

ABERTAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Wednesday 28 August 2023 17:00

Present: Ron Neave (Chair), Kath Mands (Vice-Chair), Denis Brown, Paul Crichton, Darren Keddie and Alan Fraser.

The following joined via Video Conferencing: Kevin Braidwood and Vicki Cutler.

In Attendance: Barry Moore (CE), Marjorie Sloan (CSD and Secretary), Roz Clark (CSO) and Clare Talbot (TIO).

23/08/01 Apologies

Ian Byers.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23/08/02 Declarations of Conflicting Interests

No Member declared a conflicting interest.

Asset Management & Development Committee Reports (AM&DC)

23/08/03 AM&DC Meeting 15 July 2023

The Chair of the AM&DC provided an update on the meeting which took place on 15 July 2023.

The CE confirmed that there were still issues with Scottish Water which were affecting the progress of the Development plans. He stressed that it was hoped that these would be resolved in the near future. Board **noted** the AM&DC Report.

Audit, Finance & Risk Management Committee Reports (AF&RMC)

23/08/04 AF&RMC Meeting 10 August 2023

The Chair of the AF&RMC provided an update on the meeting which took place on 10 August 2023.

The items recommended to the Board for approval were:

- Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023 and the Chair of the Board, the Chair of the AF&RMC and the Secretary were asked to sign them.
- Letter of Representation and the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the AF&RMC were asked to sign it.
- The Audited Financial Statements Return and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board were asked to sign and the CSD to submit it to the SHR.

Board **noted** the AF&RMC report.

Board **noted** the Audit Summary Report.

Board **noted** the Treasury and Investment Management Activity in the quarter as set out at s2.14 of 23/08/09, Management Accounts to 30 June 2023.

Board **approved** the Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 March 2023 and for the Chair of the Board, the Chair of the AF&RMC and the Secretary to sign them.

Board **approved** the Letter of Representation and asked the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the AF&RMC to sign it.

Board **approved** the Audited Financial Statements Return and asked the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board to sign and the CSD to submit it to the SHR.

Board Reports

23/08/05 Minute of Board Meeting 24 May 2023 and Tracker

The Chair talked through the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2023 and asked for comments. There were no amendments.

Approved. Proposed Kath Mands, Seconded Darren Keddie.

The CSD talked through the Tracker. The CE provided an update highlighting that Personal Development Plans would be considered in September 2023. He reported that the development plans were still being held up by issues relating to Scottish Water. He confirmed that a separate report on the maintenance of lifts would be provided to the AM&DC and Board. The CE also provided an update on the Business Continuity Guide.

23/08/06 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

23/08/07 Chair's Actions / Decisions between meetings

The CE presented the report and confirmed there had been no Chair's Actions since the previous Board Meeting on 24 May 2023; the Chair confirmed this to be the case.

Board **noted** the report.

23/08/08 Confidential Chief Executive's 2023 Annual Appraisal

The Chair confirmed that all Board Members had received a copy of the CE's Annual Appraisal and asked for comments. There were no comments and the CE thanked the Board Members for their continued support.

Board **noted** the report.

23/08/09 Confidential Bank Signatories

The CSD talked through the report highlighting that following the resignation of the Asset Manager the bank requires the Board to approve a change to the signatories on accounts. The CSD advised that access to electronic banking had already been cancelled. The CSD highlighted that the Association did not plan to add an additional signatory. She reported that the previous Asset Manager also held an Association credit card which had been cancelled on the day following her resignation and a replacement card was applied for in the name of [REDACTED] with the same credit limit of £1,000.

Board **approved** the changes to authorised signatories as detailed below:

- A replacement credit card in the name of [REDACTED].
- Removing [REDACTED] as a signatory to the RBS accounts, including the credit card and on line banking.

We resolve that:

- if we add or remove Authorised Signatories in the "Add or Remove Authorised Signatories" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
- if we change the Signing Rules in the "Change the Signing Rules on the Mandate" section on the "About your request" page of this form, the Bank will update our mandate accordingly for the accounts we specify in this form's "About your business" section
- and the current mandate will continue as amended.

