

APPENDIX 1

REPORTS TO THE HOUSING BOARD 22nd OCTOBER 2003

3. ELECTION OF TENANT BOARD MEMBER

At the Annual General Meeting of the Company on the 2nd July 2003 the Articles of Association were amended following concerns raised by the Housing Inspectorate over the way in which tenant Board Members were recruited.

Previously tenant Board Members were selected from and chosen by the Tenants Panel. The Inspectorate felt that the Tenants Panel was no longer representative of the community in general. The Articles of Association were amended to draw Tenant Board Members from the "recognised representative tenants body".

Following a recent vacancy arising from the retirement of one of the Tenant Board Members an election was held in the Blyth South area in which all tenants were invited to participate.

An advertisement was placed in the special edition of the Housing View distributed in August and on the Company's website, a letter was also sent to each tenant advising them of the vacancy and inviting them to stand for election to the Board if they wished. A presentation was also given to the Newsham and New Delaval Forum to raise awareness on the role of Tenant Board members and the vacancy that had arisen.

A comprehensive information pack was prepared and circulated to those tenants who requested more information. A total of 7 tenants requested further details about the vacancy and 4 tenants were finally nominated for the vacant position.

An election in the Blyth South area was then held in which all tenants were invited to vote for the candidate they preferred over a two-week period. The voting closed on Friday the 26th September and the official count took place on Wednesday the 1st October 2003. The Council's Legal and Democratic Services Unit who supervise local and national elections within the Borough supervised the counting of the ballot papers.

Around 2,500 people were eligible to vote and a total of 755 ballot papers were returned and there were 6 spoilt papers. This represents a turn out of almost 30%.

The votes cast for each candidate in alphabetical order were as follows:

Begg, Rodgine	209
Fenwick, Christine	128
Holmes, Michael	161
Milburn, George	251

George Milburn has therefore been duly elected to serve on the Board for a period of up to 3 years subject to the timing of the Annual General Meeting.

The process has also helped to raise awareness that tenants now have a real say in decisions affecting the housing service and has given them the opportunity to express their views.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the Board welcome George Milburn as the elected tenant Board Member from the Blyth South area.

Report 30th June 2004

4. ELECTION OF TENANT BOARD MEMBER - CRAMLINGTON

- 3.1 At the Annual General Meeting of the Company on the 2nd July 2003 the Articles of Association were amended following concerns raised by the Housing Inspectorate over the way in which tenant Board Members were recruited.
- 3.2 Previously tenant Board Members were selected from and chosen by members of the Tenants Panel. The Inspectorate felt that the Tenants Panel operated in an exclusive way and was no longer representative of the community it was meant to serve. The Articles of Association were amended to draw Tenant Board Members from the "recognised representative tenant's body".
- 3.3 Following a recent vacancy arising from the retirement of one of the Tenant Board Members an election was held in the Cramlington area in which all tenants were invited to participate. This is the second such election of this nature to take place and follows the election, which was held in the Blyth South Area last year.
- 3.4 An advertisement was placed in the Newspost Leader and on the Company's website, a letter was also sent to each tenant living in the Cramlington area from our participation database advising them of the vacancy and inviting them to stand for election to the Board if they wished.
- 3.5 A comprehensive information pack was prepared and circulated to those tenants who requested more information. A total of 7 tenants requested further details about the vacancy and 3 tenants were finally nominated for the vacant position.
- 3.6 An election in the Cramlington area was then held in which all tenants were invited to vote for the candidate they preferred over a two-week period. The voting closed on Wednesday the 26th May and the official count took place on Friday the 4th June 2004. The Chair and Company Secretary supervised the counting of the ballot papers.
- 3.7 Around 2,150 people were eligible to vote and a total of 688 ballot papers were returned and there were 15 spoilt papers. This represents a turn out of almost 32%.
- 3.8 The votes cast for each candidate in alphabetical order were as follows:

• Bertram Robert	314
• Kelly Mark	117
• Tweddle Dawn	255
- 3.9 Robert Bertram has therefore been duly elected to serve on the Board for a period of up to 3 years subject to the timing of the Annual General Meeting.

