



**LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING**

Date: 9 November 2020
Time: 6.15pm
Venue: By video conference

Chairperson: Douglas Robin

Present: Jean Fyfe
Pauline Gilmore
Archie Morrison
Alex McKay (by telephone)

In Attendance: Olga Clayton, Group Director of Housing and Care
Laura Henderson, Managing Director
Stephen Wright, Deputy Group Company Secretary
Margaret Ross, Financial Controller – RSLs
Jackie McIntosh, Director of Property Developments and Initiatives (in part)
Brian Stewart, Director of Investment, Repairs and Compliance (in part)
Helen Berry, Head of Assurance (in part)

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received. The Chair declared that a quorum was present. It was noted that Board meeting had been convened with a streamlined number of Board members due to the coronavirus pandemic. Board reports had been circulated to all serving Board members for their consideration in advance of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes of Board Meeting held on 17 August 2020 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 17 August 2020

The Board requested a copy of the auditor's letter to management.

4. Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scotland's Strategic Framework (presentation)

The Board received a presentation on the Scottish Government's Covid-19 strategic framework including: the four harms that the strategy sought to address; the five tier system being adopted by the Scottish Government; and the current level of each local authority area in the areas that we operate.

The Board also received an update on our approach to staff infection and exposure including the current mitigations we have in place: working safely guidelines; testing guidelines for managers; e-learning courses; and W.E. Protect helpline.

The Board welcomed our approach to ensuring the safety of our customers and staff.

Decided: The Board noted contents of the presentation.

5. Staff survey during lockdown, summer 2020

The Board considered the report which provided the results of a staff survey held in July 2020 to: assess staff morale during the first four months of lockdown; seek feedback on how they felt they and our customers had been supported; and to collate views and suggestions on how their experiences in the pandemic might influence and shape our future ways of working.

The Board discussed the outcome of the survey and reaffirmed the importance of continuing to support staff and customers during the pandemic.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the reports.

6. [redacted]

7. 2020/21 Rent Setting

The Board discussed the proposed approach to the 2021 rent increase in detail including the proposed method of tenant consultation and a comparison against other social landlords.

The Board discussed the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our customers and the importance of ensuring that our rents remain affordable. In agreeing to the proposed options of 1.7% and 2.2% the Board welcomed the reduction from the original assumptions in our business plan which had been agreed in February. The Board noted the work that had been undertaken to ensure that an increase by the lower amount of 1.7% would enable us to continue delivering all of our services to our customers. It was also noted that if tenants supported a 2.2% increase then we would seek their views on what further improvements to their homes and neighbourhoods should be made with the additional income.

Decided: The Board agreed to consult all other tenants on a general rent and service charge increase of 1.7%, with the option given for 2.2%

8. A) Business and remobilisation of services update

The Board considered the update on our response to the impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic on our services, our tenants and communities.

The Board discussed the update provided on key services including letting, rental income, homelessness, repairs and environmental services. The Board welcomed the way in which we have adapted our services and our approach to keeping in contact with tenants via outbound calls made by Housing Officers (c.11,000 since lockdown). The Board considered arrears performance and noted the importance of ensuring we carefully monitor our rental income so that we can continue to provide services to customers. The Board considered the approach to arrears management and was provided with an update on a new case review stage in the escalation process.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

B) Building compliance update

The Board was updated on our building compliance work streams in the current Covid-19 crisis and our remobilisation plans. This included: gas servicing; thermostatic mixer valve (tmv); and legionella testing.

The Board considered the report and noted the assurance provided by our robust approach to compliance.

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

9. CBG 5-year review

The Board considered a report setting out the proposed terms of reference for Wheatley Housing Group and Glasgow City Council's 5-year review of their joint venture, City Building (Glasgow) LLP (CBG).

The Board considered the particular experience of tenant Board members who explained the positive difference the joint venture had made to the delivery of a personalised repairs service. The Board also discussed the various models of the repair service utilised in our housing associations, including by large housing groups in England.

Decided: The Board noted the update and the proposed Terms of Reference that Wheatley Group has agreed for the 5-year review of the CBG joint venture at Appendix 1.

10. Delivery plan 2020/21 and performance report

The Board received an update on (i) quarterly performance and (ii) the Delivery Plan approach for 2020/21 (including associated targets).

The Board considered performance for the quarter and discussed the impact of Covid on results. The Board noted that letting figures would be reported in two ways: (i) the figure for the ARC return, which includes the time period when lettings were suspended (ii) a revised figure for internal benchmarking purposes, excluding the time period when lettings were suspended. It was noted that this would help to ensure that we can continue to effectively scrutinise our results against previous years.

Decided: The Board approved the phased targets and delivery plan for 2020/21.

11. Finance report

The Board scrutinised the management accounts for the period to 30 September 2020, including the latest forecast for 2020/21.

The Board considered the statutory deficit of £765k for the period to date, which was £396k favourable to budget due to budget variances driven by changes to the operating model in response to Covid-19. The Board also considered the reported surplus of £2,051k which was £414k favourable to budget.

Decided: The Board noted the report and the management accounts for the period to 30 September 2020.

12. Corporate risk register

The Board reviewed the corporate risk register and considered the proposed changes to risk scores.

Decided: The Board agreed and approved the revised corporate risk register.

13. Assurance update

The Board was provided with a report on the delivery of the Group's Internal Audit work 2020/21, and noted the approach to assurance during the pandemic.

The Board considered the outcome of the cyber security review which had been externally facilitated and highlighted that the IT security was well established and reflected good practice. The Board considered current home working arrangements and susceptibility to cyber-attacks and was informed about the arrangements we have in place to mitigate cyber-crime, including IT systems and general staff training.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

14. Governance update

The Board received a report on the Annual Assurance Statement and the updated Group Internal Rates or Return for development projects.

In addition, the Board noted the recent use of the Chair's actions provisions in the Group Standing Orders to approve the purchase of a 25% share in a residential shared ownership property thereby bringing this into full ownership.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted the Group Annual Assurance Statement;**
- 2) noted the Development Project approval criteria will be updated to reflect the new Group IRR rate**

15. AOCB

The Board requested that an update on construction litigation be given at the next meeting.

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

Signed _____

Date _____

Douglas Robin, Chair

Actions

No.	Business	Lead	Status	Update
27 November 2017				
4.1	Lessons learned re Duke Street development project	Tom Barclay	Post court action	A report will be brought back to the Board when this matter has been resolved.
7 October 2019				
9.1	Information on our approach to inclusion and equalities be brought to a future meeting.	Head of Housing	Spring 2021	Update on implementation of group policy to be provided
August 2020				
	Presentation on domestic abuse during lockdown	Head of Housing	Spring 2021	To future meeting (2021)
	Circulate auditor report to management	Finance Manager	Complete	To be issued with minute (December 2020)
November 2020				
	Update on Duke Street to be provided	Director of Development	Complete	Next meeting (Feb)