

FREEBRIDGE BOARD MINUTES AND ASSOCIATED REPORTS

5 MARCH 2012

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on Monday 5 March 2012 at 6.30pm in the Conference Room, Juniper House, Austin Street, King's Lynn

PRESENT:

Ray Johnson (Chairman)
Lesley Bambridge
Matthew Brown
Sylvia Calver
Steve Clark
John Fox
Irene Gammon
Michael Jervis
Paul Leader
Ian Pinches
Colin Sampson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tony Hall	-	Chief Executive
Sean Kent	-	Executive Director (Resources)
Robert Clarke	-	Assistant Director of Housing (minute numbers 27/12 - 37/12)
Angus MacQueen	-	Company Secretary

27/12 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Bill Guyan.

28/12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29/12 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Annual Rent Increase (Minute Number 09/12)

In answer to questions, the Executive Director (Resources) said that the majority of the additional discretionary rent increase of 4.1% for general needs would be phased in during 2012/13, whilst the discretionary increase of 9.1% for sheltered housing would be phased over a longer period. There was a risk that a change in Government policy could result in the discretionary increase being no longer available, and so the increase was being introduced as quickly as was considered reasonable. The phasing in of service charging had been extended over a longer period than originally planned, so as to

minimise the impact of the discretionary rent increase on sheltered scheme tenants.

(b) Mortgage Rescue (Minute Number 16/12)

In answer to a question, the Chief Executive advised that the mortgage rescue that had been approved by the Board was now being finalised, whilst another one was in progress. The service level agreement with Orbit Housing Association for the mortgage rescue scheme had been received.

30/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Tony Hall and Sean Kent declared interests in the recommendation on Executive Remuneration at minute number 33/12. The Board was content that they should remain in the room during the item, as there was no discussion on the matter.

John Fox declared an interest in the item at minute number 42/12 – Appointment of Shareholders. The Board was content that he should remain in the room during the item, but he did not vote.

Lesley Bambridge, as the ward councillor, declared an interest in the item at minute number 43/12 – Development at 2 Chapel Lane, King's Lynn. The Board was content that she should remain in the room during the item.

31/12 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:

- 14 February, Mart lunch
- 20 - 21 February, National Housing Federation Leaders' Conference
- 24 February, Freebridge business planning day with stakeholders
- 29 February, Sheltered Scheme Gardening Competition planning meeting

In relation to the Leaders' Conference on 20 - 21 February, the Chief Executive (who had also attended) said that the standard of speakers had been mixed. The key message had been the importance of being flexible and ready to react to opportunities in a rapidly changing environment. Both the Chairman and the Chief Executive had found that the event provided useful networking opportunities.

With regard to the business planning day on 24 February, the Chairman asked that his thanks be recorded to those members of staff who had been

involved in organising the event, which had been very successful. The Chief Executive advised that feedback on the event had been very good. He had been pleased with the quality of speakers and debate.

32/12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE

(a) Norfolk Community Foundation

The Chief Executive said that the Norfolk Community Foundation had agreed to his request to match-fund an additional £50,000, so that the total for this year was £100,000, on a £1.00 for £1.00 basis. This money was placed in an endowment fund, and the interest used to provide grants for initiatives that had benefit to Freebridge tenants. Freebridge's contribution was from efficiency savings. The Board had also approved a £5,000 revenue stream to boost the fund during the first few years while the capital was built up. A member commented on the positive feedback that he had received from organisations that had benefited from the fund.

(b) Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) – Empty Homes Programme Grant

The Chief Executive advised that confirmation had been received from the HCA that Freebridge's bid to the Empty Homes Programme had been successful. Freebridge would receive around £130,000 funding to bring 20 units back into use between now and 2014. Officers were working with the Borough Council to identify potential properties.

(c) Bid for Retrofitting Pilot

Confidential

(d) Around the World in 80 Dishes

The Chief Executive reported that the West Norfolk Partnership had considered discontinuing the annual "Around the World in 80 Dishes" event, as the Borough Council was no longer able to allocate the necessary funds. He had, therefore, agreed that Freebridge would become a major sponsor of and lead partner for the event, to enable it to carry on. The event was an excellent platform to promote healthy eating and to celebrate diversity.

(e) Hillington Square

The Chief Executive said that the design proposals for the Hillington Square project were almost finalised. They would be presented at the Hillington Square Design Team and Steering Group meetings on 7 March 2012 and at the Board briefing on 12 March 2012. Management Team would be discussing on 6 March 2012 the possibility of providing dedicated financial expertise for the Assets team, including the Hillington Square project, and spreading the risk in the procurement of the main contractor for the project.

33/12 **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS** (report not attached)

The Board received a report setting out the recommendations of the Resources and Risk Committee meeting held on 20 February 2012.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the revised budget for 2011/12, as presented to the Resources and Risk Committee, be approved.
- 2) That the budget for 2012/13, as presented to the Resources and Risk Committee, be approved.
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Executive to make the final allocations within the Assets budgets, subject to a report back to the Board.
- 4) That the Digital Inclusion Policy, as presented to the Resources and Risk Committee, be approved.
- 5) Confidential

34/12 **BUSINESS PLAN 2012/13 (click here to go to report)**

The Chief Executive presented a report which sought approval of the 2011 – 2014 Business Plan update and the 2012/13 One Year Plan, including minor changes to the supporting vision statements.

The Chief Executive referred to the business planning day with stakeholders, held on 24 February 2012. He said that the key points of feedback from the day had been as follows:

- the importance of partnership working;
- the importance of long-term planning and of being flexible enough to react to opportunities;
- uncertainty in the housing sector; and
- concerns over income streams.

None of the feedback had resulted in a need to change the Business Plan from that presented.

