

## YHN Board

Tuesday 28 July 2020 at 5.00 pm

Meeting to be held via Microsoft Teams

Contact Officer: Andrew Baker-Daley      Email: andrew.baker-daley@yhn.org.uk

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## AGENDA

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### Introduction Items

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Chair's Items**

To exclude the press and public during discussion of remaining agenda items because of the likely disclosure of confidential information. The definitions of what is considered confidential are contained within Section 16 of the Company's Standing Orders.

### Abri Trading Ltd.

4. **Loan Renewal (see item 7)**
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### Main Business Items

7. **Loan Renewal** 17 - 22
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11. **Governance Issues** 67 - 72

## **Minutes/Forward Plan**

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| 18. | <b>Assurances from Subsidiaries</b>   |                  |
|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asfaleia Limited 23<sup>rd</sup> July (verbal update)</li></ul>   |                  |
| 19. | <b>Assurances from Committees/Groups</b>  | <b>105 - 116</b> |
|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group Audit and Risk 21<sup>st</sup> May</li><li>• Customer Service 2<sup>nd</sup> June</li><li>• Property Group 1<sup>st</sup> July</li><li>• Group Audit and Risk 9<sup>th</sup> July</li></ul> |                  |
| 20. | <b>Any Other Business</b>   |                  |
| 21. | <b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>  |                  |
|     | 22 September 5pm  |                  |



## To be first for housing

Your Homes Newcastle Board  
28 July 2020

TITLE	<b>Health and Safety Annual Report</b>
AUTHOR	David Langhorne – Assets and Development Director
COMPANY	<b>Your Homes Newcastle, Abri Trading Ltd, Asfaleia Ltd.</b>
ACTION REQUIRED	For discussion
SUMMARY	This report provides Board with a summary of YHN Health and Safety performance during 2019/20

DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revolutionary services that support successful living</li> <li>2. Amazing places where people are proud to live</li> <li>3. Strong business fit for today, ready for tomorrow</li> </ol>	
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER	NUMBER & TITLE	<b>SR1: Non-compliance with health and safety responsibilities</b>
	LIKELIHOOD	2 (unlikely)
	IMPACT	4 (high)
FINANCIAL / VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS	Failure to comply will result in high financial penalties.	
CUSTOMER IMPACT / VIEWS	Failure to comply will impact on customers.	
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Not applicable	

# Your Homes Newcastle

## Health and Safety Annual Report

### 1. Purpose of this report

1.1 This report provides Board with a summary of compliance and health & safety performance 2019/20.

### 2. Background

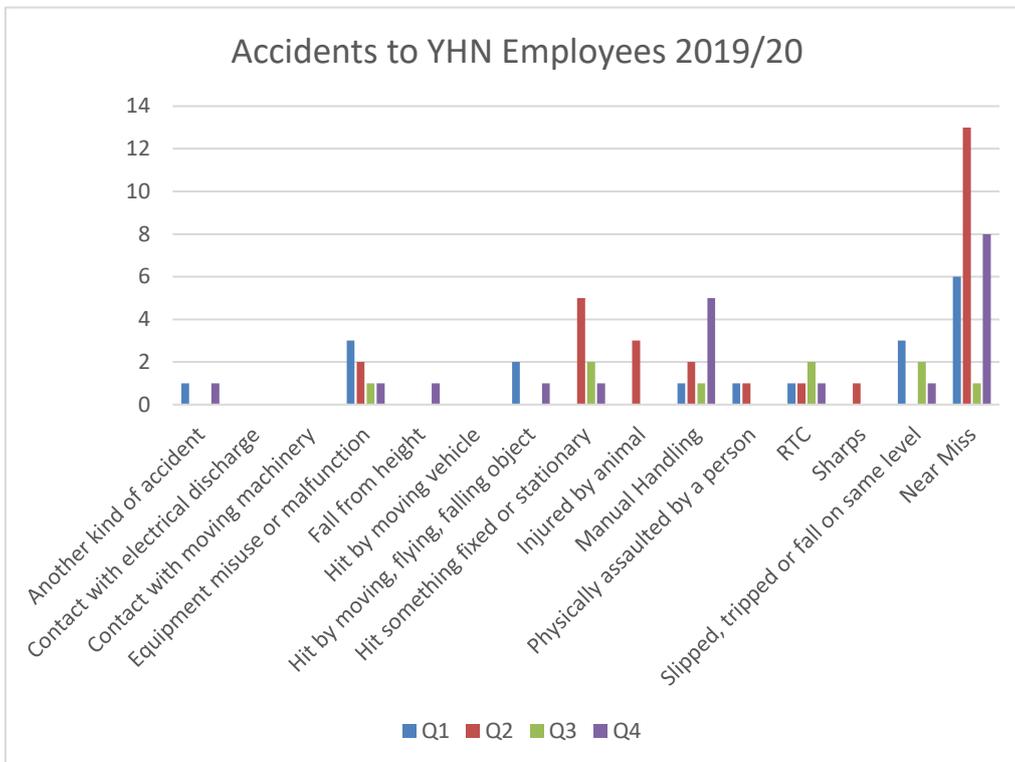
2.1 YHN formed a H&S committee in 2019 to assure board that all legislative duties were being discharged. Compliance, health and safety performance is reported quarterly to Health and Safety committee.

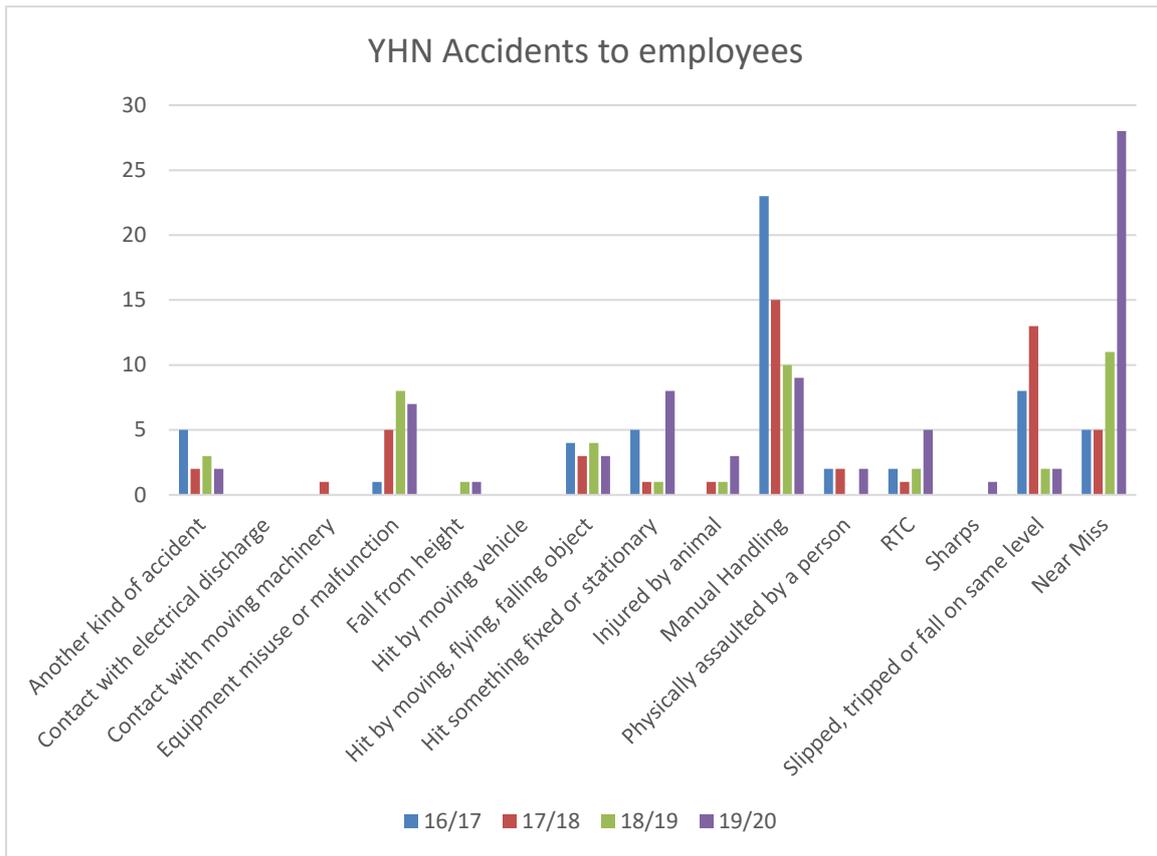
### 3. Health and Safety Reporting

#### 3.1 Health and safety monitoring

The report covers the outcome of monitoring for the following key areas of health and safety:

