

**Northwards Housing - ALMO Board Meeting
Hexagon Tower**

Thursday 12th October 2006 at 6:30pm

Chair: Ade Alao

Present	Ade Alao (AA)	Board Member
	Richard Lockwood (RCL)	Board Member
	Sue Ratchford (SR)	Board Member
	Anna Trotman (AT)	Board Member
	Michelle Blakeley (MB)	Board Member
	Eric Hobin (EH)	Board Member
	June Hitchen (JH)	Board Member
	Martin McKeivitt (MM)	Board Member

In Attendance	Robin Lawler (RL)	Chief Executive
	Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
	Steve Wood (SW)	Director of Business Services
	Larry Patrick (LP)	Director of Property Services
	Diane Roberts (DR)	Governance Support Officer (Minutes)

Observers	Karen Galston	
	Jean Galston	
	Damien O'Connor	
	James Guise	
	Dave Hallows	
	Kevin Morrison	Acting PLSM Monsall Street

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions RL temporarily took the Chair until election of Chair was completed. Quorum confirmed.	
2	Governance	
a	Election of Chair SW advised that, as Company Secretary, he had received only 1 name for nomination to the office of Chair. Ade Alao accepted his nomination. The Board elected AA unopposed.	
b	Election of Vice Chair SW advised that, as Company Secretary, he had received only 1 name for nomination to the office of Vice Chair. Richard Lockwood accepted his nomination. The Board elected RCL unopposed.	

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3	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies given by: Joan FitzGerald, Fatima Adamjee, Harvey Norton, Fionnuala Stringer, Deborah McLaughlin. Further apologies were received from Bernard Caine (Observer)</p>	
4	<p>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Equality & Diversity Matters Arising There were no declarations of interest. Items 5b,7f and 8 are confidential. It was agreed to take these matters at the end of the meeting as Observers were present. All Equality and Diversity matters would be covered under relevant items.</p>	
5 a b	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 12th September and subsequently confidential minutes of the same date were approved as a true record.</p>	Approved
6	<p>Matters Arising Item 5 Point 6 Minutes of Fourways and Wilton Panels are reflected in these meeting papers. 6a A report of number of units has been presented to Procurement & Property Sub-Committee. 6c Procurement & Property Sub-Committee received a report on additional resources from the energy partner at 27th September meeting. 10b Money Laundering Policy is Agenda item 12 e 10d Fraud Policy is Agenda item 12d 11e Amendments to the Whistle Blowing Policy have been made. Item 6 6a MS has reported the outcome of Wilton Area Panel Board referrals to the other Area Panels. The Garden Competition awards ceremony is planned for February. When awards are announced Northwards will recognise winners in the Northwards area and publicise in local media and on the website. Item 9 9b</p>	

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	<p>SW has revised the Internal Audit Strategic and Annual Plan to include the recommendation.</p> <p>Item 11 11a Performance & Quality Sub-Committee is monitoring progress of the Resident Involvement and Access and Customer Care Action Plans. This has been incorporated into the Sub-Committee's work plan.</p> <p>Item 12 12b Area Panels will be informed of the Board's decision to confirm the existing relet works policy, through the next set of minutes. A review of the relet works policy will take place during the budget setting process for 2007/08.</p> <p>12c PD and LP will refer requests to Procurement and Property Sub-Committee as appropriate.</p> <p>12d PD and LP have potentially identified funding for the surveys from the Council.</p> <p>Item 13 13a Performance & Quality Services Sub-Committee reviewed the Performance Management Quarterly Report and Trend Information at the meeting 22 September.</p> <p>Item 14 14a MS has discussed Street Environment issues with EH</p>	
7	<p>Involvement of Residents</p> <p>Minutes of Area Panel Meetings</p>	
<p>a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>Wilton: 29 August 2006 The minutes were noted</p> <p>Wilton: 26 September 2006 RCL requested that his initials are standardised for all minutes. AT enquired why Printon Avenue had not been included in the Environmental Works Schedule. MS clarified that 3 of the 6 schemes recommended can be delivered, 2 of the 6 can be delivered next year and 1 cannot be delivered because of land ownership. Area Panels will review schemes. The minutes were noted</p> <p>Fourways 30 August 2006 The minutes were noted.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>DR</p> <p>MS</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
d	<p>Fourways 27 September 2006 AA noted that Pauline Fenton is a new member of the Area Panel. The minutes were noted.</p>	

