

## PUBLIC MINUTES

### of the Homes England Board Meeting held at 9am on Thursday 28 March 2019 at Windsor House, London

#### Present:

Edward Lister	Chair
Nick Walkley	Chief Executive
Simon Dudley	
Keith House	
Richard Blakeway	
Stephen Bell	
Teresa O'Neill	
Duncan Sutherland	
Ceri Smith, UKGI	

#### In attendance:

Tom Walker	Deputy Chief Executive	
Mark Gray	Chief Risk Officer	
Gordon More	Chief Investments Officer	
Stephen Kinsella	Executive Director Land	
Isabella Freeman	General Counsel	
Amy Casterton	Chief of Staff	
Dominic Campbell	Chief Digital Officer	
Mike Wiltshire	General Manager Strategy and Performance	
Christopher Kinsella	Interim Chief Financial Officer	
Tracie Evans	Interim Corporate Services Director	
Will Davies	Chief People Officer	Items 9, 11 & 14
Kate Stansfield	Programme Manager	Items 10 & 12
Patrick Roche	Boston Consulting Group	Item 8
Claudio Di Vittorio	Boston Consulting Group	Item 8
Karalee Close	Boston Consulting Group	Item 8
Mary Carter	Board Secretary	

#### **Apologies**

01/03/19 There were no apologies.

02/03/19 Items were taken in the following order: 8, 1-7, 13, 9, 11, 14, 10, 12.

#### **Item 1 Minutes of Previous Meetings**

03/03/19 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

#### **Item 2 Matters Arising**

04/03/19 The Chief Executive presented an update note on the progress of the Grenfell Public Inquiry, and actions for Homes England.

05/03/19 Members NOTED the matters arising.

**Item 3 CEO Update**

06/03/19 The Chief Executive updated members on senior appointments and his plans for a second wave of Senior Recruitment for the remaining Executive level and other Senior posts in the new Financial Year. This would secure a fit for purpose Leadership Team to see the Agency through its next phase of change.

07/03/19 March had seen significant Ministerial Engagement, all positive, and the Homes England Team's attendance at MIPIM had been very encouraging, with stakeholders perceiving a clear change in Agency's approach.

09/03/19 The All Staff Conference was now confirmed for 16 July in Gateshead, and the Board was invited to a dinner for Conference speakers and contributors on the eve of the event, and to contribute to the Event itself.

10/03/19 Members NOTED the report.

**Item 4 Management Information Suite**

11/03/19 The Interim Chief Financial Officer presented the key elements of Homes England's performance to the 27 March 2019.

16/03/19 Members NOTED the report.

**Item 5 Early Warning Indicators Report**

17/03/19 The General Manager Strategy and Performance set out the findings of this month's Early Warning Indicator analysis.

21/03/19 Members NOTED the report.

**Item 6 Committee Minutes**

22/03/19 The Chair updated members on the proceedings of the special Investment Committee meeting on 6 March 2019.

**Item 7 Annual Business Plan**

26/03/19 The General Manager Strategy and Performance presented the Annual Business Plan for approval, and outlined the changes that had taken place since the Board saw the draft plan in February. The Plan had now been signed off by the Homes England Directors Group, MHCLG Directors General and the Housing Minister.

27/03/19 Members warmly welcomed the Minister's approval of the Annual Business Plan. They agreed that the enormous effort that had gone into producing it deserved to be recognised and celebrated. There was further to go in future years, but this was a very positive achievement. They asked that there should be a mechanism for the Board to track delivery against the Plan. MW

28/03/19 The Chief Executive described the lessons learned review that would follow publication of the Plan, which would give the Board and Executive an opportunity to reflect on what went well, what could have gone better, and how to improve for next year. This would include improvements to the interface between finance and business planning.

29/03/19 The Board APPROVED, subject to year-end budget adjustments, the Annual Business Plan, for submission to MHCLG on 15 April; and NOTED that work was beginning on a lessons learnt review of the ABP process.

