

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENFIELD HOMES BOARD
HELD ON 13 APRIL 2010**

PRESENT Litsa Worrall (Chair), Janet Billingsley (Vice Chair) Christiana During, Ahmet Oykenner, Mark Hayes, Jill Hasler, Steven Tucker, Frances Sidey, Edward Smith, Doug Taylor and Mabel Dankwa.

ABSENT Peter Fallart, Veronica Groves, Tracey Anang, Christiana During, Jill Hasler

OFFICERS: Bob Heapy (Chief Executive), Derek Young (Interim Director of Finance & Resources), Ron Pooley (Interim Director of Property & Technical Services), Mike Culligan (Director of Housing Operations) and Kate Tordoff (Head of Performance & Communications)

Also Attending: Graham Mead (Cassing Mead Consultancy)

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

NOTED

1. Apologies for absence were received from Christiana During, Veronica Groves, Peter Fallart, Tracey Anang and Jill Hasler.
2. Apologies for lateness were received from Doug Taylor.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2010 & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

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CHAIR'S REPORT

1. The Chair stated that there could potentially be 11 new Board members appointed at the next AGM and a plan needed to be put into place to manage continuity.
2. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be among the resident members due to resign (albeit they can re-present themselves), and some succession planning needed to be done.
3. It was agreed that this would be an item for discussion at the next Board AwayDay in June, as well as the feedback on the Board appraisal.
4. The Chair also invited Members to attend the Harrogate Housing Conference in Manchester on 15 & 16 July. Anyone wishing to attend should let either Bob Heapy or the Chair know.

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FEEDBACK ON BOARD APPRAISAL

1. Graham Mead from Cassing Mead attended the meeting to give an overview and share the most important headlines from the recent Board Appraisal that he had undertaken.
2. The full report and recommendations will be considered at the next HR & PD Committee
3. Graham thanked the Board for being supportive and for their enthusiasm during the process.
4. Areas were highlighted as follows:
 - a. Board has been successful in achieving the key goals set out for the newly formed ALMO.
 - b. Current structures are judged to be fit for purpose but concerns raised regarding number of Committees and cost effectiveness.
 - c. A great deal of effort has been spent on engaging with residents, with different points of view on how successful Enfield Homes has been in establishing good resident relationships.
 - d. Board committed to a process for horizon scanning post the two star rating and Decent Homes funding.
 - e. Board is getting and using the right information but concerns raised for the need for good attendance at Board meetings when important decisions are to be taken
 - f. Mixed picture with regards to reputation of the Board (relationship with local authority, residents and efforts to raise its profile externally).
 - g. A more robust approach to succession planning to be put in place.
 - h. Considerable strength shown in training and development although Board will need competencies to deal with TSA standards.
 - i. Strengthening of expertise in setting up new business opportunities.

The Chair thanked Graham Mead for his efforts and advised that the feedback would be discussed at the next Board Awayday in June.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Bob Heapy, Chief Executive advised that:

- a. A potential PR issue had arisen in respect of a failure of the district heating system to a number of properties at 3 of the Alma Road Tower blocks in Ponders End.
- b. Enfield Homes were made aware of the problems in late January/early February 2010.
- c. The hot water risers are contained in an asbestos lined ducts and under H&S regulations Enfield Homes had to give the statutory 14 days notice to the H&S Executive which frustrated the mains replacement.
- d. The mains were replaced and the heating restored over late February and March.
- e. At all times residents were kept informed and alternative means of heating and hot water were provided.

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- f. Compensation will be paid to affected residents and a public meeting is proposed for 19th April.
1. Doug Taylor joined the meeting and advised that as Ward Councillor, he had a personal interest.
2. Further to discussion around the issue of compensation, Bob Heapy advised that the amount would be approximately £60 per household, with a total of approximately £6K, which he felt was a reasonable amount.
3. In reply to Mark Hayes with regards to our compensation policy, Bob Heapy advised that in principle we would not be liable provided EH had offered alternative heating. Mark Hayes suggested that compensation for loss of heating should be paid on the basis of the policy.

Asbestos

1. Bob Heapy advised that broken and damaged asbestos had been identified in 5 residences in Turkey Street.
2. Correct notices have been given and one tenant has temporarily been decanted.
3. Enfield Homes was working closely with the Council and the Board will be informed if it becomes a concern.
4. Information on managing asbestos for residents will be uploaded onto the website.
5. In response to Nick Powell with regards to the hidden costs, Ron Pooley advised that they will not be known until all the surveys have been completed and will be contained within the Decent Homes programme.
6. The Chair requested that all information on the presence of asbestos in our properties be documented for continuity and Ron Pooley advised that it will be loaded into the Apex asset management system.

Petitions

1. Kestrel House, Alma Towers
 - a. The petition refers to the parking of Enfield Homes' estate services at the Towers making car parking for residents more difficult.
 - b. Mike Culligan advised that he had met with residents and had walked around the estate and identified an area for caretakers vehicles.
 - c. A letter has gone out today to residents.
 - d. Garages behind South Street will be demolished to accommodate Enfield Homes vehicles.
2. Bliss & Purcell Houses
 - a. A petition has been received on 18th March 2010 from approximately 40 residents complaining of the poor record of the district heating system and the 'Switch2' heating card system. Enfield Homes is working with the Council to review the 'Switch2' system and install new 'top up card' meters.
 - b. A maintenance contractual agreement with 'Switch2' is also being negotiated.
 - c. There were some breakdowns of the heating system during the exceptionally cold weather which were responded to within our timescales. A replacement boiler has been programmed.
 - d. A formal response was sent to the lead petitioner by Bob Heapy on 7th April 2010.

