

Decisions made by the Board at their meeting held on 29th May 2019

Noted below are the decisions taken by the Association's Board at their meeting held on Wednesday 29th May 2019. If you would like more information about any of these issues, please contact the Association's Office Administrator at the address below.

Minute of the Board Meeting held on 27th March 2019

Members were invited to consider the minute of the Board Meeting held on 27th March 2019.

Members approved the minutes as a correct record of the meeting as **PROPOSED** by R McNally and **SECONDED** by K McIntosh.

MATTERS ARISING

Consideration of matters arising from the published minutes.

There were no matters arising

PRESENTATION

New Standards of Governance and Financial Management

The Chief Executive presented details of the Management Committee Briefing prepared by the Scottish Housing Regulator on the New Regulatory Framework and Regulatory Standards – April 2019 explaining the process in place that will ensure that every HA submits an annual assurance statement by the end of October. The Chair will be required to sign the assurance statement to confirm that the Board agree that the Association is compliant with the Charter, the legal obligations and the standards of governance and financial management. This is intended as the final stage in the Association's year-round self-assessment process.

The CE outlined the most significant changes that had been introduced.

The Chief Executive pointed out that we were already complying with some of the new guidance and gave the recent discussions about a settlement agreement as an example of a notifiable event which was previously not a notifiable event under the old regulatory landscape. He also indicated that the recent governance review that we carried out utilising Linda Ewart pointed to a fairly robust mechanism in place or being developed which should allow the Association to be in a good position to make an appropriate statement prior to the October deadline. He also indicated that it would be his plan to have the statement ready for the AGM to allow the members some involvement in its authorisation.

Members **NOTED** the presentation.

MATTERS FOR APPROVAL

ARC Submission

Members were invited to consider a report by the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to provide the Board members with the Annual Return of the Charter (ARC) for the financial year 2018/19 for review and approval to submit to the Scottish Housing Regulator by deadline of 31st May 2019.

The Association is required to report annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator on its performance through the ARC. Before the ARC is submitted, the Board must review and approve the information in the ARC, whilst at the same time satisfying itself that the information is, to the best of the Board's knowledge accurate. A full copy of the ARC was sent separately for Board Members to review.

The CE pointed to the separate report on the EESSH submission which is part of but separate from the ARC submission. The Technical Services Manager explained the figures and led a discussion on our compliance with the EESSH requirements.

Members **NOTED** the content of the reports and **APPROVED** the ARC and the EESSH submission

Board Code of Conduct 2019 Review

Members were invited to consider a report by the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to revise the code of Governance for Committee Members. Changes to the current document were highlighted in red.

The CE reminded members that it is a regulatory requirement to sign an appropriate code of conduct and that the Association does have currently a code. However it has come to light that some of the contents of the code may not be as robust as might be necessary in some circumstances.

The CE indicated that the new code will come in to effect after the AGM and for the new Board.

Members **APPROVED** the recommended changes and the new Code.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION & NOTING

Care & Repair Quarter 4 Report

Members were invited to consider a report prepared by the Corporate Services Manager and presented by the Care and Repair Project Manager, the purpose of which was to update the Board on the progress of the current Care and Repair Contract and other relevant Care and Repair team issues.

The report indicated that the CSM provides detailed reports and meets quarterly with the councils to monitor contractual progress and performance.

The Project Manager indicated that Completions are all in line with targets except for adaptations in East Renfrewshire as has been reported throughout the financial year. Although the number of completions is lower than anticipated, the adaptations budget has been fully utilised.

The Project Manager also confirmed that the Settlement Agreement with the member of staff from Inverclyde who chose not to transfer to Bridgewater has been concluded and that a notifiable event submission had been made to the SHR which had now closed it down

requiring no further information.
Members **NOTED** the content of this report.

Scottish Secure Tenancy Rights + App

Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Housing and Customer Service, the purpose of which was to provide details of the legislative changes to Scottish Secure Tenancy rights and confirm compliance with the 1st May 2019 implementation timescales.

The HOHCS indicated that appendix 1 of the report details the legislative changes and the timescales for implementation of 1st May 2019 and 1st November 2019. Senior Officers and the Housing Officers were consulted on the changes to the SST and the final SST reflects comments from TC Young, Solicitors.

A review of the SSST model documents is underway.

Achievement of the 1st May 2019 timescales was particularly challenging as the Annual Review of the Waiting List was underway and the new Renfrewshire Common Allocations Policy was being implemented at the same time.

Members acknowledged the considerable efforts which have been made in order to implement the new SST in time by all the staff concerned.

Board **NOTED** the report.

Common Allocations Policy and Annual Review Update + App

Members were invited to consider this report presented by the Head of Housing and Customer Service, the purpose of which was to provide Board with progress on the implementation of the new Renfrewshire Common Allocations Policy and the Annual Review of the Waiting List.

From 1st May 2019, all allocation of housing will be based on the new Renfrewshire Common Allocations Policy and the new SST or SSST will be issued.

The HOHCS reported that the challenges of meeting the 1st May 2019 Policy implementation have been significant when considering the legislative changes were introduced at the same time but that staff had worked well in order to achieve the deadline.

Members **NOTED** this report.

Extra Care Cleaning Tender Report

Members were invited to consider this report presented by the Head of Housing and Customer Services, the purpose of which was to advise the Board of the outcome of the tender process for communal cleaning services at our two Extra Care developments.

Members **NOTED** this report.

SHR – Regulations Plan

Members were invited to consider the Engagement Plan letter received from SHR informing the Association that they don't require any further assurance from Bridgewater HA at this point in time other than the annual regulatory returns required for all RSL's. The Chief Executive referred members to the earlier discussion about the new Regulatory landscape and where these Engagement Plans fit in.

Members **NOTED** the letter.

Comparison between Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and Housing (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2018

Members were invited to consider the report produced by Harper Macleod explaining that in September 2016, the Office for National Statistics undertook a review of registered social landlords. The ONS determined that RSL's should be classified as public sector bodies for public accounting purposes. The ONS came to this decision based on an assessment of the wide ranging powers that the Scottish Housing Regulator had over RSL's by way of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and decided that the level of control amounted to a form of public sector control. The Government then introduced legislation limiting the powers of the SHR thus allowing the ONS to declare that Associations were no longer public bodies for the purposes of public sector borrowing. The note details the position before the new legislation and the position now.

Members **NOTED** this report.

MATTERS FOR BRIEFING AND INFORMATION ONLY

Ground-breaking new domestic abuse law comes into force 1st April 2019

Members were invited to consider a report presented by the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to explain the new law that has come into force that makes psychological domestic abuse and controlling behaviour a crime. It will be supported by Scottish Government awareness campaign aimed at improving public understanding of the wide-ranging nature of the problem.

Members **NOTED** the report and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Housing and Customer Service to contact Women's Aid to investigate the possibility of training for front line staff.

Minute of Audit and Risk Sub Committee Meeting – 15th May 2019

Members were invited to consider the draft Minute of the Audit and Risk Sub Committee Meeting held on 15th May 2019. The Chief Executive reported that the minute was for information and would be approved by the next meeting of the ARSC. However he wanted to point out that the committee had had an opportunity to meet with the Internal Auditors without senior staff being present and had subsequently approved the Internal Audit Plan on behalf of the Board.

Members **NOTED** the Draft Minute.

ADMINISTRATION

Issues which the Chair has agreed as urgent

There were no urgent issues

REGULATORY ISSUES

Notifiable Events

There were no notifiable events for consideration.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 26th June 2019