

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

Tuesday 12 January 2010 at 6:30pm

Chair: Sue Ratchford

Present	Sue Ratchford (SR) Mark Hackett (MH) Rachel Christie (RC) Michelle Carmichael (MC) Martin McKeivitt (MM) Paul Seymour (PS) Anna Trotman (AT) Michelle Blakeley (MBI)	Board Member (Chair) Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member Board Member (Vice Chair) Board Member Board Co-optee
In Attendance	Robin Lawler (RL) Mike Stevens (MS) Larry Patrick (LP) Diane Roberts (DR)	Chief Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services Director of Property Services Governance Support Manager (Minutes)

Observers none

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions SR wished all Members a Happy New Year. SR announced that this would be PS's last meeting as he was standing down due to work commitments. The Board thanked Paul for his commitment and contribution to Northwards and showed their appreciation. SR passed on David Leah's best wishes and thanks to Paul. PS thanked the Board, was sorry he had to leave and had enjoyed and learnt much from the experience.</p>	
2	<p>Election of Vice Chair SR asked if there had been any nominations for this role. DR confirmed that two nominations had been received for Martin McKeivitt who had accepted the nomination. MM was unanimously elected by the Board as Vice Chair.</p>	
3	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were given by David Leah, Fatima Adamjee, Marjan Bazargan, Naeem UI Hassan and Pat Thorpe.</p>	
4	<p>Declaration of Interests/Confidential Matters/ Requests to un-star information items/ Equality & Diversity Matters Arising PS declared interest in item 12c (employer is a member of GM Procure). Items 12b, 12c and 18 were confidential. Item 12d was later confirmed not confidential as stated on the agenda. Agenda items for information marked by * can be released for discussion by request of Board Members or Officers. There were no requests to unstar information items. All Equality and Diversity matters would be covered under relevant items.</p>	

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5 a	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2009 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Approved</p>	
6	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Item 3 Apologies for Absence RL explained that Paul Beardmore had offered to attend this meeting. RL had suggested that 9 March Board Meeting may be more useful as the results of the HRA Subsidy Review may be available at that time. It was agreed to invite Paul to March meeting.</p> <p>Item 8b Performance of new contact centre AT raised concern about the performance of out of hours service over the weekend. There had been severe problems with the service. RL and LP explained that there had been an IT issue and that the failure in service had been discussed with Manchester Working on Monday 11 January. The situation would be reviewed on Friday 14 January to ensure that the weekend service provided would be efficient. The service provider, Astraline has increased their staff numbers and have a Senior Manager on duty at all times. Tenant Inspectors are making calls to check the service at peak hours during the week. MM asked what recourse Northwards had to receive compensation for this service failure. PS asked how this issue would be communicated to tenants. RL would consider this. DR had been requested to invite a representative from the contact centre to attend the next Area Panel Meetings.</p> <p>Item 8c Revised Management Agreement RL had been asked to pay rent for Parkside Centre and has said he will do so for this year only providing a licence is completed in this financial year. MS confirmed that the signage problem at Riverpark has been resolved.</p> <p>Item 10c Ballot Report Board agenda item 10b</p> <p>Item 10b Membership of Sub-Committees, Co-optees and Champion Review Board agenda item 10c</p>	<p>RL</p> <p>RL</p>
7	<p>Chair's Items</p>	
a b c	<p>Appointment of Business Services Director Stephen Brown has been appointed and will begin work on 14 January. RL thanked the Board for participating in the recruitment process and said that Veridus (recruitment agency) had commended the organisation on the recruitment process.</p> <p>National Tenants Voice SR congratulated Norman Hart on his selection to the National Tenants Voice Council.</p> <p>Board Relations with Staff</p>	

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	SR asked the Board to take opportunities to meet staff to foster good relationships between the Board and staff. She suggested the New Year Party, attendance at Cascade Briefings and visiting Local Offices. LP and MS are willing to provide guided tours of offices by request from Board Members.	All Board Members
8	Strategic and Performance	
a	<p>Revised Management Agreement RL confirmed that the Agreement had been completed on 12 December on the authority of SR and the Board's delegated power. The deed of variation extends the Agreement to March 2012.</p>	
b	<p>Business and Delivery Plan 2010-2014 RL presented the report and confirmed that Sub-Committees had given comments and views on the Plan. The Area Panels would be consulted on the Plan on 30 January and the Board would be presented with the final plan for approval at 9 March Board Meeting. The Board confirmed the approach to refresh and update the existing Business and Delivery Plan 2009-2014 and noted the proposed timetable and consultation processes for updating the Business Plan.</p>	
c	<p>Future Jobs Fund (FJF) RL presented the report. RC expressed concern about the longevity of the scheme and what the exit strategy would be. RL reported that Groundwork are intending to create a Social Enterprise in approximately 12 to 18 months. The Board noted arrangements for FJF in the city and endorsed Northwards participation in FJF as outlined in the report.</p>	
d	<p>Inspection Action Plan RL presented the report. There is only 1 overdue action in the Inspection recommendations. There is progress on this action to give tenants access to bank accounts. AT raised REIS26 asking when the Board would receive a report on the impact of the Tenants Xtra Scheme. MS confirmed that Customers and Communities Sub Committee would receive a report at its meeting in January. AT also questioned progress on REIS25 relating to VFM in the void process. RL reported that this was being reviewed by the Board Voids Working Group – minutes are included in the Board paper pack. The Board noted progress to date</p>	
e	<p>Tenant Services Authority Response RL reported that the Board had discussed the TSA proposed standards and regulatory frame work at its Strategy Meeting in December. The closing date for comments was 5 February 2010. RL requested that the Board delegate responsibility for Northwards response to the Chief Executive and that the Board ratify the response at 9 March Board Meeting. The Board delegated responsibility for Northwards response to the TSA Statutory Consultation to the Chief Executive and that the Board would ratify the response at 9 March Board Meeting.</p>	

