

STOCKPORT HOMES BOARD MEETING
Monday 22 July 2024
10am
Shringley Hall (as part of Board Away Day)



PRESENT / IN ATTENDANCE:

Members (Present):

- Jenny Osbourne, Chair
- Philip Argument
- Priti Butler
- Alistair Chapman
- Nasrin Fazal
- Marie Gilluley
- Carol Jack
- Paula King
- Ken Lee
- Steve Partridge
- Maria Zywica

Officers (In attendance):

- Helen McHale, Chief Executive
- Carmel Chambers, Executive Director of Resources
- Anne-Marie Heil, Director of Customer Services
- Tim Pinder, Director of Property
- Rachel Cossey, Governance Manager
- Sam Donigan, Head of Assurance
- Jonny Kelly, Governance and Scrutiny Officer
- John Kennedy, Assistant Director of Finance (Item 15)
- Di Laming, Assistant Director of People & OD (Item 03)
- Alison Leach, Head of Data (Item 06)
- Neil Smith, Head of Safety (item 03)

Observer

- Roger Phillips, Chair of SKYlight
- Karen Mitchell, SHG Board Member from 30 September 2024

External

- Maria Hallows, Beever & Struthers – External Auditors (Item 15)

01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Action
	There were no apologies and no declarations of interest.	
02	MINUTES AND ACTION MONITOR OF MEETING 18 MARCH 2024	
	<p>The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and progress with the action monitor was noted.</p> <p>The Board noted that Priti Butler was in attendance at the meeting 18th March, contrary to the minutes from the meeting. It was confirmed that the minutes would be updated to reflect this.</p>	JKel
03	HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT (DECISION)	
	The Assistant Director of People and OD and the Head of Safety introduced the report to provide an overview of Health and Safety (H&S) performance during 2023/24, highlight the initiatives to be delivered during 2024/25, to give Board assurance over H&S management within the Group. The discussion covered:	

AUTHOR: Jonny Kelly
LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF: 30/07/2024

DATE: 22/07/2024
CHAIR APPROVED DRAFT: 01/08/2024

	<p>The Board discussed the consequences for customers who demonstrate unacceptable behaviour towards SHG staff. The Head of Safety explained that there are varying options available to SHG depending on the severity of the behaviour, which at the minor level can involve a manager speaking to the customer, at a medium level setting alerts on the system for awareness of staff and at the most serious level an injunction from the Safer Neighbourhoods Team. He explained that SHG are reviewing its approach to this, to assess whether it is strong enough.</p> <p>Going forward, the Board suggested that it would be useful to see the trends of H&S data over the last few years, to more readily understand where performance has improved or decreased.</p> <p>The Board discussed the working group which was established to look at causes and potential solutions for unacceptable behaviour and it was requested that Board be kept up to date on the progress of the group, before the next annual report in 12 months. It was confirmed that an update will be brought to SHG Board in six months. He added that the working group is made up representatives from varying services from across SHG. The Board suggested that it should be considered whether the focus group could involve customers in some way.</p> <p>The Board asked whether there was anything to suggest from the focus group that abusive behaviour from customers has impacted staff from a mental health point of view or been a reason to leave. The Assistant Director of People & OD provided assurance to Board that this has not been the case up to now, but SHG were aware that abusive behaviour from customers could impact the mental health of colleagues, therefore as much support as possible will continue to be offered to colleagues who suffer any form of abuse from customers. The Chief Executive added that all staff have an exit interview when they leave SHG, and it had not emerged as an issue.</p> <p>The Board highlighted that it was clear to see SHG have dramatically improved how incidents have been dealt with and recorded over recent years. They noted that near misses weren't previously recorded, but now SHG have identified ways for those elements to help drive improve in H&S.</p> <p>The Board asked whether there was any scope to learn from other providers in relation to H&S. The Head of Safety explained that the H&S Team attend several networking groups, which allows for sharing of resources and experience.</p>	<p>NS</p> <p>NS</p> <p>NS</p>
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	<p>RESOLVED: The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed the H&S annual update report and appendix and endorsed the planned initiatives for 2024/25. • Confirmed that the range of H&S works and information provided was adequate to provide the Board with assurance over the H&S management within the Group. 	
04	SAFEGUARDING OVERVIEW (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Director of Customer Services introduced the report to advise and assure the Board of the Safeguarding arrangements at Stockport Homes Group. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Director of Property highlighted that SHG are aware that the proportion of safeguarding referrals from Three Sixty operatives is not proportionate to the number of occasions that they are in customers properties, therefore this is an area of focus, to ensure that safeguarding referrals are as accessible as possible, to encourage more referrals.</p> <p>The Board discussed the statements of key themes of safeguarding for adults and children. The Chief Executive highlighted that Board members can feed into those themes, should they believe that anything significant is missing.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The Board gained assurance over the arrangements for safeguarding at SHG.</p>	
05	SKYLIGHT – USE OF GIFT AID (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Director of Customer Services introduced the report to provide an update on SKylight's use of Gift Aid in 2023/24 and planned use of Gift Aid in 2024/25. The Board noted the report.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The Board noted and discussed the use of Gift Aid.</p>	
06	CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND TSMs REPORT (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Head of Data introduced the report to present year-end 2023/24 performance data against key performance indicators, including Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's), and to provide performance data for May 2024. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Board discussed the performance indicator 'Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard' and suggested that failing to meet the target of this performance indicator is happening quite frequently with providers in the UK. They did however ask for assurance on whether this was a significant problem for SHG. The Head of Data explained that from a</p>	

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performance perspective, this is not a concern. She added that where failures have been identified, they have been quickly addressed. The Director of Property added that any damp, mould or condensation issues have been identified and addressed immediately and none of the other failures have been of a significant scale.

The Board asked whether there were any trends identified from the on-going Stock Condition Survey, e.g. Category 1 or 2 Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards. The Director of Property explained that currently a disproportionate number of the issues presented were evident in high rises due to the initial focus of stock condition surveys on those types of properties first. He added that issues were often identified in the properties of customers who rarely contact SHG, which means that SHG will be looking at a more targeted approach to these customers in the future.

The Head of Data highlighted that analysis by Housemark confirmed that decent homes standards have dropped across the sector by 29 per cent.

The Board noted that as SHG begins to collect data via different methods, the results may change, when compared to what has been seen from collecting the data through face to face and over the phone methods. The Head of Data confirmed that across the sector generally those methods see better results, which means that there is a possibility that as SHG begin to receive more online submissions, the results may begin to change.

The Board asked how the data quality tool will help SHG. The Head of Data explained that it will help increase the integrity of the data and as a byproduct it will create a data warehouse to store all the data in one place, which will provide some additional outcomes.

The Board highlighted that although the TSM appear to be reassuring when compared to other providers, it is important to understand what they mean for SHG in terms of what they address and what they don't address. The Chief Executive explained that the TSM only highlight that SHG are doing well when compared to the measures in comparison to other providers, but they indicate that there are elements where SHG can improve on. She stressed that doing well in some of the measures is not enough. The Head of Data explained that going forward, SHG are focusing on the customers who are not happy, even if it is only a small percentage of the sample. The Board highlighted that they were pleased with this being an area of focus going forward and requested that future reports provide more information related to the data, such as geographical location and property type information etc which will enable Board to identify any trends that are evident.

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	<p>The Board highlighted that there are a high number of customers who SHG don't receive data from, for various reasons and sought assurance on how this can be addressed. The Head of Data confirmed that SHG are reviewing how those who don't provide data can be reached.</p> <p>Board suggested that it would be useful for a webinar or a future Board report to focus on the wider issues in high rise properties, potentially with particular focus on Lancashire hill.</p> <p>The Board highlighted that SHG should monitor the language that is used in communications surrounding TSM as it is important that the language which indicates that customers should educate themselves, should be avoided. They added that it is the responsibility of SHG to understand what customers mean and should not be expected to educate themselves.</p>	TP
	<p>RESOLVED: The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted performance results and improvement actions outlined in this report. • Raised any concerns where performance targets are not achieved. 	
07	STOCKPORT HOMES DELIVERY PLAN OUTCOMES REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Head of Assurance introduced the report to demonstrate to SHG Board how the objectives in the Delivery Plan have been delivered across 2023-24. Following SHG Board approval, this report will then be presented to the Economy, Regeneration and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2024</p> <p>The Board highlighted that there is vast amount of useful information in the Delivery Plan, but due to its length, some of the important information could be missed. Board suggested that an infographic or executive summary be added to ensure that future audiences don't miss any of those important elements.</p>	SD
	RESOLVED: That the Board approved the Delivery Plan Outcomes Report for 2023-24.	
08	ALTAIR GOVERNANCE REVIEW (DECISION)	
	<p>The Head of Assurance introduced the report to present the Governance Review Report from Altair following the independent, triennial governance review which has been undertaken. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Head of Assurance highlighted that the Governance Team were pleased with the processes surrounding the review to reach the end point overall are pleased with the outcomes the review achieved.</p>	

	RESOLVED: That the Board noted and approved the Governance Review Report and Action Plan.	
09	GOVERNANCE REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Governance Manager introduced the report to provide an update in various aspects of Governance including items for approval, assurance and noting.</p> <p>The Board discussed the Board’s skills assessment. The Governance Manager explained that this will be picked up in the SHG Board appraisals process, to identify the levels of support that individual Board members may need. It was suggested that the review of skills could be a group discussion between Board members, potentially as a webinar.</p> <p>The Board suggested that it would be useful if self-assessment and appraisal information could be stored in Cascade to allow for easy access. The Governance Manager confirmed that it will be explored whether Cascade can facilitate this for Board members.</p> <p>The Board discussed remuneration and expenses of Board members and highlighted that any changes to these policies need to ensure that all Board members can still attend Board meetings, and therefore support with transport is always available, including taxis being offered to local Board members if they cannot make their own way. The Governance Manager confirmed that Board members will continue to be provided with appropriate support to ensure they can attend Board meetings.</p>	<p>RC</p> <p>RC</p>

