

**MINUTES OF THE BRENT HOUSING PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 19^h May 2010**

Present:

Board Members

Kathy Ellison - Chair	Independent
Joyce Baldy Gray	TRA
Karin Jaeger	TRA
Brian Litchfield	TRA
Chirag Pandya	TRA
David Unwin	TRA
Dennis Woolcock	TRA
Sami Hashmi	Councillor
Annette Collins	Independent
Colin Moone	Independent

Officers

Gerry Doherty (GD) (Chief Executive), Gary Chase (GC) (Director of Finance), Sandra Royer (SR) (Director of Housing Management), Linda Footer (LF) Company Secretary, Sue DeSouza, (SDS) Special Projects Manager, Andros Loyzou (AL) Major Works Manager, John Farquharson (GF) Building Surveyor, and Jim Cranfield (Clerk).

49 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Janice Long and Shaidah Ramzan

50 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared

51 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 25th February 2010

Resolved

That the minutes of the Board meeting held on 25th February 2010 be agreed as a correct record

52 Matters Arising

None

54 Presentation- BHP's Adaptations Service

Andros Loyzou and John Farquharson provided members with a detailed account of the work of the Adaptations Service including examples of the adaptations undertaken and the performance achieved.

Members noted that the service commenced in 2009 having previously been undertaken directly by Brent Council.

Key points included:

An ambitious objective had been set to speed up the processes, deliver high quality adaptations which met customers needs and to reduce costs.

The officers were pleased to report that these objectives were being met with the overall time for major adaptations reducing down from 394 days to 189 days, and average costs reducing from £15k to around £6.2k. Customer satisfaction levels were also very high.

Minor adaptation works were also undertaken, with assessment now undertaken by specially trained BHP staff under an accredited Trusted Assessor Scheme.

The time line for this work was now around four days and average costs had reduced from £366 to £189.

GD advised that the work had been taken on by BHP with no additional resources, the capacity having been generated from the lean fundamental review.

BL asked whether the wet room shown in the presentation could be provided in high rise buildings and **AL** confirmed that this was possible.

The **Chair** congratulated the officers on their significant achievements in meeting the objectives set for the delivery of this service and it was agreed that the nature of the service and the successes achieved should feature in future Councillor briefing material.

53 Procurement Plan

Linda Footer presented this report which sought approval to the annual Procurement Plan.

The procurement plan provided details of the procurements carried out in 2009 including information on the nature of the contracts, the key processes and timelines involved, the names of successful contractors and where appropriate the contract value.

The plan also showed the procurement anticipated in 2010 together with details of procurement undertaken for other organisations and other on-going work within the Procurement Unit.

Resolved:

- 1 That the Procurement Plan be approved and
- 2 That the plan should continue to be submitted to the Board on an annual basis.

54 BHP New Homes - Complaints, Compensation and Arrears Policies

Sue DeSouza presented three further policies recommended by the Members working group which had been set up to develop policies for BHP's new responsibilities as a landlord in its own right.

Members noted that such policies required to be consistent with the requirements and standards of the Homes and Communities Agency and the Tenant Services Authority.

The draft policies had been considered by the working group on 22nd April 2010.

Resolved

That the policies for Complaints, Compensation and Arrears and Income Recovery be approved as submitted.

55 Abandoned Vehicles Policy

Linda Footer presented this report which sought approval to the adoption of a policy and procedure for the removal of untaxed vehicles on council estates.

The policy provided for the removal and disposal of abandoned vehicles having strict regard to the guidance on the definition of abandoned vehicles provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Account was also taken of the observations made by the Ombudsman who had investigated procedures followed by other authorities.

The policy had been vetted and approved by Brent Council's legal services and would provide clear advice and instructions to officers on how to deal with untaxed vehicles on council estates.

LF advised that the existing service level agreement with the council for the removal of dangerous vehicles would need to be amended to take account of the new policy/procedure.

Members agreed that vehicles considered to have a value over £1000 should be put up for sale.

AC suggested that any monies recovered through the sale of vehicles should be put into a holding account pending any appeal, and this was agreed.

LF confirmed that every effort would be made to trace owners prior to disposal of vehicles and that the policy would be given wide publicity.

The approach to establishing the value of a vehicle was discussed and the **Chair** suggested the use of Glasses Guide.

Resolved:

- 1 To approve the BHP Abandoned Vehicles Policy and Procedure as submitted, and
- 2 That cars valued above £1,000 will be offered for sale via Ebay or through a private dealer

56 Sub Committee Membership

Resolved

To approve the appointment of sub committees for 2009/10 with membership as shown:

Service Delivery	Finance & Audit	Personnel & Remuneration
Joyce Baldy Gray Annette Collins Karin Jaeger Brian Litchfield Janice Long Shaidah Ramzan David Unwin	Annette Collins Kathy Ellison Sami Hashmi Karin Jaeger Brian Litchfield Colin Moone Chirag Pandya Connor O'Shaunnessy (co-opted)	Joyce Baldy-Gray Kathy Ellison Brian Litchfield Janice Long Dennis Woolcock Karin Jaeger Shaidah Ramzan

Community Fund Panel	Remuneration	Development
Joyce Baldy Gray Kathy Ellison Karin Jaeger	David Offenbach Sami Hashmi Colin Moone	David Offenbach Alec Castle Annette Collins

Brian Litchfield Colin Moone David Unwin	Brian Litchfield	Kathy Ellison Colin Moone David Unwin Chirag Pandya Christopher Curtain (Co-opted)–
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57 Changes to Governance Standing Orders

Linda Footer presented this report which sought approval to minor changes to Governance Standing Orders to improve clarity and to reflect changes made to the senior management structure.

