

**MINUTES OF THE BRENT HOUSING PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 30th SEPTEMBER 2010 at 6.45pm**

Present:

Board Members

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Joyce Baldy-Gray | TRA |
| Karin Jaeger | TRA |
| Brian Litchfield | TRA |
| Shaidah Ramzan | TRA |
| Dennis Woolcock | TRA |
| Lesley Jones | Councillor |
| Janice Long | Councillor |
| David Ogunro | Councillor |
| Kathy Ellison | Independent |
| Colin Moone | Independent |
| David Offenbach | Independent |

Officers

Gerry Doherty (GD) (Chief Executive), Linda Footer (LF) (Company Secretary), Gary Chase (GC) (Director of Finance), and Jim Cranfield (Clerk).

1 Appointment of Chair

It was proposed and seconded that Kathy Ellison be appointed as the Chair of the Company Board. There being no other nominations:

Resolved unanimously that Kathy Ellison be appointed as the Chair of the Brent Housing Partnership Board until the next Annual Meeting or until her successor is appointed.

2 Appointment of Vice Chair

It was proposed and seconded that Karin Jaeger be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Company Board. There being no other nominations:

Resolved unanimously that Karin Jaeger be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Brent Housing Partnership Board until the next Annual Meeting or until her successor is appointed

3 Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from David Unwin, Chirag Pandya and Arthur Steel

4 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared

5 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 29th July 2010

Resolved

That the minutes of the Board meeting held on 29th July 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

6 Arising

There were no matters arising

7 Appointment of Sub Committees 2010/11

Resolved

To approve the appointment of sub committees for 2010/11 with membership as shown:

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

| Community Fund Panel | Remuneration | Development |
|---|---|---|
| Joyce Baldy Gray Kathy Ellison Karin Jaeger Brian Litchfield Colin Moone David Unwin | David Offenbach Lesley Jones Janice Long Colin Moone Brian Litchfield | Annette Collins Kathy Ellison Colin Moone David Offenbach Chirag Pandya David Unwin Arthur Steel Christopher Curtain (Co-opted) |
| New Homes | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Kathy Ellison Brian Litchfield Chirag Pandya Arthur Steel and Ben Ogunro | | |
|--|--|--|

8 Future of Area Housing Boards

Linda Footer presented this report which proposed changes to the existing Area Housing Board structure and operational arrangements.

The current arrangements comprised four area based Boards, meeting quarterly. Membership was restricted to Resident Association Representatives and a number of other interested organisations. This, coupled with some poor attendance records, had severely limited the total number of tenants and residents who had been, or could be, involved in the work of the Boards.

LF reported that a number of boroughs had sought to involve more residents by adopting open style forums to which a much larger number of residents could attend. The format for the meetings allowed for monitoring, debate and consultation on housing issues similar to the existing AHB arrangement while also providing greater opportunity for residents to contribute to the agenda and to participate in working groups.

A “hub” scheme similar to that adopted by LB Barnet was being recommended to the Council. This would provide for membership to be drawn from tenants represented by residents associations, and community groups and any other tenant who expressed an interest in attending. An initial data base of 1500 residents was anticipated.

Meetings would be held four times a year in the same geographical areas as the current AHBs although residents would be able to attend which ever meetings they wished.

Leaseholders would continue to have their own leasehold forums held four times a year

It was noted that all four AHB Chairs were in favour of the proposed change.

The following comments were submitted by the Board Scrutiny Panel

- Residents would like to see anti social behavior added as a topic for discussion at the new Area Housing Board forums when they are introduced.

- There were mixed views on whether leaseholders should be invited to attend the new Area Housing board meetings. Some residents felt that as leaseholders pay service charges they should be involved in relevant discussion topics.

In Discussion

BL said that existing AHB representatives were able to vote on certain matters and asked how this would be managed with a much larger attendance. **GD** advised that very few matters were submitted to AHBs for decision, particularly since there were now no delegated budgets. The emphasis of the new arrangements would be on consultation and monitoring and therefore formal voting rights were not considered necessary.

In supporting the proposal **KJ** commented upon the limited numbers who attended the existing AHBs, contrasted with the much larger turnout at the Barnet hub meeting she had attended. **KJ** also noted that with fewer meetings in total, more officers were able to attend the surgery meetings.

It was noted that some consideration would need to be given to the appropriate venues. **LF** advised that with all meetings open to everyone, residents would be better able to choose the most convenient location.

Other members spoke in support of the proposal, noting in particular the potential to significantly increase tenant involvement.

LF confirmed that the proposal would need to be approved by the council.

The report was noted.

9 Councils Annual Housing Report and Local Offer 2009/10

Linda Footer reported that the Tenants Services Authority had made regulations requiring the Council to produce an Annual Housing Report and local offer by 1st October each year.

The regulations were intended to ensure that all social landlords operate to the same set of common standards and the publication of the annual report would enable tenants to see the performance levels achieved by their landlord and how they compared with other similar social landlords.

The local offer brought together the priorities for service improvements which had emerged following consultation with tenants. It identified the service improvements, how and when they would be delivered, and the lead officer.

LF submitted the first Annual report and local offer and drew attention to the main features of the report. This included BHPs key performance indicators for 2009/10 showing performance against targets and comparisons with other social housing providers, together with detailed explanations of BHPs consultation and resident involvement arrangements and the measures taken to encourage tenants to participate.

