

Homes for Islington Board of Directors

Agenda 23 April 2007

6.30 PM to 8.30 PM

Boardroom

Highbury House, 5 Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN

Item	Presenter	Subject	Status	Page number	Duration
1	A Lucas	Welcome/Apologies/Introductions	Information	Verbal	6.30 – 6.35
2	A Lucas	Declaration of interests	Information	Verbal	6.30 – 6.35
3	A Lucas	Questions received from the public and questions from the floor	Information	Verbal	6.35 – 6.55
4	A Lucas	Minutes of 26 th February 2007 and matters arising	Decision	1-6	6.55 – 7.00
5	A Lucas & E McGoldrick	Chair and Chief Executive Report	Information	Verbal	7.00 – 7.05
6	A Lucas	Governance Review	Decision	7-26	7.05 – 7.25
7	E McGoldrick	Resident Involvement Strategy	Decision	27-54	7.25 – 7.45
8	E McGoldrick	ICT Strategy	Decision	55-72	7.45 – 8.05
9	E McGoldrick	Equality and Diversity Strategy	Decision	73-106	8.05 – 8.25
10	S Town T Coyle A Borrie E Niles W McGarvie J White	Reports back from: a) Audit Committee 22 nd February 2007 b) Investment and Delivery Committee 28 th February 2007, 7 th March 2007 and 21 st March 2007 c) Finance Working Group 1 st March 2007 d) HR Committee 28 th March 2007 e) Contracted Services Sub-Board 10 th April 2007 f) Managed Property Sub-Board 11 th April 2007	Information	107-114	8.25 – 8.30
11	A Lucas	Forward Plan	Decision	115	8.25 – 8.30
12	A Lucas	Any other business and date and time of next meeting - 6.30pm, Thursday 28 th June 2007, Highbury House	Information	Verbal	8.25 – 8.30

**Homes for Islington
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes of 26th February 2007
Highbury House, 5 Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN.**

Present: Ann Lucas (Chair), Jessie White (Vice Chair), Kate Barns, Adam Borrie, Barbara Coventry, Theresa Coyle, John Gilbert, Richard Greening, William McGarvie, Eddie Niles, Louise Round, Steve Town, Claudia Webbe (Directors)

In attendance: Eamon McGoldrick (Chief Executive)
Mike Sims (Governance Team Manager)
Mark Jenkins (Senior Governance Officer – Minutes)

Apologies: Paula Belford, Caroline Jenkinson, Barbara Sidnell, Des Smith (Directors)

	ITEM	ACTION
1	<p>Welcome/Apologies/Introductions</p> <p>a) The Chair opened the meeting at 6:35pm. b) The chair gave apologies for Paula Belford, Caroline Jenkinson, Barbara Sidnell and Des Smith.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>a) There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p>Questions received from the public and questions from the floor</p> <p>a) There were no questions received in writing from the public. b) The following question was received from Brian Potter:</p> <p>“Can the Board confirm if there are proposals for directors to be paid an allowance in the region of £8000 per year?</p> <p><i>Answer: No decision has been made. The Board is considering whether or not any form of payment should be made.</i></p>	
4	<p>Minutes of last meeting 15th January 2007 and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
5	<p>Chair report and Chief Executive report</p> <p>a) Chair’s report</p> <p>The Chair informed the Board of two government sponsored reviews on social housing that have recently been published:</p>	

	<p>i) The Hills Review – The review focused on the future of social housing and a summary was published in Inside Housing in February 2007.</p> <p>ii) The Cave Review – The review focused on regulation frameworks for Housing Associations and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and arrangements for future inspections. The National Federation of ALMOs has commented and this will be circulated to directors. This included three mentions of positive practice by HFI.</p> <p>b) Chief Executive’s report</p> <p>The Chief Executive informed the Board:</p> <p>i) In a report by Professor Holshaw based on the latest published Best value Performance Indicators, HFI has scored 3 out of 3 on the three most significant indicators of housing management performance (rent arrears, voids and repairs). Only 5 local authorities in the country achieved this highest rating and HFI was the only one in London to do so.</p> <p>ii) The final report from the Audit Commission has been received regarding HFI’s Voluntary Improvement Work and this will be published on HFI’s website.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Capital Programme 2007/08 -2010/11</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced the final draft of the Business Plan 2007-12 for approval by Board.</p> <p>b) It was agreed to circulate HFI’s Continuous Improvement Plan to the Board to inform the Board of how the objectives of the Business Plan and the Audit Commission had been cross-referenced by staff.</p> <p>c) It was agreed that the Access, Customer Care and User Focus section would be amended to include reference to the initiatives to be piloted following the re-organisation of Area Offices (out-reach work and surgeries).</p> <p>d) It was agreed to re-visit the wording of the Mission Statement for next year’s Business Plan.</p> <p>e) It was noted that the method of presenting the financial information with regard to the Management Fee would be reviewed at Finance Working Group (FWG) on 1st March 2007 and presented to Board at its Away Day 16/3/07.</p> <p>The Board agreed:</p> <p>The content and format of the draft business plan 2007-08.</p> <p>To delegate to HFI’s Chief Executive the following amendments and additions that will be necessary after the date of this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed off Annual Efficiency Statement • Final position on the Management Fee • Outstanding performance indicator information as per paragraph 3.7 	<p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>David Selo</p>

	<p>Greater detail to be included in the financial information set out on pages 13 and 14 of the Business Plan.</p>	<p>Simon Kwong</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Risk Management</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced the latest version of the risk register for review by Board.</p> <p>b) It was noted that the recommendation of the Governance Review is that risk management is included in the terms of reference of the Audit Committee.</p> <p>c) It was noted that the monitoring of agency staff is done through HR Committee. Following the Area Office restructure and the Kier Review there should be a reduction in agency numbers.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <p>Approved that there are no current high red risks, as detailed in paragraph 3.7 of the report.</p> <p>Approved the current medium high pink risks as detailed in paragraph 3.8 of the report.</p> <p>Approved the report and the risks as set out in Appendix A to the report.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Performance – HFI Business Plan Objectives 2006 (qtr 3) and December Performance Indicators</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced a report providing a strategic overview of performance indicators, and progress on objectives in the Business Plan 2006-07.</p> <p>b) It was agreed that the outstanding Business Plan Objectives for 2006-07 (Introduction of a door entry / security team and minimising the loss of expertise from the Board) would be rolled into the objectives for 2007-08.</p> <p>c) It was agreed that in future the report would be more precise concerning the action taken by a Service Director to correct a failing PI as it was not sufficient to be merely “monitoring”.</p> <p>d) It was agreed that the next Anti-Social Behaviour report that is presented to Managed Property Sub-Board (MPSB) would be circulated to the Board.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <p>Agreed to the Chief Executive monitoring proposals on racial harassment incidents, caretaking, repairs and HFI Direct telephone answering.</p> <p>Agreed that the Chief Executive monitors the gas servicing programme on a monthly basis to ensure last years performance is at least equalled.</p>	<p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>Mike Sims</p>

<p>9</p>	<p>Performance – Financial and Capital Programme Management</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced a report providing the Board with a strategic overview of company finance, capital programming for 2006-07 and progress on Decent Homes targets.</p> <p>b) It was agreed that the management section on the CSA budget would be expanded in future reports to be clearer to understand.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>David Selo</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Strategy Update</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced a report giving an overview of progress in delivering equality and diversity objectives.</p> <p>b) It was noted that staff would check the minutes for 4th December 2006 concerning what was agreed as the correct format for the Strategy.</p> <p>c) It was noted that methods other than postal surveys should be considered in future.</p> <p>d) It was agreed that Eamon McGoldrick and Ann Lucas would meet to discuss Claudia Webbe’s proposals and progress with Claudia Webbe thereafter.</p> <p>e) It was agreed that staff would inform Board of the legislative requirements around diversity specifically whether to publish an annual Equality and Diversity report.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>Mike Sims</p> <p>Simon Kwong</p> <p>Eamon McGoldrick</p> <p>Simon Kwong</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Kier Review Implementation Update</p> <p>a) Eamon McGoldrick introduced a report providing a summary of progress with the Kier Review since the last report to Board on 4th December 2006.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>Report back from Efficiency and Procurement Working Group – 16 January 2007</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>Report back from HR Committee – 25th January 2007</p> <p>a) It was agreed that in future staff would ensure that reports back from Committees to Board are signed off by the relevant Chair.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>Report back from Chairs Agenda Planning Working Group – 29th January 2007</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	<p>Mike Sims</p>

	<p>Report back from Contracted Services Sub-Board – 13th February 2007</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>Report back from Managed Property Sub-Board – 14th February 2007</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>	
13	<p>Forward Plan</p> <p>The forward plan was agreed.</p>	
14	<p>Any other business and date and time of next meeting</p> <p>a) It was agreed that staff would consider some form of amplification for future public meetings.</p> <p>b) Next meeting at 6.30pm, Monday 23rd April 2007, Highbury House.</p>	David Selo

There being no further business to conclude the Chair closed the meeting at 8:00 pm

Chair: Ann Lucas

Date

Report of	Team	Job Title
Mike Sims	Chief Executive Directorate	Company Secretary

Name of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda item	Status
Board	23 rd April 2007	6	Decision

Subject of report: Governance Review

1. Synopsis

1.1 This report provides the Board with a series of recommendations in relation to governance for the organisation.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Board:

2.1.1 Agrees 39 of 50 recommendations made by the governance review and previously agreed by Governance Review Working Group (GRWG) listed in 4.1 of this report.

2.1.2 Agrees 11 recommendations made by the governance review from the options listed in 4.2 and 4.3 of this report.

3. Background

3.1 On 31st July 2006 the Board received a report recommending a review of the organisations governance arrangements.

3.2 At that meeting the Board agreed to the scope and methodology for the review and the establishment of a Governance Review Working Group (GRWG) in order to receive and comment on the findings of the Review.

3.3 The main points of the Governance Review that would have the most impact on residents were presented to the Consultative Panels in March 2007. The report and a summary of the responses of the Panels are listed at Appendix 1.

3.4 The final version of the Governance Review has been sent separately to all directors.

4. Table of recommendations

4.1 Recommendations of the governance review agreed by GRWG:

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
1	Maintain elections every two years with only half of the residents (north / south "split") of the borough eligible to vote, but allow residents from the whole of the borough to stand rather than only from the half of the borough that is voting.	Agreed
2	Rationalise the Committee and Working Group structure by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Formalising Chairs Agenda Planning Working Group as a Committee. b) Formalising Finance Working Group as a Committee. c) Abolish Efficiency and Procurement Working Group but retain Board involvement in specific service reviews. 	Agreed
3	That the following amendment and additions be made to the terms of reference and matters reserved for the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <u>Replace</u> point 12 of HFI's current terms of reference, "<i>Develop a comprehensive environmental policy covering matters such as sustainable energy, construction and design green procurement</i>" and replace with: "<i>develop and maintain the strategy plans that support the organisations business plan</i>". (ii) <u>Add to terms of reference:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approving proposals to provide services on behalf of other organisations or proposals to outsource services currently provided by the Organisation. b) Making recommendations to Council on intended action following the receipt of reports from the external auditor, external inspectorates and the local Ombudsman. c) Responding to consultation papers from Government, Council or other bodies. d) Add internal communications strategy. e) Add Health and Safety strategy. f) Agree any discretionary compensation for early termination of contract of Tier 1 staff. (iii) <u>Add to matters reserved:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Appointing the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. b) Appointment or recommendation to the Council for the appointment of all contractors where spend is in excess of £15 million a year. c) Approving the Organisations standing orders. 	Agreed
4	To change the terms of reference for Committees and Working Groups as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>HRC:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Remove Board PDR. (ii) Remove internal communications. (iii) Remove health and safety. 	Agreed

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
	<p>(iv) Agree any discretionary compensation for early termination of contract of Tier 2 staff.</p> <p>b) <u>IDC</u>:</p> <p>(i) Remove Community Safety Budget.</p> <p>(ii) Agree allocations to contractors.</p> <p>c) <u>AC</u>:</p> <p>(i) Add monitoring of risk management and rename Audit and Risk Management Committee.</p> <p>d) <u>CAPC</u>:</p> <p>(i) Add Board PDR.</p>	
5	Introduced portfolios with specific terms of reference for Board directors.	Agreed
6	<p>Change current meetings schedule:</p> <p>a) <u>Board</u> - change to 6 meetings of the Board and 6 development sessions with the Chief Executive.</p> <p>b) <u>Committee meetings</u> - All Committees to meet every two months except Audit Committee which will meet quarterly and Ethics Committee which will meet as and when is necessary.</p>	Agreed
7	Create a strategic HFI / LBI forum of Board and senior politicians that meets once a year.	Agreed
8	Introduce comment on existing or intended resident consultation on all reports for decision to be presented to board or senior management team.	Agreed
9	That the Business Plan process be condensed into at least one or two working days involving the Board rather than a process of a series of reports back to Board.	Agreed
10	That Chair and Vice-Chair develop a clearer strategy on its communications with other members Board.	Agreed
11	That the existing role and responsibility document for both Chair and Vice-Chair be updated, ensuring that the differing roles of the Chair and vice Chair (of the Board and of the committees) contribute to improving teamwork and good governance practice.	Agreed
12	Chair and Vice-Chair carry out Board PDR process rather than involving a Board development officer.	Agreed

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
13	That Chair and Vice-Chair receive specific development in relation to carrying out Board development appraisals.	Agreed
14	That the Board supplement initial annual PDR appraisal with a half yearly meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair.	Agreed
15	Subject to project plan for capacity building with diverse groups, to overall, maintain the existing regime of advertisement for future election and selection.	Agreed
16	To revamp the current recruitment pack sent out to residents.	Agreed
17	To establish a separate project plan for capacity building with diverse groups.	Agreed
18	That individual PDR's address attendance, risk management and collective responsibility.	Agreed
19	That Board more readily enforces minor breaches of code of conduct through informal mechanisms.	Agreed
20	That PDRs continue to address development for those directors unclear on declaring interests.	Agreed
21	That Chairs consider agendas before meetings and advise colleagues where conflicts of interests may exist.	Agreed
22	That the Governance Manual be renamed "HFI's Standing Orders".	Agreed
23	To amend the Articles of Association and Code of Conduct to state that directors are required to attend at least 66% of all Board, Sub-Board and Committee meetings that they sit on.	Agreed
24	That minimum time commitment for directors be defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 of 6 Board meetings - 4 of 6 Board Development / CE meetings - 4 of 6 meetings per Committee / Sub-Board - 1 AGM - 2 Away Days - 2 PDR sessions with Chair and Vice Chair - 1 Strategic LBI / HFI Forum 	Agreed
25	That HFI does not introduce the power of suspension / precautionary	Agreed

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
	suspension of Board directors.	
26	That unless a matter of urgency arises, HFI amend its constitution and/or Standing Orders only on a two yearly basis.	Agreed
27	That a briefer “high level” version of the Governance Manual be created for Directors reference.	Agreed
28	That occasional surveys of members of the public who attend the Board be taken, asking for views on the quality of the debate and the transparency of decision making (although it is recognised that this may have limited impact due to low levels of public attendance).	Agreed
29	Assess whether both open forums and questions from the public at Board meetings are required once open forums have taken place.	Agreed
30	That other presentation methods are trialed rather than relying on reports at Board.	Agreed
31	That the KPI reporting process with the Council be reviewed in preparation for the next financial year.	Agreed
32	That reports for information are circulated separately where appropriate.	Agreed
33	That more external presentations be used at Board.	Agreed
34	That Directors raise questions or comments concerning agendas with the relevant Chair in advance of meetings.	Agreed
35	That HFI investigate the use of a democratic/report writing management system and a plain English technology system which may have efficiency savings in relation to report writing process for both Board and consultative panels and other organisational meetings (e.g. SMT).	Agreed
36	That a “Charter” for HFI / LBI be drafted.	Agreed
37	That the protocol for LBI nominees to the Board be revised.	Agreed
38	The deferment of procurement of independent legal advice on the management agreement and matters relating to governance.	Agreed

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
39	That the HFI / LBI financial reconciliation process be simplified.	Agreed

4.2 Recommendations either not agreed by or not presented to GRWG:

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
1	Reduce the size of the Board to eleven	Could not reach a conclusion. GRWG formed a consensus that there should be a resident majority in any event.
2	Appoint the Chief Executive to the Board.	Not agreed.
3	Abolish the Sub-Boards and replace with a Performance and Scrutiny Committee which retains a panel of resident advisors elected from existing Consultative Panels.	Not agreed - although all were in favour of delegating some form of authorities to Sub-Boards.
4	Agree the principle of allowances but defer implementation for 12 months subject to evidence of improvements in governance through payment in the ALMO sector.	This was not presented to GRWG.
5	Change the term of office for Chair and Vice-Chair from 1 year to 2 years.	Not agreed.
6	To change the terms of reference for Sub-Boards as follows: e) <u>Sub-Boards/Performance & Scrutiny Committee:</u> (i) Agree CSA payments to other housing management providers - Partners / TMOs (ii) Decide on any local funding as delegated by Board e.g. Community Engagement (iii) Agree the spend priorities for the annual Community Safety Budget (iv) Arbitrate in TMO disputes and make recommendation to LBI on termination notices (v) Arbitrate on petitions presented by Panels (vi) Manage local performance	GRWG did not pass comment on this recommendation.
7	To change the terms of reference for FC as follows: (i) Ensure that robust reporting mechanisms are in place to identify and monitor any financial risks	This was not presented to GRWG.

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
	<p>arising from in year financial activities or any other influence (whatever its origin) which poses a financial risk to the organisation and report to board how these items may be addressed.</p> <p>(ii) Make recommendations on the operation of (review periodically) the organisation's financial scheme of delegations and financial regulations.</p> <p>(iii) Review the organisation's financial arrangements such as banking and insurance.</p> <p>(iv) To review with senior staff, where appropriate, where the financial arrangements of any service area are subject to or undergo any significant change and report to board on the impact if any this has on service delivery or the achievement of the business plan objectives.</p> <p>(v) Ensure that efficiency savings are adequately planned for, costed and approved by board via a timely, co-ordinated and robust process.</p> <p>(vi) To help identify and / or review the financial implications of, and then report to board on, the options to the board of any additions / growth items to the organisations business plan.</p> <p>(vii) Ensure than the finances supporting the business plan are robust.</p> <p>(viii) Work with the Chief Executive and LBI to ensure that the management fee negotiations occur in a timely and open way and revise its own budget timetable.</p> <p>(ix) Advise the board on how it may work with the Chief Executive to prepare a financial strategy that would lay the groundwork for increased freedoms and flexibilities with its parent organisation.</p> <p>(x) Assist in the identification, and assessment of the financial implications of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - spend to save initiatives - new business opportunities - freedoms & flexibilities <p>(xi) any planned alterations to the management fee</p>	
8	To amend the Articles of Association and Code of Conduct to state that directors are required to attend at least 66% of all meetings for Working Groups that they sit on.	GRWG did not think this attendance requirement should apply to Working Groups.
9	Change current meetings schedule for AGM to one stand alone event separate from a general meeting of the Board.	This was not presented to GRWG
10	To include in EC procedure a process whereby the decision by the Company Secretary to investigate a complaint made about a director or not can be appealed by a complainant.	This was not presented to GRWG.

