



Minutes of Meeting held 6 October 2005 at Little Aynam House, Kendal

- Present: John Stanton – Chair
Joan Chadwick – Vice Chair
Ian Metcalfe
Ron Pritchard
John Short
Gwen Murfin
Chris Jones
David Vatcher
Robin Brown
Peter Thompson
- Officers: Peter Thomas
Trevor Woodward
Helen Lawler
Judith Mitchell
David Stubbs
Garry Ronson
Sue Boulton
- Apologies: Mary Dowling (Comments supplied)
Charles Batteson
- SLDC Lawrence Conway – Head of Neighbourhood Services

NO	<u>TITLE OF MINUTE</u>	ACTION
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0309 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

299 Amend to “that the matter be looked at by the Policy Committee “with input from HR Committee”

0303 Add that “Minutes and Absence policy were accepted” HL

Subject to these amendments the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting

0310 MATTERS ARISING

Part 2 minutes from the July meeting regarding the Chief Executives remuneration were tabled.

Ron Pritchard asked for an update on the closure of cashiers offices. Sue Boulton replied that matters are being taken to 13 October meeting of SLDC Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

PART 2

It was agreed that Part 2 items be dealt with first. Detailed confidential minutes are

supplied separately.

ACTION

0311 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Lawrence Conway from South Lakeland District Council outlined the recent history of the grounds maintenance contract with Continental Landscapes. He explained the partnership arrangements with increased monitoring that would continue until 2009.

PART 1

0312 DECENT HOMES – TENDERING OF CONTRACT

Peter Thomas reported on the recent re-tendering of the contract and the implications for SLH.

0313 REPORTS FROM TENANTS' COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Tenants' Committee held on 29 September 2005 have been given to the Board. There were no special reports arising.

0314 EFFICIENCY REVIEW

Peter Thomas outlined the pressures on the business and the main drivers for change.

Chris Jones requested clarification about the impact on the Management Fee. Garry Ronson commented that more properties would have to be included in the DHP because of the fall in numbers of Right-to-Buy. An application will be made to the Government for an additional £1.5M to cover these costs. It should be noted that the extra expenditure results from the increased volume only and that costs per house will remain the same.

John Short asked about the implications of a review of homelessness. Peter Thomas explained how this may be an opportunity to benefit the Council but it has not yet reached a conclusion.

David Vatcher queried how the homelessness service would be funded. Peter Thomas explained there would be an appropriate business case made and a fee proposed for providing the service which would remain separate from the Management Fee.

The long term potential for new build following the end of the DHP is currently being discussed by the Treasury.

Mary Dowling (via email) clarified that the consultant's brief was to make proposals, not to achieve the organisational change.

0315 COST EFFECTIVENESS OF SLH

Directors welcomed that performance is improving in a context of becoming more cost effective. Gwen Murfin asked that SLDC Councillors be made aware of the contents of the report.

The methodology in producing the Housemark data ensures a high level of confidence in the benchmarking results.

RESOLVED:- That the overall cost effectiveness of SLH in a wide range of services be noted.

- That the improvements in performance and ranking be noted.

ACTION

0316 DECENT HOMES PROJECT BOARD

Helen Lawler explained the project management system and the processes for reporting through the Project Board to the Board and Tenants Committee.

RESOLVED:- That the terms of reference for the DHP Project Board be approved.

HL

0317 DECENT HOMES PROJECT: PROGRESS REPORT

Helen Lawler explained that the partnership was establishing itself very well and events were moving rapidly towards work beginning on site.

RESOLVED:- That progress with the Decent Homes Project be noted.

0318 PERFORMANCE REPORT

RESOLVED:- That performance be noted.

0319 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS PERIOD 5

Garry Ronson outlined that SLH spend against Management Fee was balanced, but reminded the Board that maintenance spends also had to be within budget. This was to prevent any future deficit effect on the HRA, which might affect the Council's ability to provide sufficient Management Fee for the next trading year.

In spite of the tight management fee, we are remaining in balance due to tight budget control.

RESOLVED:- That the financial position be noted.

0320 CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT

John Stanton queried the performance of Mitie. Trevor Woodward replied he had received no adverse reports.

RESOLVED:- That the progress to date be noted.

0321 DELIVERY PLAN

RESOLVED:- That progress be noted.

0322 POLICY REVIEW

RESOLVED:- That the reviewed policies Vision and Objectives and Customer Care be approved.

0323 FINANCE & PROCUREMENT MINUTES

David Vatcher asked whether this was the most appropriate part of the service to market test. PT said it was important we make it easy for the private sector to tender. Voids sources understandable and attractive.

0324 HR COMMITTEE

Peter Thompson asked about the attendance of Trade Union representatives. Peter Thomas replied that this has always been SLH's policy and gave reassurance that confidential items would not be considered with them then.

0325 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting were accepted.

0326 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting at 4 pm 17th November 2005 to be held at Yewbarrow Lodge, Grange-over-Sands.