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		Noted
e	Riverways 6 September 2006 The minutes were noted.	Noted
f	Riverways 6 September 2006 (Confidential) See Confidential minutes The minutes were subsequently noted.	Noted
8	Inspection Feedback (Confidential) See Confidential minutes.	
9	Human Resources & Equality	
a	Sub-Committee Minutes 26 September Minutes were noted. AA noted that all staff have now successfully completed the Diversity Workbook. RL reported that new starters would go through the same process on a periodic basis. RL reported that the Equality & Diversity Officer has given a verbal acceptance of the job offer. Human Resources and Equality Sub-Committee would be updated.	RL
b	Absence Reporting RL reported that Human Resources and Equality Sub-Committee will continue to monitor sickness levels on behalf of the Board. EH raised concerns that Hexagon Tower atmosphere may cause infections to spread widely between staff. JH asked if front-line staff were offered 'flu injections. RL confirmed this facility was available. The Board noted the rationale of absence management including the reporting process, the relationship between the Human Resource Team and Line Managers in order to achieve the organisational health indicator absence target of 10 days.	
c	Achieving Equality Standard Level 1 RL reported that an external audit had been carried out free of charge by Leeds City Council. Level 2 portfolio is now being produced for audit in December. Human Resources and Equality Sub-Committee will be kept informed of progress. RCL asked that abbreviations contained in the report are explained: LG&B Lesbian, Gay and Bi-Sexual EIA Equality Impact Assessment BME Black Minority and Ethnic CEP Corporate Equality Plan DDA Disability Discrimination Act MB asked why sexuality was not included, RL reported this is not required in the current standard. AT asked why age was not included, RL reported this would be discussed at the next Human	

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	Resources and Equality Sub-Committee. The Board noted the feedback on Level 1 and additional actions required in order to meet Level 2 of the Equality Standard. <p style="text-align: right;">Noted</p>	RL
10	Performance & Quality Services	
a	Sub-Committee Minutes 26 September Minutes were noted. <p style="text-align: right;">Noted</p>	
b	Communications Strategy MS explained amendments made by Performance and Quality Services Sub-Committee. Reports have been made to Area Panels and Task Groups. RL noted that good progress had been made by LM (Lou Mitchell, Communications Officer). The term “stakeholder” had been replaced with “audience” for consistency, less jargon and to include both internal and external audiences. The Board approved the Communications Strategy <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
c	Chartermark This report follows a report submitted to Board in April. AA enquired if the timescale was realistic. MS reported that it is challenging, but that some work has already been completed through the Inspection process. Officers are familiar with the methodology and evidence gathering. The Board noted the contents of the report and approved that a Chartermark application be made on the basis of the timetable set out in the report. <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
11	Procurement & Property	
a	Sub-Committee Minutes 27 September Date of minutes to be corrected to 27 th September. Minutes were noted. <p style="text-align: right;">Noted</p>	
b	Environmental Programme LP presented the report. He described the lessons learnt by Officers and Area Panels. LP described the potential added value of involving other agencies such as Groundwork. LP would seek additional schemes through the Area Panels which can be accommodated in this year’s budget. Procurement and Property Sub-Committee would review future schemes and report back to Board. RCL requested the removal of the last 5 words of page 11, paragraph 1. 1. The Board approved those schemes identified in appendix 1 for 06/07 commencement.	LP

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	<p>2. The Board agreed to return the proposals in Appendix 2 to the relevant Area Panel so to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Enable explanations for the delay on these works to be fully understood ii) Allow decisions on other achievable priority schemes in order to increase spend this financial year. iii) Allow discussions around these priority schemes. <p>Once these works have been agreed by the Area Panels and having undergone detailed planning and preparation they can then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) If achievable – be included in the programme for 06/07 b) Form the basis of the draft programme for 07/08. <p>3. A two year delivery plan is developed with each of the Local Area Panels for delivery in the 2006/07 programme and 2007/08 programme.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
c	<p>Update on JVCo LP gave a verbal report. The JVCo – Manchester Working went live on 1st September 2006. The transition was smooth for staff and for the service to tenants. There is an issue with the corporate signage to be resolved. Operatives vans are now being fitted as store centres to assist with the completion of jobs on the first visit. There are cashflow implications due to speedier payment of invoices which LP is discussing with the Council. Premises have now been secured. Head Quarters and Administration will be based at the old GUS building on Pinmill Brow. Operations will be based at Hendon Vale. It is anticipated these building will be completed January/February 2007. Shared use of building for Surveyors is being investigated, subject to cost. Twelve Apprentices have been appointed; four are from the Northwards area. The Board noted the report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Noted</p>	
12	Resource & Governance	
a.	<p>Sub-Committee Minutes 26 September AT reported that Voice Over Internet Protocol trials are underway at MCC. AA noted that savings need to be proved realistic. SW will report findings to Resource and Governance Sub-Committee</p>	SW

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	<p>in due course. Minutes were noted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Noted</p>	
b.	<p>Surpluses and Efficiencies Strategy SW reported that a clear audit trail, and recording of the difference which investments have made, are required. SW will update the report with clear levels of delegations in line with the standing orders. AT requested that “additional resources” be amended to “alternate resources”. JH asked if there are penalties for not achieving a 2.5% efficiency saving. SW reported that there are no penalties, but that Resource and Governance Sub-Committee would be informed if a budget holder could not make the identified saving. The Board approved the revisions to the Financial Regulations to incorporate the Surpluses and Efficiencies Strategy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SW SW</p>
c.	<p>Weekly Cost Targets SW reported that the revised targets have been set based on budgets and not on the previous basis of estimates. AT was concerned about some rises of 8% but was content the Resource and Governance Sub-Committee had approved the targets. RL reported this will be reviewed next year, will be a robust year on year process and will be benchmarked. Appropriate Sub-Committees will be updated in due course. The Board approved the revised weekly cost targets for incorporation into the Performance Management Framework.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
d.	<p>Fraud Policy Further to the Board requesting that this policy be checked for consistency with the Council. The policy has been amended so the Council notification level is now £1,000, rather than £5,000. The Board approved the amendment to the Fraud Policy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
e.	<p>Money Laundering Procedures At the Board’s request an additional section for the Fraud Policy to cover Money Laundering Procedures has been drafted. Staff training will be provided for staff involved in transactions. The Board approved the additional section to the Fraud Policy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SW</p>
f.	<p>Standards Panel Procedure The procedure has been developed to provide clarity, should it be necessary, to call the Standards Panel. The Board approved the revisions to the Standing Orders to incorporate the Standards Panel Procedures.</p>	

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	Approved	
13	<p>Relations with Council RL reported that Fionnuala Stringer had reluctantly decided to resign from the Board for personal reasons. Rachel Christie (RC) has been appointed by the Council Member as her successor from 1 November. RL and DMcL will arrange an induction for RC. FA and RC will have some joint induction sessions. AT and AA asked that a letter of thanks from the Board be sent to FS.</p>	<p>RL RL</p>
14	<p>Any Other Business (Items should be brought to the attention of the chair person prior to the meeting) DR notified the Board of training planned in November. Board members were asked to confirm their attendance by email.</p>	BOARD
15	<p>Date Of Next Meeting Thursday 14th November 2006, 6.30 at Hexagon Tower, Boardroom preceded by Company Director Training 4.00p.m. to 6.00 pm.</p>	
	<p>End Of Meeting The meeting ended at 8.40 pm.</p>	