



SIX TOWN HOUSING BOARD MEETING

10 JUNE 2009

5.00PM GLOBAL BUILDING

IN ATTENDANCE:

Board Members:

John Smith (Chair)
Andy McGiffin (Vice-Chair)
John Anderson
John Ball
Roger Brown
Wilf Davison
Peter Dawson
Brenda Headley
Larry Patrick
Janette Taylor
Michelle Wiseman

Officers:

John Merrick (Acting Chief Executive)
Vicki Haslam (Acting Director of Corporate Services)
Lindsey Stafford-Scott (Head of HR & Organisational Development)
John Bowker (Director of Technical Services)
Julia Shepherd (Board Support Officer/Minutes)

APOLOGIES:

Ivy Bolton
Iain Gartside
Chandrankanthi Pathinige
Sharif Salim

GUEST:

Sharon McCambridge (Chief Executive Designate)

		ACTION
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting, introduced and welcomed Sharon McCambridge to Board Members, who will commence as Chief Executive of Six Town Housing on 3 August. Sharon is currently Chief Executive Officer at High Peak Community Housing and will bring to STH 25 years of housing experience. Sharon is also a Stockport Homes Board Member.</p> <p>Board Members were advised Iain Gartside has replaced Denise Bigg as a Councillor representative on Six Town Housing's Board. JS will send a card to thank Denise.</p>	Completed 18.06.09
	Training: Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's)	
	John Merrick delivered training to the Board on EIA's. He confirmed that Six Town Housing has 87% of data on tenants covering disability, age and gender. A request was made to Board for volunteers to work on the Governance Equality Impact Assessment with the Board Support Officer.	All
1.0	APOLOGIES	
1.1	As detailed on page 1.	
2.0	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 25 March 2009	
2.1	The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
3.0	MATTERS ARISING	
3.1	Page 3 – 3.1: Average Relet Time re payment of Council Tax on empty sheltered properties empty over six month period. JM advised that Bury Council confirmed that STH still need to pay Council Tax on empty sheltered properties.	
2.1	Page 3 – 2.1: Moorside Wood corrected to Moorside Ward.	
10.0	Page 7 – 10.0: Recruitment of Chief Executive. Sharon McCambridge was appointed as Chief Executive.	
13.1	Page 10 – Stakeholder Survey - clarified the 77 survey forms were sent out to external partners not residents.	
13.1	Page 10 – John Bowker confirmed satisfaction figures have now been included in his report as requested.	
4.0	DECLARATION OF INTEREST	
4.1	None declared.	
5.0	PERFORMANCE UPDATE:	
5.1	The yearly performance outturn report information was presented to Board by John Merrick Director of Neighbourhood Services and John Bowker Director of Technical Services and Vicki Haslam Acting	

Director of Corporate Services.

Indicator Description	Comment
Proportion of Rent Collected BVPI 66a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not meet target of 97.50% although significant improvement in collection with a 96.68% outturn • 276 more tenants with a clear rent account
BVPI 66b tenants with over 7 weeks rent arrears as a percentage of total tenants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target of 6.00%. Outturn figure of 5.59% which is better than when STH was established as an ALMO.
Amount of Rent Arrears of Current Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £650,250.00 at year end • Approximately £241,000.00 off arrears total
FTA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outturn £636,105.00 • £144K less than previous year
% of FTA's collected	<p>10.69% for 2007/08 dipping to 10.34% in 2008/09</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently reviewing collection companies • Target of 13% • National Indicator Target 10% • Have asked the Council to review target to 10%
<u>Voids</u> – percentage of dwelling stock that is empty	<p>Year end 3.24% - 0.57% increase on last year</p> <p>Waiting for a decision from Council on 74 properties. John Merrick to attend meeting on the way forward re Sheltered Housing Review with the Council</p>
Rent Loss on vacant dwellings	<p>2.94% = £730,000.00</p> <p>£215,000.00 increase on previous year</p>
Average Relet Time BVPI 212	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 36 days • Actual outturn 46 days • 10 days reduction on previous year

JM

JM

	Board asked for number of properties accepted on first offer - John Merrick will bring information to next meeting
Urgent Repairs completed within Government timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Down from 98% in 2007/08 to 94% in 2008/09 • Improvement in first three periods, however, decline in performance against target of 99% • It was noted that there have been some problems regarding IT systems along with the use of sub contractors • Last 3 months of year SURE Maintenance performance dipped when aware the contract would be ending • From April 09, 97% completed on time – 97.2% cumulative for May 09
Average number of days taken to complete non-urgent repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target 16 days - 23 days 07/08 to 22 days 08/09 • Target for 2009/10 is 20days
% Responsive Repairs where appointment made and kept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 78% in 2007/08 • 89% in 2008/09 <p>Continued improvement on performance with target exceeded in three out of four periods. Target for last period – 85%</p>
CP12 Certificate number of properties without a valid gas safety certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement on last year: 94 in 2008/09 254 in 2007/08 • PH Jones inherited backlog from Sure Maintenance which should be cleared by the end of June 2009
Number of Non-Decent Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 803 non-decent homes in 2008/09 • 597 properties handed over. • Programme back on track

