



Wolverhampton Homes

Open Board Meeting

18 September 2020

Time 10.30 am **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Wolverhampton Homes
Venue Virtual Meeting - via Microsoft Teams

Membership

Derek Allen
Parveen Brigue
Victor Browne
Angela Davies
Hajrija Dergic
Steve Finegan
Joy McLaren
Councillor Lynne Moran
Mike Porter
Councillor Rita Potter
Councillor Zee Russell
Councillor Paul Singh

Information

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact Maya Dhanda:

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Wolverhampton WV1 3AG

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

Website <https://wolverhamptonintranet.moderngov.co.uk>
Email maya.dhanda@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk
Tel 07881358595

Agenda

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting - 10 July 2020** (Pages 3 - 6)
- 4 **Matters arising**

FOR DECISION

- 5 **Governance Arrangements - Annual Review - Julie Haydon, Assistant Director - Corporate Services** (Pages 7 - 18)

FOR INFORMATION

- 6 **Health and Safety - 12-month update 2019 - 2020 - Tim Munro, Health and Safety Lead** (Pages 19 - 24)

A.O.B

DATE OF NEXT OPEN BOARD MEETING: 02 DECEMBER 2020 (PROPOSED)

M INUTES



Meeting: OPEN BOARD MEETING
Date: 10 JULY 2020
Venue: Virtual Meeting – via Microsoft Teams
Time: 9:30 AM

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: -

Angela Davies - Chair
Steve Finegan - Vice-Chair
Parveen Brigue - Board member
Derek Allen - Board member
Hajrija Dergic - Board member
Joy McLaren - Board member
Councillor Lynne Moran - Board Member
Councillor Zareena Russell - Board Member
Councillor Paul Singh - Board Member

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -

Shaun Aldis - Chief Executive
Angela Barnes - Assistant Director – Housing Options
Darren Baggs - Assistant Director – Housing
Ian Gardner - Assistant Director – Building Services
Julie Haydon - Assistant Director – Corporate Services
Kevin Manning - Assistant Director – Asset Management
Nicky Devey - Head of Business Services
Simon Bamfield - Head of Commercial Services and Stock Investment
Catherine Stewardson - Business Assurance Manager

CWC STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -

Jo McCoy - Head of Financial Management, City of Wolverhampton Council

1.0	Apologies	
1.1	- Councillor Rita Potter - Linda Middleton – Tenant Board member - Victor Browne – Tenant Board member	

