



BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2010
AT 6.00PM AT PROGRESS HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

PRESENT:

Diane Bellinger
Caroline Cook
Cllr Joan Greenhalgh
Cllr Jim Houldsworth
Alan Marsh
Judith Mills
Bill Rogers
Janet Stirling
Alison Stringer
Paul Whitehead
Doreen Wightman (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Jefferson (Chief Executive)
Maggie Cornall (Director of Housing Services)
Cyril Holland (Director of Property Services)
Neil Jack (Director of Finance)
Peter Whittaker (Company Secretary)
Pam Whitworth (Blackpool Council Representative)

ITEM	
1.	<u>Apologies</u> Cllr Ron Bell, Cllr Simon Blackburn, Cllr Tim Cox, Carol Hall.
2.	<u>Declarations of interest</u> None
3.	<u>Minutes of the last board meeting</u> Agreed: That the minutes be approved as a true record.
4.	<u>Matters arising</u> Maggie Cornall confirmed that at the Customer Involvement Award ceremony five awards were presented to tenants who had completed the BCH Academy course.
5.	<u>Governance and the New TSA Regulatory Framework</u> Peter McHugh of PDM Associates gave a presentation entitled “ <i>The Tenant Services Authority (TSA), cross domain regulation and what it means for BCH?</i> ” He explained the TSA’s approach to regulation of social housing, particularly the change to the cross domain approach covering all social housing providers. It



	<p>was noted that, because BCH does not actually own housing stock it will not be registered with or regulated directly by the TSA who will instead regulate the Council, which in turn must ensure that BCH complies with TSA requirements.</p> <p>He outlined TSA objectives, corporate priorities, principles and powers and the emphasis the TSA places on governance good practice, including the concept of Tenant Led Scrutiny.</p> <p>Agreed That the provisions of the new regulatory regime and its effect on BCH be noted and appropriate action be taken to comply with it.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Governance Review</u> Peter Whittaker presented the report and explained why a review of BCH arrangements is required at this time and why it is recommended that the review be carried out by Housing Quality Network (HQN). Neil Jack confirmed that because this would be a low value contract for specialist professional services there is provision in the BCH procurement regulations for direct appointment of a suitable supplier such as HQN.</p> <p>Agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. A review of BCH governance arrangements be undertaken during the period April to June 2010 B. Subject to receipt of satisfactory proposals and price, Housing Quality Network be appointed to carry out the review. C. The Company Secretary be authorised to enter into negotiation with Housing Quality Network to determine requirements, process and price and to then report back to the Board on 24th March 2010 to allow placement of a formal order for the work to be authorised.
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Report of the Performance & Mentoring Services Panel</u> <u>360 Degree Appraisal - Tender Evaluation</u> Peter Whittaker presented the report and explained that eight tenders had been submitted. Following initial officer assessment an evaluation report, in which tenderers were identified only by reference number and not by name, had been prepared for the panel's consideration. He confirmed that, in view of the extremely wide range of prices offered, advice on evaluation had been obtained from the Council's Procurement Team.</p> <p>Using the recommended good practice approach a shortlist of three tenderers had been identified, out of which Tender Number 3 had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The highest overall score 2. The highest quality score and best ranking 3. The lowest cost <p>The panel therefore recommended to the Board that the contract should be awarded to tender Number 3. Following the Board's acceptance of this recommendation Peter Whittaker reported that the successful tenderer was Brynoka Consulting & Training. The Panel made recommendations as to the timing of the Appraisal Surveys, which were accepted by the Board.</p>



