

# Northwards Housing - ALMO Board Meeting

## Hexagon Tower

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April at 6:30pm

Chair: Ade Alao

**Present:**

Ade Alao (AA)	Board Member
Richard Lockwood (RCL)	Board Member
Sue Ratchford (SR)	Board Member
Joan FitzGerald (JF)	Board Member
Anna Trotman (AT)	Board Member
June Hitchen (JH)	Board Member
Harvey Norton (HN)	Board Member

**In Attendance:**

Ian Wilson	Audit Commission (Part)
Robin Lawler (RL)	Chief Executive
Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
Larry Patrick (LP)	Director of Property Services
Steve Wood (SW)	Director of Business Services
Greig Lees (GL)	Investment Strategy Manager
Steve Finegan (SF)	Business Support Services Manager
Deborah McLaughlin (DMcL)	Senior Assistant Director of Housing Services (MCC)
Yvette Newton	Business Support Officer (Minutes)

**Observers:**

Diane Roberts	Governance Support Officer Designate
Pat Scappaticci	Principal Warden/Caretaking Services Manager (Part)
Danny Whitelock	Surveying Services Manager (Part)
Lisa McBurnie	Head of Human Resources (Part)
Paul Maidment	Asset/Procurement Manager (Part)
Alan Lawrenson	CDM Team Manager (Part)
Olivia Stokes	Equality and Diversity Manager (Part)
Alison Foster	Head of Finance (Part)
Anne Duffield	Principal Local Services Manager (Part)
Nicola Jones	Principal Local Services Manager (Part)
Emma Foster	Principal Local Services Manager (Part)
Maureen Bowes	Accountancy Assistant

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>  Quorum confirmed.	

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2	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Apologies given by:  Martin McKeivitt  Fionnuala Stringer  Michelle Blakeley  Eric Hobin</p>	
3	<p><b>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters</b></p> <p>RL brought the confidential minute from the last meeting to the Board's attention (Item 8b)</p>	
4	<p><b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> March were approved as a true record.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	
5	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>6a</b> – RL confirmed a report on the review of the Void process will be going to the next Performance &amp; Quality Sub-Committee.</p> <p><b>8b</b> – Confidential Matter; this is ongoing. (See confidential minute 14<sup>th</sup> March 06)</p> <p><b>9</b> – LP confirmed a report on the year on year break down of the overall Capital Programme will be taken to the Procurement &amp; Property Sub-Committee and the problems with the size of the text in the spreadsheets will be dealt with.</p>	<p><b>MS</b></p> <p><b>RL</b></p> <p><b>LP</b></p>
7	<p>a) <u>Ian Wilson – Audit Commission Presentation</u></p> <p>This item was dealt with at the start of the meeting. Board Members and various senior managers received a presentation from Ian Wilson from the Audit Commission on the Inspection process and how it will affect Northwards Housing. A copy of the presentation will be emailed to all Board Members.</p>	<p><b>GL</b></p>
6	<p><b>Involvement of Tenants</b></p> <p>a) <u>Minutes from Area Panel Meetings</u>  Wilton Area Panel</p>	

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	<p>There were no issues with the minutes of the meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> February and the minutes were noted.</p> <p>AT asked that when Area Panels start to make recommendations to the Board how will they be presented? AA advised it would be through the minutes of the meetings and recommendations would be highlighted in bold and made clear as the Sub-Committee recommendations are.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p> <p>Fourways Area Panel The Board noted the minutes from the meeting held 1<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p> <p>Riverways Area Panel The Board noted the minutes from the meeting held 1<sup>st</sup> March.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>b) <u>Tenant Compact Update</u></b></p> <p>MS informed the meeting that the Board is being asked to note this report which has been produced by PEP. He explained that page 10 and 11 of the report is a draft outline of what the Tenant Compact will look like. A draft of the Compact will be brought to the Board Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May after it has been to the Area Panels and the Performance and Quality Sub-Committee for consultation.</p> <p>JH asked that the section on page 10, which refers to SHOUT TMO, be amended to refer to all TMOs. MS confirmed that the section on SHOUT needs to remain, but a separate section on support for all future TMO's will be added.</p> <p>AA asked why it was called a Tenant Compact and did it include Leaseholders? MS confirmed that there is reference to Leaseholders within the report, but Northwards are looking at setting up a separate Leaseholders Forum.</p> <p>HN asked when the Tenant Compact would be rolled out. MS confirmed that, if the Compact was approved at the Board Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May, it would then be rolled out as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>The Board agreed the approach being taken.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GL</b></p>

