

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

**EAST AREA BOARD MEETING
MONDAY 14 JULY 2008**

Present

Rodger Haldenby (Chair), Cllr Moira Hood, Robert Allen, Lesley Gilfedder, Mavis Pearson, David Nevett and Lin Myers

In Attendance

Paul Elliott (Assistant Director of Capital Programmes), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Dave Abbott (Assistant Director for Estate Management), Trevor Lincoln (Director of Business Planning), Shauna Brady (Personal Assistant), Lynette Jenkins (Performance Analyst) and Margaret Butler (Performance Analyst)

Members of the Public

Ms Barbara Hankinson, Mr Dennis Shaw and Ms Barbara Wild

		ACTION
1.	Apologies and Quorum	
1.1	Apologies were received from Vic Lowe, Jim Parkin, Councillor Ken Keegan and Paul Hopkinson.	
1.2	It was noted that a quorum was present. Rodger Haldenby 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 12 May 2008	
3.1	The minutes of the East Area Board meeting held on 12 May 2008 were agreed as a correct record.	
4.	Matters arising from previous minutes held on 12 May 2008	
4.1	From item 4.1 Performance Monitoring information	
	It was reported that a comprehensive presentation had been provided to the earlier Joint meeting with regards to accessing properties to carry out Gas Servicing.	
4.2	From item 4.3 Performance Monitoring Information	

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes reported that following an away day with the contractor concerned, their working practices had been discussed and the following Key actions had been agreed:

- Handover arrangements have been reviewed;
- introduced a cap on properties in possession to 50, and
- Management Structures have been re-arranged

4.3 From item 5.3 – Performance Monitoring Information

The Assistant Director of Estates Management confirmed that he had fed back the positive comments to Estates Staff.

4.4 From item 9.2 – Any other Business

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes commented that he was not aware of any cut backs due to budget constraints on the selection of gas fires available, however he will investigate this matter further.

PE

5. Decent Homes Progress

5.1 The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes provided a comprehensive update and summarised the 2007/2008 Programme.

5.2 The learning experiences gained from the 1st year of delivery of the programme were highlighted.

5.3 It was reported that an average number of declines and no-access cases had been reported in comparison to other ALMOS.

5.4 Key areas going forward into this year's programme was to target no-access properties and declines. A more in depth analysis of the reasons behind declines and no-access are being investigated to try and reduce these numbers.

5.5 A member queried if an elderly person has had an element of scheduled works completed and then decline another element of works due to the previous upheaval is it too late to then change their mind?

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes responded that due to the programme of works and delivery times of goods etc it is too late at that stage to change their mind, however, they can have the other element of works carried out at the end of the scheme.

5.6 A member commented that she had been approached by an elderly neighbour with regards to heating that had not been re-instated

correctly at the end of the working day.

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes responded that a Tenant Liaison officer should visit the property at the end of each day of major works to ensure that all electrics, water and heating is re-established and left as it was found.

It was agreed that this issue be raised with the contractors to ensure that they are using the ticklist that was designed specifically for this purpose.

PE

- 5.7 A member queried the make-up of the appeals panel referred to in 6.7 of the report?

It was reported that this was presently on a rotational basis and comment was made that this should be a set panel to ensure continuity.

- 5.8 A member queried if tenants had been made aware that the date for completion is now 2013 as a lot of tenants are under the impression that all works will be completed by 2010?

The Director of Business Planning reported that this is due to the uncertain financial allocation from Central Government, which could not be confirmed beyond the 2008/2009 Programme.

As SLHD are the delivering agent he agreed to raise this issue with the Council to allow clarification to be relayed to tenants.

TL

- 5.9 A member queried if there is a cost implication to SLHD with regards to complaints upheld?

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes responded that any cost implications are met by the Contractors Insurance.

A centralised customer care team is also being established to enable customer satisfaction to be monitored in more detail.

- 5.10 A member queried if the area board has any input into the decision regarding the Environmental works before the Programme is finally agreed with DMBC?

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes reported that the Area Board will be included in the consultation process and Gary Wells welcomed any input.

- 5.11 A member queried what % of properties have an asbestos content?

The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes reported that he could not provide an exact figure, however a large % of properties

will contain asbestos due to the age and nature of the building.

Area Board Members noted the contents of the Report

6. Nomination of Vice Chair

6.1 The Company Secretary reported that a suggestion had been made at the Area Board Agenda setting meeting that a Vice-Chair be formally elected.

6.2 It was reported that at the June Board meeting members agreed to postpone the retirement of Area Board Members to April 2009. This is to allow the company to align the number of area boards with the Councils restructure of the Neighbourhood teams.

