CHAIRS REPORT

Hello everyone,

I would like to use this opportunity of my latest Chair’s Report to update you on a number of recent business developments at CIH.

Governing Board Strategy Day

The Governing Board held a two day meeting 30\textsuperscript{th} of September to the 1\textsuperscript{st} of October 2015 at CIH offices in Coventry.

Discussions were focused on some of the key options for our 2016 Business Plan and our overall financial performance as well as thinking through the structural, strategic and environmental challenges to our business model. In preparing for the Away Day, the Executive Team considered a number of areas of the organisation where we might look to improve organisational performance and increase our efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

The meeting also provided an opportunity for the Governing Board to talk about the changes in housing sector and what the implications are for CIH. We had a presentation by Paul Hackett, Director of the Smith Institute and a former government adviser on housing, regeneration, the environment and economic development to give some perspective on the Government’s priorities going forward, and the wider economic and social context for housing. The board concluded that the changes in the sector will have an indirect effect on CIH and it will be necessary to plan for various scenarios.

There were also presentations from Jon Sawyer and Ross Fraser on Housemark and the Executive Team on CIH Consult.

Overall, the event proved to be productive and engaging and a good opportunity for the Governing Board and the executive team to have sound discussions about the challenges facing CIH in the near future.

Governing Board Meeting

The Board meeting was held following on the 1\textsuperscript{st} of October 2015 focussing on key areas of strategy, performance and governance.

The meeting began with the Chief Executive’s Report from Terrie Alafat which provided an update on Policy, Communications, Staffing and the new CIH Housing Academy. Terrie updated the Board on the Right to Buy work that CIH has been commissioned to do with John Perry, Steve Wilcox and Peter Williams as well as the Independent Review
commissioned by John Healey into Home Ownership. The Board is happy to support Terrie in her involvement with the review as one the technical advisers, along with Gavin Kelly and Kate Barker. In terms of Policy, the main focus has been to respond to key government consultations and calls for evidence which includes our proposals for the spending review, the evidence to the CLG committee on the viability and sustainability of housing associations, the evidence to the Public Bill Committee considering the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015 and a submission on government proposals to tackle rogue landlords. A member briefing on the key issues raised by the Housing Bill will be prepared after the Bill is published in October. We will also be holding a Housing Bill seminar in London on 27 October to consider and discuss the issues it presents.

Terrie also provided an update on some of our most recent high-profile media coverage during the end of August and September. The coverage was dominated by our reaction to the latest right to buy sales figures for England, and in Scotland as a result of our reaction to the latest Scottish housing statistics, the Scottish Household Survey and the Scottish Government’s new programme for government. We also achieved coverage on our submission to November’s spending review. The Board were also informed about the launch of the CIH Housing Academy. Member communication commenced with a press release on 22 September and an article in the weekly member email. Members of the Board expressed their delight at the coverage achieved and gave their support to Terrie and the Executive Team.

Turning to performance, the Board reviewed the financial performance as at 31st August 2015 for CIH. Glyn Rees-Jones, the Director for Finance and Integrated Governance, introduced the report, highlighting some key points and reporting a positive management of our cash flow and reserves. At 31st August 2015 income from the investment portfolio was £28k ahead of target at £103k. The Board were also given a brief outline of the concluded first draft of the 2016 budget. The final budget is scheduled to be presented to the Audit and Risk Board at the end of November, and to the Governing Board in December.

The Interim Director of Operations, Caroline Maley provided an update on the progress made on the development of the business performance reporting and the next steps required in the process. Progress continues to be made on the delivery of our key performance indicators but further work is required to articulate and measure the progress on the growth KPI and Business Improvement plan progress. 4 Improvement indicators were considered by the Board including the areas contained in the business improvement plan submitted to the Board in November 2014. They cover the customer, learning and growth (people) and business process segments to complete the balance scorecard approach to overall business performance management initiated at the Board away-day in September 2014. The Board noted the report and the continuing commitment to develop business reporting for CIH.

In terms of strategy, the Board had discussions around vision and where we want CIH to be positioned in the future especially in the light of the changes being made to the housing sector. A paper was delivered to the Board on International Models and proposing a model for future international activities based on the lessons we have learnt from our current international activities. The paper, delivered by the Judy Waugh, the Director of Membership and Education, was informed by analysis of our current activities, meetings
with other professional bodies with international networks and research undertaken by PARN (Professional Association Research Network) on professional bodies’ international activities. The Board considered the paper and it was felt that there was an appetite to have a better and more consistent international model and to be in a better position to what we already have, but less of appetite to explore new options. The Board also considered proposals that would address some of the current concerns of members with regards to communications with the regions. This work is nearing its completion in terms of planning and the Board expects to be the proposals and process with the Regional and NBU Membership in the coming months.

Moving on, the Board were given an update on the work to develop a programme of activities and events to celebrate our centenary year in 2016. Gavin Smart presented a paper which detailed the current proposed programme of events and a recommendation that Governing Board nominate a board member to be the key board contact for our centenary work between now and the end of 2016. The Board agreed the outline plan for Centenary events and were happy to nominate Geraldine Howley to take up this role up till the end of her tenure as President.

The Board then considered some outstanding areas of Governance. Mary Aluko, the Company Secretary and Head of Governance presented a report detailing specific areas but with particular emphasis on the proposed outline of the Governance Strategy. The aim of the proposed Strategy is to identify the challenges with the current governance structure and proffer options and proposals on how best to solve the issues which range from communication to a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities. The current structure perpetuates silos of governance which does not correspond with the initial spirit of the 2012 reform. The Board reviewed and approved the proposal and gave their support for the work to be done.

The Influence Board has agreed to change its name to the Policy Advisory Committee with a new set of Terms of Reference which better captures their role in the governance structure. You will recall that the Influence Board comprises CIH members who are not Trustees but have important roles in supporting and advising the Governing Board. They represent an important area of governance which evolved from the 2012 review. The Governing Board is pleased with the output of the Influence Board now Policy Advisory Committee and the re-evaluation process they have done to produce the revised terms of Reference.

Finally, the Board agreed an additional Board meeting on the 11th of November to discuss the 2016 Business Plan. The next official meeting of the Governing Board will take place on the 9th of December 2015 at our offices in London. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the CIH website no later than Wednesday 2 December 2015.

Best wishes,
Turlogh O’Brien,
Chair of Governing Board