

FREEBRIDGE BOARD MINUTES AND ASSOCIATED REPORTS

30 JANUARY 2012

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on
Monday 30 January 2012 at 6.20pm in the
Conference Room, Juniper House,
Austin Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Lesley Bambridge
Matthew Brown
Sylvia Calver
Steve Clark
Irene Gammon
Bill Guyan
Michael Jervis
Ray Johnson
Paul Leader
Ian Pinches
John Fox

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tony Hall - Chief Executive
Sean Kent - Executive Director (Resources)
Malcolm Fry - Assistant Director of
Finance (minute numbers 01/12-
09/12)
Helen Richardson - Governance Administrator

01/12 WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed John Fox to the Board meeting asking if he leave for the first item.

John Fox left meeting at 6.20 pm

02/12 BOARD RECRUITMENT (report not available – confidential)

Matthew Brown Chair of the Board Recruitment Panel presented the report which advised of the outcomes of the recent processes for the recruitment of the vacant tenant board member position.

[confidential wording omitted]

RESOLVED: that the board approve that John Fox be appointed to the Board with immediate effect until the 2013 AGM.

6.30 pm John Fox came back into the meeting, the Chairman confirmed to John his appointment to the Board welcoming and congratulating him.

03/12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

04/12 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Under-Occupation Policy (Minute Number 192/11)

In answer to a question, the Chief Executive confirmed he was satisfied that the costs for waiving gas and electrical checks on mutual exchanges that resolved under-occupation, or overcrowding issues could be accommodated within the current policy.

05/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Irene Gammon, as a resident of Hillington Square, and Lesley Bambridge, as the ward councillor for Hillington Square, declared interests in the item at minute number 14/12 – Hillington Square Update. The Board was content that they should remain in the room during the item, but they did not vote.

Irene Gammon, Bill Guyan, Paul Leader, Sylvia Calver, John Fox, as tenant board members, declared interests in the item at minute number 09/12 – Annual Rent Increase. The Board was content that they should remain in the room during the item.

The Chief Executive, Executive Director (Resources), Assistant Director of Finance and Governance Administrator, as employees of Freebridge, declared interests in the item at minute number 10/12 – Staff Pay Award. The Board was content that they should remain in the room during the item.

06/12 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman gave an update on his activities as Chairman since the last meeting.

As well as weekly meetings with the Chief Executive, the Chairman had attended the following:

- 12 December, official opening of Fairstead development
- 14 December, Board Member Recruitment Panel
- 19 December, evening dinner with Chairs and Chief Executives of e²
- 20 January, Event to mark the end of the Tenants of West Norfolk group in its current form
- 24 January, NHF planning conference in London
- 26 January, e² Chairs meeting hosted by Saffron Housing Trust.

The Chairman reported that he had attended the National Housing Federation Planning Policy conference in London and had met David Orr, CEO of the National Housing Federation and also Cameron Watts, Head of Planning Policy. The Chairman reported that they both had expressed interests in visiting Hillington Square to see the project in its current form before works commence and also visit after completion. The Chairman added that David Orr had coincidentally been involved with the Nationwide Building Society 2011 Sustainable Housing competition for architect students, launched in partnership with the Royal Institute of British Architects where the theme had been regeneration and where Hillington Square had been the subject for submission. The Chairman thought that it would be best to invite David Orr and Cameron Watts on a day where there was a committee or Board meeting.

07/12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE

- **Sheltered Scheme Gardening Competition 2012**

The Chief Executive presented an invitation for two Board Members who to be involved in the planning and judging for this years' Sheltered Scheme Gardening Competition requiring 1 day attendance at the planning meeting and 3 further days attending judging during the summer. The Chief Executive highlighted that there had been a request for Paul Leader to be involved again this year. Paul Leader and Ray Johnson accepted the invitation.

- **Homes Community Agency (HCA) - Empty Home Programme Grant**

The Chief Executive advised that there was an in principle commitment for empty homes with the Council, and a bidding programme for grant had come to light in which we have subsequently bid for 20 units for 2015, the grant for repair would be [confidential]. The Chief Executive highlighted that the focus for successful submissions may be in areas with a significant number of empty homes and the focus may also have a geographical element which could be an advantage to Freebridge.

- **Albert Street**

In answer to a query from a Board Member, the Chief Executive confirmed that a property on Albert Street belonged to Freebridge and recently Property Services had been working there looking to conserve the properties many original features restoring it to a modern standard.

- **Fraud**

Confidential item

08/12 **RECOMMENDATION OF THE RESOURCES AND RISK COMMITTEE: FINANCIAL PLAN**

Confidential item

09/12 **ANNUAL RENT INCREASE** (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented the report and highlighted that this was the first year since transfer that the Board had a real choice on how the rent was set. The Chief Executive reminded the Board of their recent planning day where informal discussions had taken place and that there had been high aspirations for existing and new homes. The Chief Executive stated we have the discretion given to us to apply rent increases and other housing associations had used their discretion already. He added that the Government could change or withdraw the discretionary element of the rent formula. The Chief Executive explained that in the longer term there might be a move to CPI from RPI losing the chance to improve the rent base. It was outlined that we had mitigated the proposed increase for general needs tenants to £2 a week and sheltered tenants to no more than £5 per week including service charges. The Chief Executive explained that on balance Management Team believed that it was the right thing to do.

The Chief Executive tabled feedback on the recent Rent Consultation containing the 28 responses received from 1000 tenants who had been consulted in total at random including a mix of those on housing benefit and paying tenants.

The Assistant Director of Finance provided the Board with detail that there had been a change from £2.9 m to £2 m from the financial plan and overall turnover of £26 m. The Assistant Director of Finance drew attention to page 16 of the report of a table showing the Additional Net Income. He stated that the RPI increase would average out at £4 or £5 per property as detailed within the report within a table on page 17.

The Executive Director (Resources) drew the Board's attention to paragraph 6.2 of the report which showed comparability to other housing associations rent and confirmed that not all associations spread rent over 50 weeks, the Chief Executive added that we have found that the rent free period worked well. The Chief Executive tabled a list of local housing associations which compared rent levels.

In answer to questions, the Chief Executive, Executive Director (Resources) and the Assistant Director of Finance made the following points:

- In regard to Thornage as detailed on page 18 of the report, the Executive Director (Resources) stated that a rental figure was achieved differently to other properties due to such factors being supported housing with different requirements and their budget cycle was not in line with ours.

- The Executive Director (Resources) explained that there would be a opportunity to look at increasing charges for garages on re-lets and could be flexible enough to charge up to £10 per week making it clear that the money paid would go towards upkeep of the garage unit.

In overview of the rent consultation feedback sheet tabled the Executive Director (Resources) detailed that 1000 tenants had been consulted and 28 had responded, 2 were strongly against and there had been some interesting responses. Some had been positive affirming the importance of maintaining standards and providing a good service. It was perceived that a response of 28 out of 1000 was a positive result. The press had been briefed prior to tenants receiving the consultation papers confirming to them that it was a consultation exercise. The Executive Director (Resources) stated that the Equality and Diversity profile of the responding tenants showed a good variance. It was specifically noted that some of the negative responses were from tenants of Hillington Square regarding questions about money being put back into property, it was highlighted that satisfaction would increase following the start of the regeneration project. The Executive Director (Resources) detailed that the local MPs had been provided with a brief.

