Minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Regeneration Board  
held on 9th October 2012

Members Present:
- Cllr Peter Gruen (Chair)  Leeds City Council, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning & Support Services, Labour Group
- Cllr Richard Lewis  Leeds City Council, Executive Member for Development and Economy, Labour Group
- Neil Evans (NE)  Leeds City Council, Environment & Neighbourhoods
- Steve Hoey (SH)  Third Sector (Canopy Housing Project)
- Miles Pickard (MP)  Private Sector (Pickard Properties)
- Lois Pickering (LP)  Homes and Communities Agency
- Matthew Walker (MW)  Leeds Registered Social Landlords (Leeds Federated Housing Association)
- Karen Wint (KW)  Private Sector, Leeds Building Society

Officers Present:
- Christine Addison (CA)  Leeds City Council, City Development
- Liz Cook (LC)  Leeds City Council, Environment & Neighbourhoods
- Maggie Gjessing (MG)  Leeds City Council Environment & Neighbourhoods
- Janey Haigh (JH)  Leeds City Council, City Development
- Kathy Kudelnitzky (KK)  Leeds City Council Partnerships Group

In attendance:
- Phillip Crabtree (PC)  Leeds City Council, City Development
- Victoria Marsden (VM)  Leeds City Council, Children’s Services

Apologies:
- Cllr Barry Anderson  Leeds City Council, Conservative Group
- Martin Dean  Leeds City Council Partnerships Group
- Martin Farrington  Leeds City Council, City Development
- Jonathan Morgan  Private Sector (Morgans City Living)
- George Mudie MP  Member of Parliament
- Claire Warren  Leeds ALMO’s, (West North West Homes)

1. Welcome and introductions
   Councillor Gruen welcomed all to the meeting of the board.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2012 and Action Plan
   2.1 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record; and the status of actions was noted.

2.2 Ref 3.1 Membership:
   Leeds Initiative confirmed that John Kirkham from Persimmon Homes has replaced Mark Goldstone as the Chamber nominee on behalf of the Chamber property forum. Martin Dean is due to meet with John Kirkham to discuss further.

2.3 Ref 3.2 To look at attendance data currently being collected as part of a City Council indicator on members’ engagement and see if any specific issues are evident with respect to this board:

   The information shows that, to date, we have had 73% attendance at the Housing and Regeneration Board, which compares well with the other boards where there is a range from 68% - 88% We have good scores across the different sectors, although the indicator is measuring a limited...
number of meetings

3. **Matters Arising from the minutes and action plan**

3.1 There were no matters arising and not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. **Housing Investment**

4.1 Maggie Gjessing (Housing Investment Manager, Leeds City Council) briefed members of the Board on the new Housing Investment Programmes aimed at stimulating the growth in affordable housing, as agreed by Executive Board on 5th September 2012. A copy of the Executive Board Report was circulated to members and sets out the development of an investment strategy for use of Housing Revenue Account resources, Right to Buy receipts and New Homes Bonus.

4.2 To achieve Leeds’ ambitions of growth and prosperity, the city needs a functioning housing market which meets the needs of its citizens and which underpins a thriving economy. These ambitions are set against a backdrop of change particularly within the public sector. The resources available to deliver new housing have severely reduced in recent years and commercial investment in new housing has slowed considerably.

In light of this, the Council is responding with a new approach. There are opportunities, in the form of new financial freedoms, including the New Homes Bonus, Housing Revenue Account reform and the ability to utilise Right to Buy receipts. These provide a route for new investment through which the Council, with the support of its partners, can take a lead role in stimulating the supply of new housing. This report proposes an investment approach which provides new housing in the city in an innovative and cost effective way.

4.3 MG informed members that on 5th September 2012 the Executive Board agreed to:
   i) the development of a £9.5m investment programme over three years from the HRA,
   ii) a one year contribution of £1.5m from the New Homes Bonus
   iii) the ongoing use of Right To Buy receipts, currently estimated to be £1.9m over three years.

4.4 Matthew Walker commented that the approach is very positive and in particular welcomed the use of the New Homes Bonus. He also stated that the new dimension under the ‘affordable rent’ banner of social housing that there is a move towards ‘housing need’ rather than ‘housing for those in greatest need’.

4.5 Karen Wint, in connection to the empty properties strand of the programme, stated that 20% of the Leeds Building Society’s lending is done in buy-to-let lending. KW asked the Board to consider if a piece of work could be undertaken to join up LCC, Private Landlords and smaller Lenders (i.e. Leeds Building Society) as smaller lenders are interested in investing in areas where larger lenders are not. MG and LC to explore this approach further.

4.6 LC explained that a delivery plan is being developed for the Council house new build element, which will set out how the £9m will be spent over the next three years. The Interest Free Loan scheme will take into consideration that the City does not want to encourage people to let their houses fall into disrepair in order for qualification for an interest free loan.

4.7 MG confirmed that an investment mapping exercise will be undertaken, showing all investment in affordable housing including the HCA funded programme, to provide context to discussions about what should be built and where. The outcome of this exercise will be brought back to this Board and the Executive Board.

4.8 NE stated that one of the conditions of the use of Right To Buy receipts is that the City Council needs to be able to spend the funds within short timescales. SH asked Council officers to consider that smaller organisations often have quicker timeframes and that the commuted sums funding could form part funding towards smaller schemes at £5/10/15k per property.

4.9 Cllr Gruen asked for MG to report back at the next meeting with realistic splits on the NHB.

5. **Changes to Plans Panel**

5.1 Phil Crabtree, Chief Planning Officer, Leeds City Council, briefed members on the review of Plans
Panels following approval from Full Council on 12th September 2012, following a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee on 30th August 2012.

