

Board Meeting 24 May 2010

Minutes and Associated Reports

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING (FCH) BOARD

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on
Monday 24 May 2010 at 6.25pm in the
Conference Room, Juniper House,
Austin Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Michael Stone (Chairman)
Lesley Bambridge
Sylvia Calver
Barbara Davis
Nigel Donohue
Irene Gammon
Brian Hillman
Geoffrey Hipperson
Michael Jervis
Ray Johnson
Colin Sampson
Pat Southgate

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tony Hall - Chief Executive
Sean Kent - Executive Director (Resources)
Kassie Melnyk - Interim Executive Director
(Operations)
Angus MacQueen - Governance Officer

67/10 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Bill Guyan, Paul Leader and Sylvia Pomeroy.

68/10 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

69/10 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Hillington Square (Minute Number 44/10(b))

In response to a question, the Chief Executive advised that a series of focus meetings with partners, to consider the proposals for Hillington Square, were currently being held, and that a residents' event would be taking place on the evening of 25 May 2010.

(b) Equality Bill (Minute Number 58/10)

In answer to a question, the Executive Director (Resources) confirmed that the new Equality Bill had been enacted and some aspects would take effect from October 2010.

70/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

71/10 CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Helen Richardson

Confidential item

(b) Great Massingham

The Chairman said that he and a number of other Board members had attended a launch event for the new development at Great Massingham, held on 19 May 2010. It had been clear at the event that FCH had developed a good relationship with the parish council. A number of local residents had been present and had been very positive about the new development. The Chief Executive added that the contractual completion date was February 2011, although the developer was aiming for Christmas 2010. It might be possible to set up a webcam on the site, so that the progress of the development could be followed. A further event was being planned at completion, to welcome the new tenants to their homes.

72/10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE

(a) Board Members' Expenses

The Chief Executive referred to the National Housing Federation's Spring 2010 Finance Policy Update. This document contained advice that travel and subsistence expenses paid to Board members for attendance at Board meetings could represent a taxable benefit in kind. The Chief Executive advised that it was possible to ensure that Board members were not financially disadvantaged by the taxation, at a small cost to the Association.

RESOLVED: That, where any Board member expenses are subject to taxation, the cost of the taxation be covered by FCH.

(b) Staff Recruitment

The Chief Executive stated that there had just been a very busy period of recruitment to four key posts, namely Assistant Director of Assets, Business Manager (Property Services), Contracts Manager (Property Services) and Customer Contact Centre Manager. The quality of the applicants had been high and appointments had been made to all four posts. Recruitment

consultants, ERAS, had assisted with some of the posts, including candidate profiling, which had proved very helpful.

(c) Tenant Empowerment

The Chief Executive advised that a restructure of the Tenant Empowerment function was underway. He would report further at a later date.

(d) Board Member Training

The Chief Executive referred to a seminar for Board members, entitled “The Operating Environment for the Social Housing Sector”, which had been organised by e² and would be held on 9 July 2010 in Bury St Edmund’s. The speakers would be James Tickell of Campbell Tickell and Ruth Davison of the National Housing Federation. The Chief Executive asked that Board members inform the Governance Officer as soon as possible if they would like to attend, as spaces were limited.

(e) Business Planning Handout

The Chief Executive showed the Board a handout which had been circulated to all staff. On one side, the handout set out FCH’s mission, values and customer care commitments, next to some striking artwork of a bridge; the other side was an “at-a-glance” guide to the key points of FCH’s current Business Plan. In answer to questions, officers explained that neither the bridge artwork nor the text of the handout was intended to be part of FCH’s branding work; it had only been circulated internally as a quick reference sheet for staff. The outcome of the branding workshops was being finalised and would be circulated to all those who had attended.

73/10 COMMUNICATIONS POLICY (click here to go to report)

The Executive Director (Resources) presented a report which introduced the new Communications Policy.

In answer to a question, the Executive Director (Resources) explained that, whilst marketing was not mentioned specifically within the Policy, it would be included in some of the initiatives contained in the Policy, including the branding work, issuing of newsletters and organising of events. Officers acknowledged that marketing was important, not only to develop FCH’s image among tenants and the general public, but also to attract potential employees and contractors. There was a need for some liaison with the Borough Council, to ensure that new tenants understood that they were moving into an FCH home, rather than a Council one.

The need to be very cautious when approached by the media, and for training for those authorised to talk to the media, was stressed.

It was suggested that networking opportunities should be considered carefully, so as to maximise the benefits to FCH.

The Board noted the new media protocol, as attached to the report, and

RESOLVED: That the Communications Policy, as presented, be approved, as a replacement of the Communications Strategy.

74/10 GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP REPORT (click here to go to report)

(a) Introduction

The Governance Officer presented a report which advised of the outcomes of a recent meeting of the Governance Working Group.

(b) Review of Standing Orders

The Board considered the revisions to FCH's Standing Orders, as recommended by the Working Group.

RESOLVED: That the revised Standing Orders be approved.

(c) Openness of the Organisation's Arrangements

The Board agreed with the Working Group's recommendation that, in the interests of openness and transparency, Board minutes and the relevant reports on non-confidential items should be posted on FCH's website, but provided that the minutes had been agreed by the Chairman. It was decided that, initially, this should not be extended to committee minutes, in view of the work involved and the detailed nature of the discussions held by the committees; however, this would be reviewed in six months' time. The Board also agreed with the Working Group that its meetings should not be held in public, because this could fetter discussions and confidential matters could be revealed inadvertently, and because this would be impractical in the current venue and security concerns would need to be addressed.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That, with effect from this meeting, Board minutes, accompanied by the relevant Board reports, be published on FCH's website once they have been agreed by the Chairman, subject to confidential items not being published, confidentiality to be determined by the Company Secretary in consultation with the Governance Officer.
- 2) That Standing Order 2 be amended to incorporate 1) above.

(d) Action Plans

The Board noted that the Working Group was continuing to monitor the implementation of the action plan to address areas of non-compliance with the new NHF Code of Governance – "Excellence in Governance", and of the Board Improvement Action Plan, which had been developed following the

2009 Board appraisal process. At this stage, the Working Group did not have any issues of concern that it wished to raise with the Board.

75/10 **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS** [Report not available – confidential]

(a) Introduction

The Board received a report which introduced the recommendations of recent committee meetings.

(b) Operations Committee

The Board considered the recommendations of the Operations Committee meeting held on 5 May 2010.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the revised Aids and Adaptations Policy be approved, as presented to the Operations Committee, subject to some minor drafting amendments noted by the Committee.
- 2) That the Governance Working Group be requested to consider whether improvements could be made to the way that Committee business is presented to the Board.

