

ROCHDALE BOROUGHWIDE HOUSING

REPRESENTATIVE BODY MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING 1ST DECEMBER 2021



MEMBERS PRESENT: P Worthington (Employee Representative [Chair]), D Anderson (Tenant Representative), A Butterworth (Tenant Representative), A Johnson (Tenant Representative), J Taylor (Tenant Representative), L Brosnan (TMO Representative), A Allen (Employee Representative), J Begum (Employee Representative), J Coutts (Employee Representative), S Edwards (Employee Representative), B Nicholson (Employee Representative), J Wenn (Employee Representative), and M Ansari (Tenant Representative),

EMPLOYEES: G Swarbrick (Chief Executive), C Tostevin (Director of Growth), J Goodall (Governance Manager) S Wigley (Head of Legal and Compliance [Secretary]), A Holden (Customer Engagement Lead part]), V Webb (Head of Repairs [part]), R Hall (Responsive Repairs Manager [part]), K Astbury (Head of Strategy [part]), S Jones (Governance Coordinator [Minutes])

ALSO PRESENT: M Nuttall (Non-Executive Director) and A Smith (Tenant)

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from D Meredith (Council Representative), I Wharton (Tenant Representative) and T Mortenson (Tenant Representative) A Gorczyca (Tenant Representative), B Wood (Tenant Representative), D Ferguson (Tenant Representative), F Altham (Tenant Representative) and A Tumilty (Board Chair)

ABSENT: M Mackenzie (Tenant Representative), H Mirza (Tenant Representative), S Ali (Council Representative), D Chadwick (Tenant Representative) and C Byram-Leech (Tenant Representative) were absent from the meeting and no apologies were received

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None

P Worthington, Chair convened the meeting at 6.35pm

REF	ITEM/DISCUSSION
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Dec-0	RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS
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Dec-0.1.	S Wigley presented the report informing Representatives of the 3 resignations and 3 appointments.
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Resolution: The Representative Body

1. Accepted the notice of the resignation of Barry Haycox, Suzie Ross and Pamela Radcliffe; and
2. Noted the appointments of Ian Wharton, Haroon Mirza and Toni-Lea Mortenson.

Dec-1	PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS
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Dec-1.1	Representative Body meeting 20 th October 2021.
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No comments or questions were submitted in advance of the meeting.

Resolution: The Representative Body approved the meeting minutes from 20th October 2021 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Dec-1.2 The Representative Body Action Tracker was reviewed. S Wigley informed Representatives all actions were either complete or on track.

Resolution: The Representative Body noted the progress made on the action tracker.

Dec-2 REPORTING IN

Dec-2.1 S Wigley summarised the reporting in. No comments or questions were submitted in advance of the meeting.

Dec-2.2 S Edwards asked for details around the reference to RBH Mutuality Heritage and applying the principles going forward from the reporting in from Board 6th October. G Swarbrick explained Board were given a presentation on the history of RBH which led to discussion on how we continue to develop our model and approach along with increasing member involvement. It was agreed that a short paper would be used as a prompt for discussion at the Mutual Governance Commission early next year.

Action: Have a conversation with Stephen Edwards around Mutuality Heritage
Lead: G Swarbrick **Due By:** 25/01/22

Dec-3 CORPORATE STRATEGY MONITORING

Dec-3.1 Highlight Report

C Tostevin shared a presentation on growth looking at new homes, town centre regeneration and carbon reduction. M Nuttall added we have a lot of positive things going on, we are moving forward and getting more political support however we are in a challenging environment with various things such as the pandemic and material shortages.

Dec-3.2 J Begum questioned how many new builds meet the accessibility standards and are they adaptable by design. C Tostevin responded everything we build meets the visitable accessibility standards and some we do take further, for example we are working on a town centre scheme which will meet HAPPI principles. We have set an ambition of 5% of the newbuild programme to be fully adapted and we are looking at working with specific households to meet their needs.

Dec-3.3 B Nicholson asked if there is capacity to measure the savings through the carbon initiative for our tenants to get a better buy in. C Tostevin responded we are careful not to say your bills will reduce due to various factors such as prices going up or people using more energy as its cheaper however we are looking at monitoring and how best to communicate this out.

Dec-3.4 J Coutts asked when we are doing new builds why are we not achieving more than the minimum standards. We should look at building less and improving quality rather than building more of less quality. It would be a benefit to involve the

repairs team when looking at new builds to look at ways to potentially avoid future repairs.

- Dec-3.5 P Worthington raised a question about the land acquisition process. C Tostevin explained our main route other than RBH land is the land and package deal where you agree a purchase price for the land together with a contract price to develop the site.

Dec-3.6 **Dashboard**

S Edwards questioned if we could have more information around the actions on the dashboard and also queried what the role of the Representative Body is with regards to the dashboard. P Worthington commented there is not enough time currently for us to have meaningful discussion on these items which is why we are looking at having a delegated panel.

- Dec-3.7 C Tostevin informed Representatives that Board have looked at how we presented the dashboard and we have an opportunity with the new Corporate Strategy to develop this to give a better sense of what we are delivering and if we are on track.

Resolution: The Representative Body noted the dashboard and Growing Together Highlight Report

Dec-4 BOARD QUESTION TIME

- Dec-4.1 There were no questions for Board members.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Dec-5.1 STRATEGY, POLICY AND SERVICE STANDARDS (SPSS) FORWARD PLAN APPROVAL

- Dec-5.1.1 J Wenn presented the report informing Representatives some of the strategies have been delayed due to the Corporate Strategy having been extended as a result of Covid-19. J Goodall added Representatives should note that the Forward Planning, Delegations and MGEF Task & Finish Group have been looking at strategies, policies and service standards and what should and shouldn't come to the Representative Body which would then in turn change who develops and monitors various strategies and policies. There will be an item on the next meeting's agenda to review and agree what comes to the Representative Body.

Resolution: The Representative Body approve the attached approval route and timetable.

Dec-5.2 NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION PLAN PROCEDURE

- Dec-5.2.1 J Goodall presented the report informing Representative's the appointment of the Board Chair and Non-executive Directors is a fundamental function of the Representative Body. The procedure aims to make sure we are compliant with our code of governance as well as giving a transparent and accountable process and to ensure that there is a clear succession plan in place for the Board of Directors.

Dec-5.2.2 M Nuttall questioned Neil McInroy's end of 3rd year term on the Board succession matrix. J Goodall explained that we appoint for terms of up to 3 years with a maximum of 2 terms/6 years. For anyone who is appointed midterm their first term will be less than 3 years.

Resolution: The Representative Body approved the R12 Non-Executive Director Recruitment and Succession Plan Procedure as recommended by the Mutual Governance Commission

[A Holden joined the meeting]

Dec-5.3 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT TIMELINES

Dec-5.3.1 A Holden presented the report sharing a presentation setting out the timelines.

Resolution: The Representative Body approved the proposed development timeline for the Customer Experience Strategy and Customer Engagement Strategy.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Dec-6.1 USE OF REPRESENTATIVE BODY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

Dec-6.1.1 S Wigley presented the report informing Representatives there is not much with regards to current spend however there has been a further £300 payment since the report was produced. The next meeting of the Support and Development group is 10th January, if you would like to apply, please ensure your applications are submitted prior to Christmas.

Dec-6.1.2 A Allen is attending a course on Effective Governance in January which he will feedback on as to whether it would be beneficial for other Representatives to attend.

Dec-6.1.3 J Coutts questioned if money towards internet costs should be given to all Representatives upon appointment rather than having to claim for it. P Worthington commented some Representatives would have an internet connection for personal use regardless of being a Representative and may not want to claim, it is up to the individual to make that decision. S Edward added the principle behind it is that nobody is out of pocket to carry out their role as a Representative.