5.2 Full Council agreed to establish a new strategic panel, to be named the City Plans Panel which will deal with those planning applications with significant implications for the future prosperity of the City’s economy, with a greater focus on supporting strategic decision making and economic recovery. City Plans Panel will ensure consistence of decision making across the city and will expect to see greater Ward Member and community involvement at a pre-application stage in order to take out any project delays by consulting at an early stage.

5.3 Full Council also agreed to revise the geographical boundaries for the existing two area panels, and for them to be renamed the North and East, and South and West panels to more closely reflect the areas served. This process will be reviewed after six months.

6. Child Friendly Leeds

6.1 Vicky Marsden, Children’s Services, Leeds City Council presented an update report to the members of the Board on the Child Friendly City programme following the launch of Child Friendly Leeds in July 2012.

6.2 The Child Friendly City Initiative is based on a global UNICEF programme that seeks to strengthen children's rights and improve outcomes for children and young people. Leeds is working in partnership with UNICEF UK and other Local Authorities to share and develop good practice and learning. The Child Friendly Leeds (CFL) Initiative has been identified as a “Top 25” priority for the Council, a priority in the city’s Children and Young People’s Plan and is an integral part of the “Best City” vision for Leeds.

6.3 The Leeds Youth council have been involved in the delivery of child friendly city initiatives and have developed their own campaigns and schemes from the 12 wishes highlighted through Child Friendly Leeds Action Plan (circulated to all members).

6.4 VM suggested that the Housing and Regeneration Board could link into the Leeds Youth Council for feedback on housing and regeneration related issues in the future.

6.5 The report asked for the Housing and Regeneration Board to support the development of Child Friendly Leeds through its partners making a contribution and pledges.

The pledges take two forms:

- **Supporter**: for organisations and individuals that agree to publicly support the aims and vision of a Child Friendly Leeds
- **Partner**: for organisations and individuals that move from talk to action and commit to making a significant and concrete pledge to do something extra to support CFC.

6.6 KW asked how the city is going to deliver the Child Friendly wishes. VM stated that Children would be asked how they think things have improved. KW suggested that the Council need to make sure there is a delivery plan and that this programme does not turn into a branding/PR exercise. KW offered her time to look at what support a local business could offer. VM to pick up with KW.

6.7 MW stated that he supported the work that has been undertaken so far. He also asked how the message is being spread across the city. VM informed the members of the Board that a number of methods are being used such as:

- piggy backing onto other promotional exercises across the city,
- sending information directly to schools
- displaying promotional material within libraries, sports centres, leisure centres, music schools etc

6.8 Members of the Board agreed that early involvement from Children’s services in masterplanning and blue printing for major development projects and regeneration programmes would be useful and that links with the Localities Teams should be encouraged. KK and VN to discuss further.

7. Sub Boards
7.1 East Leeds Regeneration Board
Members received and noted the minutes of the East Leeds Regeneration Board held on 1st August 2012

7.2 Housing Forum
Members received and noted the minutes of the Housing Forum on 10th July 2012, however the Board were informed that the most recent Housing Forum meeting took place in September. LC provided a brief overview of the key issues raised at the Forum which included issues around market rents.

8. Action Plan
8.1 An updated version of the Housing and Regeneration City Priority Plan Action Plan was circulated to the members of the Board. MG provided an explanation of the changes which were agreed by the Board.

9. Performance Management Reporting
9.1 Members received the quarter 1 2012/13 performance information relating to the priorities and actions detailed in the Housing and Regeneration Board partnership plan 2011/15.

9.2 MG informed members that the LIVE 2 actions have been amended to reflect the true meaning of the Priority and now addresses the ratio split between housing growth on Greenfield: Previously Developed Land (Brownfield). The Board raised no objections to this amendment.

10. Any Other Business
10.1 Dilys Jones, Homes and Communities Agency (North East, Yorkshire & Humber region) provided a brief update on the Homes and Communities (HCA) activities in Leeds and explained how investment and assets are aligned to local priorities for regeneration, economic and housing growth. The update included:

- The Leeds Local Investment Plan (LIP) sets out Leeds investment priorities which the HCA has aligned to Government focus on delivery. Economic growth including housing supply.
- In September 2012, the Government made a political announcement about additional investment into housing. DJ and colleagues are awaiting further detail and will report back with an update at the next Housing and Regeneration Board meeting.
- Announcement of £200m equity loan development finance for Private Rented Properties.
- The Governments disposal of public sector land - Land transferred to HCA for disposal to the market, possibly from the Department of Health and the Ministry of Defence. Unsure at this stage if there are any sights in Leeds which will be included
- Investment for older people prospectus due to be published at the end of October 2021. DJ stated that there would be no revenue funding associated with this initiative.

10.2 Cllr Gruen requested that updates on available funding and the outcome of the City Council’s bids for funding should be provided to Cllr Gruen and Cllr Lewis on a regular basis.

10.3 KW suggested that the City Council look to produce scorecards which state what other Local Authorities are doing and what lessons can be learnt.

10.4 Cllr Gruen asked members of the Board for recommendations on future agenda items. The following topics were raised:

- Housing Benefit update to include welfare reform
- Neighbourhood planning overview and update
- Aire Valley – background to the area with a focus on housing and community elements
- Leeds City Region Update on housing activity
- Older people’s housing review
- Affordable Housing update
10.5 Cllr Gruen asked for future meetings to take place in Room 6/7 Civic Hall rather than the East or West Room. JH to feedback to Leeds Initiative in order for future room bookings to be amended.

11. **Date/time of next meeting**
   Tuesday 11th December 2012, Committee Rooms 6 and 7, Civic Hall