

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Board of Management Hybrid Meeting held on Tuesday, 4 July 2023 at 6.00pm.

Attendance:

Board Members: Gavin Waddell - Chairperson
Karen Johnson
John Lennox
Anita Williamson
David McIndoe
David Edgar

Staff/Advisor(s): Anne Marie Brown, Chief Executive
Carla Cameron, Finance & Corporate Services Manager
Arlene Dickson, Care Services Manager
Kimberley Tennant, Corporate Services Officer
Jess Shute, Corporate Services Assistant

Observer:

Board meeting minute prepared K Tennant post meeting from the meeting recording.

ITEM	NOTE	ACTION
	WELCOME AND ORDER OF BUSINESS	
	Chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting pack was issued to members on Wednesday, 28 June 2023.	
1.0	APOLOGIES	
	Chair asked for any apologies and read out all those in attendance, confirming who was attending on-line and who was in person.	
	Apologies received from: Joe Gherardi, Michelle Donnelly, Jordan Henderson.	
1.1	Approved Leave of Absence	
	Chair confirmed [REDACTED] remains on LOA.	
1.2	Non-Attendance	
	Non-attendance at the commencement of the meeting for Francis Polding.	
2.0	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	Chair asked for any declarations. D McIndoe declared interest in item 7 due to position held with another RSL. J Shute declared an interest in item 4.1, it was confirmed that J Shute will leave the meeting whilst item is discussed.	

3.0	MINUTES	
3.1	<p>Board Meeting (23 May 2023)</p> <p>Chair asked for accuracy and approval. No amendments to note.</p> <p>The minutes were approved on a proposal by D McIndoe and seconded by D Edgar.</p>	
3.2	<p>Staffing Committee Meeting – For Noting (13 June 2023)</p> <p>Chair asked for accuracy and approval. Amendment noted that the minute date was the 13 June 2023 not 6 June 2023 as written.</p> <p>The minutes were noted.</p>	KT
4.0	Recommendations to the Board for Approval from Staffing Committee Meeting (6 June 2023):	
4.1	<p>Review of the 2021 Finance & Corporate Services Team Restructure Confidential</p> <p>Report Summary</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>	
4.2	<p>Hybrid Working Policy & EIA</p> <p>Report Summary</p> <p>AM Brown presented the report to the Board, advising that the policy has been trialled for 1 year. AM Brown informed the members that the policy has undergone extensive consultation, stating that it was important that staff appreciated that certain job roles would benefit from Hybrid Working due to the nature of their role.</p> <p>All staff were asked to pass their comments on the policy, with one member of staff passing comments formally out with the leadership team.</p> <p>AMB advised the policy has been updated to reflect operationally how the policy is operating and clarifying the association’s position on certain circumstances. Explaining to members that Hybrid Working doesn’t apply to temporary staff or newly recruited staff within their probationary period. AM Brown advised members</p>	

	<p>that there may be exceptions where emergency decisions can be made to accommodate individual requests.</p>
Discussion	<p>Member asked if Care Services Staff were accepting of Hybrid Working given that their role does not have this flexibility?</p> <p>AM Brown advised that they have been fully supportive of the policy and have been fully involved with the consultations too. Although Care Services staff do not have the flexibility to work out with their place of work the association have been more accommodating to the staffs needs with flexibility towards their planned shifts where it is needed. The Care Staff can now also build up some TOIL where they were not able to in the past.</p> <p>Member advised that the association needs to be seen to be flexible with working arrangements as is it expected for employers to offer this as standard. The member advised that they see the policy as a futureproof to the association.</p> <p>Additional member supports the previous members statement, stating that a Hybrid Working Policy is an attractive benefit for staff, current and potential.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board: Approved the revised Hybrid Working Policy as attached at Appendix 1. Noted the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.</p>
4.3	Grievance Policy & Procedure & EIA
Report Summary	<p>AM Brown presented the report to members. Advising that the Staffing Committee had recommended this policy to be presented to the Board for approval. The policy has been under review for several months, with both EVH and the associations HR Consultant providing guidance and comments on the review of the policy.</p> <p>Advising members that there is a new appendix added to the policy to ensure equality of the parties involved when the policy is in use.</p>
Discussion	<p>No comments or suggestions were made by members on the report.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board: Approved the revised Grievance Policy as attached at Appendix 1, subject to any additional changes agreed at tonight’s meeting. Noted the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.</p>
5.0	PRWG Reports (Note meeting of 27.06.2023 was not quorate):
5.1	Minor Amendments
Report Summary	<p>AM Brown presented the report to members on the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anti Bribery Policy ● Anti Money Laundering Policy ● Flexible Working Policy & EIA

AM Brown advised members that Chair of the Staffing Sub-Committee agreed to bring the policies to the Board for approval.