(c) Resources and Risk Committee

The Board considered the recommendations of the Resources and Risk Committee meeting held on 10 May 2010.

RESOLVED:

- 1) Confidential
- 2) That the revised Financial Regulations, as presented to the Resources and Risk Committee, be approved.

76/10 **REGULATORY AND STATISTICAL RETURN (RSR) 2010**
(click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report which sought authorisation for the submission of FCH's RSR 2010 to the Tenant Services Authority (TSA).

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the submission of FCH's RSR 2010 be authorised.
- 2) That the Chief Executive be authorised to sign the document on FCH's behalf.

77/10 BOARD RECRUITMENT (click here to go to report)

The Governance Officer presented a report which provided an update on this year's Board recruitment processes and which sought the appointment of a Recruitment Panel for the selection of Independent Board members.

It was noted that the Recruitment Panel should bear in mind that it must ensure that the Board had sufficient financial skills and should assess that these were appropriate for FCH's needs.

Members stated that, should there be any good candidates who were unsuccessful on this occasion, FCH should find ways of retaining their interest in and contact with the organisation, with a view to their being considered for Board membership in the future.

The Governance Officer advised that four applications had been received for the two vacancies for Independent Board membership. The names of the applicants were read out, to ensure that those appointed to the Recruitment Panel did not have a conflict of interest.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a Recruitment Panel be established to pursue the 2010 recruitment of Independent Board members and report back with its recommendations to the Board meeting on 26 July 2010.
- 2) That the Panel comprise Sylvia Calver, Brian Hillman and Paul Leader.
- 3) That the quorum for the Panel be two members.

78/10 RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (OPERATIONS)/MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE UPDATE (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report which sought to establish a Recruitment Committee for the appointment of the Executive Director (Operations) and which provided an update on the current arrangements for the Management Team structure.

It was agreed that all Board members should be given an opportunity to meet informally with the shortlisted candidates; this would also help the candidates to gain some further insight into the organisation.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a Recruitment Committee for the appointment of the Executive Director (Operations) be established.
- 2) That the Committee comprise Ray Johnson, Pat Southgate and Michael Stone, with Nigel Donohue as first substitute and Paul Leader as second substitute.

- 3) That the quorum for the Committee be three members.
- 4) That Michael Stone chair the Committee.
- 5) That authority be delegated to the Committee to make the appointment.
- 6) That the two-stage process, as set out in the report, be agreed, subject to the inclusion of an opportunity for all Board members to meet informally with the shortlisted candidates.

79/10 TENDER RETURNS FOR FERNLEA ROAD, FAIRSTEAD ESTATE, KING'S LYNN

Confidential item

80/10 WISBECH ROAD, KING'S LYNN – FORMER KIA GARAGE SITE

Confidential item

81/10 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING (click here to go to report)

The Executive Director (Resources) presented a report which provided quarterly performance information for the period to 31 March 2010.

The Interim Executive Director (Operations) said that FCH had been approached by other housing associations for advice on good practice, in view of its significant improvement in voids performance and its continuing excellent performance in rent collection. The Board asked that its thanks be passed on to the staff involved in these areas of work.

The Board noted the report.

82/10 APPOINTMENT OF SHAREHOLDERS [Tabled list not available – confidential]

The Governance Officer presented a report which requested the Board to consider applications for Tenant shareholding. He explained that, since the agenda had been issued, one further application for Tenant shareholding had been made. He tabled the list of applications, which had been updated to include this latest one.

RESOLVED: That the five applications for Tenant shareholding contained in tabled list be approved.

83/10 UPDATE ON HOMES & COMMUNITIES AGENCY AND BID PROCESS

Confidential item

84/10 **ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN EMPLOYMENT UPDATE (click here to go to report)**

The Executive Director (Resources) presented a report which provided an update on staff recruitment over the last year in relation to equality and diversity in employment, and which commented on any actions taken, or to be taken, to improve any aspect of employment in relation to equality and diversity.

The Executive Director (Resources) highlighted that, whilst it was pleasing that there had been an increase in the percentage of applicants from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, none of these applicants had been successful. FCH would need to review its recruitment procedures, to ensure that they were not inadvertently discriminatory.

In answer to questions, the Executive Director (Resources) advised that the baseline community data contained in the report was taken from the census and other information held by the Borough Council. FCH currently employed around 185 staff (full-time equivalent).

The Board noted the report.

85/10 **WORK UPDATE**

Confidential item

86/10 **COMMITTEE MINUTES** [Committee minutes not available – confidential]

The Board received the minutes of the following meetings:

- Audit Committee – 26 April 2010
- Operations Committee – 5 May 2010
- Resources and Risk Committee – 10 May 2010.

With reference to the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 26 April 2010, Ray Johnson, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, highlighted that the Committee was monitoring FCH's Supporting People funding, amidst concerns that it could be removed. Officers advised that, by introducing service charging, FCH had already made a significant move towards covering for the possible loss of the funding. Furthermore, the Financial Plan anticipated a substantial reduction in the funding.

87/10 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Board Performance

A member commented on the high standard of Board meetings, in terms of the contributions of the Chairman, the members and the officers.

(b) Post-inspections

In answer to a question, the Interim Executive Director (Operations) advised that she would shortly be contacting members of the Operations Committee with an update on the situation regarding post-inspections of Decent Homes improvement work.

88/10 NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 26 July 2010 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

CHAIRMAN

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Sean Kent	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information			√	
Consultation	Communications Working Group (a staff group)					

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Communications Policy

Purpose: To present the new Communications Policy, which it is intended will replace the Communications Strategy. The new media protocol is also attached for information.

Policy/Strategy Implications: See above

Finance and VFM Implications: None directly arising from this report

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: Implementation of the new Policy will impact positively on customer care. The new Policy has undergone an Equality Impact Assessment, which has revealed no issues of concern.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map): It is intended that the new Policy will mitigate against the following risks:

- 1.3 Significant Events lead to adverse publicity – Critical Impact, Low Likelihood
- 7.1 Failure in tenant communication – Critical Impact, Significant Likelihood
- 7.3 Inappropriate organisational image – Marginal Impact, Significant Likelihood
- 7.5 Failure in internal communication – Critical Impact, Significant Likelihood
- 12.0 Failure to address Equality and Diversity issues effectively – Marginal Impact, Significant Likelihood

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Approve the Communications Policy, as a replacement of the Communications Strategy.
- (ii) Note the Media Protocol.

This report introduces the new Communications Policy, attached at Appendix 1. It is intended that the new Policy will replace the Communications Strategy. The Communications Strategy is not attached here, as the new Policy is a complete rewrite, to reflect FCH's latest thinking on this issue and the work undertaken by the staff Communications Working Group. The document has also been written in FCH's new Policy format.

