



MINUTE OF THE BOARD MEETING

24 April 2019

Present: N Hicks (Chair); R Hutton (Vice-Chair)

A Clark; D McEwan; K McLeod; S Mills; F Roslewski; A Scott;
C Tait; M Trant

G Russell (Secretary)

In attendance: C Hughes, A Hay, K Miller

Apologies: S Brydon; M Hodgson; S McPhee

G Russell advised that T Kelly had submitted her resignation from both the Board of MEHA and MEAL, due to work commitments. The Chair asked members to note that he had passed on his thanks to T Kelly for her services to the Association.

He asked members to note that a further nomination will therefore be required for the MEAL Board.

ACTION

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from S Brydon, M Hodgson and S McPhee. Members also noted that K McLeod is currently on leave of absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

N Hicks – Board member and treasurer of The Action Group, and member of SHAPS Pensions Employers Committee

R Hutton – Employee of Port of Leith Housing Association. Through work, also has relationship with Lothian Gas, Mitie and Greenfingers.

D McEwan and C Tait – tenants of Manor Estates Housing Association

F Roslewski – receives factoring services from the Association

S Mills – Works at Changeworks

3 Risk Management Issues / Health & Safety Issues / Notifiable Events

None.

4 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 March 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2019 were approved as a true record.

5 Matters Arising

None.

6 Board Actions

Noted.

7 Matters for Approval / Decision

7(i) Impairment Review

G Russell introduced the report that had been circulated previously. He confirmed that this is an annual update and that there are no issues of concern.

Members noted that a revaluation exercise is to be carried out in the coming year, and that the Association's lender will identify consultant to carry this out.

Members approved the report.

7(ii) Review of Entitlements, Payments and Benefits 2018/19

G Russell introduced the report that had been circulated previously.

There was some discussion regarding the inclusion of invitations that were received and declined, members noted that this practice operates in accordance with the Association's Policy.

Members approved the report.

7(iv) CEO Recruitment

The Chair advised members that the sub-committee had considered presentations from 3 out of the 9 companies who had expressed an interest in managing the recruitment and had subsequently appointed Aspen.

He confirmed that the post has now been advertised and potential applicants can access a micro site with details of the post and the organisation. The sub-committee is meeting on Tuesday 21 May to sift applications. It is proposed that 8 applicants will be selected for long-list interviews to be held on 28 May, with 4 to be selected for further interview on 4 June. It is hoped that the successful candidate will be in post within 3 months thereafter.

Members noted that applications and queries are to be submitted directly to Aspen, therefore it is not known if any applications have been received as yet.

Members noted the position.

8 Matters for Information

7(iii) Strategic Options Appraisal

The Chair introduced the options appraisal matrix that had been completed and submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), in response to their request for further information about what discussions had taken place prior to the Board taking the decision to appoint a new Chief Executive rather than other options that might be available.

The Chair confirmed that the SHR has now responded that they are happy that they have been provided with sufficient information to confirm that they consider the Association is in a position to remain as a viable independent organisation.

Members debated whether there should have been wider discussion about the information prior to it being submitted to the SHR. It was noted that the matrix submitted was supported by an extensive range of evidence and additional information.

It was agreed that this item should be moved to Matters for Noting as it was not for approval.

8(i) Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Programme Outcome 2018/19

A Hay introduced the report that had been circulated previously and invited questions from members.

Members were concerned that 3 projects were over budget by more than 5% and that this had not been brought to the Board's attention at an earlier stage as required by the Association's financial regulations.

G Russell acknowledged the failure as the senior officer and undertook to ensure that this is more closely monitored and reported to the Board more regularly, at least quarterly. Members requested that any issues with overspend should also be highlighted in the covering paper.

GR

K Miller confirmed that the financial covenants are not risk as a result of the overspend.

Members noted the report.

8(ii) Health and Safety Update

G Russell introduced the report that had been circulated previously.

He confirmed that following a minor fire at Greenlaw Rig, additional fire risk assessments were carried out at all 3 retirement schemes. He further confirmed that the report had been received on the day of the meeting and makes a number of minor recommendations that will be carried out.

GR

Members noted the report.

8(iii) Insurance Update

K Miller introduced the report that had been circulated previously, noting that it is a requirement of the internal auditor that this is reported to the Board.

She confirmed that the higher cost for owners is due to the assessment of claims and values which are higher in factored properties than tenanted.

K Miller further confirmed that the amounts of excess are £50 for owners, £250 for tenanted properties. There is regular consideration of the impact of increasing the amount of the excess, however this would require to be significant to enable any reduction in premiums.

Members noted the report.

8(iv) Key Performance Indicators

G Russell introduced the report that had been circulated previously.

C Hughes drew members' attention to the figures relating to days to relet properties and confirmed that the other issues referred to in the report were 8 cases where applicants refused at first contact and 2 refusals following viewing.

G Russell confirmed that the ARC will be presented to Board for approval at the May Board meeting and that many of the figures presented in the KPI report will be reflected there.

Members noted the report.

8(v) Complaint Monitoring

Members noted the report.

8(vi) Staffing Report

Members noted the report.

8(vii) 2019/20 SHR Engagement Plan

G Russell introduced the report that had been circulated previously. He confirmed that the plan is a public document available on the Association's website and the SHR website.

In respect of the regulatory self-assessment process, G Russell confirmed that information in relation to 5 of the 7 indicators has been submitted to the internal auditor for review and that outcomes will be reported to the Board in May and June.

Members noted the report.

8(viii) Programme for Board Away Day

G Russell confirmed that the agenda can be adjusted if there are other issues the Board want to be included. It was agreed that the information in respect of common failures should be circulated prior to the event and need not be discussed in detail.

GR

Members were asked to notify G Russell of any additional items for discussion by Friday 3 May 2019.

9 Annual Collective Assessment Review

The Chair introduced the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. He thanked members for taking part and confirmed the outcomes will be used to develop training and development of structure of board meetings.

G Russell noted that there are some conflicting views on issues around board meetings, for example, too much/not enough information in reports and it would be useful for staff to have some clarity on what is required. Following some discussion, that demonstrated that there are differing views on these issues, it was agreed that matters should be discussed at the Board Away Day on 1 June and that the report should be shared with consultant Linda Ewart.

GR

S Mills left meeting during consideration of this item.

10 Any Other Competent Business

(i) External Auditor

K Miller formally notified the Board that Scott Moncrieff will be joining with Campbell Dallas as part of the CogitalGroup.

11 Date and time of next meeting: 29 May 2019

The meeting closed at: 19.20