3.10 The process has raised awareness of the tenant representation on the Board and has given the opportunity to tenants to express a view on who they would wish to sit on the Board and act in their interests.

3.11 RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the Board welcome Robert Bertram as the elected tenant Board Member from the Cramlington area.

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APPENDIX 2

	Meeting of Ascham Homes Board	AGENDA ITEM: 11
24 May 2004		
BOARD ELECTIONS		STATUS Public
		Information
Author: Elaine Gosling		Telephone: 020 8496 4080

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a timetable of actions on the elections.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report outlines the programme for the election of Resident Board Member and Independent Board Members to the Board of Ascham Homes.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Board is recommended to:
- 3.1.1 Note the programme for the election of members to the Board.
- 3.1.2 Note that the resignation of one Resident Board Member and two Independent Board Members must be tendered at the 5 July 2004 Ascham Homes Board meeting in order to secure a seamless transfer.
- 3.1.3 Note the date for the AGM, as Monday 25th October 2004.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Board received a report at its meeting of 5 April 2004 outlining the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Ascham Homes that one Resident Board Member and two Independent Board Members will be required to resign to allow the election process to proceed.
- 4.2 Ascham Homes has commissioned the services of Electoral Reform Services to run the Resident Board Member elections. Electoral Reform

Services have confirmed that they will use the first past the post system and will run the election process by way of a postal vote.

- 4.3 Attached at Appendix One is the programme for the election of Resident Board Members. The process starts with the resignation of a Resident Board Member at the 5 July 2004 Ascham Homes Board Meeting and ends with the appointment of the new Resident Board Member at the Ascham Homes Annual General Meeting on 25 October 2004.
- 4.4 Two information sessions have been programmed for July 2004 covering the roles and responsibilities of being a board member.
- 4.5 The election process for the Independent Board Members is outlined in appendix 2. The process commences with the resignation of Two Independent Board members at the 5 July 2004 Ascham Homes Board Meeting and ends with their appointment at the Ascham Homes' Annual General Meeting on 25 October 2004.
- 4.6 The Head of Resident Services will be responsible for overseeing the process of the recruitment of the Independent Board Members.
5. ISSUES AFFECTING ELECTIONS
 - 5.1 The board is specifically advised that it will be necessary to ensure that no actions of the company can be seen, portrayed or perceived as giving prominence and/ or support/ endorsement to any existing board member. Decisions on whether any activity or publicity does this will be a matter for the decision of the Company Secretary.
 - 5.2 The board is advised that this system operates in most public bodies where elections take place from a broad constituency. It is the convention in these circumstances to agree the time period within which applies. For this election it is necessary to be mindful of the public commitments of the company and dates already posted (Finance and Governance Sub Committee 31st August and Board meeting 27th September). The nature of these meetings can be seen as promoting existing board members. It is not possible to move the meetings as they are already in the public domain.
 - 5.3 The Chief Executive advises that a period of company abstinence from promoting any board member shall be between 1st September 2004 and ending 26th September 2004.
 - 5.4 For the Resident Board Member position, all tenants and leaseholders within the designated contract area will be invited to nominate themselves

for the position of Resident Board Member and then cast a vote for one of the nominees.

- 5.5 For the Independent Board Members, advertisements for these positions will be placed in the national, local and trade press. The Board will be asked to elect a sub committee to participate in this recruitment process.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The election process is an important part of the governance of the company and it is necessary to conduct it with meticulous care. The approach and timetable appended to this report achieve this end and is commended to the board.

