

EASTENDHOMES BOARD MEETING

Thursday, 7TH October 2010 at 7.00pm.
The Centre, Maha Buildings, Merchant Street, London E3

MINUTES

PRESENT	APOLOGIES
<p><u>Board Members</u></p> <p><i>Resident Members</i> Bernard Cameron [BC] (Vice Chair) Tom Madden [TM] Syed Milon [SY] Les Eldon [LE]</p> <p><i>Council Members</i> Cllr. Rachael Saunders [RS]</p> <p><i>Independent Members</i> Tuuli Lindberg [TL] Janet Seward [JS] Martin Young [MY] (Chair)</p> <p><i>Officers</i> Paul Bloss [PB] - Chief Executive Peter Gibbs [PG] – Director of Finance & Resources Steve Inkpen [SI] – Director of Regeneration Debbie Davies [DD] – Head of Policy/Service Improvement John Henderson [JH] – Director of Housing</p> <p><i>In attendance</i> Jenny Healey (Minutes)</p>	<p>Mary Nepstad [MN] Neil McAree [NM] Amjad Rahi [AR] Colin Antoine [CA] Lesley Johnson [LJ]</p>

ITEM		ACTION
	Meeting commenced at 7.00pm.	
1.	<p>Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Mary Nepstad, Neil McAree, Amjad Rahi, Lesley Johnson and Colin Antoine. SM also gave advance apologies for his early exit from the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Declaration of Interests</p>	
2.1	<p>TM requested some clarification on the five letters he received regarding accounting for Island Garden Board spend. PB confirmed that the issue had been raised with the appropriate person and that correspondence has since stopped.</p>	
2.2	<p>TM also suggested that there be a caretaker made available to</p>	

	<p>answer the door during meetings and also that the Board send their best wishes to Margaret Clark, after breaking her hip.</p> <p>2.3 MY proposed that the election of the Chair and Vice Chair be addressed and that nominations from the Board be taken. Discussion followed regarding the correct procedure for nominations, which PB confirmed was scheduled to take place at the first normal Board meeting after the AGM. MY subsequently vacated the post of Chair and nominations followed for his re-election from TL and JS. BC then vacated the position of Vice Chair, and following nomination by SM, was re-elected.</p> <p>3. Minutes of meeting – 29th July 2010 MY suggested one addition to the minutes, on page 4, number 11.3: after, <i>“With respect to some residents losing access to foreign language channels”</i> there should be added <i>“as well as generally”</i>.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>4. Governance, Scrutiny & Resident Involvement</p> <p>4.1 PB summarised the context to the report and previous reports considered and said that following the Tenant Scrutiny Panel proposals being agreed, further work had been carried out on producing the Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Role Profiles and Information Protocol. Recruitment to the Panel should be undertaken early in 2011 and training will be implemented before 1st April 2011 implementation date to meet TSA requirements. The Panel would be independent of EeH formal governance framework. It was also further proposed that the Service Review Board be replaced by a new Service Review Committee made up of Board members, dealing with Policy and Performance review and operational issues.</p> <p>4.2 TL queried points 3.5 and 7, which described a total of 24 and 12 members respectively for the Scrutiny Panel; PB confirmed that the correct number is 24. JS said that this is a large number which could prove difficult to manage; PB emphasised that the structure of the Panel as reflecting a move away from conventional board arrangement to an enhanced engagement.</p> <p>4.3 JS drew attention to point 10, pointing out that the effectiveness of the Panel might be diluted if temporary residents (for example, students living away at university) are allowed to join. To address this, MY suggested an inclusion to the text be made, specifying that only people who are residents and have been for a set period will be considered for Panel membership.</p> <p>4.4 JS, RS & LE were nominated to join the new Service Review Committee PB said we need to obtain nominations for the remaining three places.</p>	
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4.5	The recommendations of the report were approved by the Board.	
5.	National Housing Federation – Code of Governance Review	
5.1	PB introduced the report and explained that all the outstanding issues from the previous year’s report have now been addressed. The only area of non-compliance with the Code of Governance is the size of the Board, which reflects the emphasis on resident participation in a similar way to other peer RSL organisations.	
5.2	MY suggested the following addition be made to the Role Profiles: “Ensure Board Members are familiar with EeH estates and the needs and aspirations of tenants and residents on the estates, through a programme of familiarisation.”	
	The recommendations were approved by the Board.	
6.	Resident Involvement Strategy	
6.1	PB explained that EeH have a range of documents which set out EeH’s approach to resident involvement and engagement. A formal Resident Investment Strategy document has now been developed, which consolidates the information from the existing papers, and sets out other relevant information.	
6.2	PB summarised Lesley Johnson’s comments to the Board, concerning monitoring being focused on the Boards and also a query on whether IT can capture other “softer” elements of participation. Also, she suggested that examples of good practice in successful engagement should be celebrated in newsletter articles.	
6.3	MY commented that having read about the Youth Group on page 13, he was very impressed with their calibre and interest these young people showed in EeH.	
6.4	After further discussion the Board approved the strategy.	
7.	Allocation of Community Chest Funding	
7.1	PB explained that previously, funding available to local estate boards has been administered on an ad hoc basis and that formalised guidelines and arrangements are needed. These guidelines included a proposal that the funding continue to be allocated by the local boards, but that the issue of cheques and payments would be administered from Tayside House, Finance Section, with this in mind, the report contains details of proposed allocating principles and accounting mechanisms to minimise the burden on local estate boards.	
7.2	TM voiced his concerns over these proposals, underlining that he and the Island Gardens joint Board would be very upset if the allocation was discontinued. He said that in his view, there appears to be an underlying issue of trust. TM explained that if the proposed arrangement goes ahead, he would feel obliged to relinquish his role from the Board after Christmas, as he does not	