The Chair thanked Linda and her team for all the work undertaken in preparing the documentation.

Comments submitted by the Board Scrutiny Panel

- Residents asked if the document would be translated and commented there was no translation page in the document. This was noted as an omission and **LF** agreed to speak to the Council to arrange to get a translation page inserted.
- Residents felt that they needed a commitment that the Council would comply with the requirement in the tenancy agreement to paint communal areas every 7 years. **LF** pointed out that it would always be dependent upon funding being available but that this issue could be discussed by the Local Offer Working Group which included Council representation.

The report was noted

10 Board Decisions

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

11 High Level Update on Risks

The Board's agreed approach to risk management provides for higher level scrutiny at Board Level and more detailed scrutiny at sub committees.

The top ten risks scrutinised by the Board are categorised as Strategic, Operational or Financial.

GC submitted the latest updated report and highlighted the key issues for the Boards consideration highlighting in particular:

- a. Any material changes to risk
- b. Any material risks that have occurred, the mitigation actions taken and the effect upon the business
- c. Any material issues raised by sub committees

GC invited the board to consider Chirag Pandya's suggestion that succession strategy should be included as a risk.

Resolved

- 1 To approve the update and the officers advice where appropriate and
- 2 To receive a paper on a succession strategy to enable further consideration to be given as to whether this should be included within the high risk document.

12 Governance Review

LF explained the reasons for the delay in initiating this review and confirmed that a start would be made shortly.

It was agreed that the Councillor representatives would notify Linda of the name of their member to serve on the review working group.

13 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 – 1st June 2010

Arising

Minute 41 – Annual Complaints Monitoring – **CM** noted the reduced percentage of stage three complaints which had been responded to within the target time. **GD** confirmed that this had been drawn to the attention of and discussed with the council officers who were responsible for this service.

Minute 43 – Digital TV - **DW** had been alerted to some difficulties with reception and **GD** undertook to look into the position.

Finance & Audit Sub Committee – 28th July 2010

Personnel & Remuneration – 10th August 2010

Development Sub – 8th June 2010

Arising

The completion of the development at Aldbury Avenue was noted. **DO** advised that the next meeting had been deferred until the spending review announcements, since this could have an impact on future development proposals.

Resolved

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

14 Away Day

LF reported upon various venue options and it was agreed that this should be held at Chancel House on 15th October – being the lowest cost option, with use being made of outside caterers.

15 Meeting Date Changes

A number of members expressed misgivings about the manner in which a number of meeting dates had been changed.

GD apologised for the inconvenience caused. Some departure from normal procedures had occurred due in part to the use of temporary staff during the restructure process.

It was agreed to adopt a protocol whereby:

- i) any proposed changes to meeting dates would be initially agreed with the Chair – including if necessary alternative date options to be put to the membership
- ii) final decision to be taken by the Chair in the light of members response.
- iii) revised date or dates to be notified to the membership and

16 Stock Condition Survey

KJ said that some residents appeared to have formed the impression that visits to their properties in connection with this survey had some ulterior motive. **KJ** asked whether reassurances could be given perhaps by way of the Partnership News.

This was **agreed**

17 Credit Union

KE confirmed that the paperwork had now been signed off

Kathy thanked Gary Chase and his team for all the hard work that went into this initiative.

18 Private and Confidential Business

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be conducted.

19 Schedule of Contracts

The schedule identified any contracts which were due to be awarded under delegated powers and provided an opportunity for the Board to “call in” the contract for consideration.

Five contracts were shown to be due for award during the period November 2010 to January 2011 and the following contracts were called in:

Asbestos removal – contractors framework
Asbestos – consultants framework
Lift refurbishment

20 Chief Executive’s Report

GD presented a report on news and developments affecting BHP including the following:

- Review of BHP – Members were updated on the matters discussed at a meeting with the Council’s Chief Executive and also upon the broad content of the forthcoming Decentralisation and Localism Bill which could have far reaching implications for housing.

GD confirmed that he would expect BHP to hold meetings with the consultants who were to be engaged to undertake the review.

BL expressed his disquiet at the manner in which Board member attendance at the meeting with the CE had been decided upon.

- Councillors Induction– this would now include attendance by BHP officers at party group meetings. Quarterly updates on BHP activities would also be provided to Councillors
- Travellers site – the new Management contract with Oxfordshire was due to commence on 4th October

- Connaught – the failure of the company would have limited impact on BHP
- Drop in surgeries – good turn-outs and positive feedback was reported. Members were invited to attend any of the weekly surgeries being held over the next few months
- Awards - BHPs success in reaching the finals of two national awards was noted
- Settled Homes Funding – the need to renegotiate a revised programme with the Council and HCA due to delays in finalising the loan funding was noted
- Lean Fundamental Reviews – three service areas – Housing Management, Rent Collection and Ant Social Behaviour were undergoing review
- Solar Panels – the evaluation of further possible schemes was underway including possible collaboration with the private sector.
- BHP Re-Structure – the work was nearing completion and the new structure was due to be implemented on 18th October

Members noted that the union had commended the manner in which the restructure had been undertaken.

The report was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm having completed its business.

Chair

Date