One of the items in the action plan at the end of the Policy is to review FCH's press release procedure. This has been completed, and the new procedure (the "Media Protocol") is attached for the Board's information, at Appendix 2.

Objective 4 Fit for Purpose



Policy 4i Communications			
Last Reviewed	2010	Next Review	2012
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive		

1. Policy statement

Freebridge Community Housing (Freebridge) believes that excellent two-way communication is fundamental to the success of any activity and is essential for understanding the needs of our customers and providing accessible and responsive services.

Freebridge will ensure that its communications support and promote its values, which are:

Working Together, Empowerment, Integrity, Customer Focus and Enthusiasm

Freebridge wants to ensure that all its communication is clear, honest, effective and two-way. This Communications Policy aims to ensure that our stakeholders receive the right information at the right time, in a way that meets their needs.

2. Definitions

Freebridge has adopted a very broad definition of stakeholder for the purposes of this document. This will include:

- Tenants, leaseholders or shared owners of a Freebridge property
- Residents in areas where we own property
- Applicants for housing or employment
- Tenants and residents representative organisations
- Family, friends or any advice giving organisation acting on behalf of and with the consent of either of the above categories
- Board Members
- Staff
- Contractors
- Statutory and voluntary organisations
- Local and specialist media

- Opinion formers such as partners, community groups, local and central government representatives
- Any individual member of the public

3. Policy objectives

Freebridge Community Housing will aim to:

- Support the creation of a Customer Service culture
- Positively engage all stakeholders and encourage feedback
- Motivate staff to contribute to Freebridge's success
- Effectively promote Freebridge's services and branding
- Celebrate Freebridge's achievements and convey key news items to a range of audiences
- Minimise Freebridge from the impact of bad news stories
- Position Freebridge to exert maximum influence on local and national policy makers.
- Comply with our regulatory and legal responsibilities as a minimum.

4. Responsibilities

Board and management: The Board has a corporate responsibility for ensuring that effective communication is promoted and that this document underpins all aspects of Freebridge's work. The Executive Team have responsibility for developing the organisational culture and systems which this document requires to operate effectively and for ensuring it is implemented. Managers are individually and corporately responsible for ensuring that effective communication is promoted and that this document is implemented in their particular areas of responsibility.

Communications Group: The Communications Group will assist by ensuring a co-ordinated proactive approach to internal and external communications. They will act as an internal editorial team and focus group for branding, style and media, as required.

Staff, contractors and suppliers: All staff, regardless of job title or remit have a responsibility to ensure that this document is incorporated into their work related activities. All staff, contractors, and suppliers are expected to communicate effectively, both within the organisation, as well as externally.

Tenants & leaseholders: Freebridge expects that all tenants treat our workers with respect and courtesy and communicate to the best of their ability.

5. Strategy

5.1 Corporate Standards

Freebridge will establish clear standards for written and verbal communication to ensure a consistent standard and presentation both internally and externally. Plain English will be used to ensure communications are easy to understand

and unambiguous. We will provide large print and translation services to assist those who need them.

5.2 Governance

Freebridge will try to ensure that its governance arrangements are open and accessible with opportunities for dialogue with tenants, staff and stakeholders prior to and after important decisions.

5.3 Training

We will provide specific communication training where necessary and ensure that communication issues are included in other relevant training. Media and presentation training will be provided to those authorised to represent Freebridge publically.

5.4 Branding

We will ensure that press releases and other key communications always support and where possible promote our key branding messages of:

- **Independent, Local And Accountable:** empowering tenants, committed to involving them, listening to their voice and putting them first; based locally.
- **A Leader In The Community:** committed to building community partnerships and working with others to take on a role 'beyond housing'.
- **Keeping Promises:** whether on an individual basis (e.g. to carry out a repair) or on a larger basis (e.g. Decent Homes); Freebridge can be trusted.
- **Consistently And Effectively Meeting Needs:** providing quality affordable homes, excellent service for tenants, and good governance, consistently, but not inflexibly.
- **Supportive:** committed to meeting the needs of everyone in the communities we serve, whatever those needs might be.

5.5 Newsletters

Our newsletters to tenants and staff are a key part of our communications. We, with tenants, will review their format, content and style on a regular basis to ensure that they continue to meet the needs and preferences of the majority of recipients. We will also seek to develop alternative means of delivery of our newsletters as access to technology improves and preferences change.

5.6 Events and Meetings

When holding events and meetings with stakeholders we will seek to ensure ease of access, as part of our commitment to customer care and equality and diversity. Events will have a clear purpose and will seek to balance attracting the desired attendees with value for money. Post event evaluations will be undertaken to assess each event's effectiveness in meeting its objectives.

5.7 Surveying & Focus Groups

Freebridge carries out a range of tenant and staff surveys in order to gather views about the way we deliver our services and proposals for change. We also carry out regular surveys to monitor overall satisfaction levels. To supplement

these and gain additional qualitative information about service delivery we will make use of both internal and externally run focus groups.

5.8 Technology

Freebridge will ensure that it is a “fast follower” of new communications technology to ensure that it can provide communication using the methods that tenants and other stakeholders prefer. Freebridge recognises the trend towards organisations entering into more of a dialogue with their stakeholders and will develop this capacity and competency in a cost effective manner.

5.9 Press Relations

Freebridge recognises the importance of developing and maintaining positive relationships with trade national and local media to maximise positive news coverage to a range of different audiences. These relationships are also helpful in ensuring fair coverage of any adverse news stories that may occur.

5.10 Networking and Influencing

Freebridge recognises the importance of being able to influence key local and national decision makers and will via selective networking seek to build and maintain constructive and open relationships with them. Freebridge also recognises the importance of raising awareness of the activities that it carries out with other local organisations to maximise and develop opportunities for staff and tenants.

6. Monitoring

We will monitor performance across the areas covered by this policy and report it to the Board as part of our ongoing performance monitoring. In addition we will have an action plan and accompanying outputs that will be monitored and reviewed by the Management Team and progress reported to the Board.

7. Review

This policy will be subject to ongoing review in the light of experience, changes in legislation and policy; and meeting the needs of our stakeholders.

8. Risk Management

The risks associated with a failure to achieve effective communication and the activities set out in this document will be identified and included within the Freebridge’s Risk Map. The Risks will be managed in accordance with the Freebridge’s Risk Management Strategy.

9. Equality and Diversity

This policy and strategy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. All major activities resulting from this document will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments prior to their introduction.