	Recommendation of review	GRWG
11	That HFI adopt a policy whereby HFI will not pay for Directors legal expenses for representation at Ethics Committee meetings.	Not agreed - GRWG recommended HFI adopt a protocol whereby directors clear legal expenses in advance of representation at EC.

- 4.3 The Review itself makes no recommendations in relation to residential qualifications for Independent Directors. However, GRWG raised this issue but, overall, did not reach agreement. The opinions expressed by members were:
- 3 directors stated that only residents in the borough should be eligible to apply as an independent Director.
 - 1 director stated that only residents or people who work in the borough should be eligible to apply as an independent Director.
 - 1 directors stated that, where possible, preference should be given to residents applying as independent Directors, but that this should not be a condition of eligibility.
 - 2 directors stated that there should be no eligibility criteria based on residency or work for independent Directors.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 Capital Implications

None specific to this report.

5.1.2 Revenue Implications

The costs associated with the recommendations will be financed from within existing resources or compensating savings will be found. The governance budget 2007/8 is £273k. While there is no specific budget provision within this budget for the directors elections, (currently estimated at £74k if borough wide or £37k if half borough wide), this cost will be funded from within existing 2007/08 HFI budgetary resources.

5.1.3 Efficiency Implications

The recommendations are intended to streamline the decision making structure which would reduce the amount of staff time applied to administration and support. It is estimated reducing the number of meetings from 70 to 50 will realise efficiency savings of £7k pa.

5.1.4 Risk Implications

Good governance is a key benchmark for public sector organisations. The organisation maintains a risk register that is reviewed at regular intervals by the Board. The governance review has added to the terms of reference of the Audit Committee to allow for detailed scrutiny of the risk register

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 The Board should note that any changes to the Articles or Memorandum of Association will require LBI approval. Such changes will need to be logged in the Companies Constitution at Companies House.
- 5.2.2 The recommendation to change the procedure for Resident Elections will require a consideration of the conflicts of interest that might arise.
- 5.2.3 Under paragraph 4.1 of the Directors' Code of Conduct, a director is regarded as having a personal interest in a matter if a decision on that matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting her / his wellbeing or financial position to a greater extent than other tenants or inhabitants of HFI's area.
- 5.2.4 Further, under paragraph 4.3 of the Code such personal interest will amount to a prejudicial interest if residents who are aware of the situation would reasonably regard that interest as being so significant as to be likely to prejudice the Directors' ability to reach their decision in the public interest.
- 5.2.5 The decision on resident eligibility to stand for election will affect whether the directors concerned will be able to stand for re-election to the Board next year. Residents knowing of the position of the resident directors would reasonably and objectively conclude that such interest would affect those directors' ability to make their decision in the public interest rather than subrogating the public interest to their own declared self interest. In these circumstances, that director should declare a prejudicial interest and not take part in the debate or decision.
- 5.2.6 3 directors would have a personal and prejudicial interest and should therefore be precluded from taking part in the debate and decision relevant to this specific recommendation.
- 5.2.7 1 director would have a personal interest due to the fact that the change of procedure would enable him or her to stand for election in 2009, whereas at present he or she may not. However, this does not amount to a prejudicial interest given this does not affect his or her standing in 2007 and that there may be subsequent rule changes by Board, by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) or any other factor prior to 2009. Therefore he or she can therefore take part in the debate and decision.
- 5.2.8 3 directors would not have a personal or prejudicial interest as they would be able to stand for re-election under both the existing arrangements and also the proposed recommendation.

5.3 Equalities Implications

- 5.3.1 Contained within the Capacity Building section (ii) of the report.

5.4 Sustainability Implications

- 5.4.1 None specific to this report.

Report of	Team	Job Title
Ann Lucas	Board	Chair of Board

Name of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda item	Status
Consultative Panels	March 2007	n/a	Consultation

Subject of Report: Governance Arrangements

1. Synopsis

Item 6 - Appendix 1

- 1.1 This report asks Consultative Panels to comment on some possible options that a staff review of governance arrangements has identified. The information will be used to help inform the Board of any changes that it might wish to make at a future date.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Consultative Panels comment on:

- 2.1.1 **Options for the future of Sub-Boards;**
- 2.1.2 **The potential introduction of allowances for Board directors;**
- 2.1.3 **Reducing the size of the Board, but still having more resident directors than Council or Independent directors;**
- 2.1.4 **Changing the election procedure for resident directors.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Governance is the system by which organisations are directed and controlled by their boards of directors. It is distinct from 'management' – which can be thought of as the regular day-to-day decisions and actions required to run the business. Governance refers to the higher level processes by which managers are held to account and through which the broadest strategic decisions are taken.
- 3.2 As an organisation HFI is now in its third year of running. As with all of its activities, it is good practice for the Board to review its governance arrangements and, to this end, a comprehensive review is underway. The review acts as a "health check" on the practices adopted so far and considers whether they should be done differently to possibly deliver better ways of governing, or stay the same.
- 3.3 The governance review has identified a number of possible small administrative changes but this report only deals with some of the options directly relevant to residents.
- 3.4 HFI's governance arrangements have been benchmarked with other organisations and public bodies including ALMOs, RSLs (Housing Associations), health trusts and local organisations (for example, charitable bodies).

- 3.5 Staff have considered possible theoretical options that might be relevant to HFI. The findings of the review have been reported to a Working Group of the Board and Board has instructed staff to ensure that consultation on all these options takes place with the Panels before Board considers the review as a whole.
- 3.6 **Panel members should be clear that there are no proposals to implement any of the following options. HFI is simply seeking the views of Panels which will assist the Board in future decisions.**

4. Sub-Boards

- 4.1 The Board has previously set up two Sub-Boards – Managed Property Sub-Board (MPSB) and Contracted Services Sub-Board (CSSB).
- 4.2 The role of MPSB is to oversee the services provided directly by HFI through its Area Offices (Central Street, Holland Walk, Lyon Street and Upper Street). There are 6 main Board directors and each Area Housing Panel plus the Islington Leaseholder Forum (ILF) has a nominee on MPSB to represent residents.
- 4.3 The role of CSSB is to oversee the housing services delivered by providers other than HFI (TMO's/TMC's and Partners for Improvement in Islington). There are 6 main Board directors and the TMO/TMC Review Group, the PFI Residents Forum and ILF each have a nominee on CSSB to represent residents.
- 4.4 The Sub-Boards play a critical role in HFI's performance management arrangements. The Review generally concludes that this has worked slightly better at CSSB than it does at MPSB. At present the Sub-Boards do not have authority to decide anything without referring back to the Board. Benchmarking with other organisations has shown that delegating some authorities from the Board to Sub-Boards proves more successful.
- 4.5 The Panels are asked to comment on the following options about the Sub-Boards:

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	Abolish the Sub-Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saving in cost of servicing meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of detailed local performance scrutiny - Would lose a significant link between the Board and its Panels and decrease the options for resident involvement. - No Panel nominees as a link to main Board.

2	<p>Leave as existing but give delegated authorities:</p> <p>a) Agree CSA payments to other housing management providers - Partners / TMOs</p> <p>b) Decide on any local funding as delegated by Board e.g. Community Engagement</p> <p>c) Agree the annual Community Safety Budget rather than IDC</p> <p>d) Arbitrate in TMO disputes and make recommendation to LBI on termination notices</p> <p>e) Arbitrate on petitions presented by Panels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would allow the Sub-Boards to potentially be more effective. - Number of Panel nominees stays the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk that this is a superficial change and not address the weaknesses identified.
3	<p>Merge into one Sub-Board with delegated authorities as at 2.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would allow for consistency in performance management. - Allow focus across all the borough and make it easier to compare all housing management providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILF loses one Panel nominee. All others remain.

5 Allowances for Resident and Independent Board directors

- 5.1 In October 2005 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued advice to all ALMO's advising them to consider paying allowances to Board directors in the interest of improving governance. The possible benefits DCLG has indicated that introducing allowances might bring are to:
- o Improve governance quality both individually and collectively
 - o Ensure recruitment and retention of good Board members, and to help in succession planning
 - o Increase the minimum competency level required by Directors
 - o Recognise the skill and experience bought by Directors to Board and their commitment in terms of time given and expertise shared
- 5.2 At that time HFI had only been in operation for 18 months, and the Board felt it was inappropriate to consider allowances while HFI was still such a new organisation. Any current review of governance would be incomplete without now considering the suitability of allowance as previously advised as part of the "health check".
- 5.3 DCLG is following the example of the Housing Corporation which allows Housing Associations to pay their directors. Benchmarking has shown that many RSLs, plus a whole range of other public bodies including health trusts, charities, government bodies and agencies, now give allowances to their Board directors. In the ALMO sector, CityWest Homes pays its Chair and Gateshead Housing Company and

Berneslai Homes have given in principle agreement to pay allowances to their Board directors.

- 5.4 HFI has made a great deal of progress since going “live” in April 2004. It is now rated by the Audit Commission as “2 stars with excellent prospects for improvement” and resident satisfaction has improved year on year to its current level of 64%. A key driver behind the improvement in housing management services, Decent Homes work and the general success of HFI is the time and effort put in by the Board of directors.
- 5.5 The time commitment expected of Board directors is much greater than was first thought when HFI was set-up. In 2006/07 the Board and its Committees will have held approximately 70 meetings. This does not include ambassadorial work in visiting estates, attending conferences, etc. In addition, many directors are actively engaged in the local community. Directors (especially resident directors) have an important role in providing a link between HFI and the residents of the Borough, which cannot always be provided by the organisation’s executive and staff.
- 5.6 It is arguable that payment of allowances to Board directors would:
- Reward directors the extra work they have taken on;
 - Help increase the accountability of all directors and in doing so help to provide an increased service to the residents of Islington;
 - Allow for added responsibilities to be recognised (as any remuneration scheme for salaried workers would do);
 - Encourage people from a wider range of background and experience to come forward;
 - Enable directors to be held to account for the quality of their contribution through clear job descriptions and regular appraisals,
- 5.7 The guidance provided by DCLG in October 2005 provided evidence from the Housing Association sector stating that where payments are being made, the majority of chairs receive up to £10,000 per year. Other Board members are typically paid around 40-50%% of the sum paid to the chair.
- 5.8 In addition The National Housing Federation’s publication “To pay or not to pay” included a schedule of fees paid to Board members of public bodies. It used annual turnover as the basis for setting indicative pay levels for Boards. On this basis the appropriate level of allowances for an organisation on HFI’s turnover would be £5000 for directors and £12,500 for the Chair.
- 5.9 If HFI was to consider allowances, a possible model is that Resident and Independent Directors should receive an allowance with Chairs of Committees and the Chair of the Board receiving a higher allowance to reflect the greater level of responsibility (and commitment of time) required. Potential amounts might be:

Position	Allowance (Gross)
Board Director	£5000
Chairs of Committee/Sub-board/Vice-chair	£6000
Chair of the Board	£8000

6. The size of the Board

- 6.1 The current size and make-up of the Board was decided on through a variety of factors. The guidance from central government was to have 5 Council members, 5 Independents and 5 residents. However, it was decided that 7 residents, should sit on the Board and Shadow directors were sought from each of the then area panels and the ILF. The government also requires that no one constituent part of the Board has an overall majority (e.g. there can't be 9 Council members).
- 6.2 In the public sector there is significant evidence to support the view that the optimum size of a Board is about 9 -12. This has been comprehensively researched in the last few years. For example the Charity Commission surveyed over 1,400 charities of which 92% had Boards of 15 or less. This is small enough to be nimble and allow effective decision making by involving all the Board. A Board of this size can usually bring together the right skills for good governance and not place too much of a burden on individual board directors.
- 6.3 Any model for the size of the Board would keep more resident directors than Council directors or Independent directors so the focus on residents would not be lost. So for example if the Board size was 11 then there would be 5 resident directors, 3 Council directors and 3 Independent directors (a drop of 2 each).
- 6.4 Panels are asked to comment on having a smaller Board than is currently in place:

Reasons for a smaller Board	Reasons for a larger Board
1) Best practice All guides to good governance in the voluntary sector published in the last decade advise a smaller Board.	1) Stakeholders Some organisations need large Boards to allow stakeholders interests to be represented.
2) Evidence Experience in many settings has shown that large boards are generally less effective. Once numbers rise much above 12 - 15, discussion and debate becomes more difficult.	2) Experience A large Board can ensure that the right balance of skills and experience needed is present.
3) Loss of authority An inner caucus can emerge that takes the key decisions and presents them to the board for ratification. This leaves the board with responsibility but not power and is generally ineffectual.	3) May assist with issues of diversity.
4) Benchmarking Results from a Charity Commission survey showed that about 92% of the respondents had boards with 15 or less trustees.	
5) Decision making A larger board tends to become more of an information receiving body than fulfilling the decision making role.	

7. Resident elections to the Board

7.1 The current rules for resident election to the Board state that half of the Board is elected every two years by half the borough. In 2005 the “north” of the borough (residents in the Holland Walk, Boleyn Road and Isledon Road areas) elected 3 directors and in 2007 the south will elect 4 directors and so on. The elections were staggered in this manner to ensure that the Board did not lose all 7 residents at the same time.

7.2 It is considered good practice to ensure that there is no significant loss of expertise to the Board. Therefore it is not proposed to change the principle of staggered elections so that not all the resident director places have to stand for election at the same time. However, the governance review has considered options that allow moving towards a borough-wide election every two years.

7.3 Panels are asked to comment on the following options:

	Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	<p>Leave as existing –</p> <p>Candidates – One of two electoral areas</p> <p>Voting – half the borough</p> <p>Timescale – 2 years</p>	<p>1) The election process has only run once and worked well. It should not be necessary to change a process after only one successful attempt – “If it isn’t broke don’t fix it”.</p> <p>2) No added cost</p> <p>3) No potential risk in depriving the Board of expertise</p> <p>4) Ensures representation from at least two different areas of the borough</p>	<p>1) Only half the borough eligible to stand so could lead to under-representation.</p> <p>2) Can be difficult to advertise in the local press given as only relevant to half the borough</p>
2	<p>Change to –</p> <p>Candidates – borough-wide</p> <p>Voting – borough-wide</p> <p>Timescale – 2 years</p>	<p>1) Whole borough so potentially more candidates</p> <p>2) Easier to communicate with residents via local advertisement.</p>	<p>1) Double the cost of the present system.</p> <p>2) Could lead to voter fatigue amongst residents</p> <p>3) Could possibly minimise representation as all residents could come from the same neighbourhood.</p>
3	<p>Change to –</p>	<p>1) No added cost</p>	<p>1) Can be difficult to advertise in local</p>

	<p>Candidates – borough-wide</p> <p>Voting – one of two electoral areas</p> <p>Timescale – 2 years</p>	<p>2) No potential risk of depriving the Board of expertise</p> <p>3) Whole borough so potentially more candidates and better opportunities for diversity.</p>	<p>press as only half the borough eligible to vote</p> <p>2) Could possibly minimise representation as all residents could come from the same neighbourhood</p>
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HFI Consultative Panels – March 2007

	Governance Arrangements
Central Street Area Housing Panel	<p>Sub Boards Retain existing but with no delegated authority.</p> <p>Allowances Not in favour.</p> <p>Size of Board Retain existing.</p> <p>Elections Retain existing.</p>
	Governance Arrangements
Holland Walk Area Housing Panel	<p>Sub-Boards Retain existing.</p> <p>Allowances Not in favour.</p> <p>Size of Board Retain existing.</p> <p>Elections Change to borough-wide candidates and electoral area.</p>

	Governance Arrangements
Lyon Street Area Housing Panel	<p>Sub-Boards Retain existing with delegated authority.</p> <p>Allowances In favour although concern over the amounts suggested.</p> <p>Size of Board Retain existing.</p> <p>Elections Change to borough-wide candidates and suggested north and south catchment areas.</p>
	Governance Arrangements
Upper Street Area Housing Panel	<p>Sub-Boards Retain existing with delegated authority.</p> <p>Allowances Not in favour.</p> <p>Size of Board Retain existing.</p> <p>Elections Change to borough-wide candidates and electoral area.</p>

	Governance Arrangements
Islington Leaseholder Forum	<p>The meeting was inquorate for this item. The view of those individuals (three) present was:</p> <p>Sub-Boards Retain existing.</p> <p>Allowances Not in favour.</p> <p>Size of Board Retain existing.</p> <p>Elections Split on whether elections should be borough-wide or half borough-wide.</p>
	Governance Arrangements
Partners for Improvement in Islington (PFI 1) Residents Forum	<p>Sub-Boards All options viable.</p> <p>Allowances Not in favour.</p> <p>Size of Board Reduce.</p> <p>Elections Retain existing.</p>

	Governance Arrangements
Partners for Improvement in Islington (PFI 2) Residents Forum	<p>Sub-Boards Retain existing with delegated authority favoured but not agreed.</p> <p>Allowances No consensus.</p> <p>Size of Board Reduce.</p> <p>Elections No consensus although borough-wide candidates and electoral area received the most support.</p>
TMO/TMC Review Group	<p>The meeting did not take place.</p>

Report of	Team	Job Title
Simon Kwong	Chief Executive Directorate	Head of Performance & Service Development

Name of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda item	Status
HFI Board	23 rd April 2007	7	Decision

Subject of Report: HFI Resident Involvement Strategy 2007 - 2009

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report sets out a Resident Involvement Strategy and action plan for Board to endorse. Originally drafted for December 2006, this strategy has been updated to reflect the comments and recommendations of the Audit Commission following their inspection work in December 2006 and report in January 2007. It also reflects feedback from Consultative Panels in March 2007 and from the HFI Board away day held on 16th March 2007.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Board endorses the strategy and action plan (Appendix A) for Resident Involvement for roll out from April 2007.
- 2.2 That Board agrees the recommendations contained within the strategy report and summarised below.
- 2.3 That Board agrees that once the revised strategy is agreed, negotiations toward agreeing a robust SLA with FITA are initiated.
- 2.4 That Board agrees that an additional resource of £50K is dedicated to Resident Involvement to drive new initiatives and accelerate the activities needed to drive forward improvement in this key area. This approach complements and enhances organisational commitment to Community Engagement and Equality and Diversity.

3. Background

- 3.1 The proposed strategy follows on from the work of the Resident Involvement Review Group and the strategy that was agreed in 2005. It has also been developed as a result of reviewing changed circumstances in relation to the current strategy, looking at best practice in other organisations and by analysis of best practice examples outlined in the Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE). The strategy has also incorporated issues identified in the Audit Commission Inspection of HFI in 2005 and the DCLG Beacon Guide. Recommendations made by the Audit Commission following their voluntary improvement work inspection in December 2006 (reported in January 2007) have been incorporated into the strategy and action plan together with feedback from March 2007 consultative panel meetings and from the Board away day held on 16th March 2007.
- 3.2 The views of Consultative Panels on the draft strategy presented to them in the March 2007 round of meetings were not wholly in favour of the proposed changes.

