

Open minutes of Tower Hamlets Homes Board Meeting
Wednesday 12th August 2020 **4.00pm to 6.00pm**
Via Zoom

Board Members Present:

Ann Lucas – Chair (AL)	-	Chair, Independent Board Member
Claire Tuffin - Vice Chair (CT)	-	Resident Board Member
Andrew Bond (AB)	-	Independent Board Member
Nikesh Shah (NS)	-	Independent Board Member
Mahbub Anam (MA)	-	Resident Board Member
Asma Islam (AI)	-	Cllr Board Member
Tarik Khan (TK)	-	Cllr Board Member
John Pierce (JP)	-	Cllr Board Member
Sabina Akhtar (SA)	-	Cllr Board Member
Simon Hart	-	Resident Board Member

Co – Optees Present:

Pam Haluwa (PH)	-	Co-Optee to Gov.& Remuneration Committee
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Officers Present:

Susmita Sen (SS)	-	Chief Executive
Neil Isaac (NI)	-	Interim Director of Finance
Will Manning (WM)	-	Director of Asset Management
Ann Otesanya (AO)	-	Director of Neighbourhoods
Paul Davey (PD)	-	Director of Business Transformation

In Attendance:

Tanya Dios (TD) part	-	Head of Procurement
Justin Chamberlin (JC) Part	-	Head of Compliance

Apologies:

Iain Lawson (IL)	-	Co-Optee to Finance & Audit Committee
Karen Swift (KS)	-	LBTH Divisional Director of Strategy, Regeneration & Sustainability

1	Welcome	
1.1	AL welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted for the above.	
2	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	CT and PH declared their interest as leaseholders of Tower Hamlets Homes.	
3.	Question from Members of the Public	
3.1	None received	
4.	Open Minutes of the meeting of the Board on 21 May 2020	
4.1	It was noted that the minutes of the last meeting of the Board of Directors were not available to this meeting of the Board and would be distributed to the Board at a later date for ratification.	
5.	Chief Executive’s report	
5.1	The CE drew attention to highlights within the report.	
5.2	With regards to the performance section of the report NS asked how THH was ensuring the safety of staff in viewings of new tenancies. AO responded that Voids officers are following MHCLG guidance and our local risk assessment. Doors are	

	<p>opened in advance of the resident attending the viewing. The Officer remains outside whilst the resident views the home. Some housing providers have been providing viewings via video but it was felt that this did not give prospective tenants the opportunity to see all issues or problems that might arise on taking up the offer.</p>	
5.3	<p>In terms of Gas Safety, NS pointed out that a lot of the compliance challenges are out of THH's control. Self-isolation and shielding are something THH cannot do much about.</p>	
5.4	<p>NS asked whether THH should do something around Mental Health Issues. JC responded that only one case on non-access was due to mental health concerns during the Covid-19 period and that was resolved. JC also said that the June figure of 65 non-compliant gas services (due to no access) was now reduced to 11.</p>	
5.5	<p>NC asked whether THH was prepared for a second wave of the pandemic and whether THH had learned lessons that would assist. SS responded that THH's attention is currently focused on increasing and maintaining performance with each head of service requested to bring forward their plans for recovery. We are also planning support for residents in the event of a second wave / local lockdown. Meetings with Community Hubs have been held and as we have been implementing changes to issues as they arose we are confident the overall the systems and processes for referral we now have in place work well.</p>	
5.6	<p>SS felt that THH would be much better prepared for any second period of lockdown or local restrictions impacting our staff as we now have a full complement of staff in our HSC, Leasehold and Rents teams equipped to take calls from home; we have completed the majority of the rollout of new Windows 10 corporate laptops to office-based staff which ensures access to core systems and information; we have built up stocks of PPE and other supplies needed to keep essential staff safe and have refined our own test/trace procedure and absence management processes; services have been redesigned to reduce or eliminate face-to-face contact where possible thereby allowing more services to carry on delivering to customers.</p>	
5.7	<p>CT asked if overdue gas checks could be an issue with the Regulator of Social Housing. WM responded that THH can evidence that we have followed the guidance of the Regulator.</p>	
5.8	<p>On the section in the report on progress with the new management agreement with LBTH AL said that the MA was now agreed but there was little progress thus far on the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Council currently take the view that streamlining the introduction on new resident and independent Board Directors lessens LBTH control over the ALMO, which in turn means THH would have to go through an annual tendering process.</p>	
5.9	<p>NS asked what 'Accelerated Process meant in the context of the Repairs contract re-procurement. WM said this was a shorter period out to the market if there were clear Covid related reasons in the OJEU notice.</p>	
5.10	<p><i>THH Board NOTED the CE Report.</i></p>	
6.	<p>2019-20 Outturn Report</p>	
6.1	<p>NI highlighted that the outturn position was a £365k surplus compared to the budget. Further detail was provided on how this was made up by directorate.</p>	
6.2	<p>In delegated HRA budgets NI reported a £3.2m underspend. There was a £276k underspend in R&M of which the biggest contributory factor was a £337k underspend in responsive repairs to lifts.</p>	
6.3	<p>NI pointed out that at the same time THH had delivered all savings required of it</p>	

6.4	<p>(£4m). THH is projecting underspends on budgets in the current year although not on the scale of the previous year.</p> <p><i>THH Board NOTED the 2019-20 Outturn Report.</i></p>	
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Chair

Date