

**West of Scotland Housing Association
Minutes of the Board Meeting
Hybrid Meeting via Microsoft Teams and Camlachie Boardroom
Wednesday 26th March 2025**

<p>Present (In Person): Kelly Adams (chair), Jim Williamson, Karen Merz, Kenneth Fee, Ann Reid, Paul MacNeil, James Reid, Michael Sozansky,</p> <p>Present (Online): Graeme Middleton, Elizabeth Matthews, George Kpodo, Alison Calder (until 6.30 pm)</p> <p>In Attendance (In person): Brian Gannon (CEO), Jennifer Cairns (Director of Corporate Services), Karen Shaw (Director of Development & Asset Management), Valerie Wilson (Director of Finance), Robert Campbell (Director of Housing & Community Services), Susan Speirs (Senior Corporate Services Assistant), Simon Fitzpatrick (Observing Meeting)</p> <p>Apologies: Morag Kilbride, Lynsey Hamilton</p> <p>Before the meeting started Kelly Adams introduced Simon Fitzpatrick who is taking over the CEO role when Brian leaves and is here to observe the meeting. All those present at the meeting introduced themselves to Simon.</p>	
<p>Disclosure of Interests There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the meeting of 26th February 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record. They were proposed by Michael Sozansky and seconded by Ann Reid.</p>	Approved
<p>2. Matters Arising There were no matters arising</p>	Noted
<p>3. Preparation for Assurance Statement The Director of Corporate Services presented this report.</p> <p>For the benefit of the new Board Members the Director of Corporate Services advised that the Board are required to prepare an assurance statement on an annual basis to ensure that the Association complies with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework.</p> <p>She further advised that the proposed process for this year is the same as before although the timescales for this year have been</p>	

amended as Wbg Services will be carrying out an audit of our process in June. A short life working group will be set up to deal with this. Kelly Adams, Michael Sozanksy and Jim Williamson agreed to be on the working group again, but any other Board member can join as well.

The Governance Improvement Plan outlines the progress that has been made. To date 38% of the actions have been completed. It is expected that most of the actions will be completed before the assurance statement is signed off in September.

The Director of Corporate Services informed the Board that some further ARC indicators have been added this year around fire and electrical safety and damp and mould.

A letter had been received from the Regulator regarding the annual assurance requirements.

Kelly Adams asked if the wording of the letter was the same as last year. The Director of Corporate Services advised that it was.

George Kpodo asked what assurance the Board has regarding tenant safety and how do we raise awareness with tenants.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that that we provide a quarterly Health & Safety report to the Audit Sub-Committee. With regards to communicating with tenants she advised that regular health and safety messages are sent out.

The Board noted the contents of the report and approved the proposed process to prepare for the Annual Assurance Statement.

Noted & Approved

4. KPI Target Setting 2025/2026

The CEO presented this report.

He advised that the Association must report on our performance to the Scottish Regulator annually via the Annual Return of the Charter.

The KPI targets for the coming year are set in consultation with all teams across the Association. Teams' reviews are held to ensure that all teams have an input into setting these targets.

Benchmarking also takes place with other RSLs to compare performance.

The CEO further informed the Board that the Association undertook an exercise to assess our current performance across all the indicators that we report on a quarterly basis, and he went through all the targets that are in the report and highlighted those targets that have been amended and the Board are asked to approve these amended targets.

Kenneth Fee advised that the figure for the % of total staff turnover during the year includes temporary staff and that it may not be a true reflection of our ability to recruit and retain staff.

The Director of Corporate Services gave an update on the number of staff who have left in the year to date and confirmed that exit interviews did not identify any trends that would be concerning. However, we will be vigilant and continue to report to the staffing sub committee any issues that present.

Kelly Adams commented that the satisfaction figures for close cleaning and ground maintenance have gone down.

The Director of Housing & Community Services advised that the new close cleaning contractors will start on 1 April and hopefully satisfaction levels will increase. He advised that we are in the last year of the ground maintenance contract, and we will be procuring for this next year.

Ann Reid commented that a lot of tenants don't phone in to complain about these issues and that we should not be complacent.

Paul MacNeil asked if it is the same contractors that carry out the close cleaning in mixed tenure closes.

The Director of Housing & Community Services advised that if we have a majority of tenants in these closes then our contractor will usually carry out the work if the service is provided whereas if we only have a minority of tenants then it may be another contractor or external Factor.

The Board approved the Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2025/26.

Approved

5. Equalities & Human Rights Annual Report

The Director of Corporate Services presented this report.

She advised that the Equalities & Human Rights Strategy was approved by the Board in 2023, and this report gives an update on the equalities data that we hold and what data has still to be collected. It also details our current position regarding compliance.

George Kpodo asked what preventative measures or intervention is being taken to deal with this.

The Director of Housing & Community Services advised that we have an Income Management Policy in place and are carrying out preventative work before it gets to this stage. The Write off policy also only permits write offs in limited circumstances. He further advised the Board that the percentage of cases being written off is lower, but the individual balances are higher.

Jim Williamson asked what percentage of our tenants are in receipt of full Housing Benefit.

The Director of Housing & Community Services advised that historically, 70% of our tenants have been in receipt of full or partial Housing Benefit but it is harder to determine the difference between full and partial benefit now as some tenants are on Universal Credit.

The Director of Housing & Community Services informed the Board that there is a small amount of non-rent debt transferred over from Charing Cross Housing Association (CCHA) amounting to approximately £27,000 that needs to be written off. Staff are still processing these, but a lack of historical records means that it will be challenging to recover the balances. A further report will be submitted to the Board in September.

The Board approved the following recommendations: -

1. Approved the write off of six former tenant rent arrears where the arrears exceed £2,000 to a total value of £25,164.27.
2. Note the write offs for 83 former tenant accounts rent arrears less than £2,000 to the value of £27,773.34
3. Note the write offs for 18 former tenant account rent credits less than -£2,000 to the value of -£5,997.45.
4. Note the write offs of seven former tenant debts (other than rent) less than £2,000, to the value of £2,000.96.
5. Note the write offs of five former tenant credits (other than rent) less than -£2,000, to the value of -£353.42.

Approved

<p>7. Board Brief The CEO presented this report.</p> <p>The Director of Development & Asset Management advised that following the recent audit on damp and mould a recommendation had been made to update the policy regarding the reporting and escalation process. She outlined the proposed changes. The Board approved the changes to the policy.</p> <p>The CEO advised that we had received notification of the renewal of the Scottish Housing Network membership. The cost of this membership has increased by 3.5% to £2,809.40. The Board approved the renewal of this membership.</p> <p>The Director of Finance advised that CT Audit had issued the engagement letters for the WSHA Group. She had reviewed these letters and raised queries which were around the permission for electronic publication. She advised that advanced permission is required to publish the accounts on the website for WT and WL.</p> <p>The Board approved the signing of the engagement's letters for WSHA, WT and WL and authorised the Director of Finance to sign these on behalf of each organisation.</p> <p>The Board noted the rest of the report.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>8. Audit Sub-Committee Annual Report The Director of Corporate Services presented this report.</p> <p>The report outlines the activities of the Audit Sub-Committee over the past year.</p> <p>She advised that BDO will be attending the May meeting to present the annual report.</p> <p>A re-tendering exercise took place for the Internal Audit Services and Wbg have been appointed.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the Audit Sub-Committee Annual Report.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>9. Annual Data Management Report The Director of Corporate Services presented this report.</p> <p>She advised that one of the recommendations from the auditors in 2023 was to report to the Board on an annual basis in respect of data management and in respect of data breaches.</p>	

<p>There have been 10 data breaches this year which has increased from 4 last year. None of these have been reportable to the ICO. An impact assessment has been carried out on each breach.</p> <p>There have been 5 Subject Access Requests (SAR) this year and all have been from or on behalf of tenants. All requests have been responded to within the 30-day timescale.</p> <p>There have been 12 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, which has increased from last year, and 4 Environmental Information Requests (EIR).</p> <p>The Data Management Strategy was approved in September 2024 and the Director of Corporate Services gave an update on the progress with this.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of this report.</p>	Noted
<p>10. Annual Stakeholder Report The Director of Corporate Services presented this report.</p> <p>She advised that this report provided an update on the status of the relationships and activities with key stakeholders.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of this report.</p>	Noted
<p>11. Resolutions The Board noted the contents of this report.</p>	Noted
<p>12. Notifiable Events The Board noted the contents of this report.</p>	Noted
<p>13. Group Information The Board noted the following information: -</p> <p>Special DAMSC Minutes – 30.01.25 Staffing Sub-Committee Minutes – 05.02.25 Staff Consultation Group Notes – 05.02.25 WL Board Minutes – 06.02.25 WT Board Minutes – 18.02.25 Audit Sub-Committee Minutes – 19.02.25 DAMSC Minutes – 03.03.25</p>	Noted
<p>14. AOCB The Director of Finance gave a presentation on the External Audit Tender that had taken place as we were at the end of the five-year period for CT. The audit was for 3 years + 1 + 1.</p>	

<p>The Board approved awarding the contract to CT Audit as the MEAT submission, but the quality of service will be monitored by the Director of Finance and Audit Sub-Committee closely.</p> <p>The Senior Corporate Services Assistant reminded the Board about completing their e-learning modules.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
<p>Review of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting had been on time. Good discussions.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 7.30 pm.</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting – 30th April 2025</p>	