AM Brown presented the update to members advising that minor changes have been made to Anti Bribery and Anti Money Laundering Policies.

AM Brown advised that the Flexible Working Policy was missed from the review schedule, apologising to members and informing them that it should have been presented to the last Policy Review Working Group.

F Polding joined the meeting at 6.52pm

Continuing AM Brown advised that the Flexible Working Policy is based on the EVH Model policy which has been amended to reflect the associations current procedures.

Discussion Member advised that they appreciate the honesty of the missed policy, advising members in attendance to ensure that meetings are quorate where possible as this can lead to overlaps in work priorities.

No further comments or suggestions from the Board were noted.

Decision The Board:
Approved the minor changes to the Anti Bribery Policy, Anti Money Laundering Policy approved by the Chief Executive in June 2023 using delegated authority from the Board.
Approved the recommended changes made to the Flexible Working Policy made by the PRWG in April 2023.
Noted the completed EIA's for each of the revised policies.
Noted the review of the IT Security Policy has been deferred.

5.2 Whistleblowing Policy & EIA

Report Summary AM Brown presented the report to members. Advising that the policy is not based on EVH model policy, and that the policy was implemented by the Statutory Manager, during the associations engagement with the Regulator.

AM Brown advised the policy has been updated to reflect gender neutral language, legal guidance updates and the charity noted has also been updated.

Discussion Member noted that there was no context within the report toward malicious whistleblowing asking for clarity on the position of the association on this. Upon discussions it was noted that there is reference within the policy to inform employees that false or malicious accusations will be subject to disciplinary to procedures.

AM Brown advised that the policy does cover both staff and the Board of Management and will add to the policy reference to the Code of Conduct as this is not highlighted.

Member also noted that pg.14 reference to Team Leader should be changed to

AMB

Decision	<p>Manager.</p> <p>The Board: Reviewed and approved the revised Whistleblowing Policy as attached at Appendix 1. Noted the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix 2.</p>
5.3 Report Summary	<p>Flexi Time & TOIL Policy & EIA</p> <p>AM Brown presented the report to members advising that the policy is based on and EVH model policy. The policy has been in place for a number of years; however, the flexi-time element has never been fully adopted as staff favour the TOIL (Time Off In Lieu) element.</p> <p>AM Brown addressed the Board that the decision will need to be taken as to whether the Flexi Time element is adopted and implemented, or it is removed. If the Flexi Time element is implemented by the Board the only direct change to staff is the definition of core hours that staff must be present at work.</p> <p>AM Brown advised that the build-up of time will be managed closely by Managers, this will ensure that staff members do not build up additional time working intentionally more hours to have additional days off as common practice.</p>
Discussion	<p>Member asked AM Brown, asked why item 3.2.15 states that staff cannot and should not be deliberately using flexitime or TOIL to accrue regular additional leave. Noting that the purpose of the policy is to allow flexibility to start and finishing times to their working day. Member stated that at their place of work this is allowed and is a perk for the staff. AM Brown confirmed that the statement was based on historical events where staff built up the additional hours worked on tasks that did not quantify 'overtime hours.</p> <p>AM Brown advised the members that the policy must state the associations stance on deliberate misuse of the time accrual to accommodate additional leave and how it shall be treated. Informing the Board that operationally staff do not at present differentiate between Flexi Time and TOIL, time built up within the month is encouraged to be used within the same month. The policy will ensure that there is a flexible and consistent approach to the use of additional hours accrued and how they are managed operationally.</p> <p>Member asked if the flexi time should be omitted from the policy as it is not recognised operationally by the staff.</p> <p>AM Brown agreed that this is an option for the Board of Management to make, however, it is referred to in contract of employments which will need to be reviewed. Stating that the flexi time element of the policy may encourage a wider application field for applicants of job vacancies within the association.</p> <p>Member asked if overtime is agreed by the manager and staff before it is undertaken? AM Brown advised that overtime is agreed by the line manager and overtime should be an exception. This will be explained in the forthcoming Overtime Policy which will be undergoing review later this year.</p>

Member asked for clarity on the 'working hours' detailed as at 8am to 6pm with a smaller staff team than some organisations, has there been consideration if there is scope to allow everyone to take the additional hours worked that month within the same month?

