

ABERTAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minutes of the Board Meeting

Wednesday 23 October 2024 17:00

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

The following joined via Video Conferencing: Kevin Braidwood.

In Attendance: Barry Moore (CE), Marjorie Sloan (CSD and Secretary), Clare Talbot (CSO). Linda Ewart attended via Video Conferencing up to agenda item 24/10/06.

24/10/01 Apologies

Apologies were received from Ian Byers. In accordance with Rule 44.3 of the Association's Rules Vicki Cutler had been granted 'special leave of absence'.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Linda who would be present at the meeting until Agenda Item 24/10/06.

24/10/02 Declarations of Conflicting Interests

No Member declared a conflicting interest.

24/10/03 Minute of Board Meeting 18 September 2024 and Tracker

The Chair talked through the minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 and asked for comments.

Approved. Proposed Denis Brown, **Seconded** Paul Crichton.

The CSD talked through the tracker highlighting a draft of the ICT Policy for Members will be presented to Members in due course. A number of the items raised at the August 2024 Board Meeting would be addressed at the November 2024 Board Meeting.

24/10/04 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

24/10/05 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 18 September 2024; the Chair confirmed this to be the case.

Board **noted** the report.

24/10/06 Confidential Board Appraisals: Board Feedback Report 2023 – Presented by Linda Ewart

The Chair welcomed Linda to the meeting.

Linda thanked all Board Members for their input at the individual appraisals. Linda stressed that whilst each appraisal had been confidential in nature the report highlighted the overall assessment of the Board and governance of the Association.

Linda provided a comprehensive review of the Board Members' Appraisals findings, highlighting that overall, it reflected that the governance of the Association was good and strong. Linda reported that it was evident this year that everyone was coming from the same consensus and demonstrated a good understanding of the bigger picture, and it was clear the Board's attention had been very focused.

Linda reported that the Association had performed well, in particularly difficult times, and that it was evident that the Board were able to adapt to the challenges they faced. In particular she noted that the Board prioritised issues such as focusing on existing stock and asset investment, with a cautious approach to net zero.

Linda highlighted that the Board composition showed a strong and broad knowledge, with Members bringing their relevant skills, knowledge and interests to meetings. The strengths of the Board were in their decision making, robust discussions and ability to allow individuals to challenge.

Linda reported that Board Members had agreed that they were well informed with the quality of the reports and input of senior Staff being a major factor.

Linda talked through points for consideration which were highlighted in the report. In particular she highlighted the importance of Board Member recruitment and succession planning to maintain Board Membership and strengthen resilience. Linda highlighted the importance of the Board getting together in person and having networking events and pointed out that the Board Away Days had been extremely well received by Members.

Linda concluded that governance was very good, and the report reflected this. Linda confirmed that she would provide a copy of the slides.

The Board asked about the challenges associated with recruiting Board Members. Linda reported that there were some good results from a variety of approaches, using a recruitment agent as well as various in-house efforts via social media campaigns and the more traditional methods of advertising. Linda suggested the Association could co-opt three members, using a targeted approach, stating a number of housing associations had found this approach successful.

Linda left the meeting.

The CE stated that a recruitment exercise in respect of Board Members will begin in the coming weeks. The Board will be informed once the exercise begins and where this will be advertised. The CE asked Board Members to promote the exercise from both a professional and personal perspective and to pass the details of any interested persons on to him.

Board **noted** the report.

24/10/07 2024 Annual Assurance Statement

The CE presented the report. The CE talked through Appendix 1 which highlighted all of the Board reports presented throughout the year. The CE also talked through Appendix 2 which was the External Auditor, Alexander Sloan's, Audit Summary Report relating to governance matters and highlighted the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The CE provided an overview of the Internal Audits carried out in the previous year stating that the Association is Fully Compliant with the Regulatory Framework.

The CSD provided a comprehensive overview of the Annual Assurance Statement Evidence and Action Plan Framework. The CSD highlighted documents such as the Internal Management Plan, Operational Performance Report Key Performance Indicators and Risk Management Tables. The CSD highlighted changes to Standards following the publication of the updated Regulatory Framework in February 2024. These were highlighted in green.

