ONGO COMMUNITIES COMMON BOARD

COMPRISING OF: ONGO COMMUNITIES LTD (Company Number 08619739)
ONGO RECRUITMENT LTD (Company Number 04750128)
CROSBY BROKERAGE LTD (07307333)

Held at 09:30am Tuesday 2nd December 2025
The Viking Centre, 6-8 Fairfield Drive, Barton upon Humber,
DN18 6ER

MINUTES

Present:
Common Board: Natalie Cresswell (Chair), Jan Williams
Officers: Gemma Willey (minutes), Kevin Hornsby, Steve Hepworth, Ashley Harrison, Erica Sanderson, Kerry Copson
Apologies: Debbie Clegg, Karen Locking, Kacper Merta, Jo Sugden,
Absence: None
Observers: Des Hudson

The meeting was confirmed as not quorate, with only two members present, whereas three members are required in accordance with standing orders item I5 and the specific resolutions agreed by the entities in November 2022. It was agreed that the meeting would proceed for discussion purposes only, with no formal decisions made. Any decisions would be deferred to the next meeting or taken via Convene following consultation with the full membership.

Declarations of Interest: Natalie Cresswell declared she is a member of Ongo Homes Board and Jan Williams is employed by Ongo.

Time meeting opened: 09:32am

1. **Agenda item 3 – Minutes of Previous meetings and Matters Arising**

The minutes from the meeting held 17 September 2025 were approved,
The minutes from the Strategy Session held on 17 September 2025 were approved.

2. **Agenda item 4 – Action List**

The action list was noted with no actions overdue and two outstanding to be updated at a future meeting.

Jan noted uncertainty as to whether the proposed deep dive on HACT could be undertaken, as it is likely to be costly. Jan will follow up with the IT team regarding this. Steve Hepworth requested that, if the deep dive cannot proceed, the matter be brought back for discussion to clarify the intended outcomes. It was also noted that measurement could be considered separately from reporting.

3. **Agenda item 5 – Management Accounts**

Summary: This report presents the management accounts including financial golden rules of Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage for October 2025.

Ashley Harrison presented the accounts which were taken as read.

Discussion points/questions:

- *No questions were raised.*
- *The Chair noted thanks to the team for the reports which are sent monthly.*

Agreed: Board members present • approved the management accounts of Ongo Communities, Ongo Recruitment and Crosby Brokerage for October 2025. It was noted this would not be considered full approval due to the meeting not being quorate • The full papers to be shared with the board via Convene resolution.

4. **Agenda item 6 - Outcomes of Ongo Homes Investment in Ongo Communities**

Summary: This report outlines how the £1,126,932 investment from Ongo Homes for 2025/26 is being allocated and seeks approval from the Ongo Communities Board to progress a proposal for the Ongo Homes Board. The proposal aims to secure funding for 2026/27 and includes a request to use reserve funds to support two key projects: Improving Lives and Ongo Talk. It also provides details on current spending and recommendations for future funding.

Kevin presented the report outlining how funds have been allocated and detailing the projects supported through reserves, including *Ongo Talk*. The projects were noted as worthwhile investments.

Discussion points/questions:

- Members discussed the importance of the Communities Board reviewing performance outcomes to ensure grant funding achieves its intended impact.
- SH emphasised that OH Board must be assured the grant delivers value for money and that reporting should clearly link outcomes to strategic priorities and regulatory expectations.
- OH funding currently focuses on three outcome areas:
  - Skills, training and employment
  - Mentoring

    - Neighbourhood development
- The Board discussed the Improving Lives project and whether its housing-related elements should be funded by Communities or Homes.
- Members noted concerns about the sustainability of mental health support, currently funded from reserves.
- Steve advised that by 2027/28, OH Board will need to determine whether mental health becomes a formal priority with defined funding.
- Kevin commended the strong impact of current projects but cautioned that changing priorities could affect staffing and services.
- Kevin also highlighted the close link between mental health and employment support, both contributing significantly to corporate plan outcomes.
- Members explored options to increase income or secure external funding.
- Jan confirmed opportunities remain limited post-EU funding and future support may depend on Greater Lincolnshire's devolved arrangements.
- The upcoming Deputy Mayor visit in January will provide an opportunity to showcase Ongo's community impact.
- The Board emphasised the need for long-term sustainability and realistic financial planning, noting potential staffing implications.
- It was agreed that OH should set broad funding parameters—such as support for employment, young people, and mental health—rather than specifying individual projects.
- It was noted that a key requirement of procurement is social value. Members questioned whether a more proactive approach should o taken to be explicit through community value which is demonstrable. Ashley took an action to investigate social value within procurement contracting.

Agreed: Board members present: • Approved the report in principle, though formal resolution to go via Convene. • Agreed Board to discuss priorities for 27/28 at a future meeting

ACTION: 7/25 Ashley to investigate social value within procurement contracting and update members.

5. **<u>Agenda item 7 – Business Performance Report.</u>**

Summary: This paper provides performance management information on progress against the targets and highlights the year-to-date results on projects and business activities.

Kerry presented the report which was taken as read, noting the data was presented by local authority (LA) area and further subdivided for clarity. This format matched asset management reporting to ensure consistency.
This was the first use of this mapping approach, which is expected to support more regionalised reporting over time.

Discussion points/questions:

- The Chair noted the Board's request for this format and asked that future reports clarify how this is mapped.

- The Chair noted that services were provided even in low-stock areas, underlining the importance of equitable access and early community engagement.
- In response to risk concerns, Jan shared plans for a regional “fridge magnet” with a QR code linking to service information, tailored for three regions and developed with input from Fran, Claire, Jane, and neighbourhood teams.
- Regarding Christmas Award Celebrations it was noted that Drainmaster had donated £1,000 in prize money for winners, and Jewson’s had made additional contributions under the "Step Forward" initiative.
- The Chair also asked that positive performance results be passed on to operational teams, commending improvements including increased room bookings at both the ARC and Viking Centre.
- It was confirmed that Stuart had commenced in post as Team Leader for recruitment.
- The Board noted updates under “Sport, Health and Housing”:
    - Scunthorpe United had donated 1,500 match tickets for tenants.
    - Kerry, Sam, and Kevin had presented at a tenant forum event.
    - The team has established links with Lincoln City FC to develop the regional offer.
    - A rugby partnership was scheduled to launch in the new year.
    - Kerry noted that the sports partnerships were politically neutral and presented strong opportunities for brand awareness, with many clubs having marketing budgets available for social media engagement.

Agreed: Board
- considered the content of the report and discussed and debated any issues.
- agreed that the report and presentation demonstrated a clear description of the project, and that risks are understood and managed appropriately.

6. **Agenda item 8 – Charity Commission Annual Return**

This item was not approved due to the meeting not being quorate

Agreed: Board
- it was agreed that a resolution would be circulated for approval via Convene

7. **Agenda item 9 – Ongo Communities Investment Policy**

This item was not approved due to the meeting not being quorate. Some discussion took place regarding the wording, and it was agreed to bring this back to a future meeting.

Agreed: Board
- deferred the policy approval to a future meeting.

8. **Agenda item 10 – Health and Safety**

Summary: This report covers updates between 1st September 2025 – 12 November 2025 . Incidents detailed are since the last reported incidents detailed in the last Board update.
- *There have been 3 incidents reported since the last reported incidents.*

- *There has been 0 RIDDOR reportable incidents within this reporting period.*

Gemma presented the report which a taken as read and invited questions from members.

Discussion points/ questions:
- The Chair asked for some context and follow up concerning the safeguarding incident for assurance the service user was being supported. Kerry confirmed that the Neighbourhood Officer was providing support.
- The Chair noted that they were supportive of the decision and outcome concerning the way in which this incident (1003 and 1004 in the report) was handled.

Agreed: Board • Members present confirmed they were satisfied with the management of Health, Safety and Environment arrangements set out in the report. • The report will be shared on Convene by way of resolution

9. **Agenda item 11 – Strategic Risk Register**

Summary: The Ongo Communities Board and to confirm they have considered the Ongo Communities strategic risk register and that they're satisfied with the management of the risks presented in this report and associated appendix.

Erica presented the paper on risk management. She advised that further work is required in relation to the financial risk, which remains within the agreed appetite but has been separated into internal and external funding elements. A review of this breakdown is planned, and a deep dive into the strategic risk is proposed for the next meeting to support future decision-making. The key flagged risk relates to workforce and capacity. All identified roles have now been recruited to, with one minor gap expected to be addressed in the next financial year. Erica invited questions from members.

Discussion points/queries:
- Des Hudson noted the intention to undertake a deeper review of the organisation's medium-term financial sustainability, which he supported as a prudent approach.
- The Chair asked about the increase in the people-related risk score to 9, noting that while recruitment is largely complete, a small gap remains. She emphasised the value of ensuring the risk report clearly shows that this risk continues to be actively managed and remains within appetite, with the overall position improving from previous levels.

- The Chair further commented on the external funding risk, observing that while the score has remained unchanged, the external political environment has shifted. She recommended adopting a more forward-looking approach and ensuring that this changing context is reflected in the register.

It was agreed that a more holistic review of risk will be undertaken across all subsidiaries, with risks reviewed collectively to ensure alignment and consistency.

Agreed: Members present

- Noted the content reports and agreed this item would be circulated via Convene for resolution.

With no further business the meeting closed at 10:55am

Signed by Chair: Natalie Cresswell Date: 2 December 2025

As a true and correct record of the Ongo Communities Common Board meeting held on 2nd December 2025