Ascham Homes
Resident Board Member Election Process

Date	Activity	Responsible Person
5 July 2004	Resident Board Member resigns	Company Secretary
11 August 2004	Prepare printed material for nomination mailing	Electoral Reform Services
13 August 2004	Mailing list for nomination mailing to be produced	Head of Resident Services
17 August 2004	Despatch of nomination mailing	Electoral Reform Services
3 September 2004	Close of nominations	Electoral Reform Services
4 September 2004	List of nominees supplied to Ascham Homes	Electoral Reform Services
10 September 2004	Mailing list for election mailing to be produced	Head of Resident Services
13 September 2004	Preparation of printed material for Election mailing	Electoral Reform services
14 September 2004	5 Despatch of electoral Mailing	Electoral Reform Services
30 September 2004	Close of postal voting	Electoral Reform Services
1 October 2004	Election Result supplied to Ascham Homes	Electoral Reform Services
25 October 2004	Appointment of Resident Board Member to Board	Company Secretary

**Ascham Homes
Independent Board Member Election Process**

Date	Activity	Responsible Person
5 July 2004	Two Independent Board Members resign	Company Secretary
5 July 2004	Appointment of board sub committee	Board
9 August 2004	Prepare printed material for advertisement	Head of Resident Services
17 August 2004	Advertisement placed in national, local and trade press.	Human Resources
8 September 2004	Close of advertisement	Human Resources
13 September 2004	Board Sub committee and Company Secretary carry out the short listing of candidates	Board Sub Committee and Company Secretary
1 October 2004	Interview Results supplied to Ascham Homes	Board Sub Committee and Company Secretary
25 October 2004	Appointment of Resident Board Member to Board	Company Secretary

APPENDIX 3

Item No.
11

CityWest Homes

22,000 homes

Board: Main Board	Date: 25 March 2004	Title of Report: Future election process for resident Board members
Classification: For general release		Report of: Director of Corporate Services
Financial Summary	The cost of elections in 2003 was £21,649 (for printing, postage and ballot administration). <i>24601 for 25k.</i>	
Report Author	Mary Goyder, Director of Corporate Services	

1 Summary of this Report

- 1.1 The report proposes a change to the arrangements for elections of resident members to the main and area boards, and describes how consultation has been carried out.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the board decide whether the Articles of Association should be amended so that elections of Tenant Members to the board would be held every two years as explained at Section 4 of this report.
- 2.2 That the board decide whether to amend the Terms of Reference of area boards to hold resident elections to area boards every two years as explained at Section 4.

3 Background

- 3.1 The first elections to CityWest Homes board and area boards took place in summer 2003. All resident places were up for election, and all residents on estates (named tenant or lessee) were eligible to stand and to vote.

- 3.2 The company Articles of Association currently state that in future years board members will be re-elected on a "rolling" basis. Either 1 or 2 members will step down each year, chosen so that those who have served on the board for longest step down first (or chosen by lot if more than the due number have served for the same period). The area board Terms of Reference follow the same principles with either 2 or 3 members stepping down each year.
- 3.3 The principle for linking the main and area board membership which was established last year was that the two candidates with the highest number of votes in the area board elections would automatically become members of the main board, unless they did not wish to. This principle could be applied to fill any "area board" places being vacated on the main board. In practice this will mean that elections to both area boards will take place annually and a separate election to the main board will take place in those years when the directly elected member steps down.

4 The frequency of future elections

- 4.1 As agreed by the board last year we are now considering the frequency and conduct of future elections. There are significant costs (approximately £23,000 last year) associated with organising elections, as well as the amount of staff time involved. If changes are to be made it would be preferable to make them now, as last year's elections were the first, and we are now about to start on a regular cycle of board members stepping down.
- 4.2 Initially we are considering the frequency of elections, and how many board members should step down each time elections are due. In order to change these arrangements it would be necessary to amend the Articles of Association, and the area board Terms of Reference. The detailed arrangements for running the elections can then be discussed further.
- 4.3 It is essential that any election system maintains the link between the main board and area boards (ie 2 members of each area board serving on the main board). It is desirable that the system chosen should be easy to understand, and treat members of boards as equitably as possible.
- 4.4 If we wish to hold elections less frequently whilst maintaining continuity on the boards so that not all members step down at the same time, the simplest option is to hold elections every 2 years. In general this would mean that Board members would stand for re-election every 4 years rather than every 3 years.
- 4.5 In the first elections, which would be in 2005, 2 members of the main board and 3 members of each area board would step down, with the remaining 3 members of the main board and 4 members of each area board stepping down 2 years later in 2007. Two of the area board nominees to the main board (one north and one south representative) would step down in 2005, and the other two in 2007.