



BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2007 AT 6.00pm, PROGRESS HOUSE

PRESENT:

Non-Executive Directors

Independent Directors

Ron Bell JP (Chair)
Alan Marsh

Council Nominee Directors

Cllr Michael Carr
Cllr Kathryn Benson
Cllr Lily Henderson MBE
Cllr Jim Houldsworth
Cllr Kath Rowson

Tenant Directors

Irene Bishop
Gwen King
Bill Rogers
Alison Stringer
Doreen Wightman (Vice-Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Jefferson	General Manager
Maggie Cornall	Head of Housing Services
Cyril Holland	Head of Property Services
Neil Jack	Head of Finance
Peter Whittaker	Company Secretary
Peter Cross	Independent Consultant (3E's)



	PART A – OPEN MEETING – 14TH FEBRUARY 2007
1	Apologies Michael Buchanan, Pat Corless, Iris Oldham
2	Declarations of Interest There were no items of interest declared.
3	Minutes of the Meeting of 13th December 2006 The minutes were agreed as a true record.
4	Matters Arising <u>Item 7 - Appointment of External Auditors</u> Neil Jack reported that the candidate companies had been interviewed on Wednesday 24 th January 2007, the interview panel having been made up of The Chair, Irene Bishop, Pat Corless, Cllr Kath Rowson and himself. The Interview Panel recommended that Baker Tilly should be appointed. Agreed That Baker Tilly be appointed as external Auditors to Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited and that their continued appointment be reviewed at the next Annual General Meeting.
5	The Respect Standard For Housing Management Maggie Cornall presented a report explaining the purpose of the Government's Respect Standard For Housing Management and outlining the six core commitments that DCLG requires of social landlords who adopt and sign up to it. These were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accountability, leadership and commitment 2. Empowering and reassuring residents 3. Prevention and early intervention 4. Tailored services for residents and provision of support for victims and witnesses 5. Protecting communities through swift enforcement 6. Support to tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour Agreed That Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited fully adopts the Respect Housing Standard.



<p>6</p>	<p>STATUS Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2006</p> <p>Peter Jefferson presented the findings of the statutory survey that had been carried out in autumn 2006 focussing on the major areas of tenants' views about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Satisfaction with home and area • Repair Service • Contact with Blackpool • Communication • Overall satisfaction with Blackpool <p>He said that the 50% response rate to the survey was high and better than when last carried out in 2004, which gives a high level of accuracy and the opportunity to analyse the findings in considerable detail. Satisfaction levels had generally increased since the previous survey, quite considerably in a number of cases.</p>
	<p>He explained that it was now planned to hold a workshop on the findings, and the lessons to be drawn from them for service improvement, and that this would be a joint event for the Board and the Tenant Liaison Forum.</p> <p>Agreed That the findings of the STATUS survey be noted.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>BCH Vision And Values</p> <p>Peter Jefferson presented a statement of Vision And Values for BCH and explained the rationale behind it. It was noted that, whilst it was similar in nature to previous statements made for Landlord Services, BCH is a new organisation with new staff and there is a need to ensure that everyone understands its purpose and intentions. This will be done partly through Team meetings and also through the Staff Conference in which the Board will also be able to participate.</p> <p>The Chair expressed his pleasure at the approach being taken and stated that he was keen for the Board to involve itself with the staff of BCH.</p> <p>Agreed That the statement of BCH Vision And Values be endorsed and approved.</p>



<p>8</p>	<p>Performance Issues (Quarter 3 2006-07)</p> <p>Maggie Cornall and Cyril Holland presented performance statistics covering their areas of responsibility for the nine months from April to December 2006 (i.e. Quarters one to three of financial year 2006-07). Two issues were raised in particular.</p> <p><u>Rent Collection</u></p> <p>Performance to the end of December (Q3) was not as good as in the previous year primarily as a result of problems arising from the Council's implementation of a new Housing Benefit Computer System. It had been necessary to temporarily stop the processing of new claims and amendments to existing claims, which meant that tenants were not getting the support to which they may be entitled in a timely manner. It also meant that rent account balances were inaccurate, thus making it very difficult for staff to identify and pursue true arrears.</p> <p>Cllr Jim Houldsworth expressed the view that pressure should be put upon the Council to deal more speedily with the backlog and Maggie Cornall explained that they had promised to have all cases resolved by the financial year-end, the point at which annual performance is measured.</p> <p>The Chair asked that he be kept informed of continuing problems, explaining that he is to have a meeting with the Income & Debt Prevention Team to discuss their work and the problems they face. He asked if other Directors would like to join him and Alan Marsh and Bill Rogers expressed their interest in doing so.</p> <p><u>Voids</u></p> <p>Cllr Michael Carr asked if consideration could be given to fitting sprinkler systems when void properties are made ready for reletting. He undertook to provide information to Cyril Holland to form the basis of a discussion at a future meeting.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>That the 2006-07 Quarter 3 Performance Report be noted</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Governance Issues</p> <p>Peter Whittaker presented a report covering a number of governance issues.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>A That initial membership of Sub-Committees as set out in the report and the Key Issues for their consideration as set out in the paper tabled by the Chair be approved.</p> <p>B That with the exception of the June 2007 meeting, which is to be moved to 27th June 2007, the dates for Board Meetings until March 2008 set out in the report be approved.</p> <p>C That each Sub-Committee, in consultation with its Lead Officer(s) should determine its own annual cycle of meetings in relation to the now agreed cycle of Board Meetings.</p> <p>D That the Board's training "Awayday" be held on Friday 23rd March 2007</p>



<p>10</p> <p>Verbal Reports</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>A</p> <p>B</p> <p>C</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>B</p>	<p>That a representative of the Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate will attend a Board meeting in the near future.</p> <p>That a report on tendering arrangements for Grounds Maintenance, Security and Cleaning contracts will be brought to the next Board Meeting and that Directors who are interested in being part of the selection panels for these contracts should notify Cyril Holland.</p> <p>That the BCH launch event at the Tower had been very successful, had received favourable local press coverage and had raised £1,000 for the Hospice charity</p> <p>That the Operations Sub-Committee, who will later report back to the Board, should carry out inspection visits to Hostels.</p>										
<p>11</p> <p>A</p> <p>B</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><u>"ALMOS – a new future for council housing"</u> The Chair tabled copies of this booklet for Directors' information</p> <p><u>Senior Management Team Job Titles</u> Agreed That the following job titles proposed by the Chair be approved</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Peter Jefferson</td> <td>Chief Executive</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maggie Cornall</td> <td>Director of Housing Services</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cyril Holland</td> <td>Director of Property Services</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neil Jack</td> <td>Director of Finance & Resources</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Whittaker</td> <td>Company Secretary</td> </tr> </table>	Peter Jefferson	Chief Executive	Maggie Cornall	Director of Housing Services	Cyril Holland	Director of Property Services	Neil Jack	Director of Finance & Resources	Peter Whittaker	Company Secretary
Peter Jefferson	Chief Executive										
Maggie Cornall	Director of Housing Services										
Cyril Holland	Director of Property Services										
Neil Jack	Director of Finance & Resources										
Peter Whittaker	Company Secretary										
<p>12</p>	<p>The Meeting Closed at 7.45pm</p>										
<p>13</p>	<p>Date and Time of the Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 21st March 2007 in Progress House at 6.00pm</p>										