



Hackney Homes Ltd

ITEM 4

Part A minutes of Board of Directors, held at Christopher Addison house, 72 Wilton Way Hackney E8 1BJ

On 20 October 2008 at 6.30PM

Present	<p>Board Members Rupert Tyson (Chair) Alice Burke (Vice Chair) Danny Sutcliffe Karen Dodds Terry Edwards Samantha Lloyd Brian Marsh Marie Photiou Afolasade Bright Jonathan McShane Asim Bhattacharyya Feryat Demirci</p>	<p>Hackney Homes Officers Charlotte Graves Neil Isaac Gary Penticost Peter O’Kane Sunil Desai Tom Hunt Neehara Wijeyesekera Sunil Desai Tom Hogan Pat Ronayne Judith Morrison Kevin Kingston John Newton</p> <p>Trade Union Steve Edwards Melvin Drayton</p>	<p>Stakeholder Representatives (Hackney Council) Stephen Tate Nimisha Patel</p> <p>Housing Partners Elliot Brooks(Pinnacle) John Ferman (Pathmeads) John Newbury (Mouchel)</p> <p>Member of the Public Muriel Gordon Rhonda Dewsnap</p>
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	Part A – Open to the Public	Action	Date
1. Welcome/Apologies/ Introductions	<p>Apologies were received from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audrey Villas • Linda Kelly • David Larkin • Robin Smith • Alex Jarosy • Eric Cato 		

	The Board welcomed Tess Merrett, the new Governance Manager and asked her to write to Cheryl Ramsay, the previous Governance Manger to thank her for all her work and to offer the Board's condolences in her recent bereavement.		
2. Declarations of Interests.	The Board considered that all interests whether pertinent to a particular meeting or not should be declared each time. Neil Isaac said that interests only need be declared if there was a direct conflict with any of the papers to be discussed. However, a note would be circulated to clarify the position.	Neil Isaac/Tess Merrett	Nov
3. Questions from the Public	No questions were received from the public.		
4. Minutes of 18 August 2008 (Part A) and matters Arising	<u>Minutes of 8 September 2008 (Part A)</u> The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed accordingly. <u>Matters arising from the Hackney Homes Board Meeting Minutes of 8 September 2008</u> There were no matters arising.		
5. Hackney Homes' Chair Report	Rupert Tyson introduced his report. <u>Ashridge Awayday</u> Rupert Tyson was pleased with the views that had been raised at the Board awayday at Ashridge and he asked if Board Members could return the feedback forms on the event to the Governance Team. There was some discussion about the possibility of setting up a Think Tank. Rupert Tyson highlighted several events he and other Board Members had attended since the last Board meeting	All Board Chair	

	<p><u>Inspection</u> The following Board Members, comprising a balance of Residents, Council nominees and Independents, had been selected to form a focus group for the Inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marie Photiou • Danny Sutcliffe • Samantha Lloyd • Linda Kelly • Alice Burke • David Larkin <p>The Board noted the Chair's report.</p>		
<p>6. Report back from Committees: a) Hackney Homes Audit and Finance Committee Meeting- 6 October 2008</p> <p>b) Hackney Homes Service Improvement Committee 14 October 2008</p>	<p><u>Audit & Finance</u> Feryat Demirci said the timetable for this committee conflicted with another commitment and as a result she had to step down.</p> <p>Samantha Lloyd, Chair of the Audit & Finance Committee, (A&F) gave an overview of the budget setting process and its implications. The final budget would come to Board for approval in December and she invited all Board Members to attend the next Audit & Finance Committee scheduled for 3 November 2008 if they wished to take part in detailed budget discussions.</p> <p>Terry Edwards, Chair of the Service Improvement Committee, (SIC) had circulated some notes of the first meeting to Board Members. The Committee had decided that Procurement came under the remit of the A&F and not the SIC. Marie Photiou said that the Committee considered it should be the forum to discuss and deal with issues in depth and as such, would only be able to discuss one or two topics per month. The Committee wanted the Board to direct the areas the SIC should deal with and asked the Board to list out their top 3 priorities for the Committee for future agendas</p>	<p>Governance Team, Board Members</p>	<p>4.11.08</p>

