



THE GLASGOW HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
GHA BOARD
MINUTE OF MEETING – FRIDAY 29 November 2019

Present: Bernadette Hewitt (Chair), Jo Armstrong, Jo Boaden, Andrew Clark, Robert Geddes, Professor Paddy Gray, Councillor Frank McAveety, Cathy McGrath and Councillor Kenny McLean

In attendance: Anthony Allison (Director of Governance), Martin Armstrong (Group Chief Executive), Olga Clayton (Group Director of Housing and Care), Steven Henderson (Group Director of Finance), Jehan Weerasinghe (GHA Managing Director) and (In Part) Tom Barclay (Group Director of Property and Development) and David Fletcher (Director of Development)

1. New Board member – Jo Boaden

The Chair welcomed Jo Boaden to her first meeting and Professor Paddy Gray to his first in his capacity as Vice-Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Michael McNamara and Jean Albert Nietcho.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted Jo Boaden's interests as a member of the Wheatley Housing Group Board and as a Board member of the English Regulator of Social Housing.

4. a) Minute of 4 October 2019 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of 4 October 2019.

The Board received an update on the ongoing recruitment activity.

b) Action List

Decided: The Board noted the action list.

5. International diamond prize for Excellence in Quality

Decided: The Board noted the receipt of the ESQR Diamond Prize for Excellence.

6. Rent Campaign (presentation)

The Board received a presentation setting out our approach to the 2019 rent campaign, including the delivery channels and messaging.

The Board discussed how we use the campaign to signpost tenants to their Housing Officer and our wraparound services. It was confirmed this was the case.

The Board discussed the measure of success for the campaign. It was confirmed previous campaigns have had a positive impact on rent arrears.

The Board further discussed the ongoing challenges of Universal Credit and our approach to arrears collection, particularly where we may reach the eviction stage.

Decided: The Board noted the updated.

7. Delivery Plan 2019-20: Quarter 2

The Board received a summary of performance for the year to date, with a particular focus on rental income.

The Board discussed repairs performance, including the links between our repairs and maintenance performance, investment plans and development activity. The Board further discussed how we maximise the contact with tenants during repairs in terms of identifying any additional issues we can provide support with.

The Board discussed tenancy sustainment levels and the work underway to understand the drivers of tenancy failures. The Board recognised the indicator was based on technical guidance which did not distinguish where a tenant has moved from the tenancy to a positive destination.

An update on projects with revised completion timescales was provided.

The Board welcomed the reduction in absence levels and in relation to projects noted the interdependency on external partnerships, which leads to timescales being understandably more dynamic. It was explained that we will continue to seek to conclude all projects as soon as possible.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

8. Universal Credit & Welfare Reform Update

The Board received an update on our ongoing activities to support our customers and mitigate the impact of Universal Credit. The Board received feedback from the Area Committee Chairs on their discussions regarding Universal Credit and the level of comfort the Committees have taken from our strong partnership working with the Department for Work and Pensions.

The Board discussed how our staff can target support to Universal Credit recipients and the intelligence and analysis they received to allow them to do so.

The Board sought feedback on the Customer Experience Panel. It was confirmed that the panel have indicated they are very pleased with the level of resource and support we are allocating.

The Board welcomed the 'lived experience' approach and the level of insight this will provide.

The Board considered the implications for our bad debt provision and challenges this will continue to present.

Decided: The Board noted the update on Universal Credit and Welfare Reform; and noted the range of mitigations in place to manage the impact of Welfare Reform on our customers, communities and business.

9. Project Update: Bell Street Conversion

The Board received an update on the Bell Street conversion. It was explained that the project was highly complex from the outset and the manifestation of certain complexities was explained in detail, including the associated cost implications.

The Board were advised the project was subject to detailed consideration by the Group Development Committee.

The Board recognised the complexity of the project and that the inherent risk was recognised at the initial approval stage. The quality and uniqueness of the finished product was recognised as outstanding. The Board further discussed the specific areas which contributed to cost overruns and recognised that they were not foreseeable and that we sought to minimise our losses at all stages throughout the project.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) noted that the Group Development Committee considered the additional costs for the Bell Street project at their meeting on 29 October 2019;**
- 2) agreed, subject to the approval of the Wheatley Housing Group Board, the anticipated increase in costs of £490,566 over the originally approved figure for the Bell Street conversion project; and**
- 3) approved that forecast in-year savings in repairs and VAT on investment budgets will be utilised to cover the final negotiated overspend.**

10. New Build Performance Dashboard

The Board received a detailed update on delivery of our new build programme. Specific proposals and their rationale were set out in relation to Shared Equity disposals.

The Board recognised the conclusion of the re-provisioning programme.

The Board discussed progress to date, including the projected delays, our ongoing contractor engagement and engagement with the utility agencies.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) **noted the contents of the report; approved the proposed Scottish Government New Supply Shared Equity Scheme arrangements, as set out in this report, for the properties at [Redacted]; and**
- 2) [Redacted]

11. Delegated Authority for Disposals

The Board received a detailed explanation of the proposals, which sought to both update existing delegations and introduce some new delegations. It was explained that the proposals have taken into account Scottish Housing Regulatory statutory guidance.

The Board considered the delegations, which it agreed were consistent with our existing arrangements and included clear criteria and associated documentation. It was agreed the delegated authority be extended to the GHA Vice-Chair also.

Decided: The Board agreed to delegate authority to the GHA Chair, whom failing Vice-Chair, for asset disposals which meet the criteria set out in Section 5.4 of the report.

12. Health and Safety Update

The Board received a detailed update on the implementation of our health and safety management system, in particular asbestos, fire safety and gas safety. The ongoing reporting and monitoring arrangements were set out in detail, including the Board's ongoing role.

The Board discussed how they received assurance that recommendations arising as a result of Fire Risk Assessments are implemented. It was confirmed this would be considered as part of our future reporting arrangements.

The Board discussed how we communicate and make information available to tenants, including in relation to asbestos.

The Board discussed how we received assurance regarding health and safety on our new build construction activity and the respective roles and responsibilities of us and our contractors.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

13. Finance Report

The Board received a summary of financial performance for the year to date. The variation relating to the recognition of grant income was explained and the positive underlying performance in rental income and voids was confirmed.

The variation in relation to staffing costs and cyclical maintenance were explained. The Board discussed the challenges in delivering the TMV programme and how we are seeking new approaches to increase the level of access.

The terms of the consent letters were set out for the Board, with the conditions in line with previous consent requirements.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) noted the management accounts for the period to 31 October 2019;**
- 2) approved the draft EIB consent letters and delegated authority to any Board member, the Group Chief Executive, Group Director of Finance, Director of Treasury or Company Secretary to agree the final form of the letters and execute same on behalf of GHA;**
- 3) approved the draft funding syndicate consent letter and delegated authority to any Board member, the Group Chief Executive, Group Director of Finance, Director of Treasury or Company Secretary to agree the final form of the letter and execute same on behalf of GHA; and**
- 4) noted that the funding syndicate letter can also be signed by Wheatley Housing Group Limited as the agent of GHA.**

14. Information Governance update

The Board received an update on the implementation of our Freedom of Information action plan.

The Board welcomed the continued focus on our action plan and our continued commitment to openness and transparency.

Decided: The Board noted the status of the FOISA implementation plan.

15. Group Assurance Update 2019/20

The Board received an update on assurance activity for the year to date. In particular, the GHA Service evaluations results were set out.

The Board discussed the service evaluation scoring across our offices, the variation of scoring and the level of stretch required to receive the top grading. The continued focus on testing consistency across our services was welcomed by the Board.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

16. GHA Corporate Risk Register

The Board reviewed the corporate risk register and in particular the proposed changes. It was agreed that the updated risk register recognised changes in our operating environment.

Decided: The Board agreed and approved the revised Corporate Risk Register.

17. AOCB

The Board received an update on the DGHP partnership ballot.