

MINUTES

3rd November 2010

7:00pm Third Floor Board Room, Sutton Gate



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT SUTTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Present: Findlay Macpherson (Chair), Mike Davis (Vice Chair), Michael Baldwin, Lesley O'Connell, Ryan Drew and Muhammad Sadiq

Staff: Andrew Taylor, Sara Tutton, Brendan Crossan, Joanne Cambra, Andrea Armstrong and Diane Richards

LBS Representative: Trevor Hart

Also attended as observers: Enid Bakewell, Frank Berry (Chair of SFTRA), Beverley Brigden (secretary of SLA and vice-chair of SFTRA)

1. Apologies

Sharon Prospere (Maternity Leave), Samantha Bromige and Ken Morgan

FM welcomed Frank Berry to the meeting in his new role as chair of SFTRA.

DR reported that Sharon Prospere had a baby boy called Ayden on Saturday 30th October. The board offered their congratulations.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

AT updated the board that he had had some very positive discussions with Frank Berry regarding how to progress resident involvement and the role of SFTRA. AT also said that he had met with Councillor Jayne McCoy and that she was aware of the strength of the board's views on the working balance.

The minutes were agreed as being an accurate record.

3. Budget Efficiency Savings

BC presented the report which was a follow up to last month's budget report. He explained that SHP was looking for efficiency savings of £400K for 2011/12 although this might change when we receive the subsidy determination. We should know the figures by end of

following week and will then know if efficiency saving is enough or not.

BC reported that the restructure would save 1£70K in staff costs; but noted that back office functions were affected much more than any customer facing services.

On the working balance, BC explained that discussions were ongoing but that LBS had agreed to backload the increase towards the end of the 4 year period.

FM asked if all staff and not just managers had been consulted about cost efficiencies. BC replied that there were two parts to the process – savings suggested by the Value for Money forum and savings suggested by managers and finance in the annual meetings with budget holders. BC said that managers would come to these meetings with savings ideas from their teams. FM asked how we checked that managers had definitely consulted with their teams and BC said we could only judge by their input at the meeting. FM said that his comments were linked to the results in the staff satisfaction survey around giving chances to staff to contribute. JC said this was a valid point and that in her team, they had had away days and sessions so she knew this had been done

MD brought up the issue of the working balance and asked whether bearing in mind the strong financial skills they possess, the SHP leadership team felt that an increase is a reasonable thing to do? BC said that it was not really up to us as LBS can dictate what they want the balance to be. AT said that this issue reflects our different approaches – SHP has a more commercial way of looking at risk than the council whose view is to put cash aside to handle risks. He commented that are external auditors had never expressed any concern about this and that Councillor Jayne McCoy seemed to appreciate SHP's perspective on this issue. AT said that SHP could live with adding £100K next year to the balance but if an increase in the working budget would require any further staff or service cuts that he would re-open this debate.

LO complimented Steve on the finance briefing delivered before the board meeting and requested another session once the subsidies are determined. DR will arrange.

KM who was not at the meeting had sent in two questions via e-mail. AT and John Gallagher sent e-mailed response back to KM which have been circulated to the board via e-mail.

The Board agreed the recommendation:

(i) The Board agreed the identified efficiency savings for 2011/12

4. Staff Satisfaction Survey Results

Before Andrea Armstrong (AA) began, FM reminded the board that this report was only to highlight the feedback and there would be a further board report when actions and outcomes were agreed. AA presented her report to the board and stated that the survey had started in 2006 and that this had been the highest return rate ever with 134 staff completing the survey. AA reiterated that her report was just the results and not how we plan to address the results. AA said there were some dips in scores and she would be bringing it to Managers' Performance Group in December and asking managers to look at how this will impact on their future strategy and service plans.

LO asked whether the results could be broken down into teams – and specifically for the question looking at trust in managers. AA said that it could be broken down, although some staff had left the section blank identifying their service areas so may not be complete.

FM said that looking at the actions arising as a result of this survey was extremely important.

The board agreed to put this on their agenda for the away weekend on January 28/29.

5. Quarterly Balanced Scorecard

BC presented the headlines from the balanced scorecards. BC told the board that this was the largest number of PIs ever reported on with 70 PIs included. Our performance against other organisations continues to be strong; however there were some PIs not hitting the target.

BC said that the priority indicators had been reported on for the first time since their introduction due to the results from the status survey coming out. He said that these were 3 year targets so he is keen that no one overreacts to any shortfalls as there is time to correct them and that we will not change the targets but will take action to try to improve our performance against the original targets.

BC reported that for benchmarking there is a greater number of PIs for comparison this month as Housemark have introduced additional PIs which have increased the number from 10 to 30+ so there is a more thorough picture. BC said he had included in the packs a brief summary of the benchmarking against London ALMOs followed by the benchmarking information against all ALMOs. Over the last 12 months, the data shows that our performance has continued upwards and that there was not any dip post inspection. We now have 75% of PIs in the top two quartiles which is up from 42% last year.

LO said that this was an incredible achievement and that the board should put out a message to congratulate staff. AT invited FM to write a message to put into the first corporate newsletter on 12th November. FM said that he agreed it was a tremendous achievement

and he would be very pleased to write a message for the news briefing.

MD said that he was pleased to see that in terms of the benchmarking statistics, repairs, ASB and sickness were all now in the top quartile, but that he was concerned about two PIs that were off target and not showing any improvement – the satisfaction with the complaints process and the proportion of all non-telephone contact responded to within target timescales. MD also queried the figure on former tenant debt as a proportion of the rent roll.

BC responded on the rents issue that this particular PI reflects the historic position as opposed to our current performance. We started off with higher arrears than other organisations and making inroads into these historic arrears is a slow process. However the current in year performance and the current PI on rent collected as a proportion of the rent role is all looking good.

BC also expressed his view that the improved sickness levels show a good example of how the board makes a difference as this was an area of concern that they picked out from the balanced scorecard and SHP responded.

6. Leaseholder Loans Update

ST told the board that she had prepared a joint report with Lindsey Gamble from LBS to go to the Housing Advisory Group (HAG). One of the key issues raised was a request for LBS to be more flexible around allowing us to offer payment options for leaseholders. SHP wish to be able to enter into payment terms with non-resident leaseholders. Currently payment terms are not an option and we sometimes end up referred to court where the court tells us to accept payment terms.

HAG have been supportive and we are awaiting comments from the SLA.

9. Tenancy Conditions Update

FM queried the tenancy condition banning the storage of ammunition and firearms as it was his understanding that the board had expressly said that they should not be banned. He said he would want the Council to understand the decision of the Board came from its knowledge and understanding as managing agent, which should not be lightly ignored. AT explained that the board had been given two options and chose the one that did not introduce an outright ban. However when the issue went to the Housing Advisory Group, they were advised that it would be illegal for gun licence holders to be asked to disclose the required information to us. The HAG then assumed that it was SHP's intention to tighten the policy and went for the other option which they thought would be in line with the board's wishes. HAG were therefore not deliberately going against the Board's decision, however, there was a desire within HAG to send a strong political message about gun ownership. AT said that he had met with Councillor Jayne McCoy today and that if this type of

situation arose in future further consultation with the Board would take place to ensure there was a clear consensus.

14. Any Other Business

FM invited Frank Berry (FB) to speak to the board. FB complimented the board on how well they work together. He expressed his concern about any need for further budget savings from the council. He felt the council should know that SHP delivers an excellent service which other ALMOs cannot match. Residents want good service to continue and we cannot keep pulling the budget bowstring without something snapping.

FM invited Bev Brigden (BB) to speak. BB said that she felt SHP should know that caretaking and cleaning are coming up again as issues. She also reported that SLA had received their budget survey. Finally she mentioned that she had heard some rumours that the ring-fencing of the HRA is under threat. AT replied that the ring fences being discussed seemed to be those within the General Fund, rather than involving the HRA.

BB also said that the customer involvement activities log did not include all activities and some dates were incorrect. AT responded to say that sometimes we do not have all the data for last minute events before the report needs to go out. AT put forward a suggestion that we move away from a monthly log and replace it with a full 6 month review as with other service areas so we could have a more effective and more in-depth discussion. **This was agreed.**

BB also invited all to attend the SLA meeting on 30th November at 7:30 pm when they would be discussing the results of the leaseholder survey.

The Public Meeting ended at 20:15

Date of the next meeting: 1st December 2010 at 7pm

Venue: 3rd Floor, Sutton Gate

Chair	
Date	