

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited
BOARD MEETING

1 October 2008

Present

James Parkin, Lyn Ralph, Frank Protheroe, Brian Naughton, Kate Radovanovic, John Young MBE (Chair), Cllr Andrea Milner, Cllr Stuart Exelby, Cllr Bill Mordue.

Co-opted Members

Rory Perrett, Rodger Haldenby, Betty Clayton.

In Attendance

Gary Wells (DMBC), Adrian Alderton (DMBC).

Also In Attendance

Colin Mayhead (Interim Chief Executive), Trevor Lincoln (Director of Business Planning), Rebecca Wilkie (Assistant Director Housing Management), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Maxine Newton (Personal Assistant), Emma Walker (Board Support Officer), James Turner (Head of Communications).aaa

	ACTION
1. Apologies and Quorum	
1.1 Introductions were made around the table. Apologies were received from Judith Jones.	
1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present and John Young chaired the meeting.	
2. Declarations of Interest by Board Members	
2.1 There were no declarations raised.	
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2008 and matters arising	
3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2008 were agreed as a true and accurate record with the following amendments:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Page 6 – ‘Date of Next Board Meeting’ change from 3 September to 1 October 2008.• Page 2 – Savings of £2,082,739 change ‘a further report would be brought to the next meeting’ to ‘a further report would be brought to a future meeting’.	EW EW/TL

3.2 Matters Arising

3.2.1 The following matters were discussed:-

From item 6.3 – Decent Homes Work – it was reported that a Specification report was not being brought to this meeting. A suggestion of including this report as part of the strategic financial plans for SLH was put forward. The report would be made available as soon as possible, however indications were given for the New Year.

One member raised the issue of whether or not it will have an effect on next years Decent Homes programme but was assured that the savings will be incorporated into next years programme.

4 Chief Executive's Report

4.1 The Interim Chief Executive presented this report that gave an update on strategic issues currently faced by SLHD.

4.2 **Staff and Partners** - he referred to the report and said that he had visited all of the offices and depots to meet staff and listen to their views and comments. This together with the staff conference which is taking place next week will assist the company to move forward on the path of improving services.

Board Members are all invited to attend the staff conference.

He said he had met with DMBC and had recently accompanied the Chair to meet the Mayor.

4.3 **Suspension of Works** - in respect of suspension of works he confirmed all one hit works has been fully re-mobilised.

The Windows and Doors Programme is still not yet back on stream. The Interim Director of Property Services is working to ensure that the length of the suspension is kept to a minimum.

Members were informed that the Asbestos Management Plan will be included in the next Board Meeting for their consideration.

TL/DM

4.4 **Communications** - he discussed the importance of communications and stressed how it was vital to ensure communications, both internally and externally, were effective as this will encourage confidence and move the company forward.

4.5 **Governance** – as a result of recent difficulties he proposed to commission an external review of the company's governance arrangements to identify areas of improvement.

4.6 **Members fully supported this proposal.**

4.7 **Future Planning** – looking ahead he raised the preparation of next

year's Business Delivery Plan and budgets for DMCB's approval, reviewing the results of the recent 'Mock' Inspections of major services and the Audit Commission inspection which is due to take place in 18 months.

He added he would like to meet with DMBC soon to talk about how SLH can contribute to their corporate objectives on sustainable communities.

Members were informed of the receipt of the resignation of the Director of Property Services.

Questions were welcomed from the Board.

- 4.8 **Type 3 Archetypal Asbestos Surveys** – A Member enquired about the level of disruption caused to the tenant during a Type 3 asbestos survey.

The Interim Director for Property Services confirmed that it will not be necessary to undertake this type of survey in every property but we will need to ensure that enough surveys are undertaken to ensure that we have an appropriate level of information. Although we will undertake these surveys in void properties wherever possible some will have to take place in tenanted homes. In these instances we will ensure that the survey is followed closely by the windows and doors programme to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum.

- 4.9 **Contract Management** – A Member enquired how SLH would now manage its contractors. The Board were advised that SLH were taking legal advice on the legal position.

- 4.10 **Staff Training** – A Member asked how many staff were assessed against the revised competency criteria mentioned on page 2 of the report

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that staff are currently undertaking asbestos training; some had received training and some are due to receive the training very shortly.

The Director of Property Services informed the Board that he was working to reduce the number of temporary staff employed and fill vacancies.

- 4.11 **The Board noted and accepted the recommendations in the report.**

5. Former Tenants Arrears Write Offs

- 5.1 The Assistant Director of Housing Management presented this report that detailed former tenant arrears accounts that have met the criteria set down in the Rent & Arrears Recovery Policy.

- 5.2 **The Board approved the recommendations in the report.**

6. Human Resources Performance Monitoring Information for April – July 2008

6.1 The Director of Business Planning presented this report the purpose was to present performance monitoring information for the period April – July 2008 on the suite of HR indicators monitored by SHLD.

