

ROCHDALE BOROUGHWIDE HOUSING

REPRESENTATIVE BODY MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING 22ND NOVEMBER 2021



MEMBERS PRESENT: P Worthington (Employee Representative [Chair]), F Altham (Tenant Representative), A Johnson (Tenant Representative), J Taylor (Tenant Representative), L Brosnan (TMO Representative), J Begum (Employee Representative), J Coutts (Employee Representative), S Edwards (Employee Representative), B Nicholson (Employee Representative), H Mirza (Tenant Representative), T Mortenson (Tenant Representative), D Meredith (Council Representative)

EMPLOYEES: G Swarbrick (Chief Executive), S Wigley (Head of Legal and Compliance [Secretary]), S Jones (Governance Coordinator [Minutes])

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from J Wenn (Employee Representative), and I Wharton (Tenant Representative),

ABSENT: C Byram-Leech (Tenant Representative), S Ali (Council Representative), D Ferguson (Tenant Representative), D Chadwick (Tenant Representative) M Ansari (Tenant Representative), D Anderson (Tenant Representative), A Butterworth (Tenant Representative), A Gorczyca (Tenant Representative), B Wood (Tenant Representative), A Allen (Employee Representative) and M Mackenzie (Tenant Representative) were absent from the meeting and no apologies were received

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

S Wigley, Secretary convened the meeting at 6.00pm


REF	ITEM/DISCUSSION
Nov-1	Draft Corporate Strategy and Values
Nov-1.1	K Astbury introduced himself and explained the first iteration of the draft corporate strategy has been circulated prior to the session. He went on to explain that work has taken place concurrently around the values; we are looking at reducing the values to enable them to be more easily lived and breathed in everything we do.
Nov-1.2	K Astbury informed Representatives in addition to this session we are also holding tenant and employee drop-in sessions and it went to Board last week. All this will enable us to gather a whole range of feedback; so far, the main feedback is to integrate work with employees into the second priority especially around health and wellbeing, to tighten up and sharpen the language and simplify some of the content as well as the values in action section being more forward looking.
Nov-1.3	The next step following the drop-in sessions will be to further redraft the Corporate Strategy and bring back to Board and Representative Body along with the delivery plan in January and February.

- Nov-1.4 K Astbury explained there is a Values Task & Finish Group with members of the Representative Body, Board and ELT who have been working to refresh the values as well as surveys having gone out to tenants. S Edwards added there were 629 responses to the survey. As well as the survey a session took place as part of the festival of Mutuality which was a mixture of tenants, employees and Board Members. We have to live up to the values that we agree on, they are our uniqueness, they are not just an organisations values, we all own them together as members and they should represent who we are, what we believe in and what we stand for. K Astbury asked Representatives for their thoughts on the draft values and the language used.
- Nov-1.5 There was concern that we won't live up to the bold statements. It was commented that the words need to become actions.
- Nov-1.6 S Edwards commented it is about setting a challenge for us and if we are saying it we have to deliver it.
- Nov-1.7 J Coutts questioned what stops us from doing things and queried if it is down to budgets. G Swarbrick responded we should set our sights high, but we do have constraints we have to work within. We have to look at what we can financially do and where we can make things work, we need to make it work. This strategy will set the bar and in the next 2 or 3 months we will come up with the costed plan and will have choices to make and sometimes compromises will need to be made. D Meredith added it is also looking at how we can work with partners such as Rochdale Borough Council and other stakeholders.
- Nov-1.8 K Astbury asked Representatives to consider the framework; do the three priorities feel right and is the structure ok. He mentioned it has already been raised about using the phrase 'our people' and that will be changed.
- Nov-1.9 J Begum commented she was unsure about using the word 'pride'. The group discussed and felt the word should remain.
- Nov-1.10 It was felt there should be more concentration on tenants and employees working together and that the workplace should be incorporated into Core Services alongside homes and communities. K Astbury commented there is a general piece of work to do to ensure employees can see themselves in each of the priorities.
- Nov-1.11 A Johnson stated we are a housing provider, and it would be strange if we weren't focusing on core services however we bring something different to the table, we need to highlight what the added value through mutuality is.
- Nov-1.12 B Nicholson commented that we can get so focused on our differences that we don't focus on the many things we have in common with other housing associations. He felt we need to be a good landlord, mutuality is important but primarily tenants want a quality home with repairs done on time and a good contact centre experience.
- Nov-1.13 P Worthington commented that core services will always remain core services first and foremost. For the majority of tenants this will be the focus however there is an opportunity to weave mutuality through our core services. K Astbury added that mutuality, if done well, will benefit everyone, including those who aren't members.

- Nov-1.14 It was felt the only obvious omission is the digital aspect as it doesn't appear in the second theme.
- Nov-1.15 It was asked that the language is looked at as when referring to Rochdale sometimes it says Rochdale and sometimes it says the borough of Rochdale. It needs to be consistent and inclusive.
- Nov-1.16 Comment was made that the Corporate Strategy is well written and accessible.
- Nov-1.17 K Astbury reiterated the next steps: following this session and the scheduled drop-in sessions there will be a further redraft of the Corporate Strategy which will be brought back to Board and Representative Body along with the delivery plan in January and February.
- Nov-1.18 Representatives requested a further session ahead of Representative Body meeting in February to review amends made and discuss the delivery plan. K Astbury agreed this would be beneficial.

Action: Arrange a further Corporate Strategy Session for Representatives ahead of the next meeting in February **Lead:** S Jones/K Astbury **Due Date:** 31/12/2021
- Nov-1.19 T Mortenson commented that it is her first meeting as a Representative and it has been very interesting and refreshing as a tenant. She added she feels the Corporate Strategy should be specific and realistic.

*The Chair closed the meeting at **7:00pm***



Signed.....(Representative Body Chair) As a true and correct record of the Representative Body conference meeting held on 22nd November 2021