

Northwards Housing – ALMO Annual General Meeting

Victoria Hotel, Hollinwood Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 8DE

Tuesday 15 October 2019 at 6.00pm

Chair: Sue Abbott

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
	<p>In Attendance</p> <p>There were 24 tenants and residents in attendance representing all three local service areas, 9 Board Members and 3 Sub-Committee Co-optees, 12 partners and guests, 13 staff and Martin Oldfield representing the Member, Manchester City Council.</p>	
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Sue Abbott, Chair of the Board, thanked everyone for attending and welcomed them to Northwards' AGM. She introduced Robin Lawler, Chief Executive, Mike Stevens, Director of Neighbourhood Services, Robbie Chapman, Director of Business Services and Company Secretary and Andy Plant, Director of Property Services.</p> <p>Sue went through housekeeping and also advised that the AGM was being covered live on social media and the # NorthwardsAGM could be used.</p>	
2	<p>Annual Report</p> <p>Sue announced the launch of the Annual Report 2018-2019, which was included within the Northwards Natter. The Northwards Natter is due to arrive through tenants letterboxes this week and it will be free of its old plastic envelope, so it is more environmentally friendly. A short film of the highlights from the annual report was played.</p> <p>Sue presented some of the highlights from the past year, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 101.5% of rent due was collected• 659 homes were let to tenants and this included 40 new build properties• 122 major home adaptations have been carried out• 99.52% of tenants who had repairs completed told us they were satisfied• 903 hours of digital support has been provided to tenants• 37 Community events were staged around North Manchester• 450 cases of ASB have been investigated	
3	<p>The Business</p> <p>Robbie Chapman, Director of Business Services and Company Secretary,</p>	

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	<p>presented the formal agenda items of the AGM.</p> <p>a) Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the AGM held 16 October 2018 were approved by Martin Oldfield, representing the Member, Manchester City Council. Copies of the minutes were available at the meeting.</p> <p>The minutes of EGM held 27th March 2019 were approved by Martin Oldfield, representing the Member, Manchester City Council. Copies of the minutes were available at the meeting.</p> <p>b) Annual Accounts 2018/19</p> <p>Robbie Chapman presented the financial statements for financial year 2018/19. These were approved by Martin Oldfield representing the Member, Manchester City Council. Copies of the accounts were available.</p> <p>c) Appointment of Auditors</p> <p>Robbie Chapman informed the meeting that Northwards recommended re-appointing BDO as auditors of the company. This was approved by Martin Oldfield representing the Member, Manchester City Council.</p> <p>d) Appointment and Retirement of Board Members</p> <p>Robbie Chapman announced that Marina Teat and Michelle Carmichael had been appointed as new Tenant Board Members and Carol Southern and Donna Bowler appointed as new Independent Board Members.</p> <p>Sharon Thomas was welcomed back as a re-appointed Independent Board Members for a further 3-year term.</p> <p>The appointments and re-appointment were formally approved by Martin Oldfield representing the Member, Manchester City Council.</p> <p>Robbie Chapman announced that Manchester City Council had nominated a new Board Member and welcomed Councillor John Farrell, Higher Blackley Ward to the Board.</p> <p>Sue announced that a number of Board Members were stepping down or retiring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eunice Orlu, Tenant Board Member, - Guy Johnson, Independent Board Member - Hilary Vaughan, Independent Board Member - Naeem Ul Hassan, Council nominated Board Member <p>Sue thanked them all for their hard work and commitment.</p>	
4	<p>Sub-Committee Updates</p> <p>Sharon Thomas, Chair of Resources Sub-Committee gave a review of</p>	