It should therefore be emphasised that the changes set out in the attached strategy are additional ideas for effective consultation with our residents over and above the consultation mechanisms provided by our current traditional structures. The recent report by the Audit Commission was complimentary about the effectiveness of present structure of consultative panels but was clear that HFI needed to enhance this resident consultation with further mechanisms that would involve those who were not able or willing to attend tenant and resident association meetings.

3.3 The recent review has been carried out by staff, working with an external consultant, to examine our current structures and initiatives and test whether they meet the high standards necessary for an organisation aspiring to become an excellent service provider.

3.4 Key points include:

- The development of a Sounding Board
- Resident Involvement Awards for both staff and residents
- A revised Service Level Agreement between HFI and FITA
- Development of a revised Tenants Compact
- Additions to the range of consultation methods available
- A review of resource options.

4. Summary of Recommendations from the Strategy

4.1 The revised resident involvement strategy makes the following recommendations:

- Develop and agree a revised Service Level Agreement with FITA reflecting the evolving remit of this group
- Integrate the new Islington Leaseholders Association (ILA) into HFI's resident involvement structure.
- Review of the Terms of Reference of Consultative Panels ensuring that the Islington Leaseholders' Forum Terms of Reference share common themes and goals
- Review of Resident Service Statements to ensure full resident involvement in the development and monitoring of these statements
- Identify resources for resident involvement and conduct a value for money review of resident involvement
- Develop a wide range of ways for residents to get involved
- Develop a systematic approach to feedback to residents on the effects of their involvement
- Develop a Sounding Board
- Develop Resident Involvement Awards
- Improve levels of satisfaction with opportunities to become involved
- Develop resident 'mystery shoppers'
- Make consistent the incentivising payments to attendees of focus groups
- Enshrine resident involvement into the business planning process through a regular annual conference
- Provide improved training for residents
- Integrate resident involvement more fully into the culture of HFI.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This revised strategy and action plan represent a thorough review of resident involvement in HFI and provide for a step change in performance in this area. The strategy and action plan will be monitored closely and regular reviews on progress reported to SMT.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 Capital Implications

None specific to this report.

6.1.2 Revenue Implications

£50k additional funding for resident involvement has been agreed by Islington Council as part of the 2007/08 management fee. This, along with existing resident involvement budgets, will be used to drive forward the new initiatives contained within the strategy and action plan.

6.1.3 Efficiency Implications

None specific to this report, though the outcomes of the 'value for money' review will inevitably result in either financial savings or improved efficiency within existing resources.

6.1.4 Risk implications

A significant risk to gaining 3 stars in the Audit Commission inspection in late 2007 exists if improved resident involvement and value for money in this area are not demonstrable.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 The Resident Involvement strategy allows HFI to meet all its statutory requirements.

6.3 Sustainability Implications

- 6.3.1 Effective resident involvement contributes to meeting many of the key aims of the sustainable communities agenda of central and local government and social landlords.

6.4 Equalities Implications

- 6.4.1 A robust Resident Involvement strategy is essential to meeting key aims and objectives of the Equality & Diversity strategy.

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**Resident Involvement
Strategy 2007 – 2009**



www.homesforislington.org.uk

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1. Foreword

Homes for Islington (HFI) commenced operations in April 2004. HFI is owned by the London Borough of Islington (LBI) and managed by a board of directors made up of tenants and leaseholders, council representatives and independent members. HFI manages approximately 36,000 council properties throughout the borough.

The government enabled local authorities to set up arms-length management organisations (ALMOs) to manage their housing stock and provided an incentive by giving good, “two star”, ALMOs the capital funding necessary to meet their decent homes obligations. Homes for Islington was awarded two stars, with excellent prospects for improvement, in January 2005 following an inspection by the Audit Commission.

In its first year of operation HFI concentrated on establishing itself as an independent organisation and improving services to residents. The Audit Commission award of a two stars and excellent prospects for improvement judgement provided evidence of significant progress toward those goals. Over the next year our target is to continue the improvement of services to residents and to achieve a three star judgement from the Audit Commission later in 2007, reflecting the provision of “excellent” services.

The development of a revised resident involvement strategy reflects our commitment to involve residents in improving the quality of services and deciding how services will be developed. A robust approach to resident involvement will ensure that all residents have the opportunity to have their say in what matters to them. This will lead to the development of services shaped to the needs of residents and reflecting their needs and preferences.

The key rationale for developing this revised resident involvement is to ensure that involving residents is a central consideration to all activities undertaken by HFI and to broaden our approach to involve people as widely as possible.

2. Executive Summary

This strategy sets out how Homes for Islington will work together with residents to provide excellent services. It sets out the key objectives and demonstrates how it is proposed to achieve those objectives by consulting residents in service planning and involving them in decisions on service delivery. Homes for Islington believes that involving residents is a key component of improving services and in making sure that the services given priority are those that matter most to residents.

The proposed strategy follows on from the work of the Resident Involvement Review Group and the strategy that was agreed in November 2005. We have reviewed our approach to resident involvement and alongside this have seen overall satisfaction levels increasing from 54% in 2004 to 64% in 2006 and levels of satisfaction with opportunities for participation increased from 39% in 2004 to 54% in 2006. These figures, although improving, are still too low and this strategy and action plan includes the objective to improve satisfaction levels.

This strategy will ensure that HFI engages with more residents and offers more choice and opportunities to participate. To achieve this we will strengthen our existing resident involvement structures and develop a new approach in the form of an Involvement Register. HFI will establish Resident Involvement Awards to ensure that the contribution made by residents is recognised and rewarded and we will review the service level agreement (SLA) with FITA to ensure that this group works effectively to achieve the broadest involvement that is in the best interests of all HFI residents.

Satisfaction amongst HFI's leaseholders with opportunities to participate in decision making is low. This strategy also includes plans to address this challenging issue through a leaseholders communications strategy and the introduction of an Independent Leaseholders Association for which all leaseholders were recently balloted. As all Islington leaseholders will be members of the association HFI hope to see many more leaseholders involved and working with HFI and the Council to resolve differences and address concerns.

This strategy takes HFI to a new level in resident involvement. It preserves existing structures such as consultative panels that have served residents well. The strategy also brings necessary innovation such as the Sounding Board and the Independent Leaseholder Association to attract broader participation and involvement. It also goes on to propose initiatives such as Resident Involvement Awards to recognise and acknowledge the contribution made by some residents to improving services for all.

3. Introduction

A commitment to resident involvement is a core value for HFI staff and Board Directors and we are committed to reaching out to all sections of the community we serve – HFI tenants, leaseholders and their families.

HFI's Business Plan 2007-12 sets out the organisation's mission:

“To continuously improve housing for local residents through sound investment, the effective management of resources and the involvement of staff, residents and our partners”

- Homes for Islington was set up to provide a first class service for Council tenants and leaseholders in Islington and to help create and maintain safe, sustainable and inclusive communities for residents
- In meeting this purpose we will consult residents and involve them in making decisions which effect their home and locality.

This strategy sets out how Homes for Islington will work with residents to involve them in the development and provision of excellent services. It sets out the objectives of the strategy and demonstrates how it is proposed to achieve those objectives by consulting residents in service planning and involving them in decisions relating to service delivery. HFI believes that involving residents in developing services is a key component of improving services and in making sure that the services given priority are those that matter most to residents.

The recently published Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Beacon Theme Guide on “Improving Housing Services by Involving Tenants” states that:

“Good quality tenant involvement is fundamental to improving services and delivering decent homes.”

The approach set out in this strategy is consistent with good practice identified in the DCLG Beacon Guide.

This strategy has also been developed as a result of researching best practice in other organisations and by analysis of good practice outlined in the Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) 5.

In December 2006 HFI invited the Audit Commission to undertake a Voluntary Improvement Work (VIW) inspection of HFI services. The VIW report found that in resident involvement strengths in the service just outweighed weaknesses. The main recommendations of the report, including those on resident involvement, now appear as key objectives in the HFI Business Plan 2007-12 and this strategy identifies the means by which these recommendations will be met.

Key Principles

This strategy is based on a number of key principles;

- That HFI actively encourages and supports resident involvement
- That all HFI services should be open to resident involvement
- That resident involvement should be open and accessible to all residents, not only those represented in formal structures
- That it is vital to keep residents fully informed of the outcomes of their involvement
- That residents should have a choice of ways to become involved.

4. Key Objectives of the Resident Involvement Strategy.

There are four objectives of our revised strategy, all with the overarching aim to use resident involvement to improve HFI services:

Objective 1 - To integrate involvement as a driver for change throughout the organisation

Objective 2 - To provide a range of ways for residents to get involved thereby offering a broad choice of participation methods

Objective 3 – To offer training to all residents to support opportunities for participation and build capacity for resident involvement at all levels in HFI

Objective 4 – To improve resident satisfaction with opportunities for involvement.

The objectives of the strategy have clear actions and measurable outcomes, which are set out in the Resident Involvement Action Plan (Appendix 1)

5. HFI's Approach to Resident Involvement

Resident involvement is well established in HFI and we recognise that any approach taken must be regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of residents. It is possible to identify three basic levels of involvement:

- Provision of **information** on services (Level 1)
- Ensuring that residents **influence** services through participation and consultation methods (Level 2)
- Giving residents significant **control** over services (Level 3)

All three levels are currently represented within HFI ranging from individual feedback from residents or membership of a TRA to control of services through being part of a TMO or on the Board of Directors.

Level 1 – Provision of information on services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly residents' newsletter • Service Promise (HFI service standards) • Service information leaflets • HFI web-site • Getting it right on-line
Level 2 – Influence on service through participation and consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant & Resident Associations (TRAs) • Federation of Islington Tenant Associations (FITA) • Consultative Panels • Resident Service Statements • Resident Steering Groups (Major works) • Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction surveys • Monthly repairs satisfaction surveys • Customer feedback and complaints • Residents' conference • Focus groups
Level 3 – Control over services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Sub Boards of Associate Directors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> = Contacted Service sub-Board = Managed Services sub-Board • Tenant Compact • Tenant Management Organisations

Our formal structures for resident involvement work effectively¹, are valued and are identified later in this strategy and, in addition to these formal structures, there are a number of supplementary initiatives already in place that support resident involvement.

¹ ALMO Inspection Report January 2005 (Audit Commission)

For a detailed summary of current approaches and routes to resident involvement please use the link to the resident involvement on the Homes for Islington website:

<http://www.homesforislington.org.uk/homesforislington/consultation/index.asp>

Formal Resident Involvement Structure in HFI

HFI has an established framework for consulting residents and involving residents in local and corporate decision-making. These formal structures are long standing and valued by residents and viewed as effective mechanisms to achieve resident involvement.

5.1 HFI Board of Directors

Homes for Islington is led by a board of directors. The Board consists of seven tenant and leaseholder representatives, five council representatives and five independent members. Resident Board Directors were voted into their positions on the Board by their Area Housing Panel and the Leaseholder Forum. This development gives residents in the borough real power and control over how their housing services are delivered.

5.2 Tenant and Residents Associations (TRAs)

TRAs are traditional mechanisms for estate-based consultation that have an established track record in HFI. Currently there are 80 active TRAs throughout HFI. These TRAs receive support from dedicated staff at local area offices together with support provided by the service development team centrally in the form of administration grants and funding to provide training.

Tenant and Resident Associations:

- Represent the views of council tenants and leaseholders
- Provide community facilities and encourage community spirit
- Campaign to improve services
- Are consulted by HFI on improvement programmes and other major issues

5.3 Federation of Islington Tenants Association (FITA)

FITA is an independent organisation funded by Islington Council through HFI. The purpose of FITA is as an umbrella organisation for TRAs to support their growth and development and to monitor their activities in accordance with the service level agreement (SLA) that sets the scope of their activities. The recent ballot of Islington leaseholders that has resulted in the decision to form a dedicated leaseholder association will impact upon FITA membership and this development and the development of a new resident involvement strategy provides the background for negotiation of a revised SLA with FITA.

5.4 Consultative Panels

Consultative panels are another element of the formal local structure of resident involvement. HFI currently has nine consultative panels, five Area Housing Panels (AHPs) plus the Islington Leaseholder Forum, the TMO/TMC Review Group and two Partners Resident Forums (PFI1 and 2). The five Area Housing Panels are made up of TRA and TMO representatives together with additional representatives drawn from the 1 in 1000 arrangement where applicable. All consultative panels meet six times a

year. Ward Councillors are entitled to attend AHP meetings but do not have a vote. Tenant Compact funding of £1.5m per year is made available to the AHPs to spend within their areas. This represents a major influence that residents can exert on the spending on their local environment.

Having ongoing forums of residents in the form of consultative panels is a real strength for HFI. Feedback in the form of views, suggestions and comments on consultative papers is a rich source of resident opinion that feeds through to final decisions on policy and procedures in HFI.

HFI is committed to build upon the existing strengths of formal consultative structure by developing collective decision making, appropriate charring, open and accountable processes for election of panels and encouraging diverse participation in panels. This commitment is reflected in the resident involvement action plan (app 1).

Consultative panels have the capacity to co-opt additional members to the panel if it is felt that the panel is not representative of the local area.

5.5 Tenant Compact

A formal tenant participation compact was agreed and signed in March 2002. This compact represents an agreement between LBI as landlord and tenants and leaseholders on principles for involving residents in issues that affect their homes and their communities. Since it was introduced circumstances have changed significantly. The establishment of HFI as an ALMO to manage the Council's residential portfolio and the letting of two Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) contracts have introduced changes leading in part to the development of this revised strategy. As a result there is a need to produce and agree a revised compact to reflect these changes and this review will take place in 2007/08.

5.6 Involvement in procurement

Resident Board Directors currently form an element of tender evaluation panels for contracts procurement that have a value of over £100,000.

5.7 Tenant Management Organisations

HFI has a thriving tenant management sector, with over 30 TMOs and TMCs responsible for the management of approximately 10% of our stock. Each TMO chooses the services they want to provide and HFI pays them an allowance for this. The tenant management model allows real control of housing management and maintenance services by residents and HFI's ongoing commitment to this sector reflects our desire to see residents truly involved in the services they receive. HFI's Tenant Management Commissioning Team clients this sector to ensure:

- effective governance
- high levels of performance
- good relations between TMOs/TMCs and HFI.

One of our consultative panels is the TMO/TMC Review Group, which meets on the same two monthly cycle as other panels. Thus residents of housing managed by TMOs and TMCs receive and are able to comment on the same policy and procedural information supplied to other residents. We also run regular training events for TMOs and TMCs, which enable networking and development work to ensure systems are understood and owned by staff and residents.

6. Supplementary resident involvement initiatives

6.1 Resident Service Statements

Resident Service Statements are a key method of resident involvement at an estate level and are developed with resident input. These statements outline agreed performance standards for services to an estate and the proposed method of performance monitoring and management using a system of quarterly Estate Inspections. Responsibility for setting up and implementing a programme of inspections is the responsibility of the Area Teams and residents are invited to attend inspections. There is a need to apply consistency across HFI about ensuring residents are fully involved in the development and monitoring of these service statements and the attached action plan addresses this point.

6.2 Tenants Satisfaction Survey

The key tool employed by HFI to assess satisfaction and to determine tenants' priorities is a borough wide status survey. The most recent survey was completed in September 2006 and since the last survey was carried out in 2003/04 there has been substantial increases in satisfaction across all of our services, including a 12% increase in overall satisfaction with landlord services. The results are informing the business planning process for 2007/08.

6.3 Customer feedback and complaints

Responding effectively to customer feedback including complaints will remain an important method of ensuring that residents' views on service delivery are dealt with at an individual level. It is also important to review trends in complaints at an area and service level and reflect the results in the business planning process.

At a local level this is monitored by managers who make learning decisions from complaints. There is a standard pro-forma for recording complaints and the associated learning at both stages 1 and 2. It is proposed in the HFI Business Plan 2007-12 to introduce the opportunity for face to face resolution of complaints at all stages of the process.

HFI's Service Development Team also produce bi-annual complaints summary reports including resulting changes in policy or procedure, and these are reported to HFI's Senior Management Team and residents through newsletters and consultative panels.

6.4 Residents' Conference

A residents' conference, specifically geared to ensure that residents' views fed into the business planning process at an early stage, was held in the summer of 2006. This conference provided HFI with a powerful tool to improve resident involvement and innovative electronic 'real time' voting methods were used². The direct and immediate feedback provided a valuable input into the development of the business plan and all attendees will receive a copy of the plan in April 2007 highlighting their contribution to HFI business objectives. The issues of resident involvement and equality and diversity will form the core of the Residents' Conference planned for September 2007.

6.5 Focus Groups

Focus groups are employed by HFI to look closely at specific subjects with residents. For instance focus groups were commissioned to examine HFI's service standards

² Commended as 'Good practice' in the Voluntary Improvement Work Inspection Report (Audit Commission Jan 2007)

and this resulted in the Service Promise that is currently being completed. Focus groups have also been formed to inform HFI's service efficient reviews such as the review in summer 2006 of customer access.

HFI will follow best practice and incentivise attendance at focus groups through small and consistent payments to attendees.

6.6 Involvement in procurement

Resident Board Directors currently form an element of tender evaluation panels for contracts procurement that have a value of over £100,000.

6.7 Resident Steering Groups

For all major works projects on HFI estates tenants and leaseholders are invited to form a steering group to liaise with HFI and the contractors on the works. These steering groups are important formal forums for information sharing, and the identification of resident questions and concerns such as deployment of contractor vehicles. They are an opportunity for residents to influence the works, be it door colours and to use their estate knowledge to resolve security issues with the contractor.

Where there are works on estates managed by a Tenant Management Organisation it is common for the management committee to form the steering group, but in the main this is an opportunity for residents not in formal consultation bodies to play a significant part in HFI activity.

6.8 Major Works

Major works programmes, including the delivery of the Decent Homes programme and estate improvements, are one of the most important issues for residents. It is critical that HFI ensures that there is effective resident involvement in these programmes. The Audit Commission gave credit in 2005 for the way in which programmes had been implemented but concluded "there was a limited level of resident involvement in capital works."

Since that Audit Commission inspection HFI have implemented a number of significant improvements including:

- Introduction of initial public meetings to inform residents of the proposed works
- The setting up of Resident Steering Groups to consult on implementation.
- A pre commencement public meeting prior to the works starting.
- Regular progress meetings.
- Getting it Right....Online! Homes for Islington's online guide to major improvement works on residential blocks in its Decent Homes programme.

Further proposals include:

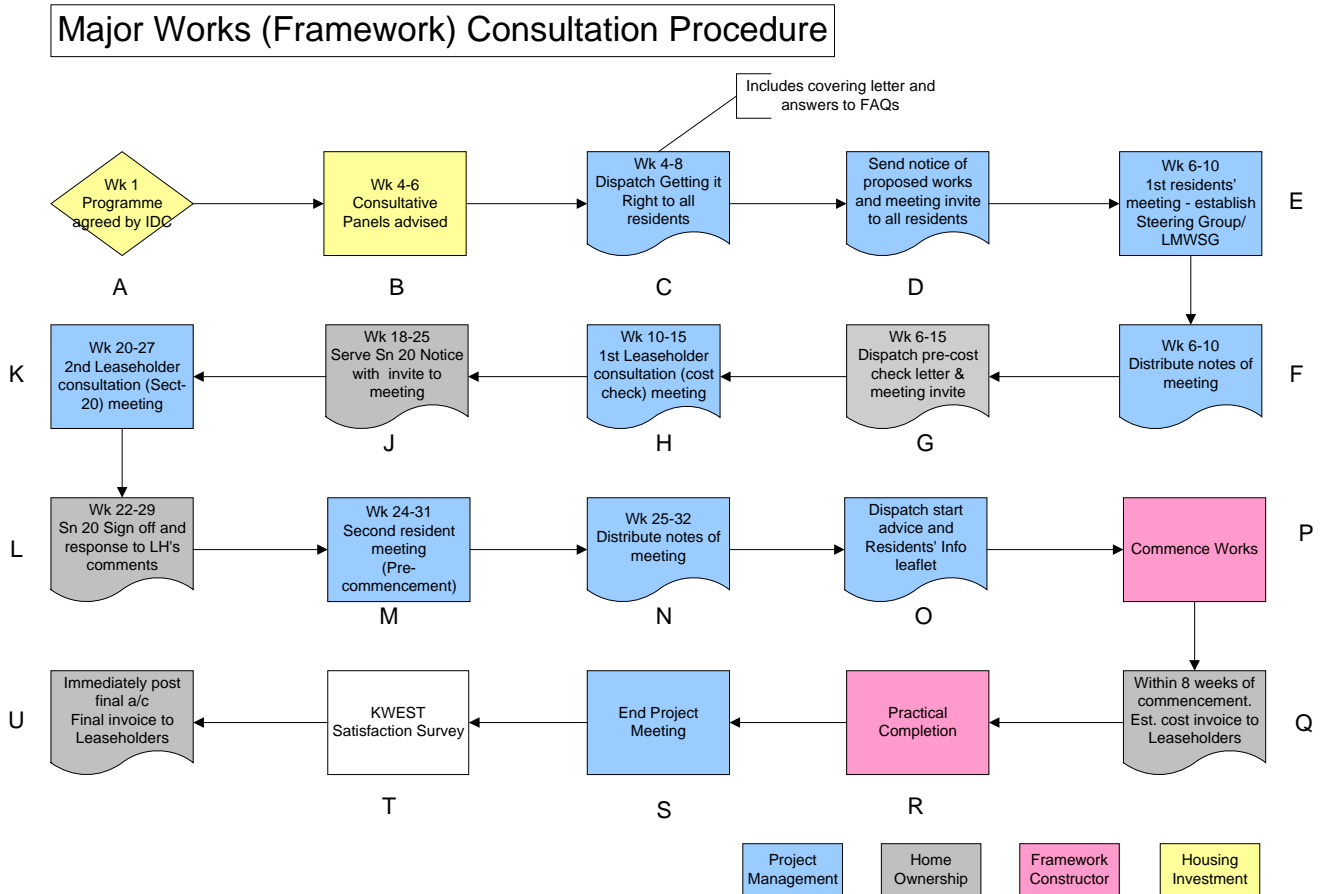
- Publication of the Capital and Major Works Programmes on the website.
- Annual conference to consult on the proposed programme.
- Annual formal report to Panels following conference.

The introduction of these arrangements will develop a systematic approach and further improve the approach to resident involvement in major works.

For Getting it Right Online – Use the following link:

<http://www.homesforislington.org.uk/homesforislington/repairs/gettingItRight/index.asp>

A diagram of the resident involvement process on major works projects is shown below.



Rev6 11/03/2006

7. Leaseholder Involvement and Participation

There are currently nearly 10,000 leaseholder families in properties managed by HFI. Whilst leaseholders share many common issues with secure tenants, the relationship with HFI as landlord differs in many respects.

The ‘property contract’ (or lease) and the national legal framework define minimum standards for certain aspects of consultation. These areas include those where Islington incurs major recharge costs. Leaseholder consultation arrangements exceed this minimum standard and we have ensured that leaseholder interests are represented within all the recognised tenant consultation forums and additionally through the Islington Leaseholder Forum.

For a description of the formal leaseholder consultation procedures associated with major planned works and improvements use the link below:

<http://www.homesforislington.org.uk/homesforislington/leaseholders/consultation/index.asp#mean>

7.1 Islington Leaseholder Forum

Homes for Islington has established the Islington leaseholder forum (ILF) as a borough-wide consultative body to promote leaseholder/freeholder interests and discuss and review policies associated with leasehold management. The remit of the ILF includes consultation on policy issues relating to day-to-day service charges, billing for major works, information on leaseholder accounts and housing management issues affecting leaseholders. The forum meets approximately five times per year.

The membership of the ILF currently comprises of two leaseholder representatives from each local housing management area plus a representative from each recognised leaseholder association. As HFI has now reduced the number of Area Offices to four, three leaseholders will be elected from each Area in the elections which will take place on the summer of 2007. Local housing area representatives are directly elected by a secret ballot of all Homes for Islington leaseholders in each area, conducted at least every two years. Additional, non-voting representatives may also be nominated or co-opted to the forum, by general agreement, in order to facilitate discussion on specific issues.

Awareness of the forum among leaseholders is increasing - 70% in the latest survey (2004: 62%) and the number of leaseholders who say they have received feedback on ILF is also increasing: 42% (2004: 19%); ILF contributes to the leaseholders’ newsletter and minutes of meetings are on the HFI web-site.

7.2 Leaseholder membership of tenant and resident associations

It is a condition of formal council recognition that the constitutions of Islington tenant and resident associations (TRAs) provide for membership to be open to all tenants, leaseholders and estate freeholders living within the TRA catchment area. Homes for Islington leaseholders may be elected as officers (i.e. Chair, Secretary, Treasurer etc.) or ordinary committee members of TRAs so long as they do not constitute a majority of either the Management Committee or the officers of the association.

7.3 Leaseholder Satisfaction Survey

In January 2006, HFI commissioned Kwest Research to undertake an independent survey of leaseholders. This followed on from an earlier survey that took place in June 2004.

The 2006 survey confirms that a substantial proportion of leaseholders are satisfied with the overall service provided by HFI. However, satisfaction levels are significantly lower in areas such as repairs and maintenance of communal areas and significantly in participation. This represents a major challenge for HFI and the actions set out in section 8 of this report seek to address these issues.

8. New Resident Involvement Initiatives

The revised arrangements set out in this strategy seek to broaden the current structure to reach out to a wider audience using both formal and informal approaches to involve residents. In order to do this we will strengthen and reinforce existing structures by, for example, introducing additional monitoring of consultative panels and revising their terms of reference. With resident input we will also develop a resident's Involvement Register as a completely new venture to broaden the potential for resident involvement within HFI.

8.1 Involvement Register

The Involvement Register will be a database or record of residents who are interested in being consulted or wish to have their say in how the homes and the areas in which they live are managed. All tenants and leaseholders and anyone who lives on an estate managed by HFI, e.g. a freeholder or tenant of a leaseholder, will be entitled to enrol on the Involvement Register.

The starting point for the Involvement Register will be widespread publicity inviting residents who want to be involved to come forward identifying how they would wish to be involved and whether they have a preference in any given topics or areas. For example, a resident may be willing to take part in a telephone survey, take part in mystery shopping, take part in evaluation of contract tenders or attend a focus group on a particular topic whilst not being willing to attend evening meetings or become a member of a TRA. An Involvement Register will give HFI the opportunity to engage with a wider audience and, therefore, improve participation levels. As we build our Involvement Register, potential will exist to reach out to groups that are often not reached through traditional resident involvement structures such as younger residents. Similarly, the range of issues that residents can contribute to will expand as the Involvement Register grows and a potential list could be:

- Resident Involvement
- Equality and Diversity
- Customer Care
- Value for money and efficiency
- Stock investment and maintenance
- Repairs
- Tenancy Management
- Income Recovery
- Leasehold Management.

As the Involvement Register membership grows, potential will develop to form groups to consider particular issues, to develop focus groups, to train and develop resident mystery shoppers and to carry out alternative forms of consultation from the traditional meeting such as by telephone or by post.

8.2 Resident Involvement Awards

HFI proposes to work with residents to develop Resident Involvement Awards. These awards will be given to residents or groups that make an outstanding contribution

and will support the delivery of this strategy by ensuring that resident involvement is given the recognition it deserves. Following consultation with residents a decision was reached that resident involvement remains a voluntary activity not attracting any allowances though any out of pocket expenses such as childcare and travel expenses will be met, in order to maximise opportunities to participate. Recognition for individual or group efforts on behalf of other residents is an important principle to encourage involvement.

Residents can be nominated for awards by any means with HFI Board members deciding on successful nominees. An award ceremony will be held at the annual residents' conference followed by publicity in resident newsletters. Award winners could be nominated for the National Federation of ALMOs Annual Awards which started in May 2007. As an ALMO HFI is part of a pioneering movement of organisations with significant resident involvement at Board level and it is important to celebrate the achievements that this brings.

8.3 Federation of Islington Tenants Associations (FITA)

Significant resources are allocated to FITA each year and the current SLA is due for a detailed review. FITA is an independent organisation run by tenants and leaseholders of Islington council though leaseholder involvement will diminish when the dedicated leaseholder association is formed in 2007. TRA members can choose to affiliate to FITA who, in turn, facilitate the development of new TRAs through the provision of direct funding (£105,000 in 2006/2007).

The work undertaken by FITA is the subject of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between HFI and FITA. The SLA is intended to be the means whereby the services provided, in return for the grant aid, are monitored and managed by HFI. The SLA will be reviewed early in 2007/08.

In the Voluntary Improvement Work report by the Audit Commission the housing inspectors comment that 'there are no agreed outputs (from the SLA).' Also that 'FITA has a diversity brief, but is unclear how this is being achieved.'

It is therefore a key plank of this strategy that a thorough review of the services provided by FITA should be included in a value for money assessment of resident involvement structures. This will result in a revised service level agreement with FITA that will agree required outputs for the organisation in return for the annual grant. This will include robust monitoring of the diverse representation of all resident representational groups and the taking of appropriate actions where representation does not accord with the population that is being served.

It has been agreed in early discussions between the HFI Board of Directors and FITA that elements of the SLA will include:

- Inducting and supporting new TRAs
- Attending and facilitating all Annual General Meetings of TRAs
- Facilitating meetings of HFI, partner organisations and other relevant agencies on at least a quarterly basis. These meetings to be open to all TRAs
- FITA to play a more significant role in the training and development of TRA members
- FITA to support HFI in the delivery of the equality/diversity, respect agenda and resident involvement targets.

8.4 Leaseholder involvement and participation

Leaseholders now form 26% of total HFI residents and this percentage is likely to increase in the coming years. Satisfaction with HFI's services and with opportunities to participate in decision making lag significantly behind those of tenants.

8.4.1 Communications Strategy

There is evidence that communication needs to be improved. To this end a Communications Strategy with leaseholders has been included in the HFI Improvement Plan for 2007-08. This will include provision for:

- Comparative performance and cost information
- Communication of the high level of accuracy of service charge bills to raise leaseholder confidence in the billing process
- Reports to leaseholders on how charges have risen relative to inflation allied to improvements in leaseholder services
- Improved explanations of framework contracts
- Improved communication on the VFM aspects of major works
- Publicity on improvements that have been made to services at the request of leaseholders
- Improvements to the Leaseholder Newsletter ("Homeowner") which is distributed twice a year.

8.4.2 Independent Leaseholder Association

Homes for Islington (HFI) and Islington Council have pledged to improve the way that leaseholders are involved in decision making. Setting up an Independent Leaseholders Association is a crucial step to achieving this. A ballot of every leaseholder has been held as most appropriate way to decide the future of leaseholder representation.

The ballot, which was conducted by the Electoral Reform Society, closed on Monday 5 March. Of the 9493 leaseholders eligible to vote, 2125 took part (a turnout of 22.4%). The final result was:

For:	76.5%	Against:	23.5%
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All Islington's leaseholders will be members of the new association with a membership fee of 40p per week being paid through the annual service charge. This will raise approximately £200k per year for the association's funds. All leaseholders will therefore have the right to elect a committee of 12 people every two years to run the association and to scrutinise its business.

The association will hold meetings during the year and keep leaseholders informed of their work. Work is underway to renegotiate an SLA with the ILA and also sign off terms of reference and a constitution. The ILA is looking to be fully functional by October 2007.

Ann Lucas, Chair of HFI's Board of Directors, said: "We welcome the vote by Islington's leaseholders to establish a new association. We look forward to building a positive and constructive working relationship with the new body so that we can

improve our services to them and address their concerns. We are committed to building a strong relationship with leaseholders and as all Islington leaseholders will be members we hope to see lots of them involved and working with HFI and the Council.”

Cllr Terry Stacy, Executive Member for Housing and Communities, said: “This is great news for leaseholders as well as our contractors. An independent association will give leaseholders a collective voice for dealing with matters like service charges, charging for major works as well helping to monitor performance. For services to improve input from the people using it is always key, that’s why I believe the decision to set up a leaseholders’ association is a big step in the right direction.”

8.5 Community Engagement

HFI has developed a Community Engagement strategy that sets out its intention to build capacity within the Boroughs diverse communities and has committed £170,000 (£70,000 ringfenced to community centres) to deliver this work in 2007/08. A Partners day, to be held May 2007 will see the launch of this initiative and will invite the Voluntary sector to contribute and work in partnership with HFI in a range of community projects.

HFI recognises that many of the local groups involved with this process will have close links with its tenants and leaseholders and will also use these forums to seek views on all aspects of its services.

In addition, HFI will seek and develop formal and informal links with key Community groups that may be representative of its tenant base. An example of this is the work recently carried out with the Islington Disabled Forum in assessing access to HFI’s customer service centres.

Regular contact with groups who represent minorities will continue and a process will be followed which allows communities to best decide how they wish to be consulted by HFI.

8.6 Increased Tenant & Resident Association involvement in consultation

Currently one main plank of consultation with residents is conducted through reports to Housing Consultative Panels. Reports, on which views and suggestions of residents are sought, are sent to all Tenant & Resident Associations. However comments and views are only recorded by those who actually attend the various consultative panels. HFI will widen this form of consultation to encourage views from all TRA and leaseholder representatives, including those who were not able to attend their respective panel meeting.

8.7 Resident involvement in procurement

Currently resident participation in the evaluation of tenders for works and services in HFI is limited to resident Board Directors. HFI will seek to broaden this participation through establishing a number of residents who express interest in future involvement. Training on tender evaluation will be provided to participating residents to empower them to play their part in evaluating tenders and recommending bids to the Board.

9. Resources, Consultation and Monitoring of Strategy

This strategy has been fully consulted on with residents, staff and other key stakeholders.

A detailed action plan is attached to the strategy. Resources are available to ensure delivery of the action plan by means of dedicated local staff at area offices, staff in the service development team and local and central budgets. The service development team manage and monitor dedicated budgets for FITA, TRA allowances and start up costs, residents training and share responsibility with area office staff for the management of the community centre budget. An additional sum of £50,000 has been granted for RI in 2007/08 to support delivery of this strategy.

HFI senior management team will monitor delivery of the strategy and action plan bi-annually and an annual report will be made to HFI Board to review the strategy.

Resident Involvement Action Plan (Appendix 1)

	Action	Target Date	Lead Director	Measurable Outcomes	Resources	Progress
Objective 1	To integrate involvement as a driver for change throughout the organisation					
1.1. Integrate resident involvement at the heart of organisational culture	Include resident involvement in relevant job descriptions	Oct 07	DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Job descriptions amended ▪ Induction amended ▪ All staff trained ▪ Conference arrangements updated ▪ Monitor training arrangements of key contractors 		
	Include resident involvement in the induction presentation and process					
	Provide all staff with training on resident involvement and include residents					
	Include item on resident involvement at staff conference and develop staff award for resident involvement					
	Work with key contractors to incorporate resident involvement in their customer care training					
1.2. Review existing structures and initiatives for RI to ensure outcomes achieved	Review ToR for Consultative Panels, develop ToR for Leaseholder Association and monitor make up of panels and attendance	Oct 07	SK & DG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New ToR agreed ▪ New SLA agreed ▪ Attendance records kept ▪ Attendance monitored by equality strands ▪ Evaluate resident input into service statements ▪ Monitor AOs to ensure consistent practice 		
	Review SLA with FITA					

	Action	Target Date	Lead Director	Measurable Outcomes	Resources	Progress
	Review resident service statements with residents and ensure HFI Consultation Standard applied to the development of statements					
1.3	Integrate resident involvement/consultation implications on reports for decision to Board, committees and SMT.			Consultation implications on all relevant reports to inform on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether consultation required. What’s been done or • If not done, what’s planned. • If not required 		
Objective 2	To provide a broad range of ways for residents to get involved					
2.1.	Develop a resident participation and involvement register.	Aug 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Database in place ▪ Publicity and registration forms in place and available at allHFI access points and community events ▪ Demonstrable use of database in resident participation and involvement ▪ Regular report to SMT ▪ Regular report to residents (HFI News) ▪ 250 residents registered by March 2008 		
	Develop a register of HFI residents who are interested in being consulted on HFI service delivery issues at a time and in a way that suits them.					
	Develop and plan publicity and registration forms for residents including recruitment drive at HFI community engagement events.					
	Develop staff awareness of register.					
	Develop database to include resident details and consultation preferences.					

	Action	Target Date	Lead Director	Measurable Outcomes	Resources	Progress
2.2 Increase resident involvement in HFI resident publications	Guest editors introduced into HFI's quarterly resident newsletter.	July 07	DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articles and sections of quarterly resident newsletter written and edited by residents. ▪ Residents on the resident newsletter editorial board. 		
2.3. Develop Resident Involvement Awards		July 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Award ceremony at annual residents' conference ▪ Award winners automatically nominated to ALG national resident involvement awards 		
Objective 3	To offer training to all residents to support opportunities for participation and build capacity for resident involvement at all levels					
5.1. Improve training opportunities for residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish relevant training on procurement and tender evaluation to allow for resident involvement in this process. 	Oct 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement training provided to residents who express an interest in participating in contract tender evaluation ▪ Training brochure produced and circulated ▪ Training matrix adopted and course attendance monitored ▪ Partnerships developed and course piloted 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a training brochure for residents 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce appropriate training for Consultative Panel members to improve outcomes for residents 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a training matrix for different levels of involvement identifying compulsory modules 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnership training with other housing organisations 					

	Action	Target Date	Lead Director	Measurable Outcomes	Resources	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor uptake of training opportunities by diversity strand 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop methods to promote and publicise training where take up is low or disproportionate. 					
Objective 4	To improve satisfaction with opportunities for involvement					
4.1. Identify resources committed to resident involvement and review value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a Value For Money review of Resident Involvement 	Dec 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VFM review carried out and report to Board with recommendations New FITA SLA (cross ref. with 8 below) 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FITA included in VFM review to feed into revised SLA 					
4.2. Ensure Business Plan is focused on resident priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate outputs from Annual Resident Conference into business plan. 	Oct 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outputs integrated into Business Plan Annual report 		
4.3. Engage residents in measuring satisfaction of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop resident participation in Mystery Shopping (MS) 	Dec 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports and action plans from MS 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular quarterly focus groups 	ongoing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports and recommendations from Focus Groups 		
4.4. Improve feedback to residents of outcomes of involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop systematic methods of feedback on the outcomes of involvement 	July 07	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methods in place 		

Report of	Team	Job Title
David Selo	Chief Executive Directorate	Director of Resources

Name of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda item	Status
Board	23rd April 2007	8	Decision

Subject of Report: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) – Strategy 2007 – 2009

1.0 Synopsis

1.1 This report provides the Board with proposals on the ICT strategy for 2007 – 2009.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That Board agrees the ICT strategy (Appendix A).

