

CALEDONIA HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

**MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2020 AT 6:00 pm
BY VIDEO CONFERENCING**

Present: Alan Nairn, Chair
Mary Clark
Tim Goddard
Ian Gray (by landline telephone)
Graham Logan
Alex McDougall
Douglas McLaren
Andrew Richmond
Lorna Williamson

In Attendance: Julie Cosgrove Chief Executive
Leigh Grubb Director of Finance & Governance
Garry Savage Director of Strategy & Innovation
Barry Johnstone Director of People
Andrew Kilpatrick Director of Assets
Tim Calderbank Director of Customer Services
Jenny Dalton Governance Officer (Minute Taker)

119.20 Apologies

Apologies were **NOTED** from Derek Robertson.

120.20 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

ITEMS for DISCUSSION and/or APPROVAL

121.20 Draft Minutes of the Management Board Meeting held on Wednesday 9 September 2020

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were **APPROVED** by the Board. The minutes were duly adopted and the Governance Officer would arrange for them to be signed by the Chair.

122.20 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda.

123.20 Draft Minutes of the Management Board Meeting held on Monday 21 September 2020

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were **APPROVED** by the Board. The minutes were duly adopted and the Governance Officer would arrange for them to be signed by the Chair.

124.20 Matters Arising

*Item 118.20 -
Election of Office
Bearers and Board
Members to
Committees*

The Chair advised that he had contacted Board members individually to discuss membership of committees and office bearer vacancies. As a result the following had been agreed:

The Board members on the Group Audit & Risk Management Committee would be: Alex McDougall (Chair), Ian Gray, Graham Logan, Andrew Richmond and Lorna Williamson.

The Board members on the Group Remuneration Committee would be: Andrew Richmond (Chair), Mary Clark, Tim Goddard and Douglas McLaren.

The post of Vice Chair would be filled at a later date.

The post of Treasurer would not be filled.

125.20 Chief Executive's Report

Programme for Government, Draft National Infrastructure Investment Plan and SFHA Manifesto

The Chief Executive advised that her report contained summaries of key documents received from the Scottish Government (SG) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA). The summary information was for noting and would be discussed in detail at the Business Strategy event on Wednesday 25 November 2020.

Andrew Richmond queried the overall cost to meet the Government's Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (ESSH2). The Chief Executive advised that a report from consultants had been commissioned to determine the potential costs and works which would be necessary.

Members also discussed the SFHA's manifesto and welcomed the commitment to lobby the SG to review and increase grant level for new build housing, provide additional funding for adaptations, and to bring stock up to ESSH2 standards.

The Chair noted that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in September each year informed the setting of annual rent increases within the Group - the CPI figure in September 2020 was 0.5%. The Chair advised that proposals for the rent review 2021/22 would be discussed at the forthcoming Business Strategy event prior to the commencement of the formal review process in December 2020.

Business Continuity Plan

Service Delivery/Performance

The Chief Executive confirmed that most services had now recommenced and rental income remained steady.

Staff Welfare

A member of staff within a very sheltered development had tested positive for COVID-19 with another self-isolating, having been contacted through the track and trace system. The Director of Customer Services (DoCS) was liaising with staff to ensure all appropriate measures were in place, and that deep cleaning of appropriate areas of the development had been undertaken. Agency staff were being used to cover absences, which would result in additional costs.

Tenant and Resident Safety

The Chief Executive explained that due to the impact of COVID-19, the SG was seeking the Scottish Parliament's approval to delay the implementation date for installing interlinked fire, heat and smoke alarms until February 2022. It remained the Association's intention to continue with the replacement programme within its properties to comply with the original date of February 2021.

Amendments to ARC Performance Data

Board members **NOTED** the amended figures for Indicator 18.2 which had been submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

Approval of Chair of Bellsmyre and Cordale Management Committees

In line with the terms of the Intra-group Agreements, Board Members **APPROVED** the appointment of Louise Spence as Chair of Bellsmyre Housing Association and Martin Walker as Chair of Cordale Housing Association.

Home Help Service – Furloughed Staff

Board members **APPROVED** the top up of salaries for staff moving to the Job Support Scheme as outlined in the report, subject to the Association obtaining clarification that the new scheme permits a top up of salary similar to the furlough scheme.

Policy Review

The Board **APPROVED** the minor amendments to the following policies as outlined in the report:

- Group Information Security Policy
- Group Data Protection Policy
- Group Document and Information Retention and Destruction Policy

Data Breach

The Chief Executive provided details of a data breach relating to the personal details of Bellsmyre Management Committee members. The Chief Executive had informed the SHR who had advised that the breach should be reported as a Notifiable Event. The Director of Finance and Governance (DoFG) had informed the Bellsmyre Management Committee members of the breach and had drafted a report on the breach that would be submitted to the Information Commissioner's office within the specified 72 hour period.

126.20 Group Annual Assurance Statement 2020

The DoFG advised that, as previously agreed with the Group's governing bodies, the Governance Working Group (GWG) had re-convened on 14 October 2020 to consider the approach to preparing this year Annual Assurance Statement (AAS).

At the meeting, the GWG considered the progress of the Governance Improvement Plan compiled following last year's assessment, the COVID-19 flag guide developed by the SFHA for consideration during the assessment process, and the compliance assessment undertaken by the Executive Management Team. The GWG concluded that the evidence provided was sufficient to demonstrate the Group's compliance with the relevant standards, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. A draft AAS had subsequently been produced and was included with the report for consideration.

