

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

WEST AREA BOARD MEETING MONDAY 9 JULY 2007 at 3:30 PM

Present

Lyn Ralph, Sid Hall, Cllr Elsie Butler, Cllr Ros Jones (Chair), Cllr Doreen Woodhouse, Cllr Beryl Roberts, Frank Protheroe, Rory Perret, Betty Clayton, Ian Gardner.

In Attendance

Janet Clarke (Asst Director of Housing), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Rob Chappell (Business Maintenance Manager, Colleen Thompson (Performance Monitoring Officer), Aileen Tutgun (PA), Maxine Newton (Board Support Officer)

		ACTION
1.	Apologies and Quorum	
1.1	Apologies were received from Dorothy Chamberlain, Cllr Maureen Edgar and Judith Jones.	
1.2	It was noted that a quorum was present. Cllr Ros Jones chaired the meeting.	
2.	Declarations of Interest by Area Board Members	
2.1	There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	Minutes of previous meeting held on 11 Jun 2007	
3.1	The minutes of the West Area Board Meeting held on 11 June 2007 were approved as a correct record.	
4.	Matters arising from previous minutes held on 11 Jun 2007	
4.1	There were no matters arising raised at the meeting.	
5.	Performance Monitoring Information	
5.1	The purpose of this report was to present the West Area Board a summary of key performance issues for April and May 2007.	

5.2 **Percentage of Current Arrears Against Annual Debit** - referring to page 2 of the Summary of Performance Graphs booklet the Chair queried if SLHD had changed anything in the way it generated income as it was currently collecting less in the North West. It was explained that the dates of rent free weeks had impacted on the performance figures.

5.3 **Number of Evictions due to Rent Arrears** - referring to page 4 of the booklet the Chair also highlighted that rent arrears were up and number of evictions due to rent arrears were down and queried if there was a correlation between the two. She was advised that this was not the case.

The Chair expressed her wishes to the West Area Board that this should be monitored closely throughout the year.

5.4 **Average Time Taken to Re-let Empty Properties** – members queried why this had deteriorated, the reasons were as a result of the number of long term voids re-let in May.

5.5 **Decency - % of properties completed within timescale – 25 days** – members raised concerns over the length of time it was taking to complete the work in tenants homes. The target had been reduced from 38 days to 25 days. On the Dunscroft scheme the extent of the work required increased after the removal of the kitchens when it became clear that a damp proof course was required.

5.6 **Number of complaints** – there was confusion amongst members over the reduction in complaints and direction of travel showing a deterioration on the graphical information. The Performance Monitoring Officer explained that this was due to the comparison against quarterly figures.

The West Area Board requested that the direction of travel to be displayed for both quarterly and monthly figures. CT

5.7 **The Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

6. **Monitor Allocations to DMBC Properties**

6.1 The Assistant Director of Customer Services presented this report that provided the West Area Board with an update on allocations made to St Leger Homes between 1 April 2007 and 31 May 2007.

6.2 This was the first written report and invited comment on its content and any requests for additional information.

6.3 The Area Board requested that at Appendix A an additional column was added to include 'No of Properties Available to Allocate'. JC

Comments were made that the information was very useful and well presented.

6.4 The Area Board noted the contents of the report.

7. Monitor Nominations made to RSL's

7.1 The Assistant Director of Housing Management presented this report that updated the West Area Board on nominations made to RSL's in the West during April and May 2007.

7.2 She explained that nominations were made for 9 properties in the West, of those requests, 6 were accepted, the outcome of the remaining 3 is still unknown.

7.3 She suggested that the report be brought to the Area Board for discussion quarterly as this fell in line with the monitoring arrangements put in place with the Housing Associations.

The Councils nominations rights from each individual Housing Association were detailed in the report. Monitoring allows the company to assess whether full nomination rights are being obtained. Where nominations rights have been rejected a database is to be developed to analyse the reasons and take appropriate actions to redress any difficulties. The details of all actions will be included within the quarterly report.

7.4 A Member asked if tenants had a security of tenure if they are nominated to a Housing Association, it was confirmed that this was the case.

7.5 The Area Board noted the contents of the report and agreed to receive quarterly updates.

8. Receive Reports on Evictions

8.1 The Assistant Director of Housing Management referred to the report that gave an analysis of evictions carried out between 1 April 2007 and 31 May 2007.

8.2 There were 9 evictions for rent arrears and 1 for other reasons.

She highlighted from the analysis that it had identified that there were more issues with tenants who lived on their own rather than with children. Also 70% of evictions were of people between the ages of 41 and 60, however the company had a larger number of tenants in that age group.

8.3 A Member raised concerns that the company did not appear to evict for Anti Social Behavioural problems soon enough. He was advised

that although we could sympathise with anyone who was suffering from this type of behaviour it was not uncommon for tenant who had been made aware that investigations were taking place to vacate the property before sufficient evidence had been gathered for the company to obtain a notice of eviction. Measures were in place to ensure that persons who had been investigated in this manner were identified if they made a further application for inclusion onto the Housing Register.

- 8.4 Another member queried the 9 evictions for rent arrears, stating for those tenants on benefits surely SLHD would receive the money direct for DMBC and asked why there should then be problems with rent arrears.

It was explained that the 9 evictions were not necessarily in receipt of benefits and that on occasions benefits did not cover the whole of the rent commitment. Other difficulties arose if tenants had sporadic work patterns or delayed completing form or providing requested information. Every effort is made to assist customers in accordance with their individual circumstances.

- 8.5 In respect of Anti Social Behaviour cases the Chair queried whether information was shared between authorities and Housing Associations. Due to data protection they were informed that it was difficult to obtain this kind of information.

- 8.6 The Chair asked if SLHD application forms asked the question if tenants had been given any Anti Social Behaviour Orders. She was informed that this was not the case the application form asked if there had been any previous convictions. She explained that it was unlikely that anyone would divulge this information on the form.

- 8.7 **The Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

9. Estate Improvement Fund – Sub Group Meeting 23 July 3.30pm

- 9.1 It was noted that the next sub group committee meeting would be held on 23 July, 3.30pm at the new building Unit 1, Ten Pound Walk in the downstairs meeting room.

Papers would be distributed in advance of the meeting as well as direction of how to reach the new building.

AT

10. Any Other Business/Items for Next Meeting

- 10.1 Election of Chair

The Company Secretary confirmed that she had not received any expressions of interest for the position of Vice Chair.

Rory Perrett expressed his interest at the meeting and members confirmed that they were happy for Rory to take up the Vice Chair position with immediate effect.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 10 September 2007

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm