



HIGH PEAK COMMUNITY HOUSING LIMITED

COMPANY NUMBER 4983817

BOARD MEETING

26th January 2010

Present: Agnes Bradley (Chair), John Arden (Vice Chair), Linda Baldry, Graham Fox, Peter Glover, Linda Leather, Kerry Martin, Anthony McKeown, John Pritchard, Awaad Rashed, Simon Rogers, Chris Webster,

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

1. Apologies Linda Downings, Mike Watson, Roger Wilkinson

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

Awaad Rashed proposed and John Pritchard seconded that the minutes presented were a true and accurate account of the meeting held on Wednesday 25th November 2009.

Matters Arising

Any matters arising were covered in the Follow up Actions.

Chair's update

The Chair asked John Pritchard to update the board on the Midlands ALMO board members meeting which he had attended.

He stated that there had been four main areas of discussion.

- the petition to the Prime Minister's office, the link for which had been forwarded to Board members, regarding funding of the ALMO.
- There had been a reminder about Board responsibility with regards to Corporate Manslaughter and Health and Safety.
- A presentation about Prudential borrowing in return for a stake in private adaptations to enable people to live in their own homes for longer, and whether this was sustainable
- One ALMO had increased their tenant incentive to downsize to £5,000.

The next meeting of this group is Monday 12th April 2010 at Nottingham City Homes.

4. High Business Summary

This item was presented in turn by the relevant Heads of Service.

Main points to note

- The Company is in surplus but not as much as anticipated. The reasons for this are covered under agenda item 9.
- On page 2 of 3 under Capital Programme the narrative should read that the Whaley Bridge kitchen contract has now started and the heating contract is completed.
- Risk is being discussed at the Audit and Resources sub group meeting on 3rd February 2010.

Board members **discussed** and **noted** the report.

Confidential Matters (this part of the meeting was a closed session)

5. Briefing on the possibility of the HRA moving out of subsidy

6. Accommodation

7. Update on the ICT outsourcing proposals (verbal)

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

Matters for Discussion and Decision

8. Report on analysis of repairs spending

This report was presented by the Head of Asset Management. He emphasised the issues and stated that a letter informing tenants affected by the work put on hold (double glazed units) what was happening and when the work would be carried out will be posted out.

It was queried if any of the doors and windows in question were under guarantee. The response was that a number of suppliers have been used over the years and some are no longer trading. The review will identify those which can be mended on this basis. There had been a suspension on replacing failed units until early 2009 when surplus monies had been identified and used to carry out the work. Since this time repairs to failed double glazed units have been done on a reported basis.

With regards to failing door units this is believed to be due to poor installation, again the review will identify the issue.

Board members were pleased to note that tenants were to be informed of what was happening and requested that the analysis be discussed at the Asset management sub group.

It was stated that the repairs budget will need to be reassessed once this has been done.

It was noted that as the implementation of the new voids standard had raised the quality of houses being let – members felt it important to maintain this standard, There is value for money in raising the standard and work is ongoing with tenant groups to increase the satisfaction.

It was noted that the company have recruited to post which will deal with recharging tenants for costs incurred so efficiencies would be gained.

A member of the board who had done a feasibility study on obtaining a waste disposal license advised against it. There were all kinds of hidden 'extras' and huge health and safety and corporate manslaughter implications of disposing of waste materials. Staff were advised to look at recycling and to explore the best deals from local waste disposal operatives who would have all the necessary licenses.

Board members approved:

- **That the raising of replacement double glazed units to be suspended until the new financial year – with the proviso that a 'common sense' approach be taken where the failure is seriously affecting the quality of a tenant's life; and that letters informing tenants of what is happening are sent out.**

- A review of new doors and windows jobs be undertaken to identify why so many require replacement. Create a planned programme if necessary.
- The implementation of the new Schedule of Rates (SOR) in voids to reflect new standard. Budget to be reviewed for 2010-11.
- Costs of void caretakers to be verified against savings in cleaning costs.
- A comprehensive set of management reports be developed following the introduction of Schedule of Rates to be reported first to Asset Management sub group and then to Board.

9. Annual review of rents and other charges 2010 / 2011

This was presented by the Head of Finance who reminded Board members that this was not within the gift of the Board to decide, but would be the recommendations that are being put to HPBC.

Recommendation 6 – as no further reliable data has been received it is proposed that no other changes than those proposed be implemented.

Recommendation 7 – is for the board to approve. Some concern was expressed that Carelink was not been utilised to its best potential. It was explained that this has been highlighted and Carelink would be doing a presentation at the next Board meeting.

It was also stated that it was not known what impact the subsidy would have on rent.

Board members noted the recommendations 1 to 6 that will be considered by HPBC:

- Recommendation 1** - the increase to rents is proposed for implementation in line with the Government guidance.
- Recommendation 2** - increases of 0.93% for non-HRA properties are proposed for implementation.
- Recommendation 3** - increases of 0.93 % for garage rents are proposed for implementation
- Recommendation 4** - service charges are proposed to be reduced by 0.9%.
- Recommendation 5** - warden charges are proposed to be kept at current year rates.
- Recommendation 6** - fuel charges are increased, as illustrated in Appendix 1 & 2.
- Recommendation 7** – Anothony McKeown proposed, Graham Fox seconded and all Board members agreed - Private Client Carelink charges.

10. TSA Registration

This report was presented by the Head of Business Services who was asked what the main advantages to being registered were. It was stated that there would be benefits especially in being able to access housing benefits directly.. It will also make it easier

for HPCH to approach other local private landlords and offer services.

Disadvantages are that it is a time consuming exercise and annual accounts will need to be submitted. It was explained that the company already submit accounts to Companies House and a duplicate copy to the TSA would not be unduly costly.

After a discussion it was decided that this is an area of the business that HPCH are looking to develop so this would be a worth while exercise.

Board members approved registration with the TSA

11. Tenants Transfer Incentive scheme Policy

This report was presented by the Head of Homes and Communities who stated that this had been produced as a direct result of the Xpress Yourself Tour questionnaire. Appendix 1 shows what the tenants had been asked and appendix 2 shows how the scheme has been developed from what the tenants have asked for.

There was a discussion during which it was agreed that the main issue was not money but having a better alternative accommodation to offer. It was very difficult to persuade people to move if they have lived in a property for a substantial amount of time. The issue should be dealt with sensitively and tenants should not feel pressured into moving. It was acknowledged that this scheme will not suit all under occupying tenants but will provide additional incentives to those who are deterred from moving due to practical difficulties.

It was queried if an approach could be made to HPBC planners to request that when planning permission was being sought and the directive which means that 15% of new build property must be affordable is brought into play, that the planners request these affordable homes are 2 bedroomed bungalows.

Board members agreed that this was a good response to the Xpress Yourself Tour and that what was now on offer could be considered to be a good deal. It was requested that a report be brought back to Board in 12 months time to assess the effectiveness of the scheme.

The Board approved the amendments to the Transfer Incentive Scheme

12. Gas Safety Policy

Board members approved the implementation of the gas safety policy as presented.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Date of next meeting:	24th February 2010
Time:	6.00pm
Venue:	Head Office, Municipal Buildings, Glossop

Signed: _____

Date: _____