AM Brown advised that staff time will be managed and sudden changes in working pattern will be picked up if it is out-with their normal 35 hours particularly if it is to accrue time to allow for days off and it will be managed accordingly by the line manager.

Member advised those in attendance that there is an expectation that employers are flexible with their approach to working hours, however there is the need of the business and customers to consider. The policy has given them the assurance that accrued time and time management of employees shall be monitored and managed in the appropriate way.

Decision

The Board:
Reviewed and approved the revised Flexi-time & TOIL Policy as attached at **Appendix 1**
Noted the Equality Impact Assessment at **Appendix 2.**
Noted, flexi-time will formally start on 16 July 2023 for Beardmore House staff

6.0 Board Matters Arising Schedule

Report Summary

AM Brown presented the schedule to members. Updating members that some of the deadline dates have been amended which are highlighted within the report. AM Brown gave an update on the action relating to petty cash for Care Services Staff.

AM Brown gave members a background on a situation that occurred whereby a tenant's boiler had failed over a weekend when the office was shut, temporary heating was supplied however the tenant was on a prepayment meter and voiced their concerns over the cost of running the temporary heaters until the boiler was fixed. The purpose of Care Staff holding petty cash would allow tenants in a similar situation to be assisted until the heating system is repaired.

Discussion

A Member agreed that the association is a 24-hour business and we cannot be seen to shut our doors when the office is not opened when our tenants are in need.

Member asked if the petty cash assistance was for Sheltered Housing tenants only?

AM Brown advised that provision would be open to all of our tenants that require assistance, with the Sheltered Housing complexes open during office closures it is an accessible, central location to provide help when needed.

Decision

The Board:
Noted the contents of the report.

Report
Summary

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DW

Decision	<p>The Board:</p> <p>Noted the contents of this report, especially:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Appendix 1 - Chief Executive Work Objectives update. b. The SFHA's visit to the Association on 12 September 2023. c. Three new suppliers as per Section 3.2.6. <p>Agreed that the Chief Executive can submit a response about the SHR's discussion paper on the Future of social Housing Regulation in Scotland by 11 August 2023.</p> <p>Approved Joe Gherardi's membership of the Staffing Committee.</p> <p>Approved the change of wording for work objective 1.2 to developing a new Business Plan for 2024 to 2027.</p>
8.0	Governance
8.1	Equality & HR's Action Plan - Annual review & Annual Statement
Report Summary	<p>AM Brown presented the report to members advising that this is the 6 monthly report, including the review of actions for 2023/2024. Referring on a letter from the SHR received on 04.07.2023 stating that the SHR are looking for assurance from the Board of Management that they are complying with their legal obligations in relation to Equalities with an emphasis on data collection.</p>
	<p>Continuing that there were 43 actions for 2022/23 covering 7 areas, noting that this has reduced in 2023/24 to 27 actions.</p>
Discussion	<p>Member noted that the association has progressed actions. Stating they are excited to see the commencement on data collection in particular for adaptations that are carried out. Due to the funding allocation which is lower in value than what is required to be carried out the additional costs are currently being met by the association.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board:</p> <p>Approved the updated Equality & Human Rights Action Plan for 2023/2024 as attached at Appendix 1, noting that this is also the 6-monthly update report to the Board.</p> <p>Noted that the Annual Equalities Statement for 2022/2023 will be published in the Association's Winter 2023 Newsletter and website.</p>
8.2	Rent Affordability Assessment/Harmonisation: Progress Update
Report Summary	<p>AM Brown presented the report to members advising that the report is a brief update. The association has been engaged with Arneil Johnson since for several months, the project commenced with rent affordability that has now been expanded to rent harmonisation and that options are being explored. AM Brown assured members that the Leadership Team are only supplying research and information, they are not progressing options.</p>
	<p>One of the outcomes from the work will result in a Rent Setting Policy which is currently not in place. Arneil Johnson are also asking the association to explore our approach to service charges too as part of the work being undertaken.</p>
	<p>The outcome and discussions will to the Board in October 2024.</p>

