

Agenda Item 3

THE RIVERSIDE GROUP

MERSEY NORTH DIVISIONAL BOARD

A meeting of the Mersey North Divisional Board was held on Wednesday, 17 September 2014 at the Walton Road Office, Liverpool

CONFIRMED MINUTES

- Present: Mr J Curran, Mr D Evans, Mr T McGuire, Ms S Naylor, Mr C Stuhlfelder, Ms J Williams, Mr K Wilson, Mr G Wright, Ms L Wright (Chair)
- In Attendance: Ms K Ash, Mr M Burnett, Mr G Crompton (Business Analyst), Mr R Hesketh, Ms P Ledwich, Mr P Swift
- Apologies: Ms T Gore, Ms L Hearne, Mr W Shortall

500 **Agenda Item 2 – Declaration of interest relevant to agenda items**

There were no declarations of interest.

501 **Agenda Item 3 – Accuracy of the minutes of the Board meeting held on 16 July 2014**

Agenda Item 490 – Agenda Item 7: The Mersey North Investment Strategy 2014

The second paragraph should read: It was 'acknowledged this is a temporary benefit enjoyed by post stock transfer associations recently completing major investment programmes.

The fourth paragraph should read that the CCV's will address this along with other information.

With these amendments the minutes were agreed as a true record.

502 **Agenda Item 4 – Matters arising from the minutes of the Board Meeting 16 July 2014**

Minute 487 Agenda Item 7 – Complaints Update

MB will provide a report to the Board at its November meeting to show the impact of service failures upon complaints volume.

Minute 488 Agenda Item 5 – Policy Voids & Disposals Update

The Board was pleased to note the Division has received additional £827K for previously unfunded major repairs including £327K for voids. Board was pleased to note this will help reduce policy voids and avoid further disposals.

Another bid will be submitted to Group to fund structural repairs in Berrybridge and Sefton.

Minute 498 Agenda Item 15 Information Items – Item (a) Scrutiny & Residents Structure

Following completion of the recruitment to the Divisional forums a Divisional Scrutiny diagram will be presented to Board in November.

503 Agenda Item 5 – REX

Business Analyst, [REDACTED] provided a demonstration of the new REX web-site which Board members can access for information about past meetings and other relevant documents. Board members were provided with individual log-in details will receive guidance notes. Board members were requested to provide feedback after using the site. KA to provide instruction guide to Board members.

The Board thanked GC and noted the presentation.

504 Agenda Item 6 - Legal Action

It was clarified that all figures within the table at 1.1 describe outputs for the same period 1 April -2 September for each year. It was agreed in future reports, to report full year-end figures for previous years and year to-date for the current year.

Board members expressed concern at the increase in evictions this year over previous and asked if Group was made aware of this volume. Board was informed that HSC does receive MN Board minutes and it has reiterated the Group income management policy of 'firm but fair' being aware that more tenants would struggle to sustain tenancies notwithstanding assistance and support from TRG staff maximising income, reducing fuel costs and managing debt.

The Board was concerned to hear of increased activity from local law firms advising tenants subject to legal action from landlords for rent arrears, to counter-claim for disrepair. The Chair was keen to stress the importance of identifying disrepair liability early and was reassured to note how the MOT/SIS process will assist.

MB was requested to prepare a S11 Disrepair report for next Board meeting.

The Board requested specific report on >£2K cases to next meeting.

The Board gave conditional authority to evict the 31 cases listed within appendix 1 to the report.

505 Agenda Item 7 - Miscellaneous Land Disposal

The Board approved the disposal via sale, to [REDACTED] of miscellaneous plot, adjacent to her house, subject to conditions outlined at 1.5 within the report.

506 Agenda Item 9 - STAR 2014

The Board noted imminent marketing campaign intended to increase awareness of facility to access TRG via web-based communications.

The Board was pleased to note improved satisfaction with repairs since Evolve engaged and improved responses in general, where customer care visits have occurred.

Concern was expressed at reduced satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live. Some discussion over role of ASB team within overall management service and how far specialising had reduced neighbourhood-wide awareness.

The Board noted the STAR results and await the action plans at the next meeting.

507 Agenda Item – 9 Whole Board Appraisal Action Plan

It was suggested Board members should have greater input into setting Board meeting agenda items. It was agreed to solicit ideas at the end of each meeting and in advance of subsequent.

It was agreed training should be sensitive to individual Board member requirements with particular reference to supporting and improving the capacity of tenant members.

The Director was requested to establish if Podcasts of Group Board briefings could be made available in advance of future Board meetings and agreed to report to Board about the possibility of equipping Board members with equivalent minimum access to portable PC/tablets.

The Board approved the action plan.

508 Agenda Item 10 - Update on MOT Project

The Board was pleased to note the reported reduction in overall repair volume and the specific reduction in post-MOT repairs and how these performance outputs endorse the MOT projections within the MN Business Plan. However, MB was requested to present a comprehensive report to next meeting with out-turn figures within a re-modelled programme.

The Board noted the report

509 Agenda Item 11 - Executive Dashboard and MPR Period Ended 31 August 2014.

The Board noted the accounts included year-end forecasts.

The Board requested the additional funds allocated to the Division (£637K) be included within the I&E.

The Board noted the beneficial impact of depreciation charges set by Group, upon I&E presentation.

The Board noted the reduced rental income due to voids and was reassured this would reduce, as early handover of new-build units occurs.

The Board noted the original targeted 2300 completed MOTs projected to year-end would not be achieved but accepted that the original target of 2300 MOTs each year was set to achieve a 4 year programme but that original model omitted to take account of the inevitable large number of voids which will be completed each year, over and above MOTs.

Counting more than 900 voids as effective MOTs each year means the number of distinct MOTs need not reach the original 2300 per year, as initially thought. This will ensure the overall budget for both MOTs and voids is not exceeded.

With regard to the KPIs the Board was asked to note that the increase in rent arrears was in part due to the cash arrears being compared to a reduced rent roll because of higher volume of voids. The Chair requested information for next Board meeting which took into account the impact of voids and compared this to previous years.

The Board also reiterated its interest in seeing the total % of rent collected against the rent due.

MB described how data recording of H&S issues had produced an inflated volume of FRA risks needing action. The Chair requested an update on this to next meeting.

The Board noted an inconsistency between eviction numbers within the earlier Legal Action Report and this report and requested clarification to next meeting.

The Board noted the report.

510 Agenda Item 12 – Information Items

Item (a) HSC Minutes 26 June 2014

Noted.

Item (b) Universal Credit Update

[REDACTED]

Item (c) Annual Customer Service Report

Noted.

Item (d) Development Update

Noted.

Item (e) Notes to support ASB Presentation to previous meeting.

Noted.

511 Agenda Item 13 - Any other business

Both Joe Curran and Ken Wilson retired from the Board at this meeting. The Chair described their huge contribution to the work of the Board over 5 years and to the work of the Berrybridge Board, which had over-lapped the Divisional Board and commenced in 2002. The Board unanimously endorsed the Chair's vote of thanks to both, wishing them a happy retirement but urging both to 'keep in touch'.

A meal is to be arranged to thank them both for their contributions.

512 Agenda Item 14 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 19 November 2014, Walton Road.