

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited
BOARD MEETING

3 December 2008

Present

John Young MBE (Chair), Lyn Ralph, James Parkin, Frank Protheroe, Brian Naughton, Christine Hague, Cllr Andrea Milner, Cllr Bill Mordue, Cllr Cliff Hampson, Cllr Doreen Woodhouse, Andrew Bosmans, Dr Rory Perrett.

In Attendance

Gary Wells (DMBC), Adrian Alderton (DMBC), Debby Ounstead,

Also In Attendance

Colin Mayhead (Interim Chief Executive), Trevor Lincoln (Director of Business Planning), Judith Jones (Director of Customer Services), Ken Hopkins (Interim Director of Property Services), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Leandra Graham-Hibling (Personal Assistant)

1. Apologies and Quorum

1.1 Apologies were received from Roger Haldenby, Kheng Lim, Cllr Stuart Exelby

1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present and John Young chaired the meeting.

1.3 The Chair took the opportunity to inform the Board that this was the last meeting that Colin Mayhead would attend in his position as Interim Chief Executive.

The Board thanked Colin for his support and advice over the last 5 months and wished him well in future endeavours.

1.4 Introductions were made for the convenience of new Board Members.

2. Declarations of Interest by Board Members

2.1 There were no declarations made.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2008 and matters arising

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2008 were agreed as a true and accurate record with the

ACTION

following amendments.

3.1.2 **From item 16.1 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was noted that the Local Government Act was dated 1971.

The Board Support Officer to make amendments to the template.

3.2 **Matters Arising**

3.2.1 There were no matters arising.

4 **Chief Executive's Report**

4.1 The Interim Chief Executive introduced his report to provide Board Members with an update on strategic issues currently faced by St Leger Homes of Doncaster

4.2 Board Member Attendance

The Interim Chief Executive provided further details following the November Board meeting in relation to attendance at Board Meetings by Asma Hassan.

He highlighted points in the Articles of Association relating to non attendance at Board Meetings and proposed that her office be vacated.

The Board agreed with the recommendation and passed a resolution to this matter. LM

4.3 Board representation on the Area Boards

The Interim Chief Executive reminded Board Members of a discussion at the Board Meeting on 5th November relating to the vacant position of Board Representative (Council) on the East Area Board.

He advised Members that Cliff Hampson had indicated his interest in the position.

The Board agreed the appointment of Cliff Hampson onto the East Area Board.

4.4 Co-option of Chair of the West Area Board

Members were reminded that in July 2008 the Board agreed to the co-option of the Chairs of the Area Boards to the Board. The position of Chair of the West Area Board is vacant and is not to be considered until after the completion of the governance review.

The Interim Chief Executive made the suggested that the

Vice Chair be invited to act as a Co-opted Member on an interim basis.

The Board agreed to invite the East Area Board Vice Chair to attend the Board meetings as the East Area Board representative until the position of Chair is filled.

A Member brought the Board's attention to possible problems in attaining quorum at the meetings of the West Area Board due to the number of Tenant and Independent vacancies. He made the suggestion that Main Board Members are placed onto the West Area Board in the interim and until the outcomes of the Governance review has been received.

The Chair volunteered to become a member of the West Area Board for the short term and until the Governance Review was complete.

4.5 Buddying Arrangements

The Interim Chief Executive provided details of the Board Member buddying arrangements that had been agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair to help Members widen their understanding and experience with the Company.

4.6 Board Equality Champion

It was noted that the appointment would demonstrate to all stakeholders the Boards commitment to equality and fairness and would assist the Council and St Leger Homes to attain level 4 of the Equality Standard.

The Vice Chair volunteered to become the equality champion.

The Board agreed to the appointment of the Vice Chair as Equality Champion.

4.7 Board Health and Safety Champion

The Interim Chief Executive explained this item was linked to item 6 on the meeting agenda.