In answer to questions, officers made the following points:

- Tenant cash-back schemes, for instance to pay tenants to carry out repairs in their homes, were being considered by a number of housing associations in light of the proposed welfare reforms. Freebridge officers would give the introduction of such a scheme serious consideration once there was more certainty around the reforms and would present any proposals to the Board for approval.

- Much of the work to achieve the Business Plan in 2012/13 appeared to fall to a small number of staff. However, some of this would be delegated to other staff. Some actions would also be achieved through joint working across the organisation; this would help to combat risks, for instance the Finance team would help other teams to control spend patterns.
- The biggest risks to the Business Plan could be those known as “black swan risks” – those risks that could not be seen. An example could be a major disruption in banks’ funding streams; if this were to occur, it could have an impact on the availability of funds to Freebridge, although Freebridge would be one of many organisations affected.

RESOLVED: That the revised 2011 – 2014 Business Plan and the 2012/13 One Year Plan be approved.

35/12 ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING POLICY AND PROCEDURES
 (report not attached – the Anti Money Laundering Policy is published within the “Policies” section of the Freebridge website)

The Executive Director (Resources) presented a report which set out an Anti Money Laundering Policy and accompanying Procedures. The Executive Director (Resources) explained that the report had previously been considered by the Resources and Risk Committee, and was now being presented to the Board following some input from the Chairman of the Committee, Matthew Brown, which had been incorporated.

The Executive Director (Resources) said that staff training on combating the potential of money laundering would be arranged shortly.

A member pointed out that the Procedures referred at paragraph 1.10.1 to the possibility of there being occasions when there was a reasonable excuse for non-disclosure of suspected money laundering, and asked for examples of such occasions. The Executive Director (Resources) undertook to look into this and to respond to the member.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Anti Money Laundering Policy be approved, as presented.
- 2) That the Anti Money Laundering Disclosure Procedures be noted.

36/12 OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR WILLOW LODGE SHELTERED SCHEME

Confidential item

37/12 SUPPORTING PEOPLE TASK GROUP INTERIM REPORT

Confidential item

38/12 **BOARD APPRAISAL AND REVIEW** (report not available – confidential)

The Company Secretary presented a report which set out the progress achieved against the action plan arising from the Board appraisal and review process held in 2010 and which proposed a new action plan arising from the Board appraisal and review process held in 2011.

The Chief Executive explained that it had been hoped to have the final outcome report on the Board appraisal and review process held in 2011 available for board members before this meeting. However, the report was awaiting one minor correction, and would be made available to members as soon as this was made. The correction did not affect the key points of the report, which members had been made aware of, nor did it affect the proposed action plan arising from it.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the progress achieved against the Board Improvement Action Plan arising from the Board appraisal and review process held in 2010 be noted, and that it be agreed that this is now completed, other than two actions carried forward to the new action plan.
- 2) That the Board Improvement Action Plan arising from the Board appraisal and review process held in 2011 be approved.

39/12 **BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT (click here to go to report)**

The Company Secretary presented a report which proposed a process by which independent and tenant vacancies would be filled during 2012.

The importance of succession planning and recruiting to fill skills gaps was stressed. It was accepted that it would be better for the Board to carry a vacancy than to appoint someone who was not right for the role.

RESOLVED: That the board member recruitment process set out in the report be agreed.

40/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UPDATE**

Confidential item

41/12 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING** (report not available – confidential)

The Executive Director (Resources) presented a report which provided quarterly performance information for the period to 31 December 2011.

Board members highlighted the particularly strong performance in relation to former and current tenant arrears, gas servicing, and sickness absence.

The Board noted that, for the first time, compliments to staff had been listed in the report. The Board asked that its thanks be passed to those staff involved.

The Board acknowledged that the only area where there was a downward trend in performance was in rent loss voids and bad debts. However, the Board was content that there were extenuating circumstances for this trend and that the situation was being well managed.

The Board noted the report.

42/12 **APPOINTMENT OF SHAREHOLDERS** (report not available – confidential)

The Company Secretary presented a report which requested the Board to consider one application for tenant shareholding.

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

43/12 **DEVELOPMENT AT 2 CHAPEL LANE, KING'S LYNN – RESOURCE CENTRE** (report not available – confidential)

The Chief Executive presented a report which provided an update on progress towards providing a new Resource Centre via the conversion of The Barn at 2 Chapel Lane, King's Lynn.

In answer to a question, the Chief Executive said that he was not aware of any reason why the target completion date of autumn 2012 should not be achieved, although there were sometimes unexpected delays with development projects. The Board acknowledged that this project was not time sensitive and, as such, any minor delay would not create a significant problem.

In response to a question, the Executive Director (Resources) stated that, as well as being used by Freebridge staff, the Resource Centre would initially be made available to tenants, and might also be advertised to other agencies.

The Board noted the report.

44/12 **WORK UPDATE** (report not available – confidential)

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

- Action Sheet
- Future Work Programme of the Board.

The Board noted the update.

45/12 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Confidential item

46/12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) Provident Street, King's Lynn

A board member referred to a recent article in the local press regarding the community facility at Provident Street, King's Lynn. The Chief Executive explained that he had heard that Norfolk County Council were considering the closure of this facility and had contacted them to see whether it would be possible for Freebridge to purchase the site and to redevelop it with a mixed use of community and residential purposes. In response, the County Council had informed him that they intended to sell the property on the open market; this would most likely not be affordable for Freebridge. A user group had informed the press of Freebridge's interest, with the result that the Chief Executive had been contacted by the press. The Chief Executive had been careful not to criticise the County Council when speaking to the press, as he was keen to maintain a good working relationship with them. He had written to the County Council to stress that Freebridge would be interested in acquiring the facility should this become viable.

The Board congratulated the Chief Executive on his handling of the situation.

(b) Carpentry Student of the Year

The Chairman reported that Freebridge Joiner Tom Ware had been named Carpentry Student of the Year by Norfolk Training Services. Mr Ware was the third Freebridge apprentice to receive an award in two years.

The Board asked that its congratulations be passed on to Mr Ware for this accolade and to the Assistant Director of Property Services for the success of the training schemes in his team.

(c) New Funding Conditions (click here to go to report)

The Chief Executive presented a report which set out the new Funding Conditions issued by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The report had been issued subsequent to the agenda.

The Chief Executive referred to a new provision in the Conditions that the HCA now reserved the right to update and amend the Conditions throughout the programme period for the 2011-15 Affordable Housing Programme. The HCA had recently made a change to the Conditions, which was in Freebridge's favour, as it enabled Registered Providers to be paid in two tranche payments, rather than the full amount on completion. This change had required a variation to the Framework Agreement with the HCA to be sealed; this had been approved under urgent action, and would be formally reported to the next Board meeting.

RESOLVED: That the new Funding Conditions, as presented, be approved.

47/12 NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 16 April 2012 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

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, Stakeholders including Tenant Panel members					

Meeting Date: 5th March 2012

Report Title: Business Plan 2012/13

Purpose: To seek the Board's approval of the 2011 – 2014 Business Plan update and the 2012/13 One year plan, including minor changes to the supporting vision statements.

Policy/Strategy Implications:

No new policies as a result of this report; however, some new policies will emerge from the activities within the plan.

Finance and VFM Implications:

The Financial Plan and budget have been developed alongside the Business Plan. Value for money and cost reduction form components of the plan.

Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications:

Increasing satisfaction is a key driver within the revised plan.

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

1.2 Governance Framework. Board direction not implemented.
Impact: Critical, Likelihood: Very Low

Within the plan the single most significant risk is the delivery of the Hillington Square project. 4.9 "Not providing a sustainable solution to Hillington Square"; Impact: Critical with a high likelihood of potential failure.

The risk of failure to deliver the improvements will be mitigated through project management and financial control.

Extensive Board member involvement in developing and monitoring the Plan reduces risk. The high level risk map will be reviewed within the Business Plan update.

Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board

- (i) Approve the revised 2011 - 2014 Business Plan and the 2012/13 One Year Plan

1 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 11th April 2011 the Board approved the 2011 - 2014 Business Plan, and agreed to an annual review of the Plan. The Financial Plan has been formulated alongside the Business Plan in order to ensure that it is affordable.

- 1.2 The Board discussed some of the key issues that would impact on the business plan at its planning days, including rent setting, welfare reforms and governance issues. The outcomes of those discussions have been fed into subsequent Board reports and the Board's decisions are reflected in this revised plan.
- 1.3 Management Team have updated the detailed delivery plan and high level plan and these are set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.
- 1.4 The Stakeholder Day will take place on the on the 24th February. The Board will receive a verbal update on any new issues that arise as a consequence of these discussions.

2 The 2012 - 2013 Plan

- 2.1 The plan will continue to be focussed around the four corporate objectives, each with a revised set of corporate targets:
 - **Improving Satisfaction**
Staff Satisfaction 96% (Using question 62 "I enjoy my job at Freebridge") currently 96%)
Tenant Satisfaction 92 % (2% increase on current target)
 - **Community Focussed**
Hillington Square - to start on site phase one
Host a successful tenant Summer Road Show (Separate satisfaction figure)
 - **Appreciating Assets**
Conclude the Decent Homes transfer programme
Re-align the Asset Management structure
 - **Increasing Capacity**
Set a gross income collection target of 98% (maintain current performance through rent increase year)
Increase staff motivation to 80% (Using question 39 "My manager motivates and inspires me to do a better job" (was 74% and had decreased by 1% from the previous year)

3 Monitor and Review

The implementation of the Plan will be monitored by the Board on a quarterly basis.

VISION	2012 - 2013	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 HR Strategy		Michelle Playford June 2012 ongoing	
	1.1.2 Mary Gober Training - review usage and develop Freebridge methodology		Tony Hall / Sean Kent June 2012 ongoing	
	1.1.3 Develop coaching capacity within Management Group		Tony Hall / Sean Kent June 2012 ongoing	
1.2 Ensure customer engagement in continuous improvement	1.2.1 Develop Tenant Panel		Michelle Playford June 2012 ongoing	
	1.2.2 Service Reviews - Responsive Repairs		Colin Davison Sept 2012	
	1.2.3 Service Reviews - Income Collection		Robert Clarke June 2012	
1.3 Increase feedback in order to demonstrate learning (Ask, Listen, Act, Learn) Capture evidence of learning	1.3.1 Improve complaints process - revise and update process		Michelle Playford June 2012	
	1.3.2 Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey		Michelle Playford June 2012	
	1.3.3 Annual Staff Satisfaction Survey		Michelle Playford Dec 2012	
1.4 Improve communication and access to services, ensuring that FCH is 'Easy to do business with' whilst providing VfM	1.4.1 Implement phase two of Customer Contact Centre Plan/Housing Management restructure		Robert Clarke Sept 2012	
	1.4.2 Embed Behavioural Influencers Pilots - identify further opportunities including incentive scheme		Sean Kent/ Michelle Playford June 2012	
	1.4.3 Research and propose a Tenant Cash Back Scheme		Colin Davison Dec 2012	
1.5 Improve choice in order that individual needs are met	1.5.1 Customer Profiling - Integrate new data into service delivery		Robert Clarke June 2012 ongoing	

VISION	2012 - 2013	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
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 Finalise implementation of the Community Development Strategy		Robert Clarke June 2012	
	2.1.2 Tenancy Visits - review pilots and agree strategy		Robert Clarke June 2012	
	2.1.3 Develop and implement Tenancy Strategy		Robert Clarke Sept 2012	
2.2 Working in partnership to improve our residents economic and social well being	2.2.1 Explore the potential for joint ventures and develop strategy		Tony Hall / Sean Kent Mar 2013	
	2.2.2 Implement Financial and Digital Inclusion strategy		Robert Clarke / Dave Clements June 2012 ongoing	
2.3 Demonstrate a commitment to improving neighbourhoods	2.3.1 Hillington Square - formalise approach to intensive Housing Management		Robert Clarke June 2012 ongoing	
	2.3.2 Monitor outcomes and performance of the Tenant Summer Road Show		Michelle Playford Sept 2012	
2.4 Influence local and national policy makers to help meet the needs of our communities	2.4.1 Develop relationships with local Media and Stakeholders		Tony Hall Sept 2012	
	2.4.2 Support for local charities - review scope with Purfleet Trust, Arts Centre, Thornage Hall and selected charities		Tony Hall / Sean Kent June 2012	

VISION	2012 - 2013	STATUS	RESPONSIBILITY AND TIMESCALE	PROGRESS
3. APPRECIATING ASSETS				
3.1 Develop an effective Asset Management Strategy	3.1.1 Finalise Asset Management Plan		Tony Hall June 2012	
	3.1.2 Commence phase one of Hillington Square Project		Tony Hall June 2012 ongoing	
	3.1.3 Implement improvement programme for Non-Traditional Homes		Tony Hall June 2012 ongoing	
3.2 Improve effective Asset Management [Making best use of what we have got]	3.2.1 Implement and review Under Occupation Strategy		Robert Clarke March 2013	
	3.2.2 Implement new structure for Asset Management		Tony Hall June 2012	
3.3 Improve analysis of our asset portfolio to maximise new affordable housing in order to meet local need	3.3.1 Develop Stock Rationalisation Plan		AD Assets Dec 2012	
	3.3.2 Secure twenty four new homes		AD Assets March 2013	
	3.3.3 Forty affordable rent conversions		Robert Clarke June 2012	
3.4 Improve overall satisfaction in the quality of tenant homes	3.4.1 Complete Decent Homes and review options for procurement of new programme		AD Assets Sept 2012	
	3.4.2 Develop and implement Sustainability Strategy		Sean Kent / Colin Davison Sept 2012	

VISION	2012 - 2013	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 Further integration of Cost Reduction Strategy through continuous improvement [Knowing our costs]		Malcolm Fry / Michelle Playford Sept 2012	
4.2 Improve internal capacity	4.2.1 Developing Skills - continue to develop management capacity		Sean Kent / Michelle Playford June 2012	
	4.2.2 ICT Strategy - Implement Electronic Document Management (EDM) and work flow		Dave Clements June 2012 ongoing	
	4.2.3 Review Quality Management Models - carry out research		Tony Hall / Sean Kent March 2013	
4.3 Income maximisation and impact on affordability	4.3.1 Manage implementation of rents and service charge		Malcolm Fry June 2012	
	4.3.2 Review interim sheltered housing service		Robert Clarke Sept 2012	
4.4 Selling Services	4.4.1 Assess stock management opportunities		Tony Hall June 2012	
	4.4.2 Implement PSD Business Plan		Colin Davison Sept 2012	
4.5 Improving Governance	4.5.1 Implement new Board structure		Tony Hall June 2012	

Freebridge Community Housing Business Plan 2012 - 2013

DEVELOPING HOMES AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITHIN WEST NORFOLK

Increasing Satisfaction	Community Focussed	Appreciating Assets	Increasing Capacity
<p>Staff Satisfaction 96%</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction 92%</p>	<p>Hillington Square Start on Site</p> <p>Successful Tenant Summer Road Show</p>	<p>Conclude DHS Transfer Programme</p> <p>Re-align Asset Management Structure</p>	<p>Income Collection Target 98%</p> <p>Increase Staff Motivation 80%</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete Service Reviews on responsive repairs and income collection ○ Revise and implement new HR Strategy ○ Implement phase two of development plan for First Contact Centre and Housing Management restructure ○ Research and propose Tenant Cash Back Scheme ○ Develop Mary Gober Approach ○ Develop coaching capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commence phase one of Hillington Square Regeneration, including intensive Housing Management ○ Develop and implement Tenancy Strategy ○ Finalise implementation of Community Development Strategy ○ Review tenancy visit pilots and agree strategy ○ Implement Financial Inclusion and Digital Inclusion Strategies ○ Tenant Summer Road Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finalise Asset Management plan and commence implementation of new management structure ○ Complete Decent Homes and review options for procurement of new programme ○ Plan stock rationalisation ○ Implement Under Occupation Strategy ○ Secure twenty four new homes ○ Achieve forty Affordable Rent conversions ○ Develop and implement Sustainability Strategy ○ Implement Improvement Plan for on traditional homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Further integration of Cost Reduction Strategy through continuous improvement ○ Continue to develop management capacity ○ Manage implementation of Rent and Service Charge Strategy including preparation for welfare reform ○ Review interim sheltered housing service ○ Implement new Board structure ○ Review Quality Management Models ○ Electronic Document Management / Workflow

	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	VISION
1. INCREASING SATISFACTION			
1.1.1 HR Strategy	Implement HR strategy	Review and identify improvements	1.1 Increasing employee satisfaction in order to develop a corporate culture that supports Customer Excellence
1.1.2 Mary Gober Training	Review usage and develop Freebridge methodology	Review and refresh approach	
1.1.3 Coaching	Develop coaching capacity within Management Group	Review and develop	
1.2.1 Tenant Panel	Develop Tenant Panel	Review Tenant Panel	1.2 Ensure customer engagement in continuous improvement
1.2.2 Service Reviews	Responsive Repairs	Community Development	
1.2.3 Service Reviews	Income Collection	Grounds Maintenance	
1.3.1 Improve Complaints Process	Revise and update complaints process	Monitor	1.3 Increase feedback in order to demonstrate learning (Ask, Listen, Act, Learn) Capture evidence of learning
1.3.2 Tenant Satisfaction Survey	Annual survey	Annual survey	
1.3.3 Staff Satisfaction Survey	Annual survey	Annual survey	
1.4.1 Develop Customer Contact Centre	Implement phase two of plan Identify further improvements	Implement further improvements	1.4 Improve communication and access to services, ensuring that FCH is 'Easy to do business with' whilst providing VfM
1.4.2 Behavioural Influencers Pilot	Evaluate and embed pilots Identify further opportunities	Implement further opportunities	
1.4.3 Tenant Cash Back Scheme	Research and propose a Tenant Cash Back Scheme		
1.5.1 Customer Profiling	Integrate new data into service delivery	Revalidate data	1.5 Improve choice in order that individual needs are met

	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	VISION
2. COMMUNITY FOCUSED			
2.1.1 Community Development Strategy	Finalise implementation of strategy	Assess impact and review	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
2.1.2 Tenancy Visits	Review pilots Agree strategy	Monitor satisfaction and feedback	
2.1.3 Tenancy Strategy	Develop and implement Tenancy Strategy	Monitor and develop	
2.2.1 Local Procurement	Explore the potential for joint ventures and develop strategy	Options appraisal	2.2 Working in partnership to improve our residents economic and social well being
2.2.2 Financial and Digital Inclusion	Implement Financial Inclusion Strategy and Digital Inclusion Strategy	Review strategies	
2.3.1 Hillington Square	Formalise approach to intensive housing management	Review and amend for phase two	2.3 Demonstrate a commitment to improving neighbourhoods
2.3.2 Estate Walkabouts	Monitor outcomes and performance of the Tenant Summer Road Show		
2.4.1 Media & Stakeholder Influencing	Develop relationship with local Media and Stakeholders	Develop relationship with local Media and Stakeholders	2.4 Influence local and national policy makers to help meet the needs of our communities
2.4.2 Providing Support for Local Charities	Review scope with Purfleet Trust, Arts Centre & Thornage	Review scope with Purfleet Trust, Arts Centre & Thornage	

	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	VISION
3. APPRECIATING ASSETS			
3.1.1 Asset Management Strategy	Finalise Asset Management Strategy	Implement final phase	3.1 Develop an effective Asset Management Strategy
3.1.2 Hillington Square	Commence Phase 1 of Hillington Square project	Commence phase 2 of Hillington Square project	
3.1.3 Implement improvement programme for Non-Traditional Homes	Phase 1	Phase 2	
3.2.1 Under Occupation Strategy	Implement and review	Implement and review	3.2 Improve effective Asset Management [Making best use of what we have got]
3.2.2 New structure for Asset Management	Implement structure		
3.3.1 Stock Rationalisation Plan	Develop Stock Rationalisation Plan	Options appraisals	3.3 Improve analysis of our asset portfolio to maximise new affordable housing in order to meet local need
3.3.2 New Affordable Homes	Secure twenty four homes	Secure twenty four homes	
3.3.3 Affordable Rent conversions	Forty Affordable Rent conversions	Forty Affordable Rent conversions	
3.4.1 Decent Homes and Development of Investment Plan	Complete Decent Homes and review options for procurement of new programme	Implementation	3.4 Improve overall satisfaction in the quality of tenant homes
3.4.2 Sustainability Strategy	Develop and implement Sustainability Strategy	Monitoring and review	

	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	VISION
4. INCREASING CAPACITY			
4.1.1 Benchmarking and Reducing costs	Further integration of Cost Reduction Strategy through continuous improvement	Target reductions from further areas Deliver agreed reductions	4.1 Clear understanding of our operating costs in order to achieve cost reductions
4.2.1 Developing Skills	Continue to develop management capacity	Continue to develop management capacity	4.2 Improve internal capacity Value of management planning and prioritisation
4.2.2 ICT Strategy	Implement Electronic Document Management (EDM) and work flow	Annual and quarterly updates	
4.2.3 Review Quality Management Models	Carry out Research	Options appraisal	
4.3.1 Service Charging	Manage implementation of rents and service charge	Review approach	4.3 Income maximisation and impact on affordability
4.3.2 Supporting People Strategy	Review interim sheltered housing service		
4.4.1 Stock Management opportunities	Assess stock management opportunities	Review operations	4.4 Selling services
4.4.2 PSD Business Plan	Implement PSD Business Plan	Review Business Plan	
4.5.1 Board Development	Implement new Board structure	Succession Planning	4.5 Improving Governance

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

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

Board Meeting Date: 5 March 2012

Report Title: Board Member Recruitment

<p>Purpose: The purpose of this report is to propose a process by which independent and tenant board member vacancies will be filled.</p>
<p>Policy/Strategy Implications: The report invokes the Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy.</p>
<p>Finance and VFM Implications: None as a direct result of this report.</p>
<p>Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: The recruitment/selection process should be properly accessible to people from all diversity strands.</p>
<p>Risk Assessment: (cross-reference with Freebridge Risk Map): Risk 1.1: Failure to comply with Regulatory and Legislation requirements (Critical Impact / High Likelihood). A comprehensive Board recruitment process, as set out in this report, is necessary to achieve the Regulatory requirement of good governance. Risk 1.4: Skill Deficiency in Board or Management Team (Critical Impact / High Likelihood). The comprehensive Board recruitment process set out in this report aims to target areas of skill deficiency on the Board.</p>
<p>Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:</p> <p>(i) Agree the Board member recruitment process outlined in this report.</p>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In line with the rotation of retirement of board members set out in the Rules, it is necessary for the Board to consider this year recruitment of both tenant and independent board members.
- 1.2 Schedules showing the end of the terms of office of each tenant and independent board member is attached at Appendix 1 for the Board's information.
- 1.3 The Board is reminded that Council-nominated board members are not included in the annual recruitment process, as these are appointed directly by the Borough Council. The Borough Council usually considers these appointments on an annual basis in May/June.

2.0 Tenant Board Members

- 2.1 The terms of office held by Sylvia Calver and Irene Gammon will come to an end at the AGM in September 2012. It will, therefore, be necessary to undertake a recruitment process for two tenant board members this year.
- 2.2 Both Sylvia and Irene have indicated that they do not intend to re-stand.

3.0 Independent Board Members

- 3.1 The term of office held by Ray Johnson will come to an end at the AGM in September 2012. In addition, Michael Jervis has also indicated that he would like to step down at this year's AGM, a year before the end of his term of office. It will, therefore, be necessary for the Board to undertake a recruitment process for two independent board members this year.
- 3.2 Michael has stressed that he does not wish to cause any difficulty to the Board by resigning a year early, and will only leave if a suitable replacement can be found.
- 3.3 Ray has indicated that he intends to re-stand.

4.0 Skills Analysis / Representational Balance

- 4.1 The Campbell Tickell outcome report on the 2011 Board appraisal and review process highlighted that HR/organisational development and substantial corporate experience (such as from a city investment bank) have been suggested as useful backgrounds not possessed by current board members. The recruitment process could include a specific focus on finding someone from one or both of those backgrounds.
- 4.2 The Campbell Tickell report also highlighted that there continue to be diversity gaps on the Board, particularly in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. This must be taken into account during the recruitment process.

5.0 The Proposed Process

- 5.1 The following process is proposed to achieve the required Board appointments:
 - 1. Mid March – Advertising in Streets Ahead for new tenant board members, to be supported by a feature on Paul Leader (already written).
 - 2. Late March – Advertising in Lynn News, on Freebridge website and through press release for new tenant and independent board members. Liaison with Communications and Customer Engagement team as to possible ways of encouraging applications that might address diversity gaps.
 - 3. Late April – Information event for prospective board members – to be led by Chairman, Chief Executive and Company Secretary.
 - 4. Mid May – Deadline for applications from prospective Board members.
 - 5. Board 25 May – Board to establish Recruitment Panel, to pursue the recruitment process. When appointing the Panel, the Board will be made aware of the identities of all applicants, so as to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

6. Board July/August – Recruitment Panel to make its recommendations on the appointment of board members. Board to make recommendations to the AGM on the appointment of independent board members. Board to instigate ballot of all tenants, to be held through the summer, to elect tenant board members. (If there are insufficient candidates to instigate a ballot, Board to appoint tenant board members.)
7. AGM September – Independent board members to be appointed. Announcement to be made on the outcome of the recruitment process for tenant board members.

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING

BOARD – 5 MARCH 2012

TERMS OF OFFICE HELD BY CURRENT TENANT AND INDEPENDENT BOARD MEMBERS

Tenant Board Members

Name	Year Term of Office Expires (at AGM in Sept)	Comments
Sylvia Calver	2012	Has indicated that she does not wish to re-stand.
Irene Gammon	2012	Has indicated that she does not wish to re-stand.
John Fox	2013	
Bill Guyan	2013	
Paul Leader	2014	Will not be permitted to re-stand because of the nine-year rule.

Independent Board Members

Name	Year Term of Office Expires (at AGM in Sept)	Comments
Ray Johnson	2012	Has indicated that he wishes to re-stand.
Matthew Brown	2013	
Michael Jervis	2013	Has indicated that he wishes to retire from the Board in Sept 2012.
Steve Clark	2014	
Ian Pinches	2014	

Freebridge Community Housing

Report to the Board

Author	Jackie Beckett	Report Type		Impact		
Related Work Ref.		For Decision	√	High	Medium	Low
		For Information			√	
Consultation	Tony Hall, Jeremy Mason					

Meeting Date: 5th March 2012

Report Title: New Funding Conditions

<p>Purpose: To seek Board approval to the new Funding Conditions issued by the HCA.</p>
<p>Policy/Strategy Implications: None directly arising from this report</p>
<p>Finance and VFM Implications: None directly arising from this report</p>
<p>Customer Care/Equality and Diversity Implications: None directly arising from this report</p>
<p>Risk Assessment (cross-reference with Freebridge Risk Map): Risk 1.1 – Failure to comply with Regulatory and Legislation Requirements – Critical Impact, High Likelihood</p>
<p>Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the new Funding Conditions, attached as Appendix A to this report

The Homes and Communities Agency requires Registered Providers who are continuing to develop schemes under the Agency's National Affordable Homes Programme 2008-11 or the 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme to formally accept the Agency's Funding Conditions that apply to that programme.

This requires a Board decision which must be retained on file for compliance audit purposes. The Board have approved the Funding Conditions in place at the time of previous development schemes receiving Board approval.

There is now a new set of Funding Conditions for 2011/12 which will require the approval of the Board. These Funding Conditions apply to the Framework Development Agreement for which Board approval was given on 5th September 2011. This covers Fairstead Pub Site, Ferndale, Wisbech Road and Jady Jane Grey Road Developments and the conversion of properties to Affordable Rent.

The main differences from the previous version of the Funding Conditions are mainly fairly minor with the following being the most relevant:

- A new reference to bribery and corruption. The HCA's Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy will apply to Freebridge as an organisation undertaking business with HCA.
- Reference to Intermediate Rents has been deleted
- A new requirement for Freebridge to commission a programme of self assessment procedural compliance audit
- A new requirement for Freebridge to comply with the Framework Delivery Agreement
- A new provision that the HCA reserves the right to update and amend the funding conditions throughout the programme period for the 2011-2015 Affordable Housing Programme.

Funding Conditions

Preamble

These Funding Conditions apply to both 'committed programme' schemes and all allocations made under the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 11-15 programme.

'The Committed programme' is made up of allocations made under the National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP), or previous affordable housing programmes, and pre-allocations agreed under the 08-11 NAHP to be delivered within the 11-15 Programme Period.

