

URH Board Minutes
Wednesday 16th May 2007 at 6.30pm
LG04, Lincoln House

Present:

Selena Ellis (Part of Meeting); Anton Manickim; Ann Hoad (Chair); Mary Simpson; Maya Schram; Cllr Clive Bennett; Helen Charlesworth-May; Paul W Cooper; Willem Buttinger; Edith Yembra; Damian Roche; Tim Mathias (Minutes); Alexandra Asare; Clara Odamo; Phil Morris; Kevin Creed; Cathy Kempadoo; Mark Browne; Dan Howcroft; Marvella Dublin

Apologies:

Cllr Alex McKenna; Jason Wyatt; Carla Pall; Dilia ('Lia') Conceição

1 Introduction

1.1.0 This was the first Meeting attended by Kevin Creed and Cathy Kempadoo, who have both been seconded from Lambeth Council.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1.0 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes & Matters Arising from Meeting held on 18th April 2007

3.1.0 There were no corrections to the Minutes of the 18th April meeting.

3.2.0 There was one Matter arising. On page 4 of the Minutes – 'Damian Roche will draft deferral letter'. A letter has been sent to the Audit Commission, along the lines agreed at the 18 April meeting.

3.3.0 The Minutes were agreed unanimously.

4 Chief Executive's Report

4.1.0 Board Governance

4.2.1 A Short-list has been drawn up. An application pack has been sent to each candidate and should be returned by Friday 1st June.

4.2.0 Mystery Shopping

4.2.1 Dates for training are being arranged, these will take place in June.

4.3.0 Web-site

4.3.1 Waltham and Roupell Park are entering into a contract with Big Room Internet. Their sites should go-live on 1st July 07.

4.3.2 Please note Blenheim Gardens already has a site.

4.3.4 Loughborough have yet to appoint a firm.

4.4.0 Human Resources Support

4.4.1 An advert for this post will go out next week.

5 HQN Assessment of Service Delivery

5.1.0 Damian Roche introduced this item.

5.1.1 The purpose of this report is to give this board a feel for the gap between URH and a Three Star ALMO. This report is based around an assessment that the consultants HQN (Housing Quality Network) has provided to URH.

5.1.2 There are some positive messages in the assessments that HQN have completed. However, there are a significant number of gaps in current practice, and priorities

for further work identified. The next two items on the agenda – the URH Annual Operational Plan and the Service Improvement Plan go some way to addressing these concerns. They should be read in conjunction with this report.

- 5.1.3 Damian Roche asked the Board to note that the on-going discussions regarding funding for both the TMOs and URH could have a highly significant affect on URH’s ability to implement the improvement plans.
- 5.2.1 Paul Cooper asked – what is the timescale for the Action Plan?
- 5.2.2 Damian Roche stated that all the targets within the Service Improvement Plan are within this financial year, but we will keep progress under review and defer actions into next year’s plan where appropriate. Obviously, URH is dependent on the TMOs to enact Action Points. Many of the Actions are either straightforward or on-going.
- 5.2.3 Damian Roche also pointed out that the Gap Analysis that underpinned the Service Improvement Plan compared URH to a Three Star ALMO. URH only needs to obtain Two Stars to obtain funding.
- 5.3.0 A proposal has previously been made to establish a Performance Sub-Group. This would examine the Service Improvement Plan in more detail. Progress against the Service Improvement Plan would still be presented to the Board on a quarterly basis, and exception reports would be produced (please see 7.2.0).
- 5.4.0 Damian Roche reminded the meeting that the inspection should take place during June 2007. A final date has not been confirmed as yet, We are likely to be given a slot when another organisation defers its own inspection. There should be no problem getting a slot to start on site in approx one year’s time. The Audit Commission fully support URH’s decision to defer inspection.
- 5.5.0 Damian Roche stated that URH are currently working on developing a formal Business Plan, along with a financial strategy. Phil Morris is already assisting the TMOs in developing their own financial plans. Both URH and the TMOs need to develop a Performance Management Framework. URH and the TMOs will be entering into discussions on how best to develop Business Plans including how these can relate to the URH Business Plan and how to monitor the plan.
- 5.6.0 **Portfolio of Evidence**
- 5.6.1 Damian Roche emphasised that this will be a key challenge for URH. The HQN survey indicated a lack of evidence around key areas such as tackling Anti-Social behaviour. Evidence must be produced ‘all along the line’ – including a clear, well publicised strategy, examples of good practice, monitoring casework etc.
- 5.6.2 Willem Buttinger stated that he could not identify how the plans interacted. Could a full overview be provided? A number of members of the board agreed with this statement. Damian Roche stated that this was a justifiable challenge (please see 6.2.0 & 6.3.0 below) and undertook to consolidated into one plan.

