

**Minutes of the Aire Valley Homes
Board Meeting
30th March 2011 at 6pm - at Navigation House**

Board Members Present

Roy Birch (RB),
Phil Davies (PD)
Andrew Feldhaus (AF)
Christina Fielden (CF)
Louise Page-Bullock (LPB)
Gillian Bennett (GB)
Steve Vickers (SV)
Cllr Geoff Driver (GD)
Cllr Stewart Golton (SG)
Richard Whitaker (RW)
Cllr Robert Finnigan (RF)

Apologies

Cllr Mark Dobson (MD)

AVHL Officers present

John Clark (JC)
Jason Kirk (JK)
Simon Costigan (SC)
Mark Grandfield (MG)
Beth Hargreaves (minutes) (BH)

Guests

Mark Waterhouse (MW) – Morrison FS
Cllr Peter Gruen (PG)

AF welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Action

411.0 Apologies for Absence/Quorum

Apologies were received from MD.

412.0 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

413.0 Action List

The action list was discussed and updated.

Minutes of meeting – 26th January 2011 (including confidential minutes)

413.1 Accuracy

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

413.2 Matters Arising

None

414.0 Minutes of the Sub-Committees

The Board Members were updated with the key points from the Sub-Committees.

415.0 Confidential Item

In accordance with the Board's Access to Information rules it was agreed that Members of the public be excluded from the discussion of item 415.0 in view of the confidential nature of the business to be considered.

416.0 Current and future issues for Leeds

PG attended the board to give an update on current and future issues for Leeds from an LCC perspective. The presentation was split into two parts, the achievements to date and future challenges.

The achievements:

The three ALMO model has been retained which will ensure local knowledge and experience is retained.

The Strategic Governance Board will enable greater joint working, cooperation and agree a city wide strategy.

The Shared Service centre will enable pooling of the back office functions, reducing duplication and maximising resources. The ALMO CEO's will be given a greater representative role on other Boards/Partnerships.

FRS17 has freed up resources to invest in housing stock to invest £4m in the modernisation of sheltered housing and £6.2m for HRA Capital Programme.

£2m for ALMOs to invest in their priorities, AVHL will prioritise new lifts at Cottingley Towers and Cottingley Heights (£400k) and tackle the fire safety backlog (£268k)

The HRA Rebate of £4.6m to be shared between ALMOs and BITMO. This will allow £1m additional investment in adaptations, £700k for Care Ring replacement, £850k for AVHL to pay Homeloss and disturbance payments for Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck in preparation for the PPF schemes and £150k for AVHL fire safety work.

Over 700 new affordable homes delivered this year. This includes 21 in Glen Road, Morley and 22 in Kirkness Court, Morley.

Plans for over 450 new affordable homes in the next financial year. This includes 22 in Chapel Hill, Morley; 20 in Holmesley House, Woodlesford; and 25 in Eastleigh Drive, Tingley.

Hard work is ongoing to secure government approval for the Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck PFI scheme. This will provide a £190m investment to provide 400 new homes, refurbish 1300 existing homes, and deliver environmental improvements and commercial space.

Over 95% of properties now meet decent homes standards. £800m has been invested to bring our housing stock up to standard.

A fairer policy for lettings which means 25% of properties will be allocated to people with local connections who have been on the waiting list the longest.

New antisocial behaviour framework will provide a stronger link between the Council, ALMOs and other services to address ASB issues more effectively.

The future challenges:

Budget Constraints as the Council has to find £90m of savings next year and £150m over four years. £4.4bn has been cut from national affordable housing budget and tenants are facing a 6.84% rent increase

Housing benefit cuts could push more people into homelessness which will increase demand for council houses.

“Flexible” tenancies will offer less security for tenants and will undermine efforts to establish stable communities.

New Homes Bonus means the government will provide funding equal to Council tax on new homes for six years. Leeds will receive £2.73m next year but this won't provide enough incentive to boost house building sufficiently.

Move to self-financing from 2012 will provide greater freedom and control over the HRA.

Still shortcomings as 75% of Right to Buy money goes to government and there is limited prudential borrowing which hinders our ability to invest.

The Board Members asked PG how more houses will be developed if PFI is no longer an option. PG advised discussions need to take place to agree this.

The Board Members noted the presentation.

417.0 Confidential Item

In accordance with the Board's Access to Information rules it was agreed that Members of the public be excluded from the discussion of item 417.0 in view of the confidential nature of the business to be considered.

