

Minutes of the Eighty-Ninth Board Meeting

Held on 14 June 2016 at 5.30pm
At Room 1, CBH, Rowan House,
33 Sheepen Road, Colchester CO3 3WG

Present:

Anne Grahamslaw (Chair)
Alan Blois (Vice Chair)
Nigel Chapman (Vice Chair)
Julie Parker
Glenn Houchell
Geoff Foster
Michala Carey
Tina Graves
Dionne Philp

In Attendance:

Michael Hadjimichael
Karen Loweman
Mark Wright
Gerardine Murphy
Matt Armstrong
Nikki Bedford

Owen Howell (Minutes)

Observing:

Gareth Mitchell (CBC)
Geoff Beales (CBC)
Jan Sexton (TLCC)
Lynda Buxton (TLCC)
Jimmy Watson (TLCC)
Michael Campbell (TLCC)
Dawn Tibble (TLCC)

1. Apologies and quorum

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Gerard Oxford, Julia Havis and Mike Lilley. These three members were in the process of retiring from the Board and the Chair placed on record the Board's thanks to them for their service and efforts. The Chair declared the meeting as quorate.

2. Declaration of interests by Board Members and Officers

- 2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2016 and Matters Arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
- 3.2 It was confirmed that there were no actions arising from the minutes.

4. Voice your view

- 4a.1 CBH tenant Jan Sexton spoke regarding mature trees which were causing problems for residents in her street. She requested a meeting with the tree specialist involved so that residents' questions could be addressed.
- 4a.2 Karen Loweman explained that the officer had examined the trees and that he had now been asked to meet with Jan to discuss the problems and potential solutions. The meeting would be set up. **Action:** Karen Loweman to ensure this

meeting goes ahead.

- 4b.1 Cllrs Lesley and Jessica Scott-Boutell spoke to describe the condition of the cul-de-sac on Winstree Road and to request that parking and landscaping improvements be made, including the provision of a disabled parking space. CBH had drawn the matter to a close and explained that this was not work which could be undertaken by CBH.
- 4b.2 Local resident Vincent Steptoe also spoke on this issue, highlighting the difficulties faced by residents with the lack of parking. Residents had designed a potential new layout for the cul-de-sac to show how changes could be made. Difficulties for emergency-vehicle access were highlighted. Concerns about the cyclepath along Winstree Road was also detailed.
- 4b.3 Karen Loweman explained the difficulties faced on estates designed and built at a time when car use was less common and explained that she had looked into the issues at Winstree Road prior to this meeting. She explained that CBC's Planning Department prioritised the retention of green spaces, but that the space here was of little benefit except for some parking. Karen offered to organize meetings between residents, CBC and CBH to discuss what was possible regarding making improvements. **Action:** Karen Loweman to pursue and liaise with CBC and residents. A petition from residents was formally noted and accepted at this point.
- 4c.1 Jan Sexton delivered a statement on behalf of the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Committee (TLCC) regarding their ongoing scrutiny work. The TLCC had concluded their scrutiny of pre-tenancy workshops and will revisit this area in the future to monitor progress. Jan expressed thanks to the officers who had worked with the TLCC on this.
- 4c.2 The next TLCC scrutiny topic would be Tenancy Audits. Their findings would be reported to the Board.

5. Confirmation of new Chief Executive

- 5.1 Chair confirmed that Board Members had met to ratify the appointment of Gareth Mitchell as new Chief Executive.

6. Board Member Expenses Scheme

- 6.1 Owen Howell introduced the report and amended Scheme and thanked Members for the suggestions which had been incorporated.
- 6.2 **Decision:** Board unanimously approved the updated Scheme.

7. Strategic Risk Register

- 7.1 Michael Hadjimichael presented the current Strategic Risk Register. The Risk added concerning the recruitment of the new Chief Executive for CBH would remain on the Register until Gareth Mitchell took up his appointment to that role.

- 7.2 Board discussed Risk Seven (Impact of Budget announcement), the risk relating to the Housing and Planning Act (2016) and the mitigating actions which had been taken relating to these. Michael accepted that this risk had lessened owing to actions taken by CBH. The Risk would remain on the Register as it was still present. This risk would be updated as the situation develops and after the next budget.
- 7.3 Michael agreed that it would be useful to Board if the Register be added to in order to make it more forward-looking. **Decision:** Board accepted the Strategic Risk Register.