	<p>The Panel had also considered the means by which feedback on the appraisal outcomes should be given to individual participants and recommended that this should be undertaken jointly by the Appraisal Consultants and the Chair of the Board for at least the 2010/11 round of appraisals. It was noted that this would incur additional cost but that it could be funded within existing budget limits.</p> <p>Neil Jack explained that the anticipated underspend in the 2009/10 Board Budget, primarily arising from a reduction in the provision of mentoring, would be carried forward into the 2010/11 financial year to help to fund the cost of both the 360 Degree Appraisals and the Governance Review dealt with in the previous agenda item. The Board accepted the Panel’s recommendation.</p> <p>Alan Marsh, Chair of the Panel, expressed his thanks to Peter Whittaker for the work he had done in managing the procurement process and assisting the Panel in its evaluation of the tenders.</p> <p>Agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Subject to receipt of satisfactory references, the initial two year contract for the 360 Degree Appraisal Survey be awarded to Tender 3. B. Appraisal of the Senior Management Team should take place before 31st March 2010 or as soon as possible thereafter. C. Appraisal of Directors and the Board as a whole should take place in the period 1st April to 30th June 2010 and be linked to the Governance Review proposed to be undertaken then. D. For at least the first year of the appraisal contract, feedback should be provided on a face to face basis jointly by the Chair of the Board and the Appraisal Consultant, subject to confirmation of the cost and the availability of budget funding for 2010/11. E. The Company Secretary be authorised to enter into negotiation with Brynoka Consulting & Training to determine a price within available budget limits for the revised feedback requirement and, subject to agreement on price, to place an order for that additional service.
<p>8.</p> <p>8A</p> <p>8B</p>	<p><u>Financial Performance 2009-10</u></p> <p><u>Quarter 3 BCH Budget Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>Neil Jack presented the report, reporting that there have been areas of spending pressure but also areas of savings, resulting in a projected net increase in the budget surplus by the year end. He further explained that, because expenditure in some areas of BCH activity had not occurred fully at previously planned levels, there will be a need for some funding to be carried forward generally to 2010-11 to meet revised spending profiles for those activities.</p> <p>Agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report and Quarter 3 financial position be noted. 2. The projected underspend specific to the Board’s own budget be carried forward to ensure that appropriate resources are available in for approved planned expenditure in 2010/11 <p><u>Quarter 3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring Report</u></p> <p>Neil Jack presented the report, drawing attention to the major variances in</p>



	<p>expenditure, both positive and negative. He explained that there will be a net reduction in the projected year end deficit on the HRA but that sufficient balances are available to cover that.</p> <p>Agreed That the report and Quarter 3 financial report be noted</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>9A</p> <p>9B</p>	<p><u>Operational Performance 2009-10</u></p> <p><u>Quarter 3 Balanced Scorecard</u></p> <p>Peter Jefferson introduced the scorecard report and commented on the major progress that had been made in reducing the number of properties without a landlord's gas safety certificate. As a result of enforcement action initiated by the Gas Team only nine gas heated homes (0.2% of the total) were now without a current certificate and injunctions to secure entry had been obtained for seven of them, with legal action in progress for the remaining two.</p> <p>It was noted that evictions had risen above their target level, which was recorded on the scorecard as an adverse move. It was explained that BCH's primary aim is to sustain people in their tenancy whilst collecting the rent due and eviction is seen as very much an action of last resort so it is important to minimise their number whilst maximising rent collection and arrears recovery</p> <p>Agreed That the Quarter 3 Balanced Scorecard and Commentary be noted</p> <p><u>Quarter 3 Decent Homes Progress Report</u></p> <p>Cyril Holland presented the report and explained that by year end there will be some underspend against planned budget. This results largely from difficulties encountered with heating replacement programmes because of the unexpected and very high cost of replacing major electricity supply cables that the utility company are refusing to meet. The work will be re-planned and rescheduled to ensure spending levels come back on target.</p> <p>He reported that satisfaction levels remain high and at 94.8% are only 0.2% short of target. Local employment levels are similarly high with the average being ahead of the 79% target by 0.28% and two companies achieving respectively 87% and 90% levels. The Community Initiatives programme was also proceeding according to plan</p> <p>Agreed That the Quarter 3 Decent Homes Progress Report be noted.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>2010 -2011 BCH Budget Overview Report</u></p> <p>Neil Jack presented the report and explained that its purpose was to provide both the detail behind the Council's proposed management fee to be paid to BCH in 2010-11 and an outline of the BCH budget assumptions for 2010-11. The Board will then consider the BCH budget for formal approval at its meeting in March 2010.</p> <p>With regard to the Management Fee he reported that the effect of inflation</p>



