

	<p><b>Meeting: Eastbourne Homes Limited Board of Directors (Company No. 5340097)</b></p> <p><b>Date: 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021</b></p> <p><b>Venue: Virtual (due to COVID-19)</b></p> <p><b>Start: 2.30 pm</b></p> <p><b>Board of Directors</b></p> <p><b><u>Present:</u></b>  <b>Board Directors:</b>  Roger Eastwood (RE) (Chair)  Louise Pearce (LP) (Vice-Chair)  Sheilah Roberts (SR) (Vice-Chair)  Paul Gunnell (PG)  Colin Belsey (CB)  Mary Hope (MH)  Candy Vaughan (CV)</p> <p><b>EHL Staff</b>  <b><u>In Attendance:</u></b>  Ian Fitzpatrick, Managing Director (IF)  Gary Hall, Head of Homes First (GH)  Paul Jametta, Finance Business Partner (PJ)  Jane McCarthy-Penman, Company Secretary (JMP)  Ola Owolabi, Deputy Chief Finance Officer (OO)  Richard Tomkinson, Customer Experience &amp; PI Lead (RT)  Simon Watts, Property Services Lead (SW)  Tim Whelan, Director of Service Delivery (TW)</p>	
Item	PROCEDURAL MATTERS	ACTION
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Gina Morgan Homira Javadi</p>	Noted
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>In accordance with Section 177 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Articles of Association of the Company, Directors declared their interests as set out below:</p> <p><b>Roger Eastwood</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Director and Chair at South Essex Homes Limited</li> <li>• Board Director at Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited</li> <li>• Board Member – National Federation of ALMOs</li> <li>• Trustee and Vice Chair of Rusthall Lodge Housing Association Limited</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Mary Hope</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wealden CAB</li> <li>• Board Director and Chair, Sussex Housing and Care</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that notwithstanding any such interests, all Directors were entitled to vote at, and be counted in the quorum of, the meeting.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting of the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021</b></p> <p>Agreed.</p>	Noted
4.	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><b>VFM</b></p> <p>The Board were advised that Jaime Wainwright-Jones had been appointed to lead on VFM within Homes First. Jaime will attend the next Board meeting and provide an overview of her workplan.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Outstanding Board Actions</b></p> <p>This report provided the Board with a checklist and audit trail of actions arising from previous Board meetings.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the report and the progress on outstanding actions to date</b></li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>Chair's Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Strategic Meeting between EBC and EHL</b></p> <p>The Board noted that this meeting took place this morning (15<sup>th</sup>).</p> <p>Discussions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairs Service – key decisions for EHL to make</li> <li>• Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)</li> <li>• Riverbourne House</li> <li>• Finance – experience is better this year</li> <li>• Building Safety Bill</li> <li>• C19</li> <li>• Rents</li> </ul> <p>The Chair provided a verbal update on the meeting and the items discussed.</p>	

**Business Matters**

**Non-Confidential Items - Part A**

7.	<p><b>Verbal Update on the Year End Audit – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021</b></p> <p>It was noted that in line with the External Audit Plan timetable, RSM had missed one or two deadlines but managed to catch up. It was confirmed that RSM had been requesting a significant amount of documentation this year.</p> <p>On a positive note, the audit is reaching completion. The audit findings were received by the team last night (14<sup>th</sup>), where there were one or two outstanding items to conclude.</p> <p>A further meeting with RSM will take place on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021 (tomorrow) to cover off any outstanding issues/discussions.</p> <p>In respect of the draft statements, there are two minor adjustments. By the end of next week, the Finance team should be in a position to share the final draft of the year-end audit and accounts.</p> <p>It was noted that a meeting of the Board will need to be scheduled to consider the final draft for approval to sign off. This will be diarised once we are in a position to consider dates.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b> <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b> <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Noted the update</b></li></ul>	
8.	<p><b>EHL Board Membership</b></p> <p>In accordance with the Articles of Association, the Board will see three terms of office ending in September 2021, two independents and one tenant.</p> <p>Last year we referred to a review of Boards/composition by the Shareholder in respect of the numerous entities it owns. As part of the Council’s review of the entities it owns (part of its Recovery and Reset Programme), there were no proposed changes to EHL at present.</p> <p>Discussions in respect of terms of office took place at the appraisal of each Board Director held in June 2021.</p> <p>The Board considered and noted the report.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b> <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b> <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Noted the report</b></li><li>• <b>Agreed to the re-appointment of two Independent Board Directors – Mary Hope and Louise Pearce</b></li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the vacancy for a Tenant Board Director</b></li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>Governance Update</b></p> <p>This report provided the Board of Directors with a brief summary of key issues that did not warrant a separate report. It covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee Membership</li> <li>• Board Attendance</li> <li>• Annual Interests and Appointments</li> <li>• Internal Audits Summary 2020/21</li> <li>• Information Governance Q4</li> <li>• Social Housing White Paper Provisions and the Management Agreement in respect of TMO's</li> <li>• Governance Forward Plan</li> </ul> <p><b>FOI's</b></p> <p>A question was raised as to who had requested the FOI's as it appeared to be individuals, rather than organisations. It was agreed that the Company Secretary would provide an update to the Chair as requested.</p> <p><b>Social Housing White Paper Provisions and the Management Agreement in respect of TMO's</b></p> <p>It was noted that this piece of work had been completed to ensure that should the situation in respect of TMO's change in the future, our Management Agreement was compliant in line with the Social Housing White Paper provisions.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the report</b></li> </ul>	
10.	<p><b>The Charter for Social Housing Residents (White Paper) Progress Update</b></p> <p>This report set out progress to date on the Government's White Paper – The Charter for Social Housing Residents. It aimed to provide assurance of Homes First's ability to meet the challenges and expectations contained within the White Paper and highlight steps already taken.</p> <p>On the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Government published a Social Housing White Paper - The Charter for Social Housing Residents. The Charter sets out measures designed to deliver on the Government's commitment to the Grenfell community that 'never again would the voices of residents go unheard' and on its 2019 manifesto pledge to empower residents, provide greater redress, better regulation, and improve the quality of social housing.</p> <p>The White Paper is intended to deliver 'transformational change' for social housing residents. It sets out measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that social housing is safe.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it easier to know how social landlords are performing, to increase transparency and accountability.</li> <li>• Ensure swift and effective resolution of complaints.</li> <li>• Strengthen the consumer standards social landlords must meet and create a strong, proactive regime to enforce them.</li> <li>• Empower residents.</li> <li>• Ensure good quality, decent homes, and neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Support home ownership.</li> </ul> <p>The Board noted that the roles of the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman are being strengthened to help deliver these measures.</p> <p>It was noted that there is no timetable attached to delivering the measures set out in the Social Housing White Paper. The White Paper provides a framework for reform, but the detail of many of the proposals requires further development and engagement with the sector.</p> <p>Some of the White Paper proposals will require primary legislation before they can be implemented. The Queen’s Speech 2021 did not include a Social Housing Bill. The background briefing notes state that the Government will continue to deliver on the White Paper proposals and will ‘look to legislate as soon as practicable.’</p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing has begun stakeholder engagement and consultation through a series of technical discussions and the Customer Experience &amp; Performance Lead has engaged in these discussions in respect of tenant satisfaction measures (TSM). It is likely that The Regulator will provide detailed guidance in respect of the adopted measures and proposed survey methodology towards the end of 2021, for implementation during 2022 and initial reporting requirement/data return during 2023/4.</p> <p>As reported to Board in December 2020, Homes First is well placed to respond to any TSM put forward, already collecting data in respect of many of those suggested in the White Paper and incorporating those which we do not into our plans for the next STAR survey, which will be issued in September/October 2021.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Customer Experience and Performance Lead for his detailed updated report.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the report</b></li> </ul>	
11.	<p><b>Report of the Head of Homes First</b></p> <p>This report provided the Board of Directors with a brief summary of key high priority issues that did not warrant a separate report. It covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Health Check Quarter 4, 2020/21</li> <li>• Stock Investment and Sustainability Work</li> <li>• Repairs Project</li> <li>• Safeguarding General Needs and Retirement Housing</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evictions Ban Update</li> <li>• Audit and Risk Update – Risk Register</li> <li>• Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme</li> </ul> <p>The shortage of materials was noted, which has had a slight impact on our repairs.</p> <p>It was noted that the repairs project is on track.</p> <p>The Board noted and agreed to the updated risk score for the STEPS Contract and the new risk around safety in the home. It was noted that EHL do not own the stock, so the wording needs to be amended accordingly.</p> <p>The Board noted the update on the RSAP Programme.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the contents of report</b></li> <li>• <b>Agreed the revised risk score for Risk SR_09</b></li> <li>• <b>Agreed the additional risk – SR_011 subject to minor amendments</b></li> </ul>	
12.	<p><b>Annual Service and Financial Plan 2021/22 - Key Milestones</b></p> <p>In March 2021, Board approved EHL’s five-year Business Plan which included the EHL Annual Service and Financial Plan 2021/22 (Delivery Plan in accordance with Part C, Section 6 of the Management Agreement, 2015).</p> <p>This report set out the key milestones for the Annual Service and Financial Plan (Delivery Plan) and associated Management Fee for 2021/22 for onward progress reporting to Service and Performance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Agreed the milestones and onward reporting to Service &amp; Performance Committee and Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b></li> </ul>	
13.	<p><b>Tenant Impact Assessment</b></p> <p>This report provided Board with the 2020/21 Tenant Involvement Impact Assessment, highlighting the impact made through tenant involvement activities on the services delivered by Homes First.</p> <p>It was noted that the colour brochure circulated to Board had an incorrect date for the Funday. This had now been rectified.</p> <p>A question was raised as to how we can improve links between EHL Board and Residents Voice.</p>	

A detailed discussion took place, and it was suggested that a tenant on the Board should sit on Residents Voice to help establish those links, if it was felt appropriate. It was also noted that a Board Brief is drafted after each Board meeting, as an update for Residents Voice on EHL Board activities. This is signed off by the Chair. This is a new communication, having just been implemented and no feedback had been received by members of Residents Voice to date.

A question was raised as to what was the tone of residents, what are their concerns, what were they raising? The Board need to understand how residents feel or what they were concerned about.

It was agreed that whilst the Board are keen to understand the feeling within the community, they did not want to be bogged down in operational detail. It was suggested that Residents Voice minutes are considered at the Service and Performance Committee.

It was further noted that the Service and Performance Committee receive updates on tenant activity.

A query was raised as to why a beach picture was used in the brochure. It was confirmed that it was an iconic picture and often used as it was popular among residents.

A detailed discussion took place in respect of estate walkabouts. It was noted that there was a combination of reasons as to why Homes First have not continued with these. The Board noted that the team need to manage residents' expectations and make sure they are properly planned.

The Board noted these comments above however, requested that consideration be taken into revisiting estate walkabouts sooner rather than later and that Councillors should also be engaged.

A Director raised a point in respect of the apparent disparity in the level of involvement between EHL and LDC. It was noted that other than the Virtual 300, there was 10% engagement.

It was noted that this report presented formal engagement by residents and that Directors should not underestimate the Virtual 300.

The Board noted that Homes First have been cautious in respect of estate walkabouts, particularly over the last 18-months. It was agreed that they would re-start, with a degree of caution.

Directors reiterated that it was important that we engage with our residents. It was also noted that it is key to pick up issues whilst out on the estates however, we need to ensure that staff can manage workloads.

It was confirmed that Homes First have had to work differently and that they have by no means dropped any work as a result of the pandemic.

	<p>A Director advised that she used to regularly attend estate walkabouts and has not been out on one for over three years.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the significant outputs, outcomes, and impact that Tenant Involvement has had on Homes First services delivered to tenants during 2020/21 and commended both the Tenant Involvement Team and involved tenants and residents for their significant contribution</b></li> </ul>	
<p><i>IF left at 3.45 pm</i></p>		
<p>14.</p>	<p><b>Complaints &amp; Compensation Annual Review</b></p> <p>This report provided the Board with a brief summary of Homes First’s annual complaints handling performance.</p> <p>It was noted that whilst the numbers of complaints received had increased significantly, around 60% are resolved informally and less than 10% are fully upheld.</p> <p>It was further noted that the Customer Experience Team have been able to deliver despite increased complaints numbers and staffing issues. They have managed significant caseloads, which has impacted on complaints handling times and afforded limited scope to invest time in working with wider teams on service improvement activities. That said, service action was taken, or improvements implemented in significantly more than the 16 upheld complaints (36).</p> <p>The Board noted that the team within Homes First that manage complaints are currently under resourced.</p> <p>The HO determinations were noted and it was requested that in future, the Board are kept abreast of any HO complaints/resolutions in a timely manner, either through Service and Performance Committee or Board. It was noted that these have been exceptionally busy in terms of numbers, however, we are quite low on the list. The Board also requested more detailed analysis in respect of the data in future reports.</p> <p>It was noted that Homes First are not currently meeting the service standards in respect of complaints response times.</p> <p>It was suggested that training needs to be considered for staff in respect of meeting service standards as looking to the future, we could have potential inspections and complaints will be picked up. It was noted that it is critical that Boards are involved in complaints.</p> <p>The Board were advised that LEC are looking at complaint handling and will be running a workshop, this will pick up on resources and training.</p>	

	<p>It was agreed that the Board would be happy to receive an update/overview on the outcomes on this workshop and any changes to the way we will deal with complaints. It was suggested that a future briefing/workshop for the Board is set up following the staff workshop.</p> <p>It was noted that there will be an article in the next newsletter detailing how residents can make a complaint.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)</b>  <b>Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:</b>  <b>The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the report</b></li> </ul>	
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*TW/OO left the meeting at 4.00 pm.*

15.	<p><b>Tenant Satisfaction 2021/21</b>  <b>STAR Survey results</b></p> <p>This report outlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STAR Annual Survey results 2020/21</li> <li>• Proposed service actions for implementation by Homes First to address expressions of dissatisfaction</li> </ul> <p>In 2020, the Board approved a proposal to move to annual STAR surveys, along with a methodology aligned to HouseMark guidance which includes five core perception-based questions along with a number of optional questions that landlords can choose to include, based on the relevance to their business.</p> <p>The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment (TIE) Panel agreed which questions to include in this year’s survey. They recommended five core questions, six optional questions and also agreed to include a “golden thread” question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What one thing could we do to improve your experience as a customer of Homes First?</li> </ul> <p>This golden thread question is included in all surveys sent to tenants with the intention that answers can be used as a tool for improving services. TIE also decided that tenants should be given an opportunity to grade their satisfaction with each question from 1-10, which is a significant departure from previous scales ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied.</p> <p>In October 2020, we commissioned Arena Partnership (AP) to conduct the survey on our behalf.</p> <p>In November, AP sent surveys by email and post to a representative sample of EHL tenants (2329), with a targeted response requirement of 512.</p> <p>By the end of December, they had received 449 responses, giving a confidence interval of +/-4.3% (this is just below sector standards of +/-4% for landlords with stock numbers of 2,500-9,999).</p> <p>The full results are contained in Appendix 1 and the new scale affords the opportunity to consider the results in a number of different ways, including:</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of positive responses (marked 9's and 10's).</li> <li>• % of neutral responses (7's and 8's).</li> <li>• % negative responses (6 and under).</li> <li>• The average satisfaction score presented as a percentage.</li> <li>• Net promoter score (see below).</li> <li>• A table setting out the percentage scored for every mark given from 1-10.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, details of the comments made to the golden thread question have now been collated. Most comments related to specific problems that tenants have experienced, as opposed to recommendations for how to improve the service. It has also been difficult to identify which comments relate to which question and we will be looking at the methodology for next year's survey to see if we can gain a better understanding of tenants' views for specific questions.</p> <p>A detailed discussion took place in respect of the 10-point scale, as it was felt it was not a balanced questionnaire and was mixed in terms of quantitative and qualitative data. It was confirmed that the golden thread question did not work how the team had hoped. This will be picked up with the Panel.</p> <p>Further discussion took place on the prescribed methodology for the application of the net provider score.</p> <p>It was suggested that the detailed operational discussion was taken outside of the meeting and as a result one Director (PG) *abstained from approving the proposed recommendations.</p> <p>It was noted that we were compliant and would continue to use a scale that we all understood.</p> <p><b>Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06) Recommendation and Resolution by the Board: The Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted the contents of the report</b></li> <li>• <b>*Approved the service actions detailed in the report</b></li> </ul>	
<i>RT left the meeting at 4.28 pm.</i>		
<b>Confidential Items - Part B</b>		
16.	<b>SEILL Update</b>  <i>Confidential – not for publication</i>	
17.	<b>Health &amp; Safety Annual Review</b>  <i>Confidential – not for publication</i>	

**Information Items**

18.

**Report back from:**

- **SEILL Board**
- **Service and Performance Committee**
- **Audit and Risk Committee**

This report provided the Board with the minutes of the SEILL Board and the Service and Performance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee during quarter four of 2020/21.

The Board noted the following:

- Minutes of the SEILL Board, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021
- Draft Minutes of the Service and Performance Committee, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- Draft Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Given due regard to Duty 2, Section 172 CA (06)**

**Recommendation and Resolution by the Board:**

**The Board**

- **Noted the report**
- **Noted the minutes of the SEILL Board**
- **Noted the draft minutes for:**
  - **Service and Performance Committee**
  - **Audit and Risk Committee**

19.

**Any Other Business**

The Board noted that:

- We will be looking to go back to face-to-face meetings as appropriate, starting December 2021.

**Bedfordwell Road**

A request was made for an update on the above project. It was agreed that this would be circulated to Board.

**Meeting closed at 4.55 pm**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Print:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dated:** \_\_\_\_\_