



**BOARD MEETING
Monday 7 December 2015 11.00 – 12.00**

Minutes

Attendees:

- The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Chair)
- Sara Weller, Lead Non- Executive Director
- Nick Markham, Non-Executive Director
- Grenville Turner, Non-Executive Director
- Melanie Dawes, Permanent Secretary
- Peter Schofield, Director General Housing and Planning
- Simon Ridley, Director General Decentralisation and Growth
- Stephen Meek, Director Strategy, Communications and Private Office
- Jacinda Humphry, Director Finance
- Christine Hewitt, Director People, Capability and Change

Apologies:

- The Rt Hon Mark Francois MP, Minister of State
- Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State
- Marcus Jones MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- James Wharton MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Baroness Williams of Trafford, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Louise Casey, Director General, Troubled Families
- Helen Edwards, Director General, Local Government and Public Services

Secretariat:

- Alex Williams, Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State
- Nina Shuttlewood, Board Secretary
- Emily Pignon, Assistant Board Secretary

In attendance:

- Tom Walker, Director, Cities and Local Growth
- Laurence Rockey, Deputy Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit
- Andrew Sissons, Head of Devolution Strategy, Cities and Local Growth Unit
- Isobel Stephen, Director, Housing Supply
- Scott Dennison, Deputy Director, Housing and Planning Analysis
- Ben Llewellyn, Deputy Director, Housing Strategy

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. The Secretary of State welcomed attendees to the meeting, particularly members at their first Board meeting and noted the apologies. He thanked Sara Weller for her work as Lead Non-Executive Director for the department.

Item 2: Devolution Deals

1. Simon Ridley explained that the purpose of the discussion today was to set out how the department would continue to push the Devolution and Growth agenda across Whitehall.
2. The Decentralisation and Growth team noted that this was a good time to have the discussion with seven deals done, the Bill concluding and the Local Government Finance Settlement setting the background. Key points from their introduction were:
 - a) Devolution was at the heart of Government's agenda, and DCLG was leading on a number of key reforms that would shift the balance of power in England from Whitehall to local people. The key elements of this agenda include:
 - i. Agreeing devolution deals with places across England
 - ii. Passing the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill
 - iii. Reforming business rates so that local authorities retain 100% of their rates by 2020
 - iv. The £12 billion Local Growth Fund, alongside local growth programmes such as Enterprise Zones, High Streets and Coastal Communities
 - v. The Northern Powerhouse and Midlands Engine.
3. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a. The Secretary of State congratulated the Housing Markets and Guarantees team and Cities and Local Growth Unit for winning recent Civil Service Awards
 - b. It was noted that the success of the Cities Bill through Parliament was key to future work
 - c. There was real momentum behind this work; there was now much more of a negotiation with local authorities whereas previously it had been more formulaic
 - d. The deal process had been powerful in bringing different local areas together.

Item 3: Building 1 Million Homes & Item 4: 1 Million more First Time Buyers

4. Items 3 and 4 were taken together. The Housing Team gave a short introduction. Key points were:

One Million Homes

- a) Aim by the end of the Parliament is to be building 200,000 homes per year
- b) Noted that the majority of delivery comes later in the period

One million more First Time Buyers

- c) 400,000 first time buyers needed each year to reach the ambition
- d) Size of deposit required has been high, which is why Help to Buy was introduced

Item 5: AOB

5. It was agreed that the next Board in March would again consider Housing, in particular the programme plan for Parliament.
6. Bilateral conversations with the Non-Executive Directors in between the Board meetings would be helpful.
7. The Board thanked Sara Weller for her work on the Board but also more widely across the department. The Secretary of State gave Sara an open invitation to return to any Board that was appropriate.

Board Secretariat

December 2015