

MINUTES

1st September 2010

7:00pm Third Floor Board Room, Sutton Gate



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT SUTTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Present: Findlay Macpherson (Chair), Mike Davis (Vice Chair), Sam Bromige, Enid Bakewell, Michael Baldwin, Lesley O'Connell and Muhammad Sadiq

Staff: Andrew Taylor, Sara Tutton, Brendan Crossan, Diane Richards and Derek Vaughan

LBS Representative: Trevor Hart

Also attended as observers: Beverley Brigden (secretary of SLA)

1. Apologies

Ken Morgan, Dilys Lee, Terry Haswell, Ryan Drew, Sharon Prospere, Jo Cambra and Simon Latham.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

No matters arising.

BC stated that the electrical testing Performance Indicator (PI) had been added as requested and ST noted that the programme was now up and running and there would now be a steady throughput and improvement in figures. FM cited this as a good example of the board raising an issue and SHP staff responding quickly and efficiently to right the matter.

The minutes were agreed as being an accurate record.

3. Code of Governance (CoG) Review

AT explained that four sections of the CoG had been reviewed but also told the Board that the entire CoG would be reviewed for the October Board meeting from a more overall strategic perspective; with a view to cutting it down by reviewing which documents belong in the CoG and which do not.

LO mentioned that as Communications Champion she should have seen these documents prior to the board dispatch and would like to be involved in the overall review. She noted that we need to review the CoG section on qualifications for being a board member as she felt that restrictions on SFTRA/SLA committee membership should possibly be lifted.

LO also asked if there had been a full consultation with staff on the whistle blowing procedure. AT replied that this had been approved by the Audit & Risk Committee based on the recommendation of an internal audit report. The policy was only being approved by the board for inclusion in the CoG as opposed to approval of the policy itself.

The Board agreed the recommendations as stated in the report:

- (i) To agree the recommendations made to sections of the Code of Governance.**

4. Housing Strategy Document

AT presented his report suggesting a number of responses from SHP to the draft LBS strategy.

LO expressed disappointment that the vision as stated in section 2.2 was being made less aspirational. AT responded that he understood her sentiment but did feel that as it stood it was not achievable and that in his view it needed to be more realistic.

MD stated his support for the response and the strategy but expressed his surprise at the high loss of stock over the last five years as mentioned in section 5.6. ST explained that this was mainly due to demolition rather than sale.

MB felt that it was very difficult to have a strategy (as opposed to a vision) at the current time with so many unknown factors including decent homes funding. TH agreed that it was a struggle to create a strategy as things are changing all the time but there was a need to keep planning regardless.

FM enquired as to whether the document was a strategy or just aims and objectives. TH stated that it was a high level strategy only and that by the time it is approved in late autumn by the Executive there will be a more detailed action plan attached.

MB stated concern about availability of mortgages at the moment especially for shared ownership. ST noted that that on page 10 it showed that the Durand regeneration project would bring more rental properties available to help address this. TH expressed agreement and said there had been some discussion about a need for different price points for different levels of ownership. There had been no movement on this yet, but TH felt that the mood was now right to bring this up again. MB identified the potential need for properties for leaseholders to downsize to.

EB asked TH about the process for approving the Housing Strategy Document. TH explained that LBS were in the consultation period and were gathering comments from all stakeholders.

The Board agreed the recommendation(s) as stated in the report:

- (i) That the Board respond to the draft strategy as set out in Section 2.**

5. Procurement of Repairs Contract

Derek Vaughan (DV) distributed a single sheet summary of his board report and talked the board through the process he had been through to make his recommendation to extend the current repairs contract.

He included key points from:

- The Audit Commission inspection
- A peer comparison of KPIs
- Our own PIs
- The pros and cons of extending versus re-tendering
- An explanation of how he gathered stakeholder's views
- Suggestions for contract and price structure revisions if we do extend.

EB asked if SHP had spoken to dis-satisfied customers during the consultation. She felt that a 30% response rate was too low and that there might be more dis-satisfied customers out there that were unreported. DV noted her query and explained that only a small proportion of customers reported any dissatisfaction and he could not consult with anyone who may have been dissatisfied but did not report it. A questionnaire is sent with every repair order but he will still be trying to improve the response rate.

EB asked if we could have every job supervised. DV understood the importance of getting it right first time and explained that under the new contract revisions not only would the contractor not be paid for recalls within six months of a job, but they would forfeit the payment for the initial job if they go beyond set performance limits.

DV highlighted that dates had been added to the key objectives in appendix 6 to strengthen the relationships with the contractor but noted that not all of the action items would be achieved prior to the contract extension.