#### 3.2 Accidents





- 3.2.1 Quarterly trends during 2019/20 were reported and discussed at H&S Committee. Annual trends highlight manual handling as the leading cause of accidents to YHN employees. During the year we have seen a downward trend and this downward trend has been consistent across the last three years. The key services that incur manual handling accidents continue to be in the Caretakers Service and NFS. Manual handling refresher training will continue to be given along with targeted sessions for the higher risk service areas. Working processes are being reviewed to remove or reduce the need for manual handling wherever possible. As a result of accident investigation, recommendations are made where required to ensure staff have suitable and sufficient training for the tasks they carry out.
- 3.2.2 Accidents categorised as RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) include fractures, amputations, loss of sight, crush injuries, burns, scalping, loss of consciousness, closed space injuries and any injuries that result in a loss of seven working days.
- 3.2.3 Cases of COVID-19 are reportable under RIDDOR if they are a result of occupational exposure. YHN have a COVID-19 investigation form, aligned with NCC, to ensure any cases are RIDDOR reported if deemed necessary. There have been no COVID-19 RIDDOR reportable occurrences up to 7 July 2020.

3.2.4 There have been three RIDDOR notifications during 2019/20 for YHN, all due to accidents to YHN employees resulting in absence over seven working days. Incidents were;

- An employee sprained a wrist and ankle – 13-day absence
- Employee involved in a road traffic collision, hit a vehicle at traffic lights – 10-day absence.
- An employee, whilst delivering a fridge freezer the lifting equipment got stuck on a stair riser resulting in the employee having their arm jerked suddenly. – 18 days absence.

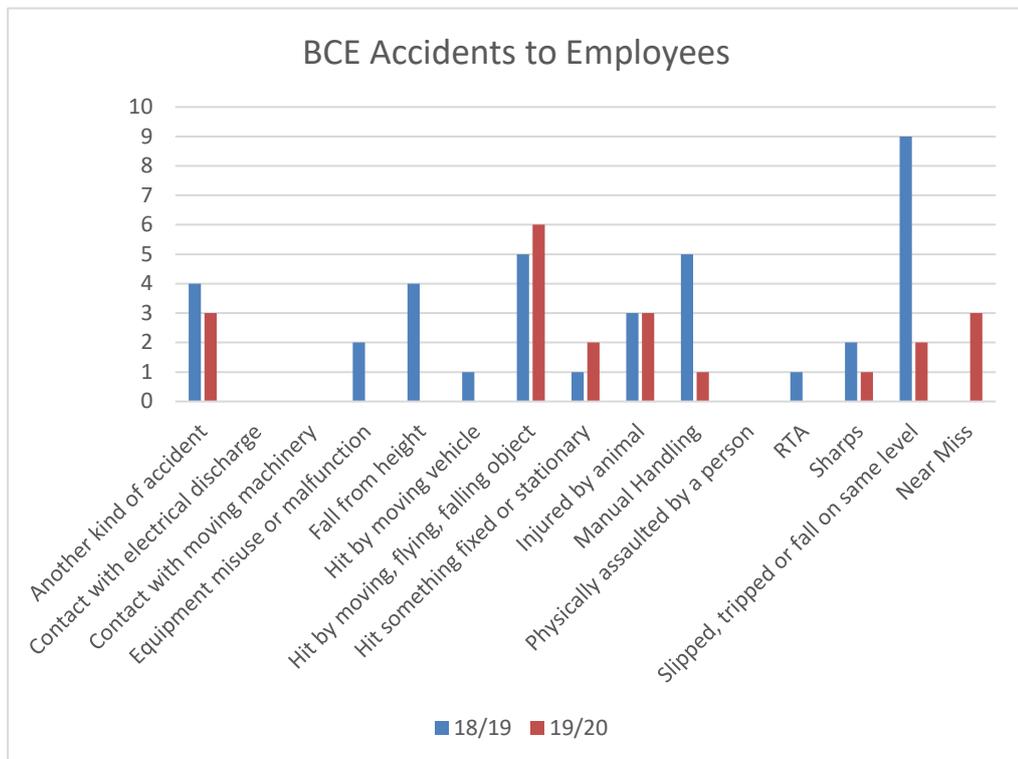
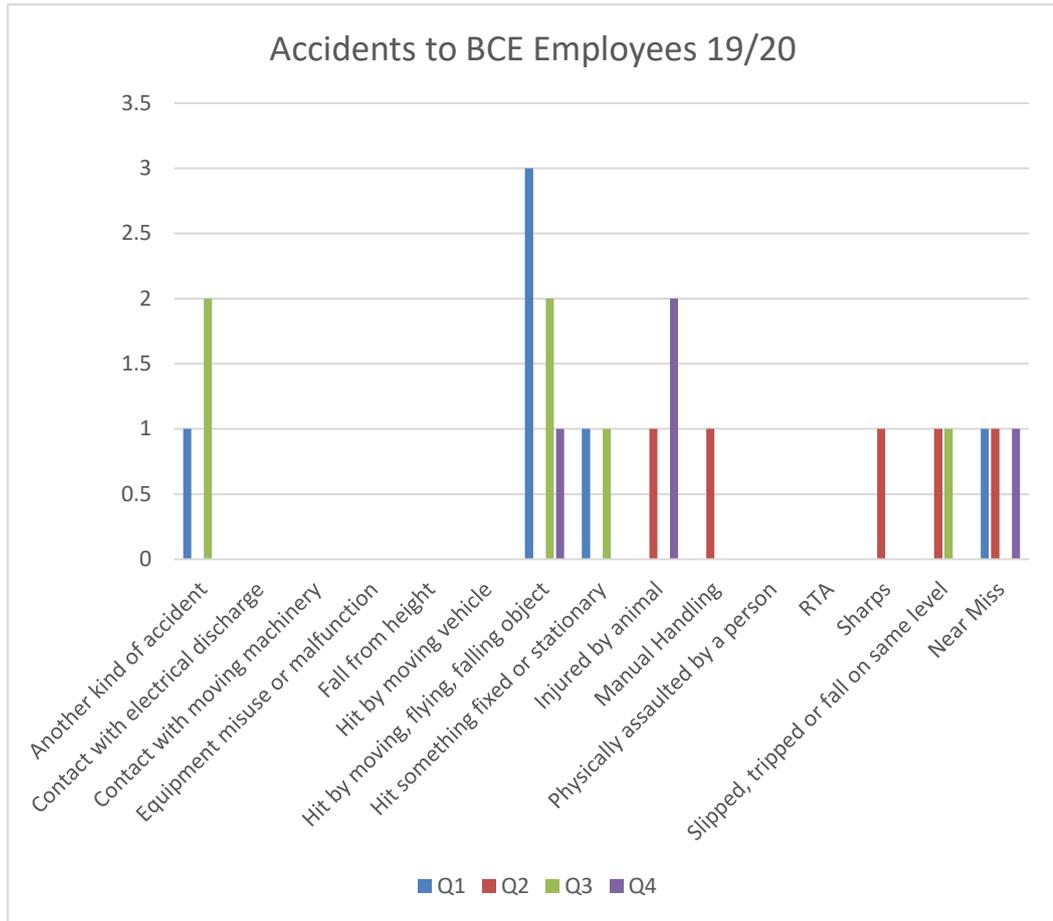
There have been six RIDDOR notifications during 2019/20 for BCE employees. Incidents were;

- Two employees with carpal tunnel syndrome.
- One employee with hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).
- One tradesperson injured whilst using a nail gun.
- One stores person hit a pothole whilst driving a forklift truck and jarred back.
- One employee was assaulted in a violent incident.

Previous years recorded YHN RIDDOR reports are:

- 16/17 - 10
- 17/18 - 4
- 18/19 - 4

3.2.5 There have been 28 near misses reported by YHN employees during 2019/20, this is a significant improvement over the 11 reported in 18/19. This demonstrates the changing culture within the organisation towards the importance of health and safety. Ongoing staff engagement via YHN intranet, health and safety working forum and face to face discussion (where safe to do so) will continue throughout 20/21 to promote near miss reporting and subsequent accident reductions as hazards are identified prior to occurrence.



