

Open minutes of Tower Hamlets Homes Board Meeting  
Thursday 29 July 2021 **4:05pm – 4:50pm**  
Via Microsoft Teams

**Board Directors Present:**

Ann Lucas (AL & Chair)	-	Chair, Independent Board Director
Claire Tuffin (CT & Vice Chair)	-	Resident Board Director
Andrew Bond (AB)	-	Independent Board Director
Safia Jama (SJam)	-	Independent Board Director
Nikesh Shah (NS)	-	Independent Board Director
Simon Hart (SH)	-	Resident Board Director
Mahbub Anam (MA)	-	Resident Board Director
Asma Islam (AI)	-	Cllr Board Director
Val Whitehead (VW)	-	Cllr Board Director

**Co – Optees Present:**

Iain Lawson (IL)	-	Co-Optee to Finance & Audit Committee
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**Officers Present:**

Susmita Sen (SS)	-	Chief Executive
Neil Isaac (NI)	-	Director of Finance
Ann Otesanya (AO)	-	Director of Neighbourhoods
Will Manning (WM)	-	Director of Asset Management
Tania Dyos (TD)	-	Head of Procurement & Contracts
Sameena Raouf (SR)	-	Governance Officer

**In Attendance:**

Fokrul Hoque (FH)	-	Community Partnerships Manager
Rupert Brandon (RB)	-	LBTH Head of Housing Supply
John Kiwanuka (JK)	-	LBTH ALMO Client Manager

**Apologies:**

Karen Swift (KS)	-	LBTH Divisional Director of Housing & Regeneration
Tarik Khan (TK)	-	Cllr Board Director
Sabina Akhtar (SA)	-	Cllr Board Director
Yasin Ahmed (YA)	-	Co-Optee to the Finance & Governance Committee
Pam Haluwa (PH)	-	Co-Optee to Gov.& Remuneration Committee
Paul Davey (PD)	-	Director of Business Transformation

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
1.1.	AL welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for the above were noted.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>	
2.1.	CT, IL and SH declared their interest as leaseholders of Tower Hamlets Homes.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Questions from Members of the Public</b>	
3.1.	None received.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes of the Open Minutes of the Board Meeting Held on 20 May 2021</b>	
4.1.	<i>The THH Board <b>AGREED</b> minutes of meeting held on 20 May 2021 were an accurate record.</i>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Community Investment 20/21 Annual report</b>	
5.1.	FH presented this item to the Board. The report provided an update on the delivery of the community investment programme for 2020-21 and the key achievements. It	

	<p>was noted that this year's planned programme was severely disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, as most community investment activities revolved around bringing people together either in a 1-2-1 setting for advice and support or in groups for training, events, and health activities.</p>	
5.2.	<p>The work of the team was refocused to provide support to residents impacted by the pandemic. Through our support to partners, hundreds of residents, especially the elderly and vulnerable, but also those facing financial hardship were supported by our Community Support Hubs and the Financial Health Centre respectively. It was noted the total number of people engaged and benefitting from our projects and activities was 6326 and the social value net benefit the programme has delivered was £32,532,776.</p>	
5.3.	<p>MA queried how we arrived at the figure of £32m social value to which FH responded that all our projects and programmes are carefully monitored, recording outputs and outcomes achieved. At the end of the year, we use a social value calculator to work out the social values. The social value is derived using the HACT Social Value calculator, based on Wellbeing Valuation theory, the latest thinking in social impact measurement and an approach developed and used by government. It was noted many housing providers use this tool to measure the social impact of community investment programmes.</p>	
5.4.	<p>It was noted the Canary Wharf call to Prayer Iftar event was a huge success with over 3,000 people watching live via social media and over 2,000 Iftar food packs distributed to the community. The online video of the event then went on to be viewed over 10 million times and was covered by both national and international press.</p>	
5.5.	<p><b>ACTION: The draft Community Investment Strategy to be shared with Board for comments before being presented to Board in September for approval.</b></p>	FH
5.6.	<p>AI thanked THH for their work particularly during the pandemic and noted it was important to look back and see what areas we have performed well in. She added both Council Officers and residents were complimentary of the THH's work.</p>	
5.7.	<p>With regards to the pandemic highlighting shifts in the community, CT queried what they were to which SS responded that these were the differences created by structural inequalities and the communities mainly affected by the pandemic. We were able to respond to the pandemic and mobilise it straightaway. There has been a lot of work around mental health, staff carried out the research and she was happy to share this with the Board offline.</p>	
5.8.	<p>FH added the pandemic highlighted the growing disparity between communities. In terms of loneliness, we had a contract in place from September 2019 and in many ways', we were already prepared. The iftar event this year which took place at Tower Bridge has been viewed over 100 million times online.</p>	
5.9.	<p><i>The THH Board <b>NOTED</b> the Community Investment – 2020-2021 Annual Report.</i></p>	
	<p><i>FH left the meeting at 4:30pm</i></p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>CE Report</b></p>	
6.1.	<p>SS presented this item to the Board. The report provided an update on Neighbourhood Services, Asset Management, Community Investment, New Tenancy Conditions and THH's performance to June 2021.</p>	
6.2.	<p>It was noted the ASB team, Police teams and Parkguard recently took part in Operation Digby. Set up as a response to an increase in drug dealing and use around the Gretton, Burnham and Digby estates in Bethnal Green. More than ten arrests were made over the two-week operation which began on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June.</p>	
6.3.	<p>Uniformed and plain-clothed officers took part in patrols of the area. Using valuable information received from residents around locations, vehicles and times, the teams</p>	

	targeted specific areas and were able to prevent and disrupt drug-related criminals from operating. There were several successful achievements because of tactics such as stop and search and more than 60 ASB warnings were issued. Additionally, 11 referrals were made to the Council's Drug Intervention Prevention team.	
6.4.	AO added Cllr Danny Hassell was very pleased by what he saw on the ground and that further updates would be fed into the bi-weekly Board brief updates. SS also added we have started a campaign to get out onto our estates and urged Board Directors to join even if it is via Zoom.	
6.5.	<b>ACTION: Re-Circulate walkabout times and dates with VW.</b>	<b>SR</b>
6.6.	With regards to the latest tenancy conditions, it was noted the latest version had been uploaded onto Diligent for Board to view. With regards to re-lets, IL queried whether there is any information about why properties are being refused to which SS responded we generally advertise properties 12 weeks in advance, and this has gone well. There is also not a common reason for refusal.	
6.7.	AO added that our aim is to get the property re-let. We have bedsits that are not always very popular and challenges with some stock. The New Builds team are having discussions with the LBTH Lettings team trying to get as much information as possible.	
6.8.	CT queried what the actual void rate was to which SS responded we tend to measure void loss.	
6.9.	With regards to Fire Risk Assessments, it was noted the second round of these had been completed and that we do not have substantial risks. We now have a programme of works; it is expected we will be hearing from frustrated residents. We will do our best to accommodate, however we must be mindful that fires have been caused by flammable material left on balconies and would appreciate Board's support endorsing it. WM added that we will be undertaking several type four fire risk assessments and a programme of external wall surveys.	
6.10.	IL commented that one of the reasons residents put down plastic grass on balconies for example is because of their poor state and that part of the solution is to make sure our maintenance programme maintains things.	
6.11.	<i>The THH Board <b>NOTED</b> the CE Report.</i>	

Actions Log: Open Board Meeting  
29 July 2021 4:05pm – 4.50pm

Item	Action	Who	Due	Status
5.5	The draft Community Investment Strategy to be shared with Board for comments before being presented to Board in September for approval.	FH		Put back to December Board Meeting
6.5	Re-Circulate walkabout times and dates with VW.	SR		Completed

Chair

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Date

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