3.0 Background and achievements to date

3.1 The Board approved the first ICT strategy for the organisation in 2005. This strategy dealt with actions required up to the beginning of 2007. The main focus of the strategy was related to implementation of outstanding modules on iWorld Housing management system and OHMS repairs system.

3.2 By the summer 2007 the actions within the 2005 strategy will be completed. For iWorld Housing management system HFI, will have implemented the property purchase, leasehold service charges and customer services modules. On the OHMS repairs system, the planned maintenance and stock condition survey information enhancements have been completed.

3.3 Another achievement has been the implementation of the technology for HFI to have it's own comprehensive website. There have been continued enhancements including in the last 12 months the introduction of the 'Getting It Right' on line web pages, which provides residents ongoing updates on the progress of implementing the decent homes capital works within their areas.

3.4 On communications technology, a new telephone system has been implemented for HFI Direct, which has resulted in significant improvements, in contact with residents on the phone. HFI has also procured a mobile phone contract, via the Procurement for Housing consortium. As well as achieving efficiency savings estimated to be £100k, staff have been issued with new more effective mobile phones.

3.5 On sustainability issues, HFI has made investment in purchasing multifunctional devices (MFD), which has made significant savings on the amount paper used for

copying and reduced the number of ancillary printers and scanning devices used by the organisation.

- 3.6 There has also been investment in the digitisation of documents that has reduced the paper stored by the organisation. This area will be ongoing within the new strategy and additional efficiency savings are likely.

4.0 The new strategy

- 4.1 A group of senior staff and two board directors, Jessie White and Adam Borrie have met to review the main strategic issues for new strategy and review the document.

- 4.2 Due to the capital investment requirements and systems development and implementation timescales, the new strategy is for 3 years.

- 4.3 The new strategy focuses on customer access to our services, to allow for more choice and assistance to our residents at the point of contact. The strategy covers residents being able to access services from any Area Housing Office, increasing services provided by our contact centre, development of on-line services and greater use of mobile technology.

- 4.4 The central plank over the next 3 years will be the procurement and implementation of a Customer Relationship Management system which will link customer contact information with resident and property information held on iWorld housing management system and OHMS repairs system.

- 4.5 The strategy recognises the requirement for the organisation to use the potential of new technology to both provide service enhancements to our residents and the efficiency savings that need to be identified to fund the improvements. This includes the digitisation of documentation, will both result in greater flexibility in accessing the information and efficiency savings in reduced storage requirements.

- 4.6 For the successful implementation of the strategy the organisation will continue to work in partnership with Islington Council and there will be ongoing consultation with our residents on the service improvements can be implemented from the new technologies.

- 4.7 The strategy includes an action plan. After adoption by the Board of this Strategy, it will be developed into a detailed work plan. Senior staff through the ICT Strategy and Projects working group will monitor this. The Board may wish to give consideration to arrangements for detailed monitoring of the strategy. This could be carried out with the continuation of the existing ICT strategy review group attended by Board Directors or responsibility could be given to a Board Director with the IT portfolio.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 Capital Implications

There will be capital investment requirement to purchase new systems and large computer hardware items. Ongoing discussion on these investments requirements will continue with Islington Council and agreement reached on funding levels and sources.

5.1.2 Revenue Implications

The HFI ICT budget for 2007/08 is:

- £605k for staff,
- £536k for hardware purchases, equipment and software installation, system maintenance and licences,
- £670k – Islington support service contract with Islington Council's ICT division (TSG) (network, servers, main telephone system and helpdesk).

There will be detailed financial assessment of the existing ICT budgets, shown above to determine the amounts available within these budgets to contribute towards the costs of implementing the strategy. For example, the iworld housing management project will be completed in 2007 and this should make available funds for utilising in implementing the new strategy. The detailed monitoring by Board will be accordance with the arrangements agreed by Directors.

5.1.3 Efficiency Implications

Within the 2007/08 ICT budget figures report above there are £110k efficiency target for 2007/08; £100k in TSG contract and £10k saving in internal ICT support services. The implementation of this strategy is expected to achieve efficiencies. These will be identified as part of implementing the strategy and reported through the business planning processes.

5.1.4 Risk Implications

The identification of risks in implementing this strategy will be dealt with through the risk management register reporting arrangements to Board and Committees. There are currently no additional risks to report.

5.2 Legal Implications

Whilst there is no legal obligation on Homes for Islington to have an ICT Strategy, the adoption of such strategy will better facilitate the development and use of IT by the organisation and hence enhance its ability to meet its obligations under the management agreement and the annual delivery plan.

5.3 Equalities Implications

The strategy aims includes supporting the modernised services through ICT to all our residents. The equality and diversity needs of our residents will be incorporated into ICT projects and impact studies will be carried out after completion of each project

5.4 Sustainability Implications

Contained within the main report.

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improving housing through partnership

Item 8 – Appendix A

Information Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy

2007 – 2009

Homes for Islington

Highbury House
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1. Foreword

Homes for Islington (HFI) commenced operations in April 2004. Owned by Islington Council, HFI is managed by a board of directors, made up of Islington tenants and leaseholders, council representatives and independent members. We manage approximately 36,000 council properties throughout the borough.

The government enabled local authorities to set up arms-length management organisations to manage their housing stock and provided an incentive by giving good “two star” ALMOs the capital funding needed to meet their decent homes obligations. Homes for Islington was awarded 2 stars with excellent prospects for improvement in January 2005 by the Audit Commission.

In its first year HFI concentrated on establishing itself as an independent organisation and improving its services to residents. The 2 star and excellent prospects for improvement judgement are evidence of substantive progress towards these goals. Over the next two years our target is to continue our improvement of services to residents and to achieve a 3 stars judgement from the Audit Commission reflecting the provision of ‘excellent’ services.

The new ICT Strategy will equip the organisation with the tools to deliver improved and accessible service for Customers. It is also an important element in achieving a three star Audit Commission assessment.

2. Introduction

This purpose of this document is to outline the updated Strategy, building on the themes developed over the last 3 successful years.

HFI's mission is "to continuously improve housing for local residents, through sound investment, the effective management of resources and the relevant involvement of staff, residents and community partners". To support this mission, our vision is:

To enable a coherent and co-ordinated ICT environment, driven by a 'bottom-up' and 'top down' approach.

The strategy will contribute directly and indirectly to the six themes of HFI's mission statement, especially in the areas of:

- Accessibility and affordability – providing residents with a choice to engage services
- Listening – interaction with customers.

Also continuing support of the Organisation's strategic delivery objectives for the improvement of services, focusing on:

- engagement with the Community – especially extending the opportunity for contact/access through emerging technology
- being a first class employer
- embracing partnership
- being an evolving Organisation.

In addition the strategy takes account of the changing environment, nationally, as regards the way in which ICT services are to be considered part of the business of Local Government. Hence it allows us to demonstrate that we remain at the forefront of Best Practice in ICT delivery, in striving to maximise the positive impacts of ICT in the delivery of public services to the residents of Islington at the lowest possible cost.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 ICT exists within HFI for four basic reasons. First, to implement and develop systems which enable the business to deliver efficient services; second, to support staff, partners and Board Members in the use of those systems; third, to assist in the process of organisational change; and lastly; it is there to support our community by enabling all our citizens to make the best use of technology to meet their individual needs and aspirations.
- 3.2 To achieve these goals and deliver services, ICT is one of the Organisations suite of strategies and must be based on the other key strategies and plans, such as the *Community Engagement Strategy* and *Resident Involvement and Customer Access*.
- 3.3 The previous ICT Strategy laid the foundations and infrastructure by the delivery of such projects like: - implementing an integrated Housing Management system, setting up the Organisation's Internet and Intranet websites, improving the Telephony System of HFI Direct (Call Centre) and standardising mobile telephony services, to name just a few.
- 3.4 The next three years will focus on customer access to our services, providing more choice and assistance to our residents at the point of contact.
- 3.5 Developments in ICT will enable residents to access services from any Area Housing Office of their choice. This will support the Organisations vision of the generic Area Housing Office.
- 3.6 Building on the technological investment in HFI Direct, further tools will be provided to support a planned extension to services offered from the Call Centre. This will aim to provide residents with resolution to more services at the first point of contact.
- 3.7 Increased flexibility for customers will be available through greater development of on-line services and mobile working for members of staff, providing access to services regardless of location and at times better suited to our customers.
- 3.8 In order to meet the increased demands for on-line access, development of the Internet will continue. The Communications department will lead and the ICT Strategy will again provide technical support and infrastructure.
- 3.9 In continuing to be a 'first class employer' the strategy will review the use of ICT equipment in order to standardise and provide efficiencies throughout the HFI.
- 3.10 How projects, systems and applications are procured and rolled out across the organisation must be governed by the strategy to ensure best practice and value for money.
- 3.11 Working with main partners such as LBI and Kier Islington, as well as our residents, is key to the successful delivery of this strategy.

4. Key Drivers

4.1 Customer Access Review

Following the 2006 review of access to our services, the following concerns were raised:

“A recurring theme from consultation with residents is that whilst the phone is answered quickly there can be delays in responding to the query whilst the call handler investigates, that the caller is often sent to other staff for a response and that staff ‘lack knowledge’. There is a perception that one department does not always know what another is doing. 31% of customers thought that staff were unable to deal with their problem in a recent survey.

The review team considered that the strategic solution to these weaknesses is the introduction of a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).

The aim of a successful CRM solution is to complete as many transactions at the first point of contact as possible, which is a customer priority. In order to achieve this the customer service officer must have access to a broad range of information and services.

Many of HFI’s problems in this regard emanate from the need for staff to use several different IT applications. This information needs to be immediately available to the call handler or staff member at a reception desk in order to provide the customer with a quick and efficient service.”¹

4.2 Generic Area Housing Offices

Area Housing Offices have recently reduced from six location specific sites to four offices in the North, South, East and West of the borough. Previously, a resident had to contact or visit their specific management office in order for assistance. The aim now is for tenants to contact any of the four offices they choose. This can only be achieved if there is consistent access to information from each location.

4.3 Information and Document Management

Building on developments of the integrated Housing Management system, appropriate staff can access customer information from any location. This will also include paper documentation, which can be viewed via a computer. This will deliver improved decision making through access to high quality secure information, achieve efficiency savings through fast retrieval of sharing electronic data and reduce costs as a result of needing less physical storage for hard (paper) copies.

4.4 Greater flexibility for Customers

While recognising not all residents can or are willing to access the internet for on-line services, there is a year on year increase of residents who want the choice and flexibility to access services when they want – which may not be during office opening hours. By embracing advances in technology, Internet, phone and even Digital TV services, residents can access services at their leisure. There will be the opportunity to complete on-line surveys for residents to provide the organisation with their views on services. Channels for access will be developed in accordance with the strategy.

¹ Customer Access Review report

4.5 London Borough Islington

Working closely with our main partner will enable access to all services available whether delivered by HFI or LBI. The technical part of the Strategy (eg Hardware standards, infrastructure and networking) will be delivered in partnership with LBI.

5. ICT Strategy

5.1 Background

The ICT Strategy & Projects Group has established foundations of the proposal for a 3-year strategy on the role of ICT within HFI, as reflected by the overall needs of the Business Plan.

5.2 Scope

This strategy is to document objectives in relation to all elements of ICT used within HFI. It will be used as the basis for defining ICT projects and the allocation of budget and resources; a basis on which SMT can implement and monitor key decisions relating to ICT, supported by further meetings of the ICT Strategy Group. The strategy is not intended to be a detailed technical document, but a guide to inform decision making and implementation.

5.3 Aims

- To agree standards and principles that will enable the implementation and support of ICT systems and users over a three-year period.
- To provide a basis on which to procure appropriate applications.
- To achieve value for money in all areas of ICT related expenditure by spending more efficiently.

5.4 Guiding principles

- There must be a real partnership between all those who manage and use ICT resources. This shall be achieved through regular meetings of the ICT Strategy Group, User groups and other related forums.
- ICT must be an integral part of the organisation's business planning process.
- To provide a strategic view of the way technology is applied across the organisation.
- The delivery of ICT must offer value for money.
- Each individual must be suitably equipped with the required ICT skills and equipment in order that they can achieve their duties efficiently and effectively, including user-confidence in the reliability and relevance ICT services. This will include identification of equality and diversity needs and ensuring that these needs are met in delivery of the strategy.

6. Objectives

6.1 Access to information at Housing Offices

Staff require access to all customer information, from any office.

Strategy Objectives

- Scanned images will be held in a suitable electronic file structure within the Document Image Processing (DIP) system for easy retrieval.
- Files and other documentation will be scanned in accordance to agreed strategy.

Action Points

- Agree a corporate electronic file structure within DIP system.
- Consider options for input of documentation in terms of cost and service delivery.
- Agree funding for the agreed strategy for scanning (if appropriate).
- Enable appropriate access to the system for staff.
- Agree retention policy for scanned images.

6.2 Management of all Customer records

Acquisition of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System will enable staff to meet more of our customers' needs at the first point of access.

Strategy Objectives

- HFI have an agreed method for implementing a CRM.
- Costs for implementation are refined as part of a procurement exercise.

Action Points

- Arrange demo of system options as outlined in the CRM options appraisal.
- Agree the requirements for HFI.
- Produce full functional specification.
- Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.

- Agree budget and funding.
- Commission implementation project.

6.3 Development of remote services for customers

The Communications department will lead on the overall development of on-line services, supported by the ICT Strategy.

Strategy Objectives

- Customers will have more on-line services available via the Internet.
- Customers will access more services with the use of both landline and mobile telephony.
- Consideration will be given to progress on digital TV services.

Action Points

- In liaison with residents and LBI, agree requirement for on-line & telephony services.
- Consider all options for implementation.
- Produce full functional specification.
- Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.
- Agree budget and funding.
- Commission implementation of project.

6.4 Development of remote access for staff

Members of staff will have interaction with systems on estates or when visiting residents in their homes, by the utilisation of wireless protocol.

Strategy Objectives

- Estates Services staff can update systems and retrieve information on site.
- Visiting officers can process information and requests for residents away from the office.

- Anti Social Behaviour officers can report information and interact with systems in real time.

Action Points

- Support the rollout of the Estate Services system.
- Agree requirements for visiting officers access.
- Agree requirements for Anti-Social behaviour requirements.
- Produce a specification for hardware and software.
- Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.
- Agree budget and funding.
- Commission implementation project.

6.5 Integration of Repair systems

In line with recommendations from the Audit Commission, Repair Systems must be integrated and flagged, in liaison with Repair Contractor.

Strategy Objectives

- HFI, LBI (TSG) and Kier Islington can work together for better integration.
- There is a clear definition of integration.

Action Points

- Produce agreed documentation of requirements.
- Agree budget and funding.
- Commission project.

Appendix 1
Homes for Islington ICT Action Plan

Objective	Activity	Measurable Outcome	Target Date	Lead Officer	Progress
Scanned images will be held in a suitable electronic file structure within the Document Image Processing (DIP) system for easy retrieval.	Agree and implement corporate electronic file structure within DIP system.	Simple retrieval of scanned images.	September 2007	Director of Operations	
	Agree budget and funding strategy for scanning.	Funding identified with clear policy for scanning.	April 2008	Director of Resources	
	Enable appropriate access to the system for staff.	Login rights agreed with management.	September 2007	Director of Resources	
	Agree retention policy for scanned images.	Policy agreed and signed off by managers.	April 2008	Director of Resources	
Agreed costed proposal for the implementation of a CRM system.	Arrange demo of system options as outlined in the CRM options appraisal.	Specification for a CRM system.	September 2007	Director of Resources	
	Agree the requirements for HFI.	Costs for implementation are refined as part of a procurement exercise.	October 2007	Director of Resources	
	Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.	A preferred supplier.	January 2008	Director of Resources	
	Agree budget and funding.	Funding identified.	March 2008	Director of Resources	

Objective	Activity	Measurable Outcome	Target Date	Lead Officer	Progress
	Commission implementation project.	CRM system.	March 2008	Director of Resources	
Customers will access more services with the use of computers and landline/ mobile telephony.	In liaison with residents and LBI, agree requirement for internet based & telephony services.	Agreed specification of service requirements.	August 2007	Director of Operations	
	Consider all options for implementation.	Completion of options appraisal.	October 2007	Director of Operations	
	Produce full functional specification.	Detailed document	December 2007	Director of Resources	
	Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.	A preferred supplier.	February 2008	Director of Resources	
	Agree budget and funding.	Funding identified.	March 2008	Director of Resources	
	Commission implementation project.	Interaction for customers via the Internet.	June 2008	Director of Resources	
Staff can interact with systems when out on site.	Support rollout of the Estate Services system	Functioning system accessible remotely.	August 2007	Director of Operations	
	Agree requirements for visiting officers access.	Document with recommendation is agreed and signed off.	September 2007	Director of Property Services	
	Agree requirements for Anti-Social behaviour requirements.	Written specification.	September 2007	Director of Operations	
	Produce a specification for hardware and software.	Written specification.	December 2007	Director of Property Services	

Objective	Activity	Measurable Outcome	Target Date	Lead Officer	Progress
	Arrange tender exercise as appropriate.	Preferred supplier	April 2008	Director of Property Services	
	Agree budget and funding.	Approved capital and revenue funding.	July 2008	Director of Resources	
	Commission implementation project.	Functioning system accessible remotely.	April 2009	Director of Resources	
HFI, LBI (TSG) and Kier Islington's repairs systems are integrated.	Produce agreed documentation of requirements.	A documented clear definition of repairs integration.	May 2007	Director of Property Services	
	Agree budget and funding.	Approved capital and revenue funding.	July 2007	Director of Resources	
	Commission project.	Consistency of repairs systems and data, in accordance with definition.	September 2007	Director of Resources	

Report of	Team	Job Title	
Simon Kwong	Chief Executive Directorate	Head of Performance and Service Development	
Name of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda item	Status
HFI Board	23 rd April 2007	9	Decision

Subject of Report: Revised Equality and Diversity Strategy 2007 - 09

1. Synopsis

1.1 This report presents Board with a revised Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2007-09, (Appendix 1), accompanied by an action plan for 2007-08 (Appendix 2). It also presents Board with an annual review of HFI progress against the equality and diversity strategy for 2006-7 which is to be made available to the public via the HFI website, (Appendix 3).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Board agrees the revised strategy and action plan;
- 2.2 The Board agrees the annual report to residents to be published on the website.

