



**nsw Federation of
Housing Associations inc**

ABN 86 488 945 663

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Held 8th December 2006 at the Federation

Meeting opened 9am.

Welcome and Apologies

Present: Stephanie Cunningham, Judith Beveridge, Coral Garratt, Nick Sabel, Beverly Wiggins, David Matthews, Patrick Yeung (arrived 12:45pm)

Apologies: Mohamed Ibrahim, Ern Phang

In Attendance: Adam Farrar, Wendy Rockwell

Noted that Ern Phang has a work conflict with regard to board meeting times. He works most weekdays, but Fridays are particularly difficult due to work commitments. He can be contacted by phone after 2pm.

President, Nick Sabel welcomed the new board members. Points of procedure will be discussed throughout the meeting to inform new members.

1. Declaration of Conflicts of interest

None. The procedure was explained to new board members

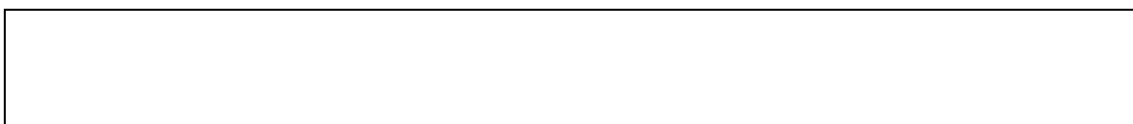
2. Minutes of last meeting (13 October 2006)

MOTION: That the Board accepts the Minutes of the meeting held 13th October 2006, as a true record of that meeting.

Moved: Stephanie Cunningham **Seconded:** Judith Beveridge Approved.

3. Business Arising

Board Minutes on website. It was confirmed that only the Board minutes from 13 October 2006, onward, will be posted on the website.



Other items to be dealt with during meeting.

Item 12 “Accreditation” (13 October 2006) was not properly moved and seconded last meeting:

MOTION: That, due to a range of conflict of interest reasons, and because it is a federating body rather than a regulatory body, the Federation will not consider taking on a potential role as an accrediting body.

Moved: Patrick Yeung **Seconded:** Stephanie Cunningham Approved.

4. Correspondence

AHO - has agreed to participate in the Federation's new initiative to establish an advisory committee to the Board: Di Chapman will be the delegate from AHO.

OCH response re the CHLP - does not answer all the questions posed.

Mike Allen – Reshaping: noted.

Mike Allen: PARG (Partnership Action Resource Group) – Board to monitor the usefulness of this committee and decide whether the Federation should have continued involvement.

Robert Nittolo: CHLP funding agreement. Didn't provide any overview of what other associations had responded. The Federation has compiled responses from housing associations and further discussion will have to take place.

5. Financial Overview

MOTION: The Board moves to accept the financial reports to 30th November 2006, as presented.

Moved: Stephanie Cunningham **Seconded:** Coral Garratt Approved.

MOTION: The Board agrees that Patrick Yeung, Treasurer, be added as a signatory to the Federation's bank accounts.

Moved: David Matthews **Seconded:** Stephanie Cunningham Approved

Electronic payments - The board agrees in principle to move into the practice of using electronic funds transfers for bill paying (note; we already use EFT for payroll and urgent one-off payments).

ACTION - to be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Management committee before making a final decision on EFT payments becoming the primary mechanism for paying bills etc.

6. Business Plan exceptions report

Key risk areas:

Intensive support for C grades - has been discontinued for the moment

Management consultancies - less than projected at this time in the year



DoH Training - major staffing overrun. Looking at commitment for the rest of the contract.

Spending more 'unspecific responsive time' than planned.

Board discussed whether they require the current level of detail in reports, including number of days spent, rather than this being incorporated into the summary report "key risk areas".

The Board agreed that the detail should be left in as a reference at least.

7. Summary of service evaluations

Noted. (As an RTO the board is required to oversee the quality of the services provided)

8. Proposed OCH summary plan and KPIs

One of the few things that came out of the peaks' review, was proposed changes to the reporting framework to OCH. This gets away from OCH micro-managing the Federation.

The majority of information (performance measures) will be gathered via surveys to members (stakeholders).

After discussions with OCH it was agreed that the Federation should conduct the survey (either internally or contracted out).

The Board discussed doing it internally, unless there is any protest from OCH, but in designing how it's done internally, making sure there are mechanisms to maintain integrity (including board oversight).

Need to get an agreement from OCH that the targets are not benchmark measures to be met, but rather they are generating information to inform future work/directions.

This may be an opportunity to question whether core funding could be indexed.

MOTION: That the Board accepts the broad approach to reporting as presented, and proposed "headline measures", for reporting to OCH.

Moved: David Matthews **Seconded:** Stephanie Cunningham Approved.

9. Board induction

VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT - Does it need reviewing? – Discussion:

While the existing mission highlights the provision of services to tenants, we are now doing more sector development and this may need to be drawn more to the fore in the mission statement.

Need to capture: the development of the sector, the changing nature of the sector, and the leadership role of the Federation.

Do new areas need to be added? – ie; focus on what we need to be responsive to:

Indigenous issues - accessibility

Emerging areas - complex needs (ie, JGOS, HASI)

Community development (see community housing strategy)

Years have been spent bringing housing associations into a professional arena.

Those elements are in our strategic directions, but not in our Mission. The Mission is about our aspirations, rather than what we have already achieved.

Supported housing is a big growth area, and community housing does it really well.

How do you incorporate all the areas of "community housing" - including affordable housing, supported housing, etc. into the Mission. (Broad stakeholders).

More associations are putting "affordable housing" into their mission statements, so the Federation should reflect that.

If the Mission statement is to be aspirational, should it be more specific?

ACTION: Engage the sector in a broader discussion about the Mission Statement, in conjunction with the review of the Strategic Plan.

VALUE STATEMENTS – discussion:

Enhancing opportunities - refers to employment. Perhaps should refer to aspirations within the sector. Maybe. change heading from 'enhancing opportunities' to "equal opportunity", and have a heading "enhancing opportunities" that is defined differently to refer to more (ie development, and other aspirations of the sector)

Leadership - make sure it's not static. Need to literally 'push' members to aspire to what is necessary to grow and continue existing. Also, too narrow to say this only occurs through the elected members to the board. Add - providing tools, development ... something that describes that the Federation leads by developing and providing things to members to assist them to develop, grow, be professional, etc. Need to describe a fuller expression of that value.

Value statements should be able to stay the same. However, it needs to differentiate you from others in your views. May need to rethink how the value of leadership is carried out, because this can be open to interpretation. This may not mean changing the statement, but defining this elsewhere (ie Strategic Plan).

Overall - the values are still relevant, but we may need to decide if they are defined and expressed in enough detail to describe the Federation's values.



CONFLICT of INTEREST

David Matthews - the role he has with his organisation could lead to inherent structural conflicts of interest? Is this true for everyone, due to working in the sector, or being a director of an association.

This has been discussed before by the Board - one example was when a Federation director was a consultant and had a direct competitive conflict. Another example might be the purchase of services by an association - would you choose the cheapest contractor or the Federation due to your commitment to supporting the Federation. So, yes, there is a genuine structural conflict of interest.

The position on the board is not representative, so this avoids particular conflicts.

There is a clear potential around the duty to act in the best interest of the Federation (for example deciding in a one off situation to not purchase Federation consultancy services is not crossing the line, but setting up your own consultancy business in direct competition with the Federation would cross the line).

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Review of Strategic Plan will go through in more detail. Referred to at Business Planning time, to identify progress and achievements against the strategic framework.

Small vs. large – Stephanie Cunningham pointed out that the Federation needs to be more clear in defining/articulating the value of small associations. Use real examples: ie a particular association was the only service in the entire area that had an exit strategy for youth... (This should be covered at the mid-term review of the strategic framework). There is a perception that large is always more cost effective, but this is simply not always true. Although there are benefits of scale (ie ability to have specialist staff), but these could be addressed through other group structures.

EMERGING BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Strategy areas, discussed and noted.

10. Development Committee

Bobbie Townsend, who is no longer on the Board, was on the Development committee, so there is now a vacancy. The committee also needs a Chair.

Coral Garratt agreed to join the committee (but may have limited ability to participate until after May due to accreditation).

Stephanie Cunningham has agreed to become Chair.

Update on developments -

This rose out of the Development Seminar / and out of work to develop tools on



developing new business - the Federation got an offer to have a license of "Estate Master" software which does feasibility studies, and could be made available to members free of charge. Need to be able to make it available on line with password protection. People can try it out on the 30 days trial.

Ahouse - a company trying to develop a rental property trust which will provide affordable housing. Requires a tax ruling,(about PBI status), which still hasn't happened. Proposing to put out product disclosure statement to the public in March. Pro bono legal advice is now available for those associations who expressed an interest. The Federation may provide a secretariat/admin role to a consortium of housing associations, on a small fee for service basis.

11. Audit & risk management committee

Need to replace a member (Brian White) and appoint a Chair.

Identifying the priority risks for the year will occur in February 2007.

Risks associated with the budget - was to be prepared for the February Board meeting, but may have to be deferred.

Review of pricing - to occur for the April Board meeting.

The Board has nominated Mohamed Ibrahim, subject to his acceptance, to become part of the committee. Patrick agreed to become Chair of the committee.

12. CHLP funding & HAM resolution

The Board moved into Committee for this Item

13. Community Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC)

Bobbie is currently a member of the CHAC, but no longer on the Federation board.

Bobbie's position on the CHAC will expire shortly, and the restructure may mean there wouldn't be many provider seats (through natural attrition). The Federation needs to decide what to do about having a sector rep on the CHAC.

ACTION: The Board needs to have some kind of communication from the CHAC to the Federation board, both while Bobbie is still on the committee and after.

14. Executive Director Report

Minister - All meetings with the Minister have not happened, and this will need to be rescheduled.

Affordable Housing strategy - very modest (\$40 million, funding through Rental Bond

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Board). We have been urged to respond positively on the understanding that this is only the beginning.

Community Housing strategy - not yet released.

State Plan - released earlier this month, however content is flawed. On positive side, identifies possible growth of the community housing sector, and a broadening of the CSHA.

CHLP - see item 12

Legislation - no further information.

Community Housing Federation of Australia - Adam Farrar has been appointed to the CHFA board. They are trying to carve out a more effective role for a national peak body, including better coordination between state peaks. We will have to think what impact this will have on the Federation.

Power Housing - a national consortium of large associations, has been formally launched. Patrick pointed St George is not a member.

Accreditation - Is now 99% complete. QMS can deliver the service at a cheaper price than is currently the case. Associations will still require some subsidy.

Broken Hill - re-registered as a B grade, then OCH announced that all social housing in the region would be managed by a single community provider.

Group Structures - OCH project has begun. Robin Kennedy is the consultant. Adam, Andrew and Sue Ogier are on the reference group.

David Matthews commented that these sorts of structures have not been proven to provide benefits.

Patrick pointed out that sharing an after hours call centre can be effective.

Training Business – The Federation won contracts to train DoH staff for the next two years in partnership with Swinburne. We have also been accepted for the "Approved Provider List" with the Dept of Education and Training to provide training under traineeships.

Still awaiting outcome on tender with Tasmania Dept.

15. Referral agreement to bring FHA into the State IR Tribunal

The staff requested the Board to agree to enter a Section 146A referral agreement. A common law agreement between the Union and the Federation.

MOTION: The Board agrees to enter a Section 146A referral agreement.

Moved: Patrick Yeung

Seconded: David Matthews

Vote-

For: 5

Against: 1

Approved

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16. Policies & Procedures - Use of recruitment firms

Motion: That the Board adopts the amended "Recruitment and Selection policy", and the review date remains August 2007.

Moved: Stephanie Cunningham **Seconded:** Beverly Wiggins Approved

17. Membership

Aboriginal Housing Company has since renewed (after briefing papers went out). Awaiting response from Community Housing Mid North Coast to find out if they intend to renew, or the reason why if they don't. David Matthews has some contact with him, and as a board member will approach Frank Birkfeld to find out if there are any issues.

MOTION: The Board agreed to remove the unfinancial members from the Register of members.

Moved: Coral Garratt **Seconded:** Patrick Yeung Approved

18. Returns to Department of Fair Trading

Noted.

19. Returns to OCH

Noted.

20. Code of Practice Report

Noted.

Notify NCCHC once new procedure to adopt the code is clarified.

21. Other Business

AGM Minutes 2005 – it was noted, after the minutes were already approved, that Stephanie Cunningham was referred to as Stephanie Ring on one occasion. This has since been amended.

DoH trainee dispute - has been resolved, but Laurel Draffen wanted the board to be aware that it occurred.

The board agreed to provide Ahouse with the legal advice that we received.

22. Next meeting: 9 February 2007

Federation President to speak with Ern Phang to find out his availability, before setting the year's meeting dates.

Meeting closed 4:04 pm

