

Northwards Housing – Resource & Governance Sub-Committee Meeting

Hexagon Tower
Wednesday 29th March at 5.30pm

Chair: Martin McKeivitt

Present: Martin McKeivitt (MM) Board Member
Ade Alao (AA) Board Member
Eric Hobin (EH) Board Member
Richard Lockwood (RCL) Board Member

Robin Lawler (RL) Chief Executive
Barry Preedy (BP) Interim Director of Business Support

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions Quorate Confirmed	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies given by: Harvey Norton (HN) Fionnuala Stringer (FS) In the absence of Harvey Norton, Martin McKeivitt was elected to take the Chair for the meeting.	
3	Minutes of Last Meeting These were agreed as a correct record.	
4 & 5	Revised Terms of Reference & Additional Responsibilities The revised Terms of Reference, having been approved by the Board on 14th March 2006, were noted, including the additional responsibility on all Sub-Committees for promoting Equality & Diversity.	
6	Equality & Diversity Issues None identified.	

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7	<p>Value for Money</p> <p>a) The Audit Commission's standards for VFM (KLOE 32) were considered, and comparisons made between the current position for NH and the 'Excellent' standard. Some particular issues noted were:</p> <p><u>Cost comparisons</u> – MCC had previously identified costs and compared to Met Councils. NH will use the 2006/7 Budget to identify service costs and is working with HouseMark to compare with other ALMOs. That exercise should be completed by mid-May, so that NH will be able to identify services where costs appear high to commence further research. It was also stressed that cost is not the only criteria, and it is important to review service quality as well. This approach was agreed</p> <p><u>Priorities and Resources</u> – it was confirmed that NH should ensure that resources are allocated to services with a high priority. This will be considered as part of the Business plan process (see below), and will need to include customers and partners in setting those priorities. This approach was agreed</p> <p><u>Procurement</u> – the procurement methods for building works (repairs and capital works) are good, based on the Framework contracts being procured in partnership with MCC. Procurement for non-building works is based on an SLA with MCC; this service needs further development and a Strategy is being developed to be presented to this Committee (in May?). This approach was agreed.</p> <p><u>Involvement</u> – it was agreed that it is important that the whole organisation (including the Board) is aware of good practice for vfm, and follows those principles in all of our activities. Plans are being developed for familiarisation and training for Board members, managers and staff; this was agreed.</p> <p>b) Self Assessment for KLOE 32 prior to the inspection – the draft was noted, and a copy of the final draft will be circulated to the Sub-Committee. It was agreed that the issues mentioned in a) requiring further development were to be included as Areas for Improvement.</p>	
8	<p>Budget Monitoring Framework</p> <p>The proposed layout and content of budget reports was agreed. It was noted that the reports can be tailored to meet different</p>	

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8 (cont)	<p>requirements with the Board receiving summary information (quarterly?) and the Committee receiving monthly reports.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Committee would receive commentaries about the budget position each month, highlighting specific issues that need consideration/action. It was also agreed that the budget monitoring reports would be colour coded to further highlight the exceptions. In this way the Committee can concentrate on key issues.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Board: That the Board approve this framework.</p>	
9	<p>Business Plan - Introduction</p> <p>The process for business planning for 2006/7 was considered in some detail. It was noted that this would be incomplete in terms of consultation and setting priorities. It was agreed that the initial analysis of key points undertaken by EMT would be presented to the Board and Area panels in April, in order that their comments can be incorporated into the Plan.</p>	
10	<p>Appointment of Auditors</p> <p>The report was considered by the Sub-Committee, who made a number of recommendations to the Board.</p> <p>Recommendations to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenders to be sought for both external and internal auditors • The Council's Internal Audit service to be invited to tender for the internal audit contract • The eight companies listed in the report to be invited to tender for both contracts. • The contracts for internal and external auditors not to be awarded to the same firm. • The Board gives delegated authority to the Sub-Committee to agree the procurement arrangements and to make appointments for both contracts. 	
11	<p>Governance Health Check</p> <p>The Sub-Committee considered the health check analysis in detail, and agreed the proposed actions required to achieve compliance with good governance standards. These are currently being implemented and will be completed by the end of April.</p>	

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12	<p>Establishment of Standards Panel</p> <p>This report was agreed for recommendation to the Board. The Panel will be established with three members of the Board. The proposed Terms of Reference and the amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association were recommended for approval by the Board.</p> <p>Recommendation to the Board: That the Board approve the establishment of a Standards Panel.</p>	
13	<p>Inspection Update</p> <p>RL updated the Sub-Committee on the nomination of the Inspectors and the timetable for the Inspection. This was noted.</p>	
14	<p>Training Requirements</p> <p>No immediate training identified.</p>	
15	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>	
16	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>Tuesday 25th April - 5.30 pm at Hexagon Tower.</p>	