

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

**Tuesday 10 November 2009 at 6:30pm**

**Chair: Sue Ratchford**

<b>Present</b>	Sue Ratchford (SR)	Board Member (Chair)
	Mark Hackett (MH)	Board Member
	Rachel Christie (RC)	Board Member
	Michelle Carmichael (MC)	Board Member
	Martin McKeivitt (MM)	Board Member
	David Leah (DL)	Board Member
	Naeem Ul Hassan (NH)	Board Member
	Marjan Bazargan (MB)	Board Member
	Fatima Adamjee (FA)	Board Member
	Pat Thorpe (PT)	Board Member
Michelle Blakeley (MBI)	Board Co-optee	
<b>In Attendance</b>	Robin Lawler (RL)	Chief Executive
	Mike Stevens (MS)	Director of Neighbourhood Services
	Larry Patrick (LP)	Director of Property Services
	Diane Roberts (DR)	Governance Support Manager (Minutes)

**Observers** Anne Heywood

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ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>RL took the Chair until the new Chair was elected by the Board. The meeting was confirmed as being quorate. RL welcomed Pat Thorpe new Tenant Board Member and Anne Heywood Observer to the meeting. Robin Lawler informed the Board that he was acting as interim Company Secretary until the new Director of Business Services is appointed.</p>	
2	<p><b>Election of Chair and Vice Chair</b></p> <p>RL asked if there had been any nominations other than SR and PS. DR confirmed that no other names had been notified for Chair and that a second nomination for Vice Chair had been declined. SR was unanimously elected by the Board as Chair. SR took the Chair. PS was unanimously elected by the Board as Vice Chair.</p>	
3	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Apologies were given by Anna Trotman and Paul Seymour. RL reported that Paul Beardmore was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior commitment. He will be invited to attend a future meeting.</p>	<b>RL</b>
4	<p><b>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Requests to un-star information items/ Equality &amp; Diversity Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Items 5b,11i,13b, and 13d, were confidential. Agenda items for information marked by * can be released for discussion by request of</p>	

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	<p>Board Members or Officers. There were no requests to unstar information items. All Equality and Diversity matters would be covered under relevant items.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p> <p><b>a</b></p> <p><b>b</b></p> <p><b>c</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2009 and subsequently the confidential minutes of the same date were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.</p> <p>The Board noted the minutes of Northwards AGM on 15 October 2009 which will be formally approved at 2010 AGM.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Approved</b></p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>Item 7b Board Membership and Recruitment</b> SR had informed candidates of the ballot result in confidence prior to the AGM.</p> <p><b>Item 7c TSA Response</b> MS reported that Area Panels are being consulted and Board agenda item 8d will report developments.</p> <p><b>Item 8a Quarter 1 Corporate Performance</b> RL reported that a voids performance meeting had taken place on 15 October prior to the AGM. Further issue-specific meetings would take place. Board Members were asked for their availability.</p> <p><b>Item 15 Relations with the Council</b> RL had circulated the MCC Scrutiny Report.</p> <p><b>Confidential Minutes</b> <b>Matters Arising</b> <b>Item 9 Future Options</b> Board Agenda item 8c.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Chair's Items</b></p>	
<p><b>a</b></p> <p><b>b</b></p> <p><b>c</b></p>	<p><b>Grace Choularton</b> SR announced the sad loss of Grace. She was a member of Fourways Panel and many tenant and community groups. SR, MS and RL paid tribute to Grace and agreed she would be sadly missed.</p> <p><b>Annual General Meeting</b> SR reported that 111 people had attended the meeting and the northAwards were again a popular feature. Feedback from the event had been good.</p> <p><b>Customer Experience</b> SR reported that this had been a successful consultation event with a wider range of tenants attending. The information gained will be used in reviewing the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan.</p> <p><b>Annual Report</b> The Board noted the report and copies were circulated.</p>	

