



BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING

MINUTES OF THE SHADOW BOARD MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2006 AT 6.00pm, PROGRESS HOUSE

PRESENT:

Non-Executive Directors – Independent

Michael Buchanan
Alan Marsh
Iris Oldham

Council Nominee Directors

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

Tenant Directors

Irene Bishop
Gwen King
Bill Rogers
Alison Stringer
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
Peter Cross	Independent Consultant (3E's)



	PART A – OPEN MEETING – 1st NOVEMBER 2006
1	Apologies Apologies were received from Pat Corless and Ron Bell JP
2	Declarations of Interest There were no items of interest declared.
3	Minutes of the Meeting of 18th October 2006 The minutes were agreed as a true record subject to it being noted that Cllr Kath Rowson was not present for Items 6 and 8, as she had to leave the meeting early, and that Maggie Cornall was not present at the meeting at all.
4	Matters Arising
A	<u>Item 4A</u> Neil Jack reported that the Pension Authority have now indicated that the contribution rate may have to rise from 15.9% to 17.7%, thereby increasing annual costs for BCH by about £35,000 above the level that Landlord services is currently paying. It was noted that this is designed to address the issue of pension underfunding but over a 25 year period. The issue is not yet finalised, however, and will be subject to further discussion with Blackpool Council. The issue of funding redundancy payments was raised in relation to this and it was noted that staff transferring from the Council to BCH under TUPE provisions will not have an automatic right to transfer back in the event that staff reductions in BCH become necessary. However, whilst the legal responsibility for dealing with redundancy issues lies with the Directors of BCH the financial responsibility lies with the Council because it is the sole Member of BCH and has control of the HRA, which would fund any redundancy payments.
B	<u>Item 6</u> Peter Jefferson reported that, as requested, he had passed on Directors' thanks to Bob Fletcher for his presentation and running of the Risk Workshop at the last meeting, which they had found enjoyable and informative.



<p>5</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Performance Management Issues</p> <p>Peter Whittaker presented a report describing the way in which performance on a range of Landlord Services activities is currently measured, monitored and reported upon, both internally and externally. The use of both statutory and local indicators was explained along with the means of measuring and the means of comparing performance in order to determine what levels of improvement and progress are being achieved.</p> <p>Future plans were also explained in terms of the intention to create a wider and more user friendly set of management and performance indicators that would be a single source of information for a range of reporting purposes. This will take into account the requirements of users, including Directors, Tenants and Tenant Organisations and the ALMO Client.</p> <p>Agreed That, although comparative Blackpool figures are not included within it, copies of the ALMO Performance Improvement Club report for 2005-06 be distributed to all Directors,</p>
<p>6</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>Neil Jack commented on the Regulations that had been distributed to Directors and made the following observations upon them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regulations are very similar to the Council's and have been prepared in consultation with the Council's Director of Finance and follow CIPFA good practice. They need now to be made BCH specific. • They are designed to be a framework to which additions will be made when future Board and other decisions have been made on such matters as, for example, a Scheme of Delegation, Procurement and Contract Rules. • BCH will follow the Council's Treasury Management rules and practice because the Council will be doing that work on behalf of BCH. • As with other Council budgets that it will manage, such as rental income, BCH will follow the Council's rules in respect of Capital Investment because BCH will be spending the Council's money, not its own. The section on Capital Investment within the Regulations exists for the future possibility that BCH may have its own capital funds available to spend. • The regulations are open for comment and amendment before final, formal agreement with Council and may change in future years in response to changes in legislative or Council requirements. <p>Agreed (a) That the regulations be generally noted for later formal approval and adoption. (b) That investigation be made of the correct period for retaining payroll records (c) That rules for confidential disposal of records, especially payroll, be incorporated</p>



<p>7</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Appointment of External Auditors</p> <p>Neil Jack commented on the report that had been distributed at the meeting and made the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The search for potential auditors had concentrated on those with current experience of auditing ALMOs • Four companies, the two biggest and two of medium size had been identified so far. • There were no local companies included because they do not have ALMO experience. • Initial examination of the potential companies identified should be carried out by officers with a view to producing a shortlist for consideration by the Board. <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) That a total of eight companies should be identified for consideration (b) That at least two of the eight companies should be locally based (c) That a shortlist of three be drawn up by officers for consideration by Directors
<p>8</p> <p>A</p>	<p>December 2006 Meeting Dates</p> <p>Peter Whittaker reported that he had received information from all Directors on their availability in December and that it was only practical to arrange the meeting for a Wednesday date, the most convenient for all being Wednesday 13th December 2006.</p> <p>Cyril Holland reported that the same day would be convenient to undertake the second tour of the housing stock to look at issues omitted through shortage of time on the first tour.</p> <p>It was, however, noted there are further overall delays in the Government's ALMO approval process and that BCH may not be able to formally take over its responsibilities by the date of the meeting. If that is the case, the meeting, which is planned as the inaugural meeting of the full rather than Shadow Board of BCH, may have to be postponed. The afternoon stock tour could, however, take place regardless of that.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) That, subject to possible change in the light of the timing of announcement of the outcome of the ALMO bidding process, a BCH Board Meeting be held on Wednesday 13th December 2006. (b) That a housing stock tour should take place during the afternoon of Wednesday 13th December 2006 and that Cyril Holland bring details of the arrangements for that tour to the next meeting of the Board.
<p>9</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Peter Jefferson referred to the "Starting up" seminar to be held in London on 16th November 2006, details of which had been distributed to Directors at the meeting.</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>That Cllr Kathryn Benson and Iris Oldham should attend the seminar with Peter Jefferson.</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>The Meeting Closed at 7-15pm</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Date and Time of the Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 13th December 2006, at Progress House at 2-00pm (Housing Stock tour) and 5-30pm (Main Meeting) - both times subject to later confirmation</p>