

BOARD MEETING

Minutes of Board Meeting held at 5:15 pm 9th July 2009, Little Aynam House, Kendal

Present: Mary Dowling (Chairman)
John Short (Vice Chairman)
Joan Chadwick
Charles Howarth
David Vatcher
Peter Woof
Christine Chadwick
John Stanton
Peter Thompson (Part II only)

Officers: Peter Thomas
David Stubbs
Sue Boulton
Jacqui Blenkinship
Rebecca Lord

Guests: Brenda Gray

Apologies: Peter Bland
Robin Brown
Frank Hodson

NO	<u>TITLE OF MINUTE</u>	ACTION
	The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming any comments from Board Directors on the new look Agenda.	
757	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING	
	The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.	
758	MATTERS ARISING	
	Minute 745: The Strategic Options paper had gone to Cabinet on 8 th July and would be reported in the Chief Executive briefing later in the Agenda.	
	Minute 745: The Chairman commented that briefing for the Board on strategic options was important and would remain on the action proforma.	CAT
	Minute 745 Providing housing register training in future would remain on the action proforma.	CAT
759	STOCK CONDITION SURVEY	
	The Chairman welcomed Jacqui Blenkinship to the meeting.	
	Jacqui Blenkinship reported that the Board received a report in December 2008 highlighting the funding gap between the 30 years outputs from stock condition	

suveys and the estimated HRA resource that could be allocated to these planned maintenance activities. Since then revised updating processes have been adopted for all completed works through the decent homes contract, voids work and major responsive replacement works up to 31st March 2009. The financial implications of adjusting the rates and lifecycles for key elements within the stock condition show an increase of £14M since December 2008.

John Stanton entered the meeting.

Negotiations had begun with SLDC to allow SLH to manage the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) thus allowing planning, delivering and procurement so that work could be then programmed into the 5 year cycles. Properties were being identified which would not return investment, along with voids, rent loss and planned maintenance.

Christine Chadwick asked about the inflation rate and Jacqui Blenkinship replied that the inflation rate would have been added into the Business Plan.

Joan Chadwick asked how many properties had not been updated through the Decent Homes programme. Jacqui Blenkinship replied that this information was available and would be brought to a future meeting.

JB

The Chairman added that it was essential to have accurate data to underpin the work involved around the stock options review.

RESOLVED:- i) That the Board approved the benchmarking rates detailed in Annex 1 and agree to the update of the stock condition survey accordingly
 ii) That the Board agree the proposed management of the MRA budget by SLH subject to SLDC agreement
 iii) Note the next steps and timescales detailed in item 4 of the Stock Condition Survey report

760 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Proposals for housing reform and investment

The Chief Executive reported that the Government had published a policy paper on 'Building Britain's Future' which announced changes to the rules for housing allocations, expansion of Choice Based Lettings, extra funding to deliver new homes to rent or buy and consultation on reform to the council house finance system.

The Chief Executive said that at the SLDC Cabinet meeting held on 8th July the Cabinet had agreed to the commencement of the Council housing options project with the funding of a Project Manager and this report would be going to full Council next week.

Extra cash for council housing building

Jacqui Blenkinship reported that SLH were currently working with SLDC to identify sites and deliver within the time frame required for the scheme. Garage sites on estates, vacant land, shops and School Knott were all being investigated with regard to redevelopment. Brenda Gray added that she had also spoken to SLDC officers about this matter.

Jacqui Blenkinship commented that she had received communication from the Homes and Community Agency who had enquired if SLH had plans to build and October 2009 would be the deadline to show an interest.

The Chairman summarised that now was a 'golden opportunity' and it was important that through the support of the Portfolio Holder, SLH be able to start building. **ACTION**

Dismantling the HRA system

The Chief Executive said that the reform of the HRA was a very positive development and once the consultation paper was received Board Directors would receive a copy. **PT**

Office Accommodation

The Chief Executive informed the Board that North Face would be vacating the second floor of Aynam Mills (which is adjacent to Little Aynam House) in October 2009 and it was an opportunity for SLH to utilise additional space in partnership with South Lakes Leisure. This would depend on SLDC confirming that they intend to delegate homelessness functions to SLH.

Joan Chadwick asked if other office space was still being examined and the Chief Executive replied that no alternative office was now being sought and the remaining 4 years left on the Little Aynam lease would tie in with the strategic options review.

RESOLVED:- That the Board note the paper

761 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Retirement by rotation of Directors

The Chairman reported that this year, Peter Bland, Tenant Board Director, Robin Brown, Council Board Director and Christine Chadwick, Independent Board Director were due to retire and asked that Directors confirm their intentions in writing by 24th July to the Chief Executive.

Nomination for Chairman and Vice Chairman

The Chairman announced that in order for the Board to give proper consideration of the Company's Management Accounts it was necessary to arrange a special Board meeting in August. By general consensus 13th August was agreed.

Board Away Day – 17th July

The Chairman reminded Board Directors of the Away Day to be held on 17th July facilitated by Michael Guest commencing at 12:00 with lunch booked for 12:30 pm. It was agreed that no evening meal would be required. **CAT**

An Agenda for the event would be sent out next week. **SAB**

RESOLVED:- i) That the Board note the paper
ii) That a special board meeting be set for **13th August** commencing at **4.30 pm** at Little Aynam House. **ALL TO NOTE**

762 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

Rebecca Lord, Accountant, reported that if spending continued at the current levels a balanced budget could be maintained. Target savings had been discussed with all budget holders, in order to restore reserves.

The Chairman asked if these were reliable and robust budgets and the Chief Executive assured the Board that the accounts and their preparation process had received a 'root and branch' examination.

Christine Chadwick suggested that for additional clarity repairs costs should be broken down further such as overheads, direct costs, labour, leasing, IT impact, sub contractor costs etc and was happy to give examples to the Accountant should they be required.

RESOLVED:- i)That the Board note the financial position at the end of May 2009 subject to additional work to be undertaken in order that future reports provide greater information, particularly surrounding the repairs expenditure.

763 OPEN DISCUSSION

None.

764 TENANTS' COMMITTEE

David Vatcher commented that as Champion for Resident Involvement he was unsure as to whether Fun Days were close to the purpose of Area Discussion Groups.

RESOLVED:- That the minutes be noted.

765 RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS

None were received.

766 GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

The Business Support Manager reported that the progress report was an updated Governance Improvement Action plan.

RESOLVED:- That the Board note the progress on the Board Development Plan.

767 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

768 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 13th August at Little Aynam House commencing at **4.30 pm**