418.0 Shared Service Centre

JC introduced this item advising WNW are now the host ALMO and David Heels from East North East has been appointed as the Head of the Shared Service.

The Early Leavers Initiatives have been launched in the ALMOs in line with the recent LCC offer.

Workshops and workstreams have been taking place to establish the

structures and determine which roles will be include in the SSC and what will be retained in the ALMOs.

The reserve money transferred from the ALMOs to guarantee the FRS17 pension liability totals £15,522m and has been ring fenced in the HRA. Of this, £4.0m was committed to a Sheltered Housing Remodelling Scheme and a further £2.033m distributed equally to the three ALMOs to fund other capital priorities. It is proposed that the AVHL share of this (£0.678m) could be used to fund DDA works and Health & Safety schemes to replace the lifts at Cottingley Towers and Heights at a cost of £0.400m and utilise the remaining £0.278m on accelerating essential work contained in the Fire Safety Concordat.

Board Members approved the recommendations to:

- **Note the report.**
- **Endorse the areas (DDA and H&S) identified for investment through the redistributed ALMO reserves.**

419.0 Grounds Maintenance

SC advised that this is a verbal update as the project is moving forward rapidly and papers sent last week would now be out of date.

Fourteen PPQ submissions have been received and eight of these have been invited to tender. The deadline for the return of the tenders is 8th May.

A full update will be presented to the CSSC next week and the tender documents can be provided if requested.

Board Members noted the verbal update.

420.0 Quest

SC gave an update on the Quest launch advising it is on track. The structures have been brought together and the recruitment process has been concluded ready for the unit to go live on Monday.

The Housing Management structure is currently being reviewed in line with the new Quest structure.

Board Members noted the verbal update.

421.0 Business Plan

JK introduced this item advising it is to provide an update on the penalty and incentive scheme and to gain final approval for next years budget.

The full business plan will be submitted to the May Board meeting.

JK

421.1 Key Performance Indicators

The forecasted incentive for 2010/11 is £317k which is an additional £57k on the original forecast and is £106k better than 2009/10.

The budgeted financial incentive for 2011/12 is £211k which is £107k lower than 10/11 as it reflects the economic climate and the expected impact of Government changes to benefits. There is scope within voids performance to recover this position but this is dependent on Strategic Landlord maintaining the same performance criteria as 2010/11.

All the performance indicators for 2011/12 and the associated penalty/incentive weighting are still being reviewed by Strategic Landlord. The final set of indicators will be reported to Resources and Performance Sub-Committee on 11th May 2011.

Board Members noted the current performance 2010/11 and review proposed targets

421.2 Budget Approval

JK advised that the draft budgets were provisionally agreed at the last meeting in January and have been re-submitted for final approval.

The budget approval is needed to start the financial year although Board Members were asked to note that the carry forward budget from this year is still being finalised and LCC need to confirm the capital budget

JC asked the Board Members to endorse SMT to put pressure on the council to receive confirmation on the capital budget earlier in the year, this was agreed.

This budget includes the FRS17 provision and salaries are based on actuals rather than the top of the scale.

The budget will be re-submitted to the Board when this years accounts are closed and the capital budget it confirmed.

JK

Board Members approved the 2011/12 revenue and capital budgets and endorsed SMT put pressure on the council to receive confirmation of the capital budget earlier next year.

422.0 **Localism Bill**

AF requested Board Members to read outside the meeting and feedback any comments.

GD would like to see a report on how the service will be provided, Shaid Mahmood will be asked to submit a report and will be invited to attend the next meeting.

BH

423.0 **Tenant Scrutiny**

AF requested Board Members to read outside the meeting and feedback any comments.

424.0 **Health and Safety policy**

The Health, Safety and Employee Welfare Policy has been signed off by JC and MG and has been agreed by the Audit and Risk Sub-Committee. It is now submitted to the Board for final approval.

The Board Members agreed the Health, Safety and Employee Welfare Policy.

425.0 Attendance at Sub-Committees

This item was not discussed.

426.0 Forward Plan

No further items were requested.

427.0 Minutes of Area Panels

There was a feeling that the Area Panel minutes included in the pack were not the most recent ones. This could be because they are only sent with the Board papers once the relevant AP has confirmed them as a correct record but going forward AP leads will be asked to submit the minutes to be circulated.

BH

428.0 Any Other Business

It was agreed that Board Meetings will commence at 5.30pm going forward.

BH

429.0 Date of next meeting – 6pm at Navigation House

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th May 2011 at 5.30pm.