

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

Minute of the Board of Management Meeting held on Tuesday, 26 March at 6.00pm via video call on Microsoft Teams

In Attendance:

Board Members: Gavin Waddell, Chairperson
David McIndoe
Michelle Donnelly
Francis Polding
Ian Lennox
Anita Williamson
David Edgar
Jade Murray

Staff/Advisor(s): Anne Marie Brown, Chief Executive
Carla Cameron, Finance & Corporate Services Manager
Dougie Wilson, Customer Services Manager
Arlene Dickson, Care Services Manager
Graeme Bruce, Finance Agent
Paul McNeill, Director HRC (Temporary Finance Agent)
Elaine Byrne Arneil Johnston (Item 6.1)
Julie Ann Clocherty, SHARE (Item 6.2)
Tom Atkinson, Atkinson Partnerships Ltd (Item 10.2)

Observer: No observers

Board meeting minute prepared by Pauline McDaid post meeting from the meeting recording.

ITEM	NOTE	ACTION
	<p>WELCOME AND ORDER OF BUSINESS</p> <p>Chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting pack was issued to Members on Wednesday 20 March 2024 with a revised pack issued on Thursday 21 March 2024.</p> <p>Chair welcomed guests to the meeting and Members agreed to bring forward agenda items 10.1, 6.1 and 6.2 for discussion before item 1 on the agenda. This will allow E Byrne, JA Clocherty and T Atkinson to leave the meeting thereafter.</p> <p>Chair reminded attendees to keep presentations to a 15-minute timeframe due to the number of reports being presented at tonight's meeting.</p>	

AGENDA ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD

10.2 Repairs and Maintenance Framework: Annual review

Report Summary

T Atkinson presented a progress update on the Repairs and Maintenance Framework for the past year 2023/24.

Removals were as a result of some contractors currently on the framework showing a lack of interest and failure to respond to work requests. In addition, there was scope to add an additional roofing contractor to the framework.

T Atkinson highlighted the 4 companies who were invited to submit an application to be added to the framework and confirmed to Members that on review they all met the criteria for quality of work and competitive rates. Members noted that one company on the framework has been suspended as they are failing to respond to work requests, and this was impacting on the Associations KPIs.

D Wilson confirmed to Members that performance has improved with the appointment of the additional contractors.

Discussion

G Waddell thanked T Atkinson for their presentation.

Clarification was given to Members regarding the action taken to suspend the contractor, advising that they were not removed as there was capacity to keep them on the framework. T Atkinson confirmed that notification would be issued to the contractor to confirm their suspension.

TA / DW

D Wilson advised Members that the new contractors are responding to work orders and that was having an impact on improving KPIs.

Decision

The Board:
Noted this covering report.
Noted the progress update report from T Atkinson (**Appendix 1**).
Approved the use of the Repairs and Maintenance Framework list and approve the list and maximum uplift rates for financial year 2024/25 as detailed in **Appendix 2**.

T Atkinson left the meeting at 6.16pm

6.1 Rent Harmonisation Report

Report Summary

E Byrne delivered a summary of their presentation to provide the Board with a progress update on the rent harmonisation work currently being undertaken.

Members were advised that within the report, rent attributes applied were in relation to property size and type, analysing stock and current allocated rents.

E Byrne advised that tenants were consulted in relation to service charges and what they thought should be included in a pooled charge or separate charge.

Members were informed that the aim of the rent harmonisation process was not for the Association to gain financially but, to ensure that a fairer system is in place for rent setting. In concluding the exercise, the projected result for DPHA would

be 51% of rents being reduced and 49% of rents being raised.

E Byrne recommended meeting with tenant's who were facing an increase to their rent, to support and discuss financial implications and claims for housing benefit / universal credit.

Members were advised that 3 approaches could be taken regarding implementing changes, and they are:

- Big Bang – all rents changing with effect from April 2025.
- Capped – rents raised by a fixed amount and phased in over a planned period.
- Time – time constraint with a recommendation of 2-3 years

Members were reminded that rent calculations in the report were based on 2023 rent figures and would need to be reviewed for 2024.

Discussion G Waddell acknowledged and thanked E Byrne for the detail and layout of their presentation.

AM Brown confirmed to Members that the next stage of the process would be mapping properties and tenants and, this would advise the Association of tenants who were in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit with the information used to inform any new rent setting formulas in the future. Members were also advised that pooled charges could be included within Housing Benefit claims.

E Byrne advised Members that in their experience, Associations have introduced harmonisation via cap or time limit method and that none have gone for the big bang method. Members were advised that the model would be updated to reflect revised rent figures for 2024 and rent increase projections for next 5 years.

Decision The Board:
Noted the contents of this report.
Noted Arneil Johnston's Tenant Consultation Outcomes Report, December 2023 (**Appendix 1**).
Approved DPHA' new approach to rent setting and services charges (setting a base rent, agreeing rent attributes, changes to service charges). Convergence option was **not agreed**.

E Byrne left the meeting at 6.47 pm

6.2 Board Collective Performance Review by SHARE

Report Summary JA Clocherty presented to the Board the Draft Annual Board Appraisal Feedback Report.

During the presentation Members were given an overview of the appraisal process and advised of the inclusion of values for the first time within the process.

Members were given a summary of their service. Feedback was given on the effectiveness of Board Members in accessing resources to inform discussion and decision making. Members were advised that the outcome from this was good

as it indicated various sources were being used by Members to find out what was occurring in the housing sector.

JA Clocherty advised Members that a recommendation from the appraisal was in relation to succession planning as no-one had indicated any interest in being an office bearer and, with Members either planning or considering stepping down there was a risk to the stability of the Board.

Members were advised that there were 3 recommendations following the appraisal and in summary these were:

Data indicated Members were not confident in the succession planning for Members and consideration should also be given to the recruitment of Members. JA Clocherty acknowledged that Board recruitment is an ongoing process and the difficulties in recruiting Board Members was not isolated to DPHA. It was recommended that Board Members and senior officers discuss succession planning within the Board and, that regular updates are given to Board Members in relation to Board recruitment.

**BOARD
/AMB /
KT**

Involvement of Members in the annual assurance process to be reviewed with consideration of a working group being set up for the process.

**AMB /
KT**

Final recommendation to Members was in relation to ongoing training with a learning and development plan for each member based on appraisal results. JA Clocherty reported that chairing skills, asset management and financial management were areas highlighted for training along with net zero and decarbonisation, governance and legislation.

**AMB /
KT**

Discussion Chair thanked JA Clocherty on their report and presentation and thanked Members for their feedback on the role of the Chair.

Chair asked Members to consider suggestions regarding succession planning and commented that Members met the skill set and should be proud of their contribution and, should consider the role of Chair.

Decision The Board:
Noted the contents of this covering report.
Provided feedback to SHARE on the content of draft Feedback Report attached at **Appendix 1**.
Noted that the final report will be presented to Members at the next Board Meeting 21 May 2024.

JA Clocherty left the meeting at 7.04pm

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies received in advance of the meeting from Stephen Boag.

1.1 Approved Leave of Absence

Chair confirmed that a LOA has been approved for J Gherardi.

1.2	Non-Attendance	
	Jordan Henderson was noted as non-attendance.	
2.0	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	Chair asked for any declarations of interest; there were none to note.	
3.0	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS	
3.1	Minute of previous meeting (20 February 2024) – For Approval	
	Chair asked for accuracy and approval. There were no suggested amendments to the minute. The minutes were approved on a proposal by F Polding and seconded by D Edgar.	
3.2	PRWG Minute (12 March 2024) – For Noting	
	Chair asked for accuracy and noting. There were no suggested amendments to the draft minute. Minutes were noted .	
4.0	BOARD MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE	
Report Summary	AM Brown presented members with the following updates to the schedule. If agreed by Members, an additional meeting will be scheduled during April to review the 30-year financial projections. Point 5; Beardmore Trust to be marked as complete as it will be included within the development of community investment plan. Point 10; ROTS information submitted to Scottish Government and an application is currently pending, the deadline is 10 April 2024 after which, confirmation will be given if the funding application is successful.	
Discussion	No discussion on this report.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the content of the Matters Arising Schedule.	
5.0	CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S PROGRESS UPDATE (Confidential)	
Report Summary	Redacted from the minute for publication purposes	
Decision	The Board: Noted the contents of this report, especially: Appendix 1 - Chief Executive’s Work Objectives 2024 update. Agreed to the following: The temporary Appointment of G Waddell as the new Convenor for the PRWG up to the 31 December 2024.	
6.0	GOVERNANCE	
6.1	Rent Harmonisation Report	
	Discussed earlier in agenda.	

<p>6.2</p> <p>Report Summary</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Decision</p>	<p>Board Collective Performance Review by SHARE</p> <p>Discussed earlier in agenda.</p>	
<p>6.3</p> <p>Report Summary</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Decision</p>	<p>GFMIP Quarterly - Update Report</p> <p>AM Brown provided the Board with a progress update on actions the Association has taken to implement the areas for improvement contained within the Governance & Financial Management Improvement Plan (GFMIP).</p> <p>Members were advised of an amendment to the issued report in relation to stock survey at appendix 1, regarding one outstanding RAAC survey. Contractor has now gained access to the property and confirmed that there is no RAAC present. This confirms that DPHA has no RAAC present in the housing stock. The Regulator has been updated with this information and there is no further information required by them as they are happy with the level of assurance provided.</p> <p>No discussion on this report.</p> <p>The Board: Approved the updated GFMIP at Appendix 1.</p>	
<p>6.4</p> <p>Decision</p>	<p>Business Plan 2024/2029 - Update Report (Confidential)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Redacted from the minute for publication purposes</p> <p>The Board: Noted the progress update on the development of the new 5-year Business Plan and Strategic Delivery Plan provided in this report. Agreed to hold an additional Board meeting on 23 April 2024 to consider and approve the new 5-year Business Plan and revised 30-year financial projections. Agreed to continue to extend the end date of the current Business Plan until it is superseded by the Board approving the new Business Plan.</p>	
<p>6.5</p> <p>Report Summary</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Decision</p>	<p>Duty of Candour: Annual Report</p> <p>A Dickson provided the Board with an overview of the legal obligation of Duty of Candour.</p> <p>Members were informed of a notification that triggered a duty of candour which highlighted three areas of training that will be required for staff: customer services, SSSC code of conduct and confidentiality.</p> <p>Members were advised that on approval, the report will be placed on website and issued to Care Inspectorate and West Dunbartonshire Council.</p> <p>Chair acknowledged that the incident and action plan was handled well. No other comments were raised.</p> <p>The Board: Noted the contents of the covering report. Approved the Annual Report on Duty of Candour for 2023-24 at Appendix 1 of this report. Agreed that the Chief Executive can approve the inclusion of any additional Duty</p>	<p>AD/KT</p>

of Candour to the report if required.

7.0 STRATEGY

No reports submitted.

8.0 FINANCE

8.1 Final Draft Budget 2024/25 For Approval

Report
Summary

C Cameron presented the final draft version of the Budget for 2024/2025 with the following changes to the report issued to Members in February 2024.

Members were given a summary of section 3.17 with C Cameron highlighting the following:

- Assumptions made to salary increase – amended to 6% increase.
- Stonework contingency – final tender cost received.
- IT cost – planned maintenance software – currently still using HUB, however, we may use asset management in Homemaster and the implementation of Phase 2 of Homemaster is due in June 2024
- Property insurance – increased costs, however, this will be covered by G Bruce.
- Staffing support costs included stock condition survey consultancy cost and this has now been allocated to consultancy fees.
- Consultancy fees for pension consultation
- Cleaning and materials – included as this is an external agency who carry out this work for us.

Members were advised that this was a holding budget this year. Urgent window and bathroom replacements would be carried out during 2024/2025 with the stock condition survey results informing an investment programme for 2025/2026.

C Cameron advised Members that the Association's budget remains covenant compliant before handing over to G Bruce.

