



**HIGH PEAK COMMUNITY HOUSING LIMITED  
COMPANY NUMBER 4983817  
BOARD MEETING**

**22 June 2011**

**Present:** Agnes Bradley (Chair), Peter Glover (Vice Chair), Chris Webster (Vice Chair), Alan Barrow, Graham Fox, Jason Good, Kerry Martin, Margaret Nield, John Pritchard, Awaad Rashed, Simon Rogers, Edward Siddall, Emily Thrane, Mike Watson

**In Attendance:** Mark Ford, Mike Coppock, Jason Hawkes, John Moss, Louise Pearce, Linda McAlinden (Minutes).

**Also in Attendance:** Ian Young (Strategic Housing officer HPBC).

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the three new Council nominated members to the meeting. All board members made a brief round table introduction to themselves.

The board **ratified** the appointments of Alan Barrow, Edward Siddall and Emily Thrane to the Board of HPCH.

The board **ratified** the reappointment of John Pritchard and Chris Webster as Board members.

The board members **agreed** to Chris Webster continuing to serve as a Vice Chair of the Board.

**1. Apologies – None**

**2. Expressions of Interest**

Other than that which might reasonably be expected from tenants and Council nominees, no Expressions of Interest were declared.

### **3. Minutes of last meeting / Matters Arising / Follow-Up Action Summary**

Kerry Martin proposed and Jason Good seconded that the minutes as presented from 27 April 2011 meeting be accepted as a true and accurate reflection of that meeting.

Board members **agreed**.

#### **Matters arising**

In response to a query regarding Peveril House, it was stated by the HPBC Housing Strategy Manager that an options appraisal report was progressing through the political process and that a decision was expected shortly.

#### **Follow up Actions**

All Complete.

### **Confidential Items**

#### **4. Minutes from Confidential part of April 2011 meeting**

#### **5. Update on Company Restructuring Programme**

**The minutes for the above items may be found under separate cover.**

#### **6. Chair's Update.**

There was no Chair's update.

#### **7. High Level Business Summary**

##### **a) Company overview**

The Chief Executive presented this report stating this is the usual overview report for the business. A volunteer for Chair of the Health and Safety committee was requested. Alan Barrow volunteered and stated that in his work capacity he had dealings with H&S. Alan Barrow was nominated as the Board Champion for Health and Safety.

In response to a query it was stated that the CESP scheme in Gamesley was now progressing. Funding and construction partners had been selected. Final approval of the appointments would be through an extraordinary meeting of the Council's Executive to be held the next day. It is hoped that work will start in 4 to 6 weeks time and will be completion will be achievable within the timescales

required. The partners will offer a scheme to owner occupiers that will allow them to have the same work carried out on favourable terms and with a range of funding options. Extensive consultation will take place prior to work commencing.

Volunteers were sought for the Governance Sub-Group as it was felt timely that further work was undertaken on reviewing governance issues. Members interested in being involved were asked to contact the Governance Co-ordinator. It was also felt that this would be a good point to review the operation of sub-groups across the governance structure and that this could be part of the remit.

It was noted that there may be opportunity to sell Communication services to Six Town Housing.

#### **b) Management Accounts**

A hard copy of the emailed document was circulated by the Head of Finance, who informed the board that the External Auditors were on site this week, and that the numbers on the sheet had moved since the document had been produced, in part due to the figures supplied on the Capital Commissioning.

Members noted the following points: -

- It was stressed that both HPBC and HPCH are working on this new system and that this was the first cut of the year end figures.
- Anticipated loss currently at £84k but may be reduced to £60k when all calculations have been carried out.
- When the pension liability (FRS17) is accounted for the deficit on the Income and Expenditure account will become an accounting profit. This is due to an unanticipated and large swing in the actuarial position and does not affect the company's overall operational position.
- The restructuring of the company may not save money during the first year but will start to show savings thereafter. Depending on the impact of HRA reform reserves may grow again which might be used for future investment.
- The External auditors will be finished by week ending 24 June 2011, the first draft of the Final Year End accounts will be presented to the Audit and Resources sub group in July. Following the necessary tax computations the accounts will be presented to board for final approval in September.
- The management accounts for the end of May reflect a positive position against year to date budgets. This may well be as a result of managers holding back spending as budgets had not been released to them.
- A member requested that the budget and outturn relating to the spend on audit costs be split into the three constituent parts.
- The company pay council tax on empty properties. The company do benefit as once the property is either reoccupied or sold off in that the monies are deposited into the HRA account and there would be no advantage to the council bearing the cost in the first place.