Resolved

To agree that Governance Standing orders be amended as shown in the appendix submitted with the officers report.

58 Compliance with Combined Governance Code

Linda Footer reported upon the need for BHP to meet certain standards contained within the Combined Code on Corporate Governance.

LF submitted a copy of the code together with an overview of BHP's current compliance with the Code.

BHP is currently compliant with all but 7 of the 48 provisions in the Code and **LF** suggested that the 7 non compliance items might best be considered by means of a governance review.

It was noted that whilst compliance might not be appropriate in all cases, BHP should nevertheless undertake a review and produce a required method statement.

AC asked whether the internal auditors would become involved in the process having regard in particular to the provisions on financial reporting. **GC** advised that these matters were included within the external auditors report, although some additional wording might be appropriate. The internal auditors would not wish to become part of the review panel but might advise on its terms of reference

Resolved:

- 1 That a review of BHP's governance arrangements be undertaken using the Financial Reporting Council's Combined Code of Corporate Governance as the main bench mark of best practice;
- 2 That at least three Board Members be appointed to form a Governance Review Panel;
- 3 To note that the following members expressed their availability to serve on the Panel: Annette Collins, Kathy Ellison, Karin Jaeger, Brian Litchfield, Colin Moone and Chirag Pandyer
- 4 That Members not present be also invited to put their names forward and that Linda Footer be authorised to determine the final membership details, and
- 5 The Governance Review Panel be asked to report back to the Board as soon as possible.

59 Chief Executives Report

GD presented a report on news and developments affecting BHP with specific reference to the following:

- Way Forward for BHP – **GD** reported upon meetings held with the Council's Chief Executive and it was noted that the Chief Executive intended to undertake an independent review as to the future of BHP. Financial considerations were likely to drive the process.

Members were pleased to note that the Brent Labour Manifesto stated that a Labour Council would work to ensure the long term future of BHP with tenants involved in its running.

GD also commented upon the steps being taken to brief councillors on the work and achievements of BHP. Members noted an example of the material being prepared. **CP** suggested that reference could be made to the Adaptations programme and to the work on Fire Prevention. This was agreed. The officers would present the factual position without embellishment. The Chair invited members to let the office know whether they had any other suggestions.

- Travellers site – the successful outcome of recent legal actions was noted together with the plans being developed to enforce the legal rulings. **GD** advised that this would need to be consistent with prevailing views within the council leadership.

GD also advised that discussions continued with the Oxford & Buckinghamshire Gypsy and Traveller Service regarding the future management of the site and that this approach was supported by senior councilors.

- South Kilburn Neighborhood Management – BHP’s participation in discussions on future service provision in the area were noted.
- Housing Heroes Awards 2010 – Members were pleased to note Francis Kabia, a BHP Neighbourhood Warden, had received the Inspirational Colleague of the Year Award.
- Ground Maintenance – improvements in this service were noted and **GD** reported that the company appeared to be taking appropriate measures to consolidate this position.
- Housing Management – a project team had been established to undertake a lean fundamentals review of this service

60 Board Decisions

The Board noted this report which detailed the current position on outstanding matters from Board decisions.

Matters completed were deleted from the list.

61 Sub Committee Reports

The minutes of the sub committee/panel meetings detailed below were presented by the Chairs of each sub committee or their nominees, with key points and matters of particular interest drawn to the attention of the Board.

Service Delivery Sub Committee – 16TH March 2010

Arising – minute 22 illegal aerials - **AC** reported that she had now established that this was the responsibility of Ofcom and that BHP should not become involved in the removal of such aerials.

Finance & Audit Sub Committee – 24th March 2010

Personnel & Remuneration – 23rd March 2010

Community Development Fund Panel – 25th February 2010

New Homes Management Committee – 15th and 25th February 2010

Development Sub Committee – 13th April 2010

Resolved

To note and ratify the minutes of the above sub committee and panel meetings.

- 62 South Kilburn Lifts** – in responding to Dennis Woolcott, **GD** advised that the decision to renew the lifts was taken having regard to their condition regardless of the anticipated life of the buildings.
- 63 Sami Hashmi** – Sami was not yet certain whether he would be re-appointed to the Board and he therefore conveyed his thanks to everyone for making his time on the Board such a pleasant and rewarding experience.

The Chair thanked him for his sterling work.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm having completed its business.

Chair

Date