



Northamptonshire Partnership Homes Limited

Company No: 09019453 Registered Address: The Guildhall, St Giles Square Northampton NN1 1DE

Minutes and actions

NPH Board Meeting

13 November 2024

*Lee Room, Westbridge Depot, St James Mill Road, Northampton NN5 5JW
And Teams.*

Present

Board Members:

Andrew Woods (AHW) *Chair*, Chris Webb (CAW) *Vice Chair*, Bob Purser (BP), Clive Williams (CDW), David Godfrey (DG), Rebecca Purnell (RP), Suzanne Williamson (SW)

Officers:

Steve Feast (SF), Nicky McKenzie (NMc), Winston Williams (WW), Katie Macey (KM), Kathy Brooks (KB), Liza Ellis (LE) *minutes*

Apologies:

Rakesh Thakarar (RT), Linda Cherrington (LC)

Observers:

| Minutes and Actions | | |
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| Meeting Commenced: 18:05 | | Action |
| Item 1: Welcome and apologies | | |
| 1 | The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted as above. | |
| Item 2: Declaration of interests | | |
| 2 | None | |
| Item 3: Minutes of last meeting | | |

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| 3 | Minutes of the Board meeting held on 16 October 2024 were approved by the Board. | |
| Item 4: Matters arising | | |
| 4 | <p>Action1: Completed</p> <p>Action 2: Completed</p> <p>Action 3: Completed</p> <p>Action 4: NMC advised that Leaseholder Policy is currently being revised and updated. The updated policy will be brought to the Board for information.</p> <p>Action 5: Completed</p> <p>Action 6: Completed</p> | |
| Item 5: Chief Executives Update | | |
| 5 | <p>KM and KB left the meeting at 19:54</p> <p>The Board received an update on the additional assurance required by West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) regarding the impact of the completion of stock condition surveys on the numbers of properties classed as “non-decent” and the 180 properties where a Fire Risk Assessment has not been completed within the required timescale. The Board sought and received assurance that WNC and NPH are working together to address and resolve the issues at pace with the assistance of additional resource and specific expertise. The mitigating actions that have been identified seek to provide assurance to the Council and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).</p> <p>The Board agreed that an extra meeting to focus on the actions relating to compliance would be needed before the next scheduled meeting in February with a potential December date identified as appropriate.</p> <p>The Board discussed the announcement in the Autumn budget statement of an increase in the employer national insurance (NI) contributions and an increase in the level of the national living wage and the financial impact of these changes on NPH. The Board queried</p> | |

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| | <p>what the value of the forecasted financial impact will be and asked for further clarification on the numbers.</p> <p>Action: The Chief Executive to confirm to the Board the forecasted value for the financial impact on NPH of the increase in NI contributions and the living wage.</p> <p>The Board welcomed the changes to the Right to Buy scheme and noted a substantial increase in applications since the announcement was made.</p> <p>The Board asked for clarity on the ratio of the number of RTB sales against the number of new build homes.</p> <p>Action: The Director of Customers will provide the figures on the ratio of the number of RTB sales against the number of new build homes.</p> <p>The Board discussed the impact of void rent loss and the reasons for the rise in levels and amount of time taken to re-let properties. The Board noted that NPH continue to provide practical support to WNC since the transfer of the housing allocation function in April 2024. Additionally, in recent weeks a further offer of strategic support has also been made to the WNC allocations team.</p> <p>The Board remuneration processes do not currently allow for a Board member who is a council nominee to be remunerated on the basis that such nominees would be either Councillors or Council Officers. Given that the most recent council nominees are neither Councillors nor Council Officers the Board was asked to consider providing remuneration at the same level as other Board members.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered the Chief Executives update • Approved the amendment to the Board remuneration policy to enable Council nominees other than Councillors and Council officers to be remunerated | <p>CEx</p> <p>DoC</p> |
| Item 6: Quarter 2 Tenant Satisfaction Measures Outputs | | |
| 6 | The Board received an update on the results of the Quarter 2 Tenant Survey 2024/25. | |



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| | <p>To date 500 surveys on 12 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) have been completed. Overall satisfaction continues to improve from Quarter 1 - 65% to Quarter 2 -72%.</p> <p>Actions within the TSM improvement plan are progressing well with an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) improvement plan being delivered, the Resident Assets Panel in place, neighbourhood inspections up and running, the Repairs Improvement Plan being delivered, the centralisation of the complaints team underway and the creation of a new tenant led Service Quality Committee due to be achieved by January 2025.</p> <p>The Board asked for confirmation that the issues raised in relation to Damp, Mould and Condensation are being dealt with in an appropriate timescale. It was confirmed that there is a specific team that deals with Damp, Mould, and Condensation issues and an inspection and works regime. In extreme cases a decant process can be instigated.</p> <p>The Board noted that the learning from the TSMs will feed into the scrutiny arrangements within the new committee structure to ensure continuous improvement. The Service Quality Committee will provide customer-based assurance with the consumer standards and to ensure the tenant voice is heard in terms of influencing the decision making throughout NPH and to feed back the tenants' voice to the Board.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considered the survey results for Q2 2024/25, and• Endorsed the progress made in delivering the remedial actions identified to improve satisfaction | |
| Item 7: Q2 Finance Update and 2025/2026 Budget | | |
| 7 | <p>The Board noted the overview of the financial performance of NPH during quarter 2 2024/25. The report highlighted areas of significant variance from budget.</p> <p>The Board noted that cost pressures continue to be experienced particularly with the impact of the additional works required following stock condition surveys, transformation actions to improve the repairs service and additional resources to address compliance. To manage these additional costs a range of actions have been put in place to manage the current projected overspend. The projection has reduced</p> | |

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| | <p>significantly from £2.1m to £0.7m in the past month and other measures are in development to deliver a break-even position at the financial year end</p> <p>The Board discussed the underspend on the Capital programme in particular related to the delivery of development schemes and the adjustment to year-to-date slippage which has now been reprofiled, predominantly into 2026/27. It was noted that open and transparent dialogue has taken place and will continue to take place with WNC so they can continue to actively consider the optimum way forward for each of the development schemes.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed and scrutinised the information presented noting the activities delivered to date, • Discussed and noted the emerging themes including cost pressures. | |
| Item 8: Quarter 2 Performance Outturns | | |
| 8 | <p>The Board noted of the 46 measures with targets reported this period, performance shows 11 (24%) are meeting profiled targets (green) and 35 (76%) are falling below profiled targets.</p> <p>Overall, 26/46 (53%) show an improving performance trend. Of the 35 below profiled targets, 22 (63%) have improved.</p> <p>The report proposes changes to measures relating to EICRs and Development to reflect changes in legislation and the delivery of future development programmes to ensure this measure suite remains relevant and up to date.</p> <p>Performance is reported to WNC through People, Place and Finance forums and a quarterly assurance meeting with WNC as part of the agreed governance arrangements.</p> <p>The percentage of complaints responded to within timescales is 76.15% year to date. A new Customer Excellence Manager has been appointed and together with the centralised Complaints Team will continue to drive improvements to performance.</p> <p>The proposed measure changes were discussed as follows:</p> | |

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| | <p>Change reporting on occupied properties with an EICR to 5 years rather than 5 and 10 years (as dictated by a change to the legislation) and over 2 measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of homes with a satisfactory EICR completed within the last 5 years Number of communal blocks with a satisfactory EICR completed within the last 5 years. <p>The 3 Development measures are proposed to be removed from the KPIs suite following changes to the delivery of future development programmes.</p> <p>The result of 100% compliance for conducting Legionella risk assessments was questioned in terms of how the Board can be assured the figure is accurate. Confirmation was given that sector specialists are supporting NPH with a data validation exercise and this work will conclude by the end December 2024. Any issues that arise from this work will be fed back to the Board as it becomes available.</p> <p>The Board noted that there has been a process change to gaining access to properties to undertake gas checks which has impacted upon performance. The Board requested a future update on when this measure will start to improve and when the target of 100% can be achieved.</p> <p>Action: The Chief Executive to report back to the Board on when the process for ensuring homes for which all required gas safety checks have been conducted will achieve the 100% performance target following the process change in August 2024.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinised and challenged the performance for this period and the actions identified to address performance that is not achieving target. Approved the proposed changes to the EICR and Development KPIs as detailed in the report. | CEx |
| Item 9: Interim Corporate Plan Action Plan | | |
| 9 | The Board considered the interim Corporate Plan Action Plan and noted progress in completing the actions within the plan. | |