3. Background

- 3.1 As reported to Board on 26th February 2007, a review of the Equality and Diversity Strategy was delayed to incorporate views expressed in the Voluntary Improvement Work (VIW) inspection by the Audit Commission that was undertaken in December 2006. A key recommendation of that report, now incorporated into the draft Business Plan 2007-12, is to improve services to diverse residents.
- 3.2 The Audit Commission’s Diversity KLOE (31) was revised in November 2006. To reflect HFI’s regulatory framework, the emphasis of the revised strategy and action plan has moved towards the Diversity KLOE and Audit Commission expectations. Whilst HFI continues to play a significant role in LBI’s achievement of progressive levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government, the action plan is no longer so closely tied to the detailed criteria contained in the Equality Standards.
- 3.3 Staffing and financial resources for delivering the diversity strategy have been increased for 2007/08 and reflect the importance of this strategy to LBI. Details of how this additional funding will be used can be found in section 7.5 of the strategy document.
- 3.4 HFI believes that equalities and diversity are central to everything we do and therefore all staff throughout the organisation have a responsibility for equalities and diversity. The Service Development Team continues to oversee development of the strategy and provides HFI’s expertise in this core area. Management responsibility for equalities and diversity is at all levels:

- Chief Executive – Eamon McGoldrick

- Head of Performance & Service Development – Simon Kwong
- Service Development Manager – Simon James
- Service Development Advisor – Sue Penrose.

4.0 Key changes to the revised strategy and action plan

4.1 The policy statement and overall aims of HFI's Equality and Diversity Strategy remain unchanged.

4.2 The following revisions to the strategy should be noted by Board:

- The emphasis has changed from the Local Government Equality Standard to the Audit Commission KLOE and key themes have been introduced which reflect those priorities.
- All recommendations and issues from the recent Voluntary Improvement Work (VIW) report are addressed (more detail in 4.3 below).
- Targets have been amended to be more challenging (eg. 35% of workforce to be BME, rather than 25%, as this better reflects baseline data)
- Data regarding HFI tenants has been updated to reflect results of the 2006 STATUS survey.
- The chapter on leadership has been strengthened to demonstrate Board commitment on this issue (a key theme for meeting Level 5 of the Equality Standard).
- The section on equalities in procurement has been given greater clarity.
- References to the Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme have been added
- There is a greater interface with HFI's Resident Involvement and Community Engagement strategies.

4.3 Comments and recommendations from the Voluntary Improvement Work Inspection (November 2006) have been incorporated into the Strategy and Action Plan as follows:

- The intention to ensure disabled access to HFI's community centres is detailed in Chapter 7.3
- The need to improve our impact assessment process is also recognised in Chapter 7.2
- The proposals to improve systems for collecting and using diversity data to assess our performance is explained in Chapter 6
- The service review of both community languages and interpreting and translation services is outlined in Chapter 8
- Issues with developing a pro-active approach to vulnerable people as well as ensuring they can be flagged up on our database are found in Chapter 8.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Significant achievements have been made in the past year, based on the original Equality and Diversity Strategy agreed by Board in 2005 (see Appendix 3 for a review of the past year). Most notable have been:

- Working in partnership with LBI in meeting the Level 3 Equality Standard, (and an imminent expectation of achieving level 4)
- The collection of diversity information from residents in the 2006 census, which can now start to be used as the basis for delivering more tailored services to diverse residents.

5.2 Equality and diversity remains an important crosscutting theme within HFI's operations and is a key area identified by the Audit Commission for improvement. The revised strategy and action plan will provide a renewed focus on diversity, and provide a sound basis for improving services to diverse residents and meeting the expectations of the Audit Commission as well as the requirements of the Equalities standard.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 Capital implications

None specific to this report.

6.1.2 Revenue implications

Additional expenditure of £50k for 2007/08 is covered by funding from LBI as part of the 2007/08 management fee. All other expenditure is from within existing budgets.

6.1.3 Efficiency implications

None specific to this report.

6.1.4 Risk implications

None specific to this report.

6.2 Legal implications

6.2.1 The revised Equality and Diversity strategy and action plan ensure HFI's compliance with all equalities legislation.

6.3 Equalities Implications

6.3.1 Contained within the Equality and Diversity strategy document.

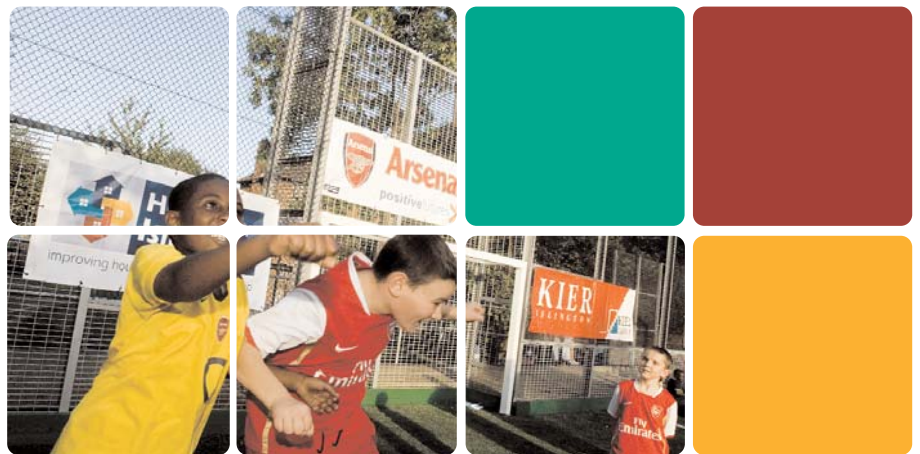
6.4 Sustainability Implications

6.4.1 None specific to this report.

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Equality and Diversity Strategy

2007 - 09



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1. Foreword

Homes for Islington (HFI) commenced operations in April 2004. HFI is owned by the London Borough of Islington (LBI) and managed by a board of directors made up of tenants and leaseholders, council representatives and independent members. HFI manages approximately 36,000 council properties throughout the borough.

The government enabled local authorities to set up arms-length management organisations (ALMOs) to manage their housing stock and provided an incentive by giving good, “two star”, ALMOs the capital funding necessary to meet their decent homes obligations. Homes for Islington was awarded two stars, with excellent prospects for improvement, in January 2005 following an inspection by the Audit Commission.

In its first year of operation HFI concentrated on establishing itself as an independent organisation and improving services to residents. The Audit Commission award of a two stars and excellent prospects for improvement judgement provided evidence of significant progress toward those goals. Over the next year our target is to continue the improvement of services to residents and to achieve a three star judgement from the Audit Commission later in 2007, reflecting the provision of “excellent” services.

This Equality and Diversity strategy seeks to ensure that excellence in service provision is delivered for all of our residents and that staff are able to thrive and develop in a workplace that welcomes diversity. It will also serve as a means of measuring the organisation’s performance in helping the Council to achieve the Equalities standard set by Government, a process that HFI as a provider of Islington’s services has a duty to support.

2. Equality & Diversity Policy Statement

2.1 Homes for Islington’s commitment to equality & diversity

Homes for Islington is committed to promoting equality and diversity among our customers and staff. Our equality & diversity policy links directly into our Equality & Diversity Strategy and Action Plan, which sets out our priorities for action to improve the living and working environment for all our residents and staff.

What equality means to Homes for Islington is ensuring that all our services meet the needs and aspirations of all our customers, that we provide our services in a fair and equitable way and that they are accessible to all. To do this, we will ensure that our policies and practices are not discriminatory and actively encourage people to access our services or take up and remain in employment with us.

By promoting diversity we appreciate and value the different life experiences, skills and perspectives different individuals can bring. Homes for Islington will celebrate the diversity of our community and staff and look at how we as an organisation can actively value those differences. This means that we will recognise people’s different service needs and make our services relevant to their individual needs. As an employer, we will actively empower our staff to develop their potential and take pride in their abilities and resources.

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and valuing the diversity within our community and workforce. It is our policy that everyone should be treated fairly and without discrimination regardless of disability, gender, ethnicity, colour, age, sexuality, language, HIV status, national or social origin, religious or other belief, or other status. We believe that diversity benefits and adds value to our organisation and the work we do.

HFI welcomes and is committed to fulfilling its legal duties under the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Human Rights Act 1998, Employment Equality Regulations 2003 and all other current and impending equalities legislation. We also accept the definition of institutionalised racism as defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and will extend it to apply beyond racism to discrimination against disabled people and all forms of discrimination.

3. Aims of HFI's Equality & Diversity Strategy

An Equalities Working Group was set up by HFI in 2004 to oversee the development of its first Equality & Diversity Strategy. This group met four times to progress the work on the new strategy, which was approved by the HFI Board for consultation in April 2005 and received final approval by the HFI Board, following feedback from the consultation, in August 2005.

This equality and diversity strategy sets out what Homes for Islington (HFI) wants to achieve in relation to equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination, and how we will deliver on our commitments. The strategy provides a clear framework for what we are trying to achieve, how we will achieve it, and the mechanisms we will use to measure our success. It will help us learn to identify any barriers that cause discrimination and through active and ongoing consultation with all our stakeholders enable us to introduce new and more effective ways of providing our service.

We want to improve the quality of life for all our customers and staff. We want to make sure that our services are accessible, that they meet the needs of all our residents and that people feel confident in using them. We aim to become an organisation that is inclusive and draws strength from its differences.

3.1 High-quality accessible services for all

Homes for Islington is committed to providing high quality services that meet the needs of all our diverse community. We will act to:

- Remove any barriers preventing our customers from accessing our services or participating in our decision-making structures.
- Provide information that is accessible and available in appropriate formats about our services.
- Review our translation and interpretation services to ensure they are fit for purpose and value for money.
- Consult and involve all our customers in our work to promote equality and diversity.
- Work with our contractors and partners and those we buy services from to ensure they do not operate discriminatory practices in employment or service delivery and that they adhere to good equalities practice in the employment of their staff and in the delivery of their services, in respect to disability, gender, ethnicity, colour, nationality, language, age, religion or belief, sexuality.
- Carry out equality impact assessments on all current and proposed policies and functions to identify any potential adverse impact and to take action to address this.
- Promote a community in which all our residents can live free from prejudice and discrimination and in harmony with each other.

3.2 Combating discrimination and valuing diversity in our workforce

We will develop and promote policies and procedures that give equal access to employment and development opportunities to all our potential and existing staff members. We will seek to achieve a workforce reflective of our community at all levels. We will make sure that our employment practices are accessible to everyone and we will put into place in our equality and diversity action plan a range of initiatives to:

- Develop and promote policies giving all our staff equal access to employment and career development opportunities.
- Develop a workforce that is representative of our community at all levels and grades throughout our organisation.
- Make sure all our staff know of their right to be protected from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- Train all our staff and Board members on our new policy.
- Set ambitious performance targets so that we can measure our progress.

Every member of our staff has the responsibility of complying with and actively promoting our Equality and Diversity Strategy and we will ensure this is a key component of all staff performance development reviews. Our service providers and tenant and resident associations are also responsible for complying with and promoting this strategy in their delivery of services to our residents. With the help of feedback from our residents and staff we will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of our service delivery and employment practices, and if there are any areas of weakness we will take action to remedy this.

4. Equality & Diversity Context

The borough of Islington is an area rich in diversity with a mix of ages, ethnicity, culture, language, religion and nationalities. Data from the last census (2001) shows Islington's official population at 175,797, with just over half being female (52.1%), around one fifth of school age and one fifth above 60 years of age. There are more than 55 nationalities, and at least 7 religions represented in our community.

Many parts of Islington's community face disadvantage and / or exclusion for reasons such as unemployment, low income, low literacy or learning difficulties, disability, language and poor health. Often these issues combine together to create multiple disadvantage that prevents people from playing a full role in our community.

Census data shows an unemployment rate of 5.8% (2.4% higher than the average for England and Wales) and that 13% of those unemployed had never worked and 34% were long-term unemployed. A quarter of the resident population had no qualifications, 6.9% were permanently sick or disabled and 7.8% were retired.

- The majority of council residents are Christian but 12.6% are Muslim, higher than for all of Islington or London residents as a whole
- One third of council residents are from a black or minority ethnic origin, slightly more than for all Islington and London residents
- There are more children and older people amongst council residents.

4.1 BME Mapping Exercise

Islington Council's Housing Dept. undertook a BME mapping exercise in 2003 to get more information about the size and location of BME communities within the borough and establish a baseline of information on housing-related need.

Key findings from this exercise include:

- Projections that by 2011 31% of Islington's population would be from an ethnic minority background.
- The ward with the greatest concentration of BME communities is Finsbury Park.
- The ward with the highest concentration of white British people is St. Peters.
- Wards in the north of the borough tend to have roughly the same number of BME residents as White British.
- Data on the tenure profile of residents (which also functions as an indicator of prosperity) showed that Black African, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean people are likely to be poorer than their White, Indian and Pakistani counterparts and more likely to be living in housing provided by the social rented sector.

4.2 Annual Survey of Homes for Islington Tenants

The 2006 Survey of Tenants for Homes for Islington revealed the following key facts:

- 31% of households had one person aged 60 or over, with 9% housing two people aged 60 or over.

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- 16% housed one person aged 16 or under, 10% two and 4% three or more people aged 16 or under.
- 73% characterised themselves as white, 18% as black or black British, 3% as Asian or Asian British, 2% as Chinese and other, and 4% as mixed.
- 52% of tenants had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity, with 84% saying their disability/illness limited their activities.
- 6% of households had someone who is a wheelchair user.
- A third of households had a net weekly income of under £100, while four in ten had a weekly income of £100-£199.

(Source: 2006 Survey of Tenants – Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute)

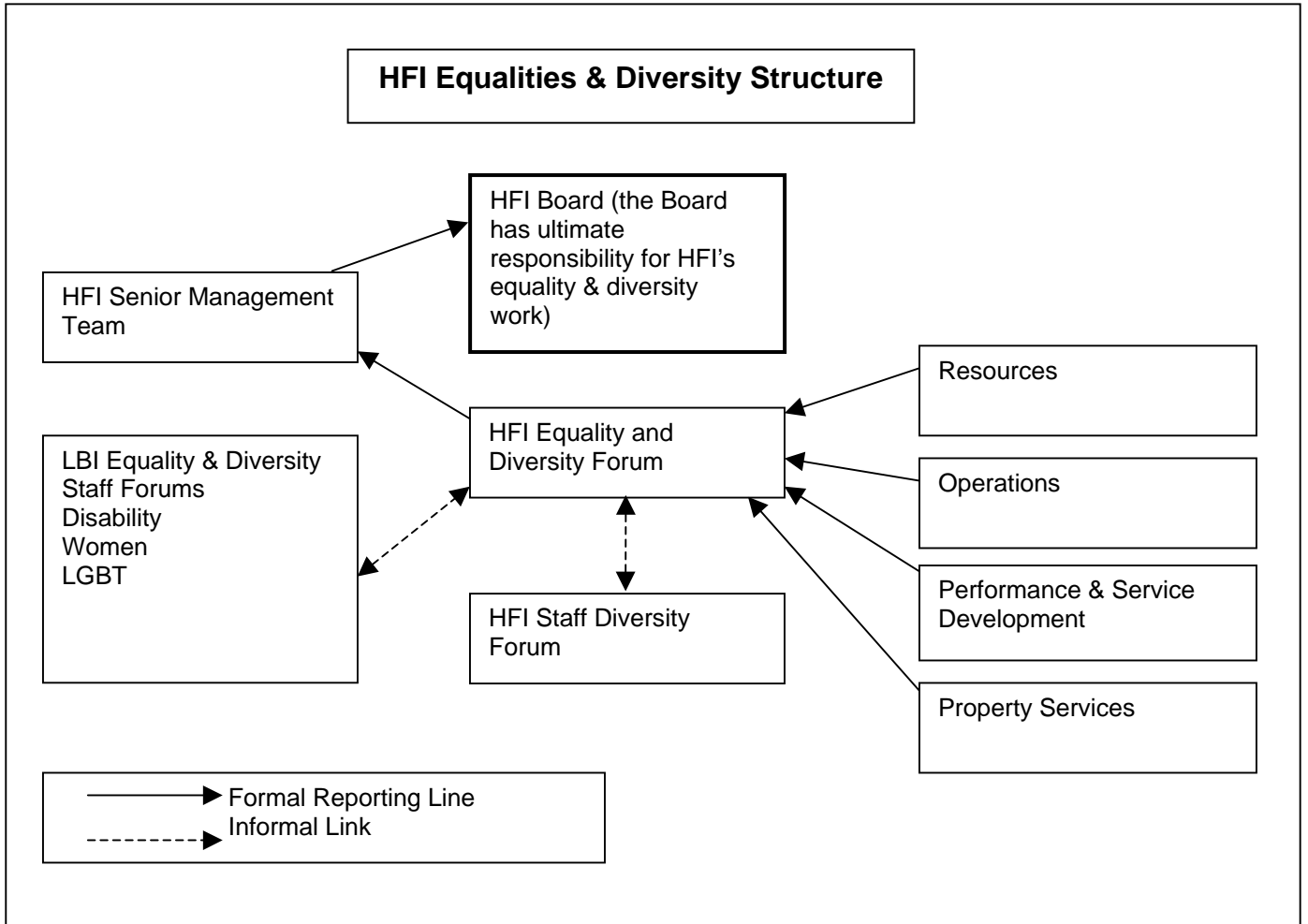
5. Leading the Equalities and Diversity strategy

The Homes for Islington Board is responsible for delivering the Equalities and Diversity strategy and have placed real emphasis on its successful delivery. Homes for Islington has a Board of Directors, consisting of seven tenant and leasehold representatives, five council representatives and five independent members and it is they, along with the Chief Executive who are ultimately responsible for the delivery of HFI’s objectives and statutory responsibilities.

Within the Board, it is also envisaged that there will be an assigned equalities and diversity portfolio holder. The portfolio holder’s role will be to advise upon key issues such as whether the Equalities and Diversity strategy is being followed and the action plan effectively delivered. Additionally, the assigned role will ensure that the Board is fully trained and equipped to monitor equality and diversity issues within the organisation.

The Board regularly reviews progress on the organisation’s diversity action plan and have implemented a system that means that all reports to the Board contain assessments as to their equality implications..

The diagram below shows the structure within HFI for managing our equality and diversity work:



5.1 Leadership and Resident Involvement

HFI believes that there needs to be an awareness of its equality and diversity goals within the community and that its residents should be influencing and leading its strategy.

- It will agree a set of targets with the Federation of Islington Tenants Associations to ensure that Tenant and Resident Associations encourage participation across the community
- It will develop a “Sounding Board” of residents whose views represent the diverse resident base of HFI.
- It will use its links with community organisations to seek feedback on HFI’s performance on diversity.

6. Monitoring the strategy

Monitoring and evaluation of our Equality and Diversity Strategy will take place on a number of levels:

- The Board of Homes for Islington will review the strategy within the wider equality and diversity agenda for Homes for Islington every year.
- The Senior Management Team (SMT) of Homes for Islington will receive twice yearly reports on progress against the equality and diversity action plan.
- The Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF), set up with representatives from each HFI division, will work at an operational level and meet on a bi-monthly basis to make sure that we maintain progress on the equality and diversity action plan. Each division will report back quarterly on their performance against the equality and diversity action plan and a twice yearly report detailing progress will be sent to the SMT
- We will discuss the findings of our monitoring with our trade unions and HFI staff forums and report on them to the HFI Board. We will publish the results and action to be taken annually on our Intranet and web-site.

