



SIX TOWN HOUSING BOARD MEETING

11 NOVEMBER 2009

6.00PM EUROPA HOUSE

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Smith (Chair)
Andy McGiffin (Vice Chair)
John Anderson
John Ball
Roger Brown (up to & including item 8)
Wilf Davison
Peter Dawson
Iain Gartside
Brenda Headley
C Pathinige
Larry Patrick
Janette Taylor
Michelle Wiseman

Sharon McCambridge (Chief Executive)
John Merrick (Director of Neighbourhood Services)
Vicki Haslam (Acting Director of Corporate Services)
Lindsey Dobson Scott (Head of HR & Organisational Development)
John Bowker (Director of Technical Services)
Julia Shepherd (Board Support Officer)
Julie Heywood (Customer Contact Manager)
Viv Simon (Team Leader Community Involvement Team) up to & including item 7
Councillor Beverley Sullivan (Shareholder Representative Bury Council)

APOLOGIES:

Sharif Salim

		ACTION
	<p>Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair: Board Members were asked to self nominate for the position of Chair and Vice Chair of Board.</p> <p>Following the discussion at the Away Days regarding the possibility of having a Chair Elect, a further discussion took place and it was agreed there would not be a position for a Chair Elect.</p> <p>A précis of each nominee was circulated with the Board Papers. Nominees were given the opportunity to address Board at the meeting and answered questions from members .</p> <p>Nominees for Chair were received from: John Smith, Iain Gartside and Andy McGiffin.</p> <p>John Smith was re-elected as Chair of the Board.</p> <p>Nominees for Vice Chair: Andy McGiffin and Wilf Davison.</p> <p>Andy McGiffin was re-elected as Vice-Chair.</p>	
1.0 1.1	<p>Apologies: As detailed above.</p>	
2.0 2.1	<p>Minutes of previous meeting: 19 August 2009 The minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
3.0 3.1	<p>Matters Arising: No matters arising.</p>	
4.0 4.1	<p>Declarations of Interest: None declared.</p>	
5.0 5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4	<p>Chief Executives Business Update: Business Update was circulated with the minutes. The Chief Executive gave latest update: New Build: The pre qualifying questionnaire has been submitted to the Homes & Communities Agency and STH are waiting to hear if the application has been successful. An employer's agent has been appointed to work up details for the first scheme including relevant sites. 5.3 The Chief Executive has been invited to join Team Bury and has accepted the invitation. 5.4 As part of the Community Regeneration Group programme Six Town Housing hosted a "Built, Housing & Construction" event on the 10th of November at the Bury FC Social Club, Gigg Lane in conjunction with Bury College, Laing O'Rourke, Cskills, Connexions, Team Bury,</p>	

<p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p>	<p>Seddon, Casey, Salford University and many more advisors were on hand to provide demonstrations, career options, guidance and help with routes to qualification and employment from a first hand knowledge perspective of the Built, Housing & Construction industries. The event was very successful with good attendance. A report from the Community and Regeneration Group will be brought to a future Board Meeting.</p> <p>The Housing Inspection Action Group (HIAG) meeting has been replaced with a new Housing Services Sub Group (HSSG). The first meeting will be on Tuesday 24 November, and will look at Six Town Housing performance and Strategic Housing issues. Sharon McCambridge Chief Executive and Vicki Haslam Acting Corporate Services Director will attend for Six Town Housing. John Bowker Technical Services Director will give a presentation on New Build.</p> <p>Lindsey Stafford Scott HR and Organisational Development Manager is leaving Six Town Housing at the end of November, recruitment for a 12 month temporary HR Manager will take place on Monday 16 November.</p>	<p>Future agenda item</p>
<p>6.0</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p>REACH: (Resident Empowerment and Challenge):</p> <p>At the Board meeting of the 25th March 2009, it was agreed by Board for a resident led regulation model to be developed within Six Town Housing.</p> <p>The report and appendices give current and future costings for the group which has an agreed membership of 12 tenants and leaseholders, and once fully developed will adopt a robust scrutiny process which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinise the organisations quality and performance in all services and policies • Scrutinise the organisation’s governance arrangements against best practice governance benchmarks and the regulatory code • Scrutinise the development of the organisations strategy and business priorities <p>The group will carry out their first scrutiny activity as a test case in January 2010, over a period of 8-12 weeks. Following this the group will create an annual programme of activity, which will be informed by tenants, REACH, STH Board and Performance & Governance, and approved by Board. Following their scrutiny the group will produce a report which will be presented to Board with their outcomes / recommendations. STH Board will have a duty to formally respond and commission an action plan to address the group’s recommendations.</p> <p>Questions were asked regarding: financial implications, training, reporting arrangements, and response time from the Board to the group. It was confirmed that the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) has given guidance on reporting arrangements and trigger setting and that the working group which has been set up which includes Board Members will decide on the triggers for reporting. It was also confirmed</p>	