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| | <p>The Board discussed the rationale for revising the completion dates for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• action 27 – co-production of a new management agreement with WNC; It was considered appropriate to suspend this task and revisit the progression once the joint business improvement action plan has been completed• action 30 – the approval and timeline to move to the new office accommodation; It was considered appropriate to amend the delivery timescale to allow for consideration over a longer timescale in line with strategic financial planning. <p>The Board noted that several Community Summits will be scheduled to engage relevant stakeholders with developing the new Corporate Plan. Following this engagement a new plan will be presented to the Board in the first quarter 2025/26.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved the interim Corporate Plan Action Plan 2024/25• Noted the progress to date in completing the Corporate Plan Action Plan and• Approved the revision of the completion dates for Action 27 ‘Co-produce a new management agreement with WNC’ and Action 30 ‘Gain approval and agree a timeline to move to new office accommodation’ as detailed in the report | |
| Item 10: Strategic Risk Register Update | | |
| 10 | <p>The Board scrutinised the Strategic Risk Register.</p> <p>The Register has been reviewed and updated to reflect recent operational issues that are being addressed collaboratively with WNC regarding compliance and financial challenges. As such, risk impacts, causes and scores have been comprehensively reviewed and updated to accurately reflect these matters and the actions being undertaken to effectively mitigate the risks.</p> <p>A further review was conducted following the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) publication of the annual sector risk profile to ensure the risk register reflected the sector risks where appropriate</p> <p>The Board will undertake an annual review in early December of the strategic risk appetite against the RSH sector risk profile.</p> | |

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| | <p>Three new risk areas were considered; Financial viability, cost and access to skilled labour, and fixed asset sales.</p> <p>There are some risks where WNC are the main risk owners, and these will be raised and discussed with WNC.</p> <p>The Board discussed the rationale for the probability and impact scores within the matrix and noted that it was not possible to reduce the impact of the risk in some instances but the overall risk rating could be reduced by effective management of the likelihood of the risk occurring.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutinised and discussed the updates to the strategic risks and approved the proposed changes, and • Were assured that NPH Strategic Risk Register reflects the RSH Sector Risk Profile appropriately | |
| Item 11: NPH 30 Year Investment Plan | | |
| 11 | <p>The Board received a summary of the proposed 30-year investment plan for onward presentation to WNC.</p> <p>This has been developed using ARK Consultancy benchmark median data as this is considered more appropriate than the current costs being achieved by NPH, which the Board acknowledged are not realistic for long-term business planning purposes as they were secured a number of years ago and do not reflect the current operating environment.</p> <p>Data from Parity Projects has also been overlaid to produce a comprehensive picture of the council housing stocks' investment needs over 30 years to ensure compliance with Decent Homes and to achieve the required energy targets.</p> <p>NPH has been undertaking a full stock condition survey programme and this has achieved surveying for 87% of NPH properties. This data is included in the investment plan. The Board agreed that lifecycles that comply with the Decent Homes standard and a realistic schedule of rates must be used to ensure the plan is as realistic and fit for purpose as possible.</p> | |

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| | The Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> considered and discussed the report and recommended that WNC give consideration to this as part of the STAR chamber process | |
| Item 12: Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules, and General Scheme of Delegations | | |
| 12 | <p>The Board scrutinised the annual update to the Financial Regulations and contract procedure rules.</p> <p>The Board noted that the next review is anticipated to take place in February 2025 once the new Procurement Contract Rules are in place.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approved the revised financial regulations (including contract procedure rules) for adoption, in line with the Audit and Risk Committee recommendations | |
| Item 13: Happy To Help CIC Report 15.10.24 | | |
| 13 | <p>The Board noted that 5 communities fund applications were approved and 2 were declined, the reasons for declining were noted.</p> <p>The Board noted the update on the HTH strategic risk register and that there are no emerging risks or changes to the operating environment that are not currently captured within the strategic risk register or within the emerging risks.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> noted the contents of the report. | |
| Item 14: Committee Reports | | |
| 14 | <p>Audit and Risk Committee</p> <p>The report was taken as read.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> noted the contents of the report. | |

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 4 December – 17:00 / Wednesday 12 February 2025 – 17:00

Close of meeting: 20:40

Action Summary

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| Action 1 (item 5) | The Chief Executive to confirm to the Board the forecasted value for the financial impact on NPH of the increase in NI contributions and the living wage. | CEx |
| Action 2 (item 5) | The Director of Customers will provide the figures on the ratio of the number of RTB sales against the number of new build homes | DoC |
| Action 3 (item 8) | The Chief Executive to report back to the Board on when the process for ensuring homes for which all required gas safety checks have been conducted will achieve the 100% performance target following the process change in August 2024. | CEx |