



**BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING LIMITED**

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2011 AT 6.15PM  
IN THE BOARD ROOM AT COASTAL HOUSE**

**PRESENT:**

Diane Bellinger  
 Cllr Lily Henderson MBE  
 Alan Marsh  
 Cllr Martin Mitchell  
 Colin Porter  
 Alison Stringer  
 Paul Whitehead  
 Doreen Wightman (Chair – Agenda Item 4 onwards)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Peter Jefferson (Chief Executive)  
 Cyril Holland (Director of Property Services)  
 Peter Whittaker (Company Secretary – Chair for Agenda Items 1, 2 & 3)  
 Steve Matthews (Head of Strategic Housing Blackpool Council)

**PART A – OPEN SESSION**

1.	<p><b><u>Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Cllr Adrian Hutton, Judith Mills, Bill Rogers, Cllr Andrew Stansfield, Janet Stirling, Cllr Christine Wright, Maggie Cornall</p>
2.	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
3.	<p><b><u>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</u></b></p>
3A.	<p><b><u>Election of Chair</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed</u></b>        That as no other valid nominations had been received Doreen Wightman be elected unopposed to the position of Chair of the BCH Board to serve until the next Annual General Meeting in 2012.</p>
3B,	<p><b><u>Election of Vice-Chair</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed</u></b>        That as no other valid nominations had been received Bill Rogers be elected unopposed to the position of Vice-Chair of the BCH Board to serve until the next Annual general Meeting in 2012.</p> <p>Doreen Wightman then chaired the Meeting for the remainder of the agenda and welcomed Colin Porter to his first meeting as a newly appointed Tenant Customer Director.</p>



4.	<p><b><u>Minutes of Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the minutes be approved as a true record.</p>
5.	<p><b><u>Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p><u>Item 4C Recruitment Process – Director of Finance &amp; Resources</u> Peter Jefferson informed the Board that Stephen Dunstan, currently Blackpool Council’s Chief Internal Auditor, had been appointed to the post and would take up his duties on 3rd January 2012.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed</u></b> That the appointment be noted.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>Minutes of Annual Strategy Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That subject to correction of the reference to Board Size and Composition at Item 7, to read “...that the Board should remain at its present size and composition i.e. five Customers, five Councillors and five Independents.” the minutes be approved as a true record.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Matters arising</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Governance Issues</u></b></p> <p>Peter Whittaker presented a report setting out governance proposals for the coming year.</p> <p><b>8A. <u>Appointment of Directors to Board Committees.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed That:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current Board Committee membership be retained until the time of the next Annual General Meeting in 2012.</li> <li>2. At its first meeting in the annual cycle each Committee will elect a Chair by simple majority of those present and voting to serve until the time of the next Annual General meeting in 2012</li> </ol> <p><b>8B. <u>Dates and Forward Plan of Meetings - January 2012 to March 2013.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed That:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The proposed dates for meetings be approved.</li> <li>2. The possible need to amend some dates when the Blackpool Council cycle of meetings for 2012-13 has been determined be noted.</li> <li>3. The Forward Plan for regular, standard agenda items be noted.</li> </ol>



<p><b>8C.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Directors Expenses</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Agreed That:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mileage rate should remain at the current rate until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 and then be paid at the same rate as that paid to BCH staff thereafter.</li> <li>2. The Communication Allowance should remain at the current rate until the time of the next Annual General meeting in 2012 and be reviewed at the first Board meeting to be held after the AGM.</li> </ol>
<p><b>9.</b></p> <p><b>9A.</b></p> <p><b>9B.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Financial Performance</u></b></p> <p>Cyril Holland presented reports covering the second quarter of the 2011-12 financial year.</p> <p><b><u>BCH 2011-12 Q2 Budget Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>It was projected that overall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. There would be an in-year surplus of £21,000 compared to an originally budgeted deficit of £93,000.</li> <li>B. Balances would be £1,720,000 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.</li> </ol> <p>Questions were raised by, respectively, Alan Marsh and Paul Whitehead about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total costs of redundancy and early retirement in 2011-12 by comparison with budgeted expenditure</li> <li>2. The apparent absence of spending to date on liability insurance</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Agreed That:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The report be noted.</li> <li>2. All Directors be provided with answers to the two questions raised</li> </ol> <p><b><u>HRA 2011-12 Q2 Budget Monitoring Report</u></b></p> <p>It was projected that overall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. There would be an in year surplus of £416,000, compared to an originally budgeted surplus of £352,000.</li> <li>B. Balances would be £2,030,000 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>10.</b></p> <p><b>10A.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Operational Performance</u></b></p> <p><b><u>2011-12 Q2 Operational Performance Report</u></b></p> <p>Peter Jefferson presented the report covering the second quarter of 2011-12 operational year. He drew particular attention to the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Although three dwellings (0.06 % of the gas heated stock) were outstanding at its end, BCH had achieved 100% access to dwellings to carry out visits for gas servicing and safety checks at one point during the second quarter.</li> <li>2. The fall in invoice processing performance was a temporary one, occurring during a time when the staff team responsible for this work was restructured.</li> </ol>



