

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

**JOINT AREA BOARD MEETING
MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2008**

Present

Lyn Ralph, Jim Parkin, Ian Gardner, Lesley Gilfedder, Andrew Bosmans, David Nevett
Dr Rory Perrett, Dr Robert Allen (Chair), Cllr Elsie Butler, Cllr Doreen Woodhouse, Cllr
Maira Hood.

Co-opted

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In Attendance

Judith Jones (Director of Customers Services), Ken Hopkins (Interim Director of
Property Services), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Janet Clarke (Assistant Director
of Customer Services), Max Newton (PA).

Also in Attendance

Deborah Ounstead (Governance Review Consultant)

1a. Apologies and Quorum	ACTION
1.1 Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of new members.	
1.2 Apologies were recorded from Betty Clayton, Rodger Haldenby, Vimbai Mbedzi, Verdun Lowe, Godwin Mudzimu, Mavis Pearson, Lin Myers and Cllr Beryl Roberts.	
1.3 It was noted that a quorum was present. The meeting was chaired by Dr Robert Allen, Vice Chair.	
1b. Minutes of previous meeting held on 8 September 2008	
The minutes of the joint meeting held on 8 September 2008 were approved as a correct record.	
2. Matters arising from previous minutes held on 8 September 2008	
2.1 From item 2.3 – Paint package – to be discussed as an agenda item.	

- 2.2 **From item 2.5 – Garage License Agreement** – to be discussed as an agenda item.
- 2.3 **From item 2.8 – Opti-time Presentation** – two Board Members had visited the depot, David Nevett and Cllr Doreen Woodhouse who commented that the over view of the system was very good.
- 2.4 **From item 5.14 – Decent Homes Progress report** – to be discussed as an agenda item.
- 2.5 **From item 5.8 – Councillor/Parish Councillor Information** – one member drew members attention to the information packs received by Councillors at 5.8 of the minutes and asked that Parish Councillors are also included in any information such as this that SLHD distribute in the future.

Communi-
cations
Team

3. Decent Homes Progress

- 3.1 The Director of Property Services presented this report that he said was the first following recommencement of works. He drew members attention to the table at 6.1 of the report that suggested SLH are slightly behind program. However, he had up to date information which was an improvement on the figures in the report with only 100 properties behind in the program. The program for Windows and Doors will finish by end of the financial year.
- 3.2 Following suspension of the program SLH were inspecting 100% of properties every day and until recently DMBC Clerks of Works were calling on some of these properties, he advised the Clerks of Works have now moved off the one hits and are now looking at the Windows & Doors program. No major incidents had been reported. A review at the of DMBC's involvement will take place in November. SLHD are reviewing the structures of the Decent Homes team and Capital team. This will reduce the dependence on Agency staff. The positions were about to be advertised.
- 3.3 All contractors have submitted claims re the costs of the suspension. This is likely to be a lengthy process and it is currently difficult to predict the outcome.
- 3.4 Prior to suspension there had been issues regarding the quality of works undertaken by 2 of the main contractors but following the recommencement no further issues have been identified.

Tenants have the right to refuse Decency work although current rates of declines are low. However as the proportion of work being undertaken in general increases this is likely to increase as some younger tenants may have carried out work within their homes.

It was noted the number of complaints for the period was 237 and

that Customer Satisfaction levels has seen a slight decrease to 95% of satisfied customers.

- 3.2 One member queried when a program schedule would be made available for the Decent Homes works.

They were advised that SLHD was currently working to complete the programme to 2013 and it is hoped that this will receive approval from DMBC by the end of the financial year. .

- 3.3 One member asked the Interim Director of Property Services to look into a case at Bawtry regarding disruptions to the availability of heating.

**LGilfedder
/KH**

- 3.4 **The Joint Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

4. Digital TV Signals

- 4.1 The Interim Director of Property Services gave a verbal update to members advising that a meeting with contractors had taken place last week, letters would be sent out shortly to advise tenants when the work is to commence. He confirmed it will be the full digital upgrade to sky and the program is due to be completed by the end of the financial year in advance of the digital switch over.

Members were advised that a program will be made available for the next meeting.

KH

5. Paint Package Recommendations

- 5.1 The Interim Director of Property Services presented this agenda item advising that the report had been received by the Main Board for discussion last week and had agreed to the introduction of a 6 month pilot.

Tenants unable to undertake the work themselves due to disability etc could apply to have the work undertaken by SLHD. A criteria for eligibility will apply.

- 5.2 Crown have offer a 25% discount on any additional material order by tenants.

- 5.3 One member expressed concerns that this may disadvantage those who used wallpaper, often because of the age or condition of the walls.

She was advised that the process was too complicated and expensive to include wall paper, SLH didn't consult widely on this issue because of this reason. However, he suggested that the additional 25% discount offered by Crown could also be used by

tenants in these instances.

5.4 Another member asked for a better understanding of point 9.2 on page 7 of the report. They were advised that the paragraph referred specifically to landlords failing to address the decoration of properties altogether and that this wouldn't be an issue for SLH. The likelihood of issues received by SLH would be more around tenants saying that the options are not suitable.

5.5 **Joint Area Board members noted the contents of the report.**

6. Garage License Agreement Update

6.1 The Director of Customer Services gave a verbal update to the meeting, she explained SLH are in the process of reviewing the garage sites. Dependent on outcomes of the review if it has an impact on the licence agreements SLH would roll out the update on the agreements along with the review in the next couple of months.