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<p><b>d</b></p> <p><b>e</b></p> <p><b>f</b></p>	<p><b>Effective Meeting Training</b> SR asked Anne Heywood to feedback on the training. She reported that it had been well attended, delegates had learnt a lot and the feedback was excellent. SR thanked Anne for accessing grant through the Trafford Hall Grant Programme to fund the event.</p> <p><b>Board Appraisals</b> SR informed the Board that annual appraisals would commenced shortly. The questions are being reviewed to improve the language and the number of people required to provide feedback is being reduced. Changes to the system are being made in response to feedback from Board Members on last year's process.</p> <p><b>Shared Training</b> DR reported that through the Manchester Governance Officers network a proposal to invite Board Members to other organisations' training events had been made. This would provide better value for money and increase Board Member networking opportunities. DR circulated Parkway Green's training programme and asked that Board Members contact her if they were interested in attending any of the events. DR also asked the Board if they supported the idea of a one-day event for Board Members across RSL's in early summer. The Board agreed this was a good opportunity and that a Saturday event would be most convenient.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Strategic and Performance</b>	
<p><b>a</b></p> <p><b>b</b></p>	<p><b>Quarter 2 Corporate Performance</b> RL highlighted that annual indicators had been produced from the Customer Satisfaction Survey which was agenda item 12c. And referred to Board agenda item 8b on the performance of the new contact centre. MBI asked for more information about BV12 (Average Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence) specifically about the note regarding work place disputes. MS explained that this was due to a small number of cases where performance or capability issues had resulted in absence. RL reported that managers were to be trained by ACAS to improve the management of these cases. DL asked if BV212 (Average time taken to re-let local authority housing) and NHL902 (% of rent lost through dwellings becoming vacant) would be considered at the Allocations event on 14 November. MS explained that the event was a consultation day with stakeholders. RL said that this was part of the Council's consultation process with stakeholders. Internal Audit are due to report to Audit Sub-Committee on voids performance in due course. <b>The Board noted current performance and delegated detailed analysis to the relevant Sub-Committee</b></p> <p><b>Performance of the new contract centre</b> RL reported that the centre had gone live on 1 July and it had been a smooth transition. <b>The Board noted the report</b></p>	

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c	<p><b>Revised Management Agreement</b></p> <p>RL presented the report and highlighted the key changes in the agreement. He also reported that the new premises for the Wardens and Mobile Cleaning Team at Riverpark had been officially opened this week. The facilities were much better and had created a good atmosphere.</p> <p>RL asked that the Board delegate the completion of the negotiations to the Chair and Chief Executive.</p> <p>MH reported that he had discussed the wider issue of licences with Councillor Paul Andrews. RL reported that he had received communications about this and would report back to Board in due course.</p> <p>MH raised concerns about the signage at Riverpark. MS agreed this was a problem and would ask staff to resolve.</p> <p><b>The Board authorised the Chief Executive to conclude the negotiations in relation to a Deed of Variation and after discussion with the Chair, to approve the revised Agreement.</b></p>	<p>RL</p> <p>MS</p>
d	<p><b>Excellence Committee</b></p> <p>DR updated the Board on progress of the Excellence Committee. An Area Panel Sub-Group, Area Panel Chairs and Vice Chairs and full Area Panels had been consulted on the best way to develop Co-Regulation within Northwards. The Excellence Committee will be resident led and is due to receive training at the beginning of March before an initial meeting towards the end of March. The group will agree terms of reference and will discuss their relationship with the Board. DR will report back to the Board in due course.</p> <p>DL asked if this group would be invited to observe at Board meetings. DR explained that Board Meetings are open to all stakeholders and therefore they would be entitled and encouraged to observe.</p>	
e	<p><b>Inspection Action Plan</b></p> <p>RL presented the report. The actions in the Financial Inclusion Strategy had been made SMART in line with Audit Commission recommendations.</p> <p><b>The Board noted progress to date</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Future Options</b></p>	
a	<p><b>HRA Subsidy Review</b></p> <p>RL presented the response which had been sent on behalf of the North West ALMO's.</p> <p>DL had asked for a plain English version of the document. Robin agreed that this would be done for future discussion with the Board.</p> <p>The Government are considering all responses and are due to respond early in 2010. RL suggested that the Board may want to include this topic in their training plans.</p> <p>MH raised the question of national debt. RL reported that there seems to be a desire amongst local authorities to do a deal or debt redistribution</p> <p><b>The Board noted the consultation response.</b></p>	<p>DR</p>

