

THE RIVERSIDE GROUP LIMITED

**Riverside North Divisional Meeting Held at 9:30 am on
Thursday 23 July 2015 at the Doubletree Hilton Hotel, Manchester**

Minutes

Present:	Darren Warneford	Chair	DW
	Mark Pearson	Vice Chair	MP
	Diana Pearce	Vice Chair	DP
	Bill Barkworth		BB
	Bob Hall		BH
	Chris Leavy		CL
	Patrick Rice		PR
	Dr Nell Chang		NC
	Cllr Peter Clark		PC
	Steve Ward	Director, North Division	SW
	Andy Gladwin	Group Financial Controller	AG
In attendance:	Kim Doran	Assistant Director, Property Services	KD
	Simon Aldred	Assistant Director, Finance	SA
	Justine Gore	Development Manager	JG
	Julie Riseborough	Business Support Manager	JR

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Carl Mitchell, Sally Trueman and Anne Tyrrell.

Declarations of Interest

None.

124 Minutes of the last Divisional Board Meeting held 21 May 2015. Action

The minutes of the last meeting were amended as follows:

Item 120 (c) corrected: an exemption does not apply; approval has been granted to roll over in the next financial year.

Item 121 inserted to reference a paper circulated at the meeting advising Board Members of the allocation of two tenancies, One to a Riverside Area Board member (Hull), and the second to a close relative of a Riverside employee (Seaton Delaval).

125 Matters Arising

None.

126 Financial Performance Report

The Board noted the contents of the financial performance report. The following points were discussed:

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- a. SA advised that the negative variation in repairs costs was a legacy of the Evolve Premium Per Property (PPP) arrangements that created additional costs due to a range of "exclusions". PPP arrangements are due to be phased out when the new standardised Schedule of Rates (SOR) is implemented later in the year.
- b. Costs arising from the "Property MOTs" may not create savings in the same financial year.
- c. Voids budgets are based on standard predictions, so exceptional increases can create negative variation. Additional funding has been identified to bring some voids back to a lettable standard: this has eased the pressure on the voids budget.
- d. AG updated board on the actions being taken by Riverside to consider the effects of the Government announcement on the extension Right to Buy (RTB). Modelling has been done at Group level based on various scenarios (due to lack of clarification on the details of the final policy) and in conjunction with the National Housing Federation. Carol Matthews has been invited to join a working party and Joy Baggaley has a meeting scheduled with the DCLG. AG confirmed that any profits from sales would be reinvested at a Divisional level within Development budgets. There are three key elements that need to be clarified: affordability, i.e. the number of tenants who could afford to exercise RTB; property values and compensation levels, as this determines the net profit; eligibility criteria, i.e. if any property types would be exempt such as bungalows.

127 Divisional Director's Report

The Board noted the contents of the Director's report. The following points were discussed:

- a. Discussions with Hull CC regarding conclusion of the North Bransholme Area Board are still progressing with a view to resolution by Autumn 2015.
- b. Discussions are still ongoing with Cheshire East regarding relocation of the Colshaw Farm office. The matter of public liability insurance for the Open Arms Management Committee has been resolved.
- c. SW agreed that the minutes should record thanks from Riverside and fellow Board members to Anne Tyrell for her contribution to the Board. SW will arrange a farewell lunch with Anne when she returns from her holiday as she was not available to attend the meeting. SW will inform Board Members of the date. A retirement gift of shopping vouchers will also be presented to Anne.

SW

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128 Operational Reports

128.1 Operations Report

The Board noted the contents of the Operations Report. The following points were discussed:

- a. The change in report format reflects changes made centrally. AG agreed to approach Val Sims about the potential for the report to be customised to show local targets. Members requested that Q&P AG continue to provide detailed analysis to inform discussion.
- b. KD confirmed that the voids and First Time Fix performance should improve now that the Asset Management team and Evolve are focusing on refurbishment/repairs.
- c. The Income Management team in Manchester had experienced further absences. The general trend is still steady, incremental improvement.
- d. Gas should be back to 100% by August.
- e. Data quality and H&S are also anticipated to improve.
- f. SW forecasted that all KPIs should be met by the end of the year.
- g. SW advised that funding has been identified to take on an apprentice within the Division to assist the Marketing and Communications officer.
- h. It was noted that compliments have increased.

128.2 Asset Management Report

The Board noted the contents of the Asset Management (AM) Report. The following points were discussed:

- a. Details of out turns from 2014/2015 had been provided and KD received positive feedback overall on the level of detail provided. KD advised that the report is still being refined.
- b. Repairs targets have changed as of 6 July. It is too early to assess the impact but the intention is to make scheduling and appointing more effective and efficient. A new "optitime" system where the CSC directly accesses Evolve work diaries has been implemented.
- c. The performance of Evolve in the Greater Manchester was queried. KD confirmed that discussions had taken place with Evolve to address capacity and other issues, a three month deadline has been set for improvement. The AM team are also looking at ways in which Riverside and Evolve can work more effectively together. The implications of Evolve having a depot at Widnes was also discussed. KD agreed to discuss this with Evolve. A member also advised that First Time Fix was not being achieved as the wrong operatives were being sent to repair requests. KD confirmed that the "optitime" system mentioned earlier will link into diagnostics meaning that requests will be linked to the right operatives. The lack of an

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effective IT interface was queried given the length of time Evolve has been working with Riverside. KD advised that this was not necessarily Evolve's fault and that Riverside IT was working to resolve this issue before the next phase of implementation in Cumbria Division.

- d. The selection of homes for the heating programme was queried. KF confirmed that homes are identified through Promaster based on the age of boilers. Carlos Joseph has also undertaken a reconciliation exercise, checking the list against repairs reports.
- e. KD confirmed that sales at Canterbury Street were progressing well, with the final agreed sale at £90K for purchase within 6 weeks. A deposit has been taken. It was confirmed that Local Authority consent is required to dispose of homes.

129 Development Report

The Board approved the pipeline programme set out in table 2 of the report in terms of complying with the strategic priorities of both the Division and Group.

The Board also noted the contents of the Development Report and the following points were discussed:

- a. It was noted that the majority of developments in the pipeline would be completed by 2017, in line with the Riverside business plan.
- b. Development is therefore fully committed and the team is now working on development opportunities from 2017-2020, which means if there is any slippage anticipated schemes can be pulled forward.
- c. JG confirmed that there will be 19 units for affordable rent at the Falcon Site Langley earmarked for 2017 (there is a possibility that the scheme could be brought forward. The HCA and Rochdale Council support the scheme).
- d. JG confirmed that [REDACTED] is in discussion with a private developer for an additional 300 homes for sale. Concerns were raised regarding the capacity of local schools. The Local Authority has incorporated the requirement of a school facility within a section 106 planning requirement.
- e. It was noted that JG is leaving Riverside and has been externally promoted. SW thanked JG for her contribution:

130 Any Other Business

A member queried the potential impact of Extra Care Riverside PFIs on General Needs: if people in General Needs properties are allocated places in the new schemes this could have a significant effect on voids and re-lets. Board members were assured that the Extra Care schemes are meeting



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needs across the whole of the Local Authority area so it is highly unlikely that all of the allocations would be made to existing Riverside tenants. Furthermore there is plenty of time to plan for tenancy succession.

131 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next Riverside North Divisional Board Meeting will be held on **Thursday 17 September 2015 at 4:00 pm** (refreshments available from 3.45pm) at **Riverside North Office, 6 Staithes, The Watermark, Gateshead, NE11 9SN**

Signed and Approved by Chair

Signature: *Diana Pearce*

Date: *17th September 2015*

Papers shown as an Appendix to the Minutes

Minute Numbers

124 – Minutes of Divisional Board meeting held 21 May 2015

126 – Financial Report

127 – Divisional Director's Report

128 – Operational Reports

128.1 – Operations Report

128.2 – Asset Management Report

129 – Development Report

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