



# MINUTES OF BRIDGEWATER HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**Venue:** At Home with ZOOM  
**Date:** Wednesday 24 June 2020  
**Time:** 5.30pm

**Present:**

Alastair Morris Chair, Heather Stirling Secretary, John Paterson Vice Chair, Ken McIntosh Board Member, Jim Sheridan Board Member, Suzanne Austin Board Member, Denise Love Board Member, Angela Westrop Board Member

**In attendance:**

Ian McLean Chief Executive, Angie Kennedy Head of Finance, Scott Currie Corporate Services Manager, Ruth Brogan Head of Housing and Customer Service

Item	Details	Action
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Chairs remarks</b>	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that members had received their papers on time. The Chief Executive indicated that with the Chair's agreement and unless there was no objection, he would take members through the agenda for the purposes of efficiency and to manage the digital issues.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
	Apologies were received from R McNally, A Naismith	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	Members were invited to declare an interest in any of the items on the agenda, in terms of the Association's published policy.	
<b>3.1</b>	There were no declarations of interest	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minute of the Virtual Covid 19 Emergency Sub Committee of 14 May 2020</b>	
	Members were invited to consider the minute of the Covid 19 Emergency Sub Committee meeting of 14 May 2020	
<b>4.1</b>	Members approved the minutes as a correct record of the meeting as <b>PROPOSED</b> by H Stirling and <b>SECONDED</b> by A Westrop	
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Item number and Report title</b>	

5.1	There were no matters arising	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Loan Portfolio Return</b>	
	Members were invited to consider the Annual Loan Portfolio Return which is to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Head of Finance explained the purpose of the return and the figures contained in the return and also explained that this is part of the Association's legal and regulatory requirements.	
6.1	Members <b>NOTED</b> the return	
<b>7.</b>	<b>External Auditors Engagement Letter</b>	
	The Head of Finance reported that because there had been a change in personnel at the Association's External Auditors, the Board were required to re-visit the Engagement Letter and confirm that they were satisfied with its contents.	
7.1	Members <b>APPROVED</b> the Engagement Letter	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Covid Up-Date Report</b>	
	<p>Members were requested to approve a report by the Chief Executive which provided an up-date on service delivery and other matters relating to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The report dealt with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Arrangements</li> <li>• Working from home expenses</li> <li>• Notifiable Events</li> <li>• Office Arrangements</li> <li>• Staffing and HR</li> <li>• Housing and Tenancy Services</li> <li>• Repairs Services</li> <li>• Landscape Maintenance</li> <li>• Gas Servicing</li> <li>• Digital</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Organisational support and governance</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Executive noted that the report was the latest up-date in relation to Bridgewater's response to the current challenging circumstances. He had used the term business as usual earlier in the report but explained that nothing could be further from the truth. Nevertheless he also advised that the Association was meeting the challenges proportionately and appropriately with our customers and staff at the forefront of everything that the Association was doing.</p>	
8.1	Members <b>APPROVED</b> payments to staff, in line with HMRC recommendations during the current pandemic and as set out in the report; <b>APPROVED</b> payments to the Head of Finance's daughter to carry out minor administrative duties in relation to mail administration at minimum wage, for the duration of the pandemic; otherwise <b>NOTED</b> the report	