- 3.2.6 NCC carry out accident investigation for BCE events, when required recommendations will be made to address the cause and prevent future occurrences.
- 3.2.7 BCE near-miss reporting: The planned roll out of near miss reporting tool box talks and information cards has been placed on hold until September 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19.
- 3.2.8 Three near misses have been reported by BCE staff during 2019/20, whilst this is an improvement over the previous year it appears low given the nature of the tasks carried out. It is anticipated figures will increase following the planned staff engagement on the importance of reporting all near misses.

### 3.3 Incidents

- 3.3.1 The Safe Living Team deal with incidents against YHN staff via various methods of recourse e.g. Potential Risk Indicator (PRI) reporting, issuing of anti-social behaviour orders and involvement of relevant third-party agencies where required such as Police.
- 3.3.2 There have been seven cases of verbal abuse towards housing officers, five of these happened within housing offices. Discussion has been held with Housing managers to present information to customers on unacceptable behaviours towards staff, this will involve input from the Safe Living Team.
- 3.3.3 There was a trend of verbal and physical incidents reported at the Stepping Stones Hostel, managed by Support and Progression services, in Q3. Following discussion with the service senior manager and site manager additional staff training was identified and delivered along with support for those subject to the unacceptable behaviours. No further incidents were reported after the main perpetrator moved out of the facility in Q4.

### 3.4 Health and Safety Training

- 3.4.1 For YHN to be compliant with health and safety legislation and adhere to the Health and Safety Policy staff must receive relevant information, instruction and training.
- 3.4.2 All new YHN employees receive H&S training via the on-line e-learning platform, the module is mandatory and ensures new employees understand their responsibilities and YHN comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 3.4.3 Health and Safety awareness training sessions were delivered to all YHN appraising managers in 2018/19.
- 3.4.4 Following a successful trial of the lone working devices by the Safe Living team full business roll out has started, devices have been distributed to Housing Services staff. Housing Plus devices have been delivered and

are in the process of being distributed to staff with training being delivered virtually to meet the restrictions placed due to COVID-19.

#### 4. Compliance

4.1 YHN’s Compliance team is responsible for coordinating statutory inspections and associated remedial works on 27,678 properties (25,122 NCC, 1,804 Leasehold, and 752 Leazes Homes)) to ensure compliance with relevant legislation.

Inclusive in numbers above are:

- 730 blocks with communal areas
- 27 Sheltered and supported housing
- 16 Operational buildings

Health and Safety Committee closely monitor performance against delivery on each compliance area on a quarterly basis. Appendix one gives detail on each specific compliance area.

Independent third-party quality assurance audits of both gas and electrical inspections are due to resume from 27 July following temporary suspension due to COVID-19.

#### 4.2 Compliance summary

Area	Legislation	Measures
<b>Gas</b>	The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998	<p>Annual landlords gas safety inspection report carried out on all properties that have a live gas supply. Third party quality assurance inspections.</p> <p>During 19/20 there were 21,127 gas services completed on behalf of NCC, and 552 on behalf of Leazes Homes</p> <p>Gas was 99.97% compliant at the end of 19/20 for NCC, reported 02/04/20. 6 properties were without a valid Landlord Gas Safety Certificate at this point, the impact of lockdown had led to no court hearings being available for three consecutive weeks. This has since been addressed.</p>

		There were no outstanding Gas Safety Certificates for Leazes Homes at the end of 19/20.
<b>Electrical</b>	Landlord and Tenant Act 1985	<p>Electrical Installation Condition Reports carried out on all properties on a five-yearly cycle, this is currently transitioning from ten-yearly to follow industry guidance and sector best practice. Third party quality assurance inspections.</p> <p>The 19/20 target of 5,500 completed electrical tests was achieved in Q4, with a total of 5,546 properties being tested in year.</p>
<b>Asbestos</b>	Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012	<p>Annual management condition inspections carried out on identified asbestos containing materials in communal areas. Suitable and sufficient surveys carried out as necessary prior to any construction works.</p> <p>There are 743 properties with known asbestos content, all have a risk assessment and asbestos management plan in place.</p>
<b>Fire</b>	Regulatory Fire Reform Order 2005	<p>Carry out fire risk assessments (FRA), duty to take general fire precautions, co-operation and co-ordination, information and training for employees.</p> <p>YHN carried out FRA's to all 42 multi storey blocks and 37 sheltered properties (inclusive of 16 owned by Leazes Homes) in 19/20, achieving 100% compliance with legislation.</p> <p>All FRA's are reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if any changes occur, achieving compliance with the requirements of the Fire Safety Order.</p> <p>The YHN Compliance Team manage actions identified through the process through to completion.</p>

	Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004	<p>There are currently five outstanding actions which require a multi-agency approach and are being progressed.</p> <p>Duty to co-operate with Fire Service in relation to buildings YHN manage</p>
<b>Water Hygiene</b>	The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems (L8), HSG 274	<p>Risk assessments, monitoring and inspection programmes</p> <p>Water Hygiene risk assessments are carried out by Integrated Water Services to ensure compliance with HSE Approved Code of Practice L8.</p> <p>There are 163 properties currently on the water hygiene risk assessment programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 163 undergo a risk assessment every two years</li> <li>• 77 small domestic properties undergo a risk assessment review annually in line with the risk control measures.</li> <li>• 86 properties (high rise/Housing Plus) are currently on a monthly monitoring programme</li> </ul> <p>All risk assessments, risk assessment actions and monthly monitoring regimes are compliant with all relevant legislation.</p>
<b>Health and Safety</b>	<p>Health &amp; Safety at Work Act 1974</p> <p>The Management of Health &amp; Safety at Work Regulations 1999</p>	<p>Accident and near miss monitoring, investigations are carried out following any reported accident, incident or near miss and recommendations are made where necessary to prevent future occurrences.</p> <p>During 2019/20 there were 42 reported accidents and 23 near miss.</p>

		<p>Accidents and near miss trends are reported to H&amp;S Committee quarterly.</p> <p>Staff training, information and guidance is delivered electronically by the learning management system with face to face sessions for manual handling, sharps and working in confined spaces. Risk assessments are in place to identify measure to control risks in the workplace.</p> <p>There are no outstanding actions from accidents or near misses, and YHN is fully compliant with all relevant legislation.</p>
<b>Passenger Lifts/Stair lifts &amp; Hoists</b>	<p>Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998</p> <p>Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998</p>	<p>Service programmes, monthly, quarterly and annual inspections.</p> <p>At the end of 2019/20 YHN was responsible for the management of 129 operational lift units across 72 properties.</p> <p>Due to a transition between lift contractors in February 2020, and subsequent lockdown there was an impact on passenger lift servicing.</p> <p>In June 2020 125 of 129 services were carried out, the outstanding four were undertaken in July. Mitigation measures have been implemented with the lift maintenance contractor to ensure servicing is carried out in accordance with contractual requirements (12 services per annum).</p> <p>All LOLER inspections are completed by Zurich Insurance.</p>

- 4.3 BCE's Health and Safety divisional performance report to DMT is presented in appendix two.

## **5. Major Incident Reporting**

- 5.1 A spate of suspected arsons at Cruddas Park occurred at Cruddas Park multi storey flats across 2019, this concluded when a suspect was arrested and removed from the block. Although no charge was brought by Northumbria Police based on risk the suspect was moved to a low risk property (location shared with Police and Fire Service).

- 5.2 The COVID-19 outbreak has presented significant challenges to YHN and customers, as a business YHN have adapted at pace to meet head on the challenges presented and strive to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and customers remain a highest priority.

A report was presented to H&S Committee 8 April outlining YHN's response to the outbreak.

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 6.1 Board are recommended to receive the report and discuss report content.

