

**West of Scotland Housing Association
Minutes of the Board Meeting at Camlachie House
Wednesday 30th October 2019
Public Minutes**

<p>Present: Ruth Simpson (Chair), Elaine Davidson, Clare Newton, John Shearer, Nick Farrell, David Wark, Lorraine Preston, George Kpodo and Ryan Docherty</p> <p>In Attendance: Brian Gannon, Chief Executive Officer, Colin MacCallum, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Stewart Gibb, Director of Housing and Customer Services, Jennifer Cairns, Head of Corporate Services and Kari Archibald, Executive Assistant.</p> <p>Also attending: Alistair Reid, Tenant Engagement Officer</p>	
<p>1. Welcome & Apologies The Chair welcomed all to the meeting especially the three new Board members, David, Lorraine and George. Noted apologies received from Kelly Adams, Ann Reid, Paul McCandlish and Derek McGowan.</p>	
<p>2. Disclosures of Interest. None.</p>	
<p>3. Approval of the Minute of 28th August 2019 The approval of the minutes from the Board meeting of 28th August 2019 2019 was proposed by Elaine Davidson and seconded by John Shearer</p>	Approved
<p>4. Approval of the Minutes of the 26th September 2019 The approval of the minutes of the Board meeting of the 4th April 2019 was proposed by Clare Newton and seconded by John Shearer</p>	Approved
<p>5. Matters Arising All matters arising were noted. The CEO took the opportunity to address the concern raised at the last Board meeting referring to the length of time meetings last. The CEO, with the support of the Chair, suggested that the Board convene in the months of April and September. This would increase the number of meetings from 8 to 10 in the year. The Board agreed to holding meetings in April and September.</p>	Agreed
<p>6. Board Briefing The CEO spoke to the Board brief highlighting the staff updates along with EVH and GWSF brief.</p> <p>The CEO spoke about the plans of the up and coming Staff and Board Conference and noted that Board and Leadership will hold an afternoon workshop to discuss the key business objectives for the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>In response to a Board member question on the Staff and Board</p>	

conference, the CEO agreed that that for next year we should still hold a staff and Board conference but keep it as a day event only. The Board members agreed to this and felt that it would still be as valuable and cost less.

The Board was asked to complete their disclosure of interest forms to the Executive Assistant as soon as possible.

The CEO mentioned that TAG had agreed that the Volunteers Dinner would be held within the Camlachie Office and they had proposed it being an informal get together with a fish and chip tea.

The Director of Housing and Customers Services spoke to the Housing Updates in the Brief.

The Board discussed the attached letter which was issued to all Landlords from the Scottish Housing Regulator which informed RSLs of some matters that had come to their attention in the course of their work (tenant safety issues and cyber security) and also to update RSLs on the current uncertainty with regard to Brexit. It was also noted that staff will also receive an ELearning training session on Cyber Security.

The Head of Corporate Services took the opportunity to inform Board that a new structure to Health and Safety reporting will be developed and that there will be more assurance around compliance in respect of the tenant safety issues noted in the SHR letter. This will be reported to the Board and Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.

7. ICT Project Update

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services updated the Board with respect to the current progress of the new IT system project.

A paper was circulated to Board prior to the meeting which gave a recap of the implementation dates and that the Go Live date for the Housing System happened on the 1st October 2019. A few issues identified from the Go Live, mainly arise from a lack of familiarity on the part of users and are being addressed by additional training sessions. Other issues are being centralised on a Users Issue Log and are being addressed on a daily basis by members of the project team.

The Board had been informed that David Hull, project manager to the team identified some issues that needed ironed out. David Hull will pull together a high level plan addressing the remaining activities associated with Phase 1 and a draft project plan for Phase 2 including timelines, deliverables, costs and resource requirements. Once the draft plan is available a paper will be brought to the Board.

The Chair enquired if David Hull will remain as a support for the project team and will his services be continued. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed that David Hull has a wealth of knowledge with the CX systems and comes from a Housing background and his services are very much required and will continue to work for WSHA for two days a week.

John Shearer asked about costs involved from Civica's side. The Director

<p>of Finance and Corporate Services advised that there should not be any cost implications and if there was then he would be hold a conversation with Civica about this.</p>	
<p>8. Rent Policy and Affordability Assessment The Director of Housing and Customer Services along with the Tenant Engagement Officer presented the revised Rent Setting and Service Charging Policy (including feedback on the consultation with tenants which was favourable in respect of the proposed changes), and also presented the findings of an affordability assessment by using the Scottish Federation of Housing Association (SFHA) affordability tool.</p> <p>The Tenant Engagement Officer gave a presentation on the Affordability Tool whilst providing numerous examples and guided members through the SFHA Affordability Tool online. The presentation demonstrated that most of our rents are significantly below the 30% income affordability criteria (rent charges is less than 30% of the tenant's income), however rents for one bedroom properties are slightly above this threshold.</p> <p>Some of the members asked about tenant income figures, combined wages and those who are secure tenants. The Tenant Engagement Officer gave detailed answers to those members and reminded that the SFHA tool gives rent comparisons with other RSLs.</p> <p>The CEO also noted that he would address issues of our costs in relation to rents in his presentation and the afternoon workshop at the Staff/Board conference.</p> <p>After some consideration, The Board ;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Approved the revised Rent Setting and Service Charging Policy 2.Noted the findings of the Affordability Assessment and rent comparisons with other RSLs 3.Noted the feedback from tenants on the Rent Setting and Service Charging Policy <p>The Tenant Engagement Officer vacated the meeting at this point.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>10. Pensions Update The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave outcomes from the 2018 triennial valuation of the SHAPS Defined Benefit pension scheme. The Board received comprehensive information included with this report and received a detailed presentation with information such as pension contribution figures, debt withdrawal and long term strategy,</p> <p>Nick Farrell mentioned that it was evident that SHAPS have likely made</p>	

<p>some savings and that pensions have done well. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed that a further report will be presented to the November Board.</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the report.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>11.Settlement Policy The Head of Corporate Services reminded the Board that a recent self assessment against the SHR Regulatory Standards highlighted that Association do not currently have a Settlement Agreement Policy in place. The Board heard in detail that Standard 5.7 states that “Severance payments are only made in accordance with a clear policy which is approved by the governing body, is consistently applied and is in accordance with contractual obligations. Such payments are monitored by the governing body to ensure payment requests are value for money”. This is a new standard.</p> <p>The recent self assessment also highlighted the need to review and update the Staffing Sub Committee remit in relation to settlement agreements to ensure that this is in line with the Regulatory Standard</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services noted that the draft Settlement Policy was viewed by a legal representative at Harper MacLeod and they gave further input which has now been included in this document.</p> <p>After consideration, the Board approved the Settlement Policy.</p>	<p>Approved</p>
<p>12. Equalities Policy The Director of Housing and Customer Services introduced the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. At its meeting in August 2019, the Board endorsed the draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for further consultation with tenants, staff and other stakeholders about the policy and the action plan. The consultation with staff and the Tenants Action Group (TAG) had not resulted in any changes to the draft policy submitted to the Board in August 2019.</p> <p>The Board noted that our Equalities Working Group, will continue to take a lead role in coordinating the delivery of Equalities agenda and the implementation of the Equalities Action Plan</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the report and approved the Policy.</p>	<p>Approve</p>
<p>13. Investigation Outcome The CEO gave an update to the Board on the outcome of the Investigation undertaken by Oatway Solutions</p>	

<p>The Board were asked to note the proposed response to the recommendations in the report and that these actions will be discussed further by the Investigation Sub Committee who have been tasked to deal with the investigation. The CEO informed that the Sub Committee will attend a meeting held on the 31st October with the Scottish Housing Regulator to discuss the conclusions of the report. Details from this meeting and recommended outcomes and actions from the Sub Committee will be presented at the November Board meeting</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the report.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>14. Corporate Plan Process and Timetable</p> <p>The CEO asked Board to consider the process for reviewing our 5 year Corporate Plan. The Board was guided through the process and timetable for the forthcoming plan and proposals around the future business planning process.</p> <p>The CEO spoke to the key areas that should be included in the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>The report made a number of suggestions such as introducing new sections to the plan including, being clear about what the top priorities are for next year and a stronger commitment from the Board on setting out our business culture and values.</p> <p>The new Corporate Plan will also demonstrate clearer evidence of how the Board have been involved in developing the plan. The Board will also focus on our Key Business Objectives at the forthcoming Staff and Board conference.</p> <p>The CEO spoke in detail about the future planning process and led the Board through a revised business planning process which reflected the SHR’s suggested good practice. This revised process was supported by the Tenant’s Advisory Group..</p> <p>The Board made a number of comments and agreed that we should have a clearer vision of our priorities and that starting the business planning process would be welcomed.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the process of the Corporate Plan for 2020-2025 and approved the process for the following years Corporate Plan to begin a review earlier in the year.</p>	<p>Approve</p>
<p>15. Assurance Statement</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services presented a report which outlined the process and the key considerations in relation to preparation for our first Assurance Statement. It presented a draft Assurance Statement from the Assurance Working Group for Board approval. and to be signed off by the Chair . The Board discussed the report including all supporting dicuments detailing the process undertaken, Board involvement Including the Assurance Working Group) the evidence matrix and the assessment of</p>	

<p>compliance materiality in respect of two areas. The Board discussed the 2 potential areas of non compliance; Rent Affordability and Equalities and Human Rights.. The Board noted that the materiality assessment was based on the guidance from the Scottish Regulator in relation to what should be considered when making a judgement around materiality. The Board discussed this and agreed with the Working Group’s recommendation that neither of these areas constituted material non compliance and therefore should not be included in the Assurance Statement.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services informed Board that going forward they will gain access to the Board intranet section and this will grant them direct access to evidence matrix documents, governance documents and all relevant Board information.</p> <p>The Board commented that the association had undertaken a robust assessment process to enable the Chair to sign off the proposed Assurance Statement.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services informed that it will be submitted to the SHR through the Landlord portal to meet the deadline for submission of 31st October. The Board will receive an email confirmation of the submission from the Head of Corporate Services.</p> <p>The Board noted the content and gave approval for the Chair to sign the Assurance Statement.</p> <p>The statement was signed and witnessed by the CEO and Head of Corporate Services.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Approved</p>
<p>16. Freedom of Information Policy</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services provided a report to give the Board assurance that the necessary actions are in place in order to comply with the introduction of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to RSLs on the 11th November 2019 and presented the draft policies of Access to Information and Record Management for Board approval</p> <p>The Chair spoke about the Freedom of Information session held for Board members prior to this meeting noting that it was extremely informative.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services informed Board that staff had also received this training and a significant amount of work has been carried out for preparation of this.</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the report and approved the Access to Information and Record Management Policy.</p> <p>David Wark vacated the meeting at this point.</p>	<p>Noted/ Approved</p>

<p>17. Review of Shareholding Policy The Head of Corporate Services gave a brief report advising of the change to the policy statement which was to remove the Barrowfield Membership Category. No other changes have been made. The policy statement has been revised to reflect the new structure of membership category.</p> <p>The Board approved the revised Policy Statement</p>	Approve
<p>18. Appointment of Board Member The Head of Corporate Services advised the Board that Peter Savage who was elected at the AGM as a Board member has now notified us that he will not take up his place and to propose the appointment of Paul McNeil to fill this casual vacancy.</p> <p>After consideration of his experience, skills and knowledge the Board agreed to the appointment of Paul McNeil to fill the Glasgow tenant Board position.</p> <p>The CEO also took the opportunity to inform Board that there is now a general member vacancy and he would like to inform the Scottish Housing Regulator of this.</p> <p>The Board agreed for the CEO to have a conversation with SHR regarding a possible nomination for the general Board member vacancy.</p>	Approve Action
<p>19. Write Off Q1 and Q2 2019The Director of Housing and Customer Services presented the report to seek Board approval for the write off write off of historical former tenant arrears and related debts for the 6 month period the 6 month period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019.</p> <p>After consideration the Board agreed to</p> <p>1. Approve the write off of 3 former tenant arrears where the arrears exceeds £2,000 to a total value of £9,532.12</p> <p>2.Note the write offs for 9 former tenant accounts with arrears less than £2,000, to the value of £8,979.97</p>	Approve Noted
<p>20.Unacceptable Behaviour Policy The CEO presented the new 'Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy' which sets out the kind of behaviour from tenants and other customers that the Association views as unacceptable. Both staff and the Tenants Advisory Group have been consulted on this policy and provided feedback that has been incorporated into this final policy. . The CEO highlighted that most public bodies including the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) operate policies that are similar to the Association's proposed policy.</p>	

<p>The CEO spoke to the content of the policy noting that the policy would not be a barrier to customers raising justifiable service complaints. He also introduced an Equality Impact Assessment of the Policy which assessed its potential impact on customers with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act..</p> <p>The Chair expressed that the report was well detailed and was great to see that members of TAG had been contributed to this.</p> <p>The board approved the Unacceptable Behavior Policy</p>	Approved
<p>21.RSG&FM Review of the papers</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services spoke to the Board about the future requirement of this report which was unduly onerous to complete and due to its position on the agenda was not necessarily the best approach to assessing whether reports took account of Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management. The Board agreed that RSG&FM Review of the papers report would no longer be brought to the meetings and that this would be replaced by a section on RSG&FM within the Issues For Consideration Table at the start of each report.</p> <p>The Board noted the content</p>	Agreed
<p>22. Health and Safety</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the Report.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services reminded the Board from earlier that there would be a new format and more detailed way that Health and Safety will be delivered to the Board and Audit Committee.</p>	Noted
<p>23. Audit Committee Minutes</p> <p>The Audit Committee minutes of 28th August 2019 were noted.</p> <p>The Chair made one observation from the Audit minute that there appeared to be a bit of concern over some variation in procedures amongst the 2 housing teams. The Director of Housing and Customers services advised that this has been resolved and staff have received training, The Audit Committee will receive an update about this at the November meeting.</p>	Noted
<p>24. DISC Minutes</p> <p>The DISC minutes of the 28th August 2019 were noted.</p>	
<p>25. TAG Minutes</p> <p>The TAG minutes of the 19th August were noted.</p>	Noted
<p>26. Willowacre Trust</p> <p>The minutes of the 13th August 2019 were noted</p>	
<p>27. Resolutions</p>	

Noted.	Noted
28. Notifiable Event The Notifiable Events presented in the report were noted by the Board.	
29. Review of the meeting The Chair asked the new Board members how they felt about their first Board meeting. Lorraine and George felt comfortable with the information provided and noted that the induction they had received had been helpful.. The Chair informed that with the introduction of Board meetings in April and September that this would hopefully decrease the paper work and length of meetings. The Chair also took the opportunity to thank the Head of Corporate Services for the amount of valuable work put into the production of many of the reports presented today.	
30. AOCB None	
Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 27th November 2019 @ 5:45pm	