	<p>related cost price increases, and the expenditure savings required by the Council as part of its own obligation to meet Government savings targets, would produce a net reduction of 2.1% in the fee to BCH for the year. Overall BCH income is projected to fall by £153,000 in 2010/11.</p> <p>With regard to expenditure a number of service commitments and proposed developments and improvements was outlined, together with the identification of efficiency and savings targets and the means by which they could be achieved. Taken overall, he advised that it would not be prudent to use accumulated balances to support the 2010-11 budget and he anticipated that a balanced budget for 2010/11 with a small projected surplus of £5,000 could be achieved.</p> <p>Agreed That the assumptions made in the outline budget report for 2010/11 be approved and the final budget report be brought to the Board on 24th March 2010.</p>
11.	<p><u>Office Accommodation – Progress Report</u> Peter Jefferson confirmed that the Harvey’s building had now been bought by the council, contractors for the refurbishment work had been appointed and work had begun. The formal lease between the Council and BCH remained still to be signed but the basic elements had been agreed. It was anticipated that BCH staff would be able to move in to the offices by September 2010</p> <p>Agreed That the position be noted and updates be provided at future meetings.</p>
12.	<p><u>New Council Housing Building – Update Report</u> Cyril Holland reported that the Cranbrook, Portree, Forshaw and Draycot sites had received planning permission and that the work is due to commence before 31st March 2010. He also confirmed that notices have been served to bring the Grange Park garage tenancies to an end.</p> <p>He also reported that the second round funding bid to the HCA had not been successful. Apparently no first round “winners”, like Blackpool, had been successful in the second round..</p> <p>Peter Jefferson expressed his thanks to the three Executive Directors and their teams for the work they had done to move the new build schemes forward.</p> <p>Agreed That the position be noted and updates be provided at future meetings.</p>
13	<p><u>Updated Board & Committee Meeting Dates 2010-2011</u> All members have an updated copy of the committee dates and times.</p> <p>DW confirmed that board members can attend any committee meeting if they wish.</p>
14.	<p><u>Minutes of Committees and Matters Arising</u></p>
14A	<p>Finance & Audit Committee Meeting 18th January 2010 In the absence of Cllr Simon Blackburn the minutes were presented by Paul</p>



<p>0</p>	<p>Whitehead.</p> <p>Neil Jack reported that the Council were proposing a rent increase for 2010/11 of 2.3% and that it was being considered by the Council's Executive at the same time as the BCH Board Meeting was being held..</p> <p>Agreed That the minutes be accepted</p>
<p>14B</p>	<p>Asset Management Committee Meeting 19th January 2010 Alan Marsh presented the minutes.</p> <p>Agreed That the minutes be accepted</p>
<p>14C</p>	<p>Human Resources Committee Meeting 26th January 2010</p> <p>In the absence of Carol Hall the minutes were presented by Diane Bellinger.</p> <p>Agreed That the minutes be accepted</p>
<p>14D</p>	<p>Operations Committee Meeting 1st February 2010 The minutes were presented by Alison Stringer.</p> <p>Agreed That the minutes be accepted</p>
<p>15.</p>	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>PW reminded Directors that BCH can fund three day delegate places at the Chartered Institute of Housing conference at Harrogate in June 2010. Any Director who would like to attend was asked to contact Peter Whittaker.</p> <p>Peter Jefferson confirmed that a number of options for the management of the Tenant project Fund is being explored. Proposals will be considered by the Finance and Audit Committee before being reported to the Board.</p>
<p>16.</p>	<p><u>Date of the Next Meeting</u> Wednesday 24th March 2010 at 6.00pm – Progress House Conference Rooms 1 & 2.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>The meeting closed at 8.15pm</p>