2.0	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angela Davies - Joy McLaren 	
3.0	Minutes of the previous meeting – 24 April 2020	
3.1	Agreed as a true record.	
4.0	Matters arising	
4.1	There were no matters arising.	
For Information		
5.0	Revenue Out-turn position 2019 – 2020, Jo McCoy, Head of Financial Management, City of Wolverhampton Council	
5.1	Board were provided with an overview of the Revenue Out-turn position for 2019 – 2020.	
5.2	Board were informed of the agreed £1.9 m use of reserves following the transition from Hickman Avenue and planned refurbishment of Wolverhampton Homes asset portfolio.	
5.3	It was confirmed to Board that Wolverhampton Homes knows the challenges that are associated with the Medium-Term Financial Planning and has plans in place to bring costs in line with the associated pressures of the People Deal, the impact of Covid-19 response and subsequent redesign of services.	
5.4	Board members acknowledged the healthy end of year out-turn position and requested that WH monitor the reliance on use of reserves to balance the budget, and to ensure this is linked to future redesign plans to provide assurance of sustainability.	
	<p>Resolved: Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the contents of the Report 	
6.0	Capital Programme Out-turn Report 2019 – 2020 – Simon Bamfield, Head of Commercial Services and Stock Investment	
6.1	<p>Board were provided with an overview of the Capital Programme Out-turn Report 2019 – 2020 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety measures for tenants requiring adaptations especially those of a vulnerable position or who are currently shielding. - Assurance that risk assessments are produced in line with COVID-19 guidance, Public Health England and HSE directive, which is applied to all capital projects. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to properties in relation to the Decent Homes Standard where the customer is deemed vulnerable - the number of properties was noted within the report and it was confirmed to Board that Estate Custodians are acting quickly to build relationships with such tenants. - A reduction in water pressure was also highlighted with reference to works at Boscobel. In response, Tenancy Officers are working closely with such residents to improve the situation, this is an ongoing process and a challenging situation, which is constantly under review. With reference to Boscobel, work is currently in process to install pumps and tanks, with pipework now complete, in all this will resolve issues with the water pressure in the forthcoming month. <p>6.2 Board requested clarity to point 6.3 of the report in line with Health & Safety and the option of moving vulnerable tenants during construction works (post COVID-19). Board were informed that temporary respite is always considered but, in most cases, this may not be an option, and any complex issues are handled safely with care and understanding.</p> <p>6.3 Board enquired as to the environmental and sustainability impact within the programme. Board were advised of the work being undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installation of LED lighting (reduced running costs) - Heath Town upgrade - District Heating System - Insulation to dwellings (reducing heat loss) - Action Plan focussing on carbon reduction and climate change in line with City of Wolverhampton Council “Future Generations” – carbon neutral by 2028. <p>6.4 Board commented on the out-turn for the year noting the excellent results, with any overspend noted as a negative which in turn is a positive result, with all management costs associated with the project being fully absorbed.</p> <p>Resolved: Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the contents of the Report 	
<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p>Apprenticeship Schemes – Sarah Butcher – Organisational Development Manager</p> <p>Julie Haydon, Assistant Director, Corporate Services presented this report.</p> <p>Board were provided with further details as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised proposal regarding early careers at Wolverhampton Homes. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EDI monitoring in terms of review of the workforce profiling and career escalation of apprentices to senior roles. - Multiskilling used as a general term around flexibility in the trade workforce being trained in single trade work with additional basic elements of skill for associated works. Responsive Repairs are looking to enhance skills sets to allow trades to be able to complete works within one visit. 	
7.3	Board enquired as to the Government announcements in relation to Covid-19 economic difficulties, and the impact on the expansion of apprenticeships to give young people valuable and meaningful opportunities.	
7.4	<p>Board were advised of the emphasis on employing local people to support the Wolverhampton economy. Coaches working across the city in high unemployment areas as part of the Click Start programme will provide opportunities to individuals to work closely with organisations such as WH. It was also noted that the Employability team will be working more closely with the City of Wolverhampton Council to maximise opportunities.</p> <p>Resolved: Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the update following the report presented on 24 May 2019 (Oliver Herrmann) • Noted the indication of the full revised proposal regarding early careers at Wolverhampton Homes, which will be presented to Board members in due course 	
8.0	A.O.B	
8.1	Board were asked to note that Board Member Linda Middleton has resigned with immediate effect.	
8.2	The Chief Executive and Chair of the Board asked that thanks are noted for the support Linda has given during the term served on the Wolverhampton Homes Board.	
9.0	Date of next meeting	
9.1	<p>Change of Date: Friday 18 September 2020</p> <p>Time: 9:30 am</p> <p>Location: Virtual Meeting via MS Teams</p>	

Board Report

	Agenda Item 5
	18 September 2020 Governance Arrangements – Annual Review
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Nicky Devey, Head of Business Services
Contact No:	07773 192830
Recommendations:	Board members are asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the Terms of Reference in line with the Governance Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board • Business Assurance Committee • Communities and Service Delivery Committee 2. Note the ongoing Governance Arrangements
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>That the Board and Committees of Wolverhampton Homes are structured to ensure Board Members are able to discharge their leadership responsibilities; make strong and effective strategic decisions and to hold Senior Management to account for the operational delivery of Wolverhampton Homes business.</p> <p>The Board must provide adequate assurance to its shareholder and wider stakeholder groups that it is effective in its operation and able to respond effectively to the anticipated future regulatory framework.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Following the implementation in January 2020 of the new Wolverhampton Homes governance structure to provide a strengthened governance framework, the report details the Board and Committee Structure and associated Terms of Reference which underpin the delivery of both the current and future legal and statutory framework that Board Members and Wolverhampton Homes work within.
- 1.2 As such an annual review of the associated Terms of Reference is required.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Wolverhampton Homes has in place a 4-year Business Plan 2019 – 2023 detailing its key strategic objectives and service delivery priorities. The plan took account the primary issues identified within the recent social housing green paper and those likely to feature through the extension of the regulatory framework for social housing through the forthcoming white paper, should this be published.
- 2.2 The core objectives of the Business Plan are themed as follows:
 - Enhanced community and customer focus
 - Providing safe and secure homes
 - Supporting people to sustain their tenancies and homes
- 2.3 The governance arrangements support the delivery of the core objectives with the following committees:
 - Communities and Service Delivery Committee - provide a decision-making focus that incorporates customer scrutiny and going forward, will ensure that the customer voice is heard.
 - Audit and Business Assurance Committee - the expected future regulatory framework and compliance with the consumer standards will link into this committee.
- 2.4 Additional consultation on the review of the Terms of Reference has been undertaken with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board.

3.0 Governance Framework

- 3.1 The Governance Structure comprises of Board, Business Assurance Committee and Communities and Service Delivery Committee.
- 3.2 The programme of Board and Committee meetings will take place throughout the year (each to meet 4 times per year).
- 3.3 Membership of each Committee compromises of 6 Board Members – 2 from each member group and where practicable aligned to areas of particular interest or expertise.

- 3.4 As part of the Board development, individual Board Members through a series of appraisal and development meetings, will be able to identify areas of particular interest aligned to the associated committee membership.
- 3.5 The overview of activities, responsibilities and content of the Board and Committees are detailed below and in future the associated Terms of Reference (Appendix 1, 2 & 3):
- Board will continue to:
 - Have a continued focus on the strategic direction of the Company incorporating medium term financial planning; redesign plans; strategic human resources issues such as restructures and remuneration issues; and revised business plans
 - Continue to establish and agree the overarching Business Assurance framework; strategic Health and Safety policy; and internal and external audit requirements
 - Continue to agree annual delivery plans and associated operational service plans
 - Continue to be ultimately responsible for compliance with all relevant legislation as an employer; provider of services and in line with its responsibilities, to report to CWC, Companies House and to all relevant regulatory agencies
 - Communities and Service Delivery Committee will continue to:
 - Cover service performance, customer feedback and satisfaction, and scrutiny, community development and cohesion
 - Oversee the delivery of the Customer Services Strategy and Community Development Strategy; consider customer feedback and ensure it supports operational service design and the delivery of service improvements as part of the planned redesign of services
 - Consider operational service performance information and support the #GoodtoGreat journey and enhanced customer satisfaction
 - Business Assurance Committee will continue to:
 - Include Internal and External Audit, compliance and the regulatory framework (built environment / business environment), redesign changes and value for money
 - Focus on the scrutiny of the approach to risk management and business continuity planning; oversee progress against compliance or improvement action plans arising from performance reviews, health and safety, internal audit or other external assessment outcomes
 - Retain a focus on preparing for regulatory changes and compliance against the current consumer standards
- 3.6 When required, additional confidential matters can be added to any of the above agendas to support the effective and timely decision making needed, across a range of operational work streams.

4.0 Financial and value for money implications

4.1 There are no proposals within this report that have immediate financial implications.

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 The governance framework underpins the Articles of Association ensuring that the Board of Wolverhampton Homes operates within the Companies governance requirements and meets its legal obligations.

6.0 Human resources implications

6.1 There are no immediate implications within this report. The proposed new framework will be supported by the current staffing arrangements.

6.2 The Senior Leadership Team will take greater ownership in the drafting and presenting of reports to Committees, support the development of skills and capabilities across this management tier.

7.0 Health and safety implications

7.1 There are no immediate Health and Safety implications as a result of this report. However, Board Members have significant responsibilities for Health and Safety both as an employer and through the operational delivery of services. This new framework supports the effective discharge of their responsibilities.

8.0 Long term consequences for the company

8.1 This will enable a planned and consistent approach to ensuring business decisions are presented and considered appropriately and in a timely manner by the relevant Board or Committee.

8.2 This supports the changing operating environment enabling WH to continue to support the City of Wolverhampton Council, in the delivery of its strategic aims under the management agreement.

8.3 The company is required to respond to any changes in the regulatory framework and this will strengthen the involvement of customer feedback as valuable insight as to how services are delivered, providing additional ways in which services can be effectively scrutinised.

9.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

9.1 Good governance will ensure Wolverhampton Homes is continuing to comply with the management agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council in fulfilling its governance and business requirements supporting an improved approach to the delivery of key business decisions.