23/08/10 AGM Arrangements and Board Election

The CSD presented the report confirming the details and plans in place for the forthcoming AGM which was to be held on Wednesday 20 September 2023 in Dryburgh Gardens, Retirement Housing Complex. The CSD reported that it would be a hybrid event allowing members to attend virtually as well as in person. The CSD talked through the current Board Membership and vacancies and

highlighted that there were three members who had reached their third anniversary. This year Kath, Denis and Vicki would be required to stand down. All three had intimated that they are willing to put themselves forward for re-election. The CSD reported that Kath had continuous service which meant that in this year the 9-year rule applied and as a consequence the Board would need to consider her continued effectiveness as a Board Member. It was also noted that Kath's appraisal, which would include a 9-year rule review, was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 5 September 2023.

Kath left the meeting.

The Board discussed Kath's effectiveness on the Board, and it was unanimously agreed that her contribution was invaluable and that she should remain on the Board, subject to her appraisal.

Kath rejoined the meeting and was advised of the Board's decision. Kath thanked the Board.

The CSD confirmed in writing, as per Rule 68, that Rules 62 to 67 had been followed. She explained that these rules relate to the use of the seal, the keeping of the Register of Members, display of the Association's name and keeping of books.

Board **noted** the AGM Arrangements and Board Election.

23/08/11 Internal Management Plan: Quarter 1

The CE presented the report and gave a comprehensive and detailed update on the Internal Management Plan.

The CE reported that an internal meeting of the H&S Steering Group had taken place but that a further meeting with the Board Member present would take place in Quarter 2. He highlighted that all Fire Risk Assessments would be carried out during the 2023/24.

The CE reported that a separate Lift Maintenance Report would be presented to the AM&DC followed by Board.

There followed discussion on a number of items including Board recruitment. It was noted that the internal Management Plan was very comprehensive.

Board **noted** the Internal Management Plan: Quarter 1.

23/08/12 Operational Performance Report KPIs: Quarter 1

The CE talked through the report and KPIs in detail. As previously reported, he reiterated that the IMP and KPIs combined provided Board with a comprehensive understanding of how the Association was progressing and performing.

The CE reported that, as agreed by Board in May, there were now 92 KPIs. He gave a comprehensive and detailed overview and update on the new KPIs as highlighted in the appendix.

The CE provided a more detailed update on acquisitions and disposals, income management, voids, customer services, health and safety, gas safety and planned maintenance.

Board asked for clarification on the decision to set a target of 100% for 'Rent collected as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year' as this seemed an almost impossible target to achieve. Following detailed discussion, it was agreed that the target would be changed to 98%.

There followed discussion on lettings and void property re-let times in particular with Board asking whether the target of <21 days was realistic. The CE confirmed that prior to the Covid pandemic the Association had met the target and therefore there was an expectation and desire to achieve it again. He stressed that, as previously reported, the condition properties were being returned was making achieving the target a very difficult challenge.

Board **noted** the Operational Performance Report KPIs: Quarter 1 and agreed to the change of target to 98-100% for Rent collected as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year.

23/08/13 SHR Communication and Correspondence

The CE talked through the report highlighting the three communications received during the Quarter. The first being the SHR national discussion on the future of social housing regulation in Scotland which

had been discussed at the Board Away Day on 15th July. The second was a request from the SHR for further information on two gas servicing cases which had been reported in the ARC and was duly provided. The final correspondence received from the SHR had been sent to all Associations with advice on preparing Annual Assurance Statements.

Board **noted** the SHR Communication and Correspondence.

23/08/14 Risk Management Tables: Quarter 1

The CE talked through the report highlighting that the August meeting was where the full risk management tables were presented to Board. He reported that updates to the Risk Management Tables were highlighted in blue. The CE reported that the only change to the Top 10 Serious and Significant Risks was in relation to the description of risk factors associated with Net Zero Carbon.

The CE gave a detailed update on the changes within each heading.