<p>3.</p> <p>10B.</p> <p>10C.</p>	<p>The increased rate of staff turnover resulted primarily from the early retirements and redundancies that had taken place earlier in 2011-12</p> <p>Diane Bellinger expressed her congratulations on the gas safety and servicing performance. She also asked if there had been any perceived effect on rent arrears levels as a result of actual and proposed changes to various benefit entitlements and levels.</p> <p>Peter Jefferson explained that the normal pattern of arrears was still evident. He added that the new Orchard computer system enabled staff to work in a more targeted and effective manner and that the inclusion of “rent free” weeks in the year also helped arrears control.</p> <p>In relation to BUS 06 (Percentage of Empty Homes Other) Paul Whitehead asked which dwellings, given the Council’s redevelopment intentions, were considered uneconomic to bring back to a habitable standard. Cyril Holland explained that these were primarily high rise flats.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the 2011-12 Q2 Operational Performance Report be noted</p> <p><b><u>2011-12 Q2 Decent Homes Progress Report</u></b></p> <p>Cyril Holland presented the report and drew attention to the increased satisfaction levels recorded for Mears with whom he said much work had been done not only on that issue but on the question of local employment levels too. He also spoke generally about the generosity of contractors in relation to Community Action, such as the provision of presents for the children of hostel residents and support for the Grange Park community party.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the report be noted.</p> <p><b><u>2011-12 Q2 Meeting Attendance Report</u></b></p> <p>Peter Whittaker presented the report to inform the Board of Attendance by Directors at Board and Committee meetings.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b><u>Data Protection</u></b></p> <p>Peter Whittaker presented the report outlining the background to the development of the two policies (Data Protection &amp; Confidentiality and ICT Security, Usage &amp; Monitoring) that were being put forward for approval by the Board. In the ensuing discussion it was noted that the implications of social networking are being considered and that advice on this topic was being sought.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed</u></b> That the Data Protection &amp; Confidentiality and the ICT Security, Usage &amp; Monitoring policies be approved</p>



12.	<p><b><u>Future Housing Development</u></b></p> <p>Peter Jefferson provided a summary of the current position with regard to both new house building and conversion of existing flats into houses as well as the redevelopment proposals for Queens Park. He further explained that BCH was working closely with Blackpool Council on developing procurement arrangements for the contracts that would be needed to carry out the various schemes.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the position be noted.</p>
13.	<p><b><u>Tenant Led Scrutiny</u></b></p> <p>Peter Jefferson reported that arrangements were in hand to recruit members for the Scrutiny Panel and that it would be possible to provide further information to the Board at its next meeting in January 2012.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the position be noted.</p>
14.  14A.        14B.	<p><b><u>Minutes of Committees and Matters Arising</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Finance, Audit &amp; Corporate Services – 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011</u></b></p> <p>Paul Whitehead presented the Minutes. With regard to Item 9 (Data Protection Breach) it was reported that the Information Commissioner had now contacted BCH to seek additional information and this request was now being dealt with.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed That:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The minutes be accepted.</li> <li>2. The position with regard to the Information Commissioner's request be noted.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Service Delivery – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2011</u></b></p> <p>Alan Marsh presented the Minutes and drew attention to Item 4 (Relocation Policy) in respect of the issues that he felt it raised. In the ensuing discussion a number of points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The issues are affected by both Blackpool Council and Government policy</li> <li>• BCH was already in discussion with the Council about relocation practicalities</li> <li>• People under-occupying homes are encouraged to move to smaller dwellings.</li> <li>• In relocating people from Queens Park the Council would wish to offer dwellings that are appropriate to their family size.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the minutes be accepted.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>No other items of business were raised.</p>



10.	<p><b><u>Motion to Move Into Part B Closed Session</u></b></p> <p><b>Agreed</b> That in view of its confidential nature the remaining item on the agenda be discussed in Part B Closed Session and that any members of the press or public currently present be excluded from that part of the Board Meeting.</p>
	<p><b>PART B - CLOSED MEETING</b></p>
1.	<p><b><u>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Settlement</u></b></p> <p>Peter Jefferson reported on progress and it was noted that the Government had not made a final announcement of the HRA settlement figures as they were still involved in consultation.</p> <p>It was hoped that a formal announcement would be made in sufficient time to allow a full report to be presented to the Board in January 2012. This would allow the implications of Blackpool's settlement to be considered by the Board and its views expressed to the Council before it made decisions about HRA business planning and rent levels for 2012-13 and future years.</p> <p><b><u>Agreed:</u></b> That the current position be noted.</p>
3.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>There was no other business raised.</p>
4.	<p><b><u>Date and Time of Future Meetings</u></b></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 25th January 2012 at Coastal House.</p>
	<p><b>The Meeting Closed at 7-15pm</b></p>