6.3 The Company Secretary commented that election is by self-nomination and each form is proposed by a nominee and a seconder.

6.4 Nomination papers were circulated and it was agreed that these be returned by Friday 22 August 2008.

ALL

It was reported that a form be forwarded to all absent members.

LM

7. Performance Information

7.1 The Performance Analysts referred to questions arising from members from the Performance Booklet received in advance of the meeting.

Can we confirm what measures are in the action plan regarding current arrears against annual debit and what is the forecast to have this back in line with the Borough target of 1.94%?

The Assistant Director of Estates Management reported that the plan for arrears is borough wide and a review of the rent recovery process is underway.

It was reported that particular emphasis is placed upon those amounts over £1500 and a review is carried out every two months by Matthew Lerner, Benefits Advisor of the Income Management Team.

It was reported that there appears to be a pattern with new tenants more prone to becoming in arrears.

It was reported that a new website “moneywise” is being devised and this will be presented to the Area Boards once it has been rolled out.

A revised structure for the arrears team is also being considered to make this more effective and targets will also need to be revised to depict the 5 areas.

A member queried what assistance is provided to existing tenants with regards to managing arrears as many of these tenants are not aware of the support system that is in place?

The Assistant Director of Estate Management reported that a key part of the role of the rent recovery officer is to refer tenants immediately it becomes apparent that they are getting into difficulties. It was agreed that this may be an item for inclusion in the tenants newsletter.

JT

7.2 *How is the Mobile Working initiative, due to go live in September 2008 going to assist with Appointments made and kept and when will we see an improvement in results?*

It was reported that this had been addressed by the presentation received by the Joint meeting.

7.3 *With regards to Outstanding Gas Servicing what was the cause of the late delivery of Appointment letters?*

It was reported that this had been addressed by the presentation received by the Joint meeting.

7.4 *With regards to the Capital Programme (Borough) how Optimistic are we about the future programme?*

It was reported that this had been addressed in the earlier report from the Assistant Director of Capital Programmes.

Area Board members noted the contents of the report

8. Receive Reports on Evictions

8.1 It was reported that 8 evictions had occurred (7 for non-payment of rent and 1 for non-occupation of property)

8.2 It was reported that there were 5 evictions in the East and 3 in the West.

8.3 The average amount for rent arrears in the East was £1740 and in the West this was £1354. The Assistant Director of Estate Management reported that an unusually large case in the East had

skewed the figures.

8.4 It was reported that Young, single, females are still the largest sector for evictions.

8.5 A member reported that it was quite concerning to see that there had been an eviction for someone between the age of 71 to 80.

The Assistant Director of Estate Management reported that eviction is always the last resort after all other avenues have been explored.

8.6 Reference was made to table 5 and It was agreed that “unknown” be changed to “other” in future reports. **DA**

Area Board Members noted the contents of the report

9. Monitor Allocations to DMBC Properties

9.1 A member queried the revisions to the CBL policy and questioned if a letter would be going out to all tenants advising them of the new policy?

9.2 The Assistant Director of Estate Management reported that he would investigate the best method to convey this information to tenants to ensure that all, including prospective tenants, are aware of the new policy. **DA**

9.3 A member requested clarification regarding Direct Matches. It was agreed that further information be provided to the next meeting. **DA**

The Director of Business Planning suggested that it may be beneficial if the presentation that went to the last Board meeting was made available to the area board.

The Chair reported that this will be considered at the Agenda setting meeting ahead of the next Area Board Meeting. **SB**

It was agreed that further information be circulated in advance of the next meeting. **DA**

Area Board Members noted the content of the report

10. Estate Improvement Fund

10.1 It was reported that a total of 98 applications had been received at present with a closing date of 18 July 2008.

10.2 A substantial percentage of suggestions were around the decent homes programme. The Assistant Director of Capital Programmes clarified that tenants of properties that are to receive decent homes

works within the next 12 months will be aware of this, therefore all the suggestions relating to this area will receive works in due course.

10.3 It was agreed that Rodger Haldenby, Mavis Pearson, Dave Nevett, Robert Allen and Lesley Gilfedder meet to discuss suggestions on Tuesday 22 July 2008 @ 5.30 pm.

11. Any Other Business/Items for next meeting

11.1 The Company Secretary reported that the intention was to hold the September 2008 meeting of the Area Board in the East Area.

11.2 Approaches had been made to Communal Halls in Armthorpe, Stainforth and several other locations.

11.3 A member suggested that the next meeting be held in the Assembly rooms in Kirk Sandall. It was agreed that availability be checked and the Company Secretary be advised.

MP

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

12.1 It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Monday 8 September 2008

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm