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Revision number:	02 – Renamed Board Transparency Policy
Lead officer:	Jeremy Beatty

BOARD TRANSPARENCY POLICY

17 June 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Regulator of Social Housing requires that all providers should run their businesses with a presumption of openness and co-operation with stakeholders. Establishing accountability and transparency in decision-making fosters a culture of trust within the organisation and from customers and other stakeholders. A culture of openness is widely seen to encourage “bottom-up” participation from the community.
- 1.2 Stockport Homes Group conducts its affairs in an open and transparent manner and will make information publicly available unless there are justifiable reasons, such as privacy or commerciality, for withholding it.
- 1.3 This Policy does not affect any general right of access to information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018 or any other relevant statutory provision or rule of law. Stockport Homes Group’s approach to Freedom of Information and Data Protection are set out in the company’s Information Governance Policies which should be read in conjunction with this Transparency Policy.
- 1.4 All personal information relating to Board Members will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and the Data Protection Act 2018, or any other relevant statutory provision or rule of law and the company’s Freedom of Information Policy.

2 PUBLIC MEETINGS

- 2.1 Stockport Homes Group’s Board, Foundations Stockport Board and Operations Committee will meet in public in accessible buildings.
- 2.2 Any items marked as confidential on the agenda will be discussed in private and the Board will exclude the press and public accordingly. The background papers and supporting documents of confidential reports are also confidential and will not be published.
- 2.3 Members of the public are able to ask the Group Board questions. If a member of the public wishes to raise an issue, they should do so in writing at least two working days in advance of the meeting. E.g. for a meeting on a Monday, written questions would have to be received by 5pm on Wednesday of the previous week. The Chair of that meeting will decide whether or not to provide an answer to such questions at a Board meeting or whether to provide a written statement in response. All questions to the Group Board should be sent to the Governance Manager.
- 2.4 The public will be excluded from meetings (or part of a meeting) whenever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that confidential information would be disclosed. Confidential information means information given to Stockport Homes Group on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be disclosed

under the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, the Data Protection Act 2018 or any other relevant statutory or provision, or rule of law, or any contractual requirement binding upon the Company.

- 2.5 Board meeting agendas and reports will be dispatched to Members no later than 5 days before the meeting.

3 CLOSED MEETINGS

- 3.1 Three Sixty Board, Viaduct Partnerships Board, Audit and Risk Committee and Nominations and Appointments Committee will not be held in public due to the sensitive information which will be considered in these meetings.
- 3.2 The minutes for the Audit & Risk Committee will be available for public inspection after they have been approved as a correct record of the proceedings at the next meeting.
- 3.3 The minutes for Three Sixty SHG, Viaduct Partnerships and the Nominations and Appointments Committee will not be made available for public inspection. In the event of a request being made consideration will be given to sharing those parts of the minutes that deemed to be non-confidential in accordance with the Information Governance Policy.

4 AVAILABILITY OF PAPERS

- 4.1 Full sets of Parent Board papers (excluding confidential items) will be published on the Stockport Homes website.
- 4.2 Minutes of the Parent Board, Operations Committee and Audit and Risk Committee meetings will be uploaded to the Stockport Homes' website for public inspection after they have been approved as a correct record of the meeting. The minutes for Three Sixty SHG, Viaduct Partnerships and Nominations and Appointments Committee will not be available for public inspection.

5 CODE OF CONDUCT

- 5.1 All Stockport Homes Group Board Members sign up to a Code of Conduct which complements the Transparency Policy. The Code of Conduct states that;

“You must not disclose information which is either given to you in confidence, or you believe to be confidential, without the consent of the person authorised

to give it (unless you are required by law to do so); or prevent someone from gaining information that they are entitled to by law”.

6 PRESS RELEASES AND OTHER PUBLICITY

- 6.1 The Chief Executive has delegated authority to co-ordinate all official publicity, press statements and publications of Stockport Homes Group. The Stockport Homes Group Chair, or other Board members, will make public statements on behalf of Stockport Homes Group with advice from the Chief Executive and the Marketing and Communications Manager. No public statements shall be made other than through the Marketing and Communications Manager.
- 6.2 Stockport Homes Group will actively publicise financial and performance information and news about the Group.

7 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- i. Stockport Homes – Information Governance Policy
- ii.
- iii. The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012

8 REVIEW

- 8.1 The Policy should be reviewed every three years or more frequently in the event of changes to legislation or guidance affecting its contents.