



BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING

MINUTES OF THE SHADOW BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2006 AT 5.30pm, PROGRESS HOUSE

PRESENT:

Non-Executive Directors

Independent Directors

Ron Bell JP
Michael Buchanan
Pat Corless
Alan Marsh
Iris Oldham

Council Nominee Directors

Cllr Kathryn Benson
Cllr Jim Houldsworth
Cllr Kath Rowson

Tenant Directors

Irene Bishop
Gwen King
Bill Rogers
Doreen Wightman

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Jefferson	General Manager Designate
Maggie Cornall	Head of Housing Services Designate
Cyril Holland	Head of Property Services Designate
Neil Jack	Head of Finance Designate
Peter Whittaker	Company Secretary Designate
Steve Pullan	Director of Housing & Social Services
Karen Smith	Assistant Director (Housing Needs)
Peter Cross	Independent Consultant (3E's)



	PART A – OPEN MEETING – 13TH DECEMBER 2006
1	Apologies Apologies were received from Alison Stringer, Cllr Carr and Cllr Henderson MBE
2	Declarations of Interest There were no items of interest declared.
3	Minutes of the Meeting of 1st November 2006 The minutes were agreed as a true record.
4	Matters Arising
A	<p><u>Item 7 - Appointment of External Auditors</u> Neil Jack reported that he had carried out initial interviews with eight companies as requested and, after scoring their suitability, had drawn up a shortlist of three, all of whom are amongst the top ten companies in the country with both general public sector and ALMO specific experience. The local companies interviewed had neither the sector experience nor the necessary support networks. Pat Corless was concerned that we should know clearly who would do the actual work – partners or more junior staff.</p> <p>Agreed: That the three short-listed companies be interviewed by a panel drawn from the following list of Directors depending upon their availability on the date to be arranged: Ron Bell JP, Cllr Kath Benson, Irene Bishop, Mick Buchanan, Pat Corless, Iris Oldham, Cllr Kath Rowson</p>
B	<p><u>Item 9 – “Starting Up” Seminar</u> Peter Jefferson reported back on the outcome of this seminar, which he had attended in company with Cllr Kath Benson and Iris Oldham and which all of them had found most useful. The three key themes had been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of organisational culture and staff relationships • Board involvement and training • The relationship with the Council



5 Meeting The Client

Steve Pullan, the Council's Director of Housing and Social Services, and Karen Smith, the Assistant Director (Housing Needs) attended the meeting in their capacity as representatives of the "Client Side" for the Council.

Steve Pullan set out the context in which the client/contractor relationship would exist and emphasised his view of it as essentially a partnership. He explained that he and the client team would represent the Council's views and policy standpoints to BCH and its Board because, despite their presence upon the Board, the responsibility of Councillor Directors lies firstly to BCH itself

Karen Smith then spoke of the more detailed and practical arrangements that will be put in place to make the relationship and BCH service delivery work. She explained that the client team are the guardians of Council policy in general and the housing application process in particular.

Alan Marsh asked about the extent of flexibility within the contract and Steve Pullan explained that, whilst the contract itself was not flexible, the approach to managing it would be to the extent necessary to make it work in practice. He also commented that there would be times when BCH would need to involve itself in issues outside of pure housing service delivery.

Pat Corless queried how this would happen and both Steve Pullan and Peter Jefferson explained the processes that can be used. They emphasised the need to co-ordinate the two areas of decision-making, BCH and Council, in order to avoid lost opportunities or wasted time.

6 Corporate Governance

Peter Whittaker presented a report that covered the following topics:

- Structure and organisation of the Board and Sub-Committees
- Roles and responsibilities of Sub-Committees
- Membership Size of Sub-Committees
- Frequency and timing of Board and Sub-Committee meetings
- Electing the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board
- Selecting and appointing Sub-Committee members
- Appointing Chairs of Sub-Committees

Agreed:

1. The Board will meet twice per quarter (i.e. approximately every six/seven weeks)
2. The Board will have four Sub-Committees, which will meet once per quarter:
 - Finance & Audit
 - Asset Management
 - Operations
 - Human Resources
3. Each Sub-Committee will have four members with a quorum of three but substitutes will be allowed.
4. With the exception of any matters for which the Human Resources Sub-Committee will act as an appellant body, all Sub-Committee decisions will be referred to the full Board for ratification.



	<p>5. Subject to ratification by the full Board the Chair and Vice –Chair of the Board, acting in consultation with the General Manager and Company Secretary, will determine the membership of Sub-Committees based upon Directors’ expressed preferences, their relevant skills and experience and the overall make-up of Board membership.</p> <p>6. The members of each sub-Committee will elect a Chair from amongst their number at the first meeting of each Sub-Committee.</p> <p>7. The relationships between Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited and its partner organisations and other external bodies will be matters for the full Board to consider.</p> <p>8. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board will be by secret ballot of all Directors regardless of whether they are able to attend the Board meeting at which the election takes place and will be determined by a simple majority of those Directors voting.</p> <p>9. The first election at the meeting will be for the Chair of the Board followed by the election of the Vice-Chair.</p> <p>10. Directors may stand for either or both posts and may self-nominate but must have a seconder and must provide a nomination statement of approximately 250 words.</p> <p>11. Directors standing for election may vote for themselves.</p> <p>12. The initial term of office will run until the first Board Meeting taking place after the first Annual General Meeting is held.</p> <p>13. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair will take place at the Board meeting Monday 15th January 2007 and nominations will close at noon on Friday 5th January 2007.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>BCH Board “Awayday”</p> <p>Peter Jefferson outlined the nature and purpose of this proposed event, which is essentially to address the issues of Vision and Values for BCH, Board cohesion and team building and consensus decision making.</p> <p>Agreed That the “Awayday” should take place on 26th and 27th January 2007</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The full Board will continue to meet on Wednesdays at 6-00pm at Progress House with the regular cycle starting on 7th February 2007 and the Company Secretary will identify a series of dates for the coming year. 2. In order to minimise any delay in ratifying their decisions Sub-Committees will meet as soon as practical before a meeting of the full Board at dates and times convenient to their members
<p>9</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Peter Jefferson explained that the National Federation of ALMOS is holding a seminar for board members on 18th January 2007 in London.</p> <p>A Agreed Gwen King and Ron Bell JP will attend the seminar</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>The Meeting Closed at 7-30pm</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Date and Time of the Next Meeting Wednesday 15th January, at Progress House at 6-00pm</p>