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9	Future Options	
a	HRA Subsidy Review The formal debt offer will be given to MCC in February. This will indicate if self-financing is an option for Northwards. RL is working closely with MCC on this matter.	
b	Options Appraisal Progress is subject to item 9a above.	
10	Governance	
a	Recruitment of Independent Board Members and Sub-Committee Co-optees DR gave a verbal report that a number of applications had been received from people who had expressed interest in previous vacancies or who had registered interest more recently. RL and SR had short listed applications and up to 6 candidates would be interviewed. The Board agreed that an interview panel of SR, RL and one other Board Member would be convened. The Board would be presented with the Panel recommendations regarding appointments in due course.	SR/RL
b	Recruitment of Tenant Board Members 2010 DR presented the report. MB asked if the candidate statements could be longer. DR explained that the Electoral Reform Service have strict limits on the size of statements allowed. However, the Area Panels had suggested that a proforma questionnaire be used to facilitate comparison of candidates. DR confirmed that this would be implemented in future ballots. The Board agreed to keep to the current arrangements of open nomination and election by all Tenants and improve the process by requiring candidates to attend training sessions and to meet with Board and Area Panel Members before the ballot process begins. It was agreed the same criteria, advertisement and ballot arrangements used in 2009 are maintained for 2010.	
c	Membership of Sub-Committees and Champion Review DR presented the report. RL highlighted that the vacancy for Independent Board Member would be allocated to Sub-Committees once appointed. DR explained that Pat Thorpe had yet to confirm her choices and this would be a priority on her return. Membership of Sub Committee and Champion Review The Board approved the recommendation for a) Sub Committee Membership b) Responsibility for Champion Areas	
11	Involvement Of Residents	
a-i	The Board noted the Area Panel Minutes.	
12	Asset Management	
a-b	Sub-Committee Minutes Minutes were noted.	
c	IMPACT/Procure – Confidential See Confidential Minutes	
d	Local Authority New Build for Older Persons Bungalows AT asked for clarification why this report was confidential. LP explained this	

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e	<p>was an error. RL reported that a further unit was being investigated over 32 bungalows proposed. LP confirmed that the HCA would allow a supplementary bid. MH commented that this was good news, it had been well received and he had an aspiration for more!</p> <p>RL reported that the Council had gained approval to build a further 171 units in West Gorton. RL informed the Board that a report would be submitted to Board at 9 March meeting and also to MCC regarding Northwards strategy to build or acquire homes in its own right using HCA funding. AT asked that Riverdale strategy be considered in this review.</p> <p>The Board noted the report</p> <p>Housing Improvement Programme 2010/11</p> <p>LP presented the report and highlighted that Northwards were on target to complete Decent Homes programme by December 2010.</p> <p>MB asked if item 4.03 c Communal area upgrades included the total budget for this work. LP confirmed this.</p> <p>PS asked what criteria the Wimpey “no fines” properties would need to meet to be included in the scheme. LP explained that a number of grant bids had been made and it would depend on their criteria. RL highlighted that potentially the £500,000 could lever in up to £4 million of additional grant funding.</p> <p>The Board approved the Home Improvement Programme 2010/11, as recommended by the Asset Management Sub-Committee</p> <p>RL circulated an article from Inside Housing regarding Whitebeck Scheme. The Board noted the efforts of staff during the adverse weather and asked that acknowledgement be made in the next Northwards Natter.</p> <p>MH asked that lessons learnt about priorities and co-ordination of services during emergency times be captured. RL agreed that a “Cold-Snap Plan” should be developed.</p>	RL
13	Audit	
	No agenda items	
14	Resources	
a-	Sub-Committee Minutes Minutes were noted.	
15	Customers & Communities	
a	Sub-Committee Minutes Minutes were noted.	
16	Relations with the Council	
	Board agenda item 9.	
17	EMT Annual Salary Review – Confidential	
	See Confidential Minutes	
18	Any Other Business	
	DR circulated “Manchester: A Great Place To Grow Older “Summary Report.	
	Date of Next Meetings	
	Friday 22 January, New Year Party, Midland Hotel, Peter Street, 7pm	

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>Wednesday 27 January, Cascade Briefings, Sheridan Suite, Oldham Road, 10am-12pm or 2pm-4pm</p> <p>Saturday 30 January, Area Panel Business Planning Event, Waterloo Centre, 9.30 to 1.00 including lunch</p> <p>Tuesday 9 February- Board Training, Equality and Diversity, Hexagon Tower, 6.30-8.30pm</p> <p>Tuesday 9 March, Board Meeting, Hexagon Tower, 6.30-8.30pm</p>	
	<p>End of Meeting With thanks to everyone the Chair closed the meeting at 8.10 pm. A special thank you and good wishes were given to Paul Seymour.</p>	