**c) Performance**

For the benefit of new members the Head of Business Services explained that the performance figures were tracked on a web based system called Covalent. The indicators and targets are set by the Quality and Performance sub group, agreed by the whole board and monitored by the Quality and Performance group.

The Chair of the Quality and Performance sub group stated that the group had decided at the last meeting that the targets for the company would be left at the 2010 / 2011 level in order to alleviate some of the pressure meeting targets might add to the current situation. Maintaining performance levels would indicate good performance at a time of significant change. He assured other board members that the group would closely monitor and changes in performance against target.

**d) Business Area Overview**

The Head of Business Services stated that this was the first time this report had been published in this format using charts from Covalent. It was not as clear, when printed, as it appeared on screen, and further work would be carried out on the report prior to the next board meeting.

She also explained that following a recommendation from the auditors the business plan is now monitored against the key themes of the company. It is not expected that this will always be green but should any indicators go to red then this will be investigated and reported back to board.

Again the Chair of the Quality and Performance assured the Board that this would also be an area closely monitored by the group.

**e) Tenant Scrutiny Action plan – update**

The Chief Executive explained that the Tenant Scrutiny group presented the findings of their first project to the Board in April and requested that the Action plan be monitored by the Homes and Communities sub group and a high level overview be discussed at each board meeting. There is an expectation nationally that companies will engage and consult with tenants. Our Scrutiny group have been invited to national events and have presented workshops on their work. The company is very proud of their achievements. Their report very much represents a tenant's perspective on the services we provide.

**Board members discussed and noted the content of this report.**

**8. Review of Strategic Risk Map**

Audit and Resources sub group asked that the Strategic Risk map be rescored following the company restructure announcement. Board members noted that this had been done.

A member requested that under the heading of Welfare reform, direct payments and

under occupation be added. It was also mentioned that the company's preparedness for HRA reform should be reflected.

The Head of Business Services stated that this would be done and would be submitted to the next Audit and Resources subgroup meeting which is being held in July.

Another member commented that it may be prudent to look again at Credit Unions once the Self Financing HRA does commence. This was **agreed**.

**Board members reviewed the strategic risk map, discussed the recommendations of the Executive Team and agreed to adopt this with the additions as mentioned above.**

**Board Members also agreed that the Strategic Risk Map would continue to be monitored by the Audit and Resources sub group.**

## **9. Stock Options Appraisal**

This report was presented by the Chief Executive of HPCH. Given the political change at the Council there was little to report at this stage.

**Board Members noted the contents of this report.**

## **10. Managing our Equalities and Diversity responsibilities**

As part of the ongoing knowledge development of board members and in view of changes to legislation earlier in 2011, the Head of Business Services stated that delivering this module from the training plan is timely.

Following the presentation of the report Board members commented as follows:

- The request for a Board Champion for Equalities and Diversities was requested and Board agreed for this to be Margaret Nield, who has had previous experience within this field.
- It was noted that the report stated there are robust procedures and processes in place which have been updated to reflect the new legislation
- As an ALMO the company is duty bound to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. A member suggested that some internal peer reviews could take place with HPBC and there could be some added value in this to test the Company's approach. It was acknowledged that this had worked well in the past and would be favourably considered.
- Future training is being undertaken by staff later in the year and this is being offered to Board members should they wish to take it.
- Discussions took place with regard to the options stated in the report for assessment frameworks for Equalities and Diversities. It was agreed that the Equality Framework for Social Housing was the most appropriate framework,

although it was felt that the cost of assessment could not be agreed at this time.

**Board members:**

- **noted** the contents of the report and appendices.
- **considered** and appointed Margaret Nield as an Equality and Diversity Board champion
- **decided not** to apply for accreditation under the Social Housing Equality Framework **but** for the company to use the framework without the associated costs of assessment at this time.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50 pm

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|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Date of next meeting:</b> | <b>Wednesday 27 July 2011</b>         |
| <b>Time:</b>                 | <b>6.00 pm</b>                        |
| <b>Venue:</b>                | <b>HPCH Head Office, Furness Vale</b> |

**Signed:**

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Chair of the Board

**Date:**

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