



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

Minutes of the Trust's Board Meeting held on 21st November 2017, 6.00pm at Ropewalks, Macclesfield

<u>Present</u>	John Hudson	JH	Chairman
	Matthew Cunningham	MC	Board Member
	Paul Findlow	PF	Board member
	Sam Knuckey	SK	Board Member
	Alison Light	AL	Board Member (from Item 3)
	Kate Lindley	KL	Board Member
	Simon Leighton	SL	Board Member
	Gordon Richardson	GR	Board Member
	Jamie Hutchinson	JaH	Director of Customers
	Tim Pinder	TP	Chief Executive
	Greg van Enk-Bones	GvEB	Director of Resources
	Vic Bradford	VB	Link Asset Services (item 5 only)
	Alistair Chapman	AC	CBRE (item 6 only)
	Rebecca Harper	RH	CBRE (item 6 only)
	Angela Lomax	ALx	David Tolson Partnership
	Liz Holmes	LH	Assistant Director Finance
	Margaret Goddard	MG	Assistant Director Homes (item 6 only)
	Nikki Pearson	NP	Governance Officer
	Pauline Gosling	PG	Minute Taker

GvEB informed Board that the Rules provide that at the first meeting following the AGM the Board must formally appoint a Chair. John Hudson was duly appointed as Board Chair

Non Attendance

Tom Agar

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chairman introduced Angela Lomax of David Tolson Partnership who was present to observe the Board as part of the independent review of Board performance.

2. Declarations Of Interest

PF declared his connection to Cheshire East Council through being a Councillor and Cabinet Member of Cheshire East.

KL declared working for Warrington Borough Council who is a lender to the Trust.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting Held 26th September 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held 26th September 2017 were reviewed.

The Board Decided:

637) That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2017 be agreed as a true and accurate record and be signed off by the Chairman.

3a. **Matters Arising**

JH informed that further work is being done on the Georgian Mill detail which Board will be informed of in due course.

Away Day – JH stated the he personally took away a lot from it, he thought that everyone was on good form and played their part. JH expressed thanks to everyone involved.

5. **Chief Executive's briefing**

Nationally

- All eyes on budget tomorrow – Government want to deliver £300k extra homes but without significant borrowing - unsure how that will work
- £50B wiped off the books last week as a result of Housing Associations being redesignated as private bodies and therefore private debt – the Governance implications of this are referred to elsewhere on agenda
- Encouraging that there appears to be a pattern of increased support for Housing Associations with the post 2020 rent increase, change in mind on LHA caps and additional funding for social rent - We are doing some work looking at affordable rent levels and links with tenancy sustainment

Locally

- We have made an offer in response to a NHF request for their staff to spend time with members –we will have Rebecca Murphy from NHF events team joining us

Trust

- Disappointingly the two wellbeing contracts that we had expressed interest in recently were not successful.
- TP reminded Board that at the recent annual resident meeting, the Chair of Challenge Group was keen that Board members make themselves available to groups of tenants and suggested Ivy House as a good place for this to happen. The Chair has since been in touch to confirm that the residents of Ivy House hold events on most Monday afternoons and would welcome Board members to attend. NP will circulate the dates.

6. **Business Plan Funding Capacity and Presentation on funding capacity (supported by Link Asset Services formerly Capita) Vic Bradford**

The Board approved the existing 30 year business plan in March 2017. This business plan was seen as prudent and deliverable including schemes that we knew were certain or likely to progress at the time with a small amount of unidentified schemes for growth. Since

March further opportunities for development have been identified which stretch the business plan and further funding will be required to secure the next phase of growth. Continued growth and the ability to take the opportunities available to us means that new finance must be arranged which meet the Trust's 'Golden Rules'.

Board received a report by the Assistant Director Finance which includes the analysis on which it is based provided by Link asset services.

GvEB stated that this report reminds us is that we need to arrange more funding if we want to continue to move forward.

Vic Bradford of Link Asset Services presented the key points of their analysis including:

- The revised business plan
- Potential funding options
- Preferred option
- Potential funding capacity

The funding options available and the level of additional funding that should be put into place were discussed in detail by the Board, with particular reference to the costs of procuring and maintaining these (arrangement fees of 0.75% to 1% and non-utilisation fees of half the applicable margin (0.65% p.a. based on a margin of 1.3%) as compared to the potential opportunity gains that a funding reserve might enable the Trust to realise. Following such discussions it was agreed that bids for short term revolving credit facilities of up to £25m should be sought from lenders, the size of the facilities to be taken to be determined in the light of offers received and further iterations of the Business Plan.

