

**A MEETING OF THE HOUSING BOARD
WAS HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2009**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Searle) (ex-officio), Chairman of Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Hook) (ex-officio), Councillors Allen, Beavis (P), Mrs Cully (P), Edwards (P), Geddes (P), Gill, Hylands (P), Mrs Mitchell-Smith (P), Mrs Mudie (P), and Philpott (Chairman) (P).

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Orders, notice had been received that Councillor Chegwyn would replace Councillor Gill for this meeting.

Also in attendance: Tenant Representative – Mrs Annie Barnes

22 APOLOGIES

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were submitted on behalf of The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Searle), Councillor Allen and Councillor Gill.

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

24 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meetings held on 17 June and 14 October 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman as true and correct records.

25 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

26 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

PART II

27 PROPOSED PLANS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF TRINITY GREEN

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing Services Manager which outlined the progress made in developing plans for the future of the Trinity Green site, including the two buildings known as Barclay House. An indicative scheme, including timetable and financial information, was presented. The proposals would be subject to planning approval and the ability to secure funding for the scheme from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) which was the successor to the Housing Corporation.

It was confirmed that the land would not be provided free of charge to the Housing Association partner, as indicated in paragraph 2.12 of the report. The land would be transferred for the amount agreed by the District Valuer and this sum would form part of the capital receipt funding put towards the redevelopment scheme. The hostel would continue to be owned and run by the Council and residents would not qualify for security of

tenure because the accommodation would not be self contained.

Members were concerned at the high density of dwellings proposed on the Trinity Green site. There were already parking problems and a lack of play space in the area and the additional affordable housing proposed as enabling development for the new hostel would exacerbate the situation. This would add to the problems of vandalism, noise and litter already suffered by residents of the Tower Blocks. Children would be tempted to play in the Time Space area and on the Ramparts which would not be acceptable.

Members questioned whether the necessary capital could be raised in other ways, for instance, through additional prudential borrowing and the use of commuted sums specified for housing purposes. Members were advised that commuted sums could be used for affordable housing but it would be difficult to justify their use for a homeless hostel.

In answer to a Member's question as to whether a homeless hostel could be provided as part of the Rowner Regeneration Scheme, officers advised that this Scheme was devised to regenerate the community of Rowner and it would not be appropriate to include a homeless hostel and more affordable housing within the Scheme.

Members requested that officers look in more detail at proposals, especially at other sites within the Borough, including existing garage blocks that were earmarked for redevelopment, with a view to relocating the homeless hostel and enabling affordable housing development to a more appropriate site.

Members also requested that additional methods of funding the proposed hostel be given further consideration by officers.

RESOLVED: That the Board agree that the Housing Services Manager, in liaison with Ward Councillors and Housing Spokespersons, continues working on the detailed proposals including financial, management, development and tenure discussions for the redevelopment of a homeless hostel.

28 BLICK UK LIMITED; TV AERIAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT RENEWAL

Consideration was given to the report of the Housing Services Manager which sought approval for the renewal of a planned maintenance contract for the servicing and updating of the communal TV aerial service.

It was confirmed that the contract would run until 31 December 2015 and not 2016 as stated in Recommendation a. of the report. It was also confirmed that proposal 2.1 (b) as detailed in the report was to be adopted.

Members considered that the service currently given by Blick UK Limited was satisfactory and the proposal being adopted would see costs falling below those of 2003.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- a. approve entering in to a contract with Blick UK Ltd (also know as Stanley Security Solutions Limited) for a period of five years from 1st January 2011 to December 31st 2015 as detailed in paragraph 2.1 (b) of the report of the Housing Services Manager; and

- b. waive contract standing order under 1.4.1 in respect of Standing order Part 4 Schedule 13 [6.5].

29 INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FRANKLIN ROAD (NO. 65-151 ODD)

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing Services Manager which informed the Housing Board of an innovative proposal to improve tenancy services to a Registered Social Landlord's tenants using the Council's expertise in the field and to grant the Housing Services Manager authority to develop the proposal.

Members welcomed this report and considered it to be a 'good news' story for the Borough. The proposal would enable a better service to be given to the residents of Franklin Road, who would now have a local point of contact for repairs and maintenance. Members paid tribute to former Councillor John Train who had initiated negotiations to improve the service given to Franklin Road residents.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- a. Note the development of joint working between the Council and Housing 21;
- b. Delegate to the Housing Services Manager the authority to enter into an agreement to cover interim arrangements for a trial period; and
- c. Note the intention of officers to explore a long term management arrangement with Housing 21 and that the outcome of that exploration is expected to be brought back to Housing Board in September 2010.

30 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That in relation to the following item the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during this item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reason set out.

31 REVIEW OF THIS COUNCIL'S HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION BUSINESS PLANS

Consideration was given to an exempt report of the Housing Services Manager which considered the impact of the proposed Housing Benefit subsidy changes on the respective homeless accommodation business plans and the need to review the way Barclay House homeless persons' hostel rent was set.

The report was exempt from publication as the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information by reason that it contained sensitive financial information concerning the Council's costs of provision of temporary accommodation for homeless households. Significant components of those costs were private landlord/owner charges to the Council and some of these costs were recommended for re-negotiation to reduce expenditure by the Council. As such, disclosure

of the contents of this report may compromise those negotiations.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- a. note the report; and
- b. agree that Barclay House rent setting becomes linked to the costs of providing the accommodation rather than being linked to rent restructuring.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 6.58 pm.

CHAIRMAN