Communication Strategy 2010-12 Action Plan

Area	Actions	Responsibility (Deadline)
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue developing coaching skills and approaches • Emphasise the importance and impact of good communications • Customer Excellence Training Programme • Re-emphasise Corporate Styles and check for continued compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MT (Ongoing) • MT (Ongoing) • AD HR (3/11) • MT (9/10)
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Board and Committee minutes on website • Consider public Board meetings • Governance Review • Update Social and Traditional Media Protocols • Review of all documents for compliance with Corporate Styles and Branding Messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO (3/11) • Board (3/11) • CEO (3/11) • ED(R) (Complete) • CEO (9/10)
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Excellence Training Programme • Plain English Training • Media Training • Team briefings • Editorial Training for staff and tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD HR (3/11) • AD HR (3/11) • AD HR (3/11) • AD HR (3/11) • AD HR (3/11)
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding Workshops • Agree Branding Messages • Explain use of branding messages • Develop the usage of branding messages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO (Complete) • MT (Complete) • CEO (9/10) • MT (12/10)
Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure newsletters meet accessibility criteria • Annual Review of format and content • Trial the use of new formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED(R) (12/10) • MT (Ongoing) • MT (9/11)
Events & Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce E&D checklist • Develop post event evaluation • Staff Conference • AGM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED(R) (12/10) • ED(R) (12/10) • MT (Ongoing) • CEO & Board (Ongoing)
Surveying & Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STATUS Survey Programme • Staff Surveys • Review Climate Survey methodology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAM (Ongoing) • AD HR (Ongoing) • BAM (12/10)
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website Phase 2 • Develop use of Social Media • Explore increasing element of dialogue on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD IT (3/11) • ED(R) (Ongoing) • ED(R) (12/10)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Contact Centre • Intranet Development • Tenant Communications Preferences utilised fully (GTKY Survey) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED(O) (12/10) • AD IT (Ongoing) • MT (12/10)
Press Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly meetings with local editors • Press Release procedure reviewed • Annual Media Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO (Ongoing) • CEO (9/10) • CEO (Ongoing)
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key influencers • Develop and promote use of social networking • Seek conference speaking opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MT/ Board (12/10) • ED(R) (Ongoing) • MT (Ongoing)
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify resource requirements and compare to those currently available • Develop a resource plan to fill critical gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO/ED(R) (9/10) • ED(R) (9/10)

Key CEO= Chief Executive; MT=Management Team; ED(R)= Executive Director (Resources); ED(O)=Executive Director (Operations); AD HR = Assistant Director of Human Resources; AD IT=Assistant Director of ICT; BAM= Business Assurance Manager; TBA=To be agreed.

Freebridge Community Housing

Media protocol

Introduction

This protocol outlines:-

- the procedure to be followed when making pro-active approaches to the media.
- the action that must be taken where enquiries are received from the media or from any other organisation seeking information which is going to be published in the public domain.

Communications and marketing help Freebridge Community Housing to achieve its business objectives, ensure that it is open and accountable, and manage its reputation.

Contacting/Responding to the Media

Media Releases:

Media releases/statements may only be issued if they have been agreed by a member of the Executive Team or the Board Chairman, Board Vice-Chairman or the relevant Committee Chairman. Any media release/statement that attributes a quote to an individual should not be released without that individual's agreement. All pro-active media releases/statements must be issued from the Chief Executive's office.

Responding to Media Enquiries:

The following have authority to respond to media enquiries: members of the Executive Team, the Board Chairman, the Board Vice-Chairman, the relevant Committee Chairman, a Public Relations consultant engaged by Freebridge for this purpose. In certain circumstances, the Chief Executive may authorise another officer to respond to media enquiries, but only after the response has been agreed by one of those listed.

If another employee/Board member is approached by the media, he/she should not attempt to respond, but should refer the matter to one of those listed. It should be noted that a Board member's contact details should not be released outside Freebridge without the permission of that Board member.

The Chief Executive's office should be informed of all responses to the media.

In the interests of maintaining good relationships with the media, those responding to media enquiries should bear in mind that journalists are often working to tight deadlines, and should attempt to provide the response at the earliest opportunity unless the journalist has indicated that there is no urgency.

Situations Where it is Not Clear if a Caller is a Journalist

Some journalists may try to elicit comments on issues from staff/Board members without declaring their journalistic interest. Any member of staff/Board member finding themselves in a position where they believe they may inadvertently have been talking to a journalist should contact a member of the Executive Team immediately and give as much detail about the

conversation as possible. Contact details should always be requested from a caller so that follow-up actions can be taken.

Newsworthy Items

Any member of staff/Board member who is aware of a potentially newsworthy item, either positive or negative, should, in the first instance, advise the Chief Executive's office.

Out of Hours

Where any member of staff or Board Member is contacted by a media representative out-of-hours, the Chief Executive should be contacted on 07769 643281 or, in the event of him being unavailable, the Executive Director (Resources) should be contacted on 07787 574958.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Angus MacQueen Governance Officer	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information			√	
Consultation	Governance Working Group, Chief Executive, Assistant Director of Human Resources and Governance					

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Governance Working Group Report

Purpose: To report to the Board the outcomes of a recent meeting of the Governance Working Group.

Policy/Strategy Implications: Standing Orders form part of FCH's policy suite.

Finance and VFM Implications: None directly arising from this report.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: Customer care considerations have been taken into account during discussion on the openness of the organisation's arrangements.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):

Risk 1.1 – Governing Framework – Failure to comply with regulatory and legislation requirements – Critical Impact, High Likelihood. It is intended that the contents of this report will help FCH to meet the regulatory requirement for good governance arrangements.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Approve the revised Standing Orders.
- (ii) Agree to the publication of Board minutes, accompanied by the relevant Board reports, on FCH's website, with effect from this meeting, subject to confidential items not being published, confidentiality to be determined by the Company Secretary in consultation with the Governance Officer.
- (iii) Agree to the amendment of Standing Order 2 to incorporate (ii) above.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Governance Working Group met on 21 April 2010 and considered various items, as set out below.

2.0 Review of Standing Orders

2.1 The Working Group considered a review of FCH's Standing Orders, in line with the two-yearly review cycle. Some minor amendments were made, for instance to take account of changes in job titles, but the main amendments for each Standing Order are listed below.

Standing Order 1 – Interpretation of Standing Orders and Associated Financial Regulations:

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.

Standing Order 2 – Board Procedure:

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Amendments to take account of the new report header format.
- Addition at 5.9 regarding our new “two hour” rule.

