

## **Butterwood Homes Scrutiny Panel**

**Date and Time:** Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 6.00 pm

**Place:** via Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Hart District Council:  
Worlock and Davies

**Butterwood Homes - Directors**  
Kirsty Jenkins, Neil Hince and David Hunt

### **In attendance:**

Quartermaster – Portfolio Holder (ex officio) – representing Shareholder  
Joanne Rayne – Finance Manager and Deputy Section 151 Officer –  
representing Shareholder

Kathy Long – Member and Committee Services Officer

### **1 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Cllr Worlock was elected as Chair for the meeting.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Farmer.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Following the deletion of “whether” from Minute 2 (Operational Plan - second paragraph, line 2), the minutes were confirmed as a true record of the previous meeting held on 25 September 2023.

### **4 OPERATIONAL PLAN AND PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Panel was advised that Butterwood Homes’s operational model was now totally focused on property maintenance and management of the 41 flats on the Edenbrook estate (Heather Court and Thistle House, Emerald Avenue, Fleet) rather than pursuing growth and development options, as had been the original intention. As shareholder, the Cabinet had agreed in April 2024 to change the membership of the Board of Directors; John Swinney was no longer a Director and David Hunt had joined the Board to provide a stronger focus on financial matters.

The Directors of Butterwood Homes gave a presentation covering:

- Expenditure on repairs and maintenance at Thistle House and Heather Court,
- Voids,
- Compliance/Health and Safety,
- Lettings Policy for key workers
- The lettings process and tenancy renewals,
- Rent reviews, and
- Feedback from tenants.

The purposes of the Company were to provide a modest income for the Council after covering the costs of managing and maintaining the 41 flats and offering properties for rental to keyworkers in Hart at a lower than market rental.

## **5 FINANCIAL REVIEW**

David Hunt gave a presentation on the audited accounts, the cash flow position and financial projections going forward.

The Panel was of the opinion that the financial position looked very promising and that the financial projection looked prudent going forward.

## **6 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

It was noted that the Cabinet had amended the Panel's terms of reference at its meeting in April 2024 as follows:

- To receive a report from the Company on the following:
  - Financial performance in the previous quarter and year-to-date against the annual budget and latest \*business plan
  - Performance against agreed key performance indicators
  - Any matters previously agreed between the Company and the Shareholder.

During discussion, the Panel requested that:

- the terms of reference should be amended to refer to an Operational Plan instead of Business Plan, and
- all documents relevant to the Scrutiny Panel meeting should be circulated one week in advance of the meeting.

The Panel was advised that the draft Operational Plan for 2024/25 would be circulated to the Scrutiny Panel the following day.

## **7 BUTTERWOOD HOMES - RISK REGISTER**

At the previous meeting, the Panel had requested that the risk register for Butterwood Homes should be reviewed at this meeting. The Panel was advised that the Board had revised and updated the risk register, as circulated with the agenda. The Company was in a sound financial position and, as the Company developed and progressed, the risk register would be revised accordingly. There were sound measures and mitigation in place to ensure that the 41 flats were compliant with on-going health and safety checks.

The Panel was of the opinion that the risk register covered the key items and that the correct level of risk had been applied to each of the categories.

The Panel thanked the Directors for their presentations and said that it was pleasing to know that the Board was doing a very good job. The properties at Thistle House and Heather Court had been maintained to a high standard and were being very well managed. The view was also expressed that the properties were not only a great asset to the community but also to the Council.

The meeting closed at 6.47 pm