Discussion	Member commented that the decision for a Rent Setting Policy to come out of the works is a sensible approach and they are looking forward to what will come to the Board for discussion in particular the convergence options. AM Brown disclosed that they too are looking forward to the discussions and interested to see what the outcome will be for tenants.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the contents of this report. Noted that Arneil Johnston will bring an options report to the Board in October 2023. Agreed at least one Board member to attend the tenant consultant event scheduled to take place some-time in August/September 2023.	
8.3	GFMIP Quarterly Update	
Report Summary	AM Brown presented report to members noting that the action to develop a 3-year action plan has been covered under the Chief Executives report under item 7.0. The stock condition survey will be going live imminently as some further information was required by the consultant.	
Discussion	There were no questions or queries.	
Decision	The Board: Approved the updated GFMIP at Appendix 1 , including the rewording of the action under Regulatory Standard 1 (Guiding Standard 1.1) – to develop a new 3-year Business Plan for 2024 to 2027.	
9.0	Strategy	
	No Reports	
10.0	Finance	
	No Reports	
11.0	Staffing	
	No Reports	
12.0	Operations	
12.1	Stonework Repairs & Insulation Project: Progress update	
Report Summary	AM Brown presented the report to members on behalf of D Wilson, advising members that due to the significance of the works and the overall value the report will remain on the agenda. This will provide the Board an update at each meeting until the works are completed. This will also ensure that the Risk Register for the work will remain as a live document to reflect on identified risks throughout the project. AM Brown advised that additional grant offer was awarded of just under £127k the total funding received for the project is £278,054.	DW
Discussion	Member advised that they are happy that finally the works have commenced as it has been ongoing for a while, passing their thanks on to the staff in relation to the works undertaken and securing additional grant funding.	

	Member also commented that the efforts made by the association upholds the vision of being more than a great landlord.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the contents of this report. Noted the additional funding received from the Scottish Government for £126,692.39. Noted the revised Risk assessment for the project.	
12.2	Rent Arrears: Progress Update Report	
Report Summary	AM Brown presented the report in D Wilsons absence on behalf of M Smilie the recently appointed temporary debt collection officer for a 6-month period. The report is in recognition that arrears are continuing to increase. The post holder is an experienced housing professional in this field, allowing a focused approach to rent arrears and supporting tenants where it is needed. AM Brown advised that the postholder is flexible with their working approach starting earlier and working later to contact tenants that are in work.	
Discussion	Member commented that some of the arrear's levels are extremely high. Additional member also noted their surprise relating the back dated housing benefit awards, noting that the processing times are longer than previous years. Member asked for the report to track those accounts over £250.00 as a baseline going forward, welcoming an extended invite to the member of staff to attend the next Board Meeting. Member agreed that the report is informative and useful, they too are looking forward to the movement in the future. Member agreed with their Board colleague's opinion on the report, however the report will show how we are supporting our tenants whilst protecting the business needs.	DW/ MS
Decision	The Board: Noted this report and the accompanying Appendix 1 . Noted the improvements in arrears recovery performance that are being achieved. by the temporary Debt Recovery Officer.	
13.0	Health and Safety No reports.	
	Suspension of Standing Orders	
19.55pm	Chair asked for the members to approve the suspension of standing orders as the meeting was approaching the 2-hour mark.	
Decision	Members agreed to suspend the Standing Orders to allow all agenda items to be presented.	

14.0	Use of Delegated Authority	
14.1	External Audit Tender Report Confidential	
Report Summary	[REDACTED]	
Discussion	[REDACTED]	
Decision	[REDACTED]	
14.2	Property Acquisition Report Confidential	
Report Summary	[REDACTED]	
Discussion	[REDACTED]	
Decision	[REDACTED]	
15.0	Any Other Competent Business	
15.1	Correspondence	
	No correspondence.	
15.2	Updated Board/Committee Workplan 2022-2023	
Report Summary	AM Brown presented the updated Board and Committee Workplan for the remainder of the year.	
Discussion	There were no discussions.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the updated Board/ Committee Work Plan 2022-2023	
15.3	Board Portal	
Report Summary	K Tennant provided the members in attendance a brief overview of the Board Members online Portal. Advising member that this is a secured website that will be accessible with individual log in accounts.	
Discussion	Members advised that they liked the layout of the Portal and look forward to seeing the finished product.	

Chair to advised dates of next meetings:

Audit & Risk Committee: 14 August 2023 @ 6pm

Board Meeting: 29 August 2023 @ 6pm

AGM: 5 September 2023 @ 6pm

Board Meeting: 5 September 2023 (post AGM)

Chair closed meeting and wish everyone a good a rested Summer break.

The meeting closed at 08.15 pm

Signed _____ Date _____

(Chairperson)