

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
BLACKPOOL COASTAL HOUSING LIMITED  
HELD VIA HYBRID MEETING AT COASTAL HOUSE  
ON WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2022 AT 6.00PM**

**Present:** Councillor N Brookes, Non-Executive Director (Chair)  
Councillor J Hobson, Non-Executive Director  
Ms M Cameron, Tenant Non-Executive Director  
Mrs M Thompson, Independent Non-Executive Director [Items 6-16 only]  
Mr A Szatkowski, Independent Non-Executive Director  
Ms M Gilkes, Independent Non-Executive Director [via MS Teams]  
Ms T Johnson, Independent Non-Executive Director

**In attendance:** Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive  
Mrs M Cornall, Director of Operations  
Mr S Dunstan, Director of Resources [via MS Teams]  
Mr A Walker, Head of Housing Services [Items 1-6 only]  
Mrs S Fowler, Chief Executive's PA  
Mr M Towers, Company Secretary  
Mrs S Chadwick, Assistant Company Secretary

		<b>Actions</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Robertson, Non-Executive Director and Mr N Herring, Tenant Non-Executive Director.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 20 JULY 2022 AND WRITTEN RESOLUTION APPROVED ON 19 AUGUST 2022</b></p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 July 2022 as a true and correct record.</li> <li>To note the Written Resolution approved on 19 August 2022.</li> </ol>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p><u>Minute 3 – Matters arising</u> Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, explained that the affordability of the company's objectives as set out in the Business Plan would form part of the</p>	

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	<p>budget setting and it was agreed that this action would be carried forward to December's meeting agenda.</p> <p><u>Minute 9 – Jobs, Friends &amp; Houses</u> Mr M Towers, Company Secretary, had contacted Lancashire Constabulary and spoken to Gillian Routledge, Chief Operating Officer, in regards to the Constabulary withdrawing as a member. A report would be presented at a future meeting detailing the next steps once that withdrawal had been confirmed.</p> <p><u>Minute 11 – Director of Resources' report</u> Mr S Dunstan, Director of Resources, reported that a new Health and Safety Advisor had recently been appointed who would oversee the company's lone working arrangements, the policy for which would be similar to that of Blackpool Council. Consideration was being given to the renewal of the contract with First2HelpYou which would be subject to a procurement exercise before being presented to the Board for its consideration. In response to a request from the Chair, Mr Dunstan agreed to share any updates with Board members in advance of the next scheduled meeting.</p> <p><u>Minute 12 – Director of Operations' report</u> Mrs M Cornall, Director of Operations, was awaiting some outstanding information from Blackpool Council in order to provide assurance as to how the proposed Equipment Hub would be managed and funded. It was therefore agreed that an in-depth report would be presented at a future meeting once those details had been confirmed.</p> <p>All other matters arising from the previous minutes had been completed or were covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p>	<p><b>JD</b></p> <p><b>SD</b></p> <p><b>MC</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2022</b></p> <p>Mr A Szatkowski, Audit Committee Chair, presented the highlights of the last Audit Committee meeting held on 14 September 2022.</p> <p>The actions and targets from the Audit and Scrutiny Action Tracker were almost all up to date with just one recommendation outstanding and Mr Szatkowski praised Mr Dunstan and his team for the work that had been undertaken in achieving that progress.</p> <p>An enhanced Health and Safety update had been provided which had been well received and a Deep Dive was undertaken by the Committee on the Diversification of Services from Core Social Housing Provision.</p>	

