



# MINUTES OF BRIDGEWATER HOUSING ASSOCIATION

## BOARD MEETING

**Venue:** Hybrid Meeting

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**Time:** 5.30pm

**Present:**

Alastair Morris Chair, John Paterson Vice Chair, Heather Stirling Secretary, Frank Bradley Board Member, Ken McIntosh Board Member, Denise Love Board Member and Suzanne Austin Board Member.

**In attendance:**

Andy Thomson Chief Executive, Ruth Brogan Head of Housing and Community Engagement