	<p>RESOLVED: That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Approved the Board Remuneration and Expenses Policy <p><i>In respect of SHL Board:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. Approved the following recommendations to the AGM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the extension of Steve Partridge’s term by an additional year, b. the re-appointment of Priti Butler for a second three-year term, and c. the appointment of Alison Foster and Karen Mitchell to the SHL Board. iii. Confirmed that Steve Partridge remains the preferred candidate for Chair, to be elected at the September Board meeting, following the AGM. <p><i>In respect of Three Sixty Board:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Board approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the extension of Phil Pemberton’s term of office by an additional year b. the appointment of Tony Williams to the Three Sixty Board. <p>The AGM will be asked to note these decisions.</p> <p><i>In respect of the SKylight Board:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Board approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The appointment of Marie Gilluley as Chair of SKylight Board b. The appointment of Nicola Firth to the SKylight Board. <p><i>The AGM will be asked to note these decisions.</i></p> <p>The Board noted the annual skills assessment, gift and hospitality register, annual attendance statistics and use of the Seal.</p>	
10	FINANCE, RISK AND REGULATION UPDATE (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Assistant Director of Finance and Head of Assurance introduced the report to present SHG Board with information and assurance on the latest finance, risk, and regulatory position for the company, and to highlight the most significant risks facing SHG.</p> <p>The Board noted that Customer Focus Committee will be presented with a full update on consumer regulation at the next meeting on 14th August 2024.</p> <p>The Board noted that SHG estimates surrounding income generally comes from HRA and rent forecasts. They also noted that Three Sixty have significantly different income streams and over the last 12 months, estimates were approximately one per cent off the actuals. The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that this will be an area of focus for Three Sixty going forward to improve on its forecasting. The Board asked for an action plan to be developed and brought back to Board later to provide an update on what is being done to close those gaps in estimates.</p> <p>The Chief Executive highlighted the complex issues surrounding the negotiations that are ongoing with Stockport County Football Club and the Council, with regards the sale of a piece of land that Stockport Homes originally intended to be developed. She noted that discussions are on-going, and the eventual outcome is not yet clear, but a portion of the previously agreed fee may need to be relinquished under the proviso of social value and added that</p>	JKen

	Stockport Homes are continuing to focus on being paid as much of the previously agreed fee as possible.	
	RESOLVED: That the Board gained assurance from the contents of the report and noted the risks that SHG is facing.	
11	CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT	
	The Chief Executive introduced the report to update the Board on, activities, issues, developments, challenges, and successes that have taken place since the last Board meeting. The Board noted the report.	
12	CHAIR AND MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES – Verbal Update (INFORMATION)	
	<p>The Board asked that a visit to the call centre be arranged, as they felt that it would be useful to see it in practice.</p> <p>Nasrin has registered for a webinar – Meet the Ombudsman for Member Responsible for Complaints on 20th August. She added that she will also be attending the Member Responsible for Complaints Conference on 7th November, where SHG will be speaking at.</p> <p>Priti recently joined the NHS Work Well Focus Group, which she hoped may provide some useful links and information, which may benefit her role on the SKylight Board.</p>	JKel
13	MINUTES (ASSURANCE)	
	The minutes from the most recent People and Governance Committee, Customer Focus Committee and Three Sixty Board were all noted.	
14	FORWARD PLAN (ASSURANCE)	
	The Governance Manager introduced the expected business for the remainder of 2024/25.	
15	<u>WHOLE BOARD ITEM</u> YEAR-END STATUTORY ACCOUNTS (DECISION)	
	The Assistant Director of Finance introduced the report to present the year-end statutory accounts for Stockport Homes Limited, and the consolidated group accounts, incorporating Three Sixty SHG Limited, SKylight Proud to be part of SHG and Viaduct Partnerships Limited. The Board noted the report.	

	<p>RESOLVED: That the Board approved:</p> <p>i) the Directors' Report and Financial Statements with particular attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directors' Report (pages 4 - 26) - Accounting Policies (pages 38 - 45) - Going Concern (pages 4 and 7) - Board Member Responsibilities and s172 duties (pages 8 - 10) <p>ii) the Audit Management Letter (Appendix Five)</p>	
ANY OTHER BUSINESS		
	<p>The Board noted that this was the final Board meeting for Jenny Osbourne as the Chair and Ken Lee as a Board member. The Board thanked them for their hard work and dedication over their tenure and wished them well in the future.</p>	