

Homes in Sedgemoor Board

The purpose of Board meetings is to make decisions, to set and evaluate strategy, to review the company's performance and to direct its affairs.

**Board minutes of the in-person Board Meeting
held at the Ibis Hotel Bridgwater, Woodlands Court Business Park,
Bristol Road, Bridgwater, TA6 4FJ
on Tuesday 30 May 2023 at 1.15pm**

Present:	Cllr Lance Duddridge Cllr Kathy Pearce Cllr Pauline Ham Jenny Vernon Marie Hide Paul Hackett Paul Stephenson (Chair)	LD KP PHa JV MH PH PS
In Attendance:	Ben Lane, Director of Finance and Performance Claire Tough, Director of Communities and Customer Services Naomi Macey, Director of Asset Management and Safety Pauline Kelly, Executive Assistant (minutes) Peter Hatch, Chief Executive	BL CT NM PK PMH
Guests:	Chris Hall, Executive Director – Community Services, Somerset Council Julia Paling, Head of People & Communications Pauline Hayes, STAC Sarah O'Neill, STAC Chair	CH JP PPH SO

NO.	ITEM
1.	Welcome Guests
	Paul welcomed Board members, attendees, and guests to the meeting.
	Apologies
	No apologies to note.
2.	Presentation Slot: ICS Accreditation Results
	Claire talked members through the results of the ICS Accreditation. Members congratulated Claire, Rachel, and all staff for their hard work.
	Action
	Paul to draft some words of thanks to be relayed to colleagues at Summer Connect.
3.	Declarations of Interest
	There were no further declarations other than those previously recorded on Board Members' Declaration of Interests Forms.
4.	Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023
	Minutes to be updated with the following amendment. <i>Item 9: Chair of Audit and Risk Update – amend BL to JV.</i>
	All agreed that minutes recorded are a true record.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED and APPROVED the minutes of the meeting recorded on 28 March 2023.

5.	Matters Arising of the meeting held on 28 March 2023
	Members noted the matters arising from the Board meeting held on 28 March 2023.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED and APPROVED the matters arising of the meeting recorded on 28 March 2023.
6.	STAC Update
	<p>Sarah gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Claire had taken committee members through the Customer Influence and Engagement Strategy following a request for more insight into the customer demographic, and to also understand their own behaviour when engaging with HiS. <p>A request has been put forward for influence and engagement training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills audits have been conducted and information is being collated. The committee would like to carry out a Damp, Mould, and Condensation scrutiny and to also look at the action plans. Reviewed the Complaints report and the committee asked to review the policy at the next meeting; in particular the second level details. Derek Quick gave an update on the capital programme and it was agreed that a progress report would be circulated on a regular basis. <p>Jen asked if there were anything more Board members can do to make Board papers more accessible, for example jargon busting. Jen also noted initials were not always great when trying to read minutes.</p> <p>Members requested this be an agenda item for the July meeting. It might also be helpful, for new members joining committees, to have a jargon busting document.</p>
	ACTION
	Pauline to look at options for a jargon busting document to aid new committee members and colleagues.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
7.	Governance Framework Review
	<p>Ben outlined a proposal to commission an external review of Board governance.</p> <p>Jen highlighted the importance of considering smaller organisations, NFA and Tpas for commissions such as this – they may be just as effective and more cost effective. Ben agreed</p>
	Action
	Ben to contact and consider smaller organisations, NFA and Tpas for the external commission review.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board APPROVED the proposed approach contained within this report and to seek three quotes from suitable companies to undertake the review. Board APPROVED the proposal that the Governance Framework Working Group selects the preferred consultant from the three and engages with that consultant to get the review underway.

