



**Minutes of Berneslai Homes Board held 23rd May 2023 at 4.00pm
in Gateway Plaza**

Present:

- Sinead Butters - Chair
- Richard Fryer - Board Member
- Adam Hutchinson - Board Member
- Mark Johnson - Board Member
- Adriana Rustemi - Board Member
- Eric Smith - Board Member
- Jo Sugden - Board Member
- Councillor Sarah Tattersall - Board Member
- Mahara Haque - Co-optee of Customer Services Committee (Board observer)

In attendance

- Amanda Garrard - CEO
- Dave Fullen - Executive Director, Customer & Estate Services
- Arturo Gulla - Executive Director, Property Services
- Shaeen Azam - Interim Exec Director, Corporate Services
- Lee Winterbottom - Managing Director Construction Services
- Sam Roebuck - Head of Governance and Strategy and Company Secretary
- Leanne Armitage - Finance Manager
- Sarah Drafz - Performance Manager (for Item 7 only)

	ACTION
<p><u>Item 1 – Apologies</u></p> <p>Kulvinder Sihota, Executive Director Corporate Services, Councillor Kevin Osborne Board member.</p>	
<p><u>Item 2 – Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>All Board members declared an interest in the Governance Update report in relation to the Board Pay element.</p>	
<p><u>Item 3 – CEO Presentation</u></p> <p>AGA presented the information and highlighted the key issues.</p>	

Board's attention was brought to the 4 Million Homes Campaign. BH tenants have been involved in the launch.

Nat Fed ALMO's Conference - AH also attended. AGu/AGa spoke on damp mould which received good feedback.

Pathways to Work Commission - BH feeding into the commission. This links into BH's good practice, Achieve programme etc.

LGC Awards – BH were involved in presenting information on solar pv and the More Money In your Pocket initiative.

IIP – This is a requirement that forms part of BH contract with the Council and is about what staff feel about the organisation, collected through a satisfaction survey. Currently BH are Gold accredited Discussions are taking place with the Council on whether to continue with IIP in the future, as it is felt a more customer focused accreditation would be more beneficial.

Telling Our Story – Work is taking place with teams to produce some good stories, including case studies which will be used to promote positive news.

EMT Away Day held – priorities identified.

Resolved

Board received the update

Item 4 – Governance Update

SR presented and highlighted the key issues.

EMT Pay Review – Discussed at Remuneration Committee; they agreed with the recommendations in the report. The Chair of the Committee assured Board that a detailed discussion had taken place, taking into consideration the independent benchmarking before making their decision. The Chair asked if Board agreed with this approach, and this was confirmed. The Remuneration Committee expressed their appreciation of the Executive Management Team and agreed that the arrangement provided good value for money. Board also acknowledged the challenges over the past year and thanked the Executive for their hard work.

Board Pay Review – A Remuneration Policy in relation to Board pay increases has been developed by the Governance team. Board pay has been reviewed through an external consultant DTP. This was also discussed and approved at Remuneration Committee. Pay rises will be paid in June, backdated to April 2023.

Board Code of Conduct – This has been revised in line with the NHF Code of Conduct.

<p>The Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference have been amended, taking into account the 3 scheduled meetings per year. Strategies and progress on action plans can be submitted to this Committee, that previously were discussed at the HR Committee.</p> <p>Remuneration Committee also approved a new Succession, Recruitment and Induction Policy.</p> <p>Board noted the members of the Remuneration committee – RF(Chair), MJ, AH, JS</p> <p>Resolved:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board approved the recommendation by Remuneration Committee that EMT Remuneration continues to be aligned with BMBC counterparts. 2. Board approved the Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference as recommended by the Remuneration Committee. 3. Board approved the revised Board Code of Conduct as Recommended by the Remuneration Committee. 4. Board reviewed and commented on the documents that were approved by Remuneration Committee 	
<p><u>Item 5 – Fire Safety Act 2023 and Building Safety Act 2022 Update</u></p> <p>AGu presented. He referred the meeting to the changes to the accountable person and principal accountable person. BH are currently awaiting names from the Council and these are required as soon as possible. Until this information is received buildings cannot be registered, the deadline for this is September 2023. KMca has confirmed that they are considering, and she also gave assurance that the deadline will be met. AGa to raise with KMca.</p> <p>With regard to building safety cases, BH have appointed Pennington’s to assist in identifying any gaps etc to enable a draft safety case to be produced and shared. A structural survey has been undertaken on one of the high-rise buildings in relation to the risk of fire – this has resulted in a good outcome. The remaining 2 high rise buildings will be surveyed in due course. This information will be included in the draft building safety case.</p> <p>Confirmation was provided that all the requirements in the Fire Safety Regulations that came into force in January 2023 are undertaken and records kept. Board reminded BH of ensuring fire doors are added to the building safety score card action plan.</p> <p>Board were pleased with the report and felt that this provided the assurance they require, however they felt the information from the Council on the accountable persons needs to expedited.</p>	<p>AGa</p> <p>AGu</p> <p>KMca</p>

<p>Board felt it would be beneficial if information from the Resident Engagement Panel could be shared with Board. It was agreed this be added to the Customer Services Committee twice a year. It was also agreed that a deep dive on high rise buildings be undertaken by Audit Committee once the building safety cases has been dealt with.</p> <p>Assurance was provided on fire safety instructions. Through the Resident Engagement Strategy process, BH ensure that residents fully understand these. There are no obligations to carry out any evacuation fire drills; however, a maintenance regime is in place, and this is logged and certificates saved. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue are very familiar with the schemes and last year carried out a significant amount of training – BH staff were also on site, and everything was covered in detail.</p> <p>Board was informed of an invitation from Pennington’s for BH to be involved in some best practice webinars as a result of the progress made.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>Board noted the contents of the report and escalated their concerns & risks to BMBC in relation to the BMBC review of governance arrangements.</p>	<p>DF AGu</p>
<p><u>Item 6 – Damp and Mould Update</u></p> <p>AGu presented, summarising the key points</p> <p>Board’s attention was drawn to the Executive summary which highlights the progress made.</p> <p>The Regulator’s initial findings identified that data is quite poor in many housing organisations. Linking to this BH are accelerating the stock condition programme, which should be 100% complete by March 2024.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Housing Ombudsman Special Report on Rochdale.</p> <p>Berneslai Homes’ progress was outlined which includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1600 homes treated • Board approval requested for a Damp and Mould dedicated team – Board noted these will be additional posts, not pulled from existing resources dedicated to compliance areas • monthly checks carried out on the most vulnerable i.e. where gas is capped • A dedicated inbox • Leaflets reviewed and website updated (with tenants’ input) • Installation of monitors in properties to identify issues – providing evidence • Damp and Mould Task Group is in place (includes tenant reps, BH, BMBC) – Action Plan has been developed 	

<p>Board requested detail on outstanding works. They also asked what Berneslai Homes are most concerned about. AGa feels the main concern is the ability of tenants to heat their homes, particularly those with no proper ventilation. With regard to fabric related issues, BH are making sure that jobs are undertaken to deal with moisture, however where there is overcrowding, this may not solve the problem. The difficulties in stopping overcrowding was discussed, which is only possible at the point of allocation. Better data collection however will pick up any overcrowding, enabling cases to be triaged if required.</p> <p>Board highlighted the importance of them understanding the composition of the stock. It was agreed that a fact sheet be shared with Board on a 6 monthly basis. Noted stock information also contained with the Asset Management Strategy.</p> <p>The importance of BH knowing its customers was discussed and the measures introduced by BH were highlighted i.e. operatives being observant when in tenants homes on unrelated matters i.e. gas servicing. All staff, the council and partners have been briefed and the dedicated e mail address has been promoted. DF has also undertaken briefings with social care colleagues, making them aware of what BH are doing, which gives them an added dimension. As part of the Stock Condition work, trends have also been looked at, for example, those tenants who have not reported repairs for a considerable period – these have been visited as a priority.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>Board noted the contents of the report and approved the establishment of a dedicated Damp & Mould Team.</p>	<p>AGu</p> <p>AGu</p>
<p><u>Item 7 – Annual Review of Performance</u></p> <p>SD presented an overview performance highlighting key areas</p> <p>9 out of the 28 KPI's were achieved. However, if the council allowed amber ratings, of the 15 rated red, 5 of these would have fallen into the amber category (narrowly missed). These relate to DH, rent collection, compliance with H & S regulations, SAP ratings and EPCC.</p> <p>The Tenant Satisfaction information slide was brought to Board's attention. Although the target has not been met, performance is favourable within the sector.</p> <p>Board were asked to note the sector dip around repairs, impacted upon by damp and mould. However, on 2 of the measures the annual target was exceeded.</p> <p>Complaints – The increase in complaints has been driven by publicity campaigns to increase tenants' awareness of the complaints process from Berneslai Homes and across the sector. Complaints resolved in the agreed</p>	

<p>target were narrowly missed, and although the target of 70% was not met for tenants satisfied with complaints handling, BH performance was higher than the sector median.</p> <p>Income – year end BH are marginally behind the 2022 position. The cost-of-living crisis has had an impact on this.</p> <p>Compliance – 99.57% compliance. Non compliance relates to 152 properties with an electrical installation condition report over 10 years old. This has been prioritised and is reducing.</p> <p>Asset Management Stock Data - Noted 59 properties classed as non-decent. BH are aware of reasons and will continue to prioritise.</p> <p>Sickness – 12.12 days absence against a target of 9 days. An EMT spotlight session has taken place, with further information being requested on trends etc. Report is awaited. HR are continuing to monitor and support managers.</p> <p>Board felt it was not helpful that amber ratings have been removed but appreciated this was a requirement of the council. They explained the difficulty in the information being received this way which prevented them from being able to carry out their role effectively. Many of the reds are only marginally away from target i.e. relet times, rent collection, gas safety compliance, rent arrears. Potential for 2 reports to be produced including amber for Board, red/green only for the Council report for the next financial year</p> <p>Board requested that the Customer Services Committee work collaboratively with the Exec representative to identify a small number of areas where there are concerns around performance and then this can be brought to Board.</p> <p>Voids were discussed. DF provided assurance that the business plan assumption for HRA rent loss is 1.05%, when it was actually 0.76% ,therefore BH are outperforming how voids are handled.</p> <p>The main issue is in relation to the PRIP contract. If a repair is not a definition of routine it goes into major voids, which is a process that takes 30 days before work is done. This could be, for example, a meter box, shower curtain, extractor fan etc. Board expressed their concern around the 30 day target and felt the PRIP relationship needs to be reviewed. AGa advised that the council have already agreed to this. Board were asked to note that both CS and Wates are outperforming their target.</p> <p>Sector median raised and the importance of not comparing with the average but to accept the challenges.</p> <p>Resolved:-</p> <p>Board noted the performance.</p>	<p>SR/SD</p> <p>CSCom and DF</p>
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<p><u>Item 8 – Professionalism Agenda</u></p> <p>SA presented the report and brought the next steps action plan to Board’s attention.</p> <p>Felt narrow approach being taken by the government. Good customer service should be seen as part of the package, the work around values/behaviours/culture is important as is curiosity and knowing how to deal with people as well as the more technical aspect. A balanced approach is required.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>Board noted the next steps in ensuring the professionalism agenda criteria is met.</p>	
<p><u>Item 9 – Resource Information Papers</u></p>	
<p><u>Item 9.1 – Quarterly Risk Update</u> AH Chair of Audit and Risk advised this is reviewed regularly by the Committee. There were no specific areas of concerns identified.</p>	
<p><u>Item 9.2 – Innovation and Technology Strategy Update</u></p> <p>No comments raised.</p>	