



Northamptonshire Partnership Homes Limited

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

Minutes and actions

NPH Board Meeting

15 January 2025

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

Present

Board Members:

Andrew Woods (AHW) *Chair*, Clive Williams (CDW), David Godfrey (DG), Rakesh Thakarar (RT), Rebecca Purnell (RP), Simon Lewis (SL), Suzanne Williamson (SW)

Officers:

Steve Feast (SF), Nicky McKenzie (NMc), Winston Williams (WW), Karl Linder (KL), Liza Ellis (LE) *minutes*

Apologies:

Chris Webb (CAW) *Vice Chair*, Jon Sawyer (JS)

| Minutes and Actions | | |
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| Meeting Commenced: 17:05 | | Action |
| Item 1: Welcome and apologies | | |
| 1 | The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and in particular Simon Lewis to his first Board meeting. All introduced themselves. Apologies were noted as above. | |
| Item 2: Declaration of interests | | |
| 2 | None | |

| Item 3: Minutes of last meeting | | |
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| 3 | The minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 December 2024 were approved by the Board. | |
| Item 4: Matters arising | | |
| 4 | <p><u>Outstanding Actions - 13 November Meeting:</u> Action 1: In progress. Further investigation is taking place on the potential costs</p> <p>Action 3: In progress. The Gas Safety process is being reviewed and the date will be confirmed within the near future.</p> <p><u>Outstanding Actions - 4 December Meeting:</u> Action 1: Completed – Update given at meeting: breakdown of the C1 to C4 Regulatory judgements issued: C4 - 1 C3 - 18 C2 – 24 C1 - 10</p> <p>Action 2: Completed – Meeting arranged.</p> | |
| Item 5: Business Improvement Action Plan | | |
| 5 | <p>The Board discussed in detail aspects of the Business Improvement Action Plan (BIAP).</p> <p>The Board discussed the plan for wider communications and noted that the communications plan involves all stakeholders. It was recognised that there are positive messages to circulate on progress against the BIAP.</p> <p>Recruitment to the Service Quality Committee is currently underway and this Committee will provide customer-based assurance of compliance with consumer standards including repairs and maintenance and ensure the customer voice is heard in terms of influencing decision making throughout NPH and the Board.</p> <p>The regular meetings between West Northamptonshire Council (WNC), and NPH are continuing in a positive spirit of transparency and determination to work together to continue progress in addressing issues and delivering improvements.</p> | |

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| | <p>The Board agreed that the relationship between WNC and NPH is in a much-improved position and confidence is building in the agreed way forward. The RSH appreciate being able to see that the direction of travel is positive for compliance at NPH.</p> <p>The Board noted that there has been and will continue to be lots of change across the housing sector and more legislation is coming which NPH will need to be prepared to meet proactively.</p> <p>The board discussed the time critical nature of the company's response to the compliance issues and asked for assurance that if something similar arose in the future NPH would be in a better position to respond through the learning gained from the current situation. The Board were assured that all areas of compliance have been independently reviewed, including data being validated by an external source. Regular external reviews will continue to check the integrity of the data. It was noted that NPH can demonstrate to stakeholders that concerns are being addressed through having a framework of compliance with the right policies in place and officers with relevant skillsets in post. This approach will be embedded within the corporate culture.</p> <p>The Board received assurance that addressing the outstanding Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) actions is achievable with the new contractors in place. The Board were pleased to hear that all the contractors are locally based. The number of outstanding actions will start to come down once the effect of appointing the contractors starts to impact.</p> <p>Business Improvement Action Plan: –</p> <p>The Board discussed whether there was an option to have multiple repairs to the same property flagged up in the system for further investigation. The Board were assured that this is currently being actively investigated as an option within the IT system and also to apply to contractors.</p> <p>Where the scope of a standard has changed, and changes are implemented through legislation i.e. Awaab's Law; on-going gap analysis will pick up the new requirements for implementation and action. The Board noted that addressing new requirements may require the recruitment of officers with specific specialist knowledge.</p> <p>Building Safety Compliance Scorecard-</p> <p>Action: The Board requested more information on the following areas:</p> | KL |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Electrical Safety Remedial Actions – What is the target date to progress this area from weak to adequate? ii. Communal Gas Remedials – More information required on why that is a limited assurance score when there are no outstanding remedial actions. What is the target date to progress this area from limited to adequate? iii. Water Hygiene Remedial Actions - More information required on why that is a limited assurance score when there are no outstanding remedial actions. What is the target date to progress this area from limited to adequate? iv. Damp and Mould – How are the number of cases awaiting inspection being tracked to ensure they don't get missed? What mitigations are in place to address these? <p>The Board asked for a further session to be arranged to build on their understanding of the figures presented in the compliance dashboard.</p> <p>Action: Another session to be arranged with Alex O'Callaghan to take the Board through the compliance dashboard to improve understanding of the data.</p> <p>The Board discussed the presentation of the data in the compliance dashboard and queried whether the 100% compliance is right given there may be issues with gaining access. It was confirmed that 100% score means that all required properties were accessed. A new team has been set-up to deal specifically with non-access issues and a new policy will be implemented in the near future. The fire service has offered to help gain access where there are serious safety concerns for the resident.</p> <p>The Board were advised that a specialist IT system is being actively considered to remove the risks associated with manual data entry and improve consistency. Internal Audit will be utilised to provide additional assurance where relevant.</p> <p>The Board asked how the work of contractors is monitored to ensure it meets the required standard. NPH are only appointing contractors that are part of an independent accreditation scheme, therefore the proof that the work meets the accredited standard is received for every job and the contractors work is independently audited as part of that accreditation.</p> | WW |
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| | <p>The Board discussed the challenges with accessing leasehold properties and compliance with fire risks. It was confirmed to the Board that buildings over a specific height have to have all the fire doors inspected whether leasehold or not including all communal parts of the building. It is a legal requirement, and any non-access issues will be progressed under the non-access policy. There may be the need to test non-access cases through the courts.</p> <p>The Board asked for an update on how the Executive Team are managing the Director of Resources work whilst there is still a vacancy for that post. A pro-active recruitment process is currently underway to fill the vacancy as soon as possible.</p> | |
| Item 6: Any Other Business | | |
| 6 | <p>AW advised that he has brought forward his resignation from the Board and this will take effect from a new Independent Director/Chair being appointed.</p> <p>The Board accepted the resignation and gave thanks to AW for his commitment to NPH and the dedication and energy he has brought to the role during his tenure.</p> <p>The Executive Team gave thanks to AW for his support.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the Chief Executive will work with the Chair of the People and Governance Committee to undertake a recruitment process with the aim to complete the process by end March 2025.</p> | |
| Date of next meeting: Wednesday 12 February 2025, 17:00 | | |
| Close of meeting: 19:10 | | |

| Action Summary | | |
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| Action 1 (item 5) | <p>Building Safety Compliance Scorecard-</p> <p>Action: The Board requested more information on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Electrical Safety Remedial Actions – What is the target date to progress this area from weak to adequate? | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Communal Gas Remedials – More information required on why that is a limited assurance score when there are no outstanding remedial actions. What is the target date to progress this area from limited to adequate? iii. Water Hygiene Remedial Actions - More information required on why that is a limited assurance score when there are no outstanding remedial actions. What is the target date to progress this area from limited to adequate? iv. Damp and Mould – How are the number of cases awaiting inspection being tracked to ensure they don't get missed? What mitigations are in place to address these? | |
| Action 2 (item 5) | <p>The Board asked for a further session to be arranged to build on their understanding of the figures presented in the compliance dashboard.</p> <p>Another session to be arranged with Alex O'Callaghan to take the Board through the compliance dashboard to improve understanding of the data.</p> | WW |