

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on Monday 6 February 2017 at 7.30pm in “The Barn”, 2 Chapel Lane, King’s Lynn

PRESENT:

Steve Clark (Vice-Chairman in the Chair)
Marie Connell
Tony Hall (Chief Executive)
Brian Long
Ian Pinches
Jasmine Rigg
Colin Sampson
Tina Smiddy
Andy Walder

IN ATTENDANCE:

Colin Davison - Director of Property
Dave Marshall - Director of Finance and Resources
Andrew Edmonds - Head of Property
Angus MacQueen - Company Secretary

31/17 ASSET DISPOSAL 2016-19

The meeting had been immediately preceded by a Board “Thinking Session” on “Asset Management Evaluation”. The Chairman, therefore, decided to take this item first, as the topics discussed in the “Thinking Session” were directly relevant to it.

The Head of Property presented a report which proposed a set of “asset disposal triggers”, to enable the compilation of an asset disposal list of properties.

In answer to questions, the Director of Property made the following points:

- Only empty properties would be considered for disposal. Where it was intended to consider tenanted properties for disposal, this would require a specific procedure and separate consideration by the Board.
- A range of options would be considered for properties placed on the asset disposal list. These could include, for instance, a change in tenure type or demolition-and-rebuild.
- Only one of the proposed triggers would need to be met for a property to be considered as a potential candidate for disposal.

- The current estimate was that around 350 properties would qualify for the asset disposal list.

The Board stressed that, before an asset disposal was pursued, it would be essential to undertake a full risk assessment and financial appraisal.

The Board noted that a report was to be brought to the next meeting which would seek delegated authority to the Management Team to carry out asset disposal. The Board would require suitable assurances to be in place for this delegation to be granted.

RESOLVED: That the asset disposal triggers, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved, to enable the compilation of an asset disposal list of properties.

32/17 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ray Johnson, Pauleen Pratt and Simon Smith.

33/17 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34/17 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

35/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

36/17 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

There was no Chairman's update, as Ray Johnson was absent from the meeting.

37/17 MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

A written update from the Management Team had been previously circulated and was noted by the Board.

The written update covered the following issues:

- Tenant Participation Advisory Service Awards – Central Region Official Shortlist 2017
- Colby Court – Moving in of Residents
- Board Remuneration Review

- Microsoft Enterprise Software Licensing Renewal – Electronic Tendering Process
- David Orr Visit to Hillington Square
- Development Update.

The Chairman highlighted that David Orr, Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation, would be visiting Hillington Square on 21 February 2017, to celebrate the completion of the work on Colby Court and to see the work beginning on Phase 4. The Chairman asked that as many Board Members as possible attend this event.

Although not included in the update, the Chairman reminded the Board that a risk and control simulation workshop would be held on 23 February 2017. The workshop was for Board Members and senior staff.

The Board was pleased to note the progress being made with current property developments.

38/17 FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE, STRESS TESTING AND MITIGATION

Confidential item

39/17 OPERATING MODEL REVIEW

Confidential item

40/17 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board considered the recommendations of the Governance Committee meeting held on 16 January 2017.

Marie Connell, Chairman of the Governance Committee, explained that the recommendations followed the Committee's discussion on the National Housing Federation's Voluntary Code on Mergers, Group Structures and Partnerships. She advised that she had invited Board Member Simon Smith to attend the meeting for this item who, although not a member of the Committee, had considerable experience of mergers. He had provided useful input into the discussion.

The Chief Executive said that the Committee had felt that the Code was too prescriptive, and that options for Freebridge should be developed. He added that he understood that the Code was soon to be revised.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the National Housing Federation's Voluntary Code on Mergers, Group Structures and Partnerships be not adopted

- 2) That the annual business planning process include consideration of the options to best deliver the Business Plan; this consideration should not exclude merger or any other business model.
- 3) That the Governance Committee be asked to develop, for the Board's approval, a brief procedure to enable an initial assessment to take place in the event that Freebridge is approached for a potential merger, acquisition or strategic partnership.

41/17 PROCUREMENT/SELLING SERVICES APPROVALS

Confidential item

42/17 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report which sought to make some amendments to the Financial Regulations.

The Director of Finance and Resources said that a full review of the Financial Regulations would be presented to the Board in June 2017. In the meantime, this report proposed some interim amendments to correct job titles and to ensure that posts had the appropriate levels of expenditure and write-off limits.

RESOLVED: That the amendments to Financial Regulation 5 and to Appendix 2 to the Financial Regulations be approved, as set out in the report.

43/17 LEASE OF A SHOP TO A MEMBER OF THE TENANT PANEL

Confidential item

44/17 LETTING OF A SHOP AT CENTRE POINT, FAIRSTEAD, KING'S LYNN

Confidential item

45/17 TENANT PANEL QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Director of Property presented a report which provided a quarterly update of the Tenant Panel's work.

The Director of Property highlighted that Richard Maun had been appointed as the Panel's new Facilitator.

The Director of Property also advised that the two vacancies on the Panel had recently been filled. The new members were Shelly Lamprell-Josephs and Annette McGivern.

The Board noted the report.

46/17 OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Confidential item

**47/17 FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES QUARTERLY
MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report which provided financial information for the quarter ending 31 December 2016, together with Human Resources key performance indicator information.

The Board noted the report.

48/17 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY UPDATE

Confidential item

49/17 RISK MANAGEMENT AND FRAUD AWARENESS UPDATE

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report which detailed risk management, fraud awareness and service assurance activities during the quarter ending 31 December 2016.

A Board Member questioned whether the Corporate Risk Map should be reviewed in light of the Government's deregulation proposals. The Chief Executive responded that it was too early to do this, as the details were not yet known.

The Board noted the report.

50/17 BUSINESS PLAN 2016/17 THIRD QUARTER UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented a report which set out progress against the 2016/17 Business Plan for the third quarter.

The Chief Executive said that he would develop a model that would enable the Board to have a clear oversight of performance against the Business Plan.

The Board noted the report.

51/17 GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Confidential item

52/17 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Marie Connell, Chairman of the Governance Committee, presented the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 16 January 2017.

53/17 WORK UPDATE

The Company Secretary presented the work update, which included the following:

- Action Sheet
- Future Work Programme of the Board.

The Board asked that further explanation be given where there were delays to actions being completed.

In respect of the future work programme, the Chief Executive said that officers would be reviewing this, to see if the Board's workload could be reduced. It might be possible, for instance, for some of the items to be dealt with by exception.

The Board noted the update.

54/17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Michelle Gant

The Board was sorry to note that Michelle Gant, Director of Engagement, would be leaving Freebridge at the end of March 2017. There would be an opportunity to "say goodbye" at the Board away afternoon on 27 March 2017.

(b) Annual Board Members' Conference

Andy Walder reported that he and Simon Smith had attended the National Housing Federation's Annual Board Members' conference, held in London on 3-4 February 2017. They would be circulating some notes of the Conference to the Board in due course.

55/17 NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 6 March 2017 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

CHAIRMAN