

## 2010 ROTHERHAM LTD

### MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2007 AT 2:00 PM AT BOARD ROOM, EASTWOOD

**Board of Directors:** Miss Anita Heaton (Chair)  
Mr Almas Abbasi  
Cllr Jane Austen  
Mr Tony Billingham  
Mrs Liz Booth  
Cllr Barry Dodson  
Mrs Mary Jacques  
Cllr Neil License  
Cllr Reg Littleboy

**In Attendance:** Mrs Isobel Riley (Chief Executive)  
Mrs Teresa Butler (Director of Business Development)  
Mr Mark Whittle (Director of Investment)  
Mr Colin Earl (RMBC)  
Mr Mike Clements (RMBC)  
Mrs Michelle Musgrave (RMBC)  
Mr Maqbool Ahmed (RMBC)  
Mrs Lynne Chatterton (Secretary to Director of Business Development) - Minutes  
Mr Andrew Roddison (RotherFed)

#### Minute No.

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mr Gaetano Demartino, Mrs Margaret Hartley and Mr Keith Stringer.

#### 2. Minutes of Board Meeting 26 September 2007

The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

#### 3. Matters Arising

Mrs Heaton advised that she had received a list of questions from Margaret Hartley. It was agreed that a degree of discretion had to be used by the Chair when receiving questions from Board Directors who could not attend meetings. Mrs Butler was to put together a guide for Board Director questions.

Mrs Hartley's first question was "Why were no officers from the Council or 2010 Rotherham Limited at the SLA meeting."

In response, Miss Heaton informed the Board that she had taken advice from Trowers & Hamblins prior to the meeting. They advised that it was perfectly

acceptable to have one or two meetings per year without the 2010 Executive being present. She felt that the meeting had been a positive step in the right direction. It was acknowledged that it had been called at very short notice but that the invitation had come from Cllr Roger Stone. No minutes had been taken at the meeting.

#### 4. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest in addition to standing declarations.

#### 5. Minutes of Committees

##### Community Development & Partnership

Cllr Austen presented the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2007 and referred directors to the key points listed at the end of the minutes.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the minutes of the Community Development & Partnership meeting held on 26 September 2007**

##### Governance

Cllr Austen presented the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October and referred members to the key points listed at the end of the minutes.

Item 5 – Cllr Austen confirmed that she had met with Peter Collins at RotherFed and now sought advice on how to progress the issue.

Mrs Riley asked the Board to consider taking advice from Trowers & Hamlins as to whether in Section 27 Consent had been breached. The Governance Committee was to check the appropriate legislation with Trowers & Hamlin and report back to the next meeting.

A note of this decision was to be sent to Mr Collins.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the minutes of the Governance meeting held on 8 October 2007**

##### Performance

Miss Heaton presented the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September.

She advised the meeting that the Performance Team was doing a sterling job of reporting back to the Performance Committee with good, accurate information being received. Cllr Dodson concurred with this view.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the minutes of the Performance Committee held on 25 September 2007.**

## Items for Decision

### 6. Revised Committee Structure

Mrs Butler presented the report to the Board which outlined proposals for a revised committee structure. It was agreed that the Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee should not be part of any other Committee. The Board agreed the appointment of Cllr License as Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee. It was noted that this now left a space on Resources & Asset Management. Mrs Butler was to email all Board Directors with regard to an additional member to join that Committee.

Mr Earl was to approach Judith Badger, Director of Finance at Wakefield, with a view to inviting them to join the Audit & Governance Committee.

No response had been received from Cllr Roger Stone with regard to a replacement for Cllr Glyn Robinson. Cllr Littleboy was to pursue this issue.

Miss Heaton was to contact Cllr Robinson to see if he wished to formally resign from the Board.

#### **AGREED:**

- 1. The Board accepted the revised committee structure comprising Audit & Governance; Sustainable Communities; Performance; Resources & Asset Management.**
- 2. The Board accepted the proposed membership**
- 3. Each Committee would appoint a Chair from within its membership**
- 4. Each Committee would nominate two members (not the Chair) to serve on the Audit & Governance Committee**
- 5. The Audit & Governance Committee would review the committee structure after 12 months**
- 6. Cllr License was appointed Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee**

### 7. Barbot Hall

This item was taken later as a confidential item.

## Items for Discussion

### 8. Finance Report

Mr Ahmed presented the report on financial performance for the period to 30 September 2007 which he felt showed a good set of results. He had hoped to have completed a profiling exercise but this had not been possible due to resources.