### **Contact Officer:**

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact Steven Studley, Compliance Manager by telephone on 0191 278 8589 or email [Steven.Studley@yhn.org.uk](mailto:Steven.Studley@yhn.org.uk)

Appendix One

YHN COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE REPORT TO H&S COMMITTEE (high level statutory risk themes only)					
Report for Period:	Year 2019/20	Agreed by AD of Operational Property Services	Name:	Ian Gallagher	
Report by:	Steven Studley	Agreed by Assets and Development Director	Name:	David Langhorne	

Key for Overall Performance Assessment Column							
Green	Confident that all reasonable arrangements are in place and no major improvements are needed	Amber	Reasonably strong arrangements are in place but some improvements are needed	Amber Rating 1	Arrangements are strong and only residual improvements needed	Red	There are very significant gaps in arrangements and major improvements are needed
				Amber Rating 2	Arrangements are good, but some significant improvements needed		

Compliance Risk Area	Are planned, workable and proportionate arrangements in place to:			Overall Performance Assessment (R/A/G)	Amber Rating (1 or 2)	Where performance assessment is red or amber, are plans in place to make improvements? (Y/N)	Clarifying Comments on Risk Theme /Activity	Action By	Date Reqd.
	Selectively monitor operational compliance, interpret and act on outcomes? (Y/N)	Assess and monitor performance - including management arrangements - and use outcomes to inform any required improvement planning? (Y/N)	Monitor and report any failings or noncompliance findings (Y/N)						
1 The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998	Y	Y	Y	Green			<p>Robust service contract in place to ensure all properties have a valid Landlords Gas Safety Certificate.</p> <p>During 19/20 there were 21,127 gas services completed on behalf of NCC, and 552 on behalf of Leazes Homes</p> <p>Gas was 99.97% compliant at the end of 19/20 for NCC, reported 02/04/20. There were six properties without a valid Landlord Gas Safety Certificate at this point, the impact of lockdown had led to no court hearings being available for three consecutive weeks. This has since been addressed. YHN now have remote access to courts to obtain warrants where necessary. Customers that have shielding letters are being offered a gas service but will not face legal action should they refuse. These cases are being recorded and will be attended once safe to do so.</p> <p>There were no outstanding Gas Safety Certificates for Leazes Homes at the end of 19/20.</p> <p>Performance reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly at officer level</li> <li>Monthly to Compliance Manager and AD of Operational Property Services</li> <li>Quarterly to NCC's Repairs and Maintenance Board and Group Audit and Risk Committee</li> </ul>		

										Third party quality assurance checks carried out by an appointed external auditor have been suspended during lockdown period by the supplier.		
2	Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012	Y	Y	Y			1	Y		YHN currently comply with the requirements of Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 however improvements actions have been identified. Assets information software is being updated via the incumbent supplier to improve available data. Mandatory asbestos training has been delivered to YHN and BCE managers and supervisors.  There are 743 properties with known asbestos content, all have a risk assessment and asbestos management plan in place.		
3	Fire Safety - The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005	Y	Y	Y						All YHN managed buildings have a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) in place. FRAs are carried out on all new buildings and reviewed annually. YHN have representation on national forums post Hackitt review. An action plan has been drafted to monitor actions required by YHN following outcomes of the Hackitt review. FRA's are currently being carried out in low and mid rise blocks.  YHN carried out FRA's to all 42 multi storey blocks and 37 sheltered properties (inclusive of 16 owned by Leazes Homes) in 19/20, achieving 100% compliance with legislation.  All FRA's are reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if any changes occur, achieving compliance with the requirements of the Fire Safety Order.  The YHN Compliance Team manage actions identified through the process through to completion. There are currently five outstanding actions which require a multi-agency approach and are being progressed		
4	Passenger lifts - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998  Moved to green since last	Y	Y	Y				Y		YHN have service and inspection contracts in place for 129 passenger lifts across 70 buildings, this includes monthly, quarterly, six monthly and annual frequencies in accordance with LOLER 98 and PUWER 98. YHN/NCC have a service contract in place with a third-party independent inspector as required under LOLER 98 to ensure compliance. YHN have commissioned TUV-SUD to carry out independent review of maintenance contract performance. NCC's recently appointed contractor have continued to deliver a high quality.  At the end of 2019/20 YHN was responsible for the management of 129 operational lift units across 72 properties.  Due to a transition between lift contractors in February 2020, and subsequent lockdown there was an impact on passenger lift servicing.		



7	Electrical Testing Moved to Amber 1	Y	Y	Y			1	Y	<p>The 19/20 target of 5500 completed electrical tests was met in Q4, with a total of 5,546 properties being testing in year. It is anticipated that the 20/21 testing programme will commence in June at the earliest, pending government guidance, BCE state this will not impact the 20/21 target, this will need to reviewed should the lockdown be extended beyond June. Emergency electrical repairs are being carried out.</p> <p>Third party quality assurance checks carried out by an appointed external auditor have been suspended during the lockdown period by the supplier. Monthly programme progress reports are used to monitor the testing programme.</p>
7	Health and Safety	Y	Y	Y					<p>During 2019/20 there were 42 reported accidents and 23 near miss. Accidents and near miss trends are reported to H&amp;S Committee quarterly.</p> <p>H&amp;S training has been delivered to YHN's appraising managers, additional sessions were offered to ensure all attended this mandatory training.</p> <p>BCE are delivering toolbox talks on ladders and stepladders, noise and personal protective equipment.</p> <p>A face to face training package has been identified for employees working in areas with increased risk of confrontation. This is to be investigated further and rolled out as necessary, based upon anticipated risk.</p>

Appendix two

HEALTH AND SAFETY DIVISIONAL PERFORMANCE REPORT TO DMT (high level statutory risk themes only)									
Note: This report should be based on the high level safety risks identified in the risk scoping exercise used to inform planning and monitoring									
<b>Directorate:</b>	Communities	<b>Report for Period:</b>	Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	<b>Agreed by Service Manager</b>	<b>Name:</b>	M Preston	<b>Date:</b>	6 February 2020	
<b>Division:</b>	BCE	<b>Report by:</b>	Mark Preston	<b>Agreed by Advising Safety Officer</b>	<b>Name:</b>	P Mann / J Forster	<b>Date:</b>	6 February 2020	
<b>Please confirm that a visible regular arrangement is in place to manage/direct health and safety performance at divisional level, overseen by the Head of Service (Y/N)</b>							Yes		

Key for Overall Performance Assessment Column							
Green	Confident that all reasonable arrangements are in place and no major improvements are needed	Amber	Reasonably strong arrangements are in place but some improvements are needed	Amber Rating 1	Arrangements are strong and only residual improvements needed	Red	There are very significant gaps in arrangements and major improvements are needed
				Amber Rating 2	Arrangements are good but some significant improvements needed		
Please note - the safety officer can advise on how resourcing issues, spans of control and other 'barriers' should be considered in assigning these indicators and judging required performance in realistic terms							

High Level Risk Theme/Activity (taken from the Risk Scoping)	Are planned, workable and proportionate arrangements in place to:			Overall Performance Assessment (R/A/G -based against indicators agreed with corporate H& Safety)	Amber Rating (1 or 2)	Where performance assessment is red or amber, are plans in place to make improvements? (Y/N)	Clarifying Comments on Risk Theme /Activity	Action By	Date Reqd.
	Selectively monitor operational compliance and interpret and act on outcomes? (Y/N)	Assess and monitor performance - including management arrangements - and use outcomes to inform any required improvement planning? (Y/N)	Monitor accidents, incidents, near misses, identify issues/ trends and act on outcomes? (Y/N)						
1 Working at height (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES	Green			Continue with current management controls and reporting arrangements.  Work at height forms now being used for the use of 'Tetra'. KB to provide summary of use for next meeting.	KB	March 20
2 Asbestos (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES	Green			Continue with current management controls and reporting arrangements.  Vega staff have had refresher training and issues with have reduced significantly  Technical staff are to be given refresher 3 core training including YHN technical staff. Mop up session to be carried out (5 staff only)	E Duffy	March 20
3 Manual handling (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES	Green			Continue with current management controls, monitoring and reporting arrangements. Review complete.		
4 Contractor monitoring (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES	Green			Continue with current management controls, monitoring and reporting arrangements.  AC needs upload the inspections carried out on AJ Keith.  SS to provide copies of YHN technical surveyor inspection reports	AC SS	Dec 19 March 20
5 Occupational Health HAVS (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES	Red		Y	Following the Reactec training session it was identified that the use of the system, the monitoring of employee use and the condition of the haveware watches was not acceptable. An action plan was pulled together to tackle the issues.		