There followed a detailed discussion on Net Zero Carbon aspirations with the costs of air source heat pumps versus gas boilers being a significant factor. It was noted that there were concerns in relation to the timescales being set by the Scottish Government. Board suggested that it may be prudent to produce a 30 Year Financial Plan based on costs associated with achieving net zero which would highlight that the timescales were not achievable. The CE confirmed that all future developments would be required to meet Net Zero Carbon commitments. He reported that until technology improved and, as a consequence, costs were reduced it was unaffordable to replace gas boilers with air source heat pumps or equivalent in all other properties at this time.

Board **approved** the Ten Most Serious and Significant Risks and the complete tables in respect of: Corporate Governance, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Housing Services and Property Services.

23/08/15 Health and Safety Quarterly Report: Quarter 1

The CE talked through the report highlighting the five areas covered: Asbestos, Electrical, Gas, Legionella and Lifts.

The CE highlighted that Asbestos KPI.

The CE provided an update on the Five Year Electrical Safety Checks highlighting that the position at the end of Q1 showed that 99.24% of the housing stock had five year electrical inspection certificates.

The CE provided an update on Gas Safety Checks highlighting that 100% of properties had an up to date Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate.

The CE highlighted that legionella testing and Lift testing and maintenance had been carried out as detailed in the appendices.

Board asked whether tree maintenance would be included in the KPI reporting. The CE explained that it was not intended to include it in the KPI report. He highlighted that a report on tree maintenance had been presented at the previous AF&RMC and subsequently Board. There followed discussion on the Association's obligation to plant trees on new developments, the CE confirmed that it was not unusual to have planning condition for every tree cut down to plant at least two trees.

Board **noted** the Health and Safety Quarterly Report: Quarter 1.

23/08/16 Rent Arrears Report: Quarter 1

The CE presented the report highlighting the excellent progress being made by the Income Team. He talked through paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 which showed the figures before and after universal credit payments had been taken into account. The CE gave a comprehensive overview of the legal action for rent arrears.

Following a query by Board in relation to the figures provided for bad and doubtful debt write-offs, the CE gave a detailed overview and explanation in relation to bad and doubtful debts.

Board **noted** the Rent Arrears Report: Quarter 1 Report.

23/08/17 Former Tenant Arrears Write-Offs: Quarter 1

The CE presented the report. He gave an overview of the six cases reported in Q1, highlighting that the write-offs were relatively low and with the work being carried out by the Income Team the figures continued to reduce.

Board **approved** the Former Tenant Arrears Write-Offs: Quarter 1 Report.

23/08/18 Voids Reasons for Termination of Tenancies: Quarter 1

The CE presented the report highlighting that it provided previous years data in order to make a comparison and to show progress. He highlighted para 2.1.1 and the Appendix which provided further detail on terminations.

Board asked whether the ARC required such detail and it was confirmed that there was information provided via the ARC but not at the same level of detail as provided in the report. There followed discussion on post Covid trends with the CE reporting that at present there was a stable tenant base. He reiterated that a successful planned maintenance programme would have a positive influence on tenant sustainability.

Board **noted** the Voids Reasons for Termination of Tenancies: Quarter 1 Report.

23/08/19 Void Rent Loss Report: Quarter 1

The CE gave a comprehensive update which confirmed the continued progress and good performance figures. He stressed that the Association's Void Rent Loss figures were extremely low. As previously reported, he reiterated the correlation between the figures in respect of the ending of tenancies and the reletting of tenancies.

Board asked why it appeared that general needs properties took longer to re-let than retirement or supported housing. The CE highlighted that, as previously reported, the number of general needs properties which had been returned in a poor condition had increased and as a consequence the re-let times were longer.

Board **noted** the Void Rent Loss Report: Quarter 1.

23/08/20 Tenant Allowances Report: Quarter 1

The CE presented the report on behalf of the Housing Manager highlighting that there had been six tenant allowances approved in Quarter 1. He gave a comprehensive update on one case in particular explaining that the payment to the tenant had been in relation to relocating the family.

Board **noted** the Tenant Allowances Report: Quarter 1.

23/08/21 Acquisitions and Disposals

The CSD talked through the report. The CSD confirmed that since the last report the Association had purchased 2 properties with both receiving grant funding. She confirmed that a further 3 properties were pending acquisition with two having grant offers accepted and an application submitted for the third.