Standing Order 3 – Terms of Reference of the Board:

- Rule D1 is referred to, but the full text of Rule D1 has been removed, to save unnecessary duplication.
- Amendments to the list of functions which the Board cannot delegate made to align with the NHF Code of Governance 2009. Particularly worthy of note are:
 - Monitoring of performance cannot now be delegated.
 - The Board now has to establish and monitor a mechanism for communicating and receiving feedback from the organisation’s stakeholders and shareholders.
- Although not specified in the NHF Code of Governance, approval of key strategies (as well as policies) has been added to the list of functions which the Board cannot delegate. This is to reflect the move within FCH to combine policy and strategy within the same document. Those strategies not currently combined with a policy, such as the Human Resources Strategy, are, in any case, seen as key documents, and as such should be reserved for the Board’s approval.
- Although not specified in the NHF Code of Governance, the responsibility to undertake an annual risk assessment exercise has been moved from the Resources and Risk Committee to the Board, as this forms part of the Board’s annual internal controls review.

Standing Order 4 – Standing Committees:

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Removal of authority from the Committees to approve strategies (see note under Standing Order 3 above).
- Removal of authority for the Resources and Risk Committee to undertake performance management (see note under Standing Order 3 above)
- Inclusion of specific monitoring roles for the Resources and Risk Committee, aligning with current practice.
- Inclusion of benchmarking role for Resources and Risk Committee, aligning with current practice.
- Inclusion of delegations to the Resources and Risk Committee relating to budget setting and budget transfers, to reflect Financial Regulations.
- Treasury management delegation to the Resources and Risk Committee reworded so as to align with the Treasury Management Policy.
- Responsibility to undertake an annual risk appraisal exercise moved from the Resources and Risk Committee to the Board (see note under Standing Order 3).
- Specifying “Customer Satisfaction” within the areas of responsibility of the Operations Committee, in view of its importance to the organisation.
- Retaining the Operations Committee’s performance management function but in conjunction with the Board (see note under Standing Order 3 above)

- Giving the Operations Committee a complaints monitoring function, in conjunction with the Board, in line with current practice.
- Removal of the requirement for Committee Chairmen to submit a draft work programme for the committees to the Board for approval each year. This has proved unnecessary in practice and should not be required if the committees are operating within their delegations.
- Addition in 5.4 detailing the right of the Audit Committee Chairman to take action in the case of a dispute between the Board and a committee. This is in line with the NHF Code of Governance 2009.
- Removal of section 6 and the diagram, as both are unnecessary.

Standing Order 5 – Terms of Reference of Chairmen

- Addition in 1.2 of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Operations Committee to the list of offices appointed by the Board annually.
- Responsibilities of Board Chairman amended to bring them in line with the NHF Code of Governance 2009. Particularly worthy of note are:
 - There needs to be a succession plan for Board membership. (This is being worked on through the Governance Working Group, having been raised as a recommendation from the 2009 Board appraisal process.)

Standing Order 6 – Terms of Reference of the Company Secretary

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Removal of requirements for the Company Secretary to hold registers of contracts and quotations. These are held by the Procurement Manager, in line with Financial Regulation 7.

Standing Order 7 – Delegated Authority to the Association’s Chief Executive

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Addition at 5.4 of authority to complete e² development agreements, in line with Board resolution (minute number 138/08 refers).

Standing Order 8 – Delegated Authority to the Association’s Executive Director (Resources)

- Amendments to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Removal of authority to sell properties under Shared Ownership, as this is covered in Standing Order 9 (Delegated Authority to the Executive Director (Operations)).
- Treasury management delegation reworded so as to align with the Treasury Management Policy.

Standing Order 9 – Delegated Authority to the Association’s Executive Director (Operations)

- Amendment to take account of the new regulatory regime.
- Amendment to clarify that reports on the development programme can go to the Board or the *relevant committee*.
- Addition at 4.2b, to include liaison with the local Homebuy agent.
- Paragraph 4.3, regarding disposals of land, deleted as it is adequately covered in the Chief Executive’s delegation.
- Addition at 4.4 to allow the completion of certain legal agreements and surrenders.

- Addition at 4.6 of authority to complete transfers of land or dwellings from the Council to rectify errors in the stock transfer plans. Such a situation has come to light recently and it is expected that others will. This delegation will avoid having to seek Board approval on each occasion.

Standing Order 10 – Custody and Use of Seal

No major amendments

- 2.2 The full text of the Standing Orders, with the amendments shown as track changes, can be seen on the Board member area of FCH's website, alongside the agenda for this Board meeting. A hard copy is available on request, by contacting Angus MacQueen on (01553 667754).

3.0 Openness of the Organisation's Arrangements

- 3.1 The Working Group considered the need to review the openness of the organisation's arrangements, as required by the NHF's "Excellence in Governance" Code for Members 2009.

The Working Group was of the view that, in the interests of transparency and operating as a tenant-focused organisation, Board minutes, accompanied by the relevant Board reports, should be published on FCH's website. Matters considered to be confidential should not be included; it would be for the Company Secretary, in consultation with the Governance Officer, to determine which items were confidential. This arrangement could be incorporated into the Standing Orders and reviewed every two years as part of the regular review of Standing Orders.

In view of the detailed discussion held by the Committees, the Working Group did not believe it to be appropriate to extend this approach to the Committees. The Working Group also felt that it would be inadvisable to make it possible for members of the public to observe Board meetings, as this could fetter discussions and confidential matters could be revealed inadvertently.

4.0 Action Plans

- 4.1 The Working Group is continuing to monitor the implementation of the action plan to address areas of non-compliance with the new NHF Code of Governance – "Excellence in Governance", and of the Board Improvement Action Plan, which has been developed following the 2009 Board appraisal process. At this stage, the Working Group did not have any issues of concern that it wished to raise with the Board.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Simon J Swanson Business Assurance Manager	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information				√
Consultation	Chief Executive					

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR) 2010

Purpose: To seek authorisation for the submission of FCH's Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR) 2010 to the Tenant Services Authority (TSA).

The RSR can be seen on the Board member area of FCH's website, alongside the agenda for this Board meeting. A hard copy is available on request, by contacting Angus MacQueen on (01553 667754).

Policy/Strategy Implications: FCH is required by the TSA to submit an RSR annually.

Finance and VFM Implications: None.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: None.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):

Risk 1.1 – Failure to Comply with Regulatory and Legislation Requirements – Critical Impact, High Likelihood.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Authorise the submission of FCH's RSR 2010.
- (ii) Authorise the Chief Executive to sign the document on FCH's behalf.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Angus MacQueen Governance Officer	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information			√	
Consultation	Chief Executive					

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Board Recruitment

Purpose: To provide an update on this year's Board recruitment processes and to seek the appointment of a Recruitment Panel for the selection of Independent Board members.

Policy/Strategy Implications: The processes set out in this report are in line with the Tenant Board Member Succession and Appointment Policy and the Board Membership and Recruitment Policy.

Finance and VFM Implications: None directly arising from this report.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: Equality and diversity requirements will be taken into account as part of the Board recruitment processes.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):
1.4 – Skill Deficiency in Board or Management Team – Critical Impact, High Likelihood

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Establish a Recruitment Panel to pursue the 2010 recruitment of Independent Board members and report back with its recommendations to the Board meeting on 26 July 2010.
- (ii) Agree that the Panel comprise three members.
- (iii) Agree that the quorum for the Panel be two members.

1.0 Recruitment of Tenant Board Members

- 1.1 In accordance with the cycle set out in the Rules, and following the lot-drawing process at the last Board meeting, Barbara Davis and Bill Guyan will be required to step down from the Board at this year's AGM. Barbara has indicated that she will not be re-standing.
- 1.2 Under the Tenant Board Succession and Appointment Policy, TOWN is responsible to select tenants to stand for election to the Board by the whole tenant body, and is currently working on this. An election will not be held if TOWN is unable to identify a sufficient number of suitable candidates.

2.0 Recruitment of Independent Board Members

2.1 In accordance with the cycle set out in the Rules, Michael Jervis and Pat Southgate will be required to step down from the Board at this year's AGM.

2.2 The vacancies have been advertised in the following ways:

- a newspaper advertisement in both the Lynn News and the Fenland Citizen;
- registration with the NHF's "Get on Board" scheme; and
- a request to Board members to make the vacancies known among their acquaintances.

A request to KLFM for free advertising, on both its website and on air, does not appear to have been successful.

2.3 An open evening for anyone interested in applying was held on Wednesday 12 May, and attended by 2 people. Both were issued with application packs at the event. Three other people, who could not attend, have been sent application packs.

2.4 The closing date for applications was Friday 21 May, and the Board will be informed orally at the meeting of the applications received.

2.5 Michael Jervis and Pat Southgate have both indicated that they wish to reapply for Board membership. Their applications will be considered as part of the recruitment process, alongside all other applications received.

2.6 The Board is asked to establish a Recruitment Panel of three members (with a quorum of two), to pursue this year's recruitment of Independent Board members. It is suggested that the Panel be required to report back to the Board's meeting on 26 July 2010 as to its recommendations. The Board will then make its recommendations to the AGM.

2.6 As part of the recruitment process, the Recruitment Panel will need to take into account skills gaps on the Board and the demographics of West Norfolk.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Tony Hall Chief Executive	Report Type	Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium
None		For Information		√	
Consultation	Chairman of the Board, Assistant Director of HR and Governance				

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Recruitment Committee for the Appointment of Executive Director (Operations)/Management Structure Update

<p>Purpose: The purpose of this report is to establish a Recruitment Committee for the appointment of the Executive Director (Operations). This report also updates members on the current arrangements for the Management Team structure.</p>
<p>Policy/Strategy Implications: None as a result of this report</p>
<p>Finance and VFM Implications: Recruitment costs will be accommodated from savings within the salary budget.</p>
<p>Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: This procedure is in line with the principles of the Freebridge recruitment policy to ensure no discriminatory practices.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map): 8.1 Lack of staff resources or skills. Impact critical, likelihood significant 8.5 Loss of key staff. Impact critical, likelihood significant</p>
<p>Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Set up a Recruitment Committee for the appointment of the Executive Director (Operations) and nominate a substitute. (ii) Agree the quorum be three (iii) Agree that Michael Stone Chair the Committee. (iv) Delegate authority to the Committee to make the appointment. (v) Agree the two-stage process recommended

Background

As in previous years when we have recruited to Executive posts, we are recommending that the Board appoints a Recruitment Committee, to be chaired by the Chairman of the Board, with two further Board members, supported by the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Human Resources. We are also recommending that a substitute Board member is also identified, to ensure a quorum of three.

In 2008, when seeking to recruit an Operations Director, there was also an opportunity for the Chair and Vice-Chair of TOWN to meet candidates, an informal meeting over dinner with the Recruitment Committee and personality profiling tests were undertaken.

Whilst we were satisfied with most of the recruitment process, we are recommending some changes in light of this experience.

We are recommending a two-stage short listing process;

- 1) The Committee meets (likely date Friday 18th June, immediately after the advert closes) to short list down to around 12 candidates (will depend on the strength of the field) who will then be called for an initial assessment day, the following week, with a range of tests, informal meetings with the Chairman, Chief Executive and Executive Director (Resources), Assistant Directors, the Chair and Vice Chair of TOWN, tour of the offices and so on.
- 2) The second stage will be a further short listing, based on the outcome of the assessment day, by the Chief Executive, supported by the Assistant Director of HR, with input from all parties involved in the assessment day.

The Recruitment Committee members will then be interviewing only those candidates who have achieved the highest standard through the assessment day. Interviews are likely to be held week commencing 12th July. The advantages of this process will be to enable a greater number of candidates to be short listed initially and 'assessed', the Recruitment Committee will be seeing only the final candidates who have demonstrated all the required attributes and will have the benefit of a great deal of feedback, up-front, on the candidates to be interviewed. This will also enable some tailoring of interview questions for individuals, to follow up on anything highlighted during the assessment process. Also, the process will not 'feel' quite as rushed on the final interview day.

We received very favourable comments in 2008, from candidates, on our handling of the process and therefore feel confident that we can again run the process internally (we will need to buy-in expertise for the testing element).

As members will be aware we are currently seeking to appoint a straight replacement for the post of AD Assets. The appointment of the Executive Director Operations will end the current interim arrangements although a handover period has been built into the process. A further report will be presented to the board in July in order to finalise the Management Team arrangements.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Darren Hudson – Performance Accountant & Accountant	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision		High	Medium	Low
		For Information	√		√	
Consultation	Executive Director (Resources), Assistant Director of Finance.					

Meeting Date: 24th May 2010

Report Title: Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To provide the Board with performance information to 31st March 2010.

Policy/Strategy Implications:

None

Finance and VFM Implications:

None as a direct consequence of this report.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications:

Performance monitoring is essential to maximising customer care.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):

2.6 Poor Income and Benefit Collection: Likelihood - low; Impact - critical

4.3 Incorrect balance of responsive and planned maintenance/Increase in demand for responsive maintenance: Likelihood – significant; Impact - critical

4.7 Fuel Servicing – Gas/Oil/Solid: Likelihood – low; Impact - critical

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Notes the information in and attached to this report.

Attached are the Performance Reports to provide the Board with an overall strategic view of Freebridge's performance as at 31st March 2010.

Appendices 1 & 2 detail how performance compares with previous years and with sector benchmarks. Both reports focus on the relevant business indicators that will enable the Board to have a strategic overview of performance. The intention of the report is to enable the Board to monitor more effectively and prioritise areas of the business for improvement and by focusing on a smaller volume of information a better interpretation can be made.

Appendix 1 – Monthly Performance Reporting.

This report focuses on the last three months of performance to highlight current trends and a year to date figure to be compared against target.

Responsive repairs and planned works completed on time for emergency have improved above the target figure of 98.5%, increasing from 99.1% in December to 99.3% in March. Urgent repairs have increased this quarter from 94.8% in December to 95.2% in March and still below the target figure of 96.5%. Routine repairs have improved slightly by 0.6% to 93.5% this quarter, but still falling short of the target figure of 96.0% in the month of March.

The number of properties without gas servicing certificates has increased from 25 in December to 27 in March; however only 2 properties are more than 8 weeks overdue and a change to the service intervals had resulted in an increase in March.

Re-let times continue to fall month on month and currently stands at 30 days year to date as at 31st March 2010.

Appendix 2 – Trend Report

This report now focuses on the current year's performance compared to the previous year's performance and the target set for 2009/2010.

Emergency repairs done within KPI's are above target although urgent and routine fall below the annual target level. The likely trend indicates that the target figures should be achievable in the new financial period 2010/2011.

The percentage for average re-let times has continued to improve from 35 days down to 30 days. It is likely to achieve the target of 14 days in the new financial period with current trends. The void continuous improvement action plan is working and can be seen this quarter, with average re-let times of 14 days.

Appendix 3 – Complaints Analysis

During the quarter to March 2010, 16 new complaints were received which was a reduction from 18 of the previous quarter. The majority were resolved at the first stage and there were no significant themes. The remaining complaints are still being worked on and we are working within target times.

There have been no complaint panels held in the last quarter.



FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING – MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORTING

AS AT 31st MARCH 2010

Description	Target 2009/10	Monthly			Year to Date	Comments	A.Dir. Resp.
		31 st Jan 2010	28 th Feb 2010	31 st Mar 2010	Year to Date as at Mar 2010		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Rent Arrears as a % of Gross Rent:</u> 							
Inc HB Arrears	2.0%	2.4%	2.6%	3.5%	3.5%	Gross fig is 0.2% higher than Year End 2008-09 this is due to the rent increase for 2009-10 and therefore the additional increase in HB outstanding at Year End. The net figure is the same as 08-09.	RC
Excl HB Arrears	1.5%	1.8%	2.1%	1.4%	1.4%		
• <u>Former Tenant Arrears %</u>	0.6%	1.08%	1.08%	1.09%	1.09%	Total rechargeable repair debt o/s (£62,262.49 invoiced in 2009-10)	
• <u>Other Arrears (in £,000)</u>	60	49	52	55	55		
• <u>Write Offs %</u>	0.5%	0.00%	0.07%	0.05%	0.18%		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>% Responsive Repairs and Planned works completed on Time (includes PSD and External Contractors): (Monthly)</u> 							
Emergency	98.5%	99.6%	99.3%	99.8%	99.3%	Emergency repairs – These are in line with targets and have continually been above FCH target for the year. Urgent – The recent changes to appointments have seen gradual improvements following the changes to Terms and Conditions and the more recent introduction of appointments.	CD
Urgent	96.5%	94.7%	96.8%	98.1%	95.2%		
Routine	96.0%	95.6%	92.8%	96.1%	93.5%	Routine – The initial introduction of appointments had an adverse effect on Routine works which has now changed and reflects an improvement in the monthly performance figure.	

Description	Target 2009/10	31 st Jan 2010	28 th Feb 2010	31 st Mar 2010	Year to Date as at Mar 2010	Comments	A.Dir. Resp.						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas Servicing Certificates completed on time Number of properties without certificates 	100%	99.75%	99.82%	99.15%	99.15%	27 properties without Gas Servicing Certificates, of which:- 2 properties are more than 8 weeks overdue at the end of March 2010. <table> <tr> <td><u>Qty</u></td> <td><u>Month</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>December</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>January</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Month</u>	1	December	1	January	CD
<u>Qty</u>	<u>Month</u>												
1	December												
1	January												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Void Rental Loss – Monthly (in £'000) Less: Decants (Monthly) Shared Ownership (Monthly) Major Repairs & DHS (Monthly) 		18	17	18	287	83 properties void in the month of Mar 10.	RC						
Adjusted Void Rental Loss (in £'000)	150	4	5	6	134								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Average Re- Let Times”: (In Days) – From CORE Report. (General Needs) CORE Stands for “Continuous Recording System” data is collected by Social Housing Sector.	28 Days – till Sep09 14 Days – till Mar10	18 Days	16 Days	9 Days	30 Days	Target of 14 days has been reached for March 10. The reduction in re-let times from 16 to 9 days in March relates to the increase of re-lets. February had 20 re-lets (2 properties were re-let after 63 and 42 days) compared to 58 (1 property re-let after 35 days) in March of which 24 properties were 1 day re-lets bringing the average down significantly.	RC						

Appendix 2

Quarterly Trend Report



Performance Indicator	Target	Previous Year	Year to Date as at Mar 2010	Improvement Trend	2008/09 House Mark Benchmark Comparisons	Actions Only	
	2009/10	2008/09	2009/10		QUARTILE		
					UPPER		
% of Non-Decent Homes	29%	37%	28%	↑	2.0%		
Arrears as % of rent debit (Housing Quality Network GNPI 134) (Excl Housing Benefit Arrears)	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	↔	2.5%		
Former Tenant Arrears %	0.6%	N/A	1.09%	↔	-		
Service Charges and Other Arrears (in £,000)	-	N/A	55	↔	-		
Rent Loss Voids + Bad Debts (in £,000)	292	N/A	285	↔	-		
% repairs done within KPI's (Year to date)	Emergency	98.5%	97.0%	99.3%	↑	99.3%	All categories have shown improvement within the month. Year on year numbers of repairs have increased with the greatest impact on Routine due to changes in job priorities.
	Urgent	96.5%	95.1%	95.2%	↑	97.6%	
	Routine	96.0%	95.7%	93.5%	↔	98.2%	
Right First Time Repairs	96%	-	97.3%	↔	-		
Average time to re-let (GN excluding Major Repairs and New Lets) from Core (Days)	14	57	30	↑	24.73	Target for first 6 months of the year 28 days and later part of the year 14 days. Target set for period as 14 to allow further discussion around re-let times.	
Overall customer satisfaction (STATUS Survey)	83%	78%	N/A	↑	88.24%		
Gas Servicing Certificates Completed on Time	100%	98.94%	99.15%	↔	99.88%	A change to service intervals has brought more properties into March 10 which impacts on overall properties with certificates.	
No of Properties without Certificates	0	33	27	↑	N/A	2 properties more than 8 weeks overdue and with legal. The remaining properties all relate to March.	

Complaints to 31/03/2010

Service Area	Rec 1/1/10- 31/3/10	Resolved at Stage 1	Resolved Stage 2	Out- standing
Housing Management - Total	3	0	0	3
Staff Attitude	0	0	0	0
Anti-social Behaviour	0	0	0	0
Estate Management	0	0	0	0
FCH	0	0	0	0
Service Standards	1	0	0	1
Tenancy	0	0	0	0
Poor state of property	1	0	0	1
Unfair Treatment	1	0	0	1
Assets - Total	6	4	0	2
Staff Attitude	0	0	0	0
Estate Management	0	0	0	0
Decent Homes Work	0	0	0	0
Tenancy	0	0	0	0
FCH	3	1	0	2
Standard of Workmanship	0	0	0	0
Poor state of property	2	2	0	0
Unfair Treatment	1	1	0	0
Incomplete Repair	0	0	0	0
PSD/Repairs - Total	7	3	0	4
Staff Attitude	0	0	0	0
Freebridge Community Housing	1	0	0	1
Decent Homes Work	0	0	0	0
Procedure Failure	0	0	0	0
Service Standards	0	0	0	0
Standard of Workmanship	2	1	0	1
Poor state of property	2	1	0	1
Unpaid Invoice	0	0	0	0
Unfair Treatment	0	0	0	0
Incomplete Repair	2	1	0	1
Finance - Total	0	0	0	0
Unfair Treatment	0	0	0	0
ICT - Total	0	0	0	0
Freebridge Community Housing	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	16	7	0	9

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Angus MacQueen Governance Officer	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information				√
Consultation						

Meeting Date: 24 May 2010

Report Title: Appointment of Shareholders

Purpose: To approve applications to become shareholders.

Summary: Applications for tenant shareholding have been received and are listed at Appendix 1. Any further applications will be reported at the meeting. All of the applications at Appendix 1 have been checked before the meeting to ensure that they meet the necessary criteria to become shareholders.

Under Rule C11, the Board has the power in its absolute discretion to accept or reject any applications for shareholding.

Policy/Strategy Implications: This report is in line with the Tenant Shareholding Policy.

Financial Implications: The cost of a share is £1. TOWN have agreed that, for tenant shareholders, this cost is covered by the community fund provided to FCH by the Royal Bank of Scotland at transfer.

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):

Risk 7.4 – Failure to adhere to Community Gateway principles and achieve tenant empowerment – Critical Impact, Low Likelihood

Risk 7.7 – Failure to deliver transfer promises – Catastrophic Impact, Low Likelihood

The roll-out of tenant shareholding is a key aspect of adhering to Community Gateway principles and the last of the tenant promises to be initiated.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Approve the applications for shareholding listed at Appendix 1 to this report and any further applications reported at the meeting.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Jo Whaley	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision		High	Medium	Low
		For Information	√			√
Consultation						

Meeting Date: 24th May 2010

Report Title: Annual Equality and Diversity in Employment Update

Purpose: This annual report is to update the Board on recruitment over the last year in relation to Equality and Diversity in employment and commenting on any actions taken or to be taken, to improve any aspect of employment in relation to Equality and Diversity.

Policy/Strategy Implications: To comply with our Policy and procedure in relation to Equality and Diversity.

Finance and VFM Implications: None in relation to this report.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: Equality and Diversity implications covered in the report

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with FCH Risk Map):

1.1 Failure to comply with regulatory and legislative requirements – Impact critical, Likelihood high.

8.1 Lack of staff resources or skills – impact critical, likelihood significant.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Note the content of this report

Findings

It is pleasing to note that the percentage of staff from Black, Minority, Ethnic (BME) origin applying for positions has increased this year.

- 7% of applications came from BME origin candidates (increasing from 5.5% last year).
- 3% of those candidates were shortlisted, but disappointingly of the 22 posts appointed to, none of the successful candidates was from BME origin backgrounds.

Currently 1.57% of employees are from BME origin compared to a Community Profile of 2.4%. We received 46% of applications from females, the greatest number being for a clerical/administrative type role followed by the role of Housing Officer and Mobile Scheme Manager.

The highest proportion of male candidates was for the roles of Plumber, Contracts Manager, Tenant Empowerment Officer and Housing Advisor. It was good to see male candidates for the Housing Advisor role, historically a female dominated role.

The recruitment method used for the vacant role of Housing Advisor was text messaging out tenants (where we have contact numbers). This resulted in a high number of enquiries and applicants from tenants, although many did not understand the role.

- 32% of applications were from candidates over the age of 45
- 34% were between 26 and 44.

We also have an increase in applications from people declaring that they have a disability and in January 2009 we were able to provide a work placement for a disabled student through the Disability Employment Advisor, in a temporary administrative role before she returned to her studies.

Diversity in Employment

The results of the 'Getting To Know You' survey of staff shows us:

Diversity Strand	Community Statistics	Staff Mar 2010
Age		
Average Age	42.4 yrs	44.2 yrs
Gender		
Female	51.4%	44%
Male	48.6%	56%
Ethnicity		
White British	96.3%	97.1%
White Other (A8)	0.8%	
White Other (other)	0.8%	1.2%
Asian	0.3%	0.0%
Black	0.2%	
Chinese & Other	0.3%	0.6%
Disability		
Limiting Long Term Illness	20.4%	6.4%
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	95%	79.9%
Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual	5%	1.2%
Religion		
Buddhist	0.1%	
Christian	78.2%	39.5%
Hindu	0.1%	
Jewish	0.1%	
Muslim	0.2%	0.6%
Sikh	0.1%	
Other	0.2%	0.6%
None	13.0%	47.1%
Not stated	8.0%	12.2%

We have re-gained the Positive About Disabled People and Age Positive accreditations. We have signed up to try and achieve the Stonewall accreditation for a second year, having received feedback from Stonewall on our performance against the standard last year, when we did not get into the top 100 employers.

The Board has agreed a target for BME origin staff and Board members of 8.15% during the year from October 2009.

Future Considerations

We have not set any specific targets in relation to recruitment across other areas of diversity. However, in the interests of gender equality and equality around disability, sexuality and

religion/belief, we should consider whether our recruitment and employment practices are in any way discriminatory, whether directly or indirectly (such as imposing a requirement on staff which could disproportionately have an adverse effect on one minority group or another). Through the programme of Equality Impact Assessments we will, in time, be reviewing all policies and procedures relating to recruitment and employment.

Beyond this we should monitor and consider the implications for minority groups of our succession planning and promotion strategies, as well as access to training and development and treatment under policies such as disciplinary and grievance.