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	<p>what the Resources Sub-Committee has been doing over the last year.</p> <p>Sharon Thomas gave an update on the work of the Operations Sub-Committee on behalf of Gary Lamb, Chair of the Operations Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Guy Johnson, Chair of the Audit Sub-Committee gave an update on the work of the Audit Sub-Committee over the past year.</p>	
5	<p>Summary</p> <p>Robin Lawler, Chief Executive, summarised the achievements in 2018/19 and outlined the main focuses for the year ahead for the next year. These included fire safety, zero carbon, digital offer and health and housing.</p>	
6	<p>Question & Answers</p> <p>Q1 Christine Leyland asked about Home Improvement Schemes homes and when properties other than the high-rise properties would receive the 2nd room improvement works.</p> <p>Andy Plant explained that he couldn't put an exact date on it and that the money that had been available had been prioritised to carry out fire safety works. He confirmed that he was hopeful that the second room improvement works would start in the next financial year, although they will take some time to complete the works to every property. He explained that, as most people chose new kitchens last time, most of the improvements to be carried out are to bathrooms.</p> <p>Q2 Val Edwards informed the meeting that she had an elderly friend who needs to be rehoused. She explained that her friend has struggled to get all the information and documentation required for the rehousing application and has been told she has to upload the documents to her application and is unable to take them into any of the local offices. Val explained that she is an advocate for Manchester Move, but the process seems so bureaucratic.</p> <p>Mike Stevens confirmed that the system has to be bureaucratic. However, he confirmed that documents can be taken into the local offices to be scanned onto applications. Mike Stevens advised Val that he would speak to her after the AGM about the individual case.</p> <p>Q3 Sue Asprey from the Chatterbox Project asked a question on behalf of several tenants who have come to the Chatterbox for advice. Sue gave examples of repairs that people ask her for advice: front doors that have been repaired but still have large gaps around them; being refused fencing or concessionary gardening; and also one tenant received a letter about breaching their tenancy agreement for not letting an operative in to carry out an electricity test when they had already failed to turn up twice as planned. Sue asked who within Northwards tenants could contact to raise issues they have.</p>	

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	<p>Andy Plant explained that if tenants are unhappy with repairs or a service, they have received then Northwards has a Complaints process that can be used. Andy Plant confirmed that he was unable to comment on the individual repairs, but would speak to Sue after the event and take the details so they could be investigated.</p> <p>Mike Stevens added that in terms of fencing and concessionary garden Northwards have a limited budget for these items and so requests need to be prioritised. Mike Stevens added that tenants can always talk to us. All individual cases will be considered, although we won't always be able to help.</p> <p>Q4 Debbie Stephenson explained that Northwards Housing had fitted ground source heat pumps to some properties, and although they save the tenants money, when they work, but they seem to breakdown a lot. Debbie explained that when repairs are reported a gas operative is sent to fix the issue but quite often the gas engineer sent is not trained to fix ground source heat pumps.</p> <p>Andy Plant confirmed that this was an issue he was aware of and that it was an industry wide issue. He advised that more Operatives needed to be trained on repairing these systems, but that an appropriately trained person should be sent to do the job.</p> <p>Q5 Steve White asked if the expenditure of £4million shown as "other" on the financial accounts summary in the annual report could be broken down further. Robbie Chapman explained that it covered items such as premises, contracts and Service Level Agreements with Manchester City Council. He confirmed that copies of the Financial Statements were available, and he would provide a full breakdown to Steve.</p> <p>Q6 Christine Leyland asked where the figures for repairs satisfaction 99.52% and repairs completed on the first visit 95.47% that were presented in the annual report had come from.</p> <p>Andy Plant explained that those figures were the end of year figures for 2018/19 and the feedback was collected on a PDA by the operative once they had completed a job. Andy Plant confirmed the automated system of feedback being collected by telephone had been implemented in December 2018 but had only started to be reported on since April 2019.</p> <p>Robbie Chapman informed the meeting that a large piece of work focussing on how we obtain feedback from tenants with a shift from retrospective feedback to real time feedback is due to start. This piece of work will be undertaken by Belinda Rourke, Head of Customer Experience. This work will be across all services and not just repairs.</p>	
	<p>Sue Abbott thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.15pm.</p>	