

<b>Cabinet</b>  30 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Ann Sutcliffe – Acting Corporate Director, Place	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Tower Hamlets Homes Governance – Resident (Tenant) Board Appointment</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Sirajul Islam – Statutory Deputy Mayor &amp; Lead Member for Housing</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Mark Baigent – Interim Divisional Director: Regeneration & Housing
<b>Authors</b>	John Kiwanuka – Housing Partnerships Manager Strategic Housing (Place)
<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Key Decision?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<b>Great Place to Live</b>

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Tower Hamlets Homes Ltd (THH) is a “Company Limited by Guarantee” and wholly owned by the Council. THH was established in July 2008 by the Council to manage some of its housing management functions. The functions delegated to THH are identified in a management agreement made pursuant to section 27 of the Housing Act 1985 and approved by the Secretary of State.
- 1.2 THH’s Articles of Association define the rights, duties, composition, and arrangements for appointing Board Members – twelve in total. The Board comprises four members from each of the three constituent groups – residents, independents and Council nominees. Subject to Article 15, the Executive of the Council determines the procedure under which residents (leaseholders and tenants) may apply to be appointed as resident Board Members. Articles 14-18 confer the powers of appointing THH Board members and any Casual Vacancies in the Council Executive.
- 1.3 A vacancy has arisen for a resident (tenant) Board Member. This report examines the process to recruit into the vacant posts, and makes recommendations to the Council Executive to appoint the successful candidate.

## **Recommendations:**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

Appoint **Julie Fagan** to the Board of THH as a Resident (Tenant) Board Member

### **2. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 2.1 The recommendation will improve the capacity of the THH Board to effectively manage its business. An adequately constituted Board provides the relevant skills, expertise, and strategic direction to guide THH in implementing the transformational agenda it has embarked on, and in delivering the challenging savings agreed with the Council.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The Mayor could decide not to make any appointments to the THH Board, however it is prudent to strengthen a key partner, particularly in respect of resident (tenant) appointments. The last resident appointment to the Board was made by the Mayor in January 2017 (Executive Decision Log 144 – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017).

### **4. DETAILS OF REPORT**

- 4.1 THH's Articles of Association define the rights, duties, composition, and arrangements for appointing Board Members – twelve in total. The Board comprises four Members from each of the three constituent groups – residents, independents and Council nominees.
- 4.2 THH has experienced difficulties in recruiting appropriate tenant residents to the Board in recent years. To resolve this matter, THH recently canvassed tenants who were already active in representing tenants and leaseholders on estates through Tenant & Resident Associations and other resident engagement bodies such as the Residents' Panel and Service Development Groups. This has proved effective in delivering strong applications.
- 4.3. **Recruitment Process – (also see appendix 1)** The recruitment process was augmented by interviews conducted by the Chair of the THH Board, the THH Chief Executive and two Board Directors, Claire Tuffin and Safia Jama. In addition the process involved an Assessment Centre and role play focusing on holding the THH Executive to account. This process successfully identified Julie Fagan who showed the right skills in understanding data, asking perceptive questions and with the appropriate focus on mitigation of risk. The successful candidate also showed understanding of equality and diversity as well as empathy for residents of social housing.
- 4.4 Julie Fagan brings a raft of experience to the THH Board, she currently works as a Business Analyst at Berwin Leighton Paisner (BLP) and has been part of a specialist team called Streamline since January 2013. Julie works with the BLP

business, and BLP's clients, to identify and implement business process efficiencies and continuous improvement.

- 4.5 Julie has been with BLP since 2000. For the period 2000-2006 Julie worked in BLP's Corporate Department, and in the Knowledge Management Department between 2006 and 2012.
- 4.6 As a Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) tenant, and former member of the THH Resident Scrutiny Panel, Julie has a personal interest in the effective operation of THH and would like to apply her professional skills to contribute to THH for the benefit of residents and the local community.

## **5. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 5.1 This report seeks to appoint one member to fill a vacant position on the Tower Hamlets Homes board.
- 5.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report, however it should be noted that the THH board undertakes an essential role in relation to the management of the Council's housing stock, including ensuring that the business operates effectively. It also provides a probity role. THH receives a management fee to fund the delivery of the services that it provides on behalf of the Borough and also manages various significant revenue and capital budgets on the Council's behalf. The management fee for the 2017-18 financial year has recently been increased to £32.372 million to fund the cost of the extra staffing resources required to commission and manage additional fire safety works.

## **6. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 6.1 Pursuant to Part 3.2.2 of the Constitution, the appointment of Councillors and others to outside bodies is an Executive decision when the appointment relates to executive functions.
- 6.2 As housing is an executive function, the appointment decision is an executive one and therefore is for the Mayor. This is also recognised in Article 17.1 of the THH Articles of Association and which provide that it is for the Executive of the Council to appoint Resident Board Members (either tenant or leaseholder).

## **7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 Appointing representatives to outside bodies enhances the Council's engagement with local communities and improves its potential to offer guidance and leadership in relation to activities taking place in the Borough

## **8. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 For THH to deliver its objectives successfully, it will need to be run effectively by its Board and staff. A fully constituted Board that is diverse presents immense experience and expertise to steer THH to improve productivity, customer experience in these financially challenging times.

## **9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **10. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Where appropriate it is important that any training needs and / or support needs of new board members are identified quickly and adequate measures put in place.

## **11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **12. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

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### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

**Linked Report:** NONE

#### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Recruitment process.

#### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

**Officer contact details for documents:** N/A

**Appendix 1:**  
**Resident and Independent Board Member Recruitment Procedure**  
July 2014

- Upon being notified of a vacancy, Tower Hamlets Homes will agree a recruitment timetable with the Board Chair;
- An advertisement will be placed in the relevant media: these are likely to include local and BME media for resident vacancies, and the trade press for independent vacancies;
- A panel consisting of no fewer than two Board members and one member of the Tower Hamlets Homes Residents Panel will be convened. On occasion, the Board may co-opt THH or LBTH officers to the panel in an advisory capacity.
- They will agree a shortlist of candidates to meet, and an appropriate selection method to test candidates (e.g. interview questions, presentation);
- The panel will interview the short-listed candidates, and agree a recommendation candidate for the Board vacancy;
- The panel will pass this recommendation to the Mayor for his endorsement, which will be received within four weeks;
- On receipt of the Mayor's endorsement, the Chair will notify the successful candidate on behalf of the Board.