

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING

Held on Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 2.30pm
at Wheatley House, Glasgow

Directors Present: Eric Gibson (Chair), Lesley Bloomer, Gregor Dunlay,
Alex McKay, Suzanne Lavelle

In Attendance: Laura Pluck, Group Director of Communities; Laura Henderson,
Managing Director; Jonny Green, Head of Housing; Sarah
Stocks, Finance Manager; Pauline Donald, Governance
Business Partner; Stephen Wright, Director of Governance

and in part: Stephen Devine, Director of Assets and Sustainability (item 11)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from Archie Morrison, Pauline Gilmore and Jackie Brock.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minute of previous meeting held on 21 August 2023 and action list

The Board reviewed the minute of the previous meeting and the action list.

Decided: The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 August 2023.

4. Chair and Managing Director update

The Managing Director provided an update on progress with the implementation of changes to the operating model.

5. Stock condition: reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) (verbal)

The Board received an update on RAAC. The Board was assured to note that following a comprehensive review of our asset records we were confident that RAAC was not used in our homes. It was further explained that the outcome of our analysis was consistent with the findings of other organisations in our sector.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

6. Winter resilience planning

The Board received an update on the approach to winter resilience planning for business operations and customers experiencing hardship during the coming year. The Board recognised that we have well-established approaches that have been deployed in previous years to address the operational business risks of the winter period across all business areas.

The Board noted that these plans have been reviewed and augmented to take account of the wider actions and approaches developed across a range of services to mitigate against business impact linked to the winter challenges our customers and services face. Planning this year also reflects current areas of risk including the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, our repair service response and the potential for staff shortage.

The Board were assured that winter resilience planning is well underway in each business area and will be continuously monitored and reviewed as we progress throughout the winter months.

Decided: The Board noted the report

7. Repairs and Maintenance Policy update

The Board received a report on the updated Loretto Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy, following approval of the revised Group Repairs and Maintenance Policy Framework by the Group Board on 30 August 2023.

The Board noted that we will continue to focus on evolving and improving the repairs service, taking into account customer feedback, insight and direct engagement with the Group Scrutiny Panel.

The Board was advised that the main amendments to the policy were noted under section 4 of the accompanying report.

The Chair advised on a conversation with one of our Board Members, out with the meeting, who had raised that they had been advised of a number of incidences where repairs were not being carried out to timeline or quality. The Chair advised that he had requested specific details of these incidences to direct and inform further investigation. Thereafter, the Chair advised that a report will come back to the Board to determine if these were substantive issues that required further action.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Noted the content of this report; and**
- 2) Approved the updated Repairs and Maintenance Policy which remains within the wider Group framework.**

8. New build development programme: mid-year update

The Board were provided with an update on the mid-year review of our new build programme performance.

The Board noted the continuing challenges related to cost to build, the review of housing for varying needs and the move to the Scottish Passivhaus standard but were encouraged to note that market conditions have improved to a degree with a more stable labour availability.

The Board acknowledged the current achievements with an anticipated anticipate delivery of 515 new homes over the 2021-2026 period against the revised target of 400 homes and noted that we will continue to strengthen this pipeline over the longer term.

The Board were assured that we continue to work with Local Authorities, the Scottish Government contractors and developers to respond to the market conditions and to bring forward new opportunities.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

9. Annual SHR assurance report

The Board received an update on the group-wide Annual Assurance Statement (“AAS”) which was received and approved by the Group Board at its meeting on 30 August 2023.

The Board noted that following the self-assessment process and external review by Campbell Tickell, no areas of material non-compliance were identified. This reflects our strong year-round focus on governance and compliance.

The Board were advised however on the recommendation (non-material), to strengthen our compliance, that our Annual Report to Tenants should provide more specificity on how and when we will address areas for improvement. The Board noted that this will be factored into this year’s annual report to tenants.

Decided: The Board noted the submission of the 2023 Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

10. Group Hate Crime Policy

The Board were provided with an overview of the newly designed Group Hate Crime Policy including its purpose, content, and desired outcomes. The Board was advised that the policy will be presented to the Group Board for approval.

The Board noted the alignment of the policy with our Group Strategy which sets out our aims for our customers to feel safe and secure and live in thriving and peaceful neighbourhoods. The policy has been established to set out our approach towards tackling hate crime within our communities and the support we have in place to deal with this.

The Board noted the incidences of hate crime recorded within Loretto during 2022/23: a total of 5 cases, but also noted that as hate crime is vastly underreported incidences could likely be higher.

The Board received assurance that extensive engagement has taken place with staff, customers, and external partners to ensure the policy is accurate, relevant,

and fit for purpose. All feedback received was positive around the existence of such a policy and incorporated into the final version.

In discussion, the Board was advised that through the introduction of the policy, and through raising awareness of hate crime, the aim will be to increase the culture of reporting. The Board also noted that to support outcome measurement and obtain improved data, a new performance framework for anti-social behaviour, which will include hate crime, will be implemented in the new year.

The Board also noted the forthcoming conclusion of funding for the Domestic Violence Project: the Revive Project, with no on-going funding expected. An evaluation of the project is in process and a report will be brought back to the Board.

Decided: The Board noted the report

11. Sustainability update

The Board received a report on the progress toward our sustainability objectives agreed through our Group Sustainability Framework and its supporting action plan.

The Board recognised that our Sustainability Framework is shaping delivery in areas ranging from our investment in existing homes to the skills we are developing among our staff.

The Board was advised that we have established a sustainability Community of Excellence and supporting delivery plan to ensure continued focus, ongoing delivery and to embed the required organisation wide change. The Board noted that this approach will help drive the delivery of sustainability objectives in line with the strategy approved by the Board.

Decided: The Board noted the progress update including the delivery plan.

12. Equality, Diversity and inclusion update

The Board received an update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (“EDI”) activity across the group and progress with our Group EDI action plan, One Group, Many Voices, supporting the implementation of our Group EDI and Human Rights policy. The Board recognised that as a group we are strongly committed to EDI with a focus on continuous improvement and ensuring this is reflected in our organisational culture.

The Board was asked to note the significant progress we have made with our action plan with most actions now complete or ongoing as business as usual. Significant areas of improvement were noted as data collection, data monitoring and analysis; areas which have positively informed our decision making.

The Board noted the next stage of the action plan will build on our success to date and factor in the result of our Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) assessment and information for the national census as it emerges.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

13. Governance update

The Board were updated on governance related matters including the proposed 2024 meeting dates, Modern slavery statement; and Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act.

The Board noted that the requirement to prepare a modern slavery statement will be made at Group level. The Board considered the statement and approach we have to assuring ourselves about the risk of modern slavery in our supply chain.

As we are currently subject to a number of layers of regulation, the Board was advised that it is not anticipated that the new Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act will materially change how we operate or arrange our business.

The Board was asked to note the 2024 meeting dates.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Approved the schedule of meetings for 2024;**
- 2) Noted the Modern Slavery Statement, approved by the Group Board on our behalf; and**
- 3) Noted the update on the new Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act 2023.**

14. AOCB

No other business was raised.

Signed:.....

(Chair)