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7	<p><b>Preparing for Inspection</b></p> <p>b) <u>Inspection Update</u></p> <p>RL explained his report updating the Board on the Inspection. The Board noted the report and also agreed that the Chair (AA), Vice Chair (RCL) and EMT represent Northwards at the Pre-Inspection Briefing with the Audit Commission on 7<sup>th</sup> June.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>	
8	<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>a) <u>Sub-Committee Minutes &amp; Recommendations</u></p> <p>8.1 <u>HR and Equality Sub Committee – 29<sup>th</sup> March 06</u></p> <p>The Board agreed the minutes of the HR and Equality Sub Committee with the following amendments to be made to the minutes; page 4 HL and JE should read HD and JE and page 2 of appendix 2 the website address is incorrect and this needs to be amended.</p> <p>Recommendations being made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Endorse the HR Policies &amp; Procedures as delegated by the Board to the Sub-Committee to approve;</li> <li>2) Equality &amp; Diversity Update <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) that the Board should target recruiting a woman or an Asian person to fill the Independent vacancy; if they have appropriate skills;</li> <li>ii) that a confidential Diversity monitoring form be completed by all Board Members;</li> <li>iii) that the Board considers the Comprehensive Equality Policy;</li> <li>iv) that the Board nominates one of its Members to become Equality &amp; Diversity Champion; - GL to check if any Board Member is identified from the skills audit.</li> <li>v) that the Board notes that Robin Lawler will be the Officer Champion for Equality &amp; Diversity;</li> <li>vi) that the Board approve the amended Board &amp; Sub-Committee report template which identifies “diversity streams”;</li> <li>vii) that the Board receives the draft Equality &amp; Diversity Action Plan in May 2006.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3) The Board is to receive a report (Item8c) recommending core competencies which are required by all Board Members &amp; setting out the programme for Board Member appraisals which is to be facilitated by Enlighten.</li> </ol> <p>HN asked if Company Policy and Procedures are to be</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ALL</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GL</b></p>

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	<p>standardised as he felt the Equality and Diversity Policy contained background information that wasn't necessary needed in the policy. RL noted HN's comment and stated that the format of policies would be something that would be considered.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p>RL</p>
<p><b>8.2</b></p>	<p><u>Resource and Governance Sub-Committee – 29<sup>th</sup> March 06</u>  The Board agreed the Sub-Committee minutes and the recommendations being made to the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Budget Monitoring Framework.</li> <li>2) The recommendations with regard to the Appointment of Internal and External Auditors.</li> <li>3) The establishment of a Standards Panel.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p>SW</p>
<p><b>8.3</b></p>	<p><u>Performance &amp; Quality Services Sub-Committee – 31<sup>st</sup> March 06</u>  The Board agreed the minutes and the recommendations from the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The change of terms of reference to all Sub-Committees responsibility relating to Equality and Diversity.</li> <li>2) That Complaints and Praise Monitoring be added to this Sub Committees terms of reference.</li> <li>3) The Board approve the amended version of the Charter Mark report – The report is Board agenda item 14.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p>GL MS</p>
<p><b>8.4</b></p>	<p><u>Procurement &amp; Property Sub-Committee – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 06</u>  The Board agreed the minutes and the recommendations from the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That Local Economic Advantage be added to the Sub Committees Terms of Reference – The Board asked that this be extended and that “Local Economic and Social Advantage” be added to the Terms of Reference.</li> <li>2) That the monthly report on Current Capital Programme Schemes will be presented to the Board quarterly.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p>GL LP</p>
	<p><b>b)</b> <u>Independent Vacancy</u></p> <p>RL gave a verbal update on the current Independent Vacancy on the Board. Steve Rumbelow, Director Manchester Housing Services will forward through contact details for any potential candidates.</p>	<p>RL</p>



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	<p>DMcL gave a short presentation to the meeting on the CPA process and Northwards' possible involvement with this. A copy of the presentation will be e-mailed to all Board Members.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GL</b></p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>Business Plan</b></p> <p>SW informed the meeting that he is currently in the process of preparing the Business Plan for the next Board Meeting in May. Barry Preedy prepared this report on SWOT and PEST analysis. The report is also going to the Area Panels for consultation, as requested by the Board.</p> <p>AA suggested that, as a Special Board Meeting was to be arranged at the start of May with only one item on the agenda, that this item be deferred to that meeting to give people more time to look at it. The Board agreed to this proposal.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Deferred</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SW</b></p>
<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>Board Accessibility</b></p> <p>SF went through the report explaining that the initiative "Ask the Board a Question" which would increase the profile of the Board. Various ALMO websites had been looked at and at present there is not another ALMO that has any similar scheme. Manchester City Council do have a similar initiative for questions to be put to Lead Councillors.</p> <p>SF went on to explain the way it would work. Questions would come in via the website and responses would be dealt with by senior officers and approved by the Chair of the relevant Sub-Committees. Section 3.5 of the report sets out issues that would not be answered publicly.</p> <p>JH was concerned about confidential matters and vexatious questions and felt that it should be looked at in more detail.</p> <p>HN asked which officer would run the initiative. SF felt that it would fall under the Governance Support Officer's role.</p> <p>The Board approved the on line question and answer facility, subject to arrangements being made for handling personal or inappropriate questions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SF</b></p>

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14	<p><b>Charter Mark</b></p> <p>MS went through the report and the Board agreed to the recommendations and gave approval in principle to Northwards Housing making an application for Charter Mark. A further detailed report on the process of applying, resource implications, and timetable will be brought to the Board in October 2006.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MS</b></p>
15	<p><b>NFA Update</b></p> <p>RL informed the Board that the update was for information. He also advised the Board that there were two vacancies on the NFA Board and the Board agreed to delegate the voting for the vacancies to AA (Chair) and RL (Chief Executive)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Noted</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>AA/RL</b></p>
16	<p><b>A.O.B.</b></p> <p>a) RCL circulated an article from Inside Housing on Northwards Housing Board Members' information.</p> <p>b) JH asked that a thank you be cascaded to all staff at Northwards Housing for all the hard work that has been done so far.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RL</b></p>
17	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Board Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on <b>Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May at 6:30pm.</b> The venue for the meeting is Cheetham Hill Road Local Services Office.</p> <p>In addition to this a Special Meeting of the Board will need to be convened on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May.</p>	