

Tower Hamlets Homes Board meeting held on Wednesday 28 July 2010 at Residents' Resource Centre

Decisions and discussions by the Board – what this means for residents

Audit Commission presentation

The Board took up the Audit Commission on their invitation to come to a Board meeting in advance of the Inspection in November. A two star result should ensure that residents receive decent homes funding available from central government. Officers regularly report to the Board and the Performance Management Committee about our preparations for the inspection. So Board members were listening carefully to understand what part they will need to play and to find out any areas of emphasis or specific focus.

One additional theme which did emerge from the Commission's presentation was how Tower Hamlets Homes was responding to the economic situation locally. Officers need to ensure that our response and narrative here is clearly understood and articulated.

Chief Executive's report

The Chief Executive writes a report for each Board meeting. This particular report covered both areas of immediate relevance and importance with look ahead to the issues which will become important for us over the next three to five years. He linked the borough-wide and national conversation about localism to our neighbourhood model of working. Furthermore, the report pointed to decisions that Tower Hamlets Homes will have to take about itself in the future such how to ensure appropriate resident and community involvement in its governance. The Board will return to this issue later this year.

Finances

The Board approved the company's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2010. The company's auditors provide a clean audit opinion on those statements for the second consecutive year. This represents evidence of the Board exercising its stewardship role and ensuring transparency and accountability with the company's finances.

Customer Access Progress Update

It was very evident to the Board over a year ago that our arrangements for customer access were not good enough. They were too remote and too disconnected from our customers, THH residents. Therefore, the Board approved bringing in a new approach based around a neighbourhood way of working with four headline objectives:

- Making sense of places
- Building trust with the customer
- Putting a face to the organisation
- Using resources most effectively

The Board was encouraged to see the real and comprehensive progress made in the last year. There has been clear evidence of improvements in customer access in both telephone and face to face contact and that the neighbourhood way of working is now becoming established.