

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Executive Director of Growth and Sustainability

TITLE: Appointment of the Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	29 November 2023
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Regeneration and Culture
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

This report updates Cabinet on the appointment of the new Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board.

Council Plan priority

Healthy, Growing, Sustainable and Learning Barnsley

Recommendations

That Cabinet notes and supports the appointment of a new Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the Berneslai Homes' Memorandum and Articles of Association that there shall be an independent Chair of the Board appointed by a competitive recruitment process and selected by an independent panel. The previous Chair of the Board, Sinead Butters MBE, was appointed to the role of Chair following a recruitment process in August 2020. Cabinet endorsed this appointment in September 2020 (cab.23.9.2020/8).
- 1.2 In line with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Chair can serve for a period of up to six years, with a review process after year three. Further to the resignation of Sinead in summer 2023 (following her three-year term), an independent recruitment for a new chair was initiated by Campbell Tickell (an independent consultancy) and concluded in mid-October.
- 1.3 The position was advertised widely across both housing and non-housing networks during summer 2023. The recruitment exercise resulted in 10 applications, with 5 candidates progressed to the longlist and 4 candidates

reaching the final interview stage.

- 1.4 The interview process involved an initial filtering of applicants through interviews with Campbell Tickell, an engagement session with tenants, applicants meeting with the Executive Management team of Berneslai Homes staff and a formal interview process with a panel comprising of the Service Director for Regeneration and Culture (Kathy McArdle), Councillor and Berneslai Homes Board Member, Cllr Kevin Osborne, the Interim Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board, Mark Johnson (who will step back into the Vice-Chair role following this appointment) and the Chief Executive of Berneslai Homes, Amanda Garrard.
- 1.5 Further to this rigorous interview process, which yielded a strong field of candidates, the preferred candidate is Ken Taylor. Ken has previously been the Chair of Wakefield and District Housing Association and former CEO of Groundworks. He has a broad experience in housing, community engagement, mental health, and property development. He will be formally appointed at the Berneslai Homes Remuneration Committee in mid-November and will observe and be appointed at the December Berneslai Homes Board.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet notes and endorses the planned appointment of a new Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial

Consultation on the financial implications of this report have taken place with representatives of the Director of Finance (Section 151 officer).

There are no direct financial implications relating to the appointment of the new Chair for the Council. The remuneration arrangements for the Chair of the Board and other members are documented in section 27 of the Articles of Association of Berneslai Homes Ltd. Remunerations, including those of the Chair, are delegated to the remuneration committee and funded from the Management Fee paid to Berneslai Homes annually.

The management fee is agreed as part of the annual HRA Business plan in a separate report to cabinet.

3.2 Legal

The Memorandum and Articles of Associations for Berneslai Homes sets out the role, remit, and powers of Berneslai Homes Ltd, the Membership of the organisation and governance arrangements for the Board. The appointment of the Chair has been concluded in line with requirements within the Article of Associations. Berneslai Homes was established as an ALMO in 2002. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee, overseen by a Board of Directors and is

ultimately wholly owned by the Council (i.e., the Council is the only Shareholder).

3.3 Equality

The recruitment process was conducted with due care and consideration to equality and diversity in line with the BH Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. The recruitment process included the Tenant Voice Panel representatives; ensuring that the tenant voice is at the heart of decision making within the organisation.

3.4 Sustainability

There are no direct sustainability implications linked to the appointment of the Berneslai Homes Board Chair. Zero carbon is one of the objectives of the Berneslai Homes Strategic Plan and includes the actions that Berneslai Homes will take to assist in achieving the zero carbon targets as a company in line with their Sustainability Strategy.

The Strategic Plan and Action Plan are aligned to Barnsley 2030 with a key emphasis on providing quality, affordable homes, neighbourhoods and supporting people to achieve their potential.

3.5 Employee

There are no direct employee implications.

3.6 Communications

There are no direct communications implications arising from this report. There will be a robust communications plan implemented by Berneslai Homes following the formal appointment of the Chair.

4. CONSULTATION

Consultation with staff, the Board (including the Council's shareholder representative) and the Tenants Voice Panel was undertaken as part of the recruitment process.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

There are no alternative options. Recruitment for a new Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board has been progressed in line with the Memorandum and Articles of Associations of Berneslai Homes Ltd.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

For Cabinet to note the appointment of a new Chair of the Berneslai Homes Board.

7. LIST OF APPENDICES

n/a

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association for Berneslai Homes Ltd is available upon request.

9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Senior Financial Services officer consulted and date. <i>Ashley Gray – Strategic Finance Business Partner 24/10/2023</i>
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted and date <i>Peter Wilson 24/10/2023</i>

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