<b>9.</b>	<b>Annual Leave and Public Holidays</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a note from the Chief Executive which dealt with annual leave and public holidays during the pandemic. The note set out the Association's position in relation to annual leave and public holidays for staff who are on furlough and for staff who are working. The notes intends to provide some clarity and fairness in relation to these issues and to ensure that the Association can operate effectively when things return to some kind of normality.	
9.1	Members <b>APPROVED</b> the actions as set out in the note.	
<b>10</b>	<b>Covid 19 Monthly report to SHR</b>	
	Members were invited to consider the second report to the SHR on Performance Statistics. Significantly it shows arrears continuing to rise	
10.1	Members <b>NOTED</b> the position	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Repairs and Maintenance Policy</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a revised Repairs and Maintenance Policy. The Technical Services Manager reported that the policy had been ready for consideration in March, having done though all the required tests including consultation with tenants. However the Pandemic and other challenges related to the pandemic meant that it wasn't possible for the Board to consider the policy until now. Additionally since the Board are likely to be appointing a new Repairs and Maintenance Contractor shortly, it is opportune to also approve a new policy. The Technical Services Manager went on and said that although a comprehensive review of the policy was undertaken there is not a corresponding comprehensive change to the policy as it was seen as "doing its job". The Technical Services Officer went over the 6 recommended changes.	
11.1	Members <b>APPROVED</b> the revised policy	
<b>12.</b>	<b>List of Approved Businesses</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the Technical Services Manager, the purpose of which was to consider approving an addition to the Approved Contractors List.	
12.1	Members <b>APPROVED</b> Turner property Services to be included on the list.	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Appointment of Temporary Repairs Contractor</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the Technical Services Manager, the purpose of which was to seek approval for the appointment of Turner Property Services as a temporary repairs contractor to take care of the Emergency repairs which Mears will no longer be carrying out, having withdrawn from their contractual obligations to us. The TSM reminded members of the circumstances which meant that Mears were disengaging from the Association at the end of June and the requirement to mitigate this decision with the appointment of a replacement contractor until such times as a new substantive contractor could be appointed. The TSM went over the arrangements which he put in place in order to procure the new temporary contractor and provided	

	information about which contractors expressed an interest and the likely costs.	
<b>13.1</b>	Members <b>APPROVED</b> Turner Property Services as the temporary repairs contractor.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Covid 19 Guidance and Supporting Victims of Domestic Abuse</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Housing and Customer Service, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with information regarding a joint letter from the Scottish Government and COSLA advising that should be a priority to bring voids back in to use and have a policy to support victims of domestic abuse during COVID 19	
<b>14.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> preparations and the challenges to re-start void works and allocations and <b>NOTED</b> that it will be a priority in Q2 for the development of a Domestic Abuse Policy.	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Arrears Performance May 2020</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Housing, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with information on current tenant arrears performance and compare the scale of the increases since the end of March 2020.	
<b>15.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the report	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Office Risk Assessment</b>	
	Members heard from the Corporate Services Manager on work being undertaken to determine the risks of going back to the office to work and what mitigating measures the Association might have to take to keep staff and customers safe. Members were also asked to consider a comprehensive risk assessment undertaken by a consultant pointing out the risks and mitigating actions which the Association can take. The Corporate Services Manager advised that the intention is to consult with all of the staff groups and to develop a plan for going back which the Board will consider in due course.	
<b>16.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the position and also <b>NOTED</b> the Risk Assessment.	
<b>17.</b>	<b>ITC Staffing Changes</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the CSM the purpose of which was to provide the Board with information on changes in the areas of Information Communication Technology and in particular temporary arrangements to mitigate the loss of our ICT Officer. The TCM explained that since our ITC Officer had chosen to take up another post, some measures would have to be put in place on a temporary basis to cover most if not all of his tasks. The report explained the rationale for the proposed changes and their duration. The CSM advised that the arrangements in place are robust and designed to ensure the Association's ICT systems continue to operate effectively.	
<b>17.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the position	
<b>18.</b>	<b>Care and Repair Quarter 4 19/20</b>	

	Members were invited to consider a report by the Corporate Services Manager in his capacity as Care and Repair Manager, the purpose of which was to up-date the Board on the progress of the current Care and Repair Contracts and other relevant Care and Repair team issues.	
<b>18.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the report.	
<b>19.</b>	<b>Duty of Candour</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Housing and Customer Service, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with an annual Duty of Candour update in relation to the Housing Support Service.	
<b>19.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> that there were no relevant incidents in the period.	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
<b>12.</b>	<b>Issues which the Chair has agreed as urgent</b>	
<b>12.1</b>	No issues	
	<b>Meeting concluded - 8pm</b> <b>Date of next meeting - 22 July 5.30pm</b>	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_(Chair)