

**FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on  
Monday 5 September 2016 at 6.50pm in  
The Community Café, Hillington Square, King's Lynn**

**PRESENT:**

Ray Johnson (Chairman)  
Marie Connell  
Tony Hall (Chief Executive)  
Ian Pinches  
Colin Sampson  
Tina Smiddy  
Simon Smith  
Andy Walder

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Colin Davison	-	Director of Property
Dave Marshall	-	Director of Finance and Resources
Simon Swanson	-	Communications Business Partner
Andrew Edmonds	-	Head of Property
Dave Clements	-	ICT Business Partner
Howard Burton	-	Business Assurance Manager (Minute Numbers 158/16 – 166/16)
Jacqueline Fry	-	Hillington Square Project Manager (Minute Number 158/16)
Angus MacQueen	-	Company Secretary

**Note: The meeting was preceded by a tour of the Hillington Square site and a presentation on the revised proposals for the area.**

**158/16      FRIARS REGENERATION MASTER PLAN – REPORT 6  
PHASING REVIEW**

Confidential item

**159/16      APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Clark, Brian Long, Pauleen Pratt and Jasmine Rigg.

**160/16      MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**161/16      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **162/16      CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

The Chairman said that he had not had his usual weekly meetings with the Chief Executive, owing to the Chief Executive being on annual leave. However, he advised of the following:

- He had attended the Stars of West Norfolk Award ceremony on 2 September. This had been an excellent event.
- He had attended the Thornage Hall fete on 4 September. He had spoken with their Chair, Ted Hare, who had expressed his gratitude for the support received from Freebridge.

## **163/16      MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

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

The written update covered the following issues:

- Development Sites
- Meeting with the Department for Communities and Local Government
- Peer Review with the Broads Authority
- Meeting with Trowers and Hamlins
- Energy Grant
- Tenant Panel Facilitation
- Out and About Visits

The Board was pleased to note the following aspects of the update in particular:

- the progress of the St Edmundsbury Road development; and
- the award of a Big Energy Saving Network grant of £5,000.

In addition to the update, the Chief Executive advised that Freebridge had been shortlisted for a "Community Citizens of the Year" Award, as part of the Safer Citizens Awards. This was in recognition of work with the Police in tackling anti-social behaviour.

## **164/16      REVIEW OF THE ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Head of Property presented a report which reviewed the Asset Management Policy.

The Director of Property highlighted that the Board had had input into the development of the revised Policy through Time to Think sessions and away day discussion.

In answer to a question, the Director of Property advised that some funding was already in place for proposed development, whilst other funding was applied for.

In response to a question, the Director of Property stated that the Board would receive updates on the implementation of the Policy via the quarterly Business Plan update reports.

The Director of Property said that the Policy had been written in a revised format, intended to be easier to read for people without technical knowledge. The Board supported this approach and was content that it should be used for other policy revisions.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised Asset Management Policy be approved, as presented.

**165/16      BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY – OPERATING MODEL REVIEW**

Confidential item

**166/16      VALUE FOR MONEY SELF-ASSESSMENT STATEMENT 2015/16**

The Business Assurance Manager presented the Value for Money Self-Assessment Statement 2015/16. This was an updated version of the document included within the Strategic Report section of the statutory accounts approved by the Board in August 2016. The updated version contained comparative performance information and unit cost details which had become available following the preparation of the Strategic Report. The updated version had also been placed into an inviting and attractive format.

**RESOLVED:** That the updated Value for Money Self-Assessment Statement 2015/16 be approved for publication and inclusion on the Freebridge website for tenant, public and other stakeholder access and information, and for submission to the Homes and Communities Agency.

**167/16      PROCUREMENT APPROVAL/CONTRACT EXTENSION – COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE**

Confidential item

**168/16      REVIEW OF THE DIGITAL INCLUSION POLICY**

The ICT Business Partner presented a report which reviewed the Digital Inclusion Policy. The ICT Business Partner explained that, as a result of the review of the Policy, it was suggested that it was now refocused onto digital engagement, and consequently renamed as the “Digital Engagement Policy”.