										The Q12 'site set-up checklist' has been reviewed and will be completed for all schemes not just F10 sites. <b>STa to start using this form for voids work</b>	STa	March 20
16	Centralised Management of key premises risks, via Design Services – General Team; Hazards Officer role:  This function contributes to the management and monitoring of Fire Safety, Gas Servicing, Electrical Testing, LEV and noise, however, the main focus at this time is this functions role in regard to Asbestos and Legionella management. (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES			1	Y		Continue with current management controls and reporting arrangements  <b>SS to as M Gerrard to pull together a TBT on fire compartmentalisation and fire stopping requirements which will be rolled out to managers and appropriate front-line staff.</b>		
17	Temporary works (No change since last report)	YES	YES	YES			2	Y		Training on hold while ST / D Gibson check changes in BS.  <b>ST to email changes to all staff who have been trained. Key staff will have temporary works training and there will be an on-line training module all other staff.</b>	ST	March 20
18	COSHH  (Moved to green from amber 1 since last report)	YES	YES	YES				Y		Continue with current management controls and reporting arrangements		

#### General Comments

BCE is CHAS and OHSAS 18001 accredited and therefore our health and safety performance is measured in a number of ways including internal (BCE/Health and Safety Section) and external (SGS Yarsley) inspection and audit.

Whilst this review highlights some red and amber ratings and resultant action areas, these are due to the service carrying out honest, and self-critical appraisals of incidents, and the management of these incidents whilst aspiring to achieve greater levels of consistency in managing these high risk areas than there is currently.

BCE uses the management review process to ensure that appropriate action is taken to improve safety performance. The MR process also ensures managers collect and analyse evidence to demonstrate improvement in safety standards.

Our assessment of risk rating is based on the following criterion:

1. Analysis of accidents and near misses.
2. Analysis of progress of individual improvement plans.
3. H+S advice, officers input and field work findings.
4. Regular training of operatives and evaluation of training.
5. H+S site inspections / Audits.

Occupational Health: Over recent months a lot of work has been done to raise awareness of occupational health issues and streamline our occupational health surveillance regime. Using the 'ReacTec' system we have identified some employees who no longer need HAV surveillance and also streamlined the surveillance of employees requiring regular hearing checks. Our corporate H&S team have developed a Health and Wellbeing Booklet which has been distributed to all employees. This contains useful information on a whole range of topics including dermatitis, skin cancer, stress and mental health as well as contact details of organisations, independent of the council, that are there to provide assistance.



## To be first for Housing

Your Homes Newcastle Board  
28 July 2020

TITLE	<b>Modern Slavery Statement</b>
AUTHOR	David Langhorne – Assets and Development Director
COMPANY	<b>Your Homes Newcastle</b>
ACTION REQUIRED	For Approval
SUMMARY	This report includes the 2019/2020 Modern Slavery Statement, as required under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, for approval by Board.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	3. Strong business, fit for today, ready for tomorrow	
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER	NUMBER & TITLE	N/A – regulatory requirement
	LIKELIHOOD	
	IMPACT	
FINANCIAL / VALUE-FOR-MONEY IMPLICATIONS	There are no financial / value-for-money implications associated with this report.	
CUSTOMER IMPACT / VIEWS	The incorporation of Modern Slavery into our mandatory Safeguarding training will help ensure our staff are equipped to recognise and report any related concerns across our customer base.	
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	Compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 will help YHN promote equality and diversity across its business, the City and, its supply chain.	

# Your Homes Newcastle

## Modern Slavery Statement

### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Board approval of the Modern Slavery Statement covering the 2019/2020 financial year.

### 2. Background Information

- 2.1 Legislation, in the form of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the Act), received Royal Assent on 26 March 2015.

- 2.2 The Act consolidates various offences relating to human trafficking and slavery. It covers

- Slavery – where ownership is exercised over a person;
- Servitude – involving the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion;
- Forced or compulsory labour involving work or services exacted from any person under the menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily and;
- Human trafficking involving arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view to exploiting them.

- 2.3 The act includes provisions to:-

- Enable the Secretary of State to make regulations relating to the identification of and support for victims;
- Make provision for independent child trafficking advocates;
- Introduce a new reparation order to encourage the courts to compensate victims where assets are confiscated from perpetrators;
- Close gaps in the law to enable law enforcement to stop boats where slaves are suspected of being held or trafficked; and
- Require businesses over a certain size and threshold to disclose each year what action they have taken to ensure there is no modern slavery in their business or supply chain.

- 2.4 An additional clause was added retrospectively and came into force in October 2015, which requires all commercial businesses in the UK with a turnover of £36 million or more to disclose, in an annual 'Slavery and Human Trafficking' statement on their website, what steps they have taken during the financial year to ensure their business and supply chains are slavery free.
- 2.5 Failure to produce the required statement, where applicable, could result in the Secretary of State seeking an injunction but, in practice, is more likely to risk being "named and shamed".
- 2.6 The Statement must be approved by the Board and signed by a Company Director before being published on the Company's website with a prominent link on the homepage, within six months of the financial year end (i.e. by 30<sup>th</sup> September).
- 2.7 YHN published its first 'Slavery and Human Trafficking' Statement for 2015/2016 following Board Approval in June 2016, and since has presented annual Statements (see Background Papers information).

### **3. The Options**

- 3.1 Whilst a Statement template is not provided under the legislation, the Act does recommend that it contains:
  - An outline of the Organisation's structure, business and supply chains;
  - Policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking;
  - Due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in the Organisation's business and supply chains;
  - Identification of parts of the business and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking and, the steps taken to assess and manage that risk;
  - An assessment of its effectiveness in ensuring slavery and trafficking are not taking place in its business or supply chains, measured against performance indicators it considers appropriate; and
  - Information about training concerning slavery and human trafficking that is available to staff.
- 3.2 Appendix 1 details YHN's 2019/2020 Statement, which represents an on-going commitment to address the issue of Modern Slavery.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the annual Statement only applies to YHN's supply chain and, does not include Suppliers that undertake work for the Council that YHN manages but are funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The Council was consulted about this and agrees with the approach we are taking.

3.4 Whilst there is no requirement and it is perhaps impossible to guarantee that slavery and trafficking does not exist somewhere within an Organisation's supply chain, the annual Statement is:-

- Designed to demonstrate that an Organisation is aware of the issue;
- Is not driving the use of modern-day slavery practices through purchasing and procurement practices; and is
- Taking effective steps to stop modern-day slavery practices in its supply chains.

#### **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

4.1 Board is recommended to:

- Approve the Modern Slavery Statement (Appendix 1) for signature by a Director and, for publication on the YHN website by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

#### **Background Papers**

- Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement (2018/2019), YHN Board, 30 July 2019
- Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement (2017/2018), YHN Board, 31 July 2018
- Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement (2016/2017), YHN Board, 8 August 2017
- Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement (2015/2016), YHN Board, 21 June 2016

#### **Contact Officer:**

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact John Henderson by telephone, on 0191 278 7770 or, email [john.henderson@yhn.org.uk](mailto:john.henderson@yhn.org.uk)



Your Homes  
Newcastle

**Your Homes Newcastle (YHN)**

Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Financial Year Report - 2019 / 2020

## Introduction

Your Homes Newcastle ("the Company") is a not-for-profit, Arms-Length, Management Organisation (ALMO) and a wholly owned subsidiary of Newcastle City Council. We were set up in 2004 to manage the Council's properties, to improve housing in order to meet the Government's Decent Homes standard and, to provide a range of support services for Newcastle City Council and other landlords. We currently manage:-

- 25,141 council and leasehold homes on behalf of Newcastle City Council; and
- 752 homes on behalf of Leazes Homes.

## Our Structure, Business and Supply Chains

We have a group structure with Your Homes Newcastle as the parent company along with two subsidiaries. The two subsidiaries are Asfaleia Limited (a charitable subsidiary), and Abri Trading Limited, (a trading subsidiary).

- Your Homes Newcastle provides our core housing management and administrative functions;
- Asfaleia Limited delivers our community care alarm service, sheltered housing service, young peoples' service, advice and support service and, employability services; and
- Abri Trading Limited includes the Newcastle Furniture Service (NFS) and, Palatine Beds.

Further information about our activities is detailed on our web site at

<http://www.yhn.org.uk/>

Our tier one supply chain is made up of UK / European-based Suppliers. Total buying value in 2019 / 2020 for the Group was £8.45m across 327 Suppliers with the top 8% (25) of Suppliers accounting for almost 74% (£6.236m) of expenditure. The main categories are summarised below: -

White goods, small electrical and furniture items for NFS	£2.61m (30.94%)
Information technology and telephony	£1.41m (16.72%)
Palatine Beds (Raw Materials)	£1.81m (21.39%)
Healthcare Services	£0.26m (3.08%)
Utilities	£0.12m (1.37%)
Printing	£0.20m (2.31%)
Miscellaneous Other	<u>£2.04m (24.19%)</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>£8.45m (100%)</u>

## **Policies in Relation to Slavery and Human Trafficking**

YHN has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery and trafficking. This is supported by our Modern Slavery Policy that was developed and implemented during 2016 / 2017. As well as setting out our approach, the Policy details how it will be communicated and how we will ensure compliance, as well as deal with any breaches.

