



## MINUTE OF THE BOARD MEETING

27 November 2019

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

A Clark; D McEwan; S Mills;  
F Roslewski; A Scott; C Tait;

C Ironside (Secretary)

**In attendance:** A Hay, A Fraser

**Apologies:** S Brydon, S McPhee, M Trant

### ACTION

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from S Brydon, S McPhee and M Trant.

#### 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  
D McEwan and C Tait – tenants of Manor Estates Housing Association  
F Roslewski – receives factoring services from the Association  
S Mills – employee of Changeworks

#### 3 Discussion of SWOT and PEST Analysis

Members discussed the SWOT and PEST analysis included in the Association's Corporate Plan and agreed a number of minor changes. A member questioned whether stock valuation information should be added as a Weakness and there was additional discussion about concerns relating to both number of and length of voids, whether the Association had any properties classed as difficult to let, where multiple repairs or component replacements were being carried out. A Hay clarified that the 5 yearly stock valuation exercise included measures of these variables, and confirmed the next valuation is programmed for spring 2020. In addition A Fraser and A Hay highlighted regular monthly checks are carried out on properties with multiple repairs and no repairs, by the operational teams.. A Hay suggested the background statistics

requested by the Valuation team be shared with the Board as context. C Ironside agreed to review background statistics for previous valuation exercise and prepare the specification for the upcoming valuation.

In response to a member's query, C Ironside agreed to review environmental issues and include these as part of a PESTLE rather than PEST analysis.

#### **4 Risk Management Issues / Health & Safety Issues / Notifiable Events**

##### **Outstanding Notifiable Event**

Ref 1003264 - citation re court action, referred to insurer. No update.

#### **5 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 October 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting, proposed by R Hutton and seconded by C Tait.

#### **6 Matters Arising**

##### **Agenda Item 10(ii) KPI**

It was agreed the option 'Don't Know' should be changed to 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' to reflect the wording used by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

#### **7 Board Actions**

In relation to the Tenant Handbook, A Fraser confirmed that this should be finalised by the beginning of December 2019. 19

#### **8 Minutes of Sub Committee or Subsidiary Meetings**

##### **8 (i) MEAL Board 21 November 2019**

The draft minute of the meeting held on 21 November had not been completed on time to be included with the papers, it will be carried forward until the January meeting.

#### **9 Matters for Approval / Decision**

##### **9 (i) Policies for Approval**

It was noted that in future when policies were being revised there would be a clear separation between policy and the accompanying procedures.

- **Stress Management**  
Following discussion, the policy was approved.
- **Attendance and Absence Management**

In response to member's query, it was confirmed that we still had one staff member on old conditions<sup>1</sup>.

C Ironside agreed to investigate how the Association deals with situations where a member of staff returns to work while on a fit note.

Staff confirmed that individual absences are monitored on a monthly basis.

Emergency Leave – Unpaid – S Mills queried about when emergency leave would be unpaid

With regard to staff undergoing IVF Treatment, it was noted that the issue of whether this should not be treated as sick leave would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Following discussion, members approved the policy.

- **Flexible Working**

Noted typo on page 2, this will be corrected.

In respect of the Appeal Process, it was noted that the appeal would go to same manager, any appeal should be heard by either the Director or CEO.

C Ironside discussed using track changes to inform Board of Policy amendments and members agreed they were happy with that format.

## **9 (ii) Regulatory Self-Assessment Action Plan**

It was agreed that Items 1.2 and 1.4 to be added to the SMT report.

It was further agreed that the deadline for item 2.1 be amended to January 2020 and item 2.2 to be included under note to accounts on senior manager remuneration

Following discussion, members approved the Action Plan, subject to the changes noted above.

## **10 Matters for Information**

### **10(i) Pre-Budget 2020/21**

In response to a question about the role of a Business Intelligence/Compliance Officer C Ironside confirmed this potential role was to provide a split between those carrying out the data preparation and those carrying out the analysis. It would hopefully provide the Association with an opportunity to increase its understanding and interrogation of the data it collects.

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<sup>1</sup> Post meeting note – that member of staff has now resigned  
<C:\Users\smckay\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\90VF8HQI\06 November 2019.docx>  
<J:\Board\MEETINGS\Minutes\Financial Year April 2019 – March 2020\06 November 2019.docx>

In response to a query about a Public Relations Officer C Ironside confirmed staff currently carry out this function but are not qualified professionals. It would be useful to have this type of resource to assist raising the profile of the Association and to help attract new Board members. C Ironside advised that we were just exploring options at the moment and it may prove not to be financially viable to fund an actual post.

With regard to HR support, members questioned why we were we considering this when EVH currently provide this service. C Ironside explained that there were no HR experts in the Association and we therefore relied heavily on EVH and sometimes we needed a quicker response when dealing with sensitive situations. Similar to the other two posts, the considerations are at an early stage and it may not manifest itself as additional posts but contractual arrangements with other organisations that are experts in the their specific field.

Members noted the report.

#### **10(ii) Board Meeting Schedule 2020**

C Ironside confirmed that dates for the away days are still to be confirmed.

Members noted the report.

#### **10(iii) SMT Report**

One member commented that the report was very informative. The Board agreed to keep the report at the end of the agenda and that is was for noting only.

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### **11 Any Other Competent Business**

#### **(i) Development Opportunity**

C Ironside advised members that she and A Hay met with CEC officials to discuss development potential. They had received positive feedback and staff have had subsequent discussion with CALA Homes regarding a possible development in South Queensferry. -C Ironside and A Hay attended South Queensferry Community Council meeting (Nov 2019) where CALA presented their development plans for 2 sites in South Queensferry. C Ironside advised Board that dependent on funding/cost the Association would look at new development of social or mid-market housing in the area adjacent to Hopetoun Estate. C Ironside provided plans and copies of the CALA presentation to Board for information.

C Ironside confirmed decisions would be required early next year for 2021 build date. In response to a query about Development Staff support, C Ironside confirmed there had been initial discussion with another experienced organisation. In response to a query about length of

programme, A Hay considered it would be an 18 month build approximately and our property completions projected into late 2022.

In response to a query about competition for development, C Ironside advised she was not aware of any other interested parties at this stage however the development is dependent on our granting of servitude access across from Hopetoun Estate.

**(ii) SG Loan Funding for smoke detectors**

A Hay advised members the Association applied to Scottish Government for £400,000 on a 5 year interest free loan to support our programmed installation of smoke detectors. Application was submitted today and formal agreement should be received by February 2020. enquired member asked whether it could affect the Association's ability to raise private finance. A Hay clarified that the loan is to be offered on same terms as previous Scottish Government loan used for funding external wall upgrades at South Queensferry, where there were no implications to Santander funding. Feedback will be passed to Board to review.

**11 Date and time of next meeting: 29 January 2020 at 5.30 p.m.**

**The meeting closed at: 19:16**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair**