

WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY HOMES LTD BOARD MINUTES
Thursday 21st February 2018 2.30pm
Floor 20, Portland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5RS

Present – James Green (JG) (Westminster City Council Board Member) (Nominated Chair)
 Cllr Murad Gassanly (MG) (Westminster City Council Nominated Board Member)
 Thomas Harding (TH) (Westminster City Council Nominated Board Member)

In Attendance-

Steve Moore (SM) (Westminster Community Homes)
 Hannah Callender (HC) (Westminster Community Homes)
 Sophie Sheekey (SS) (Westminster Community Homes)
 Gary Allen (GA) (CityWest Homes) (Item 3 & 4 only)

Minutes- Sophie Sheekey

No.	Item	Action
1.	Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
	<p><u>Declarations.</u> James Green (JG) declared that he is WCC Senior Development Manager and WOC Board Member.</p> <p>Cllr Gassanly (MG) declared that he is Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services.</p> <p>Tom Harding (TH) declared that he is WCC Head of Westminster Employment Services.</p> <p><u>Apologies</u> Apologies from Olivia Harris (OH) (Dolphin Living Nominated Board Member) and Tom McGregor (TM) (WCH Chairman).</p> <p>In TM absence, the Board appoint JG as Chair of meeting.</p>	
2.	Minutes of last meeting 6th December 2018 and Action List	
	<p>SM explained that all amber items have been picked up and are progressing.</p> <p>Item 6 CEX update- SM confirmed that an agreement to put funds in place from WCC before acquisition completion dates is a working progress. Cabinet member report has been written.</p> <p>Board agreed minutes.</p>	

3.	Period 10 Financial Monitoring	
	<p><i>GA joins meeting</i></p> <p>GA confirmed that there has not been much movement since last report. Final surplus of £228k is £189k favourable to budget mainly due to property sale proceeds totalling £192k, higher than forecast rental income of £211k. GA has no sight of any expenditures of significant variance between now and year-end.</p> <p>GA and SM address the matters arising from previous Board meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Officers were asked to look into the checking budget against expenditure Currently WCH adopt a reactive position to invoicing against budget in so much that variances only become known when the Management Accounts are compiled. GA recommends that WCH have an oversight of a financial management of POs and that they are adjusted regularly against the budget and forecasted earlier to avoid variances. SM confirmed this will be introduced from the start of the new financial year. Clarification from the Auditors about the journal entries At the AGM the Auditor raised his concerns about unauthorised changes to journal entries being made across our accounts. This raised with CWH who confirmed that it is not possible. This was fed back to Jones Avens, who confirmed that they would expect to see each change has for example, a reference number next to it and that at the audit a file would be produced referencing the specific authorisations. SM confirms change in the control process where journal entries are checked will be put in place. <p>Invoicing Westminster City Council</p> <p>HC confirms the £5.2m affordable housing grant for top ups and funding for new IMR stock was received in January. There was a 2 month delay in the invoicing process due to WCC change of finance system in November/December.</p> <p>Currently WCH are paid on 30 days terms for invoices even for claiming money back for WCH's rent. As we are now wholly owned this will need to change. SM to flag this with WCC corporate finance to be paid instantly our own funds and POs available in advance. If in the new year then the financial system has not improved, this will need to be raised to Cabinet.</p>	<p>SM/GA</p> <p>SM /GA</p> <p>SM</p>
4.	Annual Budget Approval	
	<p>SM explains WCH are still in discussion about a new program that was not carried out in 2018-19 due to becoming wholly controlled in May. Therefore the budget does not take into account where we could be if we increase to the full program and increase our stock numbers to 251 over 5</p>	

	<p>years. For which no affordable housing funding or loan will be available. SM to confirm the progress of this next Board meeting.</p> <p>WCH currently use national matrix of housing components on how to deal with grants in terms of depreciation. SM states WCH currently lose £20k on purchases because of effect of depreciation and have to sell high value properties to balance the deficit, as rents are not increased to cover this as done in private sector.</p> <p>SM to report back on this next board meeting after speaking with Jones Aven about depreciation issue.</p> <p>WCH is waiting on acquisitions agreement and then Business plan will be done. Board approve budget on a basis it is in progress and not set in stone. No business plan yet achieved.</p> <p><i>GA leaves meeting</i></p>	<p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p>
5.	Chief Executive Update	
	<p><i>SM presents</i></p> <p>CWH transfer gradually progressing with help of Natalie Roberts at WCC finance.</p> <p>WCH has not yet got a new financial program in place, to replace CWH finance. Hampshire county council have rejected WCH use of SAP, it would not be economic for us to use due to size. The finance system chosen would need to be housing tailored.</p> <p>Confirmed yesterday that Exchequer contract has been re-signed for a further year so we can use for this period and will give us time to look at other options to move on to. WCH will need someone permanently in place with knowledge of Exchequer to deal with WCH finances.</p> <p>SM has had discussions with Barbara Brownlee (Director Growth Planning and Housing) who have suggested WCC finance for accounting.</p> <p>SM to confirm with Dai Williams at WCC Finance the cost of the service level agreement.</p> <p>Regeneration Update</p> <p>1. Ebury Bridge Estate - SM states that regeneration is going well, negotiators are working hard with leaseholders and Ebury has moved on substantially in the last 2 years. Many including WCC do not see the amount of work done by WCH to contribute to the regeneration process, Board agree WCH should send updates on progression on regen estates to WCC.</p>	<p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p>

	<p>2. Church Street- We have a cabinet member report written and RR has approved; monies for acquisitions will be available to WCH before purchases.</p> <p>However, agreement is currently on hold due to an issue with separate tripartite agreement. SM to follow up with David Thompson (Senior Regen Manager).</p> <p>Future Development Programme</p> <p>WCH met with WCC treasury in January to discuss future loans through WCC. A follow up meeting has been set for 20th February if cabinet member report has been agreed by then; SM will update the board of the outcome. Funding will be also available from GLA for the new programme; offering £38k per unit by 31st March 2020.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Funding from WCC is on hold as Fergus Coleman have advised there if no funding left, this will affect the amount of properties we can acquire and affordable housing we can provide. SM to produce briefing note for additional funding and copy in MG. WCH will need £10m to acquire 40 units in current market.</p> <p>Board agree focus should be on purchasing more units.</p>	<p>SM</p> <p>SM</p> <p>SM</p>
6.	Key Performance Indicators	
	<p><i>HC presents</i></p> <p>HC refers to WCHs customer service results, Housing Management received 88% satisfaction which is slightly lower than previous year but remains higher than City West Homes which we compare our survey results.</p> <p>Gas and Smoke checks currently at 100% number of voids completed is on target.</p> <p>All IMR scheme rents currently have 0% arrears. The assured arrears are currently at 7.09% down from 15% in the last report. Since this result was provided, three cases have now paid and figure will fall further.</p> <p>HC highlights that half of arrears are universal credit cases, these cases are accumulating.</p> <p>MG informs WCH that Karen Buck's office have been made aware of an eviction on WCH tenant, which was posted on social media but not reported to WCH. SM to contact Karen Buck's office RE social media post and HC to investigate the property involved.</p>	<p>SM HC</p>
7.	Community Projects 2019/2020	
	<p><i>HC presents</i></p> <p>WCH have budgeted £24k for next financial year. With the changes at CityWest Homes (CWH) it was uncertain the community projects run through CWH would continue. Keith Cookson has confirmed these will be running and</p>	

	<p>provided report to Board to continue funding the same projects WCH has been funding. In future WCH would like to fund community that benefit WCH community homes activities directly. HC informed that it would be difficult to stop providing funding these projects without other funders in place. SS to ensure a question in the next survey is included to ask tenants whether they/children use any of the activities are tenants aware of services in the area and are they benefiting from them.</p> <p>It is recognised that as it stands there is no funding for employment related ventures. It is suggested that we do a homework club that enables a parent to stay at work.</p> <p>TH offered to work with HC and Keith Cookson on where to extend funding. Board approve £24k funding to keep CWH projects going in 2019-20 and should TH find other funders we will release these to look at other community funding opportunities.</p> <p>WCH to prepare information about age profiles, family makeups to determine what WCH tenants need. Keith to confirm whether any WCH benefit from the services.</p>	<p>SS</p> <p>HC/TH</p> <p>HC/KC</p>
8.	Fire Risk Assessments	
	<p>Orchardson FRA completed in January with good report. Leo Court has suspended due to ongoing works. Outstanding inspections due in September 2019 and will be included in next FRA update report later in the year.</p>	HC
10.	Forward Meeting Plan	
	<p>Board approved forward meeting plan for 2019-20. SS to ensure dates are in diary.</p>	SS
11	AOB	
	None.	
12	<p>Date of next meeting: Tuesday 21st May 2.30pm At Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria St.</p>	