#### **Item 8 Digital Strategy and Business Case**

30/03/19 BCG provided an introduction to the second draft of the Homes England Digital Strategy, and the Digital Homes England Business Case. The Digital programme was critical to delivering on the new mission, objectives and 5 year strategic plan, which would deliver over £50bn of economic value.

35/03/19 The Board AGREED the Strategy and Business Case; and AGREED that final amendments to the Full Digital Business Case would be delegated to the CEO, prior to being submitted for review and approval at MHCLG Investment Sub-Committee on 17 April 2019.

#### **Item 9 Gender Pay Gap Report**

36/03/19 The Chief Executive presented the annual report that set out Homes England's gender pay position. This year the mean gender pay gap figure was 18.2% and the median figure was 17.5%, compared to the March 2017 figures of 18.4% and 19.6% respectively. While a small improvement on the previous year, it was an unacceptable gender pay gap and did not reflect Homes England's ambitions for its internal workforce or for the influence that it needed to have for the broader sector. Analysis showed the imbalance was mainly driven by the very high proportion of women in the most junior grade, the proportional lack of women at more senior levels in the agency, and the current approach to

determining starting salary levels.

37/03/19 Key actions planned were to ensure that career pathways were clear and accessible for all; that recruitment practices attracted diverse talent, and for the review of pay and grading to ensure a benchmarked and bias free approach to setting salaries.

38/03/19 Members observed that Homes England was not significantly divergent from the average for equivalent organisations, and the last Equal Pay Audit had found that the Agency was compliant with the legislation. They supported all the proposed actions, and discussed how to proactively manage returners. They would be open to providing mentoring, or to supporting a possible shadow Board and shadow DG arrangement to develop and progress staff.

39/03/19 The Chief People Officer agreed to add a reference to the Equal Pay Audit to the report. **WD**

40/03/19 The Board **APPROVED** the gender pay gap report for publishing.

**Item 10 Accommodation Strategy**

41/03/19 The Programme Manager SR updated the Board on progress with the delivery of the Accommodation Strategy, following Board's decision on 29 November 2018 to submit the Strategic Outline Case to MHCLG. She outlined the proposals for each office, the underlying assumptions, and the route to completion.

43/03/19 The Chief Executive supported the proposals, which matched with Homes England's land holdings and strategic plan.

44/03/19 The Board **AGREED** to formally submit the Business Cases to Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for formal decisions, following MHCLG endorsement.

**Item 11 People Survey Information Update**

45/03/19 The Chief People Officer provided the Board with an update on data from the People Survey as requested by Board in January 2019.

48/03/19 Members **NOTED** the report.

**Item 12 Health & Safety Monthly Update**

49/03/19 The Programme Manager gave a verbal update on Health & Safety incidents since the last Board, including one notifiable dangerous occurrence where a thief stealing metal had disturbed asbestos. Tenders had been received for the Health & Safety Review, and

training for staff was being commissioned through CSL Learning.

50/03/19 Members asked that the next written report should cover Homes England's policy regarding asbestos on its sites.

KS

**Item 13 Changes to Scheme of Delegations**

51/03/19 The Head Counsel presented a number of updates to the Scheme of Delegations relating to Land, to reflect the Agency's changing role and responsibilities and support the business in moving to a new operating model.

52/03/19 The Board AGREED the proposed revisions to the Scheme of Delegations; and AUTHORISED the General Counsel to make any further minor changes necessary.

**Item 14 Changes to Pension Fund Contributions**

53/03/19 Simon Dudley and Teresa O'Neill declared an interest as HCA Pension Fund Trustees.

54/03/19 The Chief People Officer sought approval from the Board for a revised Schedule of Contributions to be implemented for the Homes and Communities Agency Pension Scheme.

55/03/19 The Board APPROVED the revised Schedule of Contributions.

**Item 15 Any Other Business**

56/03/19 There was no other business.

Date of next meeting: 25 April 2019.

**Chairman's signature:**

**Date:**