6 URH Annual Operational Plan

- 6.1.0 Damian Roche introduced this item.
- 6.2.0 This document should be produced on an annual basis. The Operational Plan has links to both the Business Plan and the Delivery Plan which was submitted as part of the original bid to set up URH. The Operational Plan operates both as a specific Delivery Plan and as a snapshot of a GAP analysis at this point in time.
- 6.3.0 The Board instructed Damian Roche to combine the two plans, to present at the next meeting.

Action Point	By whom	When
Develop combined plan	Damian Roche	20 June 07

7 Service Improvement Plan

- 7.1.0 Damian Roche introduced this item.
- 7.2.0 As previously mentioned, a proposal has been tabled to set up a Performance Sub-Group. It was agreed that this would have a finite life of between twelve and eighteen months, commensurate with the life of the project.
- 7.3.0 The proposed members of the project have yet to be agreed.
- 7.4.0 Proposal 3(d) in the report was agreed, TMO Chairs who are not members of URH will be invited to sit on the Sub Group.
- 7.5.0 Helen Charlesworth-May, Edith Yembra & Maya Schram were all volunteered and accepted onto the panel. It was suggested that a representative of each TMO should sit on the group and DR undertook to write to the Chairs.
- 7.6.0 Dan Howcroft will invite Angela Bartley, the Blenheim Gardens Chair.

Action Point	By whom	When
Invite Angela Bartley to sit on the URH Performance Sub-Group	Dan Howcroft	20 June 07

- 7.7.0 Any further nominations to Damian Roche by 25 May 07.

Action Point	By whom	When
Nominations for Performance Sub-Group	TMO Managers/ URH Board	25 May 07

- 7.8.0 It was unanimously agreed to approve all the remaining recommendations in this report.

8 Performance Indicators

8.1.0 Rent Arrears

- 8.1.1 Following comments from Paul Cooper, it was agreed to revamp the section:-
- 8.1.2 Consider whether BV66c and BV 66d are really needed in this context.
- 8.1.3 Indicate more clearly direction of travel – whether aiming to reduce or increase %.
- 8.1.4 Paul Cooper stated that this was a golden opportunity for TMOs to learn from each other. Blenheim Gardens as field leaders on Rent Arrears could provide guidance.

Selena Ellis arrived at this point.

- 8.1.5 Following a question from Cllr Clive Bennett, Damian Roche confirmed that places on Business Objects training will be offered in the very near future.
- 8.1.6 Ann Hoad attended a NFA Conference recently. Sutton ALMO have taken over the running of the SX3 system from the Council. Although URH is not big enough to take over running SX3, Ann Hoad would appreciate consulting Sutton ALMO for further advice.

Action Point	By whom	When
Contact Sutton ALMO re: trouble-shorting SX3	Damian Roche	20 June 07

8.2.0 Empty Homes

- 8.2.1 Problems are confined to Loughborough EMB. Lloyd Lewis advised contacting Shaun Lewis directly for further advice.
- 8.3.0 The remaining recommendations were agreed by the Board.

9 Capital Programme

- 9.1 Phil Morris presented this item.

- 9.1.1 A meeting to discuss the Capital Programme was held on 26th April. This was presided over by David Thompson, Assistant Divisional Director and attended by Phil Morris, Damian Roche and four Lambeth officers.
- 9.1.2 Lambeth has not made any provision in their budgets for URH in the financial year 2007/08.
- 9.1.3 Three items are in Lambeth's current programme. These are lift replacements at Tilford Hse & Thursley Hse along with roof replacement at Whitley Hse. These are all located on Roupell Estate.
- 9.1.4 The proposal to contact Pete Redman at his company address, to find out what work he had been done before he left URH, was agreed unanimously.

Action Point	By whom	When
Contact Pete Redman for further information on Major Works proposals	Damian Roche	20 June 07

- 9.1.5 Lambeth have undertaken to produce figures showing the net amount available to URH. Damian Roche was promised that this would be provided before this meeting on three separate occasions. However, URH is still waiting to receive this. A further meeting is needed to consider the cyclical programme.

10 Any Other Business

None.

Date of Next Meeting: 20 June 2007 at 6.30pm
 Unit 4 Lincoln House
 1-3 Brixton Road SW9