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10	<b>Governance</b>	
<p>a</p> <p>b</p> <p>c</p> <p>d</p>	<p><b>Ballot Report</b> DR had received feedback from the three Area Panels. She gave verbal feedback on their ideas to the Board. The Board agreed that it would like to investigate the ideas further and requested DR to report options to January Board Meeting.</p> <p><b>Membership of Sub-Committees, Co-optees and Champion Review</b> DR presented the report. It was agreed that Board Co-optees could become Champions. MBI suggested that the Service Offer to Tenants could be broken into different sections. It was agreed that if enough Champions volunteered this would be considered. <b>The Board approved the recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) that the Sub-Committee Membership is reviewed in accordance with the process proposed</li> <li>b) that Joan FitzGerald is requested to serve as Co-optee to Customers &amp; Communities Sub-Committee</li> <li>c) that current Co-optee's are confirmed to serve on the relevant committees.</li> <li>d) that the Champion Review proposal is implemented in accordance with the process proposed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Dates of future meetings</b> DR presented the report. It was confirmed that the Board wanted to arrange a 1 day Strategic Away Day in February; the date to be agreed by email. The Board also agreed to cancel the Board Training on 12 October 2010 and replace with the Annual General Meeting in the same week. <b>The Board approved the dates of meetings subject to canvassing the Board to check that Tuesday remains the most convenient night for the majority of members.</b></p> <p><b>Governance Indicators</b> DR presented the report. <b>The Board agreed to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) share Northwards governance performance data with ALMO's in the North West region.</li> <li>b) publish performance indicators in Board papers</li> <li>c) approve the proposed governance targets</li> </ul>	<p>DR</p> <p>DR</p>
11	<b>Involvement Of Residents</b>	
a-i	The Board noted the Area Panel Minutes and the revised Resident Involvement Agreement which was circulated.	
12	<b>Customers &amp; Communities</b>	
<p>a-b</p> <p>c</p>	<p><b>Sub-Committee Minutes</b> Minutes were noted.</p> <p><b>Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey 2009</b> RL reported that this report had been considered by Customers &amp; Communities and Asset Management Sub-Committees. MS presented the report in brief.</p>	

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	<p>DL noted the steady improvement even in areas where performance was top quartile and gave his congratulations to the officers for their hard work achieving this.</p> <p>RC asked when the survey had been conducted; MS reported it had been in July prior to the school holidays as this is considered to be the best time to achieve a high response rate.</p> <p>MM noted that "Public Confidence in agencies such as Northwards involved in dealing with ASB and Crime issues which matter most" had exceeded targets for 2009 and 2011. MS reported that Sub-Committees would review targets for future years in the light of current performance.</p> <p>MH was pleased that green space satisfaction had improved and had noted this in his own and in neighbouring awards.</p>	
<b>13</b>	<b>Asset Management</b>	
a	<b>Sub-Committee Minutes</b> Minutes were noted.	
<b>14</b>	<b>Audit</b>	
a-b	<b>Sub-Committee Minutes</b> Minutes were noted.	
<b>15</b>	<b>Resources</b>	
a	<b>Sub-Committee Minutes</b> Minutes and Quarter 2 Accounts were noted.	
<b>16</b>	<b>Relations with the Council</b>	
	Board agenda item 8c	
<b>17</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
a	DL had attended the National Recycling Award where Northwards, MWL and Wrekin Windows had won an award. The Board congratulated LP and staff on this achievement.	
b	RL drew the Board's attention to the recruitment of the Director of Business Services and updated the Board on the process.	
	<b>Date of Next Meetings</b>	
	<b>Saturday 14 November Allocations and Lettings, Waterloo Centre</b> <b>Tuesday 24 November, at 7.30pm, Director of Business Services</b> Recruitment event <b>Tuesday 8 December, Board Strategy with Area Panels, Hexagon Tower Board Room 6.30pm – 8.30pm – Date to be confirmed</b>	
	<b>End of Meeting</b> With thanks to everyone the Chair closed the meeting at 7.50pm	