



SIX TOWN HOUSING BOARD MEETING

19 AUGUST 2009

5.00PM EUROPA HOUSE

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Smith (Chair)
Andy McGiffin (Vice-Chair)
John Anderson
John Ball
Wilf Davison
Iain Gartside
Brenda Headley
Chandrankanthi Pathinige (from item 5)
Michelle Wiseman

Officers:

Sharon McCambridge (Chief Executive)
John Merrick (Director of Neighbourhood Services)
Vicki Haslam (Acting Director of Corporate Services)
Lindsey Stafford-Scott (Head of HR & Organisational Development)
John Bowker (Director of Technical Services)
Tracey Hunt (Finance & Business Development Manager)
Julia Shepherd (Board Support Officer/Minutes)

APOLOGIES:

Ivy Bolton
Roger Brown
Peter Dawson
Larry Patrick
Janette Taylor
Sharif Salim

		ACTION										
	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.											
1.0 1.1	Apologies: As detailed on Page 1.											
2.0 2.1	Minutes of previous meeting: 10 June 2009: The minutes were agreed as a correct record.											
3.0 3.1	Matters Arising: None from the open part of the meeting.											
4.0 4.1	Declarations of Interest: None declared.											
5.0 5.1	<p>Performance Update: Directors gave an update on performance statistics for July 2009:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicator Description</th> <th>Comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Proportion of Rent Collected BVPI 66a</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance increased 97.41% cumulative – just below target of 98% Lowest level of arrears since becoming an ALMO Over 3,200 tenants now in credit (increase of £30K still not reaching target of 98%) </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Percentage of rent arrears of current tenants.</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £618,364.00 arrears = 2.44% <p>New steps in place to address plateau including: Received match funding from Council re debt prevention work. Gaining access to Council's Housing Benefit system data. Admin team focussing on low level arrears.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total amount of FTA's</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total for July: £585,445.00 Increase of £855 in month due to rent write offs waiting to be processed. Some debts have been written on – staff tracing and identifying Performance clinics up and running </td> </tr> <tr> <td>FTA's collected as % of FTA's owed at previous year end</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.96% This is comparable with Rossendales collection rate. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Indicator Description	Comment	Proportion of Rent Collected BVPI 66a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance increased 97.41% cumulative – just below target of 98% Lowest level of arrears since becoming an ALMO Over 3,200 tenants now in credit (increase of £30K still not reaching target of 98%) 	Percentage of rent arrears of current tenants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £618,364.00 arrears = 2.44% <p>New steps in place to address plateau including: Received match funding from Council re debt prevention work. Gaining access to Council's Housing Benefit system data. Admin team focussing on low level arrears.</p>	Total amount of FTA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total for July: £585,445.00 Increase of £855 in month due to rent write offs waiting to be processed. Some debts have been written on – staff tracing and identifying Performance clinics up and running 	FTA's collected as % of FTA's owed at previous year end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.96% This is comparable with Rossendales collection rate. 	
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	<p>Void properties BVPI 212</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57 days for July. • Cumulative of 47 days • 7 sheltered properties let in July which have added around 1300 days to the figures • Without sheltered figures: cumulative of 40 days • 37 days excluding any properties adapted or awaiting assessment • Performance clinics set up which are working well. • R & M team amending procedures for empty properties 	
	<p>Urgent Repairs completed within Government timescales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98.08% for July. Cumulative performance of 93.9% (severe dip in June due to inaccuracy of data from Gas Contractor. Data now rectified • Should hit target next month 	
	<p>Average number of days taken to complete non-urgent repairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22.83 days – target 20 days • Figure affected by number of jobs which have changed to planned categories <p>Overspend last year was due to use of sub contractor. Minimal sub contractor use this financial year – on track with budgets.</p>	
<p>6.0 6.1</p>	<p>HR Update: The report detailed board’s responsibility to plan the direction for health and safety, deliver health and safety by ensuring that there are effective management systems in place, monitor health and safety by monitoring sickness absence, accidents and incidents and workplace ill-health and for reviewing health and safety which can be achieved by an annual report of health and safety performance and reviewing health and safety policy and procedures. The delivery of health and safety will largely be carried out by managers in conjunction with the health and safety advisor, however, Board should ensure that arrangements are in place and that they are adequately resourced.</p> <p>Recommendation: 1) Board were asked to acknowledge their responsibilities for health and safety as outlined in this report and within the checklist appended to this report – Health and Safety Leadership Checklist.</p> <p>2) appoint a Health and Safety Champion whose role it will be to take a strategic approach to health and safety and act as the organisations champion.</p> <p>Board acknowledged their responsibilities for Health & Safety as</p>		