Two clear themes emerged, which were Tenants Voice and Health and Safety. A draft of the 2024 Annual Assurance Statement was discussed by Board and unanimously agreed to its submission.

Board **approved** the Association's 2024 Annual Assurance Statement and authorised the Chair to sign the Statement on behalf of the Board and the Association.

24/10/08 National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter – 2023-2024

The CE talked through the report. The CE commented that the environment in which the Association was operating is accurately reflected in paragraphs one and two of the Report, highlighting the theme of significant challenges in relation to costs and maintaining affordability.

The CE talked through the headline findings highlighting in particular the areas that mattered most to tenants, such as emergency repair response times, quality of homes, rent value for money, neighbourhood management, antisocial behaviour case resolution and complaints.

The CE stressed that as with previous years the rent increase would need to be realistic in order to meet the Association's obligations in respect of its obligations to tenants, particularly with regard to planned maintenance.

The CE gave a comprehensive overview of the analysis in the report. The CSD highlighted the issues in relation to adaptations and the lengthy delay in the grant being awarded for adaptations, highlighting only £56,100.00 was awarded this year, which was half of the award from the previous year. A discussion ensued in relation to adaptations. The CE recommended that the Association would continue to carry out the adaptations on properties despite the substantial decrease in grant.

The CE concluded that despite the significant challenges the Association has already encountered and will continue to encounter, the CE is optimistic for the future that the Association has both the human resource and financial capacity to navigate through the challenges.

Board **noted** the National Report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter – 2023-2024.

24/10/09 SHR Landlord Report 2023/24

The CE provided a comprehensive overview of the SHR Landlord Report. The CE highlighted that while the statistics were very positive in some areas, there was work to be done to improve satisfaction in other areas. The CE highlighted the appointment of the new Tenant Involvement Officer and how the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy Group continues to play an integral role in identifying ways of improving satisfaction levels. The CE stated the comprehensive Tenant Satisfaction Survey will be circulated later this financial year.

Board queried the size of properties and proportioned rent charges. The CE stated a rent restructure may cause potential issues, and an external rent consultant would need to be appointed for this process to take place. There followed discussion around a rent restructure and the impact this may have on the Association and tenants.

The CE stated the Landlord Report was credit to the commitment of the Association's staff.

Board **noted** the SHR Landlord Report 2023/24.

24/10/10 CGPR: Code of Conduct for Board Members Policy

The CE presented the report. The CE highlighted the SFHA had issued a revised suite of documents dated October 2024. These replace the current documents.

The CE advised that implementing the new model Code of Conduct will ensure compliance with best practice and Regulatory Standards.

Board **approved** adoption of the revised Code of Conduct for Board Members and agreed to sign a copy.

Board **approved** adoption of the:

- Supporting Guidance to the Code of Conduct for Board Members
- Protocol for Managing an Alleged Breach of the Code of Conduct for Board Members
- Guidance on implementing the Protocol for Managing and Alleged Breach of the Code of Conduct for Board Members.

24/10/11 HRPR: Code of Conduct for Staff

The CE talked through the report. The CE explained the SFHA had issued a revised suite of documents dated October 2024. These will replace the current Code and its Appendix.

Implementing the new model Code of Conduct will ensure compliance with best practice and with Regulatory Standard 5.

Staff will be asked to sign the statement of Acceptance and Signature of the Code of Conduct for Staff
Board **approved** the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct for staff and request all staff sign a copy.

24/10/12 PSPR: Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy

The CE stated a report will be presented at the November 2024 Board Meeting.

23/10/13 Board Training Updates

The CSO advised that 2 Board Members, the CSD and the FM will be attending the Finance Conference in November 2024. The CSO advised that should any Members wish to attend training detailed in the planner to get in touch with the CSO.

Board **noted** the report.

23/10/14 AOB

1. Oak Gardens

The CE referred to the Confidential Board Report that was provided to Board Members on 5 October 2024. The CE confirmed that he will provide a further report at the November 2024 Board Meeting.

2. Board Evening Event

Plans for a Board Evening Event were discussed. The CSO will circulate dates and suggestions for a venue are welcome.

Meeting closed at 18.40hrs.