

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING

**Held on Monday 18 March 2024 at 2pm
at Wheatley House, Glasgow**

Directors Present: Eric Gibson (Chair), Lesley Bloomer, Jackie Brock, Gregor Dunlay, Alex McKay, Pauline Gilmore, Andrew Little, Guy Kerkvliet.

In Attendance: Laura Pluck, Group Director of Communities; Laura Henderson, Managing Director; Sarah Stocks, Finance Manager; Pauline Donald, Governance Business Partner.

and in part: Brian Stewart – Director of Investment, Repairs and Compliance (item 7)
Jennifer Anderson – Wheatley 360 Lead (item 8)
Stephen Wright – Director of Governance (item 10)
Laurie Carberry - Director of Procurement (item 12)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Hussain Kayani.

The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minute of the previous meeting held on 5 February 2024, action list and matters arising.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and noted the action list. No matters arising were noted.

Decided: The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 February 2024.

4. Chair and Managing Director update

The Chair reported on the following items:

- representatives from the Scottish Housing Regulator had attended the last Group Board meeting as part of their oversight of the Group.
- the Group Board received an update on the status of Mould & Damp incidences across the Group.
- on-line cyber security training for Board Members has now been issued as part of the Board's overall continuous professional development programme.

The Managing Director reported on the following items:

- the status of mould and damp cases across Loretto stock with assurance provided to the Board on the action being taken and robust monitoring that is in place.
- the status of complex repairs with assurance provided that the managing director receives monthly reporting to ensure continued visibility and that action is taken as required.

5. 2024/25 Budget

The Board were provided with a report on the 2024/25 budget and a comparison against the financial projections and noted the key movements as reported.

The Board received an overview of how the financial projections and management accounts are separately compiled and reported. For further assurance, the report to the Board in May will include a statement comparing the projected 2023-24 position reported in the management accounts against the 2024-25 budget.

The Board noted that there were no material issues to highlight to the Board, but assurance was provided that any overspends were closely monitored.

The Board noted the proposed 2024/25 budget.

Decision: The Board approved the 2024/25 budget report.

6. May Strategy Workshop: structure and approach

The Board were provided with a report detailing the proposed outline for the May strategy workshop.

The Board noted that the refresh of the annual strategy will provide the opportunity to reflect on progress to date and to consider key strategic issues. The Board noted that the structure reflects what stage the strategy is at and that several areas are already delivered or well progressed, narrowing the number of areas which would benefit from a more detailed discussion.

The Board will consider the impact on investment and regulation on social housing in Scotland at the risk register at the strategy workshop.

Decision: The Board approved the workshop structure and approach.

7. Homes Safety Building Compliance update

The Board were provided with an update on the home safety building compliance work streams during 2023/24.

The Board noted that we will continue to carry out all essential compliance activities to keep customers and homes safe and to maximise access for compliance works. The Board were advised that our “one and done” approach is delivering similar compliance activities, subject to asset cycles, property attributes and customer requirements, in a single visit.

Confirmation was provided to the Board that there are no asbestos removal requirements across the Loretto stock at the current time, but if required, were subject to strict regulations.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

8. Antisocial Behaviour Policy and Neighbourhood Management Policy

The Board were provided with a report on the Antisocial Behaviour (“ASB”) Policy and Neighbourhood Management Policy. The Board noted that the ASB Framework was approved by the Wheatley Group Board in December 2023 and our Loretto-specific ASB Policy and Neighbourhood Management Policy are aligned to this framework.

The Board was advised that the ASB Policy has been drafted to take account of customer and staff feedback. The policy includes an outline of what comprises ASB, how to report it, our time commitments to customers in handling the concerns and what support those impacted can expect to receive.

The Neighbourhood Management Policy sets out our approach to neighbourhood incidents that don’t constitute ASB and is our first dedicated policy for supporting the identification of issues or concerns that impact good neighbourhood management.

The Board were encouraged to note the triaging methodology that has been put in place and that through our safer communities recording platform, we will be able to raise cases involving concerns with the management of our neighbourhoods and ASB in one place; providing a much more detailed picture of the range of concerns being raised in our communities.

The Board highlighted that over and above the overall management of the ‘neighbourhood’ there is a requirement in this regard to also consider any impact on a customer’s ‘home’ environment and the customer. The Board noted that the safer communities recording platform will provide data and information to support our continued improvement in these areas.

Decided: The Board:

1) Approved the Loretto Housing ASB Policy.

2) Approved the Loretto Housing Neighbourhood Management Policy.

9. Group Engagement Framework

The Board were provided with an overview of the review of the Stronger Voices, Stronger Communities Customer Engagement Framework.

The Board noted the Group ‘Stronger Voices, Stronger Communities’ Customer Engagement Framework demonstrates that the Framework has considerably improved the organisation’s approach to customer engagement and positively impacted customer satisfaction.

The Board noted that the review recommended minor changes to modernise the Framework, and some practical changes to improve the already high customer satisfaction levels with the customer voice programme.

Clarification was provided that the Customer Voice programme feedback participants were confirmed as from across the Group and not Loretto-specific. The Board noted the efforts and range of approaches taken to engage customers in the consultation process.

Decided: The Board noted the updated Customer Engagement Framework.

10. Group Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Action Plan

The Board were provided with an update on the next iteration of the Group Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, *One Group Many Voices 2024/25*.

The Board noted our continued strong commitment to ensuring the delivery of EDI services, demonstrated through the Action Plan and the oversight of EDI being a formal responsibility of the Wheatley Solutions Board.

The Board noted the shift in language to 'equity' which is in keeping with the wider practice in EDI but does not fundamentally change our approach in terms of our action plan. It was confirmed that this will be reflected throughout all documentation.

The Board noted the assurance that safeguarding of our data is a key priority and as such is a Group-wide strategic project for 2024/25.

Decided: The Board noted the report

11. Finance Report

The Board were provided with an overview of the management accounts for the period to 29 February 2024.

The Board discussed our position to ensure that our existing financing arrangements are fit for purpose and that we have the financial resources to enable our ambitions. Confirmation was provided also on the approach taken on our loan agreements and covenant returns including quarterly reporting by the Treasury Team to the Group Board.

Decided: The Board noted the Finance Report for the period ended 29 February 2024.

12. Group Procurement - annual strategy and policy update

The Board were provided with a report on the annual updates to the Procurement Strategy, Procurement Policy, Group Sustainable Procurement Policy, and Group Community Benefits Statement.

The Board noted that we must comply with legislative requirements and contracting arrangements due to the classification of Contracting Authority. The updates to the suite of procurement documents presented to the Board and publication on our website are part of our approach to achieving compliance.

The Board were advised that the figure for carbon omissions as reported will be defined in the context of our total carbon emissions as a Group. The Board also noted the commitment to zero waste to landfill within our contract considerations with confirmation of implementation advised in due course.

It was confirmed that the Community Benefits statement will be further updated to reflect the shift in language to 'equity' within our EDI approach.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

13. AOCB

No other business was raised.

Signed: **(Chair)**

Date: