

FREEBRIDGE COMMUNITY HOUSING BOARD

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board held on
Monday 19 May 2014 at 6.30pm in
"The Barn", 2 Chapel Lane, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Ray Johnson (Chairman)
Lesley Bambridge
Matthew Brown
Steve Clark
Tony Hall (Chief Executive)
Sean Kent (Deputy Chief Executive)
Paul Leader
Ian Pinches
Jasmine Rigg
Colin Sampson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert Clarke - Director of Housing
Michelle Gant - Director of Engagement
Angus MacQueen - Company Secretary

The meeting was observed by a member of the Tenant Panel.

83/14 APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY TENANT BOARD MEMBER

The Board considered a report which sought to appoint a temporary Tenant Board Member.

RESOLVED: That Jasmine Rigg be appointed as a temporary Tenant Board Member, with immediate effect until the 2014 Freebridge Annual General Meeting.

[Jasmine Rigg joined the meeting at the conclusion of this item.]

84/14 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

There were no apologies for absence. The Chairman welcomed Jasmine Rigg to the meeting and those present introduced themselves.

85/14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

86/14 **MATTERS ARISING**

(a) Freebridge Community Awards (Minute Number 69/14(e))

The Chairman said that this year's Freebridge Community Awards had been held on Friday 25 April. The evening had been very successful and, in his opinion, the best awards event organised by Freebridge to date. The Providence Street Community Centre had been used as the venue for the first time and this had worked well; it should be considered to host other events in the future.

(b) "Out and About" Visits (Minute Number 81/14(f))

Board Members were reminded to let the Company Secretary know if they would like to take part in any of the forthcoming "Out and About" visits.

87/14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Steve Clarke, Ian Pinches and Jasmine Rigg declared interests in the item at minute number 90/14 – Board Member Recruitment – as they were candidates in this year's round of Board recruitment. The Board was content that they should remain in the room for the item, but they did not vote.

Paul Leader declared an interest in the item at minute number 91/14 – Review of the Tenant Panel Terms of Reference – as one of the recommended changes to the Terms of Reference, in relation to former Board Members joining the Panel, could affect him in the near future. The Board was content that he should remain in the room, but he did not vote.

88/14 **CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

The Chairman said that, in addition to his weekly meetings with the Chief Executive, he had attended the Freebridge Community Awards event.

89/14 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE**

A written update from the Chief Executive, covering a number of issues, was noted by the Board.

It was highlighted that two Board Members (in addition to the Chairman) had been requested to appear in a "Better West Norfolk" video, filming to take place on Thursday 29 May, while three Board Members had been requested to be part of the judging panel for this year's gardening competition, judging to take place on 15 and 16 July. The Company Secretary would be contacting Board Members to ascertain availability.

The Chairman commented that the Chief Executive, Matthew Brown and a number of junior staff/middle managers had attended the National Housing Federation Community Impact Awards ceremony in London on Thursday 8 May. Freebridge had been shortlisted for its work with the Purfleet Trust at the "Oaks" and "Phoenix House". Although Freebridge had not won on this

occasion, this had been further national recognition. It had also been an opportunity to reward some high performing staff by inviting them to represent Freebridge at the ceremony.

90/14 BOARD MEMBER RECRUITMENT

The Company Secretary presented a report which provided an update on this year's Board recruitment process and sought the appointment of a Recruitment Panel for the selection of Board Members.

The Company Secretary reported that 43 applications had been received for the Independent Board Member positions, and five for the Tenant Board Member positions.

The Chairman said that the information evening for prospective Board Members had been very successful and well attended. He thanked Matthew Brown and the staff involved for their contributions to the evening.

It was noted that, as Tenant Board Members were being recruited, at least one tenant had to sit on the Recruitment Panel in accordance with the Board Membership, Recruitment and Succession Policy. It was also felt that it would be appropriate for both the Chairman and the Chief Executive to sit on the Panel. It was planned that as many of the other Board Members as possible would meet informally with the shortlisted candidates and feed into the recruitment decision.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a Recruitment Panel be established to pursue the 2014 recruitment of Independent and Tenant Board Members and report back with its recommendations to the Board meeting on 14 July 2014.
- 2) That the Panel comprise Ray Johnson (Board Chairman), Tony Hall (Chief Executive) and Paul Leader (Vice-Chairman and Tenant Board Member).
- 3) That the quorum for the Panel be two members.

91/14 REVIEW OF THE TENANT PANEL'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Director of Engagement presented a report which reviewed the Tenant Panel's Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED: That the amendments to the Tenant Panel's Terms of Reference be approved, as presented.

92/14 **REVIEW OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Director of Engagement presented a report which reviewed the Human Resources Management Policy.

In answer to a question, the Director of Engagement said that staff satisfaction was monitored in a number of ways, including staff turnover, staff absence, and satisfaction surveys.

RESOLVED: That the revised Human Resources Management Policy be approved, as presented.

93/14 **REVIEW OF VARIOUS HOUSING POLICIES**

The Director of Housing presented a report which reviewed various Housing policies

RESOLVED: That the following revised policies be approved, as presented:

- Leasehold Management Policy
- Under Occupation Policy
- Income Management and Maximisation Policy
- Rent Setting and Service Charges Policy.

94/14 **AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Ian Pinches, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented a report setting out the recommendation of the Committee's meeting held on 28 April 2014.

RESOLVED: That the Whistleblowing Policy be approved, as presented to the Audit Committee.

95/14 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY UPDATE**

Confidential item

96/14 **COMPETITIVE RENEWAL OF INSURANCE SERVICES**

The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which described the renewal of insurance services.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report and timetable be approved, and the procurement of a new insurance contract be endorsed.
- 2) That the Deputy Chief Executive approve the successful contractor, subject to the requirements of Financial Regulation 7 having been followed.

97/14 STATISTICAL DATA RETURN 2014

The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which set out this year's Statistical Data Return.

The Board acknowledged the hard work of the Finance team in putting the Return together.

RESOLVED: That the submission of Freebridge's Statistical Data Return 2014, as presented, be authorised.

98/14 ANNUAL FRAUD RETURN

The Company Secretary presented a report which set out this year's Annual Fraud Return.

It was pointed out that the Return referred to key staff receiving fraud awareness training following the fraud suffered by the Association; this training had also been provided to the Board.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Police investigation into the fraud suffered by Freebridge was ongoing.

RESOLVED: That the submission of Freebridge's Annual Fraud Return 2014, as presented, be authorised, subject to including reference to the fraud awareness training received by the Board.

99/14 APPOINTMENT OF SHAREHOLDERS

The Board considered a report which listed applications for tenant shareholding.

RESOLVED: That the applications for tenant shareholding set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

100/14 2013/14 BUSINESS PLAN OUTTURN

The Chief Executive presented a report which set out the 2013/14 Business Plan outturn.

RESOLVED: That the 2013/14 Business Plan outturn report be approved, as presented.

101/14 FRAUD ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which provided the Fraud Action Plan quarterly update.

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that, despite a busy quarter and the recent departure of the Finance Director, a number of actions had been achieved.

The Board noted the report.

102/14 OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Confidential item

**103/14 FINANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES QUARTERLY
MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Confidential item

104/14 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which detailed risk management activity during the quarter ending 31 March 2014 and provided an update to the Risk Map.

The Deputy Chief Executive said that the working party set up to prepare this year's Value for Money Self-Assessment had held its first meeting. It was hoped that this year's document would achieve full compliance with the Regulator, although limited guidance was available from the Regulator.

The Board noted the report.

105/14 UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINANCIAL PLAN

The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report which provided an update on the development of the Financial Plan for 2014/15.

The Deputy Chief Executive said that the new development monitoring report had been attached to the Finance and Human Resources Quarterly Management Report. He also advised that the Board would receive more updates on the development of the Financial Plan than it had in previous years.

The Board noted the report.

106/14 VIABILITY REPORT

The Board received a report which set out Freebridge's Viability Report recently received from the Regulator.

The Board was pleased to note that the Regulator's judgement remained unchanged, namely that Freebridge "meets the requirements on viability set out in the Governance and Financial Viability standard and has the capacity to mitigate its exposures effectively".

The Board noted the report.

107/14 URGENT ACTION TAKEN – LAND BANKING ADJUSTMENT TO ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Confidential item

108/14 URGENT ACTION TAKEN – PROVISION OF A TENANCY TO A CLOSE RELATIVE OF AN EXISTING EMPLOYEE

The Board noted a request for urgent action that had been approved, to enable the Association to provide a tenancy to the close relative of an existing employee.

109/14 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.

110/14 COMMITTEE MINUTES

Ian Pinches, Chairman of the Audit Committee, presented the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 28 April 2014.

111/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Bill Guyan

Colin Sampson advised that former Board Member Bill Guyan's health had significantly deteriorated. He would provide further information as and when he became aware of it.

(b) Company Secretary

The Board congratulated the Company Secretary on achieving Chartered status, having been elected as an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators.

112/14 NEXT MEETING

The Board noted that its next meeting was scheduled for Monday 23 June 2014 at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.

CHAIRMAN