6.2 **Joint Area Board members noted the verbal update.**

7. Progress to Equality Standards

7.1 The Assistant Director for Customer Services presented this report that updated the Joint Area Board on progress of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

7.2 SLHD has achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. That the Company continues to work in partnership with DMBC in delivering a consistent Equality Standard across the organisation to help them achieve Level 4.

The timescales were challenging, SLHD would be working throughout 2009, with DMBC, to achieve Level 4, and during 2009/10 to achieve Level 5.

7.2 One member asked how SLHD compared with other ALMO's. They were advised 'mid-quartile', ALMO's experiencing better results tended to be in areas of the country that have higher levels of diversity.

7.3 **Joint Area Board members noted the contents of the report.**

8. Hate Crime

8.1 The Assistant Director of Customer Services presented this report that updated the Joint Area Board on the progress to set up Hate Crime Reporting Centres.

8.2 She advised SLHD were working in conjunction with the Racist

Multi Agency Partnership (RMAP) Strategic Group who's functions had been re-aligned within the Safer Doncaster Partnership to ensure a strong strategic steer and accountability.

It is clear that there is good interagency working on the response to hate crime. The focus of the report was on how SLH proposes to move forward.

Members attention was drawn to point 5.2 and 5.3 of the report that gave detail on general discussions that had taken place with South Yorkshire Police who had agreed to assist SLH implement the required processes.

- 8.3 One member queried that the report did not give any information on the extent of hate crime problems experienced in the **area**.

Members were informed the purpose of the report was aimed at the way in which the problem was being addressed and focusing on providing a quality service. If statistics on Hate Crime are required these will be obtained via DMBC however without wide spread hate crime centre's in place for people to report incidents it was difficult to get an accurate picture of the extent of the problem.

JC

It was the intention that all of the main area offices would become Hate Crime Centre's with 2 Estate Officers receiving the training at each area office.

- 8.4 Another member requested that Naz Hussain of the SJC receive the training also.

JC

9. Customer Profile Questionnaire's (CPQ's)

- 9.1 The Assistant Director of Customer Services presented this report that updated members on the progress of the Customer Profile Questionnaires collection, alternative languages review and new telephone interpretation provider.

- 9.2 The CPQ's assist the company to assess our tenants needs and help SLHD plan how it delivers its services. Referring to point 4 within the report she went onto explain what had been achieved by collating the information in respect of the following areas:-

- Welfare Rights – Central Rents
- Business Plainning - CPQ data put on mapping system
- Disabled Customers
- Catering for Community needs
- Translation and Interpretation needs

The questionnaires had been collected through a variety of different methods, such as; specific 'door knocking' by Estate

Officers in designated areas, telephone survey, postal survey, routine estate/repairs visits by staff, tenancy verification checks, CPQ data from the Housing Registration form, and at tenancy sign up.

She highlighted the current CPQ collection rate of 78% of tenants as at 10 October 2008.

Other ALMO's don't have the extent or range of information held by SLHD. Our target is to achieve information from 95% of tenants by the end of the financial year.

'Big Word' are the new provider for the telephone interpretation service.

9.3 Finally members were advised that SLHD was nearing 'upper quartile' for the collation of this information. Training would be cascaded to staff which would also include some SJC members.

9.4 **Joint Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

10. **Nominations to RSLs (Registered Social Landlords)**

10.1 The Assistant Director of Customer Services presented this report that provided the Area Board with an update on nominations made to RSLs from 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2008.

10.2 SLHD have 50% nomination rights for re-lets and 100% for new build properties. Although signed contracts were in place in some instances we were not receiving the entitlement but after joint working we are now at 45%..

10.3 **Joint Area Board members noted the contents of the report.**

11. **Oversee Procurement for Contract Tender and Selection**

11.1 The Senior Procurement Managers presented this report that updated the Area Board in regard to contracts awarded with a value in excess of £75,000 in the period 10 April to 30 September 2008.

11.2 One member asked that 'invitation to tenders' be produced onto the SLH website. They were advised that this was being looked into, some work had been already carried out, advertisements had been available on an internet based websites where company's were automatically notified of tenders.

These websites included DMBC website 'SCMS Alito' electronic tender system used by all local authorities in Yorkshire & Humberside, 'Buy Local' aimed at local companies, 'Supply2gov' which is a portal aimed at small/medium enterprises from smaller value contractors 'BME.org' aimed at Ethnic Minority suppliers.

DS

He was advised that the current focus had been an internal awareness of Procurement and its activities for staff within the organisation however, now the focus would concentrate on how SLH reached its external customers.

11.3 **The Joint Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

12. Any Other Business

12.1 The Company Secretary introduced Debbie Ounstead to the meeting advising she had been employed by SLH to carry out a Governance Review.

Debbie Ounstead advised she would be looking at processes and procedures as well as attending Board and Area Board meetings. Members were reminded of the governance review questionnaire and she asked members if they had not already done so to complete it and return to the Company Secretary. Members were advised the first draft of the report would be available to SLH mid December 2008 and a second early January 2009.

**Area
Board
Members**

12.2 The Company Secretary reminded Area Board Members of the need to renew their 'Declarations of Interest' following the AGM.

**Area
Board
Members**

12.3 The Company Secretary also reminded Area Board members of the forth coming training;

- Equality and Diversity
- Tuesday, 18 November 2008
- 6-8pm, the Boardroom, St Leger Court.

For those members who are unable to attend a copy of the slides will be distributed in the usual manner.

David Nevett gave his apologies in advance of the training.

12.4 One member raised that under the Decent Homes program in rural areas 'port-a-loos' for contractors or residents were not always provided and asked the Interim Director of Property Services if this could be looked at.

KH

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

13.1 Monday 12 January 2009, 3.30pm

Meeting ended at 18:36hrs