



Six Town Housing Shadow Board Meeting

Wednesday 16th February 2005

Europa House, Barcroft Street, Bury

Minutes of Six Town Housing Shadow Board Meeting

PRESENT:

Shadow Board Members

John Anderson
Gill Campbell
Wilf Davison
Peter Dawson
Frank Fenton
Brenda Headley
Tony Isherwood
Dave Mann
Andy McGiffin
Zoë Robertson (Vice Chair)
Gordon Smith
John Smith (Chair)
John Stewart
Phil Weatherby

Officers

Chris Gibbins (ALMO Co-ordinator)
Vicki Haslam (ALMO Project Officer)
John Merrick (Head of Tenant Services)
David Walsh (Service Manager Tenancy Management) Items 1-3 only

APOLOGIES:

Dorothy Gunther
Sharif Salim
Terry Spencer
Susan Jordan

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed as a true record.

2. Matters arising

None.

3. Anti Social Behaviour

David Walsh, Service Manager for Tenancy Management was invited to attend the meeting to give a presentation about Anti Social Behaviour, detailing both the current structure and the proposed structure once we become Six Town Housing.

A request was made that monitoring of the new structure be undertaken by the Operations committee, particularly around point of closure satisfaction surveys. This should include any cases dealt with by Community Housing Officers.

It was also suggested that the Service Level Agreement with Legal Services be reviewed.

Each Board Member was given a copy of the presentation and a supporting report regarding the arrangements for dealing with anti social behaviour following the establishment of STH for information.

4. S.27 application and Delivery Plan

The final documents as submitted to the ODPM on the 4th February were circulated to the Board for their information. To date we have not received any questions in response from the ODPM, although an acknowledgment e-mail has indicated that we are likely to.

Recommendation

The Shadow Board noted progress made regarding the S.27 application and Delivery Plan.

5. Communications Strategy

A discussion paper prepared by IPB Communications was brought to the Board for discussion and consideration.

As a Board we need to make decisions about what we want the profile of Six Town Housing to be – do we want to keep it local or do we want to gain national recognition? A number of options were put forward for the Board to consider and to make recommendations.

It was felt that the discussion paper was incomplete as it did not include financial information to back up the options. If there is no money available in the budget then consideration needs to

be made about how any communications strategy will be funded.

A request was made that a further report be brought back to the Board with more information about costings. The report should also include information about the core requirements that need to be in place for the inspection, so that an informed decision can be made.

Recommendation

A more detailed report including information about financial implications and core requirements be brought back to a future Board meeting.

6. Freedom Of Information Act

The Board were issued a report summarising the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to Six Town Housing and a copy of the draft publication scheme. Any comments regarding the scheme should be made to either Vicki, or to Richard as soon as possible.

Recommendation

The Board noted progress to date on compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

7. Change Management – Aims

A report detailing the proposed aims of Six Town Housing was brought to the Board for discussion. The aims are themed around the existing strap line, and information regarding the Councils new priorities was also included in the report to enable comparisons to be made. It is important that our aims sit alongside and complement these.

Once the Board are happy with the aims, consultation can start to take place at the stakeholder event on the 2nd March.

Proposed changes (in italics):

GREAT COMMUNITIES

- ◇ Have a pride *in their home* and their neighbourhood

EXCELLENT SERVICES

- ◇ Working in partnership to provide clean, comfortable and warm homes *in an attractive environment.*

It was noted that we need to be able to demonstrate service user involvement in the development of these aims in order to satisfy the Housing Inspectorate.

Recommendation

The Board agreed the aims of Six Town Housing with the proposed amendments having been made.

8. Board and Board Member Effectiveness

Since the Board agreed in principle to the introduction of performance and competency assessments and annual appraisals, work has been undertaken through Board training sessions to develop a number of competencies.

These competencies have now been incorporated into a self assessment form for Board members to complete prior to an individual appraisal with Enlighten.

Once the draft self assessment form has been agreed by Board members, they will be distributed in time for completion before appraisals commence on the 24th February.

Recommendation

The Board agreed the content of the draft self assessment forms. Appraisals to commence on the 24th February 2005, and a presentation of initial findings to be made to Board on 16th March 2005.

9. Stakeholder Event

The Board were given a verbal update about the proposed stakeholder events to be held on 2nd March 2005 at the Social Club of Bury Football Club.

The first event is “Investing in your home...a chance to have your say”. A proposed agenda for the event as drawn up with Vision 21 was circulated for information. The event will run from 10am – 3.30pm and will inform stakeholders of the principles of the Decent Homes standard, and provide a process by which tenants can feed their priorities into the decision making process around the capital programme.

The second event is a “Meet the Board” event to which all tenants, leaseholders and staff have been invited. This event will be more informal and will seek opinions from all attendees regarding the aims of Six Town Housing and the proposed service standards for all service areas. This is also the first opportunity for many people to meet the new Board of Directors, so it is hoped that as many of the Board will attend as possible.

10. Project Plan

The latest version of the Project plan was presented to the Board with all amendments shown in blue text to highlight them.

Recommendation

The revised project Plan was noted and accepted.

11. Any Other Business

- ◇ The Board were given information regarding the NFA annual conference and AGM to be held on the 19th and 20th April in York. Two places will be reserved for board members and a decision about who will attend is to be made at the next Board meeting.

- ◇ John Merrick distributed a sample of service standards information relating to the area of Customer Services. Although service standards are already in place for Housing Services, these need to be reviewed and re-branded for Six Town Housing. As these are critical documents for the Housing Inspectorate, work is being done to develop the service standards following consultation. A customer care charter and a complaints procedure are also in the process of being drafted.

The event on the 2nd March will also be used as an opportunity for further consultation. Any comments from board members regarding the standards will be welcomed, and the completed documents will be brought back to the Board for authorisation.

- ◇ A report regarding accommodation