



THE GLASGOW HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

GHA BOARD

MINUTE OF MEETING – FRIDAY 16 August 2019

Present: Bernadette Hewitt (Chair), Jo Armstrong, Andrew Clark, Robert Geddes, Professor Paddy Gray, Councillor Frank McAveety, Cathy McGrath, Councillor Kenny McLean and Jean Albert Nietcho.

In attendance: Martin Armstrong (Group Chief Executive), Anthony Allison (Director of Governance), Steven Henderson (Group Director of Finance), Olga Clayton (Group Director of Housing and Care), Graham Isdale (Group Director of Corporate Affairs), Jennifer Russell (Managing Director, GHA) and (In Part) Jackie McIntosh (Director of Property Development and Initiatives, Item 4 only), Laurie Carberry (Group Procurement Manager, Item 5 only), Brian Stewart (Director of Investment, Repairs and Compliance, Item 6 only) and Alex Adrain (Managing Director, Wheatley 360, Items 12, 14 and 15 only) .

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Michael McNamara and Iwona Grazyna Majzuk-Soska.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the standing declarations of interest.

3. a) Minute of 31 May 2019 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of 31 May 2019

b) Action List

The Board received an update on actions, including confirmation that the Scottish Government is still working with Local Authorities on plans for homelessness. It was agreed the next update be brought once this position was clearer.

Decided: The Board noted the updates.

4. Repairs Model update (Presentation)

The Board received a presentation regarding the development of our new MyRepairs model as part of the joint venture, including: the key customer experience outcomes we are working towards; plans to leverage enabling technologies in service delivery; plans for a specialist repairs function at the customer service centre; how we will measure performance; and the indicative timeline to deliver the first stage and subsequent full model implementation. It was further explained that tenant feedback was a key feature in how we developed the approach.

The Board discussed the clear benefits of the joint venture relative to the previous contractor arrangement in terms of how involved and engaged we can be in developing a new model. The board reiterated that culture remained the key element that would underpin the success of the new model.

It was explained that we were focussing on how the model and associated performance framework focussed on tenant drivers. The Board welcomed the tenant feedback utilised to developing the model. It recognised the focus on improving diagnostics, which subsequently improves repair's completed first time as a tenant value driver.

The Board considered how improved and more dynamic scheduling, particularly next day, could reduce perceived need to utilise emergency appointments for repairs which would not ordinarily fall within this classification. It was confirmed this was a potential benefit, but that we would have clear controls to ensure emergencies remained treated as such.

The Board discussed the potential to empower tenants in terms of troubleshooting common, minor repairs. It was explained this was under consideration, as well as enhanced diagnostics functionality such as tenants providing images of issues.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the presentation.

5. MySavings (Presentation)

The Board received a presentation on our MySavings portal, including: how it links with our strategic priority of supporting tenants reduce the cost of running a home; how we are promoting the product; the response from tenants and stakeholders to date; and uptake and usage to date. It was explained that we have been active across our engagement structures to promote MySavings and the feedback has been very positive.

The Board strongly welcomed the savings on offer being on products and services which are part of tenants daily expenditure, such as supermarkets. It further welcomed the targeted seasonal discounts, such as on school uniforms, which were particularly appropriate. The Board recognised the potential for the savings most tenants could derive being greater than the previous year's rent increase and supporting affordability more widely.

It was explained that there are privacy controls in place to protect our tenants' personal data.

Decided: The board noted the content of the presentation.

6. 5 Year Asset Investment Plan

The Board received a comprehensive summary of the 5 year investment plan. It was emphasised that the overall plan is developed based on feedback from tenants which drives locality and area plans.

It was explained that we have developed a customer priorities budget which seeks to further increase tenants in the allocation of funds to their priorities.

The Board discussed progress to date with our objective to have no tenants in unimproved homes by the end of 2020 and the continuing structural restraints, such as owner consent. It was explained that this remains a strong focus and agreed that a fuller update be brought back to a future meeting.

The Board discussed compliance in 1919 stock, options we have for technical solutions and the future direction of requirements as climate change remains a national focus. It was explained that we are developing a revised approach to sustainability, including with University partners, in parallel with our new 2020-25 strategic planning.

The Board discussed the contents of the plan in depth, including specific areas such as emergency lighting timescales, Livingwell investment allocation, the balance between desirable investment and specific formal requirement, and how we can enhance heating in multi storey flats in future. The Board reflected on the high investment already delivered to date and it was confirmed our levels were higher than comparators, which was credit rating positive. The Board reiterated its continued focus on investment in existing tenants' homes.

The Board welcomed the customer priorities budget, which reflected discussions at the recent strategy workshop regarding a strategic priority to increase tenant controlled expenditure. The Board discussed that balance of engaging our Area Committees in this area with widening tenant input into our decision making.

The Board considered our approach to monitoring the quality of investment work. Our quality monitoring approach was confirmed as well as confirmation we have not been subject to material issues emerging post investment and defect liability period. The Board discussed the impact of investment on the level of reactive maintenance, which should be falling in investment areas.

Decided: The Board approved GHA's 5 Year Asset Investment Plan.

7. Winget Programme Update

The Board received an update on progress with the Wingets project, where it was confirmed we have achieved significant success, which community engagement has been instrumental in achieving. It was confirmed that we continue to exhaust all options previously agreed by the Board to deliver the overall programme and an update on progress was provided to the Board.

The Board discussed the proposals for disposal where we have exhausted all options and do not consider there will be a material adverse impact on the wider community. It was confirmed the unimproved properties proposed for disposal remained technically 'defective'.

The Board discussed the type of interest we have received from potential acquirers and what scope we have to be discerning about who we would dispose to.