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<p>7. Chief Executive's Report</p>	<p>Charlotte Graves outlined Hackney Homes' activity and highlighted current issues of importance.</p> <p>5.0 <u>Inspection Preparation</u> Charlotte Graves said that there were just 4 weeks left before the Inspection began. The Executive had met with the Inspectors and they had responded positively to Hackney Homes' Self Assessment. The Inspectors would be on site 4 days a week beginning from 17th November for two weeks. The Board asked whether the Inspectors would meet with the Members of the Board member focus group individually or as a group. Charlotte Graves said that the Board Members would be seen as a group. The second week of the Inspection was the most convenient for all the focus group Members to meet with the Inspectors. Charlotte Graves said that the Inspection result would be released in accordance with the Audit Commission's timetable.</p> <p>8.1 <u>Project Excellence</u> Charlotte Graves said that officers were working on how to involve Residents in the long term in this project as the technology would have an impact on how we provided services to Residents in the future.</p> <p><u>Appendix 1 Woodberry Down</u> Kevin Kingston said that officers had held a very positive meeting with the Housing Corporation with a view to submitting a bid for the development of social rented housing and that the Planning Committee had now approved the master plan.</p> <p>The Board noted the Chief Executive's Report</p>		
<p>8. Hackney Homes Performance - Overview</p>	<p>Neil Isaac introduced the report and highlighted the following.</p> <p><u>Rents & service charges</u> The position with service charges was an improved one compared with performance in August last year. The Board asked how the current credit crisis may affect rent collection and arrears. Neehara Wijeyesekera said that the current arrears position was under £5m and the Council's target was £4.3m so</p>		

	<p>until the credit crisis we were on track to meet the target. Hackney Homes were providing advice sessions to as many people as possible to assist with the current credit crisis. John Ferman said that there had been an increase in debt referrals and in benefit surgeries. The Board asked if the leaseholder arrears could be shown as a figure rather than a percentage in the Summary. Neil Isaac said that the report showed the arrears as a figure and he would look to amending the Summary to reflect the same.</p> <p>The Board asked what the main issues were for our Residents in the current credit crisis. Neil Isaac said unemployment and fuel poverty were very serious issues. The Board asked if a paper could be brought to a future Board on how investment in debt counselling might improve income generation.</p> <p><u>Void Properties</u> The voids turnaround times were good although it was proving difficult to get void re-let satisfaction surveys back from Residents. The Board asked what was being done to improve the return rate. Tom Hogan said that we had now put the surveys out to Kwest, an independent company which would carry out telephone interviews. There was a query as to why the Housing Managers could not carry these surveys out in their void re-let visits. Neil Isaac said that this method of surveying was not considered objective enough although Elliot Brooks said that Housing Managers took the opportunity in these routine visits to remind Residents to return the survey.</p> <p><u>Property Services</u> There was some discussion about targets for appointments kept in responsive repairs. Peter O’Kane explained that the target was set in the Delivery Plan which was put before Council in Cabinet and regular discussions were held in respect of performance against target.</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>	<p>Neil Isaac</p> <p>Pat Ronayne</p> <p>Neil Isaac</p>	<p>8.12.08</p> <p>8.12.08</p>
<p>9. Financial Overview and Budget Update</p>	<p>Neil Isaac introduced the report and highlighted a significant overspend in the delegated budgets for energy costs. However energy contracts had been tendered</p>		

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	<p>through the Council and had another 12 months to run but we were in discussion with the Council about a possible way forward. The rent debit variation which had increased as a result of stock losses and accelerated decants was also a serious issue which we were keeping a close eye on. The Board asked that we request from the Council a list of all funding streams available to enable us to maximise income. Stephen Tate said that a quarterly report already went to Council and this could be shared with Hackney Homes.</p> <p>The Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the current projection on current year budgets • Agreed that the A&F Committee took the lead on budget preparation for 09/10 • Agreed that all Board Members will be invited to the next A&F meeting on 3 November. 	<p>Neil Isaac/Stephen Tate</p>	
<p>10. Anti Poverty Strategy</p>	<p>Tom Hogan introduced the report and highlighted the 5 key areas set out in the Action Plan which aimed to benefit those living on Hackney's estates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising income through training and employment • Reducing the costs of living in a Hackney Homes property • Increasing access to services and information • Managing money and dealing with financial distress • Raising awareness of the services available <p>The Board agreed that the elderly were very vulnerable in this area and said it was important that the elderly received consistent advice. Charlotte Graves said that training for frontline staff on the provision of benefit advice would be included in the Action Plan.</p> <p>Officers were asked to look at our procurement practices to ensure there were no long term expensive maintenance consequences. There may also be some cheap immediate measures we could implement such as providing Hackney Homes draught</p>	<p>Tom Hogan</p> <p>Tom Hogan</p>	