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1: Wolverhampton Homes Board Terms of Reference
- 10.2 Appendix 2: Wolverhampton Homes Communities and Service Delivery Committee Terms of Reference
- 10.3 Appendix 3: Wolverhampton Homes Audit and Business Assurance Committee Terms of Reference

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Wolverhampton Homes Board Terms of Reference	
Board Structure	
<p>Members: The Board of Wolverhampton Homes consists of 12 members:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four (4) Councillors - Four (4) Independents - Four (4) Tenants
Board Leadership	
<p>The Chair is a Board Member appointed by the members as mandated by the Board Nomination Process.</p>	
<p>Should the Chair not be available for a meeting, the Vice Chair will deputise, or the Chair will designate another appointed Board member.</p>	
<p>The Board Chair also assumes responsibility for:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leading the annual review of the Board Terms of Reference - Membership on the Board by inclusion in the Board Recruitment process - Obtaining Board approval of members - Annual appraisal of Board members including regular self-assessment of skills knowledge and expertise
Terms	
<p>Board Meetings will be held at least four (4) times a year on a quarterly basis with additional meetings as necessary to carry out its responsibilities.</p> <p>Additional sessions for Board to receive confidential reports would be incorporated when required to ensure decisions can be made in a timely and effective manner with delegated authority for the Chair, Vice Chair, the Chief Executive and Assistant Director – Corporate Services.</p>	
Quorum	
<p>Will be determined by a simple majority of Board members, which must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Councillor member - 1 Tenant member - 1 Independent member <p>Decisions will be made via a simple majority of attendees. Where there is a deadlock, the Chair will have the casting vote.</p> <p>Wolverhampton Homes Senior Management attendance as required.</p>	
Responsibilities	
<p>The role of the Board is to provide strategic decision making within the business objectives and Company’s Articles of Association in support of the development and delivery of strategy, policy and activity undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes. The Board will always retain overall responsibility for the financial affairs of the Company, compliance with all relevant legislation as an employer, provider of services and in line with its responsibilities to report to the City of Wolverhampton Council, Companies House and to all relevant regulatory agencies.</p>	

This includes the monitoring and holding to account the Senior Management in the delivery of priorities and opportunities as detailed in the Business Plan 2019 – 2023, with a continued focus on the strategic direction of the company, incorporating medium term financial planning, transformation plans, finances, investments and reserves, strategic Human Resources issues such as restructures, revised business plans or business cases for change, signing off major decisions, changes to the business assurance framework such as the corporate risk log and business plan by way of:

- Establishing and agreeing the overarching Business Assurance framework, strategic health and safety policy, internal and external audit requirements
- Ensuring Wolverhampton Homes meets its legal and statutory requirements under the management agreement and that it undertakes due diligence on behalf of its shareholder, namely, the City of Wolverhampton Council
- Agree annual delivery plans and associated operational plans
- Key decision making on priority areas and topics, development of new priority areas, recommended actions or interventions to be taken to address priorities
- Advise on policy – in supporting Wolverhampton Homes through recommendations on current policy and policy development in all areas of activity
- Continual review of the relevance and effectiveness of Wolverhampton Homes services
- Assurance of sound financial management by scrutinising the allocation of financial / human resources to the achievement of the Business Plan
- Ensuring organisational design supports the attainment of strategic objectives
- Setting the risk appetite and ensuring appropriate controls are in place
- Evaluating the performance of the Board and Board Members
- Procurement approval and authorisation for tender / notice to award
- Planning for board member succession (with statutory constraints)
- Receiving and reviewing feedback from the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Board Champions to inform the decision-making process
- Responsible for referring to relevant Committees matters considered by the Board to be deemed relevant for escalation / information sharing / further review
- In addition, the Board will receive input and presentation as necessary in order to be able to discharge its responsibilities.

Board Performance

On an annual basis the Board shall:

- review its effectiveness
- review the Board and Committee terms of reference to ensure they continue to reflect the business priorities of Wolverhampton Homes
- validate the needs of the Board, and current standards for effective governance

Agenda and Minutes

The Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Chief Executive of Wolverhampton Homes, is responsible for finalising the agenda. Input into the Agenda items may include items requested to be tabled by the Board.

The agenda, meeting materials and previous minutes should be made available at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting. A copy of the Open Board minutes and a forward plan of meeting dates will be published on the website. Business Assurance will facilitate and provide the minute taking for each meeting and ensure the sharing and cascade of minutes as appropriate.

