



**LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING**

Date: 8 November 2021
Time: 6.15pm
Venue: by Zoom videoconference

Chairperson: Eric Gibson

Present: Jacqui Mallin, Pauline Gilmore, Archie Morrison, Jean Fyfe, Suzanne Lavelle, NESTA Gililand and Alex Robertson

In Attendance: Olga Clayton, Group Director of Housing and Care
Hazel Young, Managing Director
Stephen Wright, Deputy Group Company Secretary
Sarah Stocks, Finance Manager
Chris Walker, Head of Housing

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Jennifer Williamson, Allan McGinness and Alex McKay. 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 20 September 2021 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 20 September 2021.

4. Tenant consultation feedback

The Board received an update on the consultation with tenants on our proposed new operating and engagement model. The Board considered the responses to the consultation questions and that (i) 97% of the 276 tenants who responded supported plans to introduce new ways of working and delivering services to benefit tenants and communities and (ii) 92% believed the planned new way of engagement would make it more open and accessible for tenants to get involved and have their say. It was agreed that we would continue to ensure that we retained existing face-to-face communication with those tenant who were unable to access digital services.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted the outcome of the consultation on our new operating and engagement models; and
- 2) In light of the views expressed by tenants, agreed that we should proceed with implementation of the proposals including:
 - the new Customer First Centre from 1 December 2021; and
 - incorporating £1.1m into the business plan for customer priorities.

5. New build mid-year review

The Board received a mid-year update on our new build programme performance. This included:-

- Unit completions – 66 anticipated during the current financial year at Cobblebrae Farm, Falkirk (21), Hallrule Cardonald (32) and Dargavel Village, Bishopton (13)
- Projects on site – 161 units under construction at Dargavel Village (45), Queens Quay, Clydebank (80) and Sawmillfield, Helensburgh (36)
- Pipeline of approximately 262 unit

The Board was also provided with an update on material supply and delivery which were being impacted by Brexit and factors linked to the ongoing Covid pandemic. It was noted that contracts for the projects currently on-site were performing in-line with budgets.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

6. a) 2022 rent setting

The Board received a report on the proposed rent setting for 2022/23 including:-

- Range of 2022/23 rent and general service charge increases for consultation
- How we intend to consult with tenants
- Mid-year update on financial projections and key indicators
- proposals in relation to the former Cube stock

The Board scrutinised the report, financial pressures facing our tenants and affordability assessments that had been modelled using the proposed rent options. The Board also discussed inflation and increase in construction material prices that affected our repairs and maintenance costs. The Board discussed the range of options and was assured that the lowest (1.9%) would still enable us to maintain existing services and carry out essential investment work.

Decided: The Board

- 1) agreed the proposed range of rent and service charge increase options for consultation with tenants, excluding ex Cube stock, as follows: 1.9%, 2.4% and 2.9%
- 2) agreed that ex Cube stock are consulted on a 1% rent and service charge increase in line with the ballot commitments; and
- 3) approved the approach to rent consultation set out in this report and noted that the results of consultation will be presented to the Board in February 2022 to enable final rent decisions to be made.

b) Benefit update campaign (presentation)

The Board received a presentation providing information about the range of benefits that our tenants may be entitled to and how we can assist them to access these. The Board was also provided with an overview of tools and partnerships we have in place to raise awareness of these benefits. In addition, the Board was updated on the Wheatley Works employability programme and examples of customers who have benefited from this.

Decided: The Board noted the presentation.

7. Repairs update and revised policy

The Board received a report on our repairs service and plans for its development, including our new repairs and maintenance policy framework. The Board was provided with a summary of the current demand for repairs, which had increased significantly since the Covid lockdown had ended and which had remained high. The Board noted the proposal to align the repairs service even more closely with the Customer First Centre and to increase the use of digital technology, such as booking and changing repairs online as well as tracking progress and providing real-time feedback.

The Board discussed the repairs service and the experience of tenants, particularly during the pandemic. It was noted that availability of parts was impacting the ability to complete some repairs first-time and that it was important we keep tenants informed about repairs to their homes and associated timescales.

Decided: The Board

- 1) noted the update; and**
- 2) approved the Loretto Housing Repairs & Maintenance Policy Framework.**

8. Independent review of pandemic response

The Board received and welcomed a report from Campbell Tickell on Wheatley Group's response to the pandemic. In particular, the Board welcomed the speed with which Loretto and Wheatley had provided assistance to tenants, including food parcels and help with energy costs.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

9. 2021 Group Annual Assurance Statement

The Board received a report on the Group's Annual Assurance Statement which had been approved for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Board was provided with assurance that we were materially compliant with:

- All relevant regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the SHR's Regulatory Framework
- All relevant standard in the Scottish Social Housing Charter

- Taking into account the guidance and restrictions relating to Covid 19 pandemic over the course of the reporting period, all relevant legislative duties

The Board was also provided with an update on the plans to implement an effective approach to the collection of equalities information.

Decided: The Board noted the 2021 Group Annual Assurance Statement.

10. Performance report quarter 2 2021/22

The Board received a performance update to the end of quarter 2, 2021/22. The Board noted the stable progress against many of our performance targets and strategic measures.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

11. Finance report

The Board scrutinised the financial information for the period to 30 September 2021, including the latest 2021/22 forecast.

Decided: The Board noted the management accounts for the period to 30 September 2021 at Appendix 1.

12. Corporate risk register

The Board received and reviewed the revised corporate risk register, noting in particular the updates that had been made.

Decided: The Board approved the revised Corporate Risk Register.

13. Assurance update

The Board received an update on the assurance work carried out during quarter 1 and quarter 2. The Board noted the report and confirmation that there were no significant issues arising from the reviews carried out during the period that required to be highlighted to the Board.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

14. 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 _____
Chair**