In response to the report Bill Guyan stated he had mixed feelings about the increase due to being a tenant board member and understanding that for the business it is necessary for the annual rent increase but as a tenant it was a concern as for many tenants this increase would be difficult for them. He felt that associations were being asked to do things that were beyond their landlord responsibilities. In response the Chief Executive said that his point was echoed to ministers at a recent housing conference, and that Freebridge were looking at ways to save money, included £250 k in reduction in the payroll and other savings such as making properties more energy efficient making utility bills more affordable.

Matthew Brown commented that the board had to balance that there were around 5000 people on the housing waiting list, the standard of living was declining, and that the decision may be uncomfortable for the board and most people would feel the increases to a degree and times are hard for people in social housing but this could be the last chance to use our discretionary powers to safeguard new builds and a chance to put money back in to improve services.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the board accept the proposed annual rent increase of 6.1%, in accordance with the Government's rent restructuring policy.
- 2) the board approve the further use of additional discretionary element of 4.1% for General Needs and 9.1% for Sheltered. To be implemented starting at £2pw for 2012/13.
- 3) the board delegate authority to the Chief Executive to agree the rents for Thornage, and report back to the Board.

The Assistant Director of Finance left the meeting 7.30 pm.

10/12 STAFF PAY AWARD

Confidential item

11/12 BUSINESS PLAN 2012-2014 (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report and highlighted that it had been discussed at the Board planning day and at the Management Team away day, and would be discussed during the Stakeholder event organised for 24th February. It was shared that there had been a positive response for attendance and it was highlighted that the Director from the Homes Community Agency (HCA) and the Senior Policy Advisor for the NHF would be in attendance.

RESOLVED: that the Board approve the process to update the 2012-14 Business Plan.

12/12 OPERATIONS POLICY UPDATES (click here to go to report)

The Executive Director (Resources) presented the report and detailed that the policies within the report had been working well and only some job titles had required amendment including some minor amendments shown in the report.

The Executive Director (Resources) also tabled the Appeals Policy where changes had been tracked. In answer to a question about the Ground 8 (Schedule 2 Housing Act 1988) detailed on page 1 of the policy the Executive Director (Resources) assured the board that an appeal would rarely get to this stage as there were many stages to cover before reaching that point.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the board approve the policy updates set out in the report and the changes to the Appeals Policy as tabled.
- 2) that the board approve that the next review date for all policies listed in the report will be two years' time.

13/12 BOARD MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION POLICY REVIEW (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report which was to review the membership of the board including its recruitment and succession policy and that the policy was written in accordance and compliance with the NHF Code of Governance as detailed on 1.3. It was confirmed that the policy had been updated on the revised action plan.

RESOLVED: that the board approve the Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy as presented.

14/12 **HILLINGTON SQUARE UPDATE** (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented a report which provided an update on the progress to date of the Hillington Square project

The Chief Executive highlighted an amendment to the report within the recommendations on item (iii) needed to be amended from £5.2 m to £5.5 m.

The Chief Executive stated that this project is the largest single investment commissioned so far and confirmed that the proposed amendment to the VAT sharing agreement had been agreed at the Cabinet meeting. It was reported that this would generate £3.7 million and significantly reduce the need for any sales.

In answer to questions, the Chief Executive made the following points:

- Submission of a planning application was due to go ahead in March 2012 which would exclude new builds as discussions regarding flood risks were continuing.
- A table showing the implementation of works on page 38 at 5.2 was highlighted and it was stated that works would be considered on a phase by phase basis and it was unlikely that a whole plan would administered over 6 phases.
- RBS had recently visited the estate which enabled them to understand the scale of the project and the social issues involved.
- There would be two further opportunities for the board to be involved firstly to approve plans for submission for planning and secondly to approve the recommendation of the Steering Group to appoint the contractor.
- It was explained that there was a need for extra input into the project for which the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Resources) had secured Paul Christian 2 days a week.
- The project would begin within the first two phases only and the board was assured that the properties would achieve a decent homes standard.
- The Executive Director (Resources) explained that a more comprehensive version of the current phase schedule table shown on page 38 would be required.
- The Executive Director (Resources) assured the Board that we would only commit expenditure agreed by the Board, and that we would take the opportunity to learn from the first two phases. He also stated that

peak debt in 2016 would be a crucial time in the financial plan, and the additional rent would give additional flexibility.

- The Executive Director (Resources) confirmed that the additional rental income would be used as a buffer to keep peak debt down and would be monitored closely.
- The Chief Executive highlighted that the budget currently is the best estimate and a better indication would be achieved after each tender is received.
- The Chief Executive confirmed that there would be phasing of decants for phase one and two and currently there was an indication that around 50% want to stay and 50% want a permanent move. It was also hoped that a better balance of community could also be achieved.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the board note the content of the report and the verbal update on the Council's decision regarding their contribution to the project.
- 2) that the board approve [confidential].
- 3) that the board Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Director (Resources) to seek the necessary permissions from the funders regarding the proposed demolitions and Decent Homes requirements.
- 4) that the board Delegate authority to the Hillington Square Steering Group to commence a procurement exercise for the main contractor. (Appointment of the contractor will be subject to separate Board approval).
- 5) that the board Approve the phasing of the works in the first two years.

15/12 MORTGAGE RESCUE SCHEME (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report which detailed a partnership with Orbit Group who had approached Freebridge in proposal to buy and manage properties coming via the Mortgage Rescue Service they provide. It was confirmed that the Service Level Agreement would not commit Freebridge to all properties that come through from the service and there was an option to look at specific cases on an individual basis. The Chief Executive highlighted the key figures from the report and highlighted that Orbit were receiving cases from lending institutions and from the local authority on behalf of families at risk of becoming homeless.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the board agree to Freebridge taking part in the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- 2) the board give delegated authority to the Chief Executive to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Orbit Group relating to syndicated administration services.

16/12 MORTGAGE RESCUE SCHEME – PROPOSED PURCHASE

Confidential item

17/12 BOARD MEMBERS’ ANNUAL DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented the report. Lesley Bambridge stated that she would like to add to her declaration that she is the Governor of Grey Friars School.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the board Note the schedule of board member declarations of interest, attached at Appendix 1.
- 2) that the board give permission for Freebridge to continue using UK Power Networks as a supplier, provided that the board member with the interest has no influence or involvement in the procurement process.
- 3) that the board approve the schedule of interests attached at Appendix 1 for publication on Freebridge’s website, subject to the removal of the following:
 - the declarations made by Ray Johnson under “Any Other Relevant Interest”, as these refer to private business arrangements; and
 - the declarations made by Karen Sly, as she is not a board member.

18/12 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE REVIEW (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented the report and stated that there would be a committee overlap and the proposed new structure would ensure more efficiency of a full board discussion covered in formal meetings and training sessions. The proposed new structure would save around 6 meetings a year and would mean more frequent board meetings. If agreed in principal the Resources and Risk and Operations Committees would be disbanded by proposed date of 16th April 2012.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the board approve in principle to disband the Operations Committee and the Resources and Risk Committee, and the associated actions, as set out in this report.
- 2) the request that a report be presented to the Board meeting on 16 April 2012 to enable detailed implementation of the proposal be approved.

19/12 **2011/12 BUSINESS PLAN 3RD QUARTER UPDATE (click here to go to report)**

The Chief Executive presented the report and updated on key projects. The Chief Executive highlighted items within the report that he was seeking the board's approval to remove.

The Chairman commented on the positive outcome for the items in regard to Decent Homes and New Homes that were being achieved. The Executive Director (Resources) added that in regard to the tenancy visit pilot the target of 500 visits was soon to be reached and that important issues had been picked up such as repairs, abandoned property and some calls were pleased we had visited but were not in need of any service.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the board noted the 2011/2012 Business Plan - 3rd quarter update
- 2) the board approved the requests to remove items from the Plan as set out at section 3

20/12 **APPOINTMENT OF SHAREHOLDERS** (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented a report which requested the Board to consider applications for tenant shareholding.

RESOLVED: That the two applications for tenant shareholding described in the report be approved.

21/12 **FEEDBACK FROM THE TENANT SERVICES AUTHORITY**
(report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented the report and detailed that in particular the TSA had commented governance had been good and he detailed that the overall response had been positive.

The Chief Executive stated that we need to see if the regulatory report separated the economic and management element checking against the local satisfaction.

The Executive Director (Resources) highlighted to the board that although our viability rating from the TSA had improved, it maybe reversed as Hillington Square is added to the plan.

The Chairman commented that the visit from the TSA had been very positive and they had been helpful with quick and satisfactory responses.

In answer to a question about the TSA report about the vacant Director post in which it was detailed as being a particular risk, the Chief Executive stated that this would be discussed at the management team planning away day.

The Board noted the report.

22/12 **URGENT ACTION TAKE – EMPLOYMENT OF A CLOSE RELATIVE OF AN EXISTING EMPLOYEE** (report not available – confidential)

The Board noted a request for urgent action that had been approved, to agree to the employment of a close relative of an existing employee.

23/12 **URGENT ACTION TAKE – RENT WRITE OFF** (report not available – confidential)

The Board noted a request for urgent action that had been approved, to agree for the rent to be written off.

24/12 **WORK UPDATE** (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented the work update, which included the following:

- Action Sheet
- Future Work Programme of the Board.

The Chief Executive advised that they would be updated in accordance with the amendments to the Committee Structure from April 2012.

The Board noted the update.

25/12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Norfolk Community Foundation

The Chief Executive advised that in December 2009 the board approved the partnership with the foundation and at the time for every £2 that Freebridge put in they would give £1 to the fund, grants were then given over a two year period to local concerns. The Government decided to renew the scheme, the Norfolk Community Foundation has since notified us that endowments would be matched £1 for every £1 given with a maximum of £50k. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Assistant Director of Finance allocated £50k from efficiency budgets to be placed into the fund. Summarising the Chief

Executive explained that our allocation would be a third of the overall fund made available to the Norfolk Community Foundation.

(b) Appointment of a Close relative of an Existing Member of Staff

Confidential item

(c) South Holland Utilities Bulk Buy

Lesley Bambridge provided details of a scheme whereby South Holland had bulk bought utilities saving each household £150 per year stating that this may be something that would be of interest to Freebridge.

(d) Complaint Panel

In response to a query about whether a recent offer following a complaint panel investigation has been accepted by the complainant, the Chief Executive agreed to provide an update to the panel members.

26/12 NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 5 March 2012 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

CHAIRMAN

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Tony Hall	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
Financial Plan		For Information		√		
Consultation	Management Team					

Meeting Date: 30th January 2012

Report Title: Business Plan 2012 - 2014

Purpose:

This report sets out the process for updating the current Business Plan. In particular the Board are asked to consider: 'What has changed' since the three year plan was adopted in April 2011

Policy/Strategy Implications:

There are no new policies resulting from this report

Finance and VFM Implications:

There are no financial implications as a result of this report. The Board will consider the revised Financial Plan and Budget separately.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications:

Improving customer satisfaction remains a key driver for the plan.

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

The high level risk map will be reviewed within the Business Plan update.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board

- (i) Approve the process to update the 2012-14 Business Plan

1 **Background**

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 11th April 2011 the Board approved the 2011 - 2014 Business Plan, including a revised set of corporate objectives and supporting vision statements.
- 1.2 It is proposed that this year the Board should review the Plan and update the objectives rather than a major re-write as the Plan is still fit for purpose. The Board's role in this exercise is to ensure that appropriate 'stress testing' of the Plan has taken place in light of the current environment; in particular changes in Government Policy and economic and social uncertainty. The key question to focus on is 'what has changed?'
- 1.3 In order to support the process Management Team will hold a planning event to focus, in particular, on the integration of Operational Plans with the Business Plan, and updating risk impacts. This will be followed by a Stakeholder Event on the 24th February. Any

new implications will be assimilated into the plan before being re-presented to the board on the 5th March.

- 1.4 The Financial Plan is being formulated alongside the Business Plan in order to ensure that it is affordable.
- 1.5 A copy of the current Three Year Plan is available on the Board Members' website alongside this agenda.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Tom Page	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information				√
Consultation	Board, Executive, AD of Housing and AD of Property Services.					

Meeting Date: 30 January 2012

Report Title: Operations Policy Updates

Purpose: To seek approval to various policy updates
Policy/Strategy Implications: There are no significant changes in policy arising from this report. The report seeks approval to various minor updates.
Finance and VFM Implications: - None arising directly from this report.
Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: None
Risk Assessment (cross-reference with Freebridge Risk Map): 1.2 Board direction not implemented – Critical Impact, Very low Likelihood
Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the policy updates set out in this report. (ii) Confirm that the next review date for all policies listed in this report will be two years' time.

The following list of policies has been reviewed and do not require any significant updates.

- Appeals Policy
- Allocations and Letting Policy
- Income Management and Maximisation Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Support to Vulnerable People Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Development Policy

Job titles have been updated to reflect current responsibilities throughout all the listed policies.

The minor changes recommended are:-

For the **Starter Tenancy Policy** the word “permanent” is deleted from “At the end of the 12 months, providing we have not taken steps to end the tenancy, it will become a ~~permanent~~ **an assured tenancy**” to allow for fixed term tenancies in the future.

For the **Domestic Abuse Policy** the word “experienced” is replaced with “reported” in the policy. “Research shows that domestic violence is most commonly ~~experienced~~ **reported** by women...”

For the **Tenant Safety Policy** the words “warden call” are replaced with “community alarm” in the policy “Planned maintenance of installations such as lifts, fire alarms, ~~warden call~~ **community alarm systems**” and the word “CP12” is deleted and replaced with “Landlord’s Gas Safety” in the policy “retain copies of the of the ~~CP12~~ **Landlord’s Gas Safety** certificate for at least the last two years and pass a copy to the resident”

For the **Rent Setting and Service Charges Policy** the following two paragraphs from the “Service Charges for Tenants” section are deleted as they are no longer relevant:

~~“FCH is currently bound by the Council’s pre-ballot tenant promise not to implement any new changes for existing services for transferring tenants”~~

And

~~“FCH will introduce charges post transfer tenants for additional services not included in the rent, such as the sheltered housing service, communal heating and lighting, caretaking, grounds maintenance, lifts maintenance etc. Based on the actual costs of providing these services and to include administrative costs”~~

And the following is added to the third paragraph to reflect our current practice:

~~“In line with Rent Restructuring requirements and guidance, Freebridge Community Housing anticipates that all service costs not met through rent, will eventually be met through transparent service charges. Charges will be phased in following consultation with affected tenants”.~~

For the **Dealing with Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Policy** the action plan which forms the last point on the policy is blank and therefore deleted.

The revised policies with tracked changes are available on request if preferred.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

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

Meeting Date: 30 January 2012

Report Title: Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy Review

Purpose: To review the Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy.

Policy/Strategy Implications: As set out in the report.

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

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: Equality and Diversity is considered within the Policy.

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

Risk 1.1 – Failure to Comply with Regulatory and Legislation Requirements – Critical Impact, High Likelihood. It is intended that the contents of this report will help Freebridge to meet the regulatory requirement for good governance arrangements.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Approve the Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy, as attached.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy has been reviewed in line with the usual two-yearly cycle for policy reviews.

1.2 As a result of the review, a few changes to the Policy are suggested. These are highlighted at Appendix 1.

1.3 The suggested amendments are generally minor. However, the following are perhaps worthy of particular note:

- References to the Tenant Board Member Recruitment and Succession Policy have been removed, as this Policy no longer exists.
- Human Resources has been added as one of the specialist skills that might be useful among board members. This follows a suggestion in the Campbell Tickell outcome report for the 2011 Board appraisal and review process.

- Review of the effectiveness of, costs of and attendance at training during the previous year has been added as one of the areas to be covered by the annual Board appraisal and review process. This follows a suggestion in the Campbell Tickell outcome report for the 2010 Board appraisal and review process.
- A sentence has been added to cover situations where it has only been possible to identify one candidate that is suitable to fill a tenant board member vacancy. The revised Policy states that, in such cases, the appointment(s) will be made by the Board. This is in line with our current practice.
- The need for a board member competency framework in the Board Member Agreement has been removed, as it is suggested that this is sufficiently covered by the role profile contained in the Agreement.

1.4 The revised Policy complies with the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2010, which has been adopted by the Board, and draws substantially from the good practice and excellence guidance provided with the Code.

1.5 The revised Policy includes a new action plan, for 2012-2014.

1.6 During the review of the Policy, a suggestion was considered which was aired during the 2010 Board appraisals. This was whether it would be sensible for a Vice-Chairman to step-up to become the Chairman of the Board or for a Chairman to step down to Vice-Chairman to support an incoming person. Campbell Tickell's advice at the time was that they had seen examples of these approaches, but they were not usual practice; they could work, but needed very careful management. On considering this suggestion, it was felt that, whilst these approaches may have merits on occasions, a more flexible approach to succession planning for the Chairman was preferable, and so this has not been included in the draft Policy.

2.0 Action Plan 2009-2011

2.1 Set out below is the action plan agreed under the Policy in 2009:

Area	Action	When By	Responsibility
Board annual review and performance appraisal	Arrange	Oct 2010 and Oct 2011	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance
Board recruitment processes	Administer and support	Sept 2010 and Sept 2011	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance
Board Member Agreement	Review	Mar 2010	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance
Board Induction	Undertake	Oct 2010 and Oct 2011	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance
Board training	Arrange and monitor	Ongoing	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen,

			Governance
Nominations Protocol with Borough Council	Develop	Summer 2010	Tony Hall, Chief Executive
Equalities Impact Assessment	Undertake	Jan 2010	Jo Whaley, AD HR and Governance

All of these actions were completed, with the exception of the development of the nominations protocol with the Borough Council. The Chief Executive liaised with the Borough Council about this, but was unable to reach a formal agreement over a nominations protocol. The Borough Council did, however, agree to an informal arrangement whereby it would consider gaps on the Freebridge Board when nominating board members.

Objective 4 – Increasing Capacity



Policy 4d – Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession

Last Reviewed	Dec 09 (amendments made 6/12/10) <u>Jan 12</u>	Next Review	Dec 11 <u>Jan 14</u>
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive		

Policy statement

Freebridge Community Housing (~~FCH~~) aims to ensure that its affairs are managed and directed by a Board which has members offering the widest possible range of relevant skills and experience and which also is accountable to and representative of the tenants and the wider community in which ~~FCH~~ Freebridge operates.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Standing Order 3 – Terms of Reference of the Board ~~–, the and FCH Freebridge's~~ Rules, Part D dealing with details of the Board's responsibilities and membership succession, ~~and also the Tenant Board Member Recruitment and Succession Policy.~~

Our Commitment

We will aim to ensure that Board members ~~–~~ collectively possess the qualities and skills to take decisions and monitor performance. ~~FCH~~ Freebridge will seek to ensure that they have experience and understanding of most or all of the following if they are to discharge their responsibilities effectively:

- a) The housing needs to be met by ~~FCH~~ Freebridge;
- b) General business skills, including the management of staff and property;
- c) Finance;
- d) Other relevant or specialist skills, such as commercial, investment, risk management, legal, health, social services, property management, housing development and building, public relations, marketing, human resources and information technology;
- e) Direct knowledge of the needs and aspirations of the communities and people served by ~~FCH~~ Freebridge, including equal opportunities;
- f) Working with local authorities and other public sector agencies;
- g) Strategic management and planning in a public or private body;
- h) Leadership and working as an effective team;
- i) Knowledge of the external framework as it affects ~~FCH~~ Freebridge, including financial markets, political imperatives and operating environment;

- j) Effective communication skills and an ability to focus on key issues facing the organisation;
- k) The ability to foster a culture that enhances commitment, enthusiasm and excellent performance from the staff.

Our approach

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Annual Review and Performance Appraisal

The Board will undertake an annual review and performance appraisal, which will:

- a) identify the Board's ability to scan the operating environment, think strategically and adapt as necessary;
- b) review how well the Board performs its key roles and how successful it has been;
- c) review the effectiveness of Board relationships and its role as a team;
- d) assess how the Board is viewed by key contacts, eg regulators, investors, local authorities, tenant groups, etc;
- e) review the composition of the Board, the skills and contribution of its individual members;
- f) review the organisation's ability to recruit and retain the balance of Board members it needs, and assess any current or imminent skills gaps;
- g) take an overview the breakdown of Board membership in terms of each diversity strand, including the Black and Minority Ethnic lettings target adopted annually by the Board, and consider whether there are any options to recruit under-represented groups;
- h) assess the effectiveness of Board processes, including its accountability;
- i) assess the level and quality of the information the Board receives;
- j) review the training and development needs of individual Board members as well as the Board as a whole, and review the effectiveness of, costs of and attendance at training during the previous year;
- k) include the assessment of the Chair and the Vice-Chair;
- l) result in a clear plan to support continuous improvement of the Board to meet the challenges faced by the organisation;
- m) address whether the Board provides enough support, scrutiny and challenge to the senior team; and
- n) review the performance and effectiveness of each of the Board's standing committees.

The annual review and performance appraisal process will be carried out through an independent third party.

Recruitment

- a) The Board will ensure that new members are recruited or elected on a continuous basis ~~either or~~ to fill existing vacancies. Co-option may be used where there is a need for specific skills. ~~Regard will be held to the Rules relating to tenant and council nominated representatives.~~
- b) The annual review and appraisal process will inform each recruitment exercise in terms of skills/diversity gaps on the Board.
- c) Every effort will be made to attract a strong pool of candidates for Independent ~~and Tenant~~ Board membership, maximising the use of widely available media.
- d) All prospective new Independent ~~and Tenant~~ members will be formally considered for membership by the Board or by a Committee appointed by the Board.
- e) ~~A nominations protocol will be sought~~Freebridge will work ~~with the Borough Council, whereby the Borough Council would agree to enable it to take into account skills gaps and diversity when appointing a new Council nominated Board member.~~
~~See also the Tenant Board Member Recruitment and Succession Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy.~~
- f) Vacancies for Tenant Board members will be advertised to all tenants. Applications will be shortlisted by a panel of Board members, which will include at least one Tenant Board member. The panel will then interview the shortlisted applicants. The panel will seek to select more applicants from the interview process than there are vacancies. The selected applicants will then be put forward to a ballot of all tenants, which will determine which applicant(s) assumes Board membership. ~~Should it prove possible to find only one suitable candidate for each vacancy, the appointment(s) will be made by the Board.~~
- g) All applicants for Board membership will be asked to ~~complete~~make a declaration of interest ~~form before they are appointed to the Board,~~ so that any potential interests can be identified. An appointment will not be made if the declaration reveals an actual or potential serious or continuing conflict.

Training

- a) A Board Induction Programme will be provided for all new Board members.
- b) On-going training will be provided. Members will be able to attend appropriate conferences and training events.

- c) ~~Following Training needs will be identified through~~ the Board's annual review and performance appraisal, ~~training needs will be identified for the Board as a whole and for individual Board members.~~

Executive

Members of the ~~FCHFreebridge~~ Executive will not sit on the ~~FCHFreebridge~~ Board.

Other Housing Providers

The Board at all times will be aware of potential conflicts of interest and will use its policies to manage this; however, no more than three members of staff or Board members of other housing providers may be ~~FCHFreebridge~~ Board members, with a maximum of one from any such organisation.

Board Member Agreement

All Board members will be required to sign a Board Member Agreement. The Agreement will be approved by the Board and reviewed at least every two years. It will include a Board member role profile ~~and competency framework~~.

Maximum Period of Board Service

The maximum period of Board service for each Board member will be no more than nine years.

Equality and Diversity

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~~Equality and diversity issues for the Board will be considered as part of the annual review and performance appraisal process.~~

~~This Policy has been subject to and Equality Impact Assessment.~~

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Monitoring and reporting

~~The Board will receive a report on the outcomes of the annual review and performance appraisal process.~~

Monitoring will take place through the Board's annual review and performance appraisal process and the regulator's assessment ~~and the Board's annual self-assessment exercise~~.

~~Equality and diversity issues for the Board will be considered as part of the annual review and performance appraisal process.~~

This Policy will be reviewed every two years.

Action Plan

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We will achieve our policy statement and commitments through the following key actions:

Area	Action	When By	Responsibility
Board annual review and performance appraisal	Arrange	Oct 2010 2 and Oct 2014 3	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance Company Secretary
Board recruitment processes	Administer and support	Sept 2010 and Sept 2014 Ongoing	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance Company Secretary
Board Member Agreement	Review	Mar 2010 Dec 2013	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance Company Secretary
Board Induction	Undertake	Oct 2010 and Oct 2014 As necessary	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance Company Secretary
Board training	Arrange and monitor	Ongoing	Jo Whaley/Angus MacQueen, Governance Company Secretary
Nominations Protocol with Borough Council	Develop	Summer 2010	Tony Hall, Chief Executive
Equalities Impact Assessment	Undertake	Jan 2010	Jo Whaley, AD HR and Governance

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Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

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

Meeting Date: 30th January 2012

Report Title: Mortgage Rescue Scheme

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Board approval for Freebridge to enter into a service level agreement with the Orbit Group to provide a Mortgage Rescue Service. Freebridge would purchase properties within the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) funding agreement.

Policy/Strategy Implications:

Mortgage Rescue fits within our existing policy to meet housing need. Freebridge would have to comply with the HCA funding requirements and the Service Level Agreement with Orbit Group. These are both procedural issues.

Finance and VFM Implications:

The Orbit Group carry out the initial assessments before contacting Freebridge. Freebridge would satisfy ourselves as to the condition of the property and the viability of the purchase. The property would be purchased at 90% of open market value. The HCA would fund a 47% grant contribution towards the purchase price and any work to bring the property up to the Decent Homes Standard. The property would be let at an Intermediate rent (80% of market rent) and there is no requirement to repay the grant should the tenancy come to an end. Freebridge would use its development budget to fund the remainder of the purchase price; however, as we are not required to commit to any number of purchases we will be able to manage our capacity.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications:

The Orbit Group carry out the initial assessments with the Mortgage Rescue applicant. The scheme creates an opportunity for the applicant in financial difficulty to remain in their home without the trauma of being repossessed. The alternative is that this applicant is re-possessed by the mortgage company and would have to meet their own housing need or seek assistance from the Local Authority through the homeless persons legislation.

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

The proposal has been cross referenced with the Corporate Risk Map. The key risk is 3.2: Risk of New Ventures not properly evaluated. Each property will be evaluated using the development appraisal model to ensure that it is viable. We have internal resources to check the property valuation and assess the condition of the property.

The Local Authority and the Orbit Group carry out an assessment of the individual's circumstances. If the Mortgage Rescue applicant is unable to pay their rent Freebridge would commence possession proceedings as it would with any other tenancy. There is a small risk 7.3: Inappropriate organisational image; however, this would be managed through clear communications.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Agree to Freebridge taking part in the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Orbit Group relating to syndicated administration services.

1 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting in April 2011, the Board approved a submission to the HCA for funding for new affordable homes. The bid document contained a number of elements including mortgage rescue. At the time it was felt that this area was adequately covered by another Registered Provider and therefore it was decided not to include it in our submission.
- 1.2 Freebridge has recently been contacted by the Orbit Group. The HCA has allocated resources for a further 86 mortgage rescues in Norfolk and Suffolk up until March 2013. Orbit are not interested in taking on the management of any further properties in these geographic areas and they are therefore keen to identify other Registered Providers to purchase some of these properties.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 The Orbit Mortgage Rescue Team do the work in liaising with home owners in difficulty and their mortgage lender; this would leave Freebridge to satisfy ourselves about the condition of the property and the viability of the purchase. The HCA will make a grant contribution of 47% towards the purchase price and the cost of repairs to bring the property up to the Decent Homes Standard.
- 2.2 Freebridge would be required to enter into a service level agreement with Orbit to cover the syndicated administrative service.
- 2.3 Should Freebridge purchase a property, the Mortgage Rescue applicant would become a tenant. The form of tenancy would be an Intermediate rent tenancy for a period of three years. The tenancy would be reassessed at this stage. Should the tenancy end for any reason there is no requirement to repay the grant.

3 Conclusion

- 3.1 The Borough Council are keen that Freebridge is involved in Mortgage Rescue locally. The grant rates from the HCA are better than their main programme. This, combined with the Intermediate rent levels, ensure that the properties perform well financially. The only commitment Freebridge would undertake is to sign the service level agreement with Orbit Group to cover financial and legal costs; however, there is no commitment to take any properties. Freebridge is therefore able to assess each property on its merits.
- 3.2 Normal HCA grant funding conditions apply.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Angus MacQueen	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information		√		
Consultation	Board Chairman, Chief Executive, Executive Director (Resources)					

Meeting Date: 30 January 2012

Report Title: Committee Structure Review

Purpose: To review the Board's current committee structure, to enable best use of board members' time.

Policy/Strategy Implications: The proposals made in this report would require changes to policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, in particular Standing Orders 3 and 4.

Finance and VFM Implications: Some savings could be achieved on staff time and board members' expenses through fewer formal meetings, as proposed in the report.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: None directly arising from this report.

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

Risk 1.1 – Failure to comply with Regulatory and Legislation requirements – Critical Impact, High Likelihood. This report is intended to improve Freebridge's governance arrangements, and so contribute to compliance with the regulatory requirement to achieve good governance.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) Approve in principle to disband the Operations Committee and the Resources and Risk Committee, and the associated actions, as set out in this report.
- (ii) Request that a report be presented to the Board meeting on 16 April 2012 to enable detailed implementation of the proposal.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Board has been operating for several years with three Committees, namely Audit, Operations, and Resources and Risk.

1.2 During the period that the Board had 15 members and the tenant promises were being implemented, the Committees played a very useful role in assisting the Board with its work.

1.3 It is a requirement of the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2010, which the Board has adopted, as well as good governance practice, that an Audit Committee is retained. However, following discussions with the Board Chairman, it is suggested that the Operations Committee and the Resources and Risk Committee are disbanded, and their functions undertaken by the Board, which would meet slightly more frequently. The reasons for this suggestion are as follows:

- Now that the Board is smaller, the need for smaller groupings to discuss certain issues is less of a necessity.
- The whole Board would have ownership of decisions. Currently, most policies are considered by Committees and formally approved by the Board without further consideration of the policies. The same has sometimes been the case for the Financial Plan and the budget. Issues such as budgetary and risk monitoring would also be done at Board, rather than committee, level.
- As the committees have developed, they have a limited role, especially the Operations Committee. This is partly because many decisions have both operational and budgetary implications, and so it is more straightforward to take them direct to the Board, rather than to two committees before being considered by the Board. The Operations Committee also has some duplication with the Board in relation to performance monitoring, and is likely to duplicate work with the new Tenant Panel.
- The net effect is likely to be four or five fewer formal meetings per year, saving board members' and staff time, as well as the costs of running these meetings.

2.0 Other Aspects of the Proposal

2.1 The following suggestions are made:

- The Chief Executive's Appraisal Panel is retained in its current form, but appointed by and reporting to the Board.
- If issues arise that need a small group rather than full Board discussion, informal staff/board member task and finish groups could be established, as is currently the case with the Supporting People Task Group.
- The Governance Working Group is disbanded; a task and finish group could be established to look at specific governance issues if and when required.
- A Lead Member for Finance is appointed. This board member would undertake some of the functions currently carried out by the Chairman of the Resources and Risk Committee, such as: chairing the Chief Executive's Appraisal Panel and being consulted on treasury management decisions, pension discretions and Hillington Square purchases.

2.2 One area where the proposal could significantly increase the Board's workload is that of policy reviews. It is suggested that the impact could be reduced by Board reports including only proposed changes to existing policies, rather than the full documents (which would be available on-line). Management Team is also looking to simplify and reduce the number of policies.

2.3 Extending officer delegations, so as to reduce the Board's workload, has been considered, but this is not believed to be necessary at present. This could be reviewed at any time in the future.

3.0 Next Steps and Timescale

3.1 The following steps would be required in order to achieve the proposal:

- Make changes to Standing Order 3 – Terms of Reference of the Board – and Standing Order 4 – Standing Committees.
- Change all references in policies, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to either the Operations Committee or the Resources and Risk Committee, so that they now refer to the Board, and all references to the Chairman of the Resources and Risk Committee so that they now refer to the Lead Member for Finance.
- Subsume the work programmes of the Operations Committee and the Resources and Risk Committee into that of the Board.
- Agree and issue a new meetings timetable. It is suggested that Board meetings are scheduled roughly four-weekly, subject to avoiding peak holiday periods, where possible, and meeting governance requirements, but with a longer break at Christmas-time.

3.2 It is suggested that the current committee cycle runs until 16 April 2012, when a report would be brought to the Board seeking to action the steps set out in 3.1 above.

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Tony Hall	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information			√	
Consultation	Management Team					

Meeting Date: 30th January 2012

Report Title: 2011/12 Business Plan 3rd Quarter Update

Purpose: To update the Board on progress against the 2011/12 Business Plan

Policy/Strategy Implications: None as a result of the recommendation in this report

Finance and VFM Implications: None as a result of the recommendation in this report

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: None as a result of the recommendation in this report

Risk Assessment (cross-reference with Freebridge Risk Map): The risk map was used as one of the reference points for the development of the original plan.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board

- i) Note the 2011/2012 Business Plan - 3rd quarter update
- ii) Approve the requests to remove items from the Plan as set out at section 3

1) **Background**

1.1 The 2011/12 Business Plan 3rd quarter update is set out at Appendix 1. Each action has been assessed with a RAG indicator and where appropriate there is commentary from the responsible officer. For clarity the RAG status is categorised as follows:

Red Won't be completed within the year
Amber In progress
Green Completed

1.2 This update shows the progress made on the implementation of the plan to the end of December 2011.

Overall out of the forty five activities approved by the Board, nineteen have been completed, twenty are still on target to be completed by the end of the year, four will not be completed and it is proposed that they are carried forward into the new plan. Two activities identified in section three are no longer felt to be appropriate and it is proposed that these are removed from the plan.

2) **Progress Report on Key Projects**

Increasing Satisfaction

Progress is being made in embedding our customer care Value - additional employees have received Mary Gober coaching training and monthly Gober coaching sessions are taking place. In-house induction training for new employees is established as part of the induction process.

An independent mystery shopping exercise has taken place. The results support our understanding of current performance. Areas for improvement are letter and email correspondence. The findings will be used in further customer care training.

Community Focus

A programme of tenancy visits is well underway with properties that have had no access for twelve months being a particular target. In addition to the 'Out and About' tenancy visits tenant feedback is generally very good, with the majority expressing appreciation for the visit, even if there was nothing they wished to discuss or report.

Hillington Square

The Design Team are co-ordinating a lot of activity at the present time. This supports the move from design to implementation. The project is progressing but we are now planning for a start on site in late summer/autumn.

Appreciating Assets

Good progress is being made to validate stock condition information. Where there is a lack of element information visits are taking place and appropriate works organised.

The Under Occupation Policy and Strategy has been agreed by the Board and the action plan is now in progress.

Increasing Capacity

It is proposed to defer development and implementation of succession planning until the Board have approved a revised HR Strategy.

The Supporting People funding review initiated a restructure of our sheltered housing service. These changes have been made and an interim structure is working. A further report will be presented to the Board in March.

3) **Request for Board agreement to remove items from the Plan**

1.1.3 Identify external validation scheme and self assessment

This activity was originally included in the plan to replace our intention to submit an application for an 'Investor in People' award. The general consensus is that we would not benefit from an external validation scheme as we have developed good employee engagement processes locally.

3.4.2 EEDA bid for retrofitting pilot

The application process for a full grant submission has required a disproportional amount of time. This has raised concerns that the benefits of the project are outweighed by the work required to deliver it. It is therefore proposed that we concentrate on developing our own energy efficiency strategy.

4) **Progress Report on Corporate Bond Targets**

4.1 90% Target for Customer Satisfaction

Revised survey scheduled for March 2012.

4.2 Average days lost to sickness (target 10.7 days)

Current average is 4.76 days lost to sickness.

4.3 Conclude Tenancy Visit pilots (500)

387 tenancy visits have been completed and we are on target to complete 500 visits by March 2012.

4.4 85% Satisfaction with views taken into account

A revised survey is scheduled for March 2012.

4.5 95% Decent Homes

90.65% of properties are now Decent

4.6 18 New Homes

On track to deliver 20 new homes within the financial year. Current position:

Fairstead Estate	12 units February 2012 [completed ahead of schedule tenants moved in Dec 2011]
Ferndale	1 unit completed October 2011
Lady Jane Grey Rd	2 units completed November 2011
Hillington Square	4 buybacks completed (149, 307, 246 and 239)
21 Hollycroft Close	1 buyback completed

4.7 200 New Skills

Skills log is being updated by managers to capture training/new skills.

4.8 £333,000 cost reduction target

Management Team discussions have commenced on the development of a cost reduction strategy.

5) Board members are asked to note the report and approve the requests to remove two items from the plan.

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
1. INCREASING SATISFACTION				
1.1 Increasing employee satisfaction in order to develop a corporate culture that supports Customer Excellence	1.1.1 Implement the Remuneration Strategy.	R	Sean Kent Mar 12	Still researching options to present paper to the Board before March with regard to pay award. Strategy unlikely to be finalised promptly due to Union resistance. [Status change - Amber to Red]
	1.1.2 Embed the Mary Gober training/coaching. Commence in-house induction.	G	Tony Hall/Sean Kent Mar 12	Coaches trained and being developed. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	1.1.3 Identify External Validation scheme and self assessment.		Sean Kent Mar 12	No longer being actively pursued, as not thought relevant now. Board agreement requested to remove from plan.
1.2 Embed customer engagement in continuous improvement	1.2.1 Establish Tenant Panel.	G	Michelle Playford June 11	A new member is set to be appointed to the Panel, bringing membership up to ten with only two further vacancies. The Panel has completed its first service review and has made a series of recommendations around the Local Offer, the majority of which have been implemented. The Panel is now looking at Complaints.
	1.2.2 Develop Local Offer to include customer satisfaction and improving repairs and maintenance.	G	Robert Clarke Mar 12	Tenant Panel are now involved in monitoring the Local Offer to ensure standards are being met. Local Offer highlights the focus on customer satisfaction and repairs and maintenance. Work will continue with the Panel. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	1.2.3 Asset Management Service Review.	A	Peter Nourse Nov 11 Mar 12	An interim technical client has been engaged to provide technical support to the Assets team. Amongst other things,

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
				he has been tasked with undertaking a "health check" of the service.
	1.2.4 Tenant Engagement Service Review.	G	Michelle Playford July 11	This has now been completed and has been presented to and approved by the Board. Recommendations from the review are being implemented
1.3 Increase feedback in order to demonstrate learning (Ask, Listen, Act, Learn)	1.3.1 Improve Complaints Process establish clear procedures to improve response times.	A	Sean Kent March 12	Tenant Panel reviewing current procedures and will present recommendations.
	1.3.2 Feedback mechanisms - re-launch Mystery Shopping. Focus Groups.	G	Sean Kent /Robert Clarke March 12	First Mystery Shopping exercise now completed and results being evaluated. Additionally joint working with e ² partners has commenced to look at cross shopping in the future. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	1.3.3 Annual Satisfaction Surveys.	G	Michelle Playford	STATUS survey completed in April and showed overall improvement in satisfaction. The Star Survey will take place in March 2012.
1.4 Improve communication and access to services, ensuring that FCH is 'Easy to do business with' whilst providing VfM	1.4.1 Customer Contact Centre - develop strategic plan and implement the first phase.	A	Robert Clarke Dec 11 March 12	New First Contact Centre Manager now recruited. Plan to be developed during December/January.
	1.4.2 Behavioural Influencers - assess opportunities and establish pilots.	G	Sean Kent	Despite no response from Cabinet Office approaches being developed and used in conjunction with Mary Gober coaching. 'Do Something Different' training completed and program being established.
1.5 Improve choice in order that individual needs are met	1.5.1 Revise Customer Profiling survey and collect additional data.	A	Robert Clarke July 11	Survey has been circulated to tenant's w/c 2.1.12 – focus on collecting data and updating systems over the next three months.