	outlined in the report and appointed John Ball as Health & Safety Champion to replace Denise Bigg who retired from Board In June.	
7.0 7.1	<p>Equality & Diversity Update: John Merrick gave an update on Equality & Diversity in the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first equality report will be launched next week setting out key achievements and what we need to focus on in the next year. ▪ During the last year STH have had two external assessments - the Audit Commission Inspection, and Fairplay Partnership who are currently doing work on equality and diversity with us. ▪ BME tenant satisfaction has increased from 67% - 87% in the last STATUS Survey, and we now have new ways of engaging with BME tenants in the community ▪ The Sanctuary Scheme for domestic abuse has been set up and we will soon be opening a domestic violence centre ▪ 26% of Casey's and Seddon's workforce working in the area have been recruited locally. They also operate an apprentice scheme for young people ▪ STH received an award for our PPO scheme (Prolific and other Priority Offenders) at the Greater Manchester Employer Coalition Awards in May this year ▪ A handy person scheme is being piloted ▪ The STH website has been re-launched complying with disability and equality issues ▪ We celebrated IDAHO day in May ▪ STH are now members of Stonewall and the equality group are preparing an application for the workplace equality index ▪ We are about to reassess ourselves against the equality standard which was revised in April this year ▪ We are preparing for the PRIDE weekend which takes place over the August Bank Holiday weekend. 	
8.0 8.1	<p>Learning & Development Strategy: This report introduced the proposed "Learning and Development Strategy" for Six Town Housing. Ongoing investment in learning provision provides personal and career development for staff leading to increased staff morale and commitment and in turn contributes to our aim of delivering excellent services and inspiring people. The introduction of this Learning & Development Strategy and its alignment to strategic priorities will provide a focal point for all current and future learning activities in line with Six Town Housing Learning & Development and directly support the achievement of Organisational goals and objectives.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>Board approved the new learning & Development Strategy for Six Town Housing as requested.</p>	

<p>9.0 9.1</p>	<p>Wellbeing Strategy: The strategy will have a positive impact on customers as it encompasses customers as well as employees. In addition a reduction in sickness absence and improved employee wellbeing increases organisational capacity and performance and therefore improves service delivery.</p> <p>Questions were answered on: budget, work life balance and stress.</p> <p>The new Wellbeing Strategy was approved by Board as requested in the report.</p>	
<p>10.0 10.1</p>	<p>Approval of Accounts Year Ending 2008 – 2009: The Report and Financial Statements have been considered by the Audit and Standards Committee who were happy to approve for presentation to Board for formal approval. Board are required to consider the financial position and confirm that the Company should be considered a going concern. Board were also asked to approve a letter of representation from the Board to the company’s auditor and signed by the Chair on their behalf.</p> <p>Board also need to consider the appointment or tender of external auditor.</p> <p>Questions were answered around the FRS 17 financial reporting statement regarding retirement benefits. Six Town Housing are in discussion with the Council to confirm the underwriting of the pension liability. Six Town Housing are looking to determine a better process for agreeing the Management Fee with the Council before Christmas. This would then enable the budget setting process to be started earlier for Board to be involved in.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>4.1 Board were asked to:</p> <p>4.1.1 note the company’s financial results and variations</p> <p>4.1.2 agree that it is appropriate to prepare the company’s accounts on a going concern basis.</p> <p>4.1.3 formally approve the Report and Financial Statements</p> <p>4.1.4 approve the letter of representation</p> <p>4.1.5 agree that a resolution for the re-appointment of Baker Tilly UK Audit LLP as auditors of the company be proposed at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.</p>	

	<p>4.1.6 confirm that it is satisfied with the actuary's assumptions relating to reporting under Financial Reporting Statement 17 "Retirement Benefits".</p> <p>Board noted and agreed all recommendations as detailed above.</p>	
<p>11.0 11.1</p>	<p>Annual Health & Safety Report: This report provides an update on performance against the Health and Safety Service Improvement Plan and also provides statistical analysis. This report covers the statistical period 01/04/08 to 31/03/09 and up to July 2009 in terms of progress against the Service Improvement Plan. There has been considerable progress in terms of health and safety; however, there is still work to be done. Progress against the Health and Safety Service Improvement Plan (SIP) is on target with the only barriers being related to time and financial resource availability. We continue to work with managers to ensure they are meeting their Health and Safety responsibilities.</p> <p>There have been 47 incidents during the last financial year – the majority of which relate to Repairs and Maintenance and which occur out on estates. Violent incidents and manual handling are the key areas for improvement. There have also been a number of fires and consideration should be given to the education of tenants in fire safety. Slips, trips and falls are also of concern within the estates with defective paving being of concern.</p> <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>4.1 It is recommended that Board note the contents of this report. 4.2 It is recommended that Health and Safety Statistics are reported to Board quarterly as part of the HR Update Report.</p> <p>Board noted the contents of the report and agreed to the quarterly reporting of Health & safety statistics to be included in the HR Update.</p>	
	OPEN	
	Items 13, 14, 15, & 16 are for information and were not discussed as no prior request to discuss was received	
<p>18.0 18.1</p>	<p>Any Other Business: No other business was raised. The meeting closed at 7.30pm.</p>	
<p>19.0 19.1</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting: AGM 4 November 2009</p>	