Annual Satisfaction Survey

Council Tenants satisfied with Overall Service:

74% in 2005/06

85.7% 2008/09

BME tenants satisfied with overall housing service:

87.3% in 2008/09

Increase on previous year of 63% for 07/08

	<p>Non-BME satisfaction of council tenants with overall housing service: 85.6% in 2008/09 Continued improvement on 07/08 figure of 79%. Target of 81%</p> <p>Satisfaction of Council tenants with opportunities for participation in Management and Decision Making: 46.6% in 2008/09 Against: 72% in 2005/06 STH Benchmarking with other organisations</p> <p>Satisfaction of BME Council tenants with opportunities for participation in Management and decision making: 44.6% in 2008/09 Increase on 2006/07 and 2007/08 where satisfaction was 42.00% for both years</p> <p>Questions was asked regarding the effectiveness of STH working with Local Area Partnerships: VH confirmed that Executive Management Team sit on LAP's. Each LAP works differently and STH do not feel we are getting the most of it. EMT will determine in the next couple of months how they can be more effective across the six townships.</p> <p>Non-BME Decision Making 46.8% in 2008/09</p> <p>CIT have pulled together a robust SIP to take BME forward.</p> <p>Questions were asked on the following points: - Response rate from BME customers. The Board were advised that CIT team carried out further follow-up to the surveys out by undertaking visits. - Clarification on what is top quartile. Bury Council requested that STH continue with the dashboard report format = 94% for 08/09 cumulative total of 94%. Cumulative has been reset from April.</p>	
6.0	HR UPDATE	
6.1	<p>STH workforce increased from 131 employees in March 2008 to 239 in March 2009 following the integration of R&M. Now almost 100% return on R&M statistical data.</p> <p>LSS reported through the process of benchmarking with other ALMOs, it was apparent in respect of data collection, there is only one other ALMO collecting as much data as STH.</p> <p>A breakdown of statistical data detailed in the report was shared with</p>	

	<p>Board.</p> <p>£101,000.00 was spent on learning and development training in 2008/09. Some training courses have been delivered in-house by the HR team which has resulted in a £8,833 non-cash efficiency saving.</p> <p>There has been an increase in sickness absence on last years figure of 9.9 days per person per annum in 2007/08 to 10.8 days per person per annum in 2008/09. The average cost of sickness for 2008/09 is £273,586.00. Outturn sickness figure for Repairs & Maintenance staff has decreased by 2 days since the integration with STH (16 days with Bury MBC to 14 days with STH).</p> <p>The Board raised a question relating to the review of Occupational Health Services detailed in 3.4.3 page 8 of the report. STH currently have an SLA with Bury Council Occupational Health Unit which is currently under-resourced. As a result of this Bury Council sometimes outsource the work.</p> <p>Board noted the information detailed in the report.</p>	
7.0	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY UPDATE	
7.1	<p>The Board were updated on progress with the Fairplay Partnership who have been working with staff at STH. Further work is planned for July 2009. Customer profiling and communication are the key issues which are being addressed in the workshops.</p> <p>Along with national and private sector agencies, Board Members heard how STH supported the International Homophobia Day – IDAHO.</p> <p>The Corporate Equality Action Plan was circulated with Board papers. Regular updates on the plan will be featured at future meetings. The key theme is to embed equality and diversity into the workplace. The introduction of equality and performance measures across all services will highlight to teams areas of good practice. Areas not meeting the Equality Standard will be evident from performance measures.</p> <p>John Merrick advised Board Members that the organisation is applying to Stonewall’s Equality Index; the work involved will be pulled together by members of the Equality Action Group.</p> <p>JM acknowledged that STH needs to increase the collection and use of customer data and supporting vulnerable people.</p> <p>STH will shortly be launching its Domestic Abuse Sanctuary Scheme. This is where individuals who are experiencing domestic abuse can attend a respite centre. All financial support for this venture has been provided by Bury Council.</p>	JM/EAG