During 2018, we agreed that Your Homes Newcastle would align their Procurement Procedure Rules to Newcastle City Council's and, we have been working with the Council to replace our Corporate Procurement Strategy with a new Commissioning and Procurement Plan which can be found on our external website.

The new Plan is supported by a number of Policies including Anti-Bribery, Fraud and Corruption, Whistle-Blowing and Corporate Equality, as part of our Public Sector equality duty which includes the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

During 2019 / 2020, a combined Modern Slavery Policy and, Concept of Operations document was developed in conjunction with Newcastle City Council and, was implemented in September 2019.

YHN are also committed to continually assess the recruitment procedures and practices in order to comply with current employment legislation and, recruit staff according to best practice. During 2016 / 2017 we updated our Employee Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policies to include reference to Modern Slavery. Equality impact assessments are also carried out on all HR-related Policies to ensure they promote equality of opportunity.

YHN are aware of the updated Government guidance on Covid-19 for Modern Slavery and have acted on these where appropriate; particularly around Health and Safety of Workers, Supporting Suppliers (through relief payments) and, Emerging Risks, in terms of updated risk assessments.

## **Due Diligence Processes in Relation to Slavery and Human Trafficking in our Business and Supply Chains**

As a group we are governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended), which are underpinned by our Financial Regulations. As part of our commissioning and procurement activity, Suppliers are assessed for their suitability to perform the Contract specification using a Supplier Selection Questionnaire (SQ), which incorporates requirements for Modern Slavery checks relating to a Supplier's economic and financial standing, as well as compliance with Labour Law. In addition, our standard Contract terms require our Suppliers to adhere to all of our Policies and Rules, together with compliance at all times with the Law, including specifically the Modern Slavery Act, in the performance of the Contract.

## **Parts of our Business where there is a risk of Slavery and Human Trafficking taking place, and the steps we have taken to assess and manage that risk.**

We have analysed our third party spend and categorised the supply areas we think

are most at risk of modern slavery. The areas we think that are most at risk are due to their relatively high level of spend and the lack of supply chain visibility below our tier one Suppliers: -

- Supplies of white goods, small electrical and furniture items, for NFS.
- Supplies of raw materials to manufacture beds, for Palatine.

During 2016 / 2017 we undertook the mapping of our NFS supply chain, securing the signed commitment to tackle Modern Slavery and action plan from our first-tier Supplier. They in turn secured the same commitment from the majority of our second-tier Suppliers. Going forward we continue to pursue any outstanding commitments and plan to undertake a similar exercise for the raw material Suppliers to Palatine Beds.

### **Effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in our business or supply chains**

We are confident that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place amongst our first-tier Suppliers due to the due diligence processes that we currently have in place. Whilst we cannot be as certain that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place further down our Supply Chains, since the introduction of our new Policy and revised procedures, together with the work we have undertaken in conjunction with our NFS supply chain, we have had no reported instances of Modern Slavery.

### **Training about slavery and human trafficking available to staff**

Since 2016/17, Modern Slavery training has been incorporated into our Safeguarding Adults and Children Level 1 and Level 2 training, which is mandatory for all staff who may have to make a safeguarding alert. In addition, Supplier guidance in relation to Modern Slavery has also been developed and made available on our website.

This Statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and has been approved and published by the YHN Board and, will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Position:

Date:



## To be first for housing

Your Homes Newcastle Board  
28 July 2020

TITLE	<b>Governance Issues</b>
AUTHOR	Jill Davison - Assistant Director Business Support & Company Secretary
COMPANY	<b>Your Homes Newcastle</b>
ACTION REQUIRED	For Approval
SUMMARY	This report sets out the recommendations from the Remuneration and Nominations Committee to re-appoint Board members eligible for re-election, the annual appointment of the Vice Chair, and outlines current committee memberships.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	3. Strong business fit for today, ready for tomorrow	
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER	NUMBER & TITLE	<b>SR4: Failure to deliver effective governance of the Group</b>
	LIKELIHOOD	2 (Unlikely)
	IMPACT	3 (Moderate)
FINANCIAL / VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS	Board members are paid an allowance of £3,000	
CUSTOMER IMPACT / VIEWS	N/A	
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS	N/A	

# Your Homes Newcastle

## Governance Issues

### 1. Purpose of report

#### 1.1 This report sets out:

- Recommendation from the Remuneration & Nominations Committee to re-appoint:
  - Kevin Lowry as independent member;
  - Malcolm Page as independent member;
  - Leisa Docherty as co-optee
- Recommendation from the Remuneration & Nominations Committee to appoint:
  - Dennis Hall as co-optee
- Recommendation from the Remuneration & Nominations Committee with regard to an Independent Board member vacancy,
- Process for the annual appointment of the Vice Chair, and
- Committee memberships

### 2. Background information

#### 2.1 The YHN Board membership currently comprises 13 members; four Council nominated members, eight independent members, and one co-optee.

Each September, the Articles of Association (Article 17) require three independent members to stand down on a rotational basis, and, if eligible, seek re-appointment.

#### 2.2 Board Members can serve a maximum of three terms (i.e. a maximum of nine years) and are eligible to self-nominate for re-election as the end of their first and second terms approach.

#### 2.3 In January 2019, the Board approved a Co-optee policy, which allows the appointment of up to two co-opted members, who can serve for up to three years each on a 12-month term.

#### 2.4 The terms of reference for the Remuneration & Nominations Committee set out the delegations from Board. It has the following responsibilities regarding Board appointments:

- Regularly review the structure, size, composition and balance of skills, knowledge, experience and diversity of the Board and make recommendations to the Board with regard to any changes, giving due regard to the outcomes of the annual board evaluation and appraisal process;
- Make recommendations to the Board concerning the re-appointment of any Board member at the conclusion of his or her specified term of office...having given due regard to their performance and ability to

contribute to the Board in the light of the knowledge, skill and experience required

### **3. Remuneration and Nominations Committee**

- 3.1 The Board members due for re-election under the rotational retirement schedule this September were: Kevin Lowry, Malcolm Page and Helen Simpson. Leisa Docherty, Co-optee was appointed in September 2019 and is eligible for re-election.
- 3.2 Helen Simpson has previously indicated her decision to the Chair to not stand for re-election for another term.
- 3.3 The Committee met on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2020, to assess the suitability of the members eligible for re-appointment, considering appraisal outcomes as reported by the Chair, and a statement received from members in support of their re-election.
- 3.4 Having considered the information presented, the Committee agreed the following:
  - Kevin Lowry – Recommend for reappointment for 3-year term
  - Malcolm Page - Recommend for reappointment for 3-year term
  - Leisa Docherty - Recommend for reappointment as co-optee for 1-year term
- 3.5 In accordance with the Co-optee policy, the Board can appoint up to 2 co-optees. Further to discussion and agreement in April, the Remuneration and Nominations Committee are recommending the appointment of Dennis Hall for a term of 1 year as Co-optee.
- 3.6 The recommendation of Dennis Hall is supported by his skills and experience in local government legal, governance and compliance and this would be an opportunity to strengthen the gap left by Richard Clark on Audit a & Risk committee, in addition now Helen Simpson is retiring, Dennis would retain the knowledge of Asfaleia services on the Board.
- 3.7 The Remuneration and Nominations committee also considered the vacancy on the YHN Board which Helen Simpsons resignation creates. In line with the committees delegations, this was considered taking into account the structure, size, composition and balance of skills, knowledge, experience and diversity of the Board.
- 3.8 The committee considered a skills matrix and internal audit of skills which had been compiled by the governance team. It was noted that this exercise needed to be undertaken and updated taking into account the Board agreeing a revised skills audit which was more relevant to present and future needs, as the current skill set was produced in 2017.
- 3.9 The committee also considered the current Leazes Homes partnership proposal which is being discussed between the two organisations and due to

be considered at the YHN Board in September.

- 3.10 For these reasons the Remuneration and Nominations committee are proposing to hold the vacancy, left by Helen Simpsons resignation, until an updated skills audit can be completed and further details of the Leazes Homes proposal is known.