The affordable housing investment provisions of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 came into force from 1 April 2010. Allocations for the provision of affordable housing made prior to 1 April 2010 are treated as being made under s18 of the Housing Act 1996. Allocations for the provision of affordable housing made from 1 April 2010 (including substitute allocations) are made under s19 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. It is likely that a number of providers will have allocations made under both sets of powers. These Funding Conditions apply to all allocations, regardless of the powers under which they were made.

The Funding Conditions apply to all Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing, including newly registered RPs and local authorities.

These Funding Conditions set out the requirements that must be met by RPs when using Social Housing Grant (SHG), Social Housing Assistance (SHA), Purchase Grant (or any successor assistance to it) provided by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) and its predecessor body the Housing Corporation (HC). For the purposes of these Funding Conditions, the generic term "grant" is used throughout to cover all of the above.

Grant Conditions applied to all Programmes

1. All funding is subject to either the provisions of the Housing Act 1996 or the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as applicable (or any amendment or re-enactment thereof) and any applicable determinations made under those Acts by the HCA.
2. All Grant applications and other scheme submissions relating to the achievement of forecast milestones must be made, and all Grants provided must be used, in accordance with the HCA's published criteria, procedures and audit arrangements; including but without limitation the Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide. Non compliance with the HCA's requirements and procedures could result in the suspension or withdrawal of allocations or payments and recovery of Grant.

3. Grant funding is conditional upon RPs meeting the standards set by the social housing regulator under Sections 193 and 194 of the HRA 2008 including the TSA's tenancy standard. This will be monitored by the social housing regulator and assessments of providers published in accordance with the social housing regulator's decision statement – "The regulatory framework for social housing in England from April 2010".
4. Where RPs are undertaking the role of Employer/Client on developments for which Grant has been requested, funding is conditional upon RPs undertaking grant funded projects in accordance with the principles set out in the '2012 Construction Commitments - Affordable Housing Provider version'. The HCA will exercise discretion in relation to RPs undertaking small or occasional projects with insignificant construction activity.
5. All Grant paid must be applied to the provisions of affordable housing and must be used as prescribed in HCA guidance. RPs should ensure appropriate financial appraisal of schemes to confirm their viability both during the development period and in the long term. Where RPs have specified that schemes are to be developed to higher standards and/or incorporate Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) the schemes must be developed to incorporate these features unless specific prior approval to waive certain aspects is granted by the HCA. The dwellings produced should meet the HCA's Design & Quality Standards (April 2007). Housing Quality Indicators (HQI) assessments should be carried out at Feasibility, Scheme Design and Practical Completion stages and recorded within the HQI section of IMS.
6. Funding is conditional on RPs either possessing a legal interest in the property already, or having entered into a binding legal agreement to acquire such an interest as part of a scheme, prior to drawing down Grant. Where RPs are acquiring an interest in the property or where works are to be done, the property must offer good title. Property already in RP's ownership must comply with this condition. Where a leasehold interest is to be acquired, the outstanding term should be at least thirty years for rehabilitation schemes, sixty years for new build schemes, and at least 99 years for affordable home ownership schemes at the date of purchase completion.
7. Under the NAHP 08-11 Programme Partnering Agreement (PPA) grant can be paid via the Lead Partner to other RPs within the partnerships. In this case, the Lead Partner is simply a conduit for payment and not a grant recipient. Lead Partners do not, therefore, need an interest in the site to enable this transaction.
8. No member, employee, agent or consultant of RPs or any partner organisation should have any interest in the proposed vendor, contractor or the land or property to be acquired, including properties purchased by individuals under Affordable Home Ownership or other such schemes. This includes any firm, partnership or organisation in which they or their families are involved.
9. The HCA takes a zero tolerance approach to bribery and corruption and sets the highest standards of impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the management of its activities. The principles

contained within this policy apply to any body or organisation undertaking business with the HCA. The Agency's Anti-Bribery and Corruption policy is published at ([Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy - PDF \(145 KB\)](#)).

10. For the committed programme there should be consistency between the rents, including Housing Benefit (HB) eligible service charges specified by RPs at the time of Grant allocation, with those agreed at confirmation of Grant stage and those charged from first letting or point of sale onwards. RPs will therefore charge rents, including HB eligible service charges, on first letting or point of sale which are no higher than those agreed at confirmation of Grant and thereafter it will only change its rents in compliance with standards specified by the social housing regulator. The social housing regulator standard also applies to service charges and includes requirements related to annual changes. Where this is not the case, RPs must be able to demonstrate that the service charge increase is based on cost recovery.
11. For the 11-15 programme RPs rents must be consistent with those agreed at programme offer (not withstanding any programme change notice agreed subsequently).
12. Where a scheme is to be developed by a different RP from that which will ultimately own or manage the scheme, there must be a written agreement between the RPs on the Terms of Transfer and the rents including HB eligible service charges to be charged for the scheme.
13. The conditions above in respect of rents and service charges apply equally where affordable housing is transferred to an RP, from an unregistered body which has received funding to develop that housing, whether under s27A of the Housing Act 1996 or s19 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
14. All funding is subject to RPs complying with the EU Procurement regime.
15. RPs must ensure that house builder warranties suitable for mortgage purposes together with the accompanying 'cover note' as required under the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) initiative are available upon completion of homes.
16. RPs are required to commission an appropriately qualified independent consultant or auditor to undertake a programme of self-assessment procedural compliance audit.
17. For the committed programme RPs undertaking delegated development activities in partnership with a 'Lead' RP shall fully co-operate with the Lead Organisation in order to enable the Lead Organisation to discharge its functions on behalf of its partner RP.
18. For the committed programme where an RP is acting as the 'Lead' for a group of other RPs that are participating in the delivery and/or management of homes included within a PPA, then that Lead Organisation will be deemed responsible to the HCA for the following additional responsibilities and obligations on behalf of any of the participating RPs:

- monitoring programme delivery by all RP members of the partnership and taking appropriate action to avoid slippage;
- ensuring that the principles of the '2012 Construction Commitments AHP version' are understood and followed within the partnership;
- appraising risk and financial status of individual projects and the overall programme;
- determining the individual RP that will carry out development functions for specific projects;
- usage of suitable legal and procedural documentation for all partnership members including an appropriate and binding agreement between the Lead RPs and the other participating RPs that sets out the roles and responsibilities of all parties and details arrangements for resolving disputes within the partnership;
- actively and effectively undertaking the role of Design Champion and promoting good design within the partnership;
- ensuring that relevant staff are trained in the use of 'Housing Quality Indicators' (HQIs) and in the assessment of projects using the 'Building for Life' criteria;
- ensuring that house builder warranties suitable for mortgage purposes together with the accompanying 'cover note' as required under the CML initiative are available upon completion of homes;
- where necessary, providing staff training and/or skills assistance to other partner RPs participating in development activities;
- where a development is carried out on behalf of another RP within the partnership, ensuring that the build contract is assignable to the other RP on completion, together with warranties from all design consultants and sub-contractors and where relevant, obtaining consent from the social housing regulator for the transfer;
- arranging regular progress review meetings involving all members of the partnership;
- agreeing and facilitating a programme of Quarterly Review meetings with the HCA's lead investor or lead area contact;
- commissioning appropriately qualified independent auditors to undertake a programme of self-assessment procedural compliance performance tests across the partnership in accordance with the HCA's published standardised terms of engagement.

19. For the 11-15 programme RPs should comply with the lead partner responsibilities as set out in the Framework Delivery Agreement.

RENT

20. All properties developed for letting at social rents on assured tenancies with SHG/SHA funding will be subject to the (Right to Acquire) provisions of section 16 of the Housing Act 1996 (or any amendment or re-enactment thereof), unless they are exempted by Part V of the Housing Act 1985 as amended by the Housing (Right to Acquire) Regulations 1997 or under one of the Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise)(Designated Rural Areas) Orders 1997 or any subsequent amendments or because they are properties funded as part of a Temporary Social Housing scheme. In this context,"developed for letting at social

rents" includes new build, rehabilitation, off the shelf, existing satisfactory purchase, purchase and repair, and re-improvement schemes. Rent levels for Affordable Rent should be set at sub-market levels, which should be no more than 80% of market rent.

SHARED OWNERSHIP

21. The shared ownership lease used by RPs must include the Fundamental Clauses detailed in the HCA's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide. Failure to include, a breach of, or variation (without the explicit consent of the Agency) of the Fundamental Clauses may be considered a Relevant Event under clause 7(e) of the HCA's The Recovery of Capital Grants and Recycled Capital Grant Fund General Determination 2006, or its replacement, for Grant recovery purposes.

HOME BUY

22. For all shared equity schemes RPs must hold a valid Consumer Credit Licence and have received a Direction under section 60(3) of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 (as amended) as required by the HCA's HomeBuy procedures.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT/SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

23. RPs must join and fully participate in the Department for Communities and Local Government's "Continuous Recording of Lettings System" (CORE); if they have a current development programme and they own or manage:
 - more than 250 self contained homes; or
 - more than 250 hostel/shared housing bedspaces.
24. Should this be the case, the RP must join and fully participate in recording both:
 - any lettings made; and
 - any sales of RP stock, including outright sales and shared ownership schemes, but excluding sales of additional equity shares purchased by existing shared owners (known as 'staircasing').
25. RPs must follow the processes for re-forecasting milestones and for proposing any Grant variation as set out in the HCA's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide. Decisions on accepting proposed variations will be made in the light of the HCA's available resources and the organisation's progress towards meeting its targets.
26. The HCA may impose sanctions including amendment or withdrawal of allocations if forecast milestones are not met.
27. In the event of RPs failing to comply with these Funding Conditions or if there is any cause for serious concern about their performance or financial viability, the HCA reserves the right to suspend funding.
28. If RPs should fail to comply with the conditions specified under sections 18 (3), 20 (4) and 21(4) of the Housing Act 1996, or those imposed or required under

ss19 and 31 to 33 of the Housing And Regeneration Act 2008 the HCA may suspend, withhold or recover all or part of the Grant in accordance with the determinations made or powers arising under the relevant Act and its published guidance - including the HCA's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide.

29. Where RPs receive Grant funding this will be subject to the Agency's grant recovery principles as outlined in its Recovery of Capital Grants and Recycled Capital Grant Fund General Determination 2006 as supplemented by requirements in the Agency's Affordable Housing Capital Funding Guide unless otherwise specified in the Grant Agreement or Framework Delivery Agreement (FDA). These principles will also be applied where affordable housing is transferred to an RP, from an unregistered body which has received funding to develop that housing, whether under s 27A of the Housing Act 1996 or s 19 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
30. RPs must review their security arrangements and in particular:
 - ensure that the Agency is notified immediately if a Security Administrator leaves or changes posts and responsibilities;
 - ensure that the list of IMS users and their authorities is regularly reviewed to ensure they are correct and appropriate;
 - ensure that users are removed from IMS immediately they leave the organisation or are no longer required to work on IMS; and
 - ensure that IMS passwords are not shared and that RP (RSL) users are prevented from entering IMS under a UserID other than their own.
31. Failure to comply with the above may result in the withdrawal of the RP's IMS access.
32. A copy of the relevant Committee minutes of the decision to agree to comply with the Funding Conditions must be retained by RPs for Compliance Audit/Regulatory purposes.
33. The HCA reserves the right to issue additional conditions in year as deemed appropriate and necessary.
34. The HCA reserves the right to update and amend these conditions throughout the duration of the AHP 11-15 programme period.