G Bruce informed Members of his meeting with Insurance Broker to review our current insurance arrangements. Members were advised that the Associations **Redacted from the minute for publication purposes** have submitted a renewal cost of £200,000.

Members were informed that the Insurance Broker has now returned with a quote from Avid, who have offered a 3-year agreement for £171,000. G Bruce recommended to Members that the Association move premiums to reflect a good deal in the current market.

Discussion

Chair acknowledged work undertaken on the budget and covenant.
No questions were raised by Members.

Decision

The Board:
Reviewed and **approved** the Final 2024/25 Draft Budget as attached in

Appendices 1 to 5

8.2 Value for Money - Annual Statement

Report Summary C Cameron presented to Members details of how Value for Money (VFM) was achieved when preparing the draft 2024/25 Budget.

Members were advised that the Association uses a zero-based budget approach, taking into account the needs of the Association and what was planned in the year ahead.

C Cameron advised Members that appendix 1; statement of comprehensive income explained how the budget figures were produced, and where tenders have been received and confirmed costs.

Discussion There was no discussion on this report.

Decision The Board:
Noted the contents of the covering report.
Approved the VFM Review for 2024/2025 attached at **Appendix 1** in terms of evidence to demonstrate VFM in preparing the draft Budget for 2024/25.

8.3 Debt Write Offs Report

Report Summary C Cameron presented the report, seeking approval to write off bad debt where there is no prospect of recovering the debt.

Members were asked to note an amendment to Appendix 1; former tenant arrear report - potential write off £1564.06 to be amended. Following contact from a former tenant, £824.60 can now be removed from the write off report. C Cameron confirmed that the amended amount was now £14239.42

Members were given of the following summary:
3 accounts of debts under £100 were written off under delegated authority.
£2001.16 were for sequestrated accounts.
£6240.75 for rechargeable repairs
£359.19 former tenant rechargeable repairs that were written off under delegated authority.

Discussion Members were advised that Stirling Park (Sherrif's Officer) were not being effective in tracing and recovering monies owed by former tenants.

Members acknowledged that Stirling Park had been used for a number of years, however requested that a review be carried out with the results presented to the Board regarding their effectiveness and reviewing the Associations relationship with them.

Following discussion, D Wilson gave Members an overview of the collection of rent arrears and, the Association's process for charging tenants for rechargeable repairs. D Wilson confirmed that former tenant arrears were sent to Stirling Park for tracing and recovery.

DW

Decision	<p>The Board:</p> <p>Noted the contents of this covering report.</p> <p>Approved the debt write off contained in Appendix 1 to the sum of £22481.33.</p> <p>Noted the debt write off of £41.82 (former tenant arrears) and £359.19 (rechargeable repairs) in relation to balances of less than £100 written off in line with the Write Off Policy.</p>
8.4	<p>Pension Report (Confidential)</p>
Report Summary	<p>Redacted from the minute for publication purposes.</p> <p><i>Standing orders were suspended at this point of the meeting.</i></p>
Discussion Decision	<p>Redacted from the minute for publication purposes</p> <p>The Board:</p> <p>Redacted from the minute for publication purposes</p> <p><i>G Bruce left the meeting at this point 8.11pm</i></p>
8.5	<p>Treasury Management - Update Report</p>
Report Summary	<p>C Cameron presented a report to the Board for approval to add the RBS (Royal Bank of Scotland), HSBC (Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd) and CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) Banking Platform to the list of approved investment institutions.</p> <p>P McNeill delivered information on CAF banking platform advising Members that 12 Scottish Registered Social Landlords currently use the CAF platform, and the platform contains 90 deposit accounts from an extensive group of banks. All money placed via the platform would have to be with organisations with the highest credit rating and meet the standard test from Fitch, Standards & Poor and Moodies.</p> <p>P McNeill confirmed to Members that the CAF platform cost an initial £500 to join with an annual fee of 0.225% based on deposit levels.</p>
Discussion	<p>P McNeill confirmed to members that the fee for the platform was reasonable for the sector given the access to wide range of deposit accounts.</p> <p>Members were advised that CAF offered more preferential rates and would supply exception reports giving information relating to revised / better rates or rate periods coming to an end.</p>
Decision	<p>The Board:</p> <p>Noted the contents of the report.</p> <p>Approved the addition of RBS, HSBC and CAF Banking Platform to the list of approved investment institutions.</p>

