



nsw Federation of
Housing Associations inc

ABN 86 488 945 663

Minutes Board of Directors Meeting Held 17th April 2009

Meeting opened 9.12 am

Welcome

Present: Toni Comber, Nazha Saad, Nick Sabel, Bobbie Townsend, Karen Andrew, John Nicolades (9:38am)

Apologies: Nicola Lemon, Greg Budworth, Mohamed Ibrahim

In Attendance: Adam Farrar, Wendy Rockwell

1. Declaration of conflicts of interest

None.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Amendment to minutes of the meeting held 13th February 2009:
Item 11. Executive Director report – change last dot point “NSW Gvt Stakeholders” -

1. Nazha’s name spelled incorrectly;
2. Item 11 (NSW Govt stakeholder; 5th dot) Replace with “ Nahza noted that the timing of changes to capital funding methodology didn’t allow associations to budget appropriately for it”

Motion: That the board approves the minutes of the meeting held 13 February 2009 with the above amendments included.

Moved: Bobbie Townsend **Seconded:** Nazha Saad Accepted

Motion: That the Board approves the minutes of the Teleconference held 18 March 2009.

Moved: Karen Andrew **Seconded:** Nazha Saad Accepted

Signed in accordance with s(28) of the Associations Incorporation Act

President:

Date:

Actions: noted

3. Business Arising

All items to be dealt with later in the meeting.

4. Correspondence

ACTION: Adam to provide hardcopy of report: "State of Supply Report 2008"

Care campaign -

5. Financial Monitoring

The Treasurer reported that the organisation is in a sound financial position.

Motion: That the board accepts the financial reports as presented for the period ending 31st March 2009.

Moved: Karen Andrew **Seconded:** Bobbie Townsend Accepted.

6. Business planning – Exceptions reporting to March 09

Extra work went into the preparation of the Legislative Inquiry.

We have been trying to build relationships with aged care sector, and provided a presentation on NRAS.

Lands Trusts – holds down market price of homeownership by selling land at cost of house alone, while maintaining ownership of the land. More prevalent in the USA, but could move into Australia.

Asset Managers Network held a 2 day workshop that was well attended. This was useful to identify a range of issues that need to be addressed.

A video presentation is being prepared with the Registrar – intended to be a presentation for Directors of housing associations, which will be posted on the Federation's website.

ACTION: Address the systemic issue of lack of resources within the asset management section of the Division, with Leonie King; and deal with particular issue of certain behaviours of staff within the Division, via the Asset Managers Network.

Morning Tea

Mark Nutting: 10:40 am – 11:40 am (ITEM 11.)
Update on Common Access Strategy:

Signed in accordance with s(28) of the Associations Incorporation Act

President:

Date:

- After mini budget – “how much is this project going to cost” . Original estimate for establishment \$15-18 million, then a new model developed which halved that amount.
- Targeted that it would take 2 ½ years to develop.
- Then stimulus package announced, which included a common application/access principles.
- It would require a new IT system - hoping it could leverage off the new IT system already being upgraded for Housing NSW.
- Interface will be another significant cost. ie; how housing providers get access to information and input information.
- At first instance there are 55 pages of forms for applicant information which captures a great amount of information on client need. This needs to be made smaller.
- Needs to build in (automate) income thresholds for various products (ie affordable housing, public housing, community housing...) to see what a client is eligible for.

In the end it will include:

- Comprehensive set of information about various products and providers in the system.
- A single housing assistance application form, with assessment of eligibility.
- Some affordable housing providers might opt in to be a part of this system.
- The list of data would be a ranked list based on common criteria yet to be developed.
- Using a dynamic E form would alleviate asking applicants more than they need to provide.
- If an applicant needed to provide verification (ie medical, etc) – this would be noted in the system and they would need to provide it at a later date (in order for application to be completed).

What information will be asked for on the form, and who will be checking proof of applicant’s information (at the time of applying?).

Mark said there will be a lot more work to be done in that area, once the project gets approval. Also, applicants will need to update information once their application is in. There is a workload burden associated with this new process. Some of the workload will be alleviated by automation.

The allocation rules of the provider will still remain in the hands of the association.

How would an allocation be made?:

The association can filter a list, for example – they want community housing, women’s housing, geographic location, mental health issue ---- this would create a shortlist. Then you could look at more detail of each applicant to make the final decision, and this is up to the community housing association to decide.

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President:

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The administration and governance of the system has not been finalised yet. There is still debate within the Department. Performance management won't necessarily be embedded within the administration.

As cost implications become clearer, it is vital that the sector be actively engaged in the development of the system.

What's next:

- Value management study to be done. Are you getting value for your money. Have you thought of everything. This will happen in May, and a number of community housing providers will be invited.
- Once that's done –get approval from the Minister. Then get the business case approved. This will happen towards the end of this year.
- Getting funding – a few possible sources: Housing NSW internal funds; Treasury – need to do a business case.
- Because it is tied to the stimulus package – this is a strong imperative. Want to make sure it goes forward as something coherent. Also, as the number of social housing providers is increasing, and they are becoming more independent, there is a stronger argument for a common system.

7. Progress report on major projects

Training contracts - Housing NSW increasing emphasis in online learning might put us at a disadvantage. We are exploring ways to position ourselves to take on more e-learning.

Additional item –

Media training for stock transfer organizations – were told that the Division had hired a media person to assist organizations with their communication strategies, and said that NSW Federation of Housing Associations, and that they would provide the Federation with templates.

Nazha to provide a copy of the letter to Adam which states the Federation is to take carriage of this.

Contact: Michelle Jeunken, Manager Media and Communications
8753 8590 (M)0427 908 124

8. Service evaluations

Noted.

9. Community Housing Advisory Committee

CHAC held a meeting, unfortunately Nazha was unable to attend. Have requested a meeting with the Minister. Have done a report on title transfer vs long term leasing vs other models. Title came out as most beneficial for growing the sector.

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10. Executive Director Report

New proposal to support the roll out of the Registration system, jointly with Homelessness NSW. Churches opted out of a joint proposal.

Decisions have now been made about the new funding model. They will announce this in a bulletin prior to the HAM and make a presentation at the HAM.

Meetings are being held about redevelopment, including the decanting of tenants, with community housing providers. There is a request by organisations to include them in the redevelopment brief, so they don't end up with a legacy (ie high density properties, etc)

The Division recognises they have to deliver in a quick time frame or they lose the money.

Additional lease hold subsidies may be available. An association has approached CH Division, and there may be funds through Housing NSW.

What can the sector do, aside from CH Division, directly? Ie Go out and meet local government.

The Board moved into committee:

ACTION: In the next couple of weeks need to identify influential and credible directors who can go out and talk to people – directors who understand the sector, and can promote the sector, with regards to capacity (taking on stock transfers and other properties). Need to identify the factions and who you need to go speak with. Carmel Tebutt, Della Bosca, the Treasurer, Emilio Ferrar (The Ministers financial advisor)?? Have a conversation with our friend in Treasury and ask who we should be speaking with, ie where the blockages are. Linda Burney may be worth talking to. .

Speak with Lucy about who to target in Della Bosca's office. John to speak with Dick Person about being a director to approach these people. Christine Keneally is John's local member. Could try to set up a meeting with her.

Target 3 or 4 local members and target them with respect to their local electorate.

ACTION: Need to have a broader policy discussion regarding 'forced transfers'. Adam to outline the issues for the next board meeting.

The Board moved out of committee.

11. Common Access System – Mark Nutting

(see above, after item 6)

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12. Strategic plan discussion

Change the terminology to “Not for profit housing sector” to cover the expanding nature of the sector.

Add “National” to 2.3, first dot point: “Over the life..... Currently it is the largest **National** peak in the community housing sector.”

Make the Strategic plan a one page document, including:

- Mission/Vision
- Key Strategic Objectives
- Strategic outcomes

The rest becomes the operational plan, including KPI's.

Needs to be in a form that is useful for speaking with stakeholders, and other players. Also, need to make sure it is explicit where we are changing directions.

As a public document, would the (summarised) document give enough detail for external players.

Outcome 6 - Change: ‘commercial world’ to ‘private sector market’ or ‘commercial market’, or ‘the contestable market’.

~~Outcome 12 – add “of” to Associations to be part of new directions....”~~

Turn outcome 12 into a dot point: ‘Promote sector cohesion’

Change OCH, throughout, to Community Housing Division. (see outcome 17).

ACTION: The next step is to take the redraft back to stakeholders (members, CH Division, and others). Raise it at the HAM and distribute with a process for feedback.

13. Priority risks review

A condensed version of the priority risks document was presented.

The Board discussed whether/how the external and strategic risks identified, should be included in the priority risks report.

The Board agreed to include the external and strategic risks.

Additional risks identified:

- If you raise membership fees may risk losing members.
- Different parts of the sector feel disengaged with the Federation, and that the Federation actually works for other parts of the sector. (ie small, large, medium, growth.... Could identify by Registration Class type)

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Motion that the Board accepts the priority risks to the Federation's activities.

Moved: Nazha Saad **Seconded:** Bobbie Townsend Accepted

14. Expertise requirements for board/skills audit

Skills audit – a new approach to be established before the next AGM.

May be time to raise the issue again with the sector: both about bringing in experts onto the board, and to have the board elect its own executive.

The board can actually invite, or purchase, expertise – to advise the board, without needing them to be members of the board.

This issue needs further discussion. – at June meeting.

15. Review Board calendar

Deferred.

16. New members & renewals

Motion that the board approves the following new memberships:

- **Affiliate: Society of St Vincent de Paul Homeless Persons Services**
- **Associate: Marrickville Community Training Centre**

Moved: Karen Andrew **Seconded:** John Nicolades Accepted

17. Policies & procedures

Motion: That the Board approves the amended Flexible workplace policy.

Moved: Karen Andrew **Seconded:** John Nicolades Accepted

Defer new hotline policy until teleconference

18. New Staff

For noting.

19. Process for EO performance review

Has progressed. Board to circulate a draft template before the next teleconference.

20. Other business

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21. Next meetings:

12th June

14th August

9th October

AGM – 20th Nov

11th Dec

Meeting closed: 2pm

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