8.	Value for Money Strategy and Annual Report
	<p>Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This report is linked to the NHF Code of Conduct and comes to Board for consideration every three years. ET also monitor progress. <p>Jen asked do we, within the strategy, differentiate between money we save and money we did not use. Ben will investigate and circulate the information. Jen requested that we include a statement within the strategy to cover intended and unintended savings. Ben to incorporate this.</p> <p>Marie felt that the strategy needed more VFM and less about savings. Ben to emphasis this in the final version. Marie also requested that the next annual report should include reference to non-monetary value i.e., Summer Connect.</p> <p>Ben asked if the Board was content with level of performance contained in the annual report? Paul S confirmed they were and that members would raise any concerns.</p> <p>Jen raised the comparative Housemark performance of Neighbourhoods within the VFM quadrant (comparative low performance and high cost). Peter suggested these results are unpacked at ARC and STAC. Ben noted that updated Housemark data is due very soon so ideally, we wait for this. All agreed. Jen suggested a joint review by ARC and STAC. This was agreed.</p>
	Action
	Ben to look to confirm if we differentiate between money we save and money we did not use.
	ARC and STAC to carry out a joint deep dive into Neighbourhood/Estate management once 22/23 Housemark data is available.
	Ben to incorporate a statement within the strategy to cover intended and unintended savings.
	RESOLVED
	<p>Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPROVED the Value for Money Strategy (subject to minor amendments noted) NOTED the Value for Money Annual Report
9.	Board and Committee Member Succession Planning Statement
	<p>Ben gave a brief update, and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marie suggested there be an overlap of members to pass on knowledge rather than a new member joining Board at the end of an outgoing members' tenure. <p>Jen requested ET think about recruitment to Board in a timely fashion.</p> <p>Jen requested that Number 3 is amended to say a six-year term for new members and nine for existing.</p> <p>Paul S made a request for Ben to look at suggestions around early recruitment of members into roles to give the option of mentoring, passing on knowledge and shadowing.</p> <p>Ben to arrange a pre-meet with Marie to discuss succession planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point 9 – mentoring programme for Board members. Ben to check the policy and define to members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy suggested a portfolio of general information would be extremely helpful for new members, i.e., number of properties, how many of each, where they are located and things to look out for. • Marie suggested to also include what is expected of members regarding meetings attendance, champion roles etc. • Paul S and Marie to ask candidates at the Board interviews on Wednesday 31 May, if the information pack sent to candidates was helpful and if they had any suggestions on what should be provided and build this into the induction process.
	<p>Action</p>
	<p>Ben to check the policy re mentoring of Board members and report back to members.</p>
	<p>Ben to look at suggestions around early recruitment of members to give the best hand over process possible. Ben to arrange a pre-meet with Marie to discuss succession planning.</p>
	<p>Paul S and Marie to ask Board candidates if the information pack sent was helpful and if they had any suggestions on how we could improve this in the future.</p>
	<p>Ben to produce a Board Member Welcome Pack.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board APPROVED the proposed Board and Committee Member Succession Planning Statement.
<p>10.</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy 2020-2023</p>
	<p>The following highlights were noted on this information paper.</p> <p>Paul S noted that the actions relating to analysis of repairs costs and third tier assurance for property compliance remained outstanding. Ben confirmed due to work commitments this had not been completed and ET will carry the action forward.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board NOTED and DISCUSSED the report.
<p>11.</p>	<p>Customer Focus Review</p>
	<p>The following highlights were noted on this information paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members welcomed the very comprehensive report and asked Claire to thank Rachel. Marie noted the report was easy to read and digest and asked Claire to feed this back to Rachel. • Paul S noted the 17 customer complaints recorded in the TSM data. Claire reiterated that these results are from the TSM sample and not from complaint recipients. Having analysed them, none of the 17 complaints have been recorded in our complaints system and the team are working with customers to analyse what they thought was a complaint. • Claire confirmed we were still experiencing ongoing issues with our heating contractor and acknowledged that Naomi and her team are working with the contractor on these. • Members asked if there were any trends in the nature of the referrals to the Housing Ombudsman? Claire confirmed there were no trends and will request for topics to be noted in the report for clarity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marie asked if the HO do any analysis and if four complaints was deemed as normal? Claire confirmed the HO do carry out analysis, the most recent being DMC and we use this information to determine our learning. Claire also confirmed four complaints is normal, and all complaints are rigorously managed by Rachel. Jen asked if there were any trends in compensation payments. Naomi confirmed there were not but that repairs and leak damage were common.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
12.	People Plan (Six Month Review)
	<p>Julia joined the meeting for this item and the following highlights were noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jen, as Board champion, was extremely happy to see the internal promotions, the learning and development programme and that the Clarity 4D is being used for leadership roles in recruitment and projects. <p>Jen was also very happy about Wellbeing engagement and colleague Connect sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul S stated that this was another great report which is easy to read and digest, giving the bigger picture and showing progress. Paul S asked if there is a link between ICS accreditation and IIP, as he felt the themes are roughly the same. <p>Julia confirm IIP is due in November and with Rachel being one of the members on the panel, this would ensure the action plan would be taken from both ICS and IIP. Julia reiterated the organisation were going for Platinum this time and she has a meeting our new assessor next week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul H asked if the Clarity 4D interview questions were the same for each candidate? <p>Julia confirmed the questions are the same and are presented in such a way to get information from the candidate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members thanked the People team for another great piece of work.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
13.	NHF Code of Governance Self-Assessment
	The report was noted with no questions raised.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
14.	Board and Committee Attendance Report – 2022/23
	The report was noted with no questions raised.
	RESOLVED