MD said that it was a case well made; but that he had two questions. He felt that it was extremely important as sought previously by the board to have someone managing the contract at a senior level and asked DV to expand on this. DV said that contractor had been working on making it clearer who was responsible for what. ST suggested that DV take a strong message from the board that a contract manager is needed and that this point is not negotiable. FM said that the contractor should want this as much as SHP as they will be penalised if they fail. He said that as SHP are crucial to the contractor's business we need to be strong about telling them we need to see improvements on getting it right first time and very clear on penalty clauses if they fail to meet requirements.

MD's second question was regarding any progress on the electronic transmission of work orders as this had been on the agenda for quite a while now. DV said that we were closer now. In the past, finding the budget was the main issue, but it was now possible to view the contractor's computer system through a web interface and this should hopefully allow us to progress in this area now. DV acknowledged the Board's points and said as this was still under negotiation he would bring these points to the forefront of the discussions.

EB asked about cyclical repairs and the percentage of sub-contractors who do not speak English. It was agreed that DV and EB would speak outside the meeting regarding her queries.

MB praised DV for his work on this which he had witnessed as he had been asked to sit in on the group and had helped with the SWOT analysis. He felt the process was excellent and commended the report and the recommendations.

FM asked DV if he felt that HQN had offered value for money as their report in isolation looked a bit weak. DV said they had done much more than simply the report and did feel that they had brought much value to the process.

FM said that the board appreciated the work that DV had done.

The Board agreed the recommendation(s) as stated in the report:

(i) That the Board approves the extension of the existing contract with KNK Building Services Limited for two years with effect from 1 July 2011, on the basis referred to in this report.

6. HR Service Review 6 Month Update

BC presented the report to the board and highlighted a few key points:

- In section 1.1, the development of all tier 2 and 3 managers
- In section 2.1, the monthly meetings between HR and Line Managers and the quarterly briefings
- In section 3, that the additional funding for staff agreed in HR had been split between a 0.5 HR advisor and a full time fixed term contract to primarily support the restructure

SB said that she would not recommend retendering for the CRB checking services (section 6) at this current time due to the new ISA scheme. BC agreed that this would wait until new scheme was in place. SB also asked SHP to be very careful if we re-tender payroll services to ensure we are certain under any new contract that we can get people paid right first time as this is so important to staff. BC reported that although we are looking at this with LBS who are leading on the re-tender, we can detach ourselves from the retender at any time and go our own way if that is what we choose.

SB requested that board members be included when internal training and development is going on internally and when policies change. BC agreed this would happen.

7. Quarterly Balanced Scorecard

BC explained that this quarter compared favourable with performance for 2009/2010. He noted that benchmarking is now up to date so a full year comparison is available. However, Housemark have changed their suite of PIs so these are slightly different and a further change will be coming from them.

BC stated that targets had been reviewed with LBS at the end of the first quarter and that 10 had been changed as in section 4 of the report. 9 targets had been made higher and one had been reduced.

MD noted that tenancy management is in red and asked whether this was a concern and how it was being addressed. BC clarified that it was felt that some of this was an issue with the way data was being recorded – as we were not counting visits where SHP turned up but there was no one at home. FM asked BC to look into this and SB asked whether this could be linked to rent arrears or other issues. AT also mentioned that this was partly due to staff absence and action had been taken to bring in resources to focus on this issue.

MD asked if we could put this on the board's monthly performance tracker in place of the neighbourhood inspections PI which was now seen as stable. AT agreed that one of the PIs should be included. MB asked if the changes to Housemark's PIs were to make them easier targets to meet. BC stated that this was done to ensure that most ALMOs are reporting on at least a core group of PIs for comparison purposes as too many were using their own specific PIs. FM thanked BC for his report.

It was agreed to add a new PI to the Monthly Performance Tracker (CC.SI.03 or CC.SI.04) so the board could monitor the area of tenancy management.

FM invited any questions or queries on the information items and there were none.

8. Any Other Business

AT told the Board that SHP was planning to host a reception for Jean Crossby, to mark her retirement, in conjunction with LBS prior to the next board meeting in October.

AT reminded board members that SHP would be putting forward recommendations for committee membership and championship roles at the October Board Meeting. He asked members to let DR know if they had strong preferences in either of these areas.

AT suggested that it might be an appropriate point for the Equality & Diversity Committee to review its role in the context of the internal restructure bringing Equality & Diversity and Customer Care together and whether the need identified in 2009 for the Committee still existed in the same way.

The Meeting ended at 20:45

Date of the next meeting: 6th October 2010 at 7pm
(To include AGM)

Venue: 3rd Floor, Sutton Gate

Chair	
Date	