Dec-6.1.4 It was asked if the Governance Team can draw attention to any training opportunities relevant to Representatives. S Wigley informed Representatives any training opportunities are currently discussed at the Support and Development Working Group before offering out to the wider Representative Body. J Goodall informed Representatives she gets notifications of courses and conferences and if anything of interest comes up it would be put forward.

Dec-6.1.5 P Worthington mentioned the matrix J Goodall put together on available courses and suggested revisiting this as it provides links to information sites and conferences.

Action: Recirculate the training and development programme to all Representatives **Lead:** J Goodall **Due By:** 17/12/21

Resolution: The Representative Body noted the update of use of the budget.

[V Webb and R Hall joined the meeting]

Dec-6.2 RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY REVIEW

Dec-6.2.1 A Holden presented the report and delivered a presentation giving an overview of the policy review timeline, proposed changes, and next steps.

Dec-6.2.2 J Wenn queried if the procedures would be separate to the policy. V Webb confirmed they would. He also queried if the disrepairs policy will now form part of the Responsive Repairs Policy. V Webb explained a full Disrepair Policy would not be needed so it will be covered in a few paragraphs within the Responsive Repairs Policy.

Dec-6.2.3 J Begum asked if we have resources in other languages to communicate out prior to carrying out repairs. R Hall stated we use language line which all repairs team members have access to. However, we are not always aware of what peoples first language is prior to attending the repairs job. J Begum suggested looking at an easy read guide with images. V Webb informed Representatives there is a lot of communication on the lead up to the work being done and we can use translate via the website. J Coutts added there are ways to communicate and translate using mobile phone apps.

Dec-6.2.4 B Nicholson asked if we are going to look at communicating to customers the logic around why a repair takes as long as it does, an educational piece that can help explain the priorities as feedback always tends to be communication issues rather than the quality of repair. R Hall responded we currently have planned some 'have your say sessions' as well as a wider survey going out, from this we are looking to put comms out on the website and get team members to have conversations for those who are not digital. We can also look to posting something on the customer portal which is there when customers are logging repairs digitally.

Resolution: The Representative Body noted the report

[A Holden, V Webb and R Hall left the meeting]

ITEMS FOR ASSURANCE

Dec-7.1 REPRESENTATIVE BODY ACTION PLAN MONITORING

Dec-7.1.1 J Goodall presented the report informing Representatives the request for completion dates to be changed to be more realistic has been completed.

Dec-7.1.2 S Edwards commented the action plan has got a number of workshops and suggested to work in a smarter way and hold one workshop that covers various points. Representatives were happy with this suggestion.

Action: Work with S Edwards and L Brosnan to review the Representative Body Action Plan **Lead:** J Goodall **Due By:** 09/02/22

Resolution: The Representative Body reviewed and commented on the progress of the action plan.

[K Astbury joined the meeting]

Dec-7.2 MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY MONITORING

Dec-7.2.1 K Astbury presented the report highlighting we have further work to do in a range of different areas one being making membership meaningful and the importance of mutuality as well as encouraging people to stand in elections. Part of this will be around how we communicate, we are currently looking at communication at the Membership and Communications Working Group and will be looking at a draft comms plan at their meeting in January.

Dec-7.2.2 It was questioned if there is a link to the engagement strategy. K Astbury informed Representatives we will be working closely with the Engagement Team to make sure the strategies are closely aligned.

Dec-7.2.3 A Johnson commented that it is not just about getting a high percentage of members but making it more meaningful. He also commented he was disappointed to see that only 10% of tenant members voted in the recent Representative Body elections. K Astbury responded elections are a key element and we need to encourage people to both stand and vote.

Resolution: The Representative Body:

- 1. Considered the membership year end monitoring (April 20 – March 21), quarter one monitoring (April 21 – June 21) and quarter two (July 21 – September 21); and**
- 2. Approved the report's recommendation to take forward a range of actions to address improving both the numbers of tenants and employees who are members, as well as work to make membership more meaningful.**

[K Astbury left the meeting]

CONSIDERATION PACK

Dec-8.1 REPRESENTATIVE BODY ATTENDANCE

Dec-8.1.1 No questions were raised in advance of the meeting.