The Board agreed, in principle, to appoint a Health and Safety Champion

4.8 Audit Committee

The Director of Business Planning explained the reasons behind the current vacancies and the role of the Audit Committee. Membership would normally consist of 6 Board Members, 2 from each representative group

The Board accepted the following membership to the Audit Committee:-

Lyn Ralph, Frank Protheroe, Andrea Milner, Stuart Exelby, Andrew Bosmans and Rory Perrett

4.9 Governance Review

The interim Chief Executive updated the Board on the ongoing Governance Review being conducted by Debby Ounstead. A draft report is expected in December with the final report being ready mid January.

It was agreed that further information would be provided by Debbie Ounsted to a members who was absent at the last meeting.

4.10 Recruitment to Senior Vacancies

The Interim Chief Executive advised the Board that Veredus had been appointed to start the recruitment process for the positions of Chief Executive and Director of Property Services.

He suggested that a panel is established to undertake the recruitment. Their recommendations would require full Board approval at the February meeting.

It was suggested that the panel is made up of 4 Board Members, together with the Consultants and the Interim Chief Executive in an advisory capacity.

It was also suggested that DMBC be invited to select an officer or other representative to attend the final interviews.

The Board agreed the suggestion made in the report and agreed the following Board Members are co-opted onto the panel

John Young, Lyn Ralph, Cllr Bill Mordue, Cllr Andrea Milner and Rory Perrett

5 Area Board Feedback

- 5.1 In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair of the West Area Board, the Director of Customer Services provided a verbal update from the last meeting.

Performance Monitoring

She advised the Board that there had been interest in allocations and lettings performance and members had asked for further information about the accessible housing register and direct matches. Francis Gisbourne, DMBC's Senior Occupational Therapist, had been invited to attend the January meeting of the Joint Area Boards where she would be providing a live demonstration of the systems and processes used.

- 5.2 In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair of the East Area Board, the Interim Director of Property Services provided a verbal update from the last meeting.

Decent Homes Performance Information

He advised the Board that there was interest in the progress so far on the Decency Programme and that the East Area Board were keeping up to date with performance including if the programme was on target and customer satisfaction information.

6 Health, Safety and Advisory Group – Terms of Reference

- 6.1 The Director of Business Planning led on the report which asks the Board to consider the terms of reference for the newly formed Health, Safety and Asbestos Advisory Group and asked for the Board to approve the terms of reference and agree membership.

- 6.2 A Member referred to the Terms of Reference detailed in the report and commented that as the responsibility for Health and Safety is held jointly by all Board Members they may all wish to have some involvement.

Following a discussion Members agreed to have one Board Member in the group who would act as the Board Champion and link into Board Meetings.

- 6.3 **The Board agreed to appoint Cllr Andrea Milner to the position of Health and Safety Champion.**

7 Business Delivery Plan Priorities and Management Fee

- 7.1 The Director of Business Planning led on the report to invite Board Members to comment on the key priorities currently being proposed for the Business Delivery Plan and to note the negotiations on Management Fee requirements for 2009/10.

- 7.2 He provided detailed background information relating to the plan and advised the Board that he was looking for formal agreement at the February Board Meeting.

He also suggested a further meeting for Board Members to go through the plan in more detail.

- 7.3 A Member raised a query in relation to how inflationary pressures had been included within the Management Fee negotiations and also asked what service efficiencies mean in practice.

The Director of Business Planning advised the Board that

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St Leger Homes had adopted similar inflationary processes as those adopted by DMBC and that there were a number of different inflationary indices in different areas of the Business.

St Leger Homes had reflected these pressures and made a forecast for the rest of the year.

Efficiencies for St Leger Homes would mean identifying surplus resources which could be re-located to other areas which would provide service growth.

- 7.4 A Member asked if there was a particular timeframe to achieve the efficiencies.

The Director of Business Planning replied that SLHD would be looking to achieve these targets in 12 months.

- 7.5 A Member asked how often Value For Money efficiencies are reported to the Board and if it would include the costs incurred from the asbestos incidents to ensure that services are not compromised.

She suggested appointing a Efficiency Champion of the Board to be a close link between the Board and Company Officers to provide a more in-depth probing approach.

The Director of Business Planning responded that historically Value for Money is reported twice yearly to the Board but he was proposing to report it on a quarterly basis once the new delivery plan had been approved as a substantial part of the Business Delivery Plan would centre on performance management and the adoption of rigorous reporting processes.