8. Medium Term Delivery Plan, 2015-16 Progress

- 8.1 Karen Loweman presented the progress report and highlighted the main points in the report.
- 8.2 In response to questions, Karen explained that drug and alcohol interventions for tenants had already commenced, in partnership with Open Road.
- 8.3 Mark Wright answered questions regarding the CBH Remotely-piloted Aerial System (RPAS) and confirmed that the operator held the relevant Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) licence. They were aware of the local restricted airspace above the Military Corrective Training Centre.
- 8.4 Karen explained that red-flagged items were either cancelled or on hold, pending changes affecting them. These were revisited and reviewed as appropriate. Items with no actions next to them indicated that actions had yet to commence. There were several blanks where officers had yet to add actions which had commenced or taken place. Karen would follow these up to ensure all developments were included. **Action:** Karen Loweman to ask officers to update the Delivery Plan as necessary.
- 8.5 Regarding point 6.2, Karen explained that CBC's Private Housing Team monitor potential properties which could be brought into use. CBH assists with this work, and is commencing a Private Sector Letting Scheme.
- 8.6 On point 7.3, Mark Wright explained that works planners conduct optimum route planning between jobs. These are then uploaded to PDAs and reduces travel time and mileage. Software issues encountered had been addressed and an update loaded on to a test system and is being trialled. Mark explained some of the problems which this issue had caused.

9. Annual Health and Safety Quality and Environmental Report

- 9.1 Mark Wright introduced the report and the CBH Health & Safety Manager, Jamie Grey. Jamie then covered the highlights of the report, showing the effect of proactive management on lowering accident numbers.
- 9.2 Jamie explained that all properties are surveyed annually for asbestos insulation boards. Mark expanded on this to detail the proactive work being done to remove certain asbestos items.

- 9.3 Jamie explained the variance in reported accidents and that there was no pattern or common denominator identifiable in them.
- 9.4 Mark answered questions on the CDM Compliance Officer post, telling Board that even with a market supplement offered, a viable applicant had not been found. A discounted rate on the supply of the work involved in this position had been negotiated with MPS, who were directly appointed by CBC.
- 9.5 Geoff Foster gave congratulations (endorsed by the Board) to members of staff for the work done to ensure a successful audit of CBH's work in the area of Health & Safety.
- 9.6 The new Health & Safety software was selected after an extensive business plan had been drawn up and six different programs compared. The program was bought off-the-shelf with a proven track record, but is highly-customizable and can be tailored to record all types of data as necessary. It includes a portal for accessing and adding information on demand from any platform.
- 9.7 The Chair stated that, as Board Champion on Health & Safety, she would be happy to have items in this area brought before Board when Jamie considered this necessary or useful.

10. Disabled Facilities Grants

- 10.1 Mark Wright introduced the report and explained that resident feedback had been positive and discussions were occurring to identify what the expected level of this type of work would be.
- 10.2 Board questioned aspects of the scheme, including the reputational risk to CBH if work is only coming through to us slowly. Mark assured Board that there was now no backlog of work for private-sector properties. The delay in the process occurring between a grant being given and work being done had been reduced down to an acceptable level for CBC and CBH. The aim was to reduce this even further.
- 10.3 Mark described the situation regarding potential DFG work in the Tendring District Council (TDC) area. TDC insisted on the use of local contractors and want a 'turn-key' solution, which we cannot offer, owing to the process involved in this being a functioned that has been TUPEd back into CBC from CBH. The level of risk we would take on by having to use local contractors leaves us unable to make competitive bids to carry out DFG work in the TDC area at this time and under the conditions laid down by that council.
- 10.4 It was agreed that this topic should be revisited in the confidential session of this meeting, so as to cover areas which might potentially involve commercially-sensitive discussions.

11. Finance Assurance Report

- 11.1 Michael Hadjimichael presented the paper, explaining that this provided a draft outturn position for 2015-16, subject to final audit and adjustment.

- 11.2 Chair identified the benefit of working closely with CBC on the HRA, and expressed a wish to have more discussion of issues related to the HR at future Board meetings. This could enable CBH to give CBC more help and input on the financial issues involved.

12. Performance Assurance Report

- 12.1 Karen Loweman presented the report and statistics appended to it. The only KPI not achieved was the indicator relating to B&B usage. The target for this was 0, but at year-end the total families in B&B stood at 28. Additional temporary accommodation options had been found, and more were being sought in order to reduce the use of B&Bs.

13. Committee Minutes

- 13.1 Regarding 3.10 of the Operations Committee Minutes, Mark explained that there had been no change in the definition of 'decency,' only a change in the asset management strategy, accepted by Board and CBC, to aim at reducing non-decent property numbers to zero over a five-year cycle, rather than annually. This would be the most efficient and cost-effective approach. Maintaining an annual cycle would be prohibitively expensive. It is possible that we will reduce the number to zero annually, but this was not a target. Vital repair work would always be carried out (e.g. involving heating, leaking properties etc.).

14. Forward Look

- 14.1 Owen Howell presented the Forward look and explained that efforts are continuing to reduce the number of policy reviews etc. which occur annually without any changes being necessary.
- 14.2 Owen explained that the current Forward Look only listed DMT responsibilities for items, which meant items which did not come under the purview of a DMT member had n/a written within the final column on the page. **Action:** Owen Howell to amend the heading of the final column of the Forward Look to read 'Officer/Member responsible.'

15. Any other Business

- 15.1 Owen Howell confirmed that the 2015-16 accounts would be presented to the Finance & Audit Committee at its July meeting.

With no further business, the open meeting concluded at 6.27pm.

