

Minutes of the Eighty-Third Board Meeting

Held on 17 June 2015 at 5.30 pm
In Room 1, Rowan House
Sheepen Road, Colchester CO3 3WG

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Greg Falvey
Michael Hadjimichael
Karen Loweman
Mark Wright

Bob Barnes *Item 7*
Mell Robinson *Item 9*

Berkeley Young *(Minutes)*

Observing:

Lynn Thomas *(CBC)*
Ann Carey *(TLCC)*
Jan Sexton *(TLCC)*
James Watson *(TLCC)*

1. Apologies and Quorum

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Julia Havis and Mike Lilley. Anne confirmed that the meeting was quorate.
- 1.2 Anne welcomed guests and members of the TLCC to the meeting, and noted that Jan Sexton would be presenting the group's comments on three agenda items. Anne also welcomed Michael Hadjimichael, the new Director of Resources, and noted that Lynn Thomas was attending in place of Gareth Mitchell.

2. Welcome to new Council-appointed Board Members

- 2.1 Anne welcomed the new Council-appointed Board members, Gerard Oxford and Julia Havis. Julia was not able to attend the meeting as she was chairing a meeting of the CBC Trading Board at the same time.
- 2.2 Anne paid tribute to the contribution of the departed Board Members, Ray Gamble and Nigel Offen.
- 2.3 The Board approved the proposed allocation of members to committees.

3. Declarations of interest by Board Members and officers

- 3.1 There were no new declarations of interest.
- 3.2 Geoff Foster and Alan Blois had attended the Pets Policy task and finish group.

4. Minutes of the meeting held 24 February 2015

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 The actions had all been completed.

5. Voice Your View

5.1 No one had requested to voice their view.

6. Whistleblowing Policy

6.1 Michael Hadjimichael introduced the policy. In clause 6.1, 'Standards Committee' would be changed to 'Finance & Audit Committee' before publication. **Action:** Berkeley Young to amend.

6.2 The Board unanimously approved the Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Annual Risk, Quality & Environmental Report

7.1 Jan Sexton presented the comments of the TLCC, who welcomed the news that accidents and incidents had reduced from the previous year and queried progress with Legionella testing.

7.2 Mark Wright responded to the TLCC's query about Legionella testing. CBH was not required to carry out the tests on expansion tanks in three-storey blocks but did so as a matter of best practice. A chemical 'pill' had been dropped into each tank ahead of a removal programme within the next 12 months.

7.3 Anne welcomed Bob Barnes, recently retired from CBH, to present the report. Anne congratulated Bob on his work to secure the ISO 18001 certification for the Company. Bob thanked Anne, the Board's Health & Safety Champion, for her assistance during the process. The ISO audit had raised a concern about document control, which CBH needed to improve.

7.4 The Enoch House sprinkler system will go ahead subject to a successful outcome from the bid to the Fire Service for 50% funding. The fire suppression system would cover the whole scheme. Individual rooms would have heat sensors to minimise the risk of setting off the system by accident.

7.5 The new Construction Design Management (CDM) regulations were challenging; three repairs operatives had taken on the role of environmental champions and were inspecting one job in every ten completed.

7.6 Bob had designed a health & safety and fire safety inspection checklist for the two- and three-storey blocks. Community Caretakers had a rolling two-year programme to inspect all the stairwells, of which there were approximately 475.

7.7 While gas incidents were at a low level, the number of false alarms had increased. Bob explained that all properties had a CO₂ alarm fitted and people rang to report whenever these were triggered. Where these were not false alarms, the leaks were generally due to wear and tear or tenant error.

7.8 The Enoch House refurbishment project would be inspected weekly by the Health & Safety Co-ordinator or the Clerks of Work. CBH was looking to employ a CDM Co-ordinator to take over this responsibility.

7.9 The intranet had gone live earlier in the week and Board Members would be given access in due course.

8. ICT Provision – priorities and relationship

8.1 Michael Hadjimichael introduced the report.

8.2 It was noted that the Colbea report on new business opportunities had raised concerns about the capacity of the current ICT provision for new ventures. Greg Falvey commented that the Local Authority had commercial interests and would be developing their ICT systems accordingly, but the nature of any new business may require an independent ICT solution. Anne noted that any trading subsidiary would require autonomous ICT systems.

9. Resident Involvement Strategy – Year Two Action Plan

9.1 Jan Sexton presented the TLCC's three highlights from the review of the action plan:

(a) The TLCC completed their first independent scrutiny review project on the Decent Homes Plus standard. Five of the six recommendations made as a result of the review were accepted and implemented.

(b) TLCC members have linked with more housing partners to share training and learning/networking.

(c) The new way of delivering Equality and Diversity tenant training, which resulted in the creation of a 'myth-busting' video created by the delegates that will be uploaded to YouTube.

9.2 MR took members through the report, noting that the TLCC was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the action plan.

9.3 Members discussed the approach to measuring Social Return On Investment (SROI). MR reported that a simple approach had been taken to measure the cost of three tenant groups, and the output of the groups would be assessed for impact. Mell was researching best practice and the action would be implemented in October-March 2015/16.

10. Finance Assurance Report

10.1 Michael Hadjimichael introduced the report.

- 10.2 The 'New Business Income' table (para 6.1) showed income after costs and contributions to overheads had been taken into account. Income generated would fund business opportunities, and consideration would be given to moving commercial activity to any trading subsidiary as appropriate.
- 10.3 The scored Strategic Risk Register was presented to the board for comment. The format could be amended if members agreed it was unclear. It was noted that risk descriptions should be worded to reflect the fact that the register was a public document. **Action:** Michael Hadjimichael to review the wording and amend as necessary.

11. Performance Assurance Report

- 11.1 Karen Loweman took members through the report, explaining the context of the red indicators at year-end.
- 11.2 Households in temporary accommodation – people were only placed in property outside of the Borough in an emergency and the target for 2015/16 was to use no accommodation outside of the borough.
- 11.3 Tenancy audits – progress with tenancy audits was reported to the Operations Committee. The two auditors had reported in person and would return to the Committee in due course to provide an update.
- 11.4 Average call waiting time – Karen reported that there had been no complaints from customers about the service and that the average call waiting time for May 2015 had reduced to 19 seconds. The Customer Service Team analysed call volumes and planned staff coverage accordingly.
- 11.5 % underoccupied council homes – Karen explained that the percentage of underoccupied homes included those not affected by welfare reform due to occupants being of pensionable age or not claiming benefits.

12. Committee Minutes

Operations Committee (14 May 2015)

- 12.1 Alan Blois reported that the Committee had received assurance from the Customer Service Team about the call centre performance.
- 12.2 Karen Loweman confirmed that comments on the Complaints Policy had been received from Committee Members ahead of the next meeting, and that a suitable member of staff would be present to respond to these.

13. Forward Look

- 13.1 The TLCC scrutiny report on pre-termination workshops would be available to present at the September Board meeting. **Action:** Berkeley Young to add to Forward Look.

14. Any Other Business

Information Pack

14.1 The TLCC made the following comments on the Chief Executive's report, which they had considered at their meeting:

- (a) The TLCC welcomed CBH's support of the Gas Access Campaign due to the potential dangers to council tenants and leaseholders of uninspected gas appliances in neighbouring Housing Association properties.
- (b) TLCC members gave Greg Falvey a number of ideas for the Board to consider as part of their 'vision and mission statement' discussion at the Board Away Day.
- (c) The TLCC were keen to play a part later in the Future Proofing project and were very supportive of the CBH Academy, which aimed to bring together under one umbrella all CBH's resident-focused training activity.

The meeting closed at 6.45 pm.

