



**LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING**

**Date:** 7 February 2022  
**Time:** 6.15pm  
**Venue:** by Zoom videoconference

**Chairperson:** Eric Gibson

**Present:** Jean Fyfe, Suzanne Lavelle, Archie Morrison and Jacqui Mallin

**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  
Lindsay Lauder, Director of Development and Regeneration (Item 4b)  
Craig Vesey, Development Manager (Item 4b)  
John Crooks, Group Health and Safety Lead (Item 8)  
Sam Bett, Director of Treasury (Item 13)  
Brian Stewart, Director of Investment, Repairs and Compliance (Item 5a)

The Chair informed the Board that Alex Robertson had sadly passed away on 29 Jan 2022. The Board wished to record its gratitude for Alex's work as a Board member and passed on its condolences to Alex's family.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Jennifer Williamson, Allan McGinness, Alex McKay, Pauline Gilmore and Nesta Gililand. 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 8 November 2021 and matters arising**

**Decided:** The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 8 November 2021.

**4. a) New group development vehicle**

[redacted]

## **b) Five-year development programme**

The Board received and considered our 5-year development programme for the period commencing 2022/23 through which we committed to develop 313 units for social rent. The Board considered the proposal and noted that the programme had been developed taking into account the Scottish housing policy context as well as uncertainties linked to Covid (materials supply, labour) and Brexit. The Board considered the prudent financial planning assumptions but noted that we anticipated being able to expand the programme following the outcome of current negotiations with funders.

The Board discussed the footprint of our proposed development activity and the considerations that applied across different local authorities. The Board also discussed a project in South Lanarkshire that we had previously been considering but which would now be taken forward by the local authority.

**Decided: The Board approved the details of the five-year development programme as summarised in the report.**

## **c) Duke Street update**

[redacted]

## **5. a) Five-year investment programme**

The Board received and considered our 5-year asset investment plan which underpins our strategic asset management approach and ambition to continue investing in our existing homes and communities. The Board reviewed the robust programme which included: £11.3m for major property improvement works, £3.3m for void improvement works and capitalist repairs to vacant properties, £0.5m to support medical adaptations and £3m for the remedial works at Duke Street. The Board also welcomed the inclusion of the £1.4m “Customer Voice” budget which would be used to support customer-driven investment over the next 5 years.

The Board further considered and discussed the compliance requirements driving investment, such as Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing 2, and the support that would be received from the MyRepairs Asset Team to manage the investment programmes particularly in relation to customer communication.

The Board considered the profile of our stock including the homes recently taken on through the partnership with Cube. The Board was assured that those former Cube properties were of a good standard and had previously been subject to a significant investment programme.

**Decided: The Board approved our Five-Year Asset Investment Programme 2022-2027.**

## **b) Heat and smoke detector update (Presentation)**

**Decided: The Board noted the presentation.**

## **6. a) Rent and other charges 2022/23**

The Board considered a report on the outcome of the 2022/23 rent and service charge consultation. The Board reviewed and assessed the outcome of the consultation including the increase in response rates from previous years. The Board considered the breakdown of results across the Glasgow, non-Glasgow and Livingwell stock and noted that results were broadly consistent across each with the majority of tenants supporting one of the increase options. The Board discussed the increase in inflation since the consultation began and the impact this would have on our business costs. Having considered the consultation feedback and the current economic pressure facing us and our customers, the Board re-affirmed our commitment to keeping rents affordable and was satisfied that the proposal for 2022/23 would help to us to maintain this.

### **Decided: The Board**

- 1) considered the feedback received through the extensive consultation process with tenants on our 2022/23 rent and service charge increase;**
- 2) agreed that a 1% rent increase be applied to the Cube tenants that transferred to Loretto Housing;**
- 3) approved a 1.9% rent and service charge increase for 2022/23 for all other tenants and shared owners; and**
- 4) agreed that we formally write to tenants to confirm this subject to Group Board approval.**

## **b) 2022-2027 Financial projections**

The Board received a report which set out the updated projections for investment in assets and services over the period to 2027.

The Board scrutinised the financial projections and noted the targeted reduction in management costs. The Board reviewed the reduction and was assured that this reduction could be achieved without any adverse effect on service delivery. The Board noted the assumptions about future income and expenditure, including rent, and that these would be revisited at least annually.

### **Decided: The Board**

- 1) approved the updated projections for investment in assets and services over the five year period to 2027; and**
- 2) agreed that the projected 2022/23 figures form the basis of next year's annual budget which will be presented to the Board for final approval in March.**

## **7. Strategic governance review**

The Board received an update on the outcome of the strategic governance review, the areas relevant to us and the implementation plan. The Board welcomed that the review recognised the strength of our existing governance arrangements and also provided recommendations for how we can continue to refine them.

The Board discussed the report and in particular: the group structure, the role and remit of Boards, Board composition and Board practice.

The Board also provided feedback on the draft Board planner and noted that draft Terms of Reference for this Board will be brought to the next meeting.

**Decided: The Board**

- 1) provided feedback on the planned implementation approach of the strategic governance review;
- 2) agreed the proposed approach to refreshing our 3 year succession plan; and
- 3) provided feedback on the 2022 Board planner.

**8. Group Health and Safety policy**

The Board was provided with a report on the Group-wide health and safety policy which also required to be considered and adopted by us. The Board considered the report and policy in detail and confirmed its commitment to the health and safety of staff, customers, contractors and other stakeholders. The Board in particular welcomed the arrangements in place to monitor and maintain the validity and accuracy of our health and safety policy and the comprehensive health and safety management arrangements in place. The Board discussed the importance of supporting our employees particularly those who were home working and/or lone working. In particular, the Board discussed the range of support provided to employees, including through mandatory training.

**Decided: The Board noted the updated Health and Safety Policy.**

**9. Group dampness, mould and condensation policy**

The Board considered the Group-wide policy and procedure on managing dampness, mould and condensation. The Board reviewed the proposed policy approach and the analysis which helped to identify those properties and customers that may be at a higher risk for suffering from the issues linked to dampness, mould and condensation. The Board also welcomed the proposed experiment to monitor 10 properties in the higher risk categories which would help us gain intelligence to help us understand and develop strategic investment priorities linked to risk. The Board asked that we also ensure that customers are not disadvantaged by having monitoring equipment within their homes, such as through increased electricity costs.

**Decided: The Board noted the content of this report including the group dampness policy and procedures.**

**10. Customer First Centre update**

The Board was provided with an update on the Customer First Centre (“CFC”) following its internal launch on 1 December 2021.

The Board noted that the soft launch has given an opportunity to test the robustness and effectiveness of the new systems and practices before the more formal customer launch of the service.

The Board discussed the draft performance measures and noted the importance of ensuring that we consider both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The Board also discussed the importance of focusing on the quality of customer interactions rather than volume of calls handled.

**Decided: The Board noted the progress to date in establishing our Customer First Centre.**

## 11. Performance report

The Board was provided with an update on performance towards delivering the targets in the performance framework and strategic projects for 2021/22.

The Board scrutinised the report and noted that we are still continuing to see the effects of the pandemic on our operational delivery. However, despite the continuing challenges posed for areas of our business, the Board noted that we continued to show strong performance in a number of key measures including management of rent arrears. It was explained that this was partly due to the range of wraparound and support services that we are able to provide to tenants.

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

## 12. Finance report

The Board received an overview of the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2021 which included the latest forecast for 2021/22. The Board scrutinised the report and noted the statutory deficit of £2,223k which was £111k favourable to budget.

The Board also considered repairs costs and noting the higher compliance costs which were mainly attributable to mechanical and electrical compliance. It was agreed that a note what was included within the definition of mechanical and electrical items would be circulated to the Board.

**Decided: The Board noted the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2021.**

## 13. Funding update

[redacted]

## 14. 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 reviewed and approved the revised corporate risk register.**

## 15. 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** \_\_\_\_\_