	agree with what is proposed.	
7.3	PB confirmed that local boards would remain the decision makers in granting funding for community projects, but that the finance and audit process burden would be lifted from them under the proposals. He said that there is absolutely no suggestion of wrongdoing in respect of the Island Gardens board. MY agreed that the proposal would ensure against criticism of local board processes and procedures and TL added that as a protective measure, it is a commonplace to adopt such an arrangement across the financial sector.	
7.4	JH added that if local boards decide to retain autonomy in holding their own allocations, it may be necessary for associated audit costs to be taken out of their total allocations, as EeH are required to ensure that effective processes are in place to properly account for spending and accounting.	
7.5	SM suggested that the local boards be consulted first, before decisions on the proposals are taken.	
7.6	It was noted that TM essentially disagreed with the proposal and that he was concerned that residents will subsequently be driven away from engagement.	
	Cllr. RS and SM left the meeting at 8.10pm to attend another meeting.	
	After further discussion the Board approved the proposals set out in the report.	
9.	EeH Leaseholder & Freeholders Association – Recognition Agreement	
9.1	PB summarised the report and said that he had received an email from Mary Nepstad's who objected to the document. She said that she was concerned recognition had been given to a disruptive group to EeH aims and objectives. MN also asked about how many paid up members the EEHLFA actually have.	
9.2	MY commented that he looked forward to the forthcoming dialogue with and that he hoped that the report contents are as a step toward establishing a constructive dialogue.	
9.3	TL observed that the EEHLFA campaign against EeH might be viewed as a breach of contract, although MY pointed out that there is no evidence to support that a breach had occurred.	
9.4	PB explained that EeH will continue to pursue dialogue with the EEHLFA and that a costing of time spent on dealing with queries will be undertaken in order to capture the costs involved in this. PB added that the current document is a great improvement on the first draft version from early in 2010. He also confirmed that	

	<p>new rights have been conferred, surrounding eligibility on Board Membership.</p> <p>The Board agreed that information on the number of members who had joined should be sought from the EEHLFA and noted the report.</p>	EeH
11.	<p>Redcastle Close Enfranchisement – Completion MY raised a question about retention of the £45,000 Service Charge arrears by the solicitors. PG confirmed that the solicitor holding the funds pending the LVT and will award the amount as directed by LVT. If no decision is made by February 2011, the retention will be released to EeH. MY congratulated SI on the work done.</p>	
12.	<p>Minutes of F&A Committee – 9th September 2010</p>	
12.1	<p>MY summarised the main decisions of the meeting. TL confirmed that she was satisfied with the explanation of the arrears total, as reported in the F&A meeting.</p>	
12.2	<p>PG commented that arrears from leaseholders in hardship cases are increasing and MY pointed out that the Hardship Panel would need to convene to address this as soon as possible. PB suggested that teleconferencing may be needed give the difficulties of arranging the meeting.</p>	
12.3	<p>It was noted that point 7.8 is duplicated in the minutes, but that otherwise the minutes were agreed.</p>	
13.	<p>Board Member Attendance The report was duly noted by the Board.</p>	
	<p>Meeting closed at 9:10pm</p>	

Signed

Martin Young
Chair of EASTENDHOMES Board

Date