The DoFG advised that the Bellsmyre Management Committee had discussed the AAS at its meeting on Monday 26 October 2020 and had made some minor comments. The AAS had been emailed to Cordale's Management Committee members with the request that they submit their comments to their representative on the GWG, Gary Wilson. The DoFG requested that Board members submit their comments to the Chair.

The Chair explained that a further meeting of the GWG would only be required if the feedback received from the governing bodies would materially change the contents of the AAS - however he did not anticipate that this would be necessary.

When all feedback had been considered, the final version of the AAS would be circulated to the Governing Bodies for approval prior to the submission to the SHR at the end of November 2020.

127.20 Management Accounts for the Six Month Period Ended 30 September 2020

The DoFG presented the report and advised that the results for the six month period showed a marginal improvement on the same period last year. Whilst the levels of income and expenditure for the period had clearly been impacted by the current global COVID-19 pandemic, the overall impact to date had been less significant than anticipated in the revised budget assumptions, particularly with respect to the levels of arrears/bad debts. The DoFG did however caution that the continuing effects of the pandemic on the economy and the end of the job retention scheme could see an increase in rent arrears and that this would be monitored carefully in the coming months.

128.20 Membership Review

The Management Board **APPROVED** the withdrawal of the memberships listed in the report.

129.20 Business Performance 2020-21 - Quarter 2 Update

The Director of Strategy & Innovation (DoSI) presented the quarterly update on business performance for the second quarter, covering the period 1 July to 30 September 2020. The DoSI reminded members that revised targets had been agreed at the June 2020 Board meeting. This revision was a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Group's ability to achieve the previously set targets.

The DoSI confirmed that performance was now stabilising with improvements in reletting properties and rental income collection from the previous quarter. The outstanding annual gas servicing had now been completed with no outstanding annual services in August or September 2020. However, planned and cyclical investment programmes had not been able to commence due to the restrictions. The reactive repair service had initially been limited to emergency repairs, with the backlog largely complete. The full reactive maintenance service was operational following the easing of restrictions. The DoSI explained that these factors could impact on levels of tenant satisfaction across the Group and that this could also affect the result of the major satisfaction survey being undertaken later in the year. Over the coming months the EMT and Operational Management Team would closely monitor and consider the impact of the pandemic situation on the performance of the Group and consider how performance could be brought back within target.

Following a query from the Board, the DoSI confirmed that there had been an increase in the percentage of tenants using the Connect digital platform due to the lockdown measures. However this had not been as high as anticipated and further engagement with tenants would be required if the 40% target figure was to be achieved.

130.20 Business Plan 2020/25 – Implementation Plan Quarter Two Update

The DoSI presented the report and advised that 6 of the 16 (38%) actions due to be carried out over the second quarter had been completed. Timely progress was being made with many of the remaining actions and it was anticipated that they would be progressed during the third quarter.

131.20 People Strategy Update

The Director of People (DoP) presented the six monthly update on the progress of the People Strategy activities and actions. He explained that priorities had to be adjusted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a comprehensive range of new guidance produced to help managers and staff work from home safely and productively. This included guidance for staff working from home, management guidance on productivity and engagement, flexible working, and COVID-19 related health and wellbeing advice.

Overall engagement had increased in the seven month period since the advent of the pandemic. A decline, however, had been experienced over September 2020 with data highlighting wellness and personal growth dipping across the organisation. These areas were now being targeted for improvement and the virtual staff conference planned for the start of December 2020 would give staff the opportunity to participate in several wellbeing themed sessions and activities. Meanwhile, as the engagement data can be segmented by teams, line managers have greater insight as to what interventions could make a difference to their respective teams.

The Board members congratulated the DoP on his comprehensive report.

132.20 Development and Planned Maintenance Update

This report is confidential as it is commercially sensitive and publication would harm commercial interests.

GROUP POLICIES for DISCUSSION and/or APPROVAL

133.20 Learning & Development Strategy

The DoP presented the Learning & Development Strategy and explained that it was closely aligned to the Group Business Plan. The Strategy had three strategic themes: establishing a continuous learning culture, defining and expanding competencies and leadership development, and developing a Group wide induction plan. The Strategy also had a strong focus on talent management and mentoring, reflecting the Board's feedback on the importance of succession planning when approving the People Strategy in February 2020.

Graham Logan congratulated the DoP on the layout and readability of the document and Management Board members **APPROVED** the Learning & Development Strategy.

ITEMS for INFORMATION

134.20 Draft Minutes of Health & Safety Committee Meeting: Tuesday 22 September 2020

The draft minutes of the Health & Safety Committee were **NOTED**.

**135.20 – Draft Minutes of the Bellsmyre and Cordale Management Committees September
137.20 Meetings**

The draft minutes were **NOTED**.

Any Other Business

It was **NOTED** that the Business Strategy Event would be held between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm on Wednesday 25 November 2020.

It was **NOTED** that the next Audit & Risk Management Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 2 December 2020.

It was **NOTED** that the next Management Board meeting would be held on Tuesday 15 December 2020.

There being no other business, the meeting was concluded at 7.45 pm.

Chair's signature