

**MINUTES OF THE INTEGRATED HOUSING BOARD (HSP)
TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2010**

Present: Councillor John Bevan (Chair), Margaret Allen, Ibilola Campbell, Jean Croot, Phil Harris, Louis Antill Louis, Susan Otit, Gloria Saffrey, David Sherrington.

In Attendance: Xanthe Barker, Rosie Green, Tony Jackson, Stephanie Kelle, Andrew Meek, Oluremi Omokorede, Nick Powell.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
HSP151.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from the following:</p> <p>Paul Bridge Sue Brown Ian Martin (non Board member) Jo Murphy Lisa Redfern Clare Winstanley</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-David Sherrington substituted</p>	
HSP152.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>No items of Urgent Business were raised.</p>	
HSP153.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made.</p>	
HSP154.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p><u>Matters Arsing</u></p> <p>HSP141 – The Board was advised that a Delivery Group had been formed to focus on completing the actions relating to Children and Young People’s issues identified in the Council’s Homelessness Strategy 2008-11.</p> <p>HSP145 – The Board was advised that discussion with the Government Officer for London (GOL) was still ongoing with respect to the renegotiation of NI 154 and NI 155. Proposed revised targets had been submitted in December; however, no response had been received from GOL to date.</p> <p>HSP147 – The Board was advised that, as agreed, a bid for funding from the Housing Challenge Fund had been submitted and that this had been successful in achieving the sum bid for.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p>	

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	<p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.</p>	
HSP155.	<p>PRESENTATION ON FRAUD AND SUB-LETTING</p> <p>The Board received a presentation from McKinley Erysthee on Fraud and Sub Letting and how this was being addressed by the Council and other agencies.</p> <p>Following the presentation members of the Board put questions to Mr Erysthee.</p> <p>The Board was advised that there were qualifications, which could be obtained to equip officers with the skills and knowledge to enable them to investigate fraud effectively.</p> <p>In response to a query the Board was advised that guidance was awaited from the Audit Commission on targets with respect to reducing housing fraud. The Council had appointed an officer specifically to tackle fraud following an initiative run by the National Fraud office that identified a large number of potential matches against the criteria they used to identify potential cases.</p> <p>By having an officer with the expertise to investigate fraud the Council and Homes for Haringey was also able to develop and review their systems to prevent fraud. Work was also being done with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to improve the systems and checks in place within their organisations.</p> <p>The Board was advised that there was an increasing focus on returning the assets accrued as a result of fraud and publicising the legal action taken with respect to this. There were also information packs that members of the public could download that provided information on how they could report suspected fraudulent activity and some Local Authorities set aside money to be awarded to members of the public who helped them identify fraudsters.</p> <p>In response to a query, as to how the sub letting of under occupied properties was being tackled, the Board was advised that this was harder to address as housing providers were reliant on the tenant informing them of a change in their circumstances.</p> <p>The Board was advised that tenants were often unaware that they were living in a sub let property until an investigation was underway. In many cases people were willing to help with investigations as they required assistance to find a new home.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Erysthee for his presentation.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p>	

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	<p>That the presentation be noted.</p>	
<p>HSP156.</p>	<p>PRESENTATION ON EMERGENCY PLANNING</p> <p>The Board received a presentation from Andrew Meek, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Manager, on Emergency Planning and the provision made with respect to Housing.</p> <p>Following the presentation the Board put questions to Mr Meek.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Council held a number of training events during the year where emergency procedures were rehearsed. A range of organisations participated in these, including the emergency services and volunteers and Council staff.</p> <p>The Board discussed an incident that had occurred locally during the previous weekend when a water main had burst and the problems that had been caused as a result of this. It was contended that a lack of information had created significant and avoidable difficulties to local people as public transport routes had been diverted without information being provided. Crouch End Broadway had been closed preventing traffic and pedestrians from using the area and preventing people accessing local shops.</p> <p>The Board was advised that the Council was informed of programmes of work to be carried out by the utility companies over the course of the year. In an emergency situation there were mechanisms in place to ensure that the various agencies worked together to provide a coordinated approach. Although it was recognised that the incident had caused disruption locally it did not constitute an emergency situation and therefore the emergency plans held by the Council and Thames Water would not have been appropriate.</p> <p>Mr Meek agreed to discuss the issues raised with the Highways Department and Transport for London. He noted that the new text alert service currently being established would assist in providing local people with information with respect to situations like this.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the presentation be noted.</p>	
<p>HSP157.</p>	<p>PRESENTATION ON FORTHCOMING AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION OF STRATEGIC AND COMMUNITY HOUSING SERVICES</p> <p>The Board received a presentation on the forthcoming Audit Commission inspection of the Council's Strategic and Community Housing Service.</p> <p>It was noted that a different approach had been adopted in the formation of the Self Assessment for this inspection and the work of Partners had been recognised more fully.</p> <p>The Board was advised that a 'set up' meeting was being held with the</p>	

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	<p>Audit Commission, where the arrangements and process for the inspection, would be confirmed. A contact list would be established and members of staff and partners would be asked to participate in interviews and workshops as part of the inspection process.</p> <p>In terms of the working being done to improve resident involvement it was noted that whilst there had been a great deal of positive work there was still room for improvement.</p> <p>In response to a query as to what the Audit Commission would be looking for and the criteria that would be used to assess performance, the Board was advised that Inspectors would assess how well the Council had had acted on recommendations made following the last inspection in 2007.</p> <p>A key part of the Self Assessment process was identifying areas of weakness and setting out how these would be addressed. If it was adequately demonstrated that provision was being made to address areas of weakness this would not necessarily damage the assessment score.</p> <p>It was noted that Homes for Haringey had recently been through a similar assessment process, where they had been required to produce a Self Assessment document and they had been advised that they had not put sufficient emphasis on their achievements and successes.</p> <p>There was agreement that highlighting the greater role that tenants now played was important and that representative from residents groups should have an opportunity to meet with the inspectors.</p> <p>In conclusion the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and there was agreement that there should be further 'open' meetings of this kind in the new Municipal Year.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the presentation be noted.</p>
<p>HSP158.</p>	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>No new items of Urgent Business were considered.</p>
<p>HSP159.</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>No items of AOB were raised.</p>
<p>HSP160.</p>	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>The draft dates for meetings during 2010/11, as set out below, were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 June 2010

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 October 2010• 31 January 2011• 18 April 2011 | |
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Once the Council's Calendar of Meetings for 2010/11 had been formally agreed by Council on 22 March members of the Board would be notified. (Until then the dates set out above may be subject to change).

COUNCILLOR JOHN BEVAN

Chair

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.