	<p>that Equality and Diversity strands have been met in the recruitment as all tenants have been informed and had the opportunity to put themselves forward to be involved.</p> <p>Board Members agreed that they should reply to reports from REACH within a month of considering and that Board should have the “final decision”. If they disagree with the REACH recommendation they will give a reason of why they disagree if that is the case. It was agreed that the Terms of Reference for the group would be clarified.</p> <p>Board agreed to: continue to support the development of REACH, support the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between REACH, Board and EMT, and also to consider the future budget implications for REACH.</p> <p>A further report will be brought to Board next year.</p>	<p>Action: VS</p>
<p>7.0 7.1</p>	<p>Customer Access Strategy:</p> <p>The report contains details of how customers can access Six Town Housing services for 2009 – 2012, along with an Action Plan and statistics of how customers are accessing the services currently provided. This strategy is about serving existing and future customers better and reaching and serving more people, in more ways than ever before.</p> <p>As a company our overall aim is to achieve excellent customer access and customer satisfaction putting the customer at the heart of what we do, get customer service right first time every time at first point of contact and put any mistakes right quickly, offering a high quality service ensuring that Value For Money and cost effectiveness are taken into account tailoring our services to meet customers needs. Customers want to be able to access our services in a straightforward and direct way. They expect a range and quality of services to be the same irrespective of where they live in Bury.</p> <p>The majority of customers contact us by telephone (84.4%). After listening to our customers we have worked on improving access to our services. Our website has been updated to make it more user friendly, we have introduced a text messaging service and also a self service kiosk in our reception area for customers to offer further options for customers to access our services. Overall customer satisfaction in the survey 2007/08 was 78%, this has significantly increased to 85.7% in 2008/09. Housemark benchmarking information shows Six Town Housing in the upper quartile regarding overall satisfaction with the services we provide.</p> <p>Questions were answered regarding; method of contact – email and website, and exploring the use of Digital TV. JH confirmed that contact by email from customers has increased and that the use of Digital TV has not been investigated as yet, but will be in the future. Board also asked if STH have investigated how many customers haven't contacted</p>	

	<p>us in the last twelve months. JH confirmed that the Estates team are looking into this.</p> <p>Board approved the proposed Customer Access Strategy and approved the proposed Customer Access Strategy action plan as requested</p>	
<p>8.0 8.1</p>	<p>Board Member Expense Payments: JS presented a report to review of Board Member Expense payments considered by the Audit and Standards Committee.</p> <p>Audit and Standards proposed that the Broadband allowance should be removed as most Board members with computers will already have Broadband so would be paying it anyway. They also felt that mileage rates for Board Members should be increased in line with the staff mileage. The Chair of the Audit Committee agreed that mileage should be harmonised and offered further explanation on the rationale of the recommendations made. Some Board Members expressed reservations about paper and ink cartridge claims being removed. All Board papers are printed and sent out and Personal Assistants are now sending hard copies of Committee papers out.</p> <p>Board agreed the following recommendations as recommended by the Audit Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Board member mileage to be increased and brought in line with Six Town Housing staff to 42.9p up to 999cc & 47.7p per mile over 1000cc. ▪ Proposal that Board Members who claim for ink cartridges and or computer paper to print their own Board & Committee papers. ▪ Proposal that Broadband allowance be removed from the Board Member Expense Claim Policy. ▪ Allowances for meals, carers, and out of pocket expenses to remain at the current rate, with a proposal that they are included in the next review of staff expenses and brought in line with staff payments. 	
<p>9.0 9.1</p>	<p>Reports for Information: A request to discuss queries from the Technical Services Committee was received. The following questions were answered: Page 4. item 7.4: The minutes reported a slippage on Equality and Diversity against the Service Improvement Plan. John Bowker Director of Technical Services confirmed that finance and performance had been the main concentration for the first six months of the year which led to a slippage in the collection of Equality & Diversity performance measures. Customer satisfaction statistics are now being collected weekly which will enable specific performance measures to be produced and subsequent actions to be taken.</p>	

<p>9.2</p> <p>9.3</p>	<p>Page 2 item 4.0: JB was asked if the lettings policy had been taken into account regarding the audit of garage colonies, and how many garages are in use. JB confirmed that the lettings policy and usage of garages will form part of the Stage 2 review.</p> <p>Page 5 item 9.0: Question was asked re who is checking Springs properties regarding Gas Servicing certificates. JB confirmed that this has been discussed with Springs Management, who have been made aware that this ultimately their responsibility and that information is collected on a weekly basis to notify them of outstanding certificates.</p>	
<p>18.0</p> <p>18.1</p>	<p>The Chair thanked Lindsey Stafford Scott for the work she has done in her post as HR and Organisational Development Manager for Six Town Housing turning it into “the best HR department” in the ALMO movement. He wished Lindsey well in her new post and her future career.</p>	
	<p>The meeting closed at 8.15pm.</p>	