

**Department for Communities and Local Government**  
**Board Meeting**  
**07 October 2013**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

- The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP – Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Chair)
- Baroness Hanham, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (for part)
- Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
  
- Sara Weller, Lead Non Executive Board Member
- Stephen Hay, Non Executive Board Member
- Diana Brightmore-Armour, Non Executive Board Member
- Nick Markham, Non Executive Board Member
  
- Sir Bob Kerslake, Permanent Secretary
- Helen Edwards, Director-General
- Peter Schofield, Director-General
- Andrew Campbell, Director-General
- Louise Casey, Director-General
- David Rossington, Director of Finance
- David Hill, Director of Strategy and Private Office
  
- Joe Tuke (Item 1)
- Terrie Alafat (Item 2)
- Andy Rose, Chief Exec of Homes and Communities Agency (Item 2)
- Stephen Warburton, PricewaterhouseCoopers (Item 3)

**Apologies:**

- The Rt Hon Don Foster MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Nick Boles MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State

**Secretariat:**

- Lucy Yates
- Julie Nelson

**Introduction and matters arising**

1. Secretary of State welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

**Item 1: Public Services for People**

2. Louise Casey introduced the item and set out the key learning points from the Troubled Families programme.

3. The Troubled Families programme was still at a relatively early stage, but Louise highlighted the importance of setting out an established routine to drive and sustain momentum.
4. Joe Tuke gave the Board an update on the key risks and mitigations associated with the programme and the Board noted the progress to date.
5. Helen Edwards introduced the second part of the item, looking at transforming lives through joined up health and social care. Helen set out the context; a tight fiscal environment in which demand for adult social care continued to rise. Furthermore, most people knew of a personal individual experience where health and social care services could be improved.
6. Helen set out the steps to bring about this significant transformation and also stressed the behaviours needed to make the programme a success; energy, passion and strong leadership.

### **Item 2: Housing update**

- Peter Schofield summarised the current housing market. There is increasing confidence in the market, with an upturn in demand. There were promising signs in the construction sector, reflected in both starts & completions and housing construction data.
7. Peter Schofield introduced Andy Rose to the Board. Andy summed up the role of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in housing delivery; with corporate priorities focused on
    - i. The Affordable Housing Programme
    - ii. Recoverable investment
    - iii. Bringing surplus public land to the market
    - iv. Local Growth agenda
    - v. Regulation
  8. In discussion the Board considered the changing nature of the HCAs investment programme and the skills needed to deliver this effectively.

### **Item 3: Finance**

9. Stephen Warburton from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) introduced the item; the Board had agreed at the last meeting to review the department's finance function following the qualification of the accounts. The Audit and Risk Committee discussed the emerging findings of the PwC report when it met on 20 September.
10. Stephen presented the report and set out the recommendations to the Board. The finance function had made progress over recent years and there was scope to make further changes, for example in relation to portfolio management.
11. Stephen Hay emphasised the significance of the change to the department's business and the need for a swift review to ensure that the existing control

framework is sound. Sara Weller emphasised the importance of good management information.

**Action: Andrew Campbell** to lead on an implementation plan and report on progress.

**Item 4: Performance**

12. Andrew Campbell provided a review of performance and implementation challenges for the Department.

**AOB and concluding remarks**

13. The Board agreed that the agenda for the next meeting should include planning.

14. The revised Terms of Reference were agreed.

15. The Secretary of State thanked attendees for their contribution to the meeting.

**End**