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3. Ringwell & Norton Close

- a. A petition was received from 15 sheltered schemes on 24th February 2010 asking for double glazing and other means to deal with condensation.
- b. The opinion of the technical officer is attached as an appendix.

HRA Reform

1. Bob Heapy advised that on 25th March 2010 the Housing Minister announced the second phase of the Council Housing Finance Consultation. The HRA will cease to exist but Councils nationally will be required to finance £3.65bn more housing debt bringing the total debt within Council Housing revenue accounts up to £25bn.
2. A response date of 6 July reflects that the government recognises that each Council will carefully have to consider its position.
3. For Enfield, a first review appears to show that the change would be broadly positive with a potential for Decent Homes funding to continue subject to a number of caveats and at least 10% increase in MRA and M&M.
4. Enfield Homes is working with the Council to ensure a co-ordinated response is provided to the consultation by 6 July 2010.

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RESIDENT BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS

1. Bob Heapy presented a report highlighting some changes proposed in the process of electing resident Board Members in 2010 following a review of the 2009 process.
2. An analysis of the process showed that initial expressions of interest from residents were low and only 4 candidates submitted applications.
3. Less than 16% of residents returned ballot papers, but the appointed candidates were of high quality.
4. The cost of the process was over £30K and is not felt to have provided value for money.
5. The recommendations sought approval for the revised elections procedure as outlined in appendix 1 and to proceed with elections for 3 Resident Board Members for 2010, to fill the casual vacancy in addition to the 2 required elections.
6. The difference in the procedure is that selection will be by interview and appointment rather than by election.
7. Further to discussion around the merits of financial compensation to entice more residents to come forward, the recommendations for procedure were agreed and a full discussion will be had at the next Board AwayDay in June 2010.

AGREED

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VALUE FOR MONEY

1. Derek Young gave a brief synopsis of the revised VfM strategy which was presented to the Finance & Audit Committee on 30th March, and where recommendations were agreed.
2. It has been refreshed to ensure it meets current requirements and addresses the TSA standards to be implemented in 2010.
3. This was in response to the Audit Commission's inspection report which made various recommendations to improve the approach to Value for Money.

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4. The Strategy and action plan are crucial to delivering the efficiency savings required and integral part of the delivery of the business plan, delivery plan and service improvements planned for 2010 and beyond.
5. A VfM Steering group will be established to shape and drive the VfM agenda, and will meet initially on a monthly basis. Membership will include the Director of Finance & Resources, 5 Service Managers and 3 Residents. The Board VfM Champion (Mark Hayes) will be copied in on papers and will attend occasionally.
6. An action plan and reviews programme are attached to the report and the Steering group will drive these through.
7. Derek Young advised that resource implications had been reviewed and was confident it could be done.
8. Steven Tucker congratulated Derek Young on the Strategy and stated that there was a need to focus on areas of high expenditure.

Agreed to note the report

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ANNUAL EQUALITIES REPORT

1. Kate Tordoff presented the first annual equality monitoring report for Enfield Homes (2008/09), setting out monitoring information on service take up and where available, levels of satisfaction across four of the six equality strands (race, age, gender and disability). Work has already started on the 2009/10 report.
2. The report gives more insight into who Enfield Homes' customers are, with growing numbers of BME residents, an aging resident population and increasing numbers of disabled and younger tenants leaving care.
3. The report was discussed at the Access & Involvement Committee of 23 March.
4. In response to a query from the Chair, Kate Tordoff advised that the breakdown of races was based on census categories.
5. Future profiling information will include sexual orientation, but Mark Hayes stated that these stats could be meaningless due to the level of non-response.
6. Further to review of the analysis, the Board requested that thanks be extended to Jayne Paterson who had compiled the report.
7. Kate Tordoff advised that the recommendations could be found within the body of the report.

Agreed to note the report.

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REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 28 FEBRUARY 2010

1. Derek Young advised that final figures for the financial year would be available next week but at the moment a £300-400K range surplus was envisaged. This amounts to less than 2% of the total budget of £18m.
2. The higher the surplus, the bigger the contingency would be.
3. Current figures on repairs & maintenance were showing under budget by £500K. entirely due to a much greater emphasis of identification of improvements that have been capitalised.
4. The forecast in spend terms comes down to £10.82m from £11.4m.

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5. The EH Finance team had been working closely with the Council's Finance team and every job over £1K had been analysed to identify improvements.
6. The rules had been agreed with the Council and an audit trail left.

NOTED

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CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING TO 28 FEBRUARY 2010

NOTED

1. Ron Pooley advised that the Decent Homes spend as of 30th March is £14.572m.
2. Derek Young advised that there was there was an area of £200/300K within that spend which is being reviewed and might need to change.
3. The Board congratulated Ron Pooley and his team and the Finance team for all their efforts.

Agreed to Note the report

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REPORT BACK FROM THE COMMITTEES

1. A summary of items discussed at Committee meetings since the last Board meeting were contained in the report.

Agreed to note the report

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Chair bid farewell to Kate Tordoff and Derek Young who will be leaving the organisation shortly. She thanked them for all their efforts and wished them good luck in their future endeavours.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings will be scheduled upon receipt of the finalised calendar of meetings from Enfield Council.