



MINUTE OF THE BOARD MEETING

25 November 2020

Present: R Hutton (Chair); A Scott (Vice-Chair)
A Clark; D Duff; N Hicks; G Kitchener; S Mills; P Rowsby
C Ironside (Secretary)
C Tait (MEAL Board) attended for consideration of Agenda Item 3

In attendance: C Hughes, A Hay, K Miller

Apologies: M Trant

Prior to the meeting, Alex Cameron of Quinn Internal Audit conducted a training session on Treasury Management.

ACTION

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from 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.
S Mills – employee of Changeworks
D Duff – tenant of the Association
G Kitchener – tenant of the Association

3 Matters for Discussion

Members discussed the key issues highlighted in the SWOT and PESTLE analysis that formed part of the Association's Strategic Plan. The review will inform development over the coming year of the next Strategic Plan, which will cover the period 2022/27.

Key points are noted below:

- Under Environmental considerations, noted that the headings were very high level and a lot of detailed information and actions would be required to address the issues. It was agreed that development of an Environmental Strategy would be included in the next Strategic Plan, noting that this would be a significant piece of work.
- Further detail to be included regarding Fuel Poverty as highlighted under Social considerations.
- Noted that digital exclusion has increased as a result of CoVid, also that there is likely to be pressure from Scottish Government to develop a Digital Inclusion Strategy.
- Noted fuel price increases and impact of CoVid on unemployment rates and that the Association will need to look at longer-term planning to address the overall impact of CoVid.
- On issue re mix of tenancy types, change to reflect that this enables the Association to address the needs of those who would not be able to access social housing but would have difficulty affording property in the private rented sector.
- To include as a strength the ability to attract Board members with a range of relevant experience.
- Include the revision of the Strategic Plan as an Opportunity.
- Include the impact of CoVid as a threat.

C Tait left the meeting at 5.55 p.m.

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 now been concluded)

C Ironside advised members of the tragic event that occurred last weekend where a toddler died. She confirmed that the family are tenants of the Association. Staff have made the Police aware that we are the landlord of the property; however, there is limited information available now.

Members noted the position.

5 Minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 October 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2020 were approved as a true record.

6 Matters Arising

None.

7 Board Actions

7(i) Board Actions from October 2020 Meeting

Noted

8 Minutes of Sub Committee or Subsidiary Meetings

None

9 Matters for Approval / Decision

Policies for Approval

9(i) Services to Owners

A Hay introduced the report that had been circulated previously. Members approved the policy.

9(ii) Complaints

C Hughes introduced the report that had been circulated previously. Members noted that the policy follows the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's model. Members approved the policy.

9(iii) Business Continuity Plan

C Ironside introduced the report that had been circulated previously, noting that a number of changes were proposed because of CoVid. In particular, it is now clear that there is minimal risk linked to the ability of staff or Board members to attend the office, as evidenced by how services and conduct of business has been carried out since April 2020.

In addition, there is no longer a need to identify alternative premises should staff be unable to access the office, again as staff can work effectively from home and a meeting room could be hired if absolutely necessary.

K Miller confirmed that all servers are now held on the cloud, meaning that we are not dependent on a physical server in the office. Regular back-ups are carried out and there are no concerns in this area.

Members approved the policy.

9(iv) Evictions

C Hughes introduced the report that had been circulated previously. With regard to the section that referred to the Human Rights Act, the Chair noted that this applies to those being affected by anti-social behaviour as well as those facing eviction because of their actions. Similarly, the impact of non-payment of rent on the Association's ability to provide services should also be

CH

taken into account. C Hughes agreed to amend the wording of that section accordingly.

Members approved the policy.

9(v) Anti-Money Laundering

K Miller introduced the report that had been circulated previously, thanking those who had contributed to discussion of key areas and Link Group who had shared their policy with us.

K Miller highlighted that the Association is now under HMRC supervision and this policy is a requirement, however she emphasised that the Association is considered low risk in this area.

K Miller confirmed that some measures have been in place for some time, however further staff training will be arranged.

Members approved the policy.

KM

Other Matters for Approval

9(vi) Regulatory Self-Assessment Action Plan

C Hughes introduced the report that had been circulated previously, noting that this was a summary of the actions identified in the review of Regulatory Self-Assessment that was presented to the Board in October 2020. She further confirmed that the Association plans to carry out a detailed review of 2 of the 7 standards in the coming year and that Board members will be heavily involved in this process.

Members approved the plan as presented.

9(vii) Risk Management Review

C Ironside introduced the report that had been circulated previously. She highlighted that there were more proposed changes than usual due to the impact of Covid.

C Ironside confirmed that the 4 major risks would be included in the review of the 2019/22 Strategic Plan.

Members approved the report.

9(viii) Membership Application

C Ironside advised that 2 applications for membership had been received from:

- Mr A McEwen (tenant of the Association)

- Mr P Rowsby (co-opted member of the Board)

10 Matters for Information

10(i) Pre-Budget 2021/22

K Miller advised members that some estimated figures had been omitted from the report, namely:

Paragraph 2.5 - £20,000

Paragraph 2.6 - £10,000

Paragraph 2.6 - £15,000

Members noted the report.

10(ii) Board Meeting Schedule 2021

C Ironside highlighted that the timescale for Board member appraisals had been brought forward to enable identification of any skills gaps that could be addressed prior to the AGM.

Members noted the report.

10(iii) Half-Year Activity Analysis Report

K Miller advised that this was a report on activity in the first 6 months of the financial year, as requested by the Board.

Members noted the report.

10(iv) Returns Register 2020

K Miller advised that this register is to give members assurance that the 'soft covenants' (referred to in the Treasury Management Training) are being achieved and the dates and details are included in this report.

Members noted the report.

10(v) Strategic Plan 2022/27 Timetable

Members noted the report.

10(vi) SMT Report

C Ironside noted that, following conclusion of the First Tier Tribunal case, no enforcement order had been made against the Association, commending A Hay for her work on this matter.

Members noted the report.

11 Any Other Competent Business

(i) Potential Development South Queensferry

A Hay advised members that the start date for this project has now been delayed to September/October 2021, resulting in a subsequent delay to the timing of financial information being submitted to the Board.

Members noted the information.

11 Date and time of next meeting:

Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 5.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

DRAFT