



MINUTE OF THE BOARD MEETING

28 October 2020

Present: R Hutton (Chair); A Scott (Vice-Chair)
A Clark; D Duff; N Hicks; G Kitchener; S Mills; M Trant
C Ironside (Secretary)

In attendance: C Hughes, A Hay, K Miller
P Rowsby

Apologies: None

C Ironside, Secretary, took the Chair until conclusion of Agenda Item 3.

ACTION

1 Apologies for Absence

No apologies submitted.

C Ironside advised members that F Roslewski had tendered his resignation from the Board.

2 Declarations of Interest

N Hicks	Board member and treasurer of The Action Group, and member of SHAPS
R Hutton	Employee of Port of Leith Housing Association
S Mills	Employee of Changeworks
D Duff	Tenant of Manor Estates
G Kitchener	Tenant of Manor Estates

C Ironside welcomed D Duff and G Kitchener to their first meeting as Board members, following their election at the AGM in September. She also welcomed P Rowsby who was attending the meeting as an observer.

3 Election of Office Bearers

▪ Nominations for and election of Chair

C Ironside invited nominations for the position of Chair. S Mills nominated R Hutton, seconded by A Scott. There being no other nominations for Chair, R Hutton was duly elected.

▪ Nominations for and election of Vice Chair

C Ironside invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair. R Hutton nominated A Scott, seconded by A Clark. There being no other nominations for the position. A Scott was duly elected.

▪ Appointments to Audit Committee

The following members were appointed to the Audit Committee:

A Clark; A Scott; N Hicks; M Trant
R Hutton (observer)

C Ironside thanked N Hicks and R Hutton for their contributions to the Board in their roles as Chair and Vice Chair.

C Ironside passed the chairing of the meeting to R Hutton.

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

Outstanding Notifiable Events

- Ref 1003264 - citation re court action, referred to insurer. No update
- Ref 1003661 – closure of office due to CoVid 19. (Issue re gas servicing failures has been added to this)

5 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 26 August 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 August 2020 were approved as a true record.

6 Matters Arising

Agenda Item 8(iii) Development Programme Update

A member raised concerns that the Board had not yet seen a development appraisal report in respect of the development opportunity previously discussed, however costs had been included in the Five Year Financial Plan. A Hay advised that a full appraisal report would be submitted to the Board when seeking approval to go ahead with the proposed development.

Following discussion, members noted that the Senior Management Team (SMT) will report to the Board when more detailed information is available.

7 Board Actions

- A Hay confirmed that the revised date for production of the Asset Management Strategy is January 2021 when it will be presented to the Board. **AH**
- The joint training discussion of ARCHIE Board members has now taken place. C Ironside is to discuss outcomes with other CEOs and agree how this should be progressed. **CI**
- A Hay confirmed that the revised timescales exploring Satisfaction with Repairs and Approach to Right first time with Reactive Maintenance Contractor, other RSLs and ARCHIE was due to staff focus on dealing with operational issues that have arisen as a result of home working during Covid pandemic and will be addressed once Covid pandemic backlog has been fully resolved.

8 Minutes of Committee or Subsidiary Meetings

▪ **MEAL Board 17 September 2020**

Members noted that the MEAL Board are monitoring the impact of CoVid, particularly on the level of rent arrears.

For the first time a tenant satisfaction survey had been carried out, results were positive, however outcomes were affected by long-outstanding issues in respect of landscaping that were the responsibility of the developer.

▪ **Audit Committee 14 October 2020**

A Clark, Chair of the Audit Committee, introduced the minute, highlighting in particular that the recent Internal Audit Report on Tenant Safety had identified no significant issues of concern that would require the Board’s immediate attention.

A member raised concerns that minutes of the Audit Committee are referred to the Board before being approved by members of that Committee. Following discussion, it was agreed that the draft minutes would be emailed to Audit Committee members within 10 days of the meeting to enable virtual approval prior to the following Board meeting **KM**

Post-meeting note: MEAL Board minutes will also be circulated to MEAL Board members within 10 working days of each meeting..

9 Matters for Approval / Decision

9 (i) Mid-Year Budget Review and Finance Update

K Miller introduced the report that had been circulated previously, noting that the mid-year review enables more accurate reporting of spend against

budget in the final management accounts. She drew members' attention to the main proposed amendments as outlined in the report.

K Miller confirmed that the interest cover ratio of 535% was due to spend to date being specifically less than anticipated.

In response to a question from a member regarding the proposed maintenance spend in Quarters 3 and 4, A Hay advised that it is hoped that this will be achieved and that further reports will be presented to Board in due course. She confirmed that sums of £330,000 are currently being processed and that a number of high-value projects are due to start soon.

A member commented that some permanent savings will have been achieved through lower numbers of routine repairs having been completed. A Hay also noted that some external works that were delayed due to CoVid will not now take place in the current year.

Following discussion, members approved the revised budget.