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
	1.5.2 Diversity Impact Assessments - continue rolling review and integrate into service reviews.	G	Sean Kent	Ongoing [Status change - Amber to Green]
2. COMMUNITY FOCUSED				
2.1 Support our communities through working with people in ways which will help them to have a greater influence over decisions which affect their lives	2.1.1 Complete Community Development Strategy to include employment, training and capacity building opportunities and commence implementation.	A	Robert Clarke Dec-11 Mar 2012	To commence in 4 th Quarter.
	2.1.2 Tenancy Visits - agree and implement programme of pilots.	G	Robert Clarke	Programme of visits has commenced and target will be met by March 12 [Status change - Amber to Green]
2.2 Working in partnership to improve our residents economic and social well being	2.2.1 Local Partnerships - Influencing partnerships' objectives to meet tenants' needs.	G	Tony Hall	Range of local partnerships in place, strong working relationship with the Borough Council. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	2.2.2 Local Procurement - establish baseline data and set target for future activity.	A	Malcolm Fry Aug-11 Mar/Apr 12	Targets yet to be set. To be picked up when Procurement Manager position filled.
	2.2.3 Revise Financial Inclusion Strategy and Develop Digital Inclusion Strategy.	A	Malcolm Fry / Dave Clements March 12	Digital Inclusion: Research taken place, discussion paper debated by Management Team November 2011. Strategy & Action Plan to go to R&R Committee February 2012. Financial Inclusion Strategy - to be researched further.
2.3 Demonstrate a commitment to improving neighbourhoods	2.3.1 Hillington Square - Consult and complete design pilot - start on site.	R	Tony Hall Mar 12 Sept 12	Design progressing to Stage D by end of February 2012 – planning submission will follow. OJEU notice for main contractor published. [Status change - Amber to Red]
	2.3.2 Local Charters - Grow Neighbourhood Charters as appropriate.	G	Robert Clarke April 11	Action plan in place to commence new approach on Hillington Square w/c 9 th Jan 12. Terrington Charter working

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
				well. No new Charters identified to date. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	2.3.3 Estate Walkabouts - Agree approach and set targets. Publish programme for residents.	G	Robert Clarke	Programme published.
2.4 Influence local and national policy makers to help meet the needs of our communities	2.4.1 Media & Stakeholder Influencing - complete Influencer audit and deliver action plan.	G	Michelle Playford Ongoing	Influencer and partner perception surveys completed and findings analysed. Delivery of targeted engagement activity underway. The first edition of the e-bulletin was distributed in Nov 2011 generating a positive response. Media engagement is ongoing with proactive and reactive media relations. Next partner focus group set for February 2012.
	2.4.2 Providing Support for Smaller Charities - Agree extent and approach. Agree scope with Purfleet Trust, Arts Centre & Thornage.	G	Tony Hall/Sean Kent	Charitable Support Policy agreed. Art Centre SLA ready for when transfer occurs. [Status change - Amber to Green]

3. APPRECIATING ASSETS

3.1 Develop an effective Asset Management Strategy that delivers a range of approaches, products and priorities reflecting our assessment of local markets	3.1.1 Revise Asset Management Strategy and agree corporate objectives.	A	Tony Hall March 12	Revised date due to interim management arrangements and inability to recruit AD Assets - range of alternative solutions now being considered.
3.2 Improve effective Asset Management in order to understand the	3.2.1 Asset Management Database - analysis of requirements for stock condition information. Validate and collect information.	A	Peter Nourse Nov 11 Jan 12	A number of elements are showing as having no data. Surveys are currently being carried out on these elements and

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
<p>long term performance of our asset portfolio and the investment performance of each individual property [Making best use of what we have got]</p>				will be completed by mid January 2012.
	3.2.2 Devise Under Occupation Strategy and action plan. Implement pilots.	G	Sean Kent	Policy and Strategy agreed. Action Plan in progress. [Status change - Amber to Green]
<p>3.3 Improve analysis of our asset portfolio to maximise new affordable housing in order to meet local need</p>	3.3.1 Stock Rationalisation Plan.	R	Peter Nourse Oct 11 June 2012	Discussions ongoing with other Registered Providers. Options appraisals being undertaken on some of our own stock [Status change - Amber to Red]
	3.3.2 New Affordable Homes - deliver 18 new homes.	G	Peter Nourse Mar 12	New homes total, which includes build, buybacks and purchases, currently stands at 20 units [Status change - Amber to Green]
<p>3.4 Improve overall satisfaction in the quality of tenant homes including optimising energy efficiency measures</p>	3.4.1 Decent Homes and Development of Investment Plan - program Stock Condition Survey work plan. Procurement of partners.	A	Peter Nourse Nov 11	Savills' Stock Condition data loaded onto Open Housing. All Survey data loaded onto Open Housing. Current Decency level is 91% of the stock. Investment plan for 2012/13 will be completed by the end of February 2012.
	3.4.2 EEDA Bid for retrofitting pilot successful. Prepare and commence.		Tony Hall Dec 11	Board agreement requested to remove from plan.
	3.4.3 Complete approach analysis to wider energy efficiency measures - identify funding including "Green Deal". Consider pilots.	A	Sean Kent Aug 11 Mar 12	Research is focussing on retrofit passivhaus to inform future plans and pilots.

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
4. INCREASING CAPACITY				
4.1 Clear understanding of our operating costs in order to achieve cost reductions	4.1.1 Benchmarking and Reducing costs - target reductions from agreed areas.	A	Malcolm Fry Nov 11	Analysis has been undertaken - report will go to the R&R Committee Feb 2012
	4.1.2 Revised Procurement Strategy produced	A	Malcolm Fry Dec 11 Mar 12	Further research required March 12
4.2 Improve internal capacity	4.2.1 Developing Skills - Review training approaches Improve identification of outcomes.	G	Sean Kent July 12	New PDP introduced as part of new appraisals. Revised training request form completed. Guidance notes for managers on training evaluation completed. Definition of 200 skills and skills 'log' completed.
	4.2.2 ICT Strategy - map and review existing information storage, improve access to reporting tools, improve usage of existing systems.	A	Dave Clements Information Storage: Target Dec 11 Mar 12	To be completed at end of 4 th quarter
		A	Reporting Tools: Target Sep 11 Mar 12	To be completed by end of 4 th quarter
		G	Improved Usage of Existing Systems: Target Jan 12	ASB requirements specification drawn up and demos received from REACT & Gentoo – Capita's module to be assessed once released. Asset Management Systems action plan agreed by Management Team. HR system to be migrated to a self-service portal. [Status change - Amber to Green]

VISION	2011 - 2012	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
	4.2.3 Agree and implement Succession Planning approach.	R	Sean Kent Sept 11 - Mar 12	Deferred pending review of HR Strategy. [Status change - Amber to Red]
4.3 Income maximisation and impact on affordability	4.3.1 Fairer Futures Investment Plan - identify funding options.	G	Sean Kent March 12	Funding in place for current program. Investigation of new opportunities ongoing. [Status change - Amber to Green]
	4.3.2 Service Charging - implement phase 2 of sheltered and identify general needs charges.	A	Robert Clarke April 12	Phase two of Sheltered Housing complete. General needs service charging being reviewed pending outcome of decision on rent increases for 2012/13
	4.3.3 Supporting People Strategy - restructure sheltered services.	A	Robert Clarke Dec 11	Report on interim new structure to go to the Board March 2012
4.4 Selling services	4.4.1 Stock management opportunities - agree approach and develop draft systems and procedures. Review current opportunities.	A	Tony Hall March 12	In discussion with developers regarding lease arrangements
	4.4.2 Agree and implement PSD Business Plan.	A	Colin Davison Mar 12	Ongoing
4.5 Improving governance	4.5.1 Revise Board Development Plan.	A	Tony Hall March 12	Action Plan from Board Appraisals and proposals regarding new Board /Committee structure.

NB: Where there has been a change of status this is indicated in the Notes