The Board decided:

- 639.i)** To commence tender negotiations to arrange revolving credit facility up to £25m.
- 639.ii)** To continue to appraise development opportunities
- 639.iii)** To progress with the increase in the on-lending provision to our subsidiaries to take advantage of opportunities when they arise

7. Presentation on Macclesfield Regeneration by CBRE

JH welcomed Alistair Chapman and Rebecca Harper of CBRE to the meeting.

Alistair and Rebecca gave a presentation to Board on the emerging proposals and vision for the Sunderland Street area of Macclesfield as part of our approach to the Placemaking agenda. The Sunderland Street area is of strategic importance to PPHT given the significant investment that the Trust has either already made or is planning to make with Throwsters Court, 42 Park Green and proposals for Georgian Mill.

JH thanked Alistair and Rebecca for a very informative and thought provoking presentation

The Board decided:

- 640)** To note the presentation by CBRE

9. Sector scorecard pilot report

To give context to the presentation TP explained that Housing Associations have been preparing VFM self assessments for many years – Board signed off our assessment at its last meeting. The down side of this is that each HA chooses how it delivers services and the Regulator has been unimpressed by some VFM Self Assessments whilst thinking that HA's were stashing surpluses.

The Sector Scorecard is a selection of key VFM indicators as agreed by and “owned” by the sector in response to ill-informed criticism from outside the sector. Led by Home Housing, there are 200+ associations in the pilot which we have taken part in. The objective measures contained within it are likely to be endorsed by HCA as part of their VFM standard.

JH asked if we will be producing information on the missing indicators which are currently reported on.

There was a discussion on the difficulty of benchmarking customer satisfaction via the Star survey, the expense involved and the fact that the information is quite often out of date.

TP stated that he has expressed an interest in the vacancy on the steering group which is responsible for overseeing the collection and collation of data.

The Board decided:

642) To note the sector scorecard pilot report.

10. Performance Report to September 2017

GvEB presented the performance report to 30th September 2017 which has one red and two amber indicators. Rent collection and Gas safety continue to perform very well.

Red indicators

% Rent debit lost through voids – half of the voids are major improvement voids needing a lot of work and Ivy House accounts for five of the empty properties. GvEB informed that we are not expecting to meet the year-end target but to see improvement though we will strive to meet the target.

JaH further explained that we have had a lot of major improvement and also standard voids which have taken up a long time and money. At 0.43% we are still upper quartile and if we can reach below 0.4% by year end it will be a big improvement.

AL asked if the big spends were due to long term tenancies – JaH explained that yes it was and that the Gas team are being asked to survey props when they are carrying out annual services in order to identify potentially big voids for the future.

Number of new home completions – Goldfinch site has hit major setback due to road layout negotiations with the Local Authority and is running at a couple of months delay and is now projected to complete in December 2018. GvEB thought the commentary given showed that we were not good at forecasting the completions and this has been improved by putting in place closer supervision and oversight of the schemes. We are aiming to improve monitoring of this area. Other completions remain on target for the year end.

The Board decided:

643) To note the performance report to 30th September 2017

11. Feedback from Audit Committee (including approval of updates to standing orders)

MC gave feedback from the Audit Committee meeting held on 7th November which included: the minutes are available via the App.

- Internal Audit Reports update
- Response to HCA Consultation on VFM standard
- Standing Orders Review and recommendation for Board approval
- Risk in focus -Possible fraud in relation to business resilience – cyber attacks
- Income Collection – Bad Debts/ write offs
- Verbal feedback from Audit Committee Conference attended by GR

The Standing Orders documents reviewed by Audit Committee are available on the portal as appendices and are listed below with a brief description of the changes made:

Appendix A Standing Orders Summary

- The standing order summary has been updated to reflect the Trust changing its status to a Community Benefit Society.
- Removed Articles of Association and replaced with ‘The Rules of the Society’
- Added the Subsidiaries of the Group

Appendix B ST00 Index of documents linked to the Standing Orders

- Removed the Articles of Association and replaced with ‘The Rules of the Society’

Appendix C ST10 Framework for approving

- Removed Company Membership Policy
- New Board Member Remuneration Policy added, approved by Board September 2017

The Board decided:

644.i) To note the feedback from Audit Committee of 7th November 2017

644.ii) To approve the changes to ST00, ST01 and the Standing Orders summary

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed.....

Date.....