9 (ii) Policies for Approval

▪ Tree Management

A Hay introduced the report that had been circulated previously, advising members that the revised policy reflects the outcomes of previous complaints and clarifies how specific issues should be dealt with. In response to a member query, A Hay confirmed that the policy would help to address some of the issues that were identified in the First Tier Tribunal case.

Following discussion, members approved the policy.

9 (iii) Annual Assurance Statement (Regulatory Self-Assessment)

C Hughes introduced the report that had been previously circulated, noting that this reflected the work that had been done throughout the year to demonstrate compliance with the regulatory requirements.

C Hughes confirmed that the draft assurance statement requires to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the end of November 2020.

A member raised an issue regarding the recording and reporting of Board attendance. It was agreed that the existing register maintained by staff would be made available on BoardBookit. It was further agreed that the information regarding attendance would be published in the Annual Report.

**CH
CI**

C Hughes advised members that the proposed Annual Assurance Statement is in respect of the year to March 2020 and is therefore not affected by the impact of CoVid. A statement has been included in the statement to reflect the fact that work practices have been adjusted to take

account of the situation and the impact on services will be reported in the reports to be submitted to the Regulator in 2021.

Members approved the report. C Hughes advised that she would contact the Chair regarding signing of the Annual Assurance Statement for submission to the Regulator.

CH

Post-meeting note: Although the matter was not discussed at the Board meeting, subsequent discussion with the Chair confirmed that the issue of whether or not to proceed with Internal Audit of Regulatory Self-Assessment in the current financial year.

9 (iv) Financial Investment Advice

K Miller introduced the report that had been circulated previously. There was significant discussion regarding this topic with members expressing differing views on the need to seek additional independent and expert financial advice.

Following discussion, members agreed that an ad hoc meeting of the Audit Committee should be set up to consider the issue in detail. It was confirmed that the Board delegated authority to the Audit Committee to make a decision on the matter.

KM/CI

Members of the SMT and P Rowsby left the meeting at 6.25 p.m. while members considered Agenda Item 9 (v)

9 (v) Pension Consultation Update

Members approved the recommendations of the report..

Members of the SMT and P Rowsby re-joined the meeting at 6.35 p.m.

10 Matters for Information

10 (i) Mid-Year Strategic Plan Update

Noted.

10 (ii) KPIs Quarter 2

Noted.

10 (iii) Complaints Monitoring Quarter 2

A member expressed concern about the number of complaints about the Association's reactive maintenance contractor that were upheld. C Ironside confirmed that the new Property Services Manager is meeting with the contractor on a weekly basis and she is confident that there will be

improvements in this area. A Hay advised that complaints are reviewed regularly and action taken where concerns are identified.

10 (iv) Staffing Report

Noted.

10 (v) Planned and Cyclical Programme Quarter 2

Noted.

10 (vi) Allocations Outcomes

A member noted that all those housed in the period covered by the report were white and expressed some concern at the lack of diversity. C Hughes advised that, as noted in the report, work has yet to be done with regard to information about the diversity of the population within Edinburgh. C Ironside advised that the Association's Equalities Policy is due to be reviewed by March 2021, however this cannot be progressed until the Regulator publishes its guidance on requirements in this area.

In response to a question from a member, C Hughes confirmed that she would give more information about how the Association deals with allocations as part of the induction process for new members.

10 (vii) First Tier Tribunal Outcome Report

Noted.

10 (viii) SMT Report

C Ironside advised that at the time of writing the report, there had been no amendments to the SFHA Code of Conduct. The SFHA have now issued a new Code of Conduct. Whilst there have been no material changes, the revised version now includes links to various sources of information. C Ironside will issue the revised version for information. **CI**

C Ironside confirmed that a further SGM is to be held after the November Board meeting to enable members to approve the wording of the clause that will allow the holding of virtual meetings in the future. Members agreed that this should also provide an opportunity to review the use of pronouns within the document. **CI**

R Hutton thanked P Rowsby for his attendance at the meeting, he left at 6.55 p.m.

11 Any Other Competent Business

(i) Potential Board Member

C Ironside confirmed that P Rowsby had applied to become a Board member in response to the Association's recruitment process. He is a change management expert, currently working at Heriot Watt University and also has considerable experience in a variety of housing roles.

Post-meeting note: C Ironside is to contact P Rowsby to discuss his co-option to the Board.

Standing Orders were suspended at 6.58 p.m. to enable the meeting to continue

Members of SMT left the meeting at 7.00 p.m. to enable discussion of the next agenda item.

(ii) EVH Salary Letter

Members noted the contents of the letter and will await the next stage.

(iii) Meeting Questionnaire

A short questionnaire will be issued post meeting to review how the meeting was chaired and identify any areas for improvement.

(iv) Board Member Appraisals

An email will be issued to those Board Members who have not completed their annual appraisal.

Date and time of next meeting:

Wednesday 25 November 2020 at 5.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at:7:15pm