

**WIGAN AND LEIGH HOUSING COMPANY LIMITED**  
**GOVERNANCE, STANDARDS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**AT WALH HQ, WIGAN**

**THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2010**

**Present:**

**Members:**

Fiona Whistlecroft (Chair), Kevin Burgan, John Michaels, Geoff Roberts, Jo Bennett, and Michael Winstanley.

**In Attendance:**

Ken Lee (Director of Resources), Phil Brown (Company Secretary), Nicola Welch (Audit Manager, Wigan Council) and Edward Flanagan (Board Services and Finance Officer).

**98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies for absence were received from Jean Garlick.

**99. MINUTES:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2009 were approved as a true and accurate record. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**Actions from the minutes**

The Board Services and Finance Officer advised Committee that subsequent to Committee Members' requests he had sought advice from the Equality and Diversity Manager and been informed that the current diversity monitoring of the Board should remain the same under the new regulator, the Tenant Services Authority.

The Board Services and Finance Officer also advised that committee papers would continue to be circulated to Board Members who are not on the committee until the new Board Members website was completed.

**100. URGENT BUSINESS:**

No urgent business was presented to the Committee.

**101. AGENDA ORDER:**

The Committee agreed to receive reports as on the agenda.

**102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Geoff Roberts declared an interest in the item 'Independent Board Member Selection Process' as one of the Independent Board Members at the end of their term of office this year.

**103. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – DISPERSED TENANCY FOLLOW UP:**

The Audit Manager presented a report on the Internal Audit follow up review of dispersed tenancy procedures within Wigan and Leigh Housing. The Committee was pleased with the improvements made in the service and noted the intention to reduce the number of dispersed tenancies.

- It was agreed (a)** To note the audit report and WALH's response to the findings.  
**(b)** To thank staff for the work done to improve this service.

**104. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – PROCUREMENT:**

The Audit Manager presented a report on the Internal Audit review of the procurement procedures within Wigan and Leigh Housing. In response to questions raised, Committee was informed of changes made to the procedure for placing orders, the use of commitment accounting and on WALH's reliance on Wigan Council to make improvements to the Agresso computerised accounting system.

**It was agreed** To note the report and the management response.

Geoff Roberts left the meeting during the discussion of the following item.

**105. INDEPENDENT BOARD MEMBER SELECTION PROCESS:**

The Company Secretary presented a report to outline options for the selection and appointment of Independent Board Members to fill two vacancies due to arise at the next Annual General Meeting to be held in the autumn. Various options were discussed. Committee Members felt that a consistent process should be adopted for each recruitment and considered that going through an interview process was good practice.

**It was agreed** To recommend to the Board that the two existing Independent Board Members due to retire this year are re-appointed subject to a satisfactory interview by a Tenant Board Members panel.

Geoff Roberts rejoined the meeting at this point.

**106. BOARD MEMBER REMUNERATION UPDATE:**

The Company Secretary presented a report updating Members on progress with proposals to investigate the feasibility of paying Board Members. Any proposals made by the Council's Independent Remuneration Committee would be reported to the Board for consideration. The report would include the Committee's recommendations and outline the implications for Board Members should they choose to accept or reject payment for their services.

**It was agreed** To note the progress on the investigation into the option of payment of Board Members.

**107. AWARD OF CONTRACT UNDER DELEGATED POWERS – NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT AT KAY CLOSE. SCHOLES:**

The Director of Resources presented a report providing Committee Members with an update on progress with the first new build development at Kay Close, Scholes and to advise of the acceptance of a tender under approved delegations.

Committee was informed that the first tranche of funding from the Homes and Communities Agency for this scheme had been received and funding had also been awarded to construct an additional new build scheme at The Orchards, Leigh. Ground works at Scholes were substantially complete.

**It was agreed** To note the report and the financial situation with the scheme.

**108. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting will be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 18 March 2010 at WALH HQ, Unity House, Westwood Park Drive, Wigan.

**CHAIR**

| Actions             |   |                        |           |
|---------------------|---|------------------------|-----------|
| Minute/<br>ref' no' | Action  | Responsible<br>Officer | Completed |
| 91/ 1               | Give feedback as to when tasks have been completed on the Internal Audit Right to Buy report  | Mike Grimes            |           |
| 92/2                | Thank staff in the Leaseholder Service Section on the improvements made in the service.   | Mike Grimes            |           |
| 93/3                | Check how the Tenant Services Authority would like housing providers to measure diversity.  | Edward Flanagan        | ✓         |
| 95/4                | Stop distributing committee papers to Board Members not on that committee for information once they are available on the new Board Members website. | Edward Flanagan        |           |
| 95/5                | Arrange a networking event for Board Members at the next NFA AGM  | Ashley Crumbley        |           |