(Mrs Booth left the meeting.)

Cllr License felt there should be real time recording and not historical recording.

Mrs Riley felt that Repairs & Maintenance budget was a real issue. The Repairs & Maintenance Action Plan should bring this back into line.

Cllr Austen asked how the Decent Homes programme was factored in as this should reduce responsive repairs. Mr Whittle advised that in his experience, expectations of tenants grew after Decent Homes work had been carried out and tenants tended to report things that might previously have been acceptable. Once Decent Homes work was completed we needed to try and stem flow of repairs coming through.

The Repairs & Maintenance Action would be brought to Board. This would outline a long term approach to stock which had never been taken before. Mr Earl felt this was a significant risk area at this moment and one for which the Cabinet Member had asked for a report to be submitted.

Mr Ahmed advised the Board that he needed to create a balance sheet. To do that, three things had to be in place for 2010 accounts to be separate from RMBC accounts:

- Move to R codes
- Change invoicing arrangements
- New accounts payable ledger

Mrs Riley said that costs could be coming through for work that was needed on changes to the coding structure. Clarity was required immediately from finance/RBT for changing the coding structure, which she felt should have been carried out before the ALMO was set up. If there was a £50,000 risk then it needed to be included in the accounts until the position was resolved. This needed to be reported very clearly to the next Board meeting and why it has only just emerged. Mr Earl advised that this was essentially a one-off piece of work being dealt with outside the SLA and that the SLA was to reflect recurring support provided.

Mr Ahmed advised that stock and WIP (work in progress) were being captured. A lot of work had been carried out to ensure 2010 did not have the same problems as last year.

Mrs Riley had been advised that the 7.7% increase on the capital management fee, which had been accounted for within the figures since the beginning of the year, would now only apply to Decent Homes programme.

Mrs Riley informed the Board that this issue had been raised this with Mrs Musgrave and Cllr Ellis and she had been assured at the liaison meeting that 2010 could rely on the fee being applied to all the capital works being managed by 2010 on behalf of the Council.

The capital programme needed to be re-adjusted to take into account the costs of the floods and the ROCC/handheld project funding. Mrs Riley felt the Council

needed to reassure the Board that the ROCC/handheld costs would flow through HRA as the project was funded on an “invest to save” basis. At the present time no-one knew from where the money for the project programme was coming. Mr Lewis felt clarification was required in writing through the finance team and not by a virtual discussion.

Mrs Heaton tabled the second question from Mrs Hartley in connection with SLAs and the cost of service delivery by RMBC Finance. Mr Earl advised that a meeting was to take place on 9 November to discuss the finance SLA and Mr Clements offered to provide the Board with HRA monitoring reports for information on how the HRA budget was spent.

Mr Lewis advised that he would also like that information.

## **9. Financial Regulations**

Mr Ahmed presented the paper which set out financial regulations for 2010 Rotherham which were based on those of RMBC. These needed the agreement of the Section 151 Officer.

Cllr License felt that items over £1m should be signed for by CE/Acting CE plus either the Chair or Deputy Chair.

Mr Lewis did not think only one signatory was helpful and did not protect any member of staff. A co-signatory should always be required.

## **10. Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan**

This item was deferred.

### **Items for Information**

## **11. RMBC Support Team Project Plan**

Mr Earl presented the paper and drew the Board’s attention to the items which were at “amber” and “red” status.

Mr Earl advised the Support Team was to withdraw by the end of November. However, there would still be support through SLAs, Performance Management and Preparation for Inspection.

Mrs Riley was concerned about the “amber” status on the scheme of delegation and decision making, which she felt was a major issue. There were a lot of fundamental issues that needed to be discussed with the Council before a report could be brought to the Board. Mrs Riley felt the Management Agreement did not require reviewing.

Mrs Heaton felt there needed to be a frank discussion on how decisions were made, processes for doing things efficiently etc.

With regard to Board Directors' training, Mr Earl advised that the option of 2-2½ hour sessions was generally preferred. Details of training providers would be issued to the Governance Committee on Monday, 5 November.

## **12. Decent Homes Phase 2**

Mr Whittle presented the Decent Homes report to 17 October 2007.

Cllr Austen noted that there were no performance figures for ROK and wanted to know what was being done about them. Mr Whittle advised that a number of meetings had been held with senior management at ROK. Cllr Austen advised that there were still problems and that she had received more complaints this month than previously. Cllr License suggested that their senior representative should attend the next Resource & Asset Management Committee meeting. Mrs Riley was to attend the Partnering Board meeting on 5 November and would raise this issue.