	<p>excluders. Tom Hogan said he would add this to the Acton Plan.</p> <p>The Board agreed and endorsed the Anti-Poverty Strategy.</p>		
<p>11.Hackney Homes Sustainable Supply Chain Policy</p>	<p>John Newton introduced the report and said that it linked in with the Anti-Poverty Strategy. There were two key areas in the policy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To maximise opportunities for local people 2. The development of sustainable supply chains <p>both of which took value for money and best value into consideration.</p> <p>The Board asked if we could include living wage rather than minimum wage. John Newton said that the contract monitoring side could look at this area. There was a view that now Hackney Homes used bigger contractors, there were fewer opportunities for local people. Officers said that although we were governed by OJEU regulations and directives, the Policy included the development of a Hackney Small and Medium Enterprise Register which should assist in maximising opportunities for local people.</p> <p>The Board approved the Hackney Homes Sustainable Supply Chain Policy.</p>	John Newton	
<p>12.Anti Social Behaviour Policy</p>	<p>The Board had previously considered this policy at its meeting on 18 August.</p> <p>The Board approved the Anti Social Behaviour Policy.</p>		
<p>13 Delivery Plan Timetable 2009-2010</p>	<p>Peter O’Kane introduced the report and reminded the Board of the requirement to produce an annual Delivery Plan to be developed according to the Management Agreement between Hackney Council and Hackney Homes. The development of the Delivery Plan was later this year on account of the priority given to current service improvement activity but the timetable has been discussed with the Council. A draft</p>	Peter O’Kane	

	<p>Plan would be brought back to Board on 8 December 2008.</p> <p>The Board agreed the Delivery Plan timetable</p>		
<p>14. Complaints Performance</p>	<p>Neil Isaac introduced the report and the Board asked what we could do to improve performance in this area. Charlotte Graves said that initially one of the difficulties was that complaints first went to our neighbourhood partners before going to the complaints team. There was now more ownership at the beginning of the process and more complaints were getting signed off there so the timeframe had improved but once the Inspection had been completed, we would review the system. Neil Isaac said that there had also been an improvement in the number of stage 2 complaints and of those that reached stage 2, fewer of them were likely to be upheld. We were learning valuable lessons from complaints and were also investigating the introduction of a compensation policy. There was a view that the process on occasion took too long and Residents would like improvements. Neil Isaac said that our statistics were not reflecting this and it would be useful if he could be provided with some specific examples.</p> <p>Charlotte Graves said that the Enhanced TRA system was recorded on the same system as the complaints which meant that general queries were being counted as formal complaints and we were looking to separate the two. Tom Hunt said that there had been some technical difficulties but that these had now been resolved so the service would become more effective and he said he would bring a paper to Board about recording queries from walkabouts and TRAs.</p> <p>The estate walkabouts were working well and the follow up service by telephone to enquiries raised on these was good.</p> <p>Gary Penticost said that we were learning from our errors and had identified areas for improvement and were focussing on four core areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-operation between neighbourhood offices and property services with 	<p>Tom Hunt</p>	<p>8.12.08</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regards to leaks and water penetration • follow up from surveyor visits • damp and mould growth • failure to remedy repairs on the first visit <p>We had also put additional resources in our contact centre to deal with complaints.</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>		
<p>15. Interim Vice Chair</p>	<p>Rupert Tyson said that owing to very poor health, Audrey Villas joint Vice Chair was unlikely to be able to perform her duties for several weeks and he proposed that an interim Vice Chair be appointed. Two ways forward had been proposed by Board Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair nominated an Interim Vice Chair • The Board voted on nominations <p>The Board considered that it should be the whole Board who voted in an election for this position and after some discussion the Board also decided that whoever was elected should remain as Vice Chair until the next round of full Board elections.</p> <p>A secret ballot was held and Marie Photiou was elected as Vice Chair.</p>		
<p>16 & 17 Respect Consultation and Decent Homes Update</p>	<p>Charlotte Graves introduced these reports which were for information only and asked the Board if they thought it a good idea to receive reports for information which did not need debate along with the formal Board papers. The Board thought it was.</p> <p>The Board agreed to receive information items only with the formal Board papers.</p>		



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<p>18 Any Other Business</p>	<p>Pat Ronayne and Tom Hunt were leaving Hackney Homes.</p> <p>The Lead Inspector would be attending the next Board meeting.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that we considered holding Board meetings around the borough.</p> <p>Board training would be reviewed.</p>		
<p>19</p>	<p>The Meeting closed at 9.05 pm</p> <p>Date of next Board Meeting: Monday 10 November at 6.30 pm Christopher Addison House</p>		

Signed as a true record of this meeting _____ Chair Dated _____