A Board Member had submitted a question asking for clarification on the key changes in the revised Policy, and this had been answered in advance of the meeting.

In response to a question, the ICT Business Partner said that the intention of the Policy was to build on the methods of communication that tenants were able to use; traditional methods would still be available.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised Digital Engagement Policy be approved.

**169/16      ANNUAL REPORT FOR TENANTS 2015/16**

The Communications Business Partner presented a report which sought approval for the Annual Report for Tenants 2015/16.

In answer to questions, the Communications Business Partner made the following points:

- The intention of the Annual Report was to be retrospective in nature. It appeared within the Streets Ahead magazine which included articles on upcoming plans. However, he would consider including a piece on looking ahead in future Annual Reports.
- He would consider whether the figures in the Annual Report could be made more meaningful.

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Report for Tenants 2015/16 be approved for publishing to Freebridge's tenants.

**170/16      CUSTOMER SATISFACTION POLICY**

The Communications Business Partner presented a report which introduced the new Customer Satisfaction Policy, as a replacement for the Customer Care and Customer Engagement Policies.

A Board Member had submitted a question regarding the level of resources to be allocated towards improving customer satisfaction, and this had been answered in advance of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Customer Satisfaction Policy be approved, as presented, in replacement of the Customer Care and Customer Engagement Policies.

**171/16      RENEWAL OF LEASE AT THORNAGE – CAMPHILL COMMUNITIES, HOLT**

The Director of Property presented a report which sought approval to renew the lease and management agreement with Camphill Communities, Thornage Hall.

It was requested that it be arranged for the Board to visit Thornage Hall.

**RESOLVED:** That the lease and management agreement at Thornage with Camphill Communities be renewed for six years.

**172/16            APPLICATIONS TO LIFT AND GIVE CONSENT UNDER THE RURAL AREA COVENANT**

Confidential item

**173/16            ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING UPDATES**

The Communications Business Partner presented a report which provided an update on equality and diversity in recruitment, on actions undertaken to promote equality and diversity in recruitment, and on training and development during 2015-16.

A Board Member had submitted a question regarding diversity as an employer, and this had been answered in advance of the meeting.

In response to a question, the Communications Business Partner said that he would check whether Freebridge's monitoring of applicants for employment was in line with that required for the "Positive about Disabled People" accreditation.

In answer to a question, the Chief Executive stated that all employees were being encouraged to welcome diversity and to "be themselves" at work.

The Board noted the report.

**174/16            INTRODUCTION OF PROCEDURE FOR STORES AND INVENTORY MANAGEMENT**

The Director of Property presented a report which introduced a procedure for stores and inventory management.

The Director of Property explained that the procedure was operational and, as such, would not normally be presented to the Board. However, this had been required by the internal auditors as a resolution for one of their findings.

In answer to a question, the Director of Property confirmed that a training programme would be put in place to embed the new procedure.

The Board noted the report.

**175/16            URGENT ACTION TAKEN – OUT OF HOURS CONTRACT EXTENSION**

The Board noted a request for urgent action that had been approved, to extend the existing out of hours contract.

**176/16**      **URGENT ACTION TAKEN – SECTION 106, LAND TO REAR OF RAMPANT HORSE, GAYTON**

The Board noted a request for urgent action that had been approved, to enter into and complete the Section 106 Agreement attached to the planning approval for land to the rear of The Rampant Horse, Gayton.

**177/16**      **WORK UPDATE**

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

- Action Sheet
- Future Work Programme of the Board.

The Board noted the update.

**178/16**      **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Statutory Accounts**

In answer to a question, the Chief Executive confirmed that the statutory accounts had been finalised, approved by himself and the Chairman, and signed, as agreed by the Board at the last meeting.

**179/16**      **NEXT MEETING**

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 3 October 2016 at 6.30pm.

**The meeting closed at 8.30pm.**

**CHAIRMAN**