

**West of Scotland Housing Association  
Minutes of the Board Meeting  
Hybrid Meeting via Microsoft Teams and Camlachie Boardroom  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<p><b>Present:</b> Irene McFarlane (Acting Chair), Michael Sozansky, Nick Farrell, George Kpodo, Paul McCandlish, Alison Calder, Kenneth Fee, Elaine Davidson</p> <p><b>In Attendance:</b> Brian Gannon (CEO), Jennifer Cairns (Director of Corporate Services), Robert Campbell (Director of Housing &amp; Community Support Services), Andrew Kubski (Director of Development &amp; Asset Management), Donna Paton (Director of Finance &amp; IT), Susan Speirs (Senior Corporate Services Assistant), Markus Hiemann (Marberg – for item 3)</p> <p>The CEO advised that Karen Merz, a member of the Woodlands &amp; Garnethill Residents Association, was attending the meeting as an observer.</p> <p>As Kelly Adams (Chair) was on holiday Irene McFarlane (Vice-Chair) had agreed to Chair the meeting in her absence.</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Ann Reid, Paul MacNeil, Kelly Adams, Ruth Simpson</p>	
<p><b>Disclosure of Interests</b> There were none.</p>	
<p><b>1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record. They were proposed by Elaine Davidson and seconded by Michael Sozansky.</p>	<b>Approved</b>
<p><b>2. Matters Arising</b> An update was provided on the actions from the previous meeting.</p>	<b>Noted</b>
<p><b>3. Sustainability Strategy</b> Markus Hiemann of Marberg introduced himself to the meeting and advised what consultatncy work he was doing with the Association in respect of the strategy and to give advice to the Board.</p> <p>The CEO outlined the background to the strategy. He advised that we are moving from a green strategy to a sustainability strategy and it is a two year strategy. He advised that the Association has worked with other members of the G8 group on this and have also engaged with consultants. The CEO outlined the key targets of the strategy.</p> <p>The CEO advised that the objectives and actions set out in our green strategy of 2020/23 have been delivered and this has enabled the Association to start to imbed sustainability. He advised that the Association has reduced its carbon footprint by 20% over the last three years.</p>	

<p>Markus Hiemann clarified some further information within the strategy. He advised that WSHA has changed to a waste company for uplift that is more able to record waste and that this has led to the increase noted from the previous estimated figures.</p> <p>Kenneth Fee noted that the emissions from Fleet is marginally up. The Director of Corporate Services advised that the organisation has grown in the period and with regards to mileage claims 80% of staff have submitted reduced mileage claims since 2019/2020. Marcus also advised that the carbon footprint of the Association will change as the organisation changes.</p> <p>Alison Calder asked about the overall impact the strategy would have on our communities.</p> <p>The CEO thanked Alison for her focus on the impact on our communities and noted that this dialogue will be easier due to the strong connection between sustainability and the cost of living crisis.</p> <p>The CEO outlined the three objectives of the strategy and advised that we have an action plan to deliver these objectives. He advised that the action plan will be monitored by the sustainability project team and the board will be given an annual update.</p> <p>Nick Farrell asked how we get the implementation across to staff. The CEO advised that the next staff briefing session will focus on the sustainability strategy.</p> <p>Irene McFarlane asked that a date be put on the bottom of the strategy.</p> <p>The board approved the 2023-2025 sustainability strategy.</p> <p>The CEO thanked Marcus for his input.</p>	<p><b>Approved</b></p>
<p><b>4. Cost of Living Crisis Survey &amp; Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Director of Housing &amp; Community Support Services advised that this survey had been sent to all tenants. A summary of the survey results had been issued to the board. A copy of the full survey results will be sent out to all the board members. The aim of the survey was to find out how the cost of living crisis was affecting our tenants and to see what support could be offered to them. He advised that 748 responses had been received and this was the biggest response the Association had ever received for a survey carried out. Of the 748 responses received, 391 tenants had asked the Association to get in touch with them for additional support and advice. A holding response has been sent to these tenants advising that we will be in touch with them in the coming weeks/months. The Director of Housing &amp; Community Support services advised that a significant</p>	<p><b>Action</b></p>

<p>number of people who responded to the survey had not previously engaged with the Association.</p> <p>A review of all the responses received has been carried out to try and identify the key themes and what action can be taken to help. The main themes appear to be the cost of energy and food. Rent had been lower in the list. Following this review an action plan has been set up showing what we already do to help tenants and also setting out new ways in which we can provide help and assistance.</p> <p>The Director of Housing &amp; Community Support Services advised that the actions to assist tenants will be an issue in terms of resource and that sources of additional funding/resources was being investigated. He advised that funding has already been received to employ a debit advice person. He also advised that a social work placement would be starting next month and two further bids for funding are pending.</p> <p>Irene McFarlane advised that it would be good to include community benefits in the action plan. Another option would be to look into forming partnerships as the Association cannot provide all the help required.</p> <p>The board noted the contents of the report and approved the action plan.</p>	<p><b>Noted &amp; Approved</b></p>
<p><b>5. Loan Portfolio</b></p> <p>The Director of Finance advised that the Loan Portfolio is an Annual Return which has to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 30<sup>th</sup> June each year. She advised that the return gives a summary of the outstanding loans that the Association has.</p> <p>The Director of Finance advised that the loan portfolio has increased by just over £8m since last year. 60% of the loans are on a fixed rate basis and 40% are on a variable basis. She advised that the Association still has sufficient unsecured properties to obtain more loans.</p> <p>The board approved the Loan Portfolio Return and also authorised the Director of Finance to submit the return by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.</p>	<p><b>Approved</b></p>
<p><b>6. Board Annual Review Report</b></p> <p>The Director of Corporate Services advised that this report provides the board with an overview of the annual reviews that were carried out and highlights the key themes from these appraisals and also gives information on the succession planning. She advised that the reviews took place in April, May and June this year and that all have been carried out apart from one which was not done due to personal reasons. This will be re-arranged with the board member concerned.</p>	

<p>The Director of Corporate Services advised that all board members were very positive about the governance of the Association. Training was another issue that was raised as very few board members had completed their e-learning modules. No other significant training and development issues had been raised.</p> <p>Board members had advised that it was important to have more interaction with staff and also to get to know one another. It was suggested that we re-instate the half hour slot before meetings to enable this. It was also suggested that individual staff could attend meetings to present their reports.</p> <p>Succession planning was also a key theme of the appraisal process as members were asked if they were interested in being re-elected or becoming an officer bearer. This is important as it ensures that we have a full board.</p> <p>The board noted the contents of this report and approved the proposed actions.</p>	<p><b>Noted &amp; Approved</b></p>
<p><b>7. Review of Rechargeable Repairs Policy</b></p> <p>The Director of Development &amp; Asset Management advised that this policy was last reviewed in 2020. He advised the policy has been updated to provide guidance for staff in respect to the proposed changes in the current process. More detailed information has been provided with regards to administering the policy and also incorporates MMR tenants.</p> <p>The board noted the contents of the report and approved the revised policy.</p>	<p><b>Noted &amp; Approved</b></p>
<p><b>8. Review of Unacceptable Behaviour Policy</b></p> <p>The Director of Corporate Services gave a background to this policy.</p> <p>She advised that there has been an increase in unacceptable behaviour from tenants over the past few months.</p> <p>A review of the policy has been carried out and changes have been made. Our Customer Care Charter has now been included which details how customers should be treated and how staff should be treated. Social media has also been included as there has been an increase in negative comments that have been made against staff. Filming of staff without their consent has also been included as unacceptable behaviour as there have been instances of this in the past few months. Templates letters have also been included to ensure that we have standard correspondence.</p> <p>The board approved the revised policy.</p>	<p><b>Approved</b></p>
<p><b>9. Dialogue with Tenants on Rents, Services &amp; Investment</b></p> <p>The CEO advised that this report gives the board an update on our plans for having an open dialogue with tenants around rent, services</p>	

<p>and investment as part of our business plan prior to when we formally consult with them on the 2024-25 rent increase proposals. He advised that it is important for tenants to understand the link between what they pay for rent and what this money pays for.</p> <p>Consultation will take place with tenants in the next few months to find out what their priorities are and it is important to do this first before carrying out the rent consultation.</p> <p>Irene McFarlane suggested that this consultation plan could be summarised into one page and presented to politicians. She advised that a meeting is being held in Pollok with the MSP for the area and that Brian should attend to discuss this matter.</p> <p>Michael Sozansky asked whether investment was an appropriate term to use for replacing components that were already there. The CEO agreed that we should engage with TAG on the terminology we use to determine what is most meaningful for tenants.</p> <p>The board noted the report and approved the plans for dialogue with tenants on rent affordability and service delivery and investment.</p>	<p><b>Action</b></p> <p><b>Noted &amp; Approved</b></p>
<p><b>10. Development &amp; Investment Sub-Committee Annual Report &amp; Review of Remit</b></p> <p>The Director of Development &amp; Asset Management advised that this report outlines the work that has been carried out by the Development &amp; Investment Sub-Committee over the past year in line with its remit and delegation of Authority. It has been approved by DISC and requires the approval of Board.</p> <p>At the last DISC meeting on 2 June it was agreed that an expansion of asset management activities should be included in this remit and that the name of the Sub-Committee should be changed to reflect this. The revised remit was presented with an additional section outlining the asset management activities that would be reported. It was proposed that the Sub-Committee should now be named the Development &amp; Asset Management Sub-Committee (DAMSC).</p> <p>The Board approved the report highlighting that the DISC had fulfilled its remit for last financial year.</p> <p>The Board approved the revised remit and name change to the Development &amp; Asset Management Sub-Committee.</p>	<p><b>Noted &amp; Approved</b></p>
<p><b>11. Board Brief</b></p> <p>The CEO advised that there were no decisions required in this report.</p> <p>The Director of Corporate Services advised that the CX Housing upgrade went live on 25<sup>th</sup> May as planned. She advised that the</p>	

majority of issues have been dealt with following the upgrade. There are still some outstanding issues but Civica are dealing with these. Implementation of the new banding system is being worked on but is about two weeks behind schedule.  The board noted the rest of the report.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>12. Annual Complaints Report</b> The board noted the contents of this report.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>13. Annual L &amp; D Report</b> The board noted the contents of this report.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>14. Resolutions</b> The board noted the contents of this report.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>15. Notifiable Events</b> The board noted the contents of this report.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>16. Group Information</b> The board noted the WT Board Minutes of 16.05.23, Audit Sub-Committee Minutes of 17.05.23, TAG Minutes of 25.05.23 and the DISC Minutes of 02.06.23.	<b>Noted</b>
<b>AOCB</b> There was no other competent business.	
<b>17. AGM Report</b> Elaine Davidson declared an interest in this item and left the meeting.  The Director of Corporate Services advised that the AGM would take place on Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2023 at 5.00 pm in the Barrowfield Community Centre. Elaine Davidson is due to stand for re-election this year but as she has been on the Board for more than nine years the board has to assess her continued effectiveness. After discussion the board agreed that Elaine has demonstrated continued effectiveness.  The board noted the rest of the report.	<b>Approved</b>  <b>Noted</b>
<b>Review of Meeting</b> The board agreed that the meeting has gone very well.	
<b>Date of next meeting - 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023</b>	