

**Northwards Housing - ALMO Board Meeting
Holiday Inn, Oldham Road**

Saturday 10 July 2010 at 9:30am

Chair: Sue Ratchford

Present	Sue Ratchford (SR) Rachel Christie (RC) Naeem Ul Hassan (NH) Fatima Adamjee (FA) Michelle Blakeley (MBI) David Leah (DL) Marjan Bazargan (MB)	Board Member (Chair) Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member
In Attendance	Robin Lawler (RL) Mike Stevens (MS) Larry Patrick (LP) Stephen Brown (SB) Alison Foster (AF) Diane Roberts (DR)	Chief Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services Director of Property Services Director of Business Services Head of Finance Governance Support Manager (Minutes)
Observer	The following Sub-Committee Co-optees attended by invitation from the Chair: Joan FitzGerald, Pat Glazebrook, Guy Johnson	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions Confirm Quorum Quorum Confirmed	
2	Apologies for Absence Apologies were given by Anna Trotman, Hilary Vaughan, Michelle Carmichael and Martin McKeivitt. Luke Barnett and Karen Blakeley Sub-Committee Co-optees also gave their apologies.	
3	Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Requests to un-star information items/ Equality & Diversity Matters Arising Items 4b, 12b, 12d were confidential. Agenda items for information marked by * can be released for discussion by request of Board Members of Officers. There were no requests to unstar information items. All Equality and Diversity matters would be covered under relevant items.	
4	Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2010 and subsequently the confidential minutes of the same date were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair. The Board noted the Board Performance Indicators. <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
5	Matters Arising 6c Tenants Network Group SR reported that the group were not due to meet again until late July and	SR

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	<p>that she hoped to attend</p> <p>7e Quarter 4 Performance Report SB will report at the next meeting.</p> <p>8a Next Steps in HRA Reform RL is awaiting receipt of the PWC report</p> <p>9a Board Performance Board Agenda item 8c</p> <p>9c Board Residential Complete</p> <p>9d Rule Changes Work is in progress and a further report will be presented to Board in September.</p> <p>9e TSA Regulatory Framework RL will present an update at the Board Away Day following the Board Meeting.</p> <p>9f Council Board Member Awaiting Council response.</p> <p>15 NFA Annual Conference DL reported that he has been asked to Chair a New Build session at this conference as a Northwards representative.</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>RL</p> <p>SB/DR</p>
6	Chair's Items	
<p>a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p>	<p>NorthFest – 11 September SR reported that this event would be held at Bignor Street Recreation Ground. This event has been popular and encouraged Board Members to attend. Further details will be sent to Board Members.</p> <p>Staff Conference – 23 September RL reported that EMT had reconsidered this event in light of budget constraints. The Annual Staff Awards will be combined with the New Year Party. EMT want to value and recognise staff and the New Year Party is a small investment per employee to achieve this.</p> <p>TSA Board Tour – 30 June RL reported that the feedback from tour had been very positive. Anthony Mayer (Chair of TSA Board) had sent a hand-written letter thanking Northwards. RL commented that it will help to build good relations with the TSA.</p>	<p>DR</p>
7	Strategic and Performance	
<p>a</p>	<p>Northwards Annual Report 2010 SB reported that this is the first report under TSA rules. RL highlighted that the report is for tenants and that the process and timetable had been included in the report. SB explained that more consultation with residents had been included in the process. MBI said that she and SR were part of the consultation group, that some good ideas had been put forward and it was a productive group. RL asked that Board Members completed the questionnaire to share their views about the content of the report.</p>	

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	<p>The Board approved the suggested timetable for production, content and agreed that the final document should be signed off by the Chair and Chief Executive during the final week of design and production.</p>	
8	<p>Governance</p>	
a	<p>Tenants Conference / AGM – Thursday 14 October DR updated the Board that this is a combined event and the Sheridan Suite has been provisionally booked. DR will update the Board when arrangements are confirmed.</p>	DR
b	<p>Board Membership and Recruitment Tenant Board Members DR reported that 34 expressions of interest had been received following an advertisement in Northwards Natter. 14 people had expressed a desire to find out more. Two events and some one to one sessions had been held to explain more about being a Board Member. 7 people have attended these sessions. The next step in the process is candidates attendance as observers at the Board Meeting on 10 August. Area Panel Members have also been invited to this meeting following consultation on Tenant Board Member recruitment last year where Area Panel Members requested that they meet candidates before the ballot process begins. SR requested that as many Board Members as possible attend August Board Meeting in order to meet with the candidates.</p> <p>Independent Board Members DR reported that there may be vacancies for Independent Board Members. Once this is clear, recruitment process will be considered by RL and SR.</p>	
c	<p>Sub-Committee Membership DR presented the report. Following consultation with Sub-Committee Members, DL had agreed to transfer to Customer & Communities Sub-Committee from Asset Management Sub-Committee. However, accompanied by Mark Hackett's leave of absence this has created a similar, though less acute problem for Asset Management Sub-Committee. Once the Council Board Member vacancy is filled this may help to alleviate this problem. RC volunteered to remind Paul Beardmore about the urgency of the Council vacancy. Hilary Vaughan had volunteered to attend Audit Sub-Committee in addition to Resources Sub-Committee. Michelle Carmichael had been appointed as Chair of Asset Management Sub-Committee. Sue Ratchford had been appointed as Chair of Customers and Communities Sub-Committee. The Board were asked to ratify the above appointments.</p> <p>The Board approved the recommendations for a) Sub-Committee Membership b) Sub-Committee Chairs</p>	RC