Cllr Dodson felt there was a lack of customer relations with all Decent Homes contractors. Cllr Austen was horrified at the number of refusals and felt that a refusal strategy was required.

Cllr Dodson asked Mr Whittle to put a report to RMBC regarding bathroom issues. Cllr License felt that flexibility was required and perhaps the guidance to surveyors needed to be redrafted with the recommendation that if one item in the bathroom failed the inspection, the entire bathroom should be replaced.

### **AGREED:**

- 1 ROK to attend the Resources & Asset Management Meeting on Wednesday, 21 November**
- 2 A refusal strategy was to be brought to the next meeting.**

## **13. Health and Safety Report**

Mr Whittle presented the report for information.

HSE had been notified of an asbestos breach. Mr Whittle was to ask John Stapleton to report this to Michelle Musgrave.

With regard to Hepatitis B, Cllr Dodson asked whether the operatives could be supplied with antiseptic wipes. Mrs Riley was to take this up at the next H&S meeting as operatives might already have an equivalent product in their kits.

### **AGREED:**

- 1 The Board received and noted the report.**
- 2 Mrs Riley was to take up the issue of antiseptic wipes at H&S Committee.**

## 14. Housemark Benchmarking Report

Mrs Butler presented the report for information.

It was noted that 2010 Rotherham Limited were one of the least generously resourced ALMOs in their comparator group but had performed very well on KPIs and league tables. It was the intention to take part in this comprehensive benchmarking exercise annually. This had been received by the by the Performance Committee who felt it was a very useful document and it would be incorporating elements into its monthly agenda.

Mrs Riley advised that the information would be used in the Delivery Plan in order to inform budget proposals to the Council. The evidence would be used to highlight what added value could be provided if resources were available. These were the things that would make the difference between 2\* and 3\* ALMOs.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the report.**

## 15. Taking Forward Environmental Initiatives

Mrs Butler presented the report for information.

Mrs Riley advised that this issue had come to light in the KLOE gap analysis. It was proposed to ask the Audit Commission if they would like to work with 2010 Rotherham Limited to develop a KLOE on green issues.

Cllr Austen felt that items like this could go to the Sustainable Communities Committee.

Mr Whittle advised that he was to use the stock of solar panels at Rawmarsh to pilot their use in 100 homes in suitable positions. Mrs Musgrave asked Mr Whittle to feed this into the Affordable Warmth Action Plan to capture outputs.

**AGREED: Progress on Environmental Issues to be reported to the Sustainable Communities Committee.**

## 16. Director of Neighbourhood Management Report

Mrs Riley presented the report for information.

Cllr Austen advised that she had only just received the revised staffing structure. Mrs Riley advised that Mr Webb was to have presented this to the Area Assemblies but that they had to be cancelled due to him being ill.

It was agreed that Area Managers should offer regular meetings to Ward Members and Neighbourhood Champions should also make contact with local Councillors. Mrs Riley was to personally reinforce this message with Neighbourhood Managers.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the report.**

**17. Director of Investment Report**

Mr Whittle presented the report.

He advised that a draft report on the In-House Service Provider was due shortly which would highlight a number of recommendations. Mr Lewis asked to see a benchmark against an external comparator.

Mr Whittle was asked to feed the Board's congratulations back to Heather Newton on reaching the final of the APSE award. All four apprentices were to be invited to the Quality Award lunch prior to the next Board Meeting.

**AGREED: The Board received and noted the report.**

*The public and the press were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of confidential information.*

**Barbot Hall**

The Board was asked to comment on the options to inform the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods' decision on the recommendations in the report to her entitled: "Decent Homes Scheme 2006 – 2011. The Doors & Windows Replacement Programme Procurement Process: Outcome of Negotiations with Astraseal Limited & Financial & Service Implications".

Each of the four options carried medium to high risks for the Council and the company; these were detailed in the report.

The Board considered the options in the report but was unable to reach a consensus view. It was agreed an informal briefing note summarising the discussion and expressing the views of Directors should be sent to the Cabinet Member.

**Date of Next Meeting: 28 November 2007 – 2 pm, Board Room, Eastwood**

**Dates of Future Meetings:**

**19 December 2007 – 2 pm, Board Room, Eastwood**

**30 January 2008 – 2 pm, Board Room, Eastwood**

**27 February 2008 – 2 pm, Board Room, Eastwood**

**26 March 2008 – 2 pm, Board Room, Eastwood**

Signed as a true and accurate record.

.....(Chair)

Date:.....