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<p><b>The Board agreed:</b> To note the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 14 September 2022.</p> <p><b>6. SERVICE DISCUSSION – ASB AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SERVICE</b></p> <p>[Mrs M Thompson, Independent Non-Executive Director, joined the meeting during consideration of this item.]</p> <p>Mr A Walker, Head of Housing Services, gave a presentation on the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team. The role of the Team, which consisted of a Manager, Team Leader, five Housing Officers and administrative support, was to respond to complaints about alleged Anti-Social Behaviour by tenants.</p> <p>Mr Walker explained that he was part of a Working Group with Blackpool Council which was preparing for the introduction of the Social Housing White Paper. The key impact upon the ASB Team as a result of that Paper was the proposed introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures which would take the form of an annual survey to assess Tenants’ satisfaction with their landlord’s contribution to the neighbourhood and its management of Anti-Social Behaviour. Guidance had been issued on what help should be expected by tenants when experiencing ASB issues and a self-assessment was being worked on in conjunction with Blackpool Housing Company to ensure both companies were fully aware of the expectations of their tenants.</p> <p>Board members were reminded of BCH’s Anti-Social Behaviour Policy which was revised and relaunched following Board approval in October 2020 having taken into account guidance from the Housing Ombudsman during that revision process. Mr Walker further advised that BCH had joined Resolve in 2021 which promoted good practice and excellence in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour.</p> <p>The key issues facing the ASB Team were outlined, some of which were complex cases involving organised criminal gangs, violence, hate crimes or domestic abuse. Serious mental health issues were also being encountered and the Team had recently attended mental health training to increase their confidence and resilience when dealing with such issues.</p> <p>Mr Walker explained that the Team’s primary aim was that of prevention rather than enforcement. In the first half of 2022, the ASB and Neighbourhoods Team had recorded over 9,000 preventative actions compared to 53 enforcement actions. Management of tenants’ expectations as to the process when reporting an ASB incident was crucial and the Team had to remain mindful of the regulations within which it was operating. Partnership work had recently been undertaken with Blackpool Council’s Community Safety Team to ensure</p>	

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<p>that Community Protection Warnings were issued correctly and in accordance with legislation introduced by the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014.</p> <p>Mr Walker concluded his presentation by inviting any Board members who were interested in meeting the Team and seeing the work it did first hand to contact him and he would make the appropriate arrangements.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Walker for his presentation and for the work of the Team and Board members acknowledged the challenges faced when tackling issues of ASB. In response to a question as to how the issue of unsightly abandoned household goods such as sofas and fridges being left in the gardens of properties was being dealt with, Mr Walker explained that was an issue for the Neighbourhoods Team who had a budget set aside to fund the removal of such items if required.</p> <p>Mrs M Thompson, Independent Non-Executive Director, referred to the resilience support available for staff and suggested that the company could point colleagues towards “ShinyMind”, a wellbeing and resilience app, which had various resources to help to reduce stress and anxiety at work. In response, Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, explained that staff already had access to a similar app but was unsure of the take-up and would therefore check that staff were aware of the resource. Mr A Szatkowski, Independent Non-Executive Director and Ms T Johnson, Independent Non-Executive Director, added that another similar app, “TogetherAll”, may also be useful.</p> <p>The Board discussed the introduction of the annual tenant satisfaction survey and queried how that would be measured and recorded. Mr Walker explained that the Housemark STAR survey would be undertaken in the new year to get an initial indication of tenants’ views however Board members were of the opinion that further surveys should be carried out throughout the year. Mr Donnellon therefore agreed to bring a report to the next meeting in December outlining other survey options for the Board’s consideration.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the information.</li> <li>2. That Mr Donnellon brings a report to the December Board meeting outlining options for tenant satisfaction surveys.</li> </ol> <p>[Mr Walker left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.]</p>	<p></p> <p><b>JD</b></p> <p><b>JD</b></p>
<p><b>7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b></p> <p>The Board considered the Performance Report for Quarter 2. Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, explained that there were no major fluctuations since the last</p>	