- 7.4 The Chair asked the Board for a volunteer to take up the role of efficiency champion. Andrew Bosmans volunteered for the position of efficiency champion.

- 7.5 **The Board received information relating to the Business Delivery Plan and Management Fee.**

The Board endorsed the suggestion of holding a meeting to review the draft business delivery plan in more detail. It was agreed that this is held mid January and the Board asked the Director of Business Planning to make the necessary arrangements.

The Board agreed to appoint Andrew Bosmans to the position of Efficiency Champion.

- 8 Decent Homes Progress Report**

- 8.1 The Interim Director of Property Services presented the report which updated Board Members on the progress of the Decent Homes Programme and brought Board Members attention to the changes of format within the report.
- 8.2 He advised members that although he was expecting a small overspend the number of properties was also over expectations and that this could be absorbed within the flexibility allowed within the 2 year allocation.
- 8.3 Section 7.4 in the report confirming that surveying of flats for digital TV had commenced in November.
- 8.4 The Windows and Door contractors have recommenced work. There were some snagging issues from work prior to the suspension that needed to be undertaken.
- 8.5 The report detailed that there were no adverse quality issues and that the teams were looking at holding meetings with tenants relating to customer satisfactions.
- A Member asked why no action had been taken with a partner due to there past poor performance.
- It was noted that on this years programme, St Leger Homes had not experienced any poor performance from the partner and quality issues had not arisen.
- 8.6 Quality if work issues.
The Director of Property Services advised the Board on the recent fire at Askern.
- 8.7 He advised the Board of differing information included in the Appendices and provided an update on why the number of properties did not appear to match.
- 8.8 A member asked about the progress on the reports from Turner and Townsend and in particular the Affordability report.
- The Director of Property Services advised the Board that he had received a draft copy of the report and explained that the work undertaken with the consultants had identified misconceptions.
- 8.9 He explained that the team are reviewing the information relating to customer satisfaction and discussed how tenants can have dissatisfaction with parts of the process but still be satisfied with the overall results.
- 8.10 **The Board received the information relating to the Decent Homes Programme**

9. Financial Monitoring Information

9.1 The Director of Business Planning led on the report which updated Board Members on the projected revenue and capital expenditure for 2008/9 and the actual income and expenditure to date as of 31st October 2008.

9.2 The Interim Chief Executive emphasised the outstanding asbestos costs which are not included in this information.

9.3 **The Board noted the position of both the Revenue and Capital accounts.**

10. Former Tenant Arrears Write Offs

10.1 The Director of Customer Services introduced this report which was to provide Board Members with details of the former tenant arrears cases that have met the write off criteria.

10.2 **The Board agreed to the recommendation in the report and the write off of accounts detailed in Appendix A.**

11. Any Other Business

11.1 The Chair asked that the Board to acknowledge the passing of Maureen Edgar, who had been a support of St Leger Homes in the Past. The Board asked that a letter of condolence is sent to Maureen Edgar's family at this sad time.

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A Member volunteered to pass on the message of condolence as he is a family friend. The Chair thank the Board Member for his kind assistance.

11.2 The Chair informed the Board that he had presented Rose Bowls to Board Members who have recently left the Board.

12. Date of next Board meeting

12.1 Wednesday 4 February 2008

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 1971, 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.

13. Minutes of the Emergency Board Meeting held on 19th November

13.1 The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting on 19th November as an accurate record of the meeting.

13.2 The Interim Chief Executive advised the Board on a number of requests under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information acts which had recently been received.

He asked that the Board delegates the authority to himself and working in conjunction with the Chair and Solicitors with regard to a fee for the information.

The Board formally delegated the authority.

13.3 He reported that the grievance process has commenced and interview letters had been presented to various members of the Board and DMBC.

13.4 The circulated papers were reviewed including the response to the requests under the acts drafted by the Solicitor.

The Board agreed membership of the grievance panel and agreed the message detailed in the draft letter.

14. Interim Management Arrangements

14.1 This agenda item was discussed as a confidential item in a closed Board Meeting.

15. Performance Information (for information only)

18.1 Board members noted the Performance Information.

The meeting ended at 8.02pm