#### **4. Vice Chair**

- 4.1 In accordance with the current article 27 (8);

*The Board may appoint up to two vice or deputy chairs to act in the absence of the Chair on such terms as the Board shall think fit.*

- 4.2 The responsibilities of the Vice Chair are:

- to assist and support the Chair in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities;
- to deputise for the Chair in their absence;
- to attend Board agenda setting meetings
- to assume responsibility for a particular area of responsibility or interest as may be agreed by the Board, such as chairing committees;
- to meet with the Chair and Managing Director as required in between Board meetings; and
- to undertake such other duties as may be delegated to them by Board

- 4.3 In July 2019, J McCarty was re-appointed as the Vice Chair for a third year. During the year Joyce McCarty stepped up to Chair the Board as Jo Boaden left the organisation at the end of July 2019 and continued in this role until Tony Gates joined in January 2020.

- 4.4 To ensure transparency and good governance, we will open nominations to the whole Board.

During the meeting the Chair will ask for nominations to the position of Vice Chair. Each nomination must be proposed and seconded by a Board member. In the event of more than one nomination a ballot will be held by show of hands.

#### **5. Committee Memberships**

- 5.1 The Chair intended to review committee membership during the appraisals process, however due to response to Covid taking priority, they are recommending no substantial changes at this time apart from some amendments to Group Audit and Risk Committee. Full committee membership will be reviewed in due course.

## 5.2 The current membership is detailed below for information:

Group Audit and Risk Committee	Finance and Performance Committee	Health and Safety Committee	Customer Service Committee	Remuneration and Nominations Committee	Abri Trading Limited	Asfaleia Limited
VACANT (Chair)	Malcolm Page (Chair)	Paul Scope (Chair)	Lynne Blakey	Tony Gates	Paul Scope	Stephen Bramwell (Chair) (Independent)
Kevin Lowry	Joyce McCarty	Dennis Hall	Up to 15 tenant members	Joyce McCarty	Joyce McCarty	Dennis Hall (Independent)
Linda Hobson (Vice Chair)	Sylvia Copley	Bill Tebay	Representative from housing scrutiny – Ashleigh Fullwood	Malcolm Page	Malcolm Page	Helen Simpson (YHN)
Stephen Bramwell (Asfaleia rep)	Leisa Docherty	Gareth Kane	Representative from Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice – Liviu Popoviciu	Paul Scope		
Anne Cuthbertson		Tony Gates				

## 5.3 Group Audit and Risk Committee

Due to Richard Clark's resignation as Chair of Group Audit and Risk committee, the Chair asked Kevin Lowry to step in as interim Chair during the last 3 months. Subject to the approval of recommendations in section 3 of this report and the re-appointment of Kevin Lowry for a further term, the Chair of the Board is recommending to Board to formally appoint Kevin Lowry as Chair of Group Audit and Risk Committee.

- 5.4 Due to the dissolution of Asfaleia, Stephen Bramwell's exit from the Group will reduce the numbers on this committee. Due to the variable risk environment at the moment, it is essential we have a full membership of this committee. Subject to the approval of recommendations in section 3 of this report and the appointment of Dennis Hall as co-optee, the Chair of the Board is recommending to Board to appoint Dennis Hall to this committee to maintain membership at 4 members.

## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

### 6.1 Board are recommended to:

- a) Accept the recommendation of the Remuneration and Nominations Committee for the re-appointment of the Board members listed above;
- b) Approve the process for the appointment of a Vice Chair;
- c) Note the update on Committee memberships;
- d) Approve the appointment of Kevin Lowry as Chair of Group Audit and Risk

Committee;

e) Approve the appointment of Dennis Hall on to Group Audit and Risk Committee

**Background Papers**

- Articles of Association
- Group Governance Handbook
- Co-optee Policy 2019

**Contact Officer:**

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact Jill Davison by telephone on 0191 278 8624 or email [jill.davison@yhn.org.uk](mailto:jill.davison@yhn.org.uk)



## **YHN Board 19 May 2020 (5:05pm to 7:30pm)**

### **Present:**

L Blakey, S Copley, A Cuthbertson, L Docherty, T Gates, L Hobson, G Kane (until item 735), K Lowry, J McCarty, M Page, P Scope (until item 740), H Simpson (until item 736), B Tebay

A Baker-Daley	Governance Officer
J Davison	Company Secretary
D Langhorne	Assets and Development Director
G van Enk-Bones	Interim Finance Director
J Vinton	Customer Services Director
A Senior	Head of Fairer Housing, Newcastle City Council

### **733 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for some housekeeping observations during the virtual meeting. All members would be given the opportunity to speak in turn following the delivery of the main report.

The Chair gave thanks to the Executive Team for their leadership in difficult circumstances whilst the Managing Director is on leave and gave thanks for the support and input of chairs and members over the last nine weeks. It has been a difficult time for every organisation, and for a company on the front line in many areas, YHN has had to flex and adapt to the change ways of working to support customers, but it has performed exceptionally well.

The Chair apologised for the late circulation of the Covid-19 Strategic Impact Review report, noting that the Executive Team were asked to pause circulation until three committee meetings were held and their discussions incorporated.

### **734 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **735 NHF CODE OF GOVERNANCE**

The report detailed the self-assessment results of governance standards activity against the adopted National Housing Federation Code of Governance, seeking

approval of a proposed compliance statement for inclusion in the annual report and financial statements.

The Chair noted that the self-assessment was prepared by the Governance Team, however it is for the Board to decide that they are satisfied the criteria has been met and acknowledged there is always room for improvement within that.

J Davison added during the exercise, evidence is submitted in support of compliance, but in some areas more could potentially be done, referencing learning and development. It has been raised in the Chair's previous paper, though it is felt that the Board are still compliant in this area. It is felt that there are no areas in which an explanation has to be given as to non-compliance, hence the proposal of full compliance.

K Lowry commented that the evidence base is strong, there may be some formal aspects of development the Board could catch up on, but certainly the learning curve we are currently on is certainly effective governance.

H Simpson left the meeting at 7:05pm

**RESOLVED** – that the Board approved the proposed compliance statement for inclusion in the annual report and financial statements

#### **736 MINUTES OF 28 JANUARY**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 January were agreed as a true correct record and would be signed by the Chair in due course.

#### **737 MINUTES OF 24 MARCH**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 24 March were agreed as a true correct record and would be signed by the Chair in due course.

#### **738 ACTION LIST**

The Action Log was received and information noted.

#### **739 BOARD FORWARD PLAN**

The Chair introduced the forward plan, highlighting that the Governance Team have noted the items that were not considered by the Board at the March meeting due to the shift in focus to the response to Covid-19, and noted that time will need to be allocated in future to discuss them.

The Chair noted that the away day is planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and the next normal meeting will be held at the end of July. He asked members their thoughts on an additional meeting to catch up on items that had to be delayed.

J McCarty supported the proposal, suggesting some of the time allocated to the away day is set aside to consider the March reports but, highlighting the Chair's

report on board development, stressed the importance of using the away day to give space for proper discussion and thinking time.

A Cuthbertson expressed their concern about use of time for a virtual away day, that it could become potentially de-energising if the session runs too long and could diminish the value of quality time, suggesting the day itself is not overcrowded.

The Chair suggested that some of the away day time be used as a general catch up, to socialise and get to know each other better, to discuss some of the thoughts in the Board development paper outside of the formal meeting structure.

The Chair acknowledged timing concerns, suggesting that the session could last 1.5 to 2 hours at most, and that a formal Board meeting is held as a separate block later in the day.

P Scope supported the suggestions and agreed that a full day would be counterproductive. It would be of benefit to hold a non-scripted discussion free of presentation to talk and share ideas.

B Tebay highlighted that holding an additional Board meeting will create preparation pressures on the Executive Team, that the Board should ensure they are comfortable to expedite business matters. The Chair acknowledged the concern, and suggested that the agenda could be reviewed and agreed with the team. Some reports had already been prepared for the March meeting and might not require much input.

L Docherty agreed with the proposals and noted that it could be a long time until the Board meet again in person, suggesting psychometric tests could form part of the away day agenda if it hasn't already been set. The Chair agreed to discuss facilitation ideas further with L Docherty and A Cuthbertson.

K Lowry endorsed views, adding that it feels sometimes the Board have missed out in using the away days as an opportunity to get to know each other's backgrounds, strengths and weaknesses, especially now given there are newer members.

**RESOLVED** – that the forward plan was received for information.

P Scope left the meeting at 7:15pm

## **740 ASSURANCES FROM COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED** – that the Board received the following updates for information:

- Customer Service Committee 11<sup>th</sup> March
- Health and Safety Committee 8<sup>th</sup> April

Meeting ended 7:30pm

T Gates  
Chair  
28 July 2020



## **YHN Board 2 June 2020 (2:05pm – 3:50pm)**

### **Present:**

L Blakey, S Copley, A Cuthbertson, L Docherty, T Gates (Chair), L Hobson (up to item 742), G Kane, K Lowry, J McCarty (Vice-Chair), M Page, P Scope, H Simpson, B Tebay

### **In attendance:**

A Baker-Daley	Governance Officer
J Davison	Company Secretary/Assistant Director Business Support
D Langhorne	Lead Director
G van Enk-Bones	Interim Finance Director
J Vinton	Customer Services Director

A Senior                                      Head of Fairer Housing Unit, Newcastle City Council

### **741 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting, all members were recorded as being present.

As agreed at the away day, the Chair noted that members were to split into two groups to consider the first two update reports; safeguarding and BCE, and report back to Board on their discussions.

### **742 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

### **743 BOARD FORWARD PLAN**

The Chair presented the forward plan and asked members if they had any questions. G Kane asked if all non-confidential items could be taken prior to the exclusion of press and public, and queried the confidential nature of the health and safety report and GDPR report planned for July's meeting.

D Langhorne replied that the health and safety report could contain information about specific issues, a judgement call could be made once we see the content of the paper to ensure there is nothing of a personal nature.

J Davison acknowledged the query, suggesting that decisions could be taken at the agenda planning stage. Historically the order of the agenda did originally consider non-confidential items first, however there sometimes used to be timing issues where items such as budget came at the end. Members took a view as a Board to re-order the agenda in order of importance of paper, following a long period of non-attendance by the public. Should the team be notified of members of the public attending the meeting there is an alternative agenda which can be used on the day which will consider non-confidential items first as to not disrupt proceedings in making attendees leave and re-enter.

J Davison added that, similar to the health and safety report, the GDPR report content may determine the visibility, suggesting that it could be considered at the agenda meeting between officers and the Chair and Vice Chair. If there is a desire from Board to be more open and cover more public reports this can be reviewed.

**RESOLVED** – that the forward plan was received for information.

#### **744 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, adding that a feedback form will be circulated to reflect on both the away day and meeting. A Cuthbertson and L Docherty were thanked for helping to design the morning session.

Meeting ended 3:50pm

T Gates  
Chair  
28 July 2020

## YHN Board Forward Plan 2020

### Meeting 22 September 2020

Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
Annual Report and Financial Statements -Year End Reserves	Approval	×	Interim Finance Director
2021 Board and Committee Calendar	Approval	×	Company Secretary
Committee Memberships	Approval	×	Company Secretary
Leazes Homes Update	Discussion	✓	Managing Director
Strategic Risk Register	Discussion	✓	Interim Finance Director
GDPR Annual Report	Discussion	✓	Assistant Director Business Support
Assurances from Committees/Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health and Safety 5<sup>th</sup> August</li><li>• Finance and Performance 25<sup>th</sup> August</li></ul>	Discussion	×	N/A

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## Meeting 24 November 2020

Report Name	Purpose	Confidential?	Report Author
Health and Safety Policy	Approval	×	Assets and Development Director
Housing Investment Update	Discussion	✓	Assets and Development Director
Proposed Newcastle City Council HRA Rent Amendment 2021/2022	Approval	✓	Interim Finance Director
Assurances from Committees/Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Service 16<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>• Property Group 28<sup>th</sup> October</li> <li>• Finance and Performance 3<sup>rd</sup> November</li> <li>• Health and Safety 4<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Group Audit and Risk 12<sup>th</sup> November</li> </ul>	Discussion	✓	N/A
<b>ABRI TRADING</b>			
Abri Trading – Business Activity Update	Discussion	✓	Finance & Commercial Director



## To be first for housing

### Customer Service Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 Update to YHN Board 28 July 2020

Protect – not for publication	Circulation of this update is limited because the information is considered to be sensitive and is exempt in accordance with YHN's Information Policy and Section 16 of Standing Orders
Author	Jen Vinton – Customer Services Director

#### Key Discussions/decisions and actions agreed

##### Covid-19 response

Committee was provided with an update on YHN's response to Covid-19. The update included details of the positive work YHN had undertaken including staff redeployment, welfare calls to customers, proactive support for known victims of domestic abuse, response to anti-social behaviour, Emergency Housing Panel referrals, repurposing of YHN buildings to support hospital discharge, support for elderly and vulnerable customers through Ostara, delivery of emergency food parcels, continuation of emergency repairs, continuation of gas servicing tests where possible, delivery of furniture to elderly and most vulnerable customers, refurbishment and reinstatement of void properties and the creation of a Community Spirit Fund to support local community groups.

Discussions were held about the need to support groups such as those who were LGBT+, some of whom may be in lockdown with family who did not understand or accept them as they are. These people may not be the main tenant in the property and so would not necessarily be spoken to during welfare calls made by YHN.

##### Think Big Project

The Think Big project had been put on hold in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Committee were asked to consider what the next steps should be including when the best time to restart the project could be. It was also suggested members consider the current pandemic, YHN's response in terms of how its delivered services and whether this should be considered when the project resumes. Actions coming out of the staff survey and planning for the customer survey had also been put on hold due to the pandemic. The Committee considered the next steps and

suggested the Think Big project could potentially restart towards the end of August / beginning of September which would allow time for things to settle a little, with the possibility of bringing this forward if this was possible.

There was also a discussion that there is likely to be a change in customer expectations of YHN as a result of the coronavirus and that it would be important to review lessons learnt from the response and to build this into the Think Big project.

#### The Contact Centre

Committee had previously requested to be kept up to date on the transformation of the Contact Centre. During this meeting the focus was on how this had operated during the lockdown period.

Discussions took place about how this had been a critical service for customers of YHN and Newcastle City Council since lockdown began and efforts had been made to maintain the service through a range of measures with recordings about wait times to manage expectations of customers and the redeployment of approximately 40 staff who had been supporting the Contact Centre on a rota basis. Support had also been provided to the Citylife line.

#### YHN Community Spirit Fund

Discussions were held about the Community Spirit Fund, its purpose and how it was operating. The £10,000 community fund is a partnership between YHN and Ideal Boilers and was set up to help projects and organisations in local communities to respond to Covid-19. Discussions were held about the types of projects this had funded and the number of requests which were being supported.

It was highlighted that the fund had been put forward as a model of good practice to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and their feedback had been very positive. Some other local authorities were planning to replicate the model.

A further pot of £2,000 had also been ringfenced for staff who worked directly with customers and their families to provide things like reading books and jigsaws.

Committee members provided feedback that their experience of the Community Spirit Fund had been very positive so far. Members suggested that information about the projects supported by the fund should be shared on the YHN website to highlight to tenants the excellent work that YHN was doing, supporting communities.

#### Scrutiny and Involvement for Tenants/ Newcastle Independent Tenants Voice

The Chair of SIFT provided information on the project for "Do the service charges for caretaking reflect the actual service received". This report had been completed and was now available on the website. The current scrutiny exercise was looking at how Newcastle City Council and YHN effectively engage with tenants and customers who would be impacted by carbon neutral projects in council houses and the report would be completed by the end of July. Members discussed the opportunity to look at the impact that lockdown had on the environment and at the potential large negative impact of coming out of lockdown.

Re-appointment/Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

Discussions were held about opening back up the vote for Chair and Vice-Chair, but that as there were five very new members on the Committee it was felt that it would be best to put this on hold until later in the year.

Members were also asked once a year to complete an appraisal of the Committee and again it was felt this would be best put on hold until the new members were better settled in.

Committee Work Plan

Committee agreed Contact Centre updates will be brought to every meeting for the rest of the year.

Gas Servicing

Concerns were raised about gas safety checks and what the impact of customers shielding was having on this. Members were advised of the sensitive approach being taken and of the safety measures in place and about the records which were being kept. This had not been a problem for YHN as it appears to have been with other housing organisations.

Key observations or comments for Board

The Committee had very positive discussions about the projects detailed in this update and provided officers with feedback and suggestions on each of these.

**Contact Officer:**

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact Richard Tate by email: [Richard.tate@yhn.org.uk](mailto:Richard.tate@yhn.org.uk)