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8.	<p>report and assured Board members that there were no specific areas of concern to be brought to their attention.</p> <p>The repairs performance indicator had shown a slight downwards trend and Mrs M Cornall, Director of Operations, was investigating the impact of sickness absence and general volatility in the labour market which had affected contractors' ability to recruit and respond to jobs in a timely manner. It was reported that staff turnover figures reflected the pattern across the labour market as a whole, rather than any dissatisfaction in working for BCH, and the company was working towards increasing its workforce resilience.</p> <p>Mr A Szatkowski, Independent Non-Executive Director, noted the assurances provided by Mr Donnellon but expressed concern that of the 16 "Performance Against Target" indicators, 11 were red. Councillor J Hobson, Non-Executive Director, added that he had raised a similar concern at the previous meeting but despite being assured that those figures would improve, there had been no positive movement to date. In response, Mr Donnellon explained that any downwards trends were minor and he was confident that ongoing monitoring by the Senior Management Team would result in trends moving in the right direction in future.</p> <p>Ms M Gilkes, Independent Non-Executive Director, referred to the gas safety performance indicator and suggested that more detail was needed. Following discussion the Board agreed that, as that data was scrutinised in detail by the Audit Committee which presented its findings to the Board by way of the minutes of its meeting, further in-depth reporting did not need to be made at Board level. Mr Donnellon added that further information could be added to the company SharePoint site if required and that going forwards a redesign of the scorecard to better reflect that indicator could be considered.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b> To note the update.</p> <p><b>COST OF LIVING CRISIS</b></p> <p>Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, presented his report on the current cost of living crisis and the measures that were being considered to alleviate the impact of rising costs for tenants and against the Business Plan.</p> <p>Energy, fuel and food costs were of particular concern. Discussions had taken place with Blackpool Council regarding the use of Community Centres as "warm banks" where food and activities such as bingo could be provided. It was anticipated that much of the potential activity could be funded from existing sources however in order to give the initiative some resilience the Board was</p>	

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9.	<p>asked to consider earmarking £25,000 from its reserves to support additional activity in its community centres if required.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the report.</li> <li>2. To agree to earmark £25,000 from BCH reserves to support additional activity in community centres if required.</li> </ol> <p><b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT</b></p> <p>Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, updated the Board on the significant developments that had arisen since the last Board meeting.</p> <p>In particular, the Board’s attention was drawn to the response submitted jointly by BCH, Blackpool Council and Blackpool Housing Company to the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities’ “Decent Homes Standard” consultation. That response had had to be submitted by the deadline of 14 October and the Board was therefore asked to endorse the response or, if not, Mr Donnellon would withdraw it.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the update.</li> <li>2. To endorse the response to the government consultation on the introduction of a decent homes standard for the private rented sector.</li> </ol>	
10.	<p><b>DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES’ REPORT</b></p> <p>Mr S Dunstan, Director of Resources, presented the highlights of his report to the Board.</p> <p>Board members were pleased to note that an experienced IOSH (Institution of Occupational Safety and Health) qualified Health and Safety Advisor had been appointed and was due to start in post at the beginning of November. In further good news, BCH had been successful in the Best Employer Wellbeing Approach at the recent Active Blackpool awards which reflected the work undertaken on mental and physical wellbeing following similar recognition at the Northern Housing Awards.</p> <p>Quarter 2 Rent Collection figures were circulated at the meeting. It was noted that the current rent arrears total was higher than the equivalent Q2 figures from 2021/22 however Board members were assured that that had been due to the October period ending before the first direct debit payments had been received and therefore were assured there was nothing to be concerned about.</p>	