6.1 Reviewing the strategy

Tenants, leaseholders and other key stakeholders such as community, advocacy and representative groups will be involved in reviewing, evaluating and informing this strategy. We will use a range of mapping and evaluation techniques such as resident focus groups, surveys and questionnaires, performance data, complaints, sampling and spot checks and mystery shopping.

Each year we will produce an end-of-year review to assess our performance on our Equality & Diversity Strategy, publish it on our website and make it available to all sectors of our community and workforce. We will actively engage with our residents and partners in our annual monitoring and review of this strategy.

6.2 Collecting equalities data

To ensure that our services and employment practices are inclusive, we will systematically collect and monitor data on access to both. We will extend the collection and analysis of our equalities data to identify areas we need to improve.

In 2005 we ran an extensive reconciliation exercise to make sure that the information we hold on our computer database matches that in our file records. This exercise greatly improved the information we hold on the ethnicity, gender, languages and impairment profile of our residents as well as developing an alert system for vulnerable tenants. But further work was needed to gather comprehensive equality information, including age, sexuality and religion or belief as well as the equalities profile of our leaseholders.

In 2006 we carried out a full census of all our residents to collect information on all six equality strands. Some additional information was gathered and, in 2007, we have developed a policy and procedure for the ongoing collection of diversity information to expand our knowledge of the profile of our residents, a process that would also list their preferred method of communication. With this growing profiling information we are increasingly able to map our services against all the equality strands and assess whether services are unbalanced and where we need to take action.

6.3 Monitoring our performance

HFI is one of very few housing organisations who are now carrying out a series of service reviews by equality strand. This work commenced in 2006/07 with an analysis of our performance in providing equality of treatment in the areas of rent arrears and complaints. This work continues in 2007/08 with reviews now taking place in the areas of anti social behaviour and repairs. In addition HFI, in partnership with the London Borough of Islington, will comply with the Government's requirements with regard to CORE lettings.

6.3 External Monitoring of our performance

HFI recognises the value of external monitoring in assessing its service delivery and has used a number of tools in measuring its diversity performance;

- It continues to report and be answerable for its performance on Best Value Performance Indicators to the Council.
- The Council monitors performance through the Equalities standard process
- LBI' acts as a "critical friend" and gives feedback on our performance
- We benchmark our services against other ALMOs in terms of diversity
- Improving our diversity awareness has been the subject of voluntary inspections of the service

7. How we will deliver our commitment

HFI recognises that the successful delivery of its Equality and Diversity strategy is vital in ensuring that all residents are able to access our services and staff are able to work in a supportive environment.

We will ensure that we comply with Equalities legislation and that frontline services are delivered in ways that are tailored to the needs of our diverse residents. For this reason, HFI will build upon its existing diversity profiling information, further develop our long-established links within the community as well as seeking new ways for ascertaining the views of our diverse residents (such as the Sounding Board proposals included in the our Resident Involvement strategy).

The Audit Commission has published a revised Diversity Key Line of Enquiry (31), which sets out the standards required of an excellent organisation. We will use this checklist to evaluate our progress towards becoming an excellent organisation in terms of equality and diversity.

7.1 The Equality Standard for Local Government

The Equality Standard for Local Government replaced the Commission for Racial Equality Standard in 2002 as the primary best value performance indicator for local government.

As an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) HFI are not directly assessed under the Equality Standard but are totally committed to supporting Islington Council's application to gain accreditation against the standard. Regular meetings with the Local Authority are in place and an evidential checklist approach has been adopted to ensure that progress is maintained. Key themes of the Equalities standard are mainstreamed throughout this strategy and the accompanying action plan.

7.2 Equality Impact Assessments

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 we have a duty to monitor and review all existing or proposed policies and functions relevant to the duty to promote race equality and identify any adverse effect on any of our black and ethnic minority communities. As a social landlord we are also monitored on how we perform against the CRE's Code of Practice in Rented Housing and the Code of Practice for Tackling Racial Harassment. We will review and improve the procedures for Equality Impact Assessments *and benchmark them to the CRE standard* to make them more relevant and effective. We will use the process to determine whether any of our functions or policies is likely to have an adverse impact on our community or staff. We will act and take rapid remedial action when gaps or faults in the system are found.

To address multiple discrimination, Homes for Islington has adopted an impact assessment process covering all six of the Equality Standard target groups and investigate any adverse effect of our policies or functions in regard to disability, race, gender, sexuality, age, religion or belief as well as economic status. We will impact assess all our proposed policies and procedures and review them to ensure we comply with all equalities legislation.

Homes for Islington will carry out a formal equality impact assessment during the development of all strategies, policies, procedures and projects which are relevant, to assess whether there is any impact on any particular equality group. This process will be an integral part of the planning and implementation of strategies, policies, procedures and projects. The assessment will be done before and during any consultation and will include a specific race equality impact assessment as required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

7.3 DDA Legislation

All HFI offices already comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and we will ensure that they continue to do so.

All of our Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) are also DDA compliant, although in some cases this is through the provision of home visits on request. We will work with those TMOs whose offices are not physically compliant to make them so where this is feasible.

We will also work with Islington Council to ensure that community centres are DDA compliant. Current funding levels will enable this programme to be completed in 2010.

Priority will be given to delivering the aids and adaptations service to a high quality so that it continues to compare well with other providers when benchmarked.

7.4 Race Equality Amendment Act

HFI remains committed to implementing and adhering to the provisions of the Race Equality Amendment Act 2000 both in terms of its Service delivery and Employment.

It will continue to involve staff in assessing its performance and will constantly examine its own practice taking into account the findings of the Stephen Lawrence report on institutional racism.

7.4 Training

To implement our new Equality & Diversity Strategy, we will train all our staff on their duty to promote equality and value diversity and combat discrimination and harassment. We will train our Management Team and managers who have to implement our policies and procedures.

We will provide high quality and up to date equality and diversity training for anyone involved in our recruitment or performance management procedures. We will train all our staff and make sure everyone is aware of their duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and all current and future equalities legislation. We will review and shape our training and development processes against feedback from the community to ensure that they are dynamic and flexible and equip our staff with the knowledge and skills they need to provide responsive quality services to all.

7.5 Resources

Significant resources in both staffing and financial terms will continue to be directed to delivering our Equality and Diversity Strategy in 2007/8. Extra funding and staff resources will be used to:

- deliver new services tailored to the identified needs of HFI's diverse residents
- further extend HFI's diversity profiling information so that we can better understand the needs of our customers
- produce targeted leaflets for particular communities
- hold open days promoting HFI's services for communities that request them.

The Equality & Diversity Forum, chaired by HFI's Chief Executive, will continue as a dedicated delivery resource. Staff in the Service Development Team and Human Resources will act to deliver and monitor the strategy in tandem with colleagues throughout the rest of the organisation. The Head of Performance & Service Development and the Service Development Manager will continue to have equalities and diversity as one of their key responsibilities and there will be a named Service Development Adviser who acts as lead on operational equalities and diversity matters.

8. A partnership with our community

Homes for Islington will develop and implement the Equality & Diversity Strategy in partnership with our residents, tenant and resident associations, representative or advocacy groups within the community, staff and contractors. We will seek to meet our community cohesion duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. We will consult widely with our stakeholders, the community we serve and our staff on this strategy annually with each review of the scheme. Homes for Islington welcomes customer comments and we will encourage and facilitate customer feedback.

8.1 Communication

We will communicate this strategy widely to our community and workforce. We will:

- Ensure it is available on request in our main community languages and in accessible formats and that it is accessible to disabled people from a wide range of impairment groups.
- Encourage feedback on our services by consulting our residents using a variety of inclusive consultation techniques including surveys, written documents, focus groups as well as face-to-face meetings.
- Be pro-active in reaching out to all the groups in our community to seek input and advice on the development and implementation of the strategy and action plan.
- Ensure that our communications are accessible to all through our Communications Strategy, that our staff are aware of what is expected of them, that there is consistency in HFI's communications and that there is the widest possible access for people who do not speak and/or read much English and for disabled and deaf residents and staff.
- We will review our Interpreting and Translation service, translation strap lines, community languages and translation symbol as part of an efficiency review in early 2007 and ensure staff receive training on how residents can access the service.
- We will ensure that key HFI documents are available in a number of languages and provide advice leaflets that can be targeted at different sections of the community.
- We will develop our staff so that they have the customer care skills to respond to different communication techniques and will create a database of languages spoken in-house so that these skills can be utilised if called upon.

8.2 Delivering services to the whole community

To meet the needs of its residents, HFI has developed a wide network of contacts within the community that are integral to the delivery of its day to day services.

- In providing support to its black and ethnic minority residents, HFI staff liaise closely with Somali, Turkish and Bengali community groups particularly in areas where these communities are well represented.
- Whenever possible, HFI will continue to develop its links within those hidden sections of the community whose profile and population is very low.
- HFI will support vulnerable residents through its team of Housing Support Officers.
- It works closely with groups representing the elderly in the Borough
- It has liaised pro-actively with Stonewall to raise awareness of the issue of homophobia within the community

- It has joined up with mainstream youth providers in providing diversionary activities for young people on HFI estates and sought the views of young people on the services it provides.
- The needs of disabled residents will continue to be discussed through our established contacts with Disability Action in Islington.

HFI regards these relationships as both a valuable source of feedback on its performance and as a means of communication with sections of the community that may not always access its services.

HFI will continue to promote the use of its Complaints system as a means of ensuring it is delivering effective services throughout the Community and will if necessary use innovative ways of encouraging feedback.

In the coming year, HFI will carry out a mapping exercise of these wide ranging voluntary and community links so that;

- Our residents are aware of and can be referred to these services
- HFI can ensure that communication occurs in a way that best suits the needs of each community.

9. Aiming to be an excellent organisation

Homes for Islington received a two star rating from the Audit Commission following an inspection in November 2004 and is aiming to increase this to a three star rating in November 2007. The Audit Commission has issued guidance documents “Key Lines of Inquiry” (KLOE), which set out the standards they expect to see in organisations providing an excellent service. The KLOE on diversity identifies a cross cutting theme and provides valuable guidance for assessing HFI’s progress towards becoming a three star organisation providing excellent services to its customers.

9.1 HFI as a provider of high quality, accessible services

HFI aims to provide high quality, accessible services to everyone in our community. To do this, we have undertaken an extensive profiling exercise of all our customers to make sure everyone’s needs are taken into account when we plan and deliver our services. To eradicate harassment on our estates, we use a victim centred approach and work systematically and in partnership with a number of agencies including the Police.

We follow agreed and consistent procedures that have been developed with our residents in tackling hate crime of all forms on our estates and will support people facing harassment by taking action against perpetrators. We actively publicise our commitments to tackle such harassment to our residents and produce statistics on incidents that can be nationally benchmarked.

We will ensure that the information we provide to our customers is available in the main community languages and accessible to all.

We will actively seek to engage all our customers, including those who have been marginalised or previously considered “hard to reach” and involve them in our consultation forums. We will run an annual conference for residents to engage and involve people throughout our community in the way we deliver our services to them. We will actively encourage and welcome feedback from our customers on the way we provide services and build that feedback into improving our services.

Black and minority ethnic communities disproportionately experience racial discrimination. The effects can include poverty and bad housing conditions with more minority ethnic people likely to live in overcrowded accommodation. To address the debilitating effects of poor housing, the government has set a target to ensure that all social housing meets set standards of decency by 2010.

The Decent Homes Standard does not however cover a number of things such as security, lift repair and renewal, environmental or estate works and facilities for the disabled. Those will be covered by the Homes for Islington Standard. Our objective is to deliver improvement to residents’ homes that will not just meet the government’s Decent Homes Standard by 2010 but will deliver a much higher level of improvements.

HFI believes that tackling poverty and supporting communities to live in areas that feel safe and free from fear are essential factors in promoting equality for all its residents. Alongside this strategy HFI have developed a Community Engagement Strategy that focuses on these key factors and supports the equality and diversity agenda.

10. Homes for Islington as an Employer of Choice

10.1 An Employer of choice

HFI aims to be an employer of choice and to attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve.

We will ensure that everyone has equal access to training and promotion opportunities and that we operate work/life balance policies that maximise employment and career development opportunities for all. We will strive to make sure our workplace is free of discrimination and harassment and take robust action to combat it.

We will provide a safe environment that is accessible to disabled people and seek to retain in employment any of our staff who are or become disabled. As part of this we will seek accreditation to become a “Two Ticks – Positive about Disabled People Employer”. We aim to maintain our Investors in People accreditation and the existing positive action schemes in place for our staff.

As part of our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 we will monitor and collect information on our staff by ethnicity in regard to:

- Staff in post.
- Applications for employment, training and promotion.
- Staff receiving training.
- Staff appraisals.
- Staff facing complaints or disciplinary action.
- Staff leaving the organisation.

The new Equality Standard for Local Government expects organisations to promote equality across the six equality strands of disability, gender, race, age, sexuality and religion or belief. Homes for Islington has adopted this approach and extended the monitoring of its staff to cover all six strands so we can take an active stand against multiple discrimination and promote equality for all.

To make our workforce truly representative of our community and to promote career development for all our staff, we will monitor and analyse the information we hold on our staff by:

- Percentage of the workforce compared with the equalities composition of our community.
- Equalities origin of our staff by grade.

We will undertake a comprehensive profiling exercise across all equality strands of our staff and will use the 2001 census figures to set initial baseline targets for the recruitment of our staff in terms of disability, gender and race.

10.2 Making our workforce representative of the community we serve

In May 2005 Homes for Islington employed 674 staff of whom 267 (39.6%) were female and 407 (60.4%) male, 42.3% black and minority ethnic staff, 1.6% ‘other’ and 56.1% white.

To ensure there is accurate representation of our community throughout our organisation, Homes for Islington has set the following baseline targets:

- Disabled staff –10%.
- Women – 50%.
- BME - 35%.
- LGBT staff – 5%.

We will continue to set staffing targets against our diversity profiling information and will amend these if necessary to ensure they continue to accurately reflect the diversity profile of our residents.

10.3 Training

We will continue to train our staff to ensure they have all the skills they need to deliver the aims of this strategy. There is a role for each member of our staff in tackling discrimination where it exists and being proactive in promoting equality and diversity where they work and in the services they deliver to our customers. Our online diversity training for all staff was short-listed for a national award where it received a commendation.

11. Equalities in Procurement

Procurement is an important function, which we will use to actively promote our Equality & Diversity Strategy. Our Procurement Strategy will ensure that contracts are delivered in a way that is non-discriminatory and which promotes equality of opportunity for all our residents, staff and local businesses.

To this end we will:

- Make them aware of HFI's Equality and Diversity Policy and their obligation to implement it in full.
- Review our contracts to ensure they include a requirement that the contractor must comply with statutory equalities legislation.
- Provide training for all staff involved in procurement work so that they understand the provisions of equality legislation and their relevance to their area of work.
- At pre-tender stage formally request copies of all contractors' equality and diversity policies which will be assessed to ensure they meet HFI's standards so that the contractor organisation can meet the specific needs of the diverse communities in Islington.
- Encourage our partner organisations to adopt recruitment and employment practices that make their workforce reflective of our local population.
- Take steps to encourage active participation in decision-making from customers and service users, including people from marginalised and disadvantaged communities.

All contracts will be tendered in strict accordance with HFI's procurement policy and will comply fully with all relevant legislation within UK and EC law.

HFI Equality and Diversity Action Plan – April 2007 - March 2009

	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
1.	Meeting diverse needs				
1.1	Ensure that diversity issues are given sufficient priority in business planning processes.	<p>Mainstream equality and diversity into business planning process.</p> <p>Make equality and diversity central to the 2007-08 Residents' Conference.</p>	Simon Kwong	Annual business plan and service objectives that are informed with robust equality and diversity information.	Dec 07
1.2	Provide proactive services that more fully meet residents' diverse needs.	<p>Consult residents with diverse needs to explore their individual requirements for improved service delivery.</p> <p>Analyse best practice elsewhere and introduce as appropriate to HFI residents.</p> <p>Consult community groups of minority residents and organisations such as Disability Action in Islington to help build up picture of how to meet diverse needs.</p> <p>Use diversity mapping information to target services to appropriate diverse groups.</p>	Service Directors	Evidence of a series of initiatives that improve the services to diverse communities based on consultation with diverse residents and their representatives.	Dec 07
1.3	Review the translation and interpretation procedure to ensure that it is fit for purpose and value for money.	<p>Review translation and interpretation service through Service Efficiency Review methodology.</p> <p>Challenge and rigorous monitoring undertaken by Service Review Panel.</p>	Simon James	Report approved by Service Review Panel that provides for high quality translation and interpretation service that provides VFM and meets the needs expressed by customers.	Oct 07

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
1.4	Ensure effective, accessible and meaningful communication with diverse residents and other stakeholders.	<p>Publicise the interpreting and translation service to all HFI staff and residents.</p> <p>Translated or large print documents to be sent to those residents who we know require this service without them having to ask.</p> <p>Ensure interpreting and translation is available in British Sign Language (BSL), community languages, large print and Braille on demand.</p> <p>All key HFI documents to include explanatory sentence in 6 main community languages so that non-English speakers can determine if they require a translated copy.</p> <p>HFI web-site to include translation facilities in main community languages.</p>	Simon James	<p>Extensive publicity provided of new interpreting and translation procedure following review.</p> <p>Translation in a number of formats available on demand for all key HFI documents which also include summary of contents in community languages.</p> <p>Translation facility available in main community languages on HFI web-site.</p>	Dec 07
1.5	Ensure community centres comply with the DDA in the shortest time that resources allow.	Agree a resourced plan with the Council to make compliant with the DDA the remaining 7 non-compliant community centres.	Doug Goldring	All community centres compliant with DDA legislation.	March 09
1.6	Ensure all TMO offices comply with the DDA.	All top priority recommendations of the DDA compliance audit implemented (as budgets allow)	Anthony Jonas	All TMO public access offices complaint with DDA legislation.	March 09
1.7	Produce action plan for completion of resident profile information.	<p>Establish a methodology and targets for completion of resident profile information.</p> <p>Ensure that systems are in place to keep</p>	Simon James	Resident profile sufficiently complete to enable decisions on amendments or additions to service provision that meets the needs of diverse groups.	Sept 07

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
		information up to date.			
1.8	Develop a policy for using staff for translations.	Consult with staff who speak a language other than English to see how they could be employed in providing a translation service to customers. Use this consultation to develop a procedure and reward system for involved staff.	Simon James	Register of staff available for telephone and one to one translation with customers.	Dec 07
1.9	Make further progress with addressing the needs of disabled clients	Review with DAil the needs of their disabled client group and how these needs can be addressed by HFI.	Simon James	Report documenting a range of ways in which the needs of disabled residents can be met within available HFI resources.	Sept 07
1.10	Ensure equality & diversity input into the renewal of the HFI web-site.	List of equality & diversity requirements provided to web-site contractors following consultation with customers.	Simon James	Web-site that meets the needs of diverse groups.	Dec 07
2.	Service user involvement				
2.1	Further develop partnerships across the community.	Complete up to date listing of community and voluntary groups. Provide outreach events where requested by community groups. Convene regular liaison meetings with diverse community groups.	Simon James	Community and voluntary groups listing in place. Range of outreach events that provide full access to all diverse groups and which include consultation on equality and diversity needs. Regular contact developed with diverse community groups that aid the tapping in to hard to reach groups.	Dec 07
2.2	Ensure HFI consultation methods are fully inclusive to	Develop consultation standard including checklist for staff facilitating consultation to	Simon James	Consultation standard in place	Dec 07

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
	all potential participants.	ensure they are accessible to stakeholders from all equality strands. Publicise information concerning consultation and meetings and resulting outcomes in a range of formats.		Increased satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making from BME residents to at least 58% in 2007-08 and 61% in 2008-09.	
2.3	Facilitate the participation of diverse groups of residents in HFI's Sounding Board.	Targeted advertising of the Sounding Board to maximise inclusion of diverse groups.	Simon James	Involvement of diverse groups in the Sounding Board that is in balance with the local community.	Dec 07
3.	Assessing our own performance				
3.1	Monitor diversity in resident representative forums and work to improve representation as appropriate.	Include monitoring of community representation in TRAs within FITA SLA. Monitor community representation in consultative panels. Internally monitor representation within Board, sub-Boards and HFI Committees. Take action through succession planning, selective advertising and training to remedy any lack of representation of diverse groups.	Simon James	Diverse representation on resident representative bodies that at least reflects the community as set out in mapping exercise.	Sept 07
3.2	Produce a selection of indicators on diversity.	Produce a selection of indicators on diversity.	Simon Kwong	Selection of diversity indicators in place to enable Board and SMT to evaluate whether equality & diversity aims are being met.	Sept 07
3.3	Report on equality monitoring of repairs and ASB services.	Complete 2007-08 programme of equality reports.		Reports produced to agreed timetable	March 08

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
	Repeat diversity, rent, complaints analyses				
3.4	Take all necessary actions that flow from equality reports (see 3.3) to ensure equity of service provision.	Take action to ameliorate any inequality identified in equality reports.	Service Directors	Actions from analysis of equality reports fully implemented	March 08
3.5	Include an equalities and diversity statement in the HFI Annual Report for residents and stakeholders.	Prepare a statement on equalities and diversity for the Annual Report to residents and other stakeholders that sets out progress on E&D objectives and summarises improvements in services to diverse residents.	Simon James	Equalities and diversity statement included in each Annual Plan outlining progress against E&D objectives	June 07
3.6	Ensure satisfaction surveys are broken down by ethnicity.	Include questions on ethnicity in all surveys of residents and analyse the results by diversity themes.	Simon James	All resident surveys able to be broken down by diversity strands.	June 07
3.7	Review procedures for equality impact assessments.	Undertake a review of equality impact assessments to make them more relevant and effective. Train staff to make full use of assessments as appropriate following review.	Simon James	Satisfaction of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) tenants at 66% in 2007-08 and 70% in 2008-09.	Dec 07
4.	Leadership and partnership				
4.1	Ensure equality & diversity input into the HFI Communications Strategy.	Consult on communication requirements among diverse groups and ensure that this information is included in the annual review of the Communications Strategy.	Phil Pepper	Communications Strategy that promotes HFI's equality objectives through tenant and staff newsletters, web-site and media.	March 08

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
4.2	Board of Directors to appoint an equalities & diversity portfolio holder [if agreed at Board 23.04.07]	Implement the selection procedure for portfolio holders amongst Board Directors.	Ann Lucas	Equality & Diversity Board Director portfolio holder in place.	June 07
4.3	Support LBI in achieving the Equality Standard and Disability Equality Scheme.	Provide LBI with necessary data to enable them to achieve Level 5 of the Equality Standard.	Simon Kwong	LBI achieve Level 5 of the Equality Standard	March 08
5.	Regulation and legislation				
5.1	Demonstrate compliance with the Commission for Race Equality code of practice for rented housing.	HFI to start collating evidence from December 2007. Provide LBI with information needed to demonstrate compliance.	Simon Kwong	Compliance with the CRE code of practice for rented housing effectively demonstrated.	March 08
6.	Human resources				
6.1	Ensure that HFI workforce reflects the diversity of Islington's communities.	Workforce equality profiling exercise conducted annually. Benchmark information against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community mapping profile • Learning & Development • Grievance & disciplinary • Promotion and retention • Grades <p>JDs and PSs reviewed periodically to include E&D objectives.</p> <p>Conduct annual staff satisfaction survey and undertake remedial action where E&D issues</p>	Phil Pepper	Targets attained: Disabled staff 10% Women 50% BME 35% LGBT 5% Obtained 'Two ticks for disability' accreditation Obtained 'Age positive' accreditation	March 08

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	Objective	Action	Lead	Measurable outcome	Date
		identified.			
6.2	Develop and support the Staff Diversity Forum.	Provide resources (£5,000 pa) and facilities to effectively facilitate the Staff Diversity Forum.	Phil Pepper	Staff Diversity Forum working in partnership with the Board and Senior Management Team to promote an ethos of respect and equality for all so that all staff can fulfil their potential without fear of discrimination.	March 08

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT 2006/07

Questions and answers

Why is Equality and Diversity important to Homes for Islington?

Islington is a very diverse borough and the tenant and leaseholders of Homes for Islington (HFI) have a multitude of different backgrounds and needs. HFI is committed to ensuring that it can deliver services that can be accessed by all of its residents irrespective of their individual needs.

What is HFI's Equality and Diversity strategy?

This strategy is important because it is a commitment as to how HFI intends to both provide accessible and suitable services for all HFI residents and ensure that it has a well trained and representative staff group who are able to deliver those services to an excellent standard.

The Strategy is agreed by the HFI Board and consulted upon widely with HFI's stakeholders.

How does HFI report back on its performance?

At the end of the financial year HFI produces this Equality & Diversity report and posts it on the HFI web-site as a means of feeding back on it's performance to residents. A summary on equality & diversity performance will also form part of the resident's overall HFI Annual Report.

Our Achievements in 2006/7

Delivering excellent services

HFI's frontline service provision reaches across all of it's tenants and leaseholders;

- During the year it has ensured that all of its offices have disabled access and that they fully comply with the requirements of recent legislation.
- A number of new initiatives have been introduced including annual repair checks for the visually impaired and the installation of sight alert smoke alarms for deaf and deafened tenants.
- HFI has worked in partnership with a range of Community and Voluntary groups who may represent and have access to our diverse communities.
- HFI has consistently taken a strong line against perpetrators of harassment and hate crime of all kinds and works in partnership with the Police and voluntary organisations in ensuring tenants are properly supported.
- HFI offices can offer interpretation and translation services as well as staff who are trained in a variety of communication techniques. During the year HFI updated its systems to ensure that communication aids were available to all those with sensory impairments at all of its service delivery points.

Meeting National Standards

HFI places a huge priority on meeting targets set by the Government for diversity.

- HFI, as one of the Council's key partners has worked with the Local Authority in meeting level 3 of the Equality Standard, a process set by Government which measures effectiveness in managing diversity. This will continue with the aim of achieving Level 5 by March 2008
- Together, HFI and LBI have met the Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice for housing.
- HFI has been a member of Stonewall's "Diversity Champions" since 2005 demonstrating the commitment to improving the working environment for lesbian, gay and bi-sexual staff
- HFI has developed its services in a way that is consistent with standards set by the Audit Commission in its "Key lines of enquiry"

Managing our own performance

HFI monitors and assesses its own performance throughout the year to ensure it delivers to its commitments

- The Board and the Chief Executive of HFI have taken the lead in ensuring the strategy succeeds in its aims.
- Forums for evaluating progress both in service delivery and employment issues are regularly held with HFI to assess the organisation's performance.
- HFI has set up and is currently improving upon a system of Equality Impact Assessments, a process that involves the organisation checking its performance and new initiatives to ensure they do not have an adverse effect on any residents with diverse needs.
- Data detailing diversity information among residents has been compiled, which means that HFI is increasingly able to ascertain the needs of its residents.
- HFI is one of very few housing organisations that has used this information to check that it is treating all of its residents fairly in areas such as rent arrears and complaints

Ensuring good practice in employment

HFI has ensured that it is an excellent employer whose workforce mirrors the Community.

- Positive action schemes are in place for staff in where certain groups who are under represented
- HFI has reviewed issues around work-life balance and flexible working
- High quality and accredited diversity training is provided to all staff
- A staff Diversity Forum is in place to work in partnership with the Board and management team to create a safe, inclusive and diverse working environment which fosters an ethos of respect and equality for all.

What will HFI deliver in 2007/08?

HFI is an organisation that is always looking for ways to improve upon its performance. In recognition of the importance of diversity issues, HFI has committed extra resources in the coming year which will;

- Deliver a number of projects targeted at sections of the community who may not be using our service
- Deliver a series of service improvements and service additions based on the expressed needs of diverse clients
- Further improve upon the diversity information it holds on its residents
- Develop further its range of contacts in the community and voluntary sector
- Ensure that it improves upon and extends the ways that it communicates with residents.

Report back from Audit Committee (AC)
22 February 2007
Steve Town – Chair

Committee Learning and Development

- AC noted a brief report on the roles and objectives of Internal Audit.
- AC agreed to reserve an item on the agenda for each meeting for learning and development.

Internal Audit Activity for July - December 2006 and future Work Programme

- AC noted a report summarising the work carried out in relation to HFI in the period July - December 2006 and providing an opinion to the Committee as to the overall robustness of the internal control environment operating within the organisation.
- AC agreed that future internal audit reports would list both actions that have been progressed and not been progressed by staff.

Update on overpayments

- AC noted a report providing an update on HFI's current levels of salaries overpayments.

Risk Register

- AC noted the current position with regard to all risks that relate to its remit.

3 Year Review of Company Auditor

- AC agreed to continue with the existing external audit arrangements with RSM Robson Rhodes LLP for the audit of the accounts for 2007/08 financial year and review again in 12 months.

Forward Plan

- AC noted the likelihood that, dependent on a decision by the Board, the Terms of Reference of Audit Committee would be changed to include Risk Management. On this basis the Committee agreed to meet on a quarterly basis and review risk and audit matters at each meeting.

Report back from Investment and Delivery Committee (IDC)
28 February 2007
Theresa Coyle – Chair

Tender Approvals

- IDC did not agree a Tender Approvals for Contract 23 (St Luke's Estate) as there were inaccurate figures and a lack of description about works.
- IDC agreed to hold an additional meeting to agree Contract 23 with these amendments.

Financial Progress on Delivery of 2006/07 Capital Programme

- IDC noted a report on the financial progress of the 2006/07 Capital Programme.
- IDC agreed to receive a report on what the Capital Programme funds from LBI have been spent on in 2006-07 (not including Decent Homes work).

Risk Register

- IDC noted a report presenting the current position with regard to all risks that relate to IDC.

Contract Approval Schedule update

- IDC received and noted a list of all approved framework contracts for 2006/07 to date.

Forward Plan

- IDC agreed to add a report to the agenda on 21st March 2007 to explain the reasons for backloading the programme in 2006/07 and to detail whether the programme will be backloaded in future years.
- IDC agreed to add reports on Digital TV and Local Contractors and Suppliers to the agenda for 21st March 2007.

Report back from Investment and Delivery Committee (IDC)
7 March 2007
Theresa Coyle – Chair

Tender Approval

- IDC agreed a Tender Approval for Contract 23 (St Luke's Area), noting that the report had been amended as instructed by the Committee on 28th March 2007.
- It was agreed to provide a breakdown of capital spend for framework contracts by Area for the meeting 21st March 2007.

Report back from Investment and Delivery Committee (IDC)**28 February 2007****Theresa Coyle – Chair****Local Contractors and Suppliers**

- IDC noted a report summarising the work that has been done in encouraging the use of local contractors and suppliers by the partner framework constructors as part of the Decent Homes programme.
- IDC requested a breakdown of local procurement activity of the contractors.

Constructor Value for Money, allocation methodology and selection 2007/08

- IDC agreed the means of constructor selection and allocation and agreed the allocation of contract packages to constructors.
- IDC noted that there would be a meeting between the Chair and constructors to advise on allocations and areas for improvement.
- IDC agreed to receive a further report in 6 months setting out progress on the actions identified under Value For Money.

Financial Implications Regarding Digital TV implementation

- IDC noted and approved the financial arrangements to meet digital television.

Financial Progress on Delivery of 2006/07 Capital Programme

- IDC noted a report updating directors on progress of the 2006/7 main framework contracts and progress on other areas of the capital programme.

Risk Register

- IDC noted a report presenting the current position with regard to all risks that relate to IDC.

Health and Safety Performance of Framework Contractors

- IDC noted a report providing an overview of the health and safety performance of the framework constructors currently being utilised to deliver the capital program.

Contract Approval Schedule update

- IDC received and noted a list of all approved framework contracts for 2006/07 to date.

Forward Plan

- IDC noted that Contract 20 had been deferred to a future meeting.

Report back from Finance Working Group (FWG)**1 March 2007****Adam Borrie – Chair****HFI 2007-08 Management Fee Budget**

- FWG noted a report detailing the compilation of the 2007-08 HFI Management Agent Account (MAA) budget.

Budget monitoring 2006/07 Month 10

- FWG noted a report summarising the latest position on the HFI Managing Agent Account (MAA) and detailing the Housing Capital Account spending to date.

Forward Plan

- FWG agreed to amend the agenda for May to include 2006-07 outturn indicative figures, Terms of Reference for Finance Committee, Kier Review (financial risks) and Resource Allocation over the Decent Homes programme.

Report back from Human Resources Committee (HRC)
28 March 2007
Eddie Niles – Chair

HR Strategy

- HRC agreed the HR Strategy for 2007-08.

Discretionary compensation policy on early termination

- HRC agreed HFI's position on the discretionary payments that can be 'added' to staffs final package when they are being made redundant and retiring simultaneously.
- HRC agreed that the existing schemes of delegation for both Board and HRC should be amended to reflect granting delegated authority to agree discretionary compensation for Tier 1 or Tier 2 staff.

Single Status

- HRC agreed to delegate final sign-off of HFI's Single Status policy to the Chair of HRC, Chief Executive and Director of Resources subject to the cost being covered by management fee negotiations.

Strategic HR Matters

- HRC noted a report providing an update on the various HR issues that have a strategic impact on HFI.

Performance Management

- HRC noted the significant issues or changes that have occurred since being reported to HRC on 25th January 2007.
- HRC noted that absence had improved although the 06/07 target was now unlikely to be achieved.

Risk Register

- HRC noted the current position with regard to all risks that relate to its remit.

Forward Plan

- HRC agreed to add reports on awards and small teams and the protocol for directors on receiving staff complaints to the agenda for May.
- HRC agreed that more detailed analysis of true vacancies be considered for Operations Division in May and Property Services Division in July.

**Report back from the Contracted Services Sub-Board (CSSB) –
10 April 2007
William McGarvie – Chair**

Performance Indicators

- CSSB received and noted a report giving the performance indicators for February 2007.

Report Back from PFI 1 contractor - Partners for Improvement in Islington

- CSSB noted a report giving information about the performance of Partners in delivering the PFI 1 contract for refurbishment, maintenance and housing management services to 2,400 street properties across the borough.
- CSSB raised concern that the Satisfaction Survey is not reported in a timely fashion and asked Partners to provide a more timely response.

Report Back from PFI 2 contractor - Partners for Improvement in Islington

- CSSB noted a report giving information about the new PFI contract, referred to as PFI2, delivering refurbishment, maintenance and housing management services to 1,871 street properties, comprising a total of 4,101 dwellings across the borough.

Report Back from TMOs/TMCs

- CSSB noted a report back on TMOs/TMCs and noted that the new Modular Management Agreement (MMA) should be in place by May 2007.

Risk Register

- CSSB noted the current position with regard to all risks that relate to its remit and requested that a new risk should be added – inadequate funding of HFI's residual works under PFI 2.

Report Back from Consultative Panels

- CSSB received a report giving feedback from the March round of Consultative Panels on items for consultation.

Forward Plan

- CSSB agreed the forward plan.

**Report back from Managed Property Sub-Board (MPSB) -
11 April 2007
Jessie White – Chair**

Performance Indicators

- MPSB received and noted a report giving the performance indicators for February 2007.
- MPSB queried whether the caretaking figures were a true reflection of performance but accepted assurances that they were.

Responsive Repairs

- MPSB noted a report listing the key areas of performance that staff focus on in the provision of a repairs and maintenance service to customers.
- MPSB noted a Board request from January 2005 that a report back on the performance of British Gas would be provided to MPSB and that this had not yet happened. MPSB requested that the next Responsive Repairs report on 13th June 2007 focussed on British Gas and gave detail on terms and conditions.

Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny

- MPSB noted an update on the provision of services being used to tackle issues of Anti-Social Behaviour and outlining initiatives being taken to deliver a service to tenants and residents.
- MPSB noted that at this stage reports were quantitative rather than qualitative but note that staff would be able to provide qualitative feedback by August 2007.
- MPSB asked staff to specify the total funds required to properly address all areas of Anti-Social Behaviour in preparation for 2007/08 budget.

Risk Register

- MPSB noted the current position with regard to all risks that relate to its remit.

Update on petitions received by Area Panels

- The report was noted and MPSB asked staff to clarify why most petitions occur at Holland Walk Area Housing Panel.

Consultative Panel Feedback report

- The report was noted.

Forward Plan

- MPSB agreed the forward plan and asked that consideration needed to be given to reporting on ICSL in June 2007.

Forward Plan for Homes for Islington Board 2007-2008

Date of meeting	Items on the Agenda	Status
28/06/2007	Risk Management	D
	HFI Business Plan Objectives 06/07 (qtr 4) and March Pis	D
	Financial and Capital Performance Management	M
	Kier Review	I
	Contract Approvals	D
20/08/2007	Sustainability Strategy	D
	Communications Strategy 2007/08	D
	HFI Business Plan Objectives 07/08 (qtr 1) and June Pis	D
	Financial and Capital Performance Management	M
	Contract Approvals	D
15/10/2007	Risk Management	D
	Kier Review	I
	Directors and Auditors Report 2006-07	D
	Contract Approvals	D
AGM - 05/11/2007	Approval of 2005-2006 Accounts, Appointment of External Auditor and Directors report	D
17/12/2007	Appointment of new directors	D
	Election of Chair / Vice Chair	D
	Appointment to Sub-Boards / Committees / Working Groups	D
	Business Plan 2008-13 (first draft)	D
	Community Engagement Strategy	D
	HFI Business Plan Objectives 06/07 (qtr 2) and September Pis	D
	Financial and Capital Performance Management	M
	Contract Approvals	D
25/02/2008	Business Plan 2008-13	D
	Procurement Strategy	D
	Efficiency Strategy	D
	Health and Safety Policy	D
	HFI Business Plan Objectives 06/07 (qtr 3) and December Pis	D
	Risk Management	D
	Financial and Capital Performance Management	M
	Contract Approvals	D