9.0	STAFFING	
9.1	EVH Wage Negotiation for 2024/2025 (Confidential)	
	Moved to end of agenda to allow staff to leave discussion.	
10.0	OPERATIONS	
10.1	Final Stonework Report Including Cost Summary	
Report Summary	D Wilson presented the report updating the Board on the final cost of the Stonework and Internal and External Wall Insulation project at 820 to 830 Dumbarton Road and 8 to 10 Scott Street. Members were advised that the cost summary included contribution from Scottish Government and grant funding from West Dunbartonshire Council and charges to commercial units and owner occupier properties.	
Discussion	Chair commented that it was good to see work finished and acknowledged the excellent work carried out.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the contents of this progress report. Noted the funding that has been drawn down to assist with costs. Noted the project is now complete and off site.	
10.2	Repairs and Maintenance Framework: Annual review	
	Discussed earlier in agenda.	
10.3	Development Update Report (Confidential)	
	Redacted from the minute for publication purposes	
Decision	The Board: Noted the contents of this progress update report. <i>Discussion was held around Standing Orders and Members agreed to a further extension to allow the planned business to concluded.</i>	
11.0	HEALTH AND SAFETY	
11.1	H&S Policy Updates, Annual Statement and Declaration Update Report	
Report Summary	D Wilson presented Members with an update on actions being taken to ensure the Association complies with its Health & Safety legal obligations as an employer and landlord and confirmed that there was no amendment to the report submitted.	
Discussion	There was no discussion on this report.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the general updates provided in this report. Noted the revised H&S Control Manual Sections as attached at Appendix 1. Noted that the Landlord's H&S Manual is currently being updated by EVH. Noted the Health & Safety Working Group meets on average every 6-weeks. Noted that Annual H&S Declarations will be issued to Members for acceptance on the Members by Friday, 5 April 2024.	

11.2	ACS Health & Safety Audit Report for Beardmore House, November 2023	
Report Summary	D Wilson presented Members with an updated audit report from ACS on the Association's Health & Safety provisions as an employer, which was carried out in November 2023 and confirmed that there was no amendment to the report submitted.	
Discussion	There was no discussion on this report.	
Decision	The Board: Noted the reports from the Health & Safety Audit: Beardmore House & Landlord Safety Audits carried out in November 2023 by ACS – Appendix 1 . Noted that all part-conform and non-conform actions will be monitored by the Audit & Risk Committee through the Recommendations Monitor from May 2024 onwards, until such times as the actions are complete.	
12.0	USE OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY	
	No reports.	
13.0	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS	
13.1	Correspondence	
	No correspondence submitted.	
13.2	Updated Board/Committee Workplan 2024-2025	
	No updates were presented to Members.	
14.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS	
	Chair advised of the dates of next meetings: Board Meeting: 21 May 2024 at 6pm (online) Board Meeting: 23 April 2024 at 6pm (online) Audit and Risk Meeting: 13 May 2024 at 6pm (online) <i>C Cameron, A Dickson, D Wilson and P McNeill left the meeting at 8.34pm</i>	
9.0	STAFFING	
9.1	EVH Wage Negotiation for 2024/2025 (Confidential)	
	Redacted from the minute for publication purposes	
Decision	The Board: Approved EVH's recommended wage proposal for 2024/2025 as attached at Appendix 1 , which is an increase of 6% on all salary points (bar points PA1 to PA6 which will be increased to the set rate for the Real Living Wage of £12.00 per hour). This increase will also be applied to all allowances, bar the standard HMRC fixed mileage allowance. Noted the ballot paper will be completed by the Chief Executive as Secretary and returned to EVH by the deadline date of 28 March 2024.	AMB
	The meeting closed at 8.38pm	

Signed G Waddell Date 21.05.2024
(Chairperson)