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9	Audit Commission Inspection	
a	<p>Re-inspection Action Plan SB presented the report. He highlighted three items: REIS 18 – “Review effectiveness of Corporate Debt Policy in partnership with MCC”. This has been problematic and not in our control although work was on-going. RE13c – “Introduce and report on targets for achieving access to bank accounts” - AF updated the Board that a temporary Financial Inclusion Officer was being recruited and would be working on progressing this issue. REIS13 “Explore and integrate overdue gas safety checks within repairs system”. LP reported that there had been some delays with data cleansing, but this was now complete and testing is underway prior to going live.</p> <p>The Board noted progress to date and agreed that a more detailed report is presented to the next Board meeting on the outstanding actions.</p>	SB
10	Involvement Of Residents	
a-e	The Board noted the Area Panel Minutes.	
11	Customers & Communities	
a-b	<p>Sub-Committee Minutes Minutes were noted.</p>	MS
c	<p>CSE Accreditation MS reported that the final report was awaited. However, the results were available. Northwards had achieved the standard and had been described as an “outstanding organisation”. The assessor commented on the high calibre of staff, organisational culture and commitment to customer service. Randomly selected interviews with tenants had been positive. There was one area of Partial Compliance – void performance and relets - although it had been noted that this area had improved. It was noted that areas highlighted in last year’s report; customer journey mapping and performance information had been addressed. There were a number of areas that were considered Compliance Plus; quality of information, partnerships, neighbourhood wardens, landlord services, complaints handbook and mobile estate cleaning team. MS will circulate the report to the Board when it is finalised. RL reported that the assessor had also visited the Call Centre. MS said that the assessor had thought this service had improved and the One 2 One Service was innovative. There had also been visits to Whitebeck Court and the bungalow sites. The assessor had requested that she visit these sites again during next year’s assessment.</p> <p>The Board noted the update</p>	
12	Asset Management	
a	<p>Sub-Committee Minutes Minutes were noted</p>	

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b	<p>Sub-Committee Minutes (Confidential) See confidential minutes</p>	
c	<p>IMPACT/GM Procure Update LP reported that MCC approval was awaited. A proforma needs to be completed to demonstrate why this procurement arrangement had been chosen. Value for Money had been demonstrated. For example, kitchen prices were 13.26% less than current rates. RL explained that the new organisation was progressing and that MCC will be the partner. However, they will be asked to delegate the consortium Board Member seat to Northwards. The Council are aware that MWL interest is protected through Procure Plus and they have supported the next agenda item (12d).</p>	
d	<p>Extension of Northwards Housing's Repair and Servicing Contracts with Manchester Working Limited (Confidential) See confidential minutes</p>	
13	<p>Audit</p>	
	<p>No meeting since last Board meeting.</p>	
14	<p>Resources</p>	
	<p>No meeting in May.</p>	
15	<p>Relations with the Council</p>	
	<p>Reform of the Council House Finance and Self Financing RL presented the report. Following the Board Strategy meeting in June, a copy of the report to the Council's Executive on 30 June had been appended to the report. RL summarised the key issues including; debt settlement, treatment of PFI grant and disabled adaptations/communal areas to flats/new fire safety works. The consultation ended on 6 July and the new Government will consider responses. It is likely to summarise the responses and make proposals in the Autumn. If the reform is voluntary this is likely to be effective from 2011; if it is legislative it is likely to be April 2012.</p> <p>The Board noted the Council's response to the debt offer under the Review of Council Housing Finance and asked to be kept advised of further developments.</p>	
16	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
	<p>RL reported that July Board Meeting usually approves the accounts for the previous financial year. He reported that Northwards were still in discussion with MCC to finalise some details within the accounts. Resources Sub-Committee will consider the accounts on 26 July and this could form a special Board Meeting or they could be approved by electronic means. AF explained that the issue with the accounts is that balances are awaiting confirmation (what is owed to each other). The external auditors have completed their report subject to this final item.</p> <p>Board noted the position</p>	

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	Date of Next Meetings	
	Tuesday 10 August, Strategy Discussion, Hexagon Tower Board Room - Tenant Board Member candidates to meet Board and Observe a short meeting. SR again asked Board Members to be present and confirmed Area Panel Members would also be invited.	
	End of Meeting With thanks to everyone the Chair closed the meeting at 10.30am.	