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the attendance for the 2022/23 financial year and DISCUSSED any concerns regarding attendance at Board and Committee meetings.
15.	Board Member Tenure and Term Update (Annual)
	The report was noted with no questions raised.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the annual position statement and CONSIDERED what action needs to be taken to maintain a full complement of members in accordance with the Articles of Association.
16.	Board Skills Matrix Update and Clarity 4D Summary
	The following highlights were noted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jen asked if all the results were statistically relevant. Jen also noted that members do not all need to be experts of all areas, and that Board needs to be a combination of the right people. Jen also noted she is the Board Champion on Sustainability and had not been contacted. Marie noted feedback forms can sometimes be confusing for lack of accessibility. Pauline Ham confirmed that sometimes the answer to the skills questions is not always yes or no.
	Members noted the report, however with the issues raised.
	Action
	Naomi to check that the contact details Katy Barry has for Jen are correct to ensure sustainability information gets through to Jen.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the summary findings from the Skills Matrix questionnaire and NOTED the summary output from the Clarity4D exercise undertaken during the Board Away Day.
17.	Sustainability Strategy Update
	The report was noted with no questions raised. Members asked Naomi to thank Katy for the report, another well written report.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the update.
18.	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
	The report was noted with no questions raised.
	RESOLVED
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
19.	Core Corporate Performance Indicators – March 2023
	The following highlights were noted on this information paper.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent arrears in the top six – this is a fantastic achievement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relet times have slipped. Claire and Naomi plan to review the void process with a deep dive on numbers and what is happening to ensure we are managing this as effectively as possible. <p>Claire explained that a large number of supported housing properties had delays on them. Policy voids yet to hit the results however we are being very proactive in assessing early and getting them relet asap. We have also had a lot of major voids and plans are in place to manage these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pauline Hayes commented that she had been asked by customers why the void process took so long. She was aware that a total refurbishment of a property obviously pushes the timeline down however the tenants moving in greatly appreciate this. <p>Paul H noted that not all landlords include major voids in their data. If we stripped this out our performance may compare better than others. Are standards also comparable? The process is not always about speed, it is also about the quality of a property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marie asked if we could justify/measure when explaining our VFM in key areas as we may spend more at the outset, but this would deliver better VFM in the future. • Ben clarified that the Housemark Quartile performance for Neighbourhood as discussed in item 11 – the data includes customer satisfaction Neighbourhood in which they live’. • Jen noted the higher level of reds on the MA KPIs and asked for more narrative to explain the reason for this. <p>Peter confirmed, moving forward, targets have been more realistically set for the new suite and where necessary, narrative will be included for amber or red moves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members acknowledged the great result for non-emergency repairs.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board NOTED the final key performance indicator results for 2022/23 covering the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.
<p>20.</p>	<p>Compliance Dashboard Summary – April 2023</p>
	<p>The following highlights were noted on this information paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still green, showing that the great work continues however lifts are still causing issues. • Marie asked if Aspen Court is on par with our compliance. <p>Naomi confirmed that a review of all compliance is underway to make sure everything is correct but nothing of concern has arisen to date. Aspen Court will be included in the next compliance report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naomi confirmed that the new lift contractor (Deltron) have been very responsive and fairly priced. • Peter asked if the full report (now in the Information Pack) works for members.

	<p>All agreed that it was. Jen confirmed she prefers this layout so she can give the report focus away from the Board pack. Paul S agrees with this and Marie noted she can go back and forth to the report with ease rather than having to scroll around the Board pack.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the contents of the report.
21.	Management Accounts – March 2023
	<p>The report was noted. Members found the information useful to see how we have matched against the forecast.</p> <p>Ben noted that Housing Management was overspent but this captured energy increases which would be recharged to customers.</p> <p>Paul H noted that he would like to see year end performance against forecast. Ben to share this with Paul H.</p> <p>Paul S noted that only £27K of the winter warmth fund from reserves had been utilised. Ben confirmed the 3 elements of this fund and that a lot of the property-related costs had been covered by the main capital programme budget. Claire added that we have also received some SEED funding for the hub activities.</p> <p>Marie noted that the development officer funding via reserves was lower than expected. Ben confirmed that we had incurred lower costs and it wasn't a full year of costs.</p> <p>Paul H noted the lower outturn figure for capital spend (84%). Had this impacted the fee received? Ben confirmed that it had and this was contained in the figures.</p>
	ACTION
	Ben to share the year end performance against forecast information with Paul H.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the final 'pre audit' management accounts for 2022/23 and note the key variances identified in the body of the report.
22.	Actions from April Board Away Days
	The report was noted with no questions raised.
	<p>RESOLVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board NOTED the actions from April Board Away Days.
23.	AOB: Spotlight Session on 22 June 2023
	Members confirmed availability and agreed the session would be in person.