Wolverhampton Homes Communities and Service Delivery Committee Terms of Reference	
Committee Structure	
Members: The Communities and Service Delivery Committee consists of six members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two (2) Councillors - Two (2) Independents - Two (2) Tenants
Committee Leadership	
The Chair is a Committee Member appointed by the members as mandated by the Board Nomination Process.	
Should the Chair or Vice Chair not be available for a meeting, the Chair or Vice Chair will designate another appointed Board or Committee member. Back fill arrangements and the option to co-opt Board members to the Committee as required will be permitted.	
The Committee Chair also assumes responsibility for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership on the Committee by inclusion in the Board nomination process - Obtaining Committee approval of members
Terms	
Committee Meetings will be held at least four (4) times a year on a quarterly basis with additional meetings as necessary to carry out its responsibilities.	
Additional sessions for Committee to receive confidential reports would be incorporated when required to ensure decisions can be made in a timely and effective manner with delegated authority for the Chair, Vice Chair, the Chief Executive and Assistant Director – Corporate Services.	
Quorum	
Will be determined by a simple majority of Committee members, which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Councillor member - 1 Tenant member - 1 Independent member 	
Decisions will be made via a simple majority of attendees. Where there is a deadlock, the Chair will have the casting vote.	
Wolverhampton Homes Senior Management attendance as required.	
Responsibilities	
The role of the Board is to provide strategic decision making within the business objectives and Company's Articles of Association in support of the development and delivery of strategy, policy and activity undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes.	
This includes the monitoring and holding to account the Senior Management in the delivery against the Business Plan 2019 - 2023 incorporating Service Performance, Customer Feedback and Satisfaction, Customer Scrutiny, Community Development and Community Cohesion by way of:	

- Providing assurance that Wolverhampton Homes has a robust framework to achieve continuous improvement and excellent service delivery to its customers
- Linking in to the Business Assurance Committee to share matters it defines relevant or where there are cross cutting implications
- Reviewing the company performance data to ensure it is meeting its key performance indicator targets to support the #GoodtoGreat journey and enhance customer satisfaction
- Scrutinising and prioritising customer feedback and learning, through regular monitoring in order to make recommendations where necessary for further review or follow up action
- Ensuring scrutiny arrangements and the views of tenants are at the heart of the decision-making process to reflect the 'customer voice' is effectively heard
- Consideration of customer feedback to ensure it supports operational service design and the delivery of service improvements such as the Estate Custodian approach
- To oversee progress against the Customer Care Strategy and the implementation of the tenant and leaseholder deals
- Decision making in regard to key HR issues and remuneration
- Receiving and reviewing feedback from the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Board Champions to inform the decision-making process
- Responsible for referring up to the Board / Business Assurance and Governance Committee, matters considered by Committee to be deemed relevant for escalation / information sharing / further review
- To assure the Committee and Board that Wolverhampton Homes are effective in meeting regulatory and statutory requirements
- In addition, the Committee will receive input and presentation as necessary in order to be able to discharge its responsibilities.

Committee Performance

The Committee shall provide Board with an annual assurance statement and shall:

- be accountable to the Board
- review its effectiveness
- review the terms of reference annually to ensure it continues to reflect the business assurance priorities of Wolverhampton Homes
- validate the needs of the Committee, and current standards for effective governance

Agenda and Minutes

The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Chief Executive of Wolverhampton Homes, is responsible for finalising the agenda.

Input into the Agenda items may include items requested to be tabled by the Committee.

The agenda, meeting materials and previous minutes should be made available at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting.

Business Assurance will facilitate and provide the minute taking for each meeting and ensure the sharing and cascade of minutes as appropriate.

Wolverhampton Homes Audit and Business Assurance Committee Terms of Reference	
Committee Structure	
Members: The Business Assurance Committee consists of six members:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two (2) Councillors - Two (2) Independents - Two (2) Tenants
Committee Leadership	
The Chair is a Committee Member appointed by the members as mandated by the Board nomination process.	
Should the Chair or Vice Chair not be available for a meeting, the Chair or Vice Chair will designate another appointed Board or Committee member. Back fill arrangements and the option to co-opt Board members to the Committee as required will be permitted.	
The Committee Chair also assumes responsibility for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Membership on the Committee by inclusion in the Board nomination process - Obtaining Committee approval of members
Terms	
Committee Meetings will be held at least four (4) times a year on a quarterly basis with additional meetings as necessary to carry out its responsibilities.	
Additional sessions for Committee to receive confidential reports will be incorporated as required to ensure decisions can be made in a timely and effective manner with delegated authority for the Chair, Vice Chair, the Chief Executive and Assistant Director – Corporate Services.	
Quorum	
Will be determined by a simple majority of Committee members which must include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 Councillor member - 1 Tenant member - 1 Independent member 	
Decisions will be made via a simple majority of attendees. Where there is a deadlock, the Chair will have the casting vote.	
Wolverhampton Homes Senior Management attendance as required.	
Responsibilities	
The role of the Board is to provide strategic decision making within the business objectives and Company’s Articles of Association in support of the development and delivery of strategy, policy and activity undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes. This includes the monitoring and holding to account the Senior Management in the delivery against the Business Plan 2019 - 2023, incorporating Internal Audit, External Audit, Compliance and Regulatory Framework (Built Environment / Business Environment), Transformational Change, Value for Money and monitoring the effectiveness of shared services (SLA’s) by way of:	

- Providing assurance that Wolverhampton Homes has a robust framework for the management of risk and compliance arising from or associated with Property, Health and Safety, Workforce, Reputational Management, Governance, Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning
- Approval of the Annual Audit Programme
- Linking in to the Communities and Service Delivery Committee to share matters it defines relevant or where there are cross cutting implications
- Scrutinising and prioritising risks and compliance through regular monitoring, in order to make recommendations where necessary for further review or follow up action
- To oversee progress against compliance or improvement action plans arising from performance reviews, Health and Safety, Internal and External Audit or other external assessment
- To investigate any activity associated with risk and compliance as required, to assure the Committee and Board that Wolverhampton Homes are effective in meeting regulatory and statutory requirements
- To retain a focus on preparing for regulatory changes and compliance against the current Consumer Standards
- Receiving and reviewing feedback from the Tenant Scrutiny Panel and Board Champions to inform the decision-making process
- Responsible for referring up to the Board / Communities and Service Delivery Committee, matters considered by Committee to be deemed relevant for escalation / information sharing / further review
- Obtaining independent specialist Audit advice as required
- In addition, the Committee will receive input and presentation as necessary in order to be able to discharge its responsibilities

Committee Performance

The Committee shall provide Board with an annual assurance statement and shall:

- be accountable to the Board
- review its effectiveness
- review the terms of reference to ensure it continues to reflect the business assurance priorities of Wolverhampton Homes
- validate the needs of the Committee, and current standards for effective governance

Agenda and Minutes

The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Chief Executive of Wolverhampton Homes, is responsible for finalising the agenda.

Input into the Agenda items may include items requested to be tabled by the Committee.

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Business Assurance will facilitate and provide the minute taking for each meeting and ensure the sharing and cascade of minutes as appropriate.

Board Report

	Agenda Item 6
	18 September 2020 Health and Safety – 12-month update 2019 – 2020
	Open Report
Status:	For Information
Author and job title:	Tim Munro, Health and Safety Lead, CWC
Contact No:	079767 51442
Recommendations:	Board members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of the report
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>Protecting the Health and Safety of employees and members of the public who may be affected by our activities is an essential part of risk management and must be led by the Board.</p> <p>Health and Safety law places duties on organisations, employers and Directors who can be personally responsible when these duties are breached.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To update members as to the progress and changes made in relation to the management of health and safety at Wolverhampton Homes (WH).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 This report will focus on the achievements from the last report, and planned objectives for the next 12 months.

Overall responsibility for health and safety continues to rest with the Chief Executive and Directors of Wolverhampton Homes.

Operationally, the City Council's specialist Health and Safety team provide health and safety advice and support through a service level agreement. The service level agreement is managed through the Assistant Director - Corporate Services.

- 2.2 Formal arrangements for regular monitoring exist through the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee meetings, which are Chaired by the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and include Trade Union representatives on behalf of employees. Minutes of these meetings are then shared with all employees through employee briefing and are also monitored through SMT.

Liaison and joint working with Trade Union representatives remains a positive and constructive relationship with both parties working together to identify and resolve health and safety matters.

Other formal monitoring of health and safety progress is included in the Health and Safety Champions meetings and service level agreement review meetings between the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Health and Safety Lead at City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC).

- 2.3 At the December 2019 Board meeting, discussion took place with regards to Wolverhampton Homes developing and implementing an action plan to identify key health and safety milestones. It is intended this will be used to monitor progress with the health and safety agenda, however, this piece of work is ongoing but has been limited due to the impact of Covid-19.
- 2.4 The draft action plan is being developed in line with the Plan, Do, Check Act cycle, identified in the HSE Document 'Successful Health and Safety Management'.