8.0	PAY AND GRADING UPDATE	
8.1	<p>The pay and grading exercise was launched in February 2009 and is a three-part process exercise consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Re-alignment ii. Completion of JDQ's iii. Pay Agreement <p>There are 94 roles within the organisation to evaluate. 62 roles have been evaluated to-date and 47 roles (50%) have been quality checked by Hay. It is expected that all appeals will be completed by the end of October 2009. Agreement with Trade Unions to take place November/December. The decision to allow only one appeal has been agreed by both the pay and grading steering group and unions.</p> <p>Board congratulated LSS on the efficiency of the process.</p>	
	<i>Brenda Headley, Janette Taylor and Peter Dawson left the meeting at this point.</i>	
9.0	liP Update	
9.1	<p>STH was initially assessed against the liP standard in October 2008. but failed to meet all of the standards evidence requirements. STH was re-assessed in May 2009 solely on the areas identified for improvement. The result was positive with STH meeting Level 1. The liP accreditation has been awarded until May 2012 when we will need to re apply.</p> <p>HR will monitor and maintain the standards and work towards applying for the higher standard.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: Board were asked to:</p> <p>4.1 Acknowledge the achievement of the Investors in People standard and commit to ongoing review and maintenance of the standard within the liP New Choices Framework</p> <p>Board were happy to agree the above recommendation and thanked all involved in attaining this prestigious award and congratulated all staff.</p> <p>Board Members will be invited to the unveiling of the plaque.</p> <p>Acknowledged stationery will need updating to include the liP logo. HR to promote the accreditation accordingly via posters and website.</p>	HR
10.0	ICT STRATEGY	
10.1	At the Board Away Day last October, a key priority set by Board was	

	<p>that STH ensure its ICT systems are fit for purpose and meet business needs.</p> <p>The scope of this ICT strategy is to provide a high level document which defines the strategic direction of the organisation rather than a project plan which details how and what service improvements and developments will be delivered.</p> <p>This strategy is supplemented with an ICT service improvement plan (attached as an Appendix to the Strategy) which will be reviewed on an annual basis and which will contain more detail about future work programmes</p> <p>The key changes in the strategy include the appointment of a 'management champion', the formation of an ICT User Group which has representation from all levels of the organisation, which meets on a monthly basis to develop and drive changes throughout the organisation and a new SLA negotiated for 2009/10.</p> <p>Board asked if there was a "disaster recovery plan" and whether the ICT User Group have the required skills to address the complex issue of disaster recovery. VH confirmed that at present STH do not have their own plan, but this is an action to be done.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The Board agreed to the recommendation as listed at 4.1:</p> <p>4.1 To approve the draft ICT Strategy subject to any amendments which may be proposed during discussions at the meeting.</p> <p>Following discussion the Board approved the draft strategy and asked for an Action Plan to be developed to deal with any issues arising from the ICT Strategy.</p>	VH
11.0	REMUNERATION OF BOARD MEMBERS	
11.1	<p>The Board previously rejected payment for Board Members at the Board Meeting on 16 April 2008 and requested that this be reviewed annually. A report and attached appendix detailing other ALMO's provisions on the payment of Board Members was taken to the Audit and Standards Committee on 30 April 2009 for consideration at which the Audit & Standards Committee recommended that Board reject payment.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: 4.1 It is recommended that Board: 4.1.1 Note the contents of the report;</p>	

	<p>4.1.2 Reject the payment of Board Members as recommended by the Audit and Standards Committee at their meeting on 30 April 2009; or</p> <p>4.1.3 Consider the information presented in order to agree whether payment of STH Board Members would be acceptable, appropriate and feasible in principle for STH. If so delegate authority to investigate further to the Company Secretary.</p> <p>Board noted the report and agreed to reject the payment of Board Members as recommended at 4.1.2.by the Audit & Standards Committee.</p>	
12.0	TRAINEE AND APPRENTICE STRATEGY	
12.1	<p>The proposed “Trainee and Apprenticeship Strategy” for STH was put forward for board approval.</p> <p>The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out shows this strategy will have a positive impact on our customers The aim of the strategy is to provide training and employment opportunities for the borough’s local communities with an emphasis on support for our customers.</p> <p>It is anticipated that any costs for the introduction and delivery of the strategy can be met from with the Learning & Development and Human Resource budgets.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: Board agreed to the recommendation: To approve the new Training and Apprenticeship Strategy as requested at 3.1</p>	
	<i>MW left the meeting at this point.</i>	
	Agenda Item Numbers 14 / 15 / 16 and 17 are for information and were not discussed as no prior request to discuss was received.	
19.0	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
19.1	No other business was raised. The meeting closed at 7.55pm.	
20.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
20.1	19 August 2009 at 5.00pm	