

Meeting: Minutes of Board Meeting

Meeting Date: 26 September 2023

Time: 5.30pm

Location: Virtual (MS Teams Video Conference)

Discussion

Meeting Opening

1. Welcome & Apologies

Present		Staff	
Liz McKenzie	Chair	David Byfield	Chief Executive (CEO) Company Secretary (CS)
John Duncan	Board Member		
Richard Mahon	Board Member	Karen Fee	Director of Finance, Digital Engagement and Corporate Services (DFDCS)
Chinenye Anameje	Board Member	Peter Kelly	Director of Asset Management (DAM)
Alex Warren	Board Member	Suzanne Casey	Director of Customer Services (DCS)
Chuks Nnadi-Nnadi	Board Member	Jacqui Mills	Corporate Services Officer (CSO) (Minute Taker)
Apologies		In Attendance	
Karen McDonagh	Board Member	Trudi Trokarczyk	Scottish Housing Network
Mark Ingram	Vice-Chair		
Maureen Cope	Board Member		
Sharon Richford	Board Member		

2. Declaration of Interest

None.

3. Declaration of Receipt and Understanding

Members present confirmed they read and understood the contents of the Board papers.

4. Minutes of Board Meetings for Approval

Minutes of Board Meeting 29 August 2023 (Full and Redacted set)

Approved by:

Alex Warren

Richard Mahon

	The minutes of the Audit and Policy Subcommittee meetings held on 1 and 15 August respectively were reviewed for information.		
5.	<p><u>Matters Arising/ Action Sheet</u></p> <p>Action Sheet:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="178 416 1471 456"> <tr> <td data-bbox="178 416 823 456">Approved by: Alex Warren</td> <td data-bbox="823 416 1471 456">Seconded by: Richard Mahon</td> </tr> </table>	Approved by: Alex Warren	Seconded by: Richard Mahon
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Items requiring a discussion/ approval			
6.	<p>Scotland Housing Network Performance Analysis Visit</p> <p>Trudi Tokarczyk was welcomed to the meeting at 5.35pm to present the Performance Analysis presentation. She referred to the national outlook and advised that satisfaction figures have reduced across the sector which is reflective of the challenges faced. There has been an improvement with achieving SHQS. Emergency repair timescales have been on an upward trend for RSLs as have non-emergency repair timescales. However, despite good repairs performance, satisfaction levels have been declining.</p> <p>Trudi then highlighted how Ardenglen’s performance compares with our peers. She advised that the Association has a higher number of complaints than our peer group but that this is not a bad thing as it demonstrates that the Association is accurately recording complaints and also committed to resolving these. There has been improvement in the time taken to respond this year.</p> <p>99% of our stock meets SHQS and is above average performance. The Association is performing well against our peer group with emergency repairs but non-emergency repairs is slightly above that of our peer group.</p> <p>Repairs Right First Time performance is really good at 96.70% which is above the average of our peer group. Repair Satisfaction has reduced and it is likely that the performance change is down to the previous impact of covid.</p> <p>The Association has good tenancy sustainment performance with 93.15% sustainment in the year. This year there were a couple of deaths which impacted on the overall performance but it is still good performance on a par with our peers.</p> <p>The Association had no evictions in the year which is down to early intervention initiatives and the hard work of staff to try and avoid this last resort action.</p> <p>Ardenglen’s rent is low and sits well with our peer group. The proposed rent increase for next year is slightly higher than our peer group but is still reasonable as the Association has low rents.</p> <p>Overall the Association has really strong performance in Overall Satisfaction, Repairs, EEESH, SHQS, Tenancy Sustainment, Rent Collection and Arrears Management. The Performance Analysis highlighted two areas for the Association to consider and monitor: Repairs Satisfaction and Quality of Home.</p>		

	<p>The Board advised that the data presented was reassuring and confirmed they are comfortable with a slightly higher complaints tally than our peers as they receive regular reports on Complaints. It also shows that our customers are engaging with us.</p> <p>The Board thanked Trudi for her presentation and she left the meeting at 6.10pm.</p>
7.	<p>Annual Assurance Statement 2023</p> <p>CEO presented the Annual Assurance Statement advising that it sets out the Association’s compliance and assurance position also making reference to our Governance arrangements, Human Rights approach as well as our Business Planning. He sought approval from the Board to submit the statement to the Regulator.</p> <p>The Board approved the Annual Assurance Statement.</p>
8.	<p>MCCH Exit Strategy</p> <p>DCS presented report on the strategy for exiting the MCCH as our community facility by 8 November 2023. The owner of the MCCH will be notified of our intention to leave. A series of planned activities will take place with the last being the Halloween Party on Friday 27 October. Thereafter, a clear out period will commence from 30 Oct until 8 November with some assistance sought from Caledonian Maintenance.</p> <p>DCS advised that most of the community investment activities can be relocated to other community venues including AHA Boardroom for a short period until the potential of 6 Ardencraig Street as a community facility is determined.</p> <p>The Board approved the MCCH Exit Strategy.</p>
9.	<p>Eviction Report</p> <p>DCS presented Eviction Report advising that this the highest arrears case managed at Ardenglen. The customer has not engaged despite numerous attempts by AHA staff to support and advise. There has been a continual pattern of broken arrangements over the last year and the customer has 15 months’ worth of arrears on their property with no plan or willingness in place to repay this. AHA have offered the customer appointments with our Welfare Rights Officer to discuss their financial situation, all have been declined. The customer has been in employment for the majority of their tenure but have had occasional periods of receiving Housing Benefit.</p> <p>The Board queried whether there had been any indication of the reason that the person is not paying their rent. DCS advised that the main problem with this case has been the reluctance of the customer to engage and be open about his financial circumstances.</p> <p>A discussion ensued around whether this arrear would be written off. DCS advised that she would not be looking to write this debt off for at least a year. She suggested that it may be possible to accrue some of the debt owed in around six months’ time once the tenant has settled somewhere else.</p> <p>The Board approved eviction decree and pursuit of wages arrestment where possible.</p>
10.	<p>Share Members Report</p>

	<p>CSO presented the Share Report advising that there have been six requests to become Shareholders whilst five existing shareholders no longer meet the requirements and should be removed.</p> <p>The Board approved addition of six new members and removal of five members from Shares Register.</p> <p>The Board approved the Share Report.</p>
Items for Noting	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Annual Complaints Report</p> <p>CSO presented the Annual Complaints advising that there were 165 complaints in the year of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72 Complaints were Upheld, 45 Not Upheld and 38 were Resolved • 98.7% of Stage One Complaints were responded to in full in the year with 2 remaining active at time of report • 100% of Stage Two Complaints were responded to in full • The top three complaint categories in 2022-23 were: Failure to Attend Appointment, Complaints raised through the Satisfaction Survey, Communication • There were three improvements identified through Learning from Complaints <p>No questions arose.</p> <p>The Board noted the Annual Complaints Report.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Value for Money Quarterly Report</p> <p>DFDCS presented the quarterly Value for Money Report advising of the savings made in Quarter 2. The Value for Money Group have continued to meet monthly and identified savings amounting to £33,260, this has been achieved by cancelling some small office contracts and utilisation of procurement frameworks.</p> <p>The Value for Money Group will soon turn their attention to internal efficiencies that can be achieved.</p> <p>No questions arose.</p> <p>The Board noted the Value for Money Quarterly Report.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>6 Arden Craig Street Conversion Report</p> <p>DAM presented report detailing the costs involved in remodelling 6 Arden Craig Street into a community facility and the costs to bring it back into circulation as a 6 apartment for allocating to a homeless family. The Board had recently had a site visit to the facility to view its potential and allow them to make a decision on its future purpose.</p>

DAM advised that the paper presented is just to advise members of potential costs. Consultants NBM and MAST were both approached to provide costing for the refurb. NBM costings are slightly lower at £186k and MAST £233k for conversion to housing. There is quite a disparity between both.

The Board expressed some surprise at the cost to convert back to social housing in comparison with the cost to create a community facility. The Board noted that if there was funding available, anticipated a 50% grant, it would take the cost down to approximately £95k for AHA.

The Board discussed the grant funding available to convert the building into a community facility. There are a number of funding applications in place that the Association is awaiting response on in the coming months.

The Board queried if there is any issues regarding upgrading heating or windows to the property if a community facility. DAM advised that he would need to check what standards apply to community facilities to determine any potential costs.

The Board queried whether the Association is comfortable from a reputational standpoint with standing by any decision made to continue as a community facility rather than convert back into social housing. CEO advised that the space has been used as a Community Facility for such a long time that I don't foresee it being an issue if we retain it as a community space, especially with the imminent withdrawal from the Maureen Cope Hall.

DFDCS advised that she has studied the financial projections on the conversion to a social housing unit and the numbers do not stack up over thirty year period. The Board queried just how long it would take for the costs to break even. DFDCS advised that it would be close to breaking even some time after the thirty year point but she would need to adjust spreadsheet to extend the projection term from 30 years to 40 years to get a full picture.

The Chair sought opinion of the full Board on the purpose of 6 Arden Craig Street. It was largely agreed that the community facility option is the most cost effective option and that irrespective of funding outcomes, the building will be used as a community facility. The Board felt that as the building will continue as a community facility, procurement works should commence now rather than delay matters awaiting funding decisions.

The Board agreed that 6 Arden Craig Street should be refurbished as a community facility. DAM should proceed with Building warrant and procure works that can be done now until funding application outcomes are known.

Meeting Close

14.	Notifiable Events CEO advised that the notifiable event regarding the Tribunal has now been closed.
15.	Health & Safety None.
16.	Correspondence None.
17.	Use of Delegated Authority

	None.
18.	<p>A.O.C.B Leave of Absence Request Maureen Cope requested a three month leave of absence during her Board appraisal. The Chair advised that she will catch up with her again in a couple of months to ascertain whether she wishes to resign from the Board.</p> <p>The Board approved three month leave of absence for Maureen Cope MBE.</p>
19.	<p>Summary of actions/ decisions at this meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Board Approved the minutes and action sheet ➤ The Board Approved the Annual Assurance Statement ➤ The Board noted the Performance Analysis Report ➤ The Board Approved Exit Strategy ➤ The Board Approved Eviction Report ➤ The Board Approved the Share Members Report ➤ The Board Noted Annual Complaints Report ➤ The Board Noted Quarterly Value for Money Report ➤ The Board approved 6 Ardencraig Street Report and agreed it will be a community facility. Procurement works will commence. ➤ The Board approved three month leave of absence for Maureen Cope MBE.
20.	<p>Meeting Evaluation</p> <p>The Board thanked staff for their reports and advised it was an informative meeting.</p>
21.	Date and time of next meeting – 31 October 2023 (MS Teams)
22.	<p>Meeting Close</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7.15 PM with a vote of thanks to the Chair.</p>