There followed discussion on the benefits of buying back stock and how dialogue with owners in blocks where the Association owned the majority of properties was key. The CE confirmed that reports would be taken to Board where the Association was considering the purchase of properties outwith the Policy.

Board **noted** the Acquisitions and Disposals Report.

23/08/22 Procurement Quarterly Report: Quarter 1

The CSD presented the report highlighting that there had been one tender over £50k awarded with the reporting period. The tender was in respect of the External Fabric Works Contract which was awarded to Andrew Shepherd Construction on 22 May 2023.

The CE gave an overview of the works which would be carried including roofs, balconies and windows. Board **noted** the report.

23/08/23 Value for Money Annual Report

The CSD presented the report, highlighting that the report updated the figures and commentary as reported in August 2022.

The CSD talked through the appendices which provided the explanatory information and statistics.

Board **noted** the Value for Money Annual Report.

23/08/24 Written Resolution Report

The CSD talked through the report which provided confirmation of the two written resolutions which had been agreed since the Board Meeting on 24 May 2023.

Board **noted** the Written Resolution Report

23/08/25 CGPR: Share Membership Policy

The CE talked through the report highlighting that, whilst the Policy had been approved in February 2022, a number of amendments had been identified to correspond with the Association's Rules.

Board **approved** the revised Share Membership Policy.

23/08/26 HRPR: Attendance and Absence Management Policy

The Chair presented the report.

The CE highlighted that the Policy had last been approved in August 2020 and was therefore due for review. He explained that, following agreement by Board, the CSO would send this Policy and the subsequent two which were on the agenda to all staff requesting that they sign to say they have read and understood them.

Board asked whether policies were checked by the Association's solicitors as it had been noted in the IMP that Employment Contracts were being reviewed by them and there would therefore be a crossover with the documents. The CE and CSO confirmed that certain HR Policies were reviewed by the Associations solicitors and indeed the CSO reported that there was regular dialogue relating to HR documents such as contracts.

Board **approved** the Attendance and Absence Management Policy

23/08/27 HRPR: Disciplinary Policy

The CSD presented the report.

The CE highlighted that the Policy had last been approved in August 2020.

Board **approved** the Disciplinary Policy.

23/08/28 HRPR: Grievance Policy

The CSD presented the report.

The CE highlighted that the Policy had last been approved in August 2020.

Board **approved** the Grievance Policy.

23/08/29 Share Membership Update

The CSO presented the report.

Board **approved** the Share Membership Update

23/08/30 Board Training Updates

The CSO presented the report.

Board **noted** the Board Training update.

23/08/31 **Confidential** Review of the Property Services Department

The CE reported that the focus of this report was on the managerial aspects of the department and that a further report relating to the wider department would follow in due course.

The CE gave an overview of the current managerial structure and of the proposed structure. He highlighted that since February the proposed structure had, to all intents and purposes, been in effect. The result of moving from two managers to one had seen the department running more efficiently and effectively. He stressed that whilst there were costs savings associated with the change that had not been the driving force when considering the change.

Board asked for assurance that the removal of a key role would not have a detrimental effect on either the incumbent of the new role or indeed the service provided to tenants. The CE highlighted that a transformation training plan was in place to provide the Property Services Manager with the skills necessary to carry out the additional duties. He stressed that the current Maintenance Manager who would be taking up the role of Property Services Manager had many years of experience and was keen to take on the challenges of the new role. The CE reassured Board that he was satisfied that the role could be carried out by one individual with the support of himself and a strong team. He highlighted that the wider department review would ensure that the correct competency levels of staff were in place to support the Property Services Manager while maintaining the efficiency and effectiveness of the department.

Board **approved** the proposed Managerial Structure where the Association operates with one Property Services Manager within the Property Services Department.

23/08/32 AOB

1. The CE explained that a Board Meeting would take place immediately after the AGM on 20 September 2023 and that an Agenda and Papers would be sent out on 13 September 2023.

[REDACTED]

3. The CE thanked the Board for their flexibility and agreement in changing the date of this meeting from 30 August to 28 August 2023.

Meeting closed at 19.00hrs.