3.0 Updates

- 3.1 Fire safety remains a key area for health and safety. Wolverhampton Homes acknowledges its responsibility to take precautions to protect the safety of its employees, customers and any relevant persons affected by its undertaking, against fire, dangerous substances, which could give rise to fire, and the spread and effects of fire.

The general fire precautions apply to all places of work and housing stock, however, under legislative requirements reference is required for higher risk premises, identified as workplaces, high rise blocks of flats, supported housing schemes and low-rise blocks of flats.

General needs housing is not classed as high risk, but not withstanding that any fire situations, which occur in these lower risk premises are fully investigated and any remedial actions, or lessons learned, actioned across the housing stock within appropriate timescales.

- 3.2 Health and safety training continues to feature strongly in Wolverhampton Homes overall training plan. This training offers a blended approach of that provided by in house trainers and additionally by specialist external providers.

Health and safety training for employees starts during their induction training programme to ensure new staff receive information regarding essential health and safety.

On-going basis refresher training is delivered to employees to remind them of policies, procedures and practices, as well as updating them on changes and advances.

Examples of some of the training delivered over the last 12 months has included First Aid at Work, Asbestos Awareness, Personal Safety in relation to the Potentially Violent Persons Register, Accident Investigation for Managers, and Manual Handling.

- 3.3 Maintaining current applicable health and safety policies and procedures remains an effective way for Wolverhampton Homes to show and acknowledge its commitment to health and safety and has in place processes and procedures to allow employees to remain safe whilst at work.

During the last year, a review timetable has been developed to ensure existing are reviewed and refreshed in light of changing legislation and Wolverhampton Homes requirements.

- 3.4 Improvements and changes have been made to both strategic and operational health and safety issues and Wolverhampton Homes is committed to continually improving the health and safety culture.

4.0 Financial and value for money implications

- 4.1 There are no financial and value for money implications identified within this report.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Health and Safety law places duties on organisations, employers and Directors of the Board who are accountable, if these duties are breached.

6.0 Human resources implications

6.1 Board approval was given in July 2020 to appoint two internal Health and Safety officers to complement the existing service level provision. Recruitment to these posts is underway.

7.0 Health and safety implications

7.1 There are potentially serious risks for Wolverhampton Homes and its operations from inadequate consideration of health and safety issues. The punitive measures include not only enforcement powers of inspectors but can include both personal and corporate liability proceedings. As a significant presence in the West Midlands, Wolverhampton Homes could be considered a high-profile case, particularly if things go wrong. However, Wolverhampton Homes gives consideration to a sensible risk management that is about:

- Ensuring that employees and the public are properly protected
- Providing overall benefit to society by balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing real risks – both those, which arise more often and those with serious consequences
- Enabling innovation and learning, not stifling them
- Ensuring that those who create risks manage them responsibly and understand that failure to manage real risks responsibly is likely to lead to robust action
- Enabling individuals to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also must exercise responsibility

Sensible risk management **is not** about:

- Creating a totally risk-free society
- Generating huge amounts of paperwork
- Scaring people by exaggerating or publicising trivial risks
- Stopping important recreational and learning activities for individuals where the risks are managed
- Reducing protection of people from risks that cause real harm and suffering

8.0 Equalities implications

8.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? **NO**

8.2 Not required in relation to the report.

9.0 Impact on the environment and community

9.1 There is no impact on the environment and community identified within this report.

10.0 Long term consequences for the company

10.1 A robust Health and Safety policy and its effective implementation will safeguard against litigation, improve reputation, increase productivity, and reduce insurance premiums.

10.2 A review of the Health & Safety Service Level Agreement has been undertaken with a view to maximising the service provision to Wolverhampton Homes.

11.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

11.1 A safe, healthy organisation is important in the provision of effective and efficient services to our customers and is essential for the planning of quality services.

12.0 Impact of COVID-19

12.1 Covid-19 has had an impact on the delivery of the Health and Safety service, due to employees working from home based on government guidance where only essential services originally continued to be delivered.

12.2 The City of Wolverhampton Council Health and Safety Team have continued to provide help, advice and support to Wolverhampton Homes during this period particularly with regards to revised safe working arrangements for employees who cannot work from home, consideration of requirements to carry out individual risk assessments for employees and infection control advice.

12.3 As services are restored, the Health and Safety team are providing help, advice and undertaking site visits to Wolverhampton Homes premises.

13.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

13.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **NO**

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