Dec-8.1.2 S Wigley reiterated the target attendance is a minimum of 80% and informed Representative's attendance would be reviewed again following this meeting and low attendance would now start to be addressed.

Dec-8.2 MINUTES OF WORKING GROUP / TASK & FINISH GROUP MEETINGS

Dec-8.2.1 No questions were raised in advance of the meeting.

STANDARD ITEMS

Dec-10.1 REPRESENTATIVE BODY FORUM (to raise operational issues for signposting)

Dec-10.1.1 J Coutts informed Representatives he had received an email offering an insight into our carbon zero journey and felt it may be beneficial for them to come and talk to the Representative Body as a whole.

Action: Arrange a workshop for Representatives on Carbon Zero Journey **Lead:** S Jones **Due By:** 25/12/21

Dec-10.2 KEY ISSUES (matters to escalate or refer to the Mutual Governance Commission)

Dec-10.2.1 Flag to MGC the importance of the Representative Body being at the heart of future development on our mutual approach.

Dec-10.3 KEY MESSAGES FOR BOARD

Dec-10.3.1 Representatives agreed that the key messages for Board should be:

- Approval of Non-Executive Director Recruitment and Succession Procedure
- Approval of SPSS forward plan
- Decarbonisation programme and level of interest in further discussion

Dec-10.4 KEY MESSAGES FOR MEMBERS

Dec-10.4.1 Representatives agreed that the key messages for Members should be:

- Decarbonisation programme

Dec-10.5 REPRESENTATIVE BODY AND JOINT MEETING FORWARD PLANS

Dec-10.5.1 S Wigley presented the forward plan informing it is kept under review at agenda planning meetings.

Resolution: The Representative Body noted the forward planners.

VERBAL ITEMS

Dec-9.1 DELEGATED PANEL UPDATE

Dec-9.1.1 P Worthington gave an update on the delegated panel explaining it has come from the review undertaken by Representatives which was a piece of work led by Representatives to get to the heart of how we can perform better and achieve the things we identified as important. We are aiming to concentrate on fewer things with fewer items on the agenda to allow for deeper conversation. To enable this, we are putting together a delegated panel, the panels function is to look after all the items that take up time in Representative Body meetings that don't necessarily generate interesting debate.

Dec-9.1.2 J Wenn questioned if there is a risk of creating a two-tier Representative Body where some would have more privileged information than others and asked if the membership would be fixed or if there is opportunity for people to rotate to allow all to take part. P Worthington assured Representatives that everyone will have access to the papers and can submit comments if they wish. The Representative

Body will still ratify any decisions made by the delegated panel as part of the reporting in process which is also being developed.

Dec-9.1.3 J Goodall added there will be a clear reporting in structure giving Representative Body full oversight of what the panel are doing.

Dec-9.1.4 J Goodall informed Representatives there is a draft forward plan which we are looking to put in place at the start of next year and to enable us to do this we are looking to have an additional Representative Body meeting in January 2022 to look at what is going where as well as what strategies and policies you want to be involved in and what you don't.

Dec-10.6 REFLECTION ON MEETING (Post meeting survey)

Dec-10.6.1 **What worked well:**

Well managed and kept to time

Relaxed and supportive presenters

Pre-session call as a reminder to join

Dec-10.6.2 **What Contribution did we particularly make:**

Challenged / questioned the Board

Provided insight

Good discussion around decarbonisation

Dec-10.6.3 **What could we do better:**

Smaller agendas to allow for thorough discussions

Explain what is being asked of Representatives prior to commencing a presentation to help focus

More time management for questions and answers

Dec-10.6.4 **Report Quality:**

Good

Dec-10.6.5 **Consideration of Values:**

Championing, pioneering and responsibility

*The Chair closed the meeting at **8:30pm***



Signed.....(Representative Body Chair) As a true and correct record of the Representative Body conference meeting held on 1st December 2021