6.2 He pointed out that the focus of the report was on the performance monitoring of sickness absence.

Referring to the table on page 3 of the report he drew members attention to the top reasons for long-term sickness. The table depicted a marked increase in the number of occurrences due to stress related illnesses, however he was able to confirm that only 1 out of the 7 cases were work related.

Members were advised that all cases of sickness relating to stress are reported to Occupational Health without delay in order to assist in the recovery process.

To ensure that staff are aware of the assistance available from our Occupational Health provider they were invited to last year's staff conference. This proved very popular and they are attending again this year.

SLHD will be producing a Stress Management Policy in the near future.

6.3 It was confirmed that the majority of 'back pain', 'lower and upper limb' illnesses were not a result of incidents/accidents at work. SLHD have a very low level of incidents/accidents at work. Staff are encouraged to report all accidents and near miss accidents. Each report is reviewed by the Executive Management Team and with union colleagues.

Following a question from a Board Member the Director of Business Planning agreed to provide the member with further details regarding injuries sustained from lifting and handling incidents.

TL

7. Training provided between April and July 2008

7.1 The Director of Business Planning presented information on training undertaken between April and July 2008.

7.2 He confirmed negative course feedback by staff is responded to and those concerns are reviewed with the trainers before commencement of further training.

7.3 It was confirmed that the Investigations training in Appendix B was specifically training in respect of formal disciplinary hearings at supervisory level.

- 7.4 I was also confirmed that refresher asbestos training was due to finish by the second week in November 2008.

The Board noted the Report.

8. Equality & Diversity

- 8.1 The Director of Business Planning presented this report that detailed the equality and diversity monitoring of applicants and employees information as at June 2008.

- 8.2 He commented that the tables in the report show that SLHD are making very good progress in attracting appropriate levels of interest in respect of the equality and diversity targets.

- 8.3 However, referring to page 5 of the report at point 4.5, he raised that SLHD remain outside of the target particularly for people with disabilities and those from the minority ethnic communities. Interest is being generated in both areas although it has been noted that only a minority of these applicants were being successful.

It was confirmed feedback to unsuccessful applicants was being offered although figures had not been produced to demonstrate how many applicants were requesting the information.

It was agreed that further research and analysis would be undertaken to capture more detailed information to be brought back to a future meeting.

- 8.4 **The Board noted and agreed the report.**

9. August 08 Revenue & Capital Monitoring Report 2008/09

- 9.1 The Director of Business Planning presented this report that informed Board of the projected revenue and capital expenditure for 2008/09 and the actual income and expenditure to date as at 31 August 2008.

- 9.2 **Revenue** - he highlighted to Board Members that the key issue with the revenue budget was the projected overspend of £341k against a budget of £40m with the report detailing how each directorate contributes to these forecasts.

He assured members that the Executive Management Team regularly monitor the budgets, ensuring actions are taken to keep expenditure is kept within budgets and therefore he was confident that it would not be significant at the end of the financial year.

One member asked if future reports could include details of the actions being taken to recoup the overspend as well as strategic savings.

TL

TL

- 9.3 **Capital** – the Public Sector Housing Capital Programme shows an over commitment of £0.1m.

Significant costs associated with the suspension of works were expected but this will be addressed later in the meeting.

- 9.4 **Board members noted and agreed the report.**

10. **Any Other Business**

- 10.1 The Interim Chief Executive tabled a briefing note that he intended to send out to all staff advising he had taken the view that it was not appropriate to hold a company wide Christmas party.

Board members agreed and approved the briefing note.

CM

- 10.2 A Member commented favourably on the appearance of the new silver livery for the company vans.

- 10.3 The Interim Chief Executive advised Board Members that a number of venues were being considered for the AGM to be held on 5 November. After discussion it was agreed that Mount Pleasant Hotel should be contacted.

EW

The Chief Executive reminded members that following the AGM Members are required to appoint a Chair and Vice Chair. It was agreed that nominations forms along with details of the process would be distributed to all Board Members with a return deadline of 17 October 2008. If two or more persons apply, their nomination papers will be sent to Board Members one week prior to the meeting.

EW

The Chair thanked those Members who had participated in the Independent Member recruitment evening and confirmed that he had received their recommendations. He requested that the Board agree that he invites the selected candidates to a meeting with himself and the Chief Executive and that if no contraindications are found these names will be put forward to the Council for approval.

Board Members approved this proposal.

It was confirmed that SLHD was still waiting for the Mayor's decision for Councillor nominations to both the Main Board and Area Boards.

11. **Date of next Board meeting**

- 11.1 Wednesday 5 November 2008 AGM

- 11.2 Adrian Alderton asked permission from the Chair and left the meeting.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the

meeting for the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 19721, as amended, on the grounds that exempt information as amended defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule A to the Act is likely to be disclosed.

12. Decent Homes Progress

12.1 The Interim Director of Property Services presented this report that updated Board members of the current Capital Works being undertaken and planned for the period 1 April to 31 August 2008.

12.2 Board members noted and discussed the contents of the report.

13. Performance Information (for information only)

13.1 Board members noted the Performance Information.

The meeting ended at 7:43 pm