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11.	<p>In relation to a question from Ms M Gilkes, Independent Non-Executive Director regarding stock condition liability, Mr Dunstan explained that the Business Plan reflected the work the company had undertaken on stock and he agreed to share further details on his return to the office. Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, suggested that the 30 year Business Plan could be looked at in more detail at December's Board meeting.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b> To note the update.</p> <p><b>DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS' REPORT</b></p> <p>Mrs M Cornall, Director of Operations, provided an update on the significant developments since the last Board meeting.</p> <p>Discussions were ongoing in regards to the need for a community centre at Hawes Side which Mrs Cornall had been involved in and she advised that the next steps would involve a consultation with the local community.</p> <p>The research project with Brighton University into support for young people who had left the care system was continuing. Work had recently been done with the Care Leavers Service and William Lyons House with the next research area focusing on working with the Council to target young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).</p> <p>More information was required as to the costs involved in setting up the proposed Equipment Hub. Once those details had been confirmed Mrs Cornall intended to draw up a Business Plan which would be presented to a future meeting for the Board's consideration.</p> <p>Mrs Cornall had been engaged as a champion for the Blackpool Health Inequality Catalyst. Together with Lancaster University the previous Ethically Powered Data Centre Innovation Catalyst had looked at how Blackpool could become a centre for the installation of a network of data centres powered by renewable energy whereby waste heat generated by the data centres could be utilised. Wider implications around deprivation were to be explored and the new catalyst would focus on health inequalities in Blackpool.</p> <p>The new Mereside Library and Launderette facility had been well received with the library reporting a significant uptake of its service. The old library building was in the process of being emptied before it would be handed back to BCH to be reinstated as residential accommodation. It was anticipated that this work would be undertaken in partnership with Blackpool and the Fylde College to provide work experience opportunities for students within the construction</p>	<p><b>SD</b></p> <p><b>JD</b></p>

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12.	<p>department of the College.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b> To note the update.</p> <p><b>GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>Mr M Towers, Company Secretary, reminded the Board of its approval of the new Governance Framework at its meeting on 4 May 2022 and reported that the Shareholder Committee had since approved a suite of additional documents to run alongside the Framework which were being introduced across all of the Council’s companies in order to ensure a consistency of approach. Mr Towers drew the Board’s attention to the Senior Management Disciplinary and Grievance Roles and Responsibilities, noting that this had previously been adopted by two of the Council’s companies and provided clarity on roles and processes in the event of any disciplinary or grievance matters for senior managers.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b> To adopt the following documents as presented and to add them to the company’s Governance Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Executive Director Agreement</li> <li>• Conflicts of Interests and Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality Policy</li> <li>• Board Member Disputes</li> <li>• Senior Management Disciplinary and Grievance Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>• Role descriptions</li> </ul>	
13.	<p><b>MEMBER RELATIONS</b></p> <p>Board members considered any items that the company wished to raise with Blackpool Council in its role as member when it next attended a meeting of the Shareholder Committee on 25 November 2022.</p> <p>Mr M Towers, Company Secretary, advised Board members that in accordance with the new Governance Framework an Annual Report of the Audit Committee was to be drafted by Mr Szatkowski, Audit Committee Chair. That report would be circulated to Board members for their consideration and approval by way of Written Resolution prior to Mr Szatkowski attending the Shareholder Committee meeting to present his report to the Council.</p> <p>Mr J Donnellon, Chief Executive, added that the Strategic Risk Register would also be presented in addition to his standard performance and financial reports which would be shared with Board members in advance of the meeting.</p>	AS / Co. Sec.

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14.	<p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Strategic Risk Register would be presented to the Shareholder Committee alongside performance and financial reports at its next meeting on 25 November 2022.</li> <li>2. That Mr A Szatkowski produces a draft Annual Audit Report to be circulated to Board members for approval by way of Written Resolution prior to it being presented to the Shareholder Committee.</li> </ol> <p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
15.	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7 DECEMBER 2022</b></p> <p>The Board noted the date of the next meeting as 7 December 2022.</p> <p>Mrs S Chadwick, Assistant Company Secretary, agreed to circulate proposed meeting dates for 2023 to Board members for their consideration prior to formal approval at the December Board meeting.</p>	<b>Co. Sec.</b>
16.	<p><b>CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2022</b></p> <p><b>The Board agreed:</b></p> <p>To approve the confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 July 2022 as a true and correct record.</p>	

The meeting ended at 7.37pm

**Signed by the Chair**

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**Councillor Neal Brookes**