The Board recognised the significant success to date with the project and the role of our investment and local staff in achieving this.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) approved the targeted programme of disposal of 33 unimproved GHA owned Winget properties; and**
- 2) delegated financial authority to the GHA Board Chair to approve each disposal, taking into account our charitable obligations.**

8. Complaints Handling and Performance

The Board received an update on complaints handling for 2018/19, including: the level of complaints; analysis of trends; and lessons learned. It was explained that the increased volume of complaints has been subject to analysis and an audit of the 434 complaints received during quarter four of 2019. The Board were advised of the key findings of the analysis and audit and that they are informing a wider review of our complaints handling agreed at the start of this reporting year.

The Board considered the performance for the year, including the target regarding the number of stage 1 complaints upheld and the next steps in implementing improvements. The Board discussed the level of complaints relative to our number of tenants, which remains proportionately low.

It was explained that we are taking immediate steps in the Customer Service Centre, which handles a significant volume of complaints, to reintroduce the 'resolver' roles.

The Board considered YourPlace complaint handling performance and the overall volume of complaints. It was confirmed the YourPlace Board would also consider complaints performance and that they would be part of the complaints handling review.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) noted the complaint handling and performance in GHA for 2018/19; and**
- 2) noted the proposals to carry out a customer focussed review of our existing complaints process.**

9. Governance update – 2019 AGM and Secretary report

The arrangements for the upcoming AGM were set out to the Board, as well as proposal for a Rule change to effect the feedback from our succession plan discussions.

Decided: The Board

- 1) agreed to call a **Special General Meeting** to pass the **Special Resolution** to change our Rules on **Friday 13 September 2019** at **10.00am** at **Wheatley House, 25 Cochrane Street, Glasgow, G1 1HL**;
- 2) noted that upon the change of Rules, the Parent intends to appoint **Jo Boaden CBE** to the additional Parent Appointee role;
- 3) approved the formal calling of the **Annual General Meeting** for on **Friday 13 September 2019** at **09.30am** at **Wheatley House, 25 Cochrane Street, Glasgow, G1 1HL**;
- 4) noted the retirement of **Andrew Clark** and **Michael McNamara** and agree to recommend them to the **AGM** for appointment, subject to Parent approval;
- 5) agreed to recommend **Jean-Albert Nietcho** for re-election at the **AGM**, subject to Parent approval; and
- 6) noted the confirmation from the **Secretary** that **Rules 62-67** have been followed.

10. a) 2018/19 Financial Statements

The Board received a summary of our draft 2018/19 financial statements, with all the variations from the year end management accounts explained.

The Board considered the financial statements which were, save the explained variations, in line with expectations and reporting throughout the year.

Decided: The Board

- 1) approved the **2018/19 financial statements**;
- 2) Confirmed the preparation of the financial statements using the going concern basis;
- 3) Delegated authority to the **Chair and Group Director of Finance** to approve any non-material changes to the accounts; and approved the letter of representation to the auditors, and
- 4) noted the related letter of comfort from the **Chief Executive**.

b) Annual Internal Audit Report and Assurance Statement 2018/19

It was explained that the assurance statement underpinned the control framework in place in preparing the financial statements

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report along with the overall Annual Internal Audit opinion detailed in Section 6.

11. Finance Report

The Board received a summary of financial performance for the year to date.

The Board considered financial performance, with no material variations to date and performance consistent with budget.

Decided: The Board noted the management accounts for the period ended 30 June 2019.

12. Asylum Seeker Contract

The Board received a detailed update on the asylum seeker contract position, in particular the impact of the changing national picture. A detailed impact assessment our position regarding the provision of temporary accommodation was set out, including the implications for our own contractual arrangements.

The proposed approach was set out to the Board, who considered the proposals in detail including the link to our wider New Scots Action Plan. The Board recognised the significant efforts we have made and the clear assessments of the risks which it considered further.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) noted the update on the Asylum Seeker contract current position and key changes that are due to take effect in September 2019;**
- 2) agreed the continued leasing (of non over-stayer properties) by GHA, Cube and Lowther Homes of temporary accommodation to Mears Limited, the successor to Serco under the new asylum contract procured by the Home Office for the period 2019-2029;**
- 3) agreed to enter sub-contractor agreements with the Home Office and Mears Limited to provide for direct leasing of accommodation to the Home Office in the event of Mears' dissolution, pending the appointment of a replacement contractor by the Home Office; and**
- 4) agreed to enter into a new rolling lease with Serco for the properties that will not transfer to Mears on 01st September, with a view to these properties returning to the mainstream letting pool as and when they are returned to us with vacant possession by Serco.**

13. Delivery Plan 2019-20 Quarter 1

The Board received an update on performance in the first quarter, where Universal Credit continues to adversely impact arrears performance. It was explained that the benefits of MyHousing on let times was now being realised.

The Board considered performance and our ongoing focus on fully understanding the impact of Universal Credit.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

14. Group Hate Crime Policy

Decided: The Board noted the draft Group Hate Crime Policy.

15. a) GHA Fire Safety Update

The Board received an update on fire safety and confirmation this remains an area of high priority across the Group.

The Board considered our approach to assuring fire safety and it was agreed a report on our approach be brought back to a future meeting.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

b) Group Fire Prevention Charter with Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

The Board welcomed the Charter and our continued strong partnership with the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.

Decided: The Board approved entering the Fire Prevention Charter with the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.

16. AOCB

The Board agreed to delegate authority to the Chair to grant servitudes previously covered by the Scottish Housing Regulator General Consent on the advice of relevant senior staff.

Decided: The Board delegated authority to the Chair to grant servitudes previously covered by the Scottish Housing Regulator General Consent.

There was no other competent business.