



## LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING

**Date:** 28 March  
**Time:** 2pm  
**Venue:** Wheatley House, 25 Cochrane Street Glasgow

**Chairperson:** Eric Gibson

**Present:** Alex McKay, Allan McGinness, Archie Morrison and Jacqui Mallin (in part)

**In Attendance:** Hazel Young, Managing Director  
Stephen Wright, Deputy Group Company Secretary  
Sarah Stocks, Finance Manager  
Chris Walker, Head of Housing  
Morgan English, Assistant Company Secretary  
Stephen Devine, Director of Repairs and Sustainability (items 4 and 6)

### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Jennifer Williamson, Jean Fyfe, Pauline Gilmore, Suzanne Lavelle and Nesta Gilliland. The Chair declared that a quorum was present.

### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

The Board noted the standing declarations. No new declarations were made.

### 3. **Minutes of Board Meeting held on 7 February 2022 and matters arising**

**Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 7 February 2022.**

The Chair provided an update on the recent Group Board workshop regarding sustainability, including the requirement for all social housing in Scotland to achieve Energy Performance Certificate band B by 2032.

### 4. **Transforming our repairs environment**

The Board received a report on our plans for the joint development, with City Building Glasgow (CBG), of the repairs and maintenance service provided to our customers. The Board discussed the plans particularly those which would give customers more control and flexibility, for example through introducing the Localz app to allow them to track and message the repairs operatives.

The Board was pleased that customers will be able to provide feedback about the service through digital methods such as Rant and Rave, meaning more information is available to and from customers in real time. The Board also welcomed the plan to include specialist City Building repairs staff within our Customer First Centre and broadening the availability of our appointment slots.

**Decided: The Board noted the update and agreed to receive updates on progress at subsequent meetings.**

## **5. New operating model update**

The Board received an update on the progress of our new operating model and proposed next steps as we continue to emerge from Covid restrictions.

The Board discussed the report and in particular was the progress of our Customer First Centre, with the grade of service rising to 86% of calls being answered within 30 seconds from the start of January. The Board also noted that the Customer First Centre has seen improvements to calls being resolved at the first point of contact which has allowed Housing Officer time to be freed up to spend more time in their communities.

The Board considered progress with our online services as we have broadened our digital engagement forums through community Facebook pages and the development of our 'Book it, track it, rate it' repairs app.

The Board discussed the development of our new engagement structures and was encouraged by the recruitment of our Customer Voices and the increase in diversity of age ranges. This was largely achieved through promoting more digital engagement activities which has helped us attract more customers in lower age bands than we have been able to previously. The Board emphasised the continued need to retain non-digital methods of engagement to ensure that no one was left behind.

**Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.**

## **6. Home Safe building compliance update**

The Board considered a report which provided an update on our building compliance work streams following remobilisation post pandemic.

The Board emphasised the importance of compliance work and discussed the increase in compliance work as Covid restrictions have lessened. The Board also noted that we seek to implement a 'one and done' approach to minimise inconvenience to our customers whilst assuring the safety of our homes, for example by carrying out repairs and compliance checks in a single visit where possible. The Board considered the progress in our compliance activity, including the 100% completion rates for gas safety and the installation and maintenance of smoke and heat detectors.

**Decided: The Board noted the report and agreed the proposed approach to compliance related works.**

## 7. 2022/23 Budget

The Board scrutinised the proposed 2022/23 budget which reflected the challenging economic climate. In reviewing the budget the Board considered:

- net operating surplus budgeted of £15,571k;
- repairs and maintenance costs of £2,569k
- net capital expenditure of £11,800k, supporting our continued investment in existing and new build properties in 2022/23.

The Board was assured that appropriate mitigations had been put in place as a response to the external economic environment and was satisfied that we would remain compliant with our covenants and that our business plan was sound.

The Board requested more information on the mitigations put in place at the strategy workshop in May, as well as a mid-year review of the financial projections with early indicators and impact on five-year financial projections to the September Board meeting.

**Decided: The Board approved the draft 2022/23 budget.**

**[Jacqui Mallin left the meeting]**

## 8. Energy costs: supporting our customers

The Board received a report which outlined the steps we are taking to support our customers with increasing energy costs.

The Board considered the proactive efforts made with customers through our Fuel Advice Team who offer advice and guidance to customers, making sure they are on the right tariffs and are accessing all funds available to them. The Board discussed the challenges our customers face due to rising energy costs and the support initiatives we are developing such as through the Wheatley Foundation and our Energy Crisis Fund.

The Board recognised the increasing pressure on customers' finances as a result of changes in the energy market and asked that they be kept updated on this as the year progresses.

**Decided: The Board noted the measures we are taking to support customers facing hardship due to the energy crisis.**

## 9. A New Deal for Tenants – draft Rented Sector Strategy consultation

The Board considered a report which summarised the Scottish Government's draft strategy for the rented sector in Scotland. The Board considered the report and consultation, noting that this focussed on enhancing tenants' rights across all rented sectors, including social and private (PRS).

**Decided: The Board considered the draft proposals set out in the consultation.**

## 10. Finance report

The Board was provided with an overview of the management accounts for the period to 28 February 2022 including the latest forecast for 2021/22. The Board scrutinised the accounts including the impact of the Customer First Centre meaning Group services employee costs were £31k higher than budget, however this was offset by lower Group service running costs due to continued homeworking. Additionally, net capital expenditure was £5,544k higher than budget; the Board was satisfied this was linked to the new build programme and timing of grant claims.

**Decided: The Board noted the finance report for the period to 28 February 2022 at Appendix 1.**

## 11. Governance update

The Board received an update on our strategic governance review and considered the proposed new Loretto Housing Terms of Reference, as well as succession planning and broadening of Board diversity indicators as part of this. The Board also considered and supported the revised reporting template.

**Decided: The Board**

- 1) Provided feedback on and agreed to recommend to the Group Board the proposed Board Terms of Reference;**
- 2) Noted the Board diversity indicators to be factored into our 3 year succession plan;**
- 3) Noted the revised Board reporting template; and**
- 4) Agreed that we incorporate the risk review into our wider strategy workshop in May.**

## 12. AOCB

No other items of business.

**I certify that the above minute has been approved as a true and accurate reflection of the proceedings.**

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_