

**PART 1**  
**BOARD MEETING**

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**Minutes of Meeting held at 5:15 pm**  
**15<sup>th</sup> March 2007 at Little Aynam House, Kendal**

Present: John Stanton – Chair  
Mary Dowling – Vice Chair  
Ron Pritchard  
Peter Thompson  
Joan Chadwick  
Gwen Murfin  
John Short  
Kathy Sykes  
Brenda Gray

Officers: Sue Boulton  
Peter Thomas  
David Stubbs  
Garry Ronson

Apologies: D Vatcher  
R Brown  
G Donning

NO	<u>TITLE OF MINUTE</u>	ACTION
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting by asking all Board Directors for a minute's silence to reflect the sad loss of Ian Metcalfe and more recently David Vatcher's wife.</p> <p>The Chair added that letters of condolence had been sent on behalf of the Board to Ian Metcalfe's family and also to David Vatcher.</p>	
<b>460</b>	<b>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</b>	
	<p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.</p>	
<b>461</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>	
448:	<p>Ron Pritchard enquired as to how the Cabinet meeting went that the Chief Executive attended on 31<sup>st</sup> January. The Chief Executive replied that the relationship between SLDC and SLH had grown stronger and more constructive. SLDC had asked for more detail on performance and to work further with SLH on the presentation of performance information which we were happy to assist with.</p>	
453:	<p>The Vice Chair reported that interviews had taken place today for the Board Director. The formal conclusion to the appointment would be an Agenda item at the next meeting.</p>	MD
<b>462</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM TENANTS' COMMITTEE</b>	
Item 254	<p>Ron Pritchard said that with 3 stars in mind an article had been put in the Homefront newsletter asking all tenants to get involved in mystery shopping. 3 tenants had already responded from the Ulverston area</p>	

panel meeting.

**ACTION**

Item 256 Ron Pritchard enquired about the future of the Ambleside and Ulverston area offices. The Chief Executive replied that at present the Ambleside office was still manned by a Senior Housing Officer and Housing Officer although the Clerical Assistant was presently covering maternity leave in Ulverston due to staffing shortages. Gwen Murfin asked how much the running costs for the Ambleside office were and the Business Support Manager said costs were between £16-£18K per annum.

The Chief Executive advised the Board that the future of the Ambleside and Ulverston offices should be looked at within the context of our access strategy generally and a report on this matter would be presented to the next board meeting.

PT

Kathy Sykes added that Environmental staff would be leaving the Ulverston Town Hall at the end of March. The Chief Executive commented that perhaps now was the time to assess the options for Ulverston having regard to the need to improve disabled access.

Gwen Murfin asked about the update of the Tenant Compact. The first review meeting with Marianne Hood, an Independent Tenant Adviser, is to be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

Item 260: John Short asked if DHP funds could be used to improve external lighting at bungalow sites for pensioners. The Director of Operations replied that DHP money could be used for providing extra lighting and would investigate who pays for the Drummermire security lighting.

DS

#### **463 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT**

The Vice Chair said that the report contained a useful drawing together of the papers and suggested that the Board undertake a self-assessment as a first step and then a more targeted appraisal. Following the Board training course in May an away day was proposed to be undertaken in June.

RESOLVED:- That a board self-appraisal away day be conducted in June aiming to produce a board development plan.

HL

#### **464 LEARNING FROM ALMO'S – THE EXPERIENCE OF THE FIRST THREE ROUNDS**

The Chief Executive said that discussions had taken place with SLDC Officers and Members with regard to the long-term options and it was important that the long-term strategic issues relating to the HRA and SLH Business Plan were undertaken in conjunction with each other. It was beneficial for SLH to take the initiative allowing sufficient time for consultation with stakeholders. Following the achievement of our first priority to complete the DHP, SLH faces a fresh set of challenges and strategic options.

The Vice Chair said that SLH needed to take account of what stock and assets we had and start looking at how these assets are used, e.g. the re-development of sheltered housing schemes and to start being creative for the future.

Gwen Murfin suggested that it might be possible to build more houses on council owned estates as many properties have large gardens and open spaces – it was a case of making the best use of the assets available to us.

In preparing next years Business Plan the Chief Executive advised the Board that a

strategic options review would be initiated to develop proposals for consultation with tenants and the Council.

**ACTION**

RESOLVED:- To note the key findings of the Learning from ALMOs report and to undertake a future options review in preparation for the SLH Business Plan.

**PT**

**465 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PERIOD 10**

The Director of Finance reported that the company was still on target to meet its liabilities from previous years and produce a small surplus for the end of 2006/07. Ron Pritchard congratulated the Director of Finance and his team and the Chair emphasised his thanks. The Vice Chair asked if SLDC could determine its own level of HRA balances. The Director of Finance replied that £600K was recommended by the Audit Commission as a reserve level. Some of the SLH savings from 2006/07 would assist in restoring HRA balances in accordance with the timescale put together with SLDC Strategic Director Resources for replenishing reserves. This would enable a more stable HRA position, which in turn would benefit SLH for the future.

RESOLVED:- That the Directors note the financial position of the company as at January 2007.

**466 CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT FOR MAJOR CAPITAL AND REVENUE PLANNED MAINTENANCE SCHEMES APRIL 2006 - MARCH 2007**

The Director of Operations said that an agreement had been reached with the Environmental Agency with regard to Summerlands septic tank. In addition to the treatment plant there would be a separate surface water drainage. The total cost would be divided 30 ways between council and owner-occupier properties. To assist with payment instalment provisions had been made and the Director of Operations had now also agreed with SLDC that recovery could be through a charge on the property when it is sold.

Ron Pritchard questioned the 22% return satisfaction on the external painting contract. The Director of Operations replied that this was an average return percentage for surveys.

**467 MAJOR WORKS AGREEMENT**

A report on the Major Works Agreement setting out how tenants will be involved in all future major work was presented. Gwen Murfin asked if Town Councils could be added to the list of consultees? The Director of Operations advised that the original document could not be altered but the list for consultation would be amended.

**DS**

The Chief Executive and the Chair were asked to sign the original document at the end of the meeting.

RESOLVED:- That the Major Works Agreement be formally adopted.

**468 HR COMMITTEE MINUTES**

RESOLVED:- That the minutes be accepted.

**469 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

RESOLVED:- That the minutes be accepted.

**470 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**ACTION**

The Chair read out Kathy Sykes resignation letter. He thanked her on behalf of the Board for all her time and effort as a Tenant Board Director and commented that Kathy was remaining on Tenants' Committee for the time being.

**471 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at Little Aynam House, Kendal