

Open minutes of Tower Hamlets Homes Board Meeting  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 **6.00pm – 8.00pm**  
New Town Hall, Whitechapel

**Board Directors Present:**

|                                 |   |                                   |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Ann Lucas (AL & Chair)          | - | Chair, Independent Board Director |
| Claire Tuffin (CT & Vice Chair) | - | Resident Board Director           |
| John Wu (Wu)                    | - | Independent Board Director        |
| Mahbub Anam (MA)                | - | Resident Board Director           |
| Nikesh Shah (NS)                |   |                                   |
| Abu Chowdhury (AC)              | - | Cllr Board Director               |

**Co – Optees Present:**

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Pam Haluwa (PH) | - | Co-Optee to Standards & Customer Experience Committee |
|-----------------|---|---|

**Officers Present:**

|                         |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Ann Otesanya (AO)       | - | Acting Chief Executive                              |
| Neil Isaac (NI)         | - | Director of Finance                                 |
| Beverley Greenidge (BG) | - | Director of Neighbourhoods                          |
| Paul Davey (PD)         | - | Director of Business Transformation                 |
| Michael Killeen (MK)    | - | Director of Asset Management                        |
| Gulam Hussain (GH)      | - | Head of Regulatory Assurance & Interim Head of NHDs |
| Darren Cruice (DC)      | - | Head of Asset Management & Compliance               |

**In Attendance:**

|               |   |      |
|---------------|---|------|
| John Kiwanuka | - | LBTH |
| Karen Swift   |   | LBTH |

**Apologies:**

|                     |   |                            |
|---------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Sameena Raouf (SR)  | - | Governance Officer         |
| Safia Jama (SJam)   | - | Independent Board Director |
| Maium Talukdar (MT) | - | Cllr Board Director        |

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|-----------|---|--|
| <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 and PH 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 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023</b>   |  |
| 4.1.      | <i>The THH Board <b>AGREED</b> minutes of meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 were an accurate record.</i>                                  |  |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Bentworth Court Update</b>   |  |
| 5.1       | GH introduced the report and outlined progress on the programme of works, support for residents and the timeline for their return to Bentworth Court. |  |
| 5.2       | JW asked about the number of households still due to return. GH confirmed that 31 families were still awaiting return.                                |  |

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| 5.3       | MA asked for clarification of the anticipated overall return date.   |  |
| 5.4       | GH said that the vast majority of homes should be back in occupation by mid-June. This timeline recognises that residents have been seeking a weeks' notice prior to agreeing a move-in date and the preparations required to resolve issues with energy supplies, agreeing replacement fridges with THH and completing any other remedial repair requests. A small number of flats (circa 5/6) are expected to be subject to a more prolonged return timetable due to the extent of damage from the explosion itself or subsequent damage from leaks which now require the properties to be fully refurbished.  |  |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Damp and Mould Improvement Plan</b>   |  |
| 6.1       | PD introduced the report. Following the Housing Ombudsman's spotlight report on Damp, mould and condensation (DMC) and the subsequent tragic death of Awaab Ishak due to damp and mould in his home, THH have been working hard to identify any potential gaps in service and improvements that need to be made. The report set out the process of improvement and early changes made.   |  |
| 6.2       | JW asked if the DMC dashboard: was primarily for management or board?  |  |
| 6.3       | PD responded that we are currently working on the details of this, but data around damp and mould will be presented in dashboards for Board, EMT and the Council according to specific needs and preferences.  |  |
| 6.4       | MA noted that this programme will require resourcing and asked how this will be achieved.  |  |
| 6.5       | MK said that THH repairs are recruiting 4 inspectors for damp and mould within the new structure and as of 4/5/23 - 2 inspectors have been recruited and interviews are planned for other inspectors. The structure also includes a Team Leader for administration of repairs and customer care. The additional resources should be in place by August 2023.   |  |
| 6.6       | JW asked if any of the actions are considered to be falling behind schedule? ES responded by saying that the improvement plan was recently reviewed to ensure that deadlines are realistic based on weekly discussions concerning resource, time taken to develop processes and systems. No actions therefore are currently falling behind schedule. However, there a quite a few actions due throughout May which are essential to the finalisation of the policy and process map. With this in mind, and our desire to engage residents on our policy and approach, it is likely that the policy/process mapping action (29) will fall behind schedule for an end of May deadline. |  |
| 6.7       | MA asked about the cost implication of this as most of the stock is old and likely to have damp.   |  |
| 6.8       | MK said the reactive M&D works are covered within the Price Per Property (PPP) contract. Additional resources are for THH internal to manage going forward. The capital programme will be impacted by information which informs the decision for improvements including windows, roofs, insulation and mechanical extraction systems. This needs to be incorporated within the criteria for deciding the right investment.   |  |

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| 6.9 | CT suggested that it might be helpful to have photos of damp and mould on the website to help residents identify it.<br><br>PD thought this was a good suggestion and would see this was looked into.  | <b>PD</b> |
| 7.  | <b>CE Report</b>   |           |
| 7.1 | AO presented the CE report and highlighted some areas to note, including updates on the contractual dispute with Engie, revised tenancy conditions, the fire at Maddocks House, Robin Hood Gardens and performance to March 2023.  |           |
| 7.2 | JW offered congratulations on the Engie result and asked if we had an indication as to the magnitude of overpaid amounts that could be recovered?  |           |
| 7.3 | NI reported that Engie had previously agreed that they had been overpaid by £1.67m and had agreed to repay it. Since preparing the CE's report Engie have written to the Council to issue a "Notice of Disagreement" to say that they disagree with the outcome. As an alternative to lengthy and expensive court proceedings they have suggested a further discussion on the issue to see if the parties can come to a "commercial" agreement to settle the accounts. We have a meeting with legal colleagues to discuss next steps on the 12th of May. |           |
| 7.4 | On the new Tenancy Agreement MA asked if AirBnB was addressed.   |           |
| 7.5 | BG replied that set out the change in the TA on this:  |           |
| 7.6 | <i>You must not give up possession or sublet part of your home without first getting written permission from us (which will not be refused without a good reason). Permission will not be given for Airbnb or similar short-term sublettings.</i>  |           |
| 7.7 | MA also asked if there were plans for Watney Market underground car park.  |           |
| 7.8 | MK replied that improvements including re-surfacing the market area to stop leaks to the undercroft have been approved. There are also plans to install new lighting and sprinkler system. The site has been highlighted for discussion about the potential development opportunity.   |           |

Actions Log: Open Board Meeting  
23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 6.10pm – 7.10pm

| Item | Action   | Who       | Due | Status    |
|------|--|-----------|-----|-----------|
| 6.9  | CT suggested that it might be helpful to have photos of damp and mould on the website to help residents identify it. | <b>PD</b> |     | Completed |

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Chair**

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**Date**