

Homes in Sedgemoor Board Meeting

The primary purpose of the board meeting is to provide oversight and strategic guidance to the business, to address important matters, to assess emerging risks and trends, and make decisions.

**APPROVED Minutes of the hybrid Board Meeting
held via Teams and in the Sedgemoor Room at
Bridgwater House on Tuesday 26 September 2023 at 1.45pm**

Board Members:	Cllr Kathy Pearce Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Pauline Ham Marie Hide Paul Hackett Paul Stephenson (Chair)	Kathy Lance Pauline H Marie Paul H Paul S
In Attendance:	Ben Lane, Director of Finance and Performance Claire Tough, Director of Communities & Customer Service Naomi Macey, Director of Asset Management and Safety Pauline Kelly, Executive Assistant (<i>minutes</i>) Peter Hatch, Chief Executive	Ben Claire Naomi Pauline K Peter
Guests in person:	Chris Brown, Service Director – Housing (<i>Joined at Item 13</i>) Chris Fisher, Prospective Tenant Board Member Chris Hall, Executive Director – Community Services Craig Green, STAC member Olly Keates, Prospective Ordinary Board Member Ros Griffiths, STAC member Sarah O’Neill, STAC Chair	Chris B Chris F Chris H Craig Olly Ros Sarah
Guests via Teams:	James Menhenitt, Prospective ARC Co-Optee (via Teams)	James

NO.	ITEM
1.	Welcome Guests
	Paul welcomed Board members, attendees, and guests to the meeting.
	Apologies
	Apologies received from Jen Vernon.
2.	Declarations of Interest
	There were no further declarations other than those previously recorded on Board Members’ Declaration of Interests Forms.
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2023
	All members agreed that the minutes recorded are a true record.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED and APPROVED the minutes.
4.	Matters Arising from the meeting held on 25 July 2025
	Members stated those actions <i>in progress</i> held no concern and noted the matters arising from the Board meeting held on 25 July.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the update.

5. Election of Roles and Confirmation of Committee Membership 2023/2024

Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.

- Board established the roles and memberships in the Governance Framework for the upcoming 12-month period.
- A request was made to members to express their interest in roles leading up to the meeting. It was noted that no two names were put forward for any one role.
- **Nominations for Board Chair:** one received from Paul S and members were invited to vote. Lance proposed and members in agreement for Paul S to continue in the role.

Paul S stated he felt lucky to have a great team supporting him with this. He also thanked members for their challenge, continued commitment and interrogation, which made it a privilege to carry out the role.

- **Nominations for Board Vice Chair:** one received from Jen and all members in agreement for Jen to continue in the role.
- **Reappointments to ARC:** received from Jen, Marie, Paul H and Lance. All members in agreement for ARC members to continue in their roles.

Marie noted that as Vice Chair for Board, Jen would step up to Chair if Paul S had a prolonged absence and therefore Jen could not continue to chair ARC. Marie asked if this could be declared in the Terms of Reference.

Ben confirmed this information was declared in the relevant documents and if Paul S had a period of absence, Jen would be Chair of the Board and the ARC Vice Chair (being Marie) would step up to become Chair of ARC.

- **STAC appointments:** Board approved for all current members to be reappointed.

Sarah reappointed as Chair of STAC.
Lance reappointed as Councillor Board member on STAC.
Chris F appointed as Board member on STAC.

RESOLVED

- Board **NOTED** and **APPROVED** all appointments for 2023/24 as stated in the report.

6. Confirmation of New Board Champions 2023/24

Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.

- Topics identified by Board as a strategic interest and linked to individual members.
- Members will work with the lead officer, with the backup member in place to cover in times of prolonged absence.
- Topic list and the champions/back up champions can be revisited as necessary during the timeframe.
- Recommendation for Board to approve. All members approved the new Board Champions list for 2023/24.

RESOLVED

- Board **NOTED** the refreshed Board Champions Grid for the period September 2023 to September 2024.



7.	Chair Update
	No questions were raised.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
8.	Chief Executive Update
	No questions were raised.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
9.	Chair of ARC Update
	No questions were raised. Paul S noted the comprehensive report, covering a vast range of topics and giving Board added assurance.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
10.	STAC Update
	No questions were raised in relation to the report.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah added that Chris Gilmore (Liberty) attended the last STAC meeting and left the session with several actions. He has since completed these actions and updated the committee, who were pleased with the speed of the progress. Marie asked if the IT equipment issues had been resolved. <p>Sarah confirmed the laptops are currently being built by SC IT team. Once complete Sarah Mees will carry out one to one set up/training. Sarah will inform Board when all STAC members' equipment are in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul thanked Sarah for her comprehensive report and STAC members for their continued hard work.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
11.	Risk Management Framework
	Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following an internal audit, a key finding highlighted that we did not have a framework in place to capture how we manage risk. The updated documents have now been through ARC and reviewed by both the internal and external auditors. ARC found the framework helpful and clearly shows we are achieving what we hoped. Recommendation for Board to approve. All members approved the Risk Management Framework.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board APPROVED the newly created Risk Management Framework.

12. Accounting Policies Review	<p>Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are required to review the accounting policies on an annual basis. External Auditors confirmed that no changes are required to the accounting policies in readiness for the preparation of the 2023/24 accounts. The August ARC meeting approved for these accounting policies to come to Board today, with the recommendation for members to approve the policies. <p>All members approved the accounting policies.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board APPROVED the Accounting Policies for use by Homes in Sedgemoor when preparing the 2023/24 financial statements.
13. Review of RSH Consumer Standards, including Social Housing White Paper (Six Monthly Review)	<p>Claire gave a brief update on this information paper, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions have been started - six complete, 25 in progress and progressing to ensure they are closed. The group have started to look at the regulatory requirements and what we would like to have. Responses have been received from involved customers. There are also links to the Housing Ombudsman and Building Safety Regulator – the group are working to ensure we are in the right place in those areas. The Spotlight Session in December will offer Board more training on the new regulations. <p>Paul S reminded the Board how important it is that the Board is across this important piece of work. Paul S asked Claire why the Board and STAC information section of the website was only at 25%. Claire confirmed this was only just going live at that time of writing. Claire also confirmed the team are working hard to bring this up to speed and the Comms team are working hard to bring the information up to date.</p> <p>Marie asked if the outstanding content was for internal or external consumption. Claire replied that the outstanding content was a bit of both.</p> <p>Paul S noted that some information links are showing not available on the website. Peter will report this to Julia.</p> <p>Consultation on Consumer Standards: Paul S asked when will our draft response be shared with Board and STAC. Claire confirmed this would be soon. Paul S requested for comments to be turned around quickly.</p> <p>Chris Brown joined the meeting at this point, giving members an update on his role and how HiS will be involved going forward.</p>
	<p>ACTION</p> <p>Peter to report website link issues to Julia and update Board.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
14.	Customer Influence and Engagement Strategy (Six Monthly Update)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claire provided an update in these activities and some changes to the team. <p>Sarah Mees (Housing Team Leader – Enabling) will be transferring to the Assets team from 2 October. The Enabling team will move into the Customer Service Team and will be managed by Rachel Palmer (Customer Focus Manager).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marie requested that when designing the ownership and accountability framework, could Champions be included. This should also be noted on the risk register. Paul S noted that the creation of a joint customer working group is critical. <p>Claire confirmed the recruitment had started, with several staff already interested in being included.</p>
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED this update on the Strategy.
15a.	Compliance Summary Report – August 2023
	<p>Naomi gave a brief update on this information paper, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another solid performance in August for most areas. Heating and Gas: performance has improved and by the end of August there were only two gas services overdue – the best performance in 18 months. Lindsey Hoggard (Compliance & Building Safety Manager) and the team are now working on keeping the momentum going. Lifts: this is our main area of concern. We are working closely with our new contractor to ensure we help with access issues and identifying ways for them to make connection with tenants. We are expecting an improvement by the end of September. Paul S noted that many areas were at 100%, for example asbestos, legionella, fire risk assessments, smoke detectors, gas detectors, to name a few. <p>Paul S noted this is a massive achievement across those big-ticket items and an incredible achievement by the team. Paul S asked Naomi to pass Board thanks to the team and other colleagues who help to achieve these results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul S asked SC colleagues if this is still discussed at an organisation level. Chris B confirmed it was, and it was good to be able to celebrate the situation.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.

15b.	Westfield Housing Building Safety Case (confirmation of Registration and Summary)
	<p>Naomi gave a brief update on this information paper, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building safety case has been formally registered on 7 September, with HiS being one of the first organisations to do so. <p>A huge amount of work had been required to get the case over the line, collating 105 items of evidence and creating a small action plan, which is to be completed over the next 12 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We received confirmation from the Health & Safety Regulator that our submission has been received. We now have six months to start working on our action plan. Between April 2024 and 2029 we may receive a request from the Regulator to demonstrate that all the information we recorded is correct. Naomi confirmed that once the Westfield House upgrades and improvements have been completed, our building safety case will be amended to reflect these. Communications to update residents have been completed. This was noted by and gave assurance to Board. Naomi noted that our compliance with Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 requirements was also completed ahead of schedule
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED that Westfield House has now been registered with the Building Safety Regulator in accordance with the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022.
15c.	Damp, Mould & Condensation (Six Monthly Report)
	<p>Naomi gave a brief update on this information paper, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the first six monthly report following the STAC led deep dive in January. An action plan followed, and Naomi reported that the majority of actions were now complete. The remaining <i>in progress</i> actions were not overdue. There is a marked uptick in customer satisfaction in the service being carried out and this gives us confidence that our processes are working and we have the correct resources in place. Specialist training is being organised for colleagues to further strengthen our approach. We have received some great responses from tenants when appointments are organised within one day of reporting and works being completed the day after that appointment. Our systems and quality assessment are now in place to deliver this service. Kathy raised the question if the issues were being seen in a particular area or type of property. <p>Naomi confirmed, following an assessment across the area, that income levels within the household are the main reason for these issues. The Assets team are working closely with their Housing Officer colleagues to help tenants where we can.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul S asked if officers were aware of any 'outside the box' thinking on damp, mould, and condensation to manage it in a different way. Kathy noted that the Centre for Sustainability was very good around this information and is keen to work with key groups. Kathy asked if there is potential for working with this group to help support our tenants who need this. Naomi will explore this further. <p>Paul S noted there are links and partnerships and he asked for members and colleagues to think about this outside of the box.</p>
	<p>ACTION</p>
	<p>Naomi to make contact with the Centre for Sustainability and explore support options.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the six-monthly update on Damp, Mould, and Condensation.
<p>15d.</p>	<p>Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) Update</p>
	<p>Naomi gave a brief update on this information paper, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naomi confirmed we are awaiting results for Westfield House to confirm there is no RAAC in the building. 12 blocks have been identified which fit the criteria and a programme is being drafted to start surveying these buildings. The team are also looking to identify other buildings, working closely with SC and if remedial works are required the teams will work jointly on this. Scanning technology is being used which will hopefully speed up the process. Naomi advised members she would be happy to provide more technical information if requested. To date the scanning has not identified any RAAC. Paul S asked if the scanning technology was readily available. <p>Naomi confirmed the technology was currently being used by civil engineers in a different environment and is now being successfully employed to carry out a review of structures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marie questioned if there was a likelihood that RAAC was present in smaller properties i.e., houses? <p>Naomi noted this could be a possibility however the team are adopting a risk-based approach looking at buildings which fit the RAAC profile as a priority or where a building is having capital intrusive works carried out. We do need to be careful though that we do not make any wrong assumptions.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the current position and future arrangements to scope and mitigate any concerns around RAAC construction within our homes.
<p>16.</p>	<p>Statutory and other Registers (Six Month Update)</p>
	<p>No questions were raised.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.

17.	Sustainability Strategy Update
	No questions were raised.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the update on our Sustainability Strategy.
18.	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
	<p>Peter confirmed this report would be the last brought to Board, as we are now moving into transitional and business as usual work. Peter will include any updates in his Chief Executive report. Monthly updates with Marie (as LGR Champion) will also stop.</p> <p>Members approved the ceasing of LGR reports and were happy to receive updates in the CE report.</p>
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report and the intention to cease bi-monthly LGR reports from this meeting onwards.
19.	AOB
	<p>Board members to note some important meeting dates for the rest of the year.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 28 November: Board meeting starting at 1.30pm 28 November: Councillor Meet and Greet event starting at 5pm 7 December: Spotlight Session starting at 3pm 7 December: Board and STAC Christmas meal starting at 5pm 8 December: Colleague Christmas Connect starting at 11.30am 30 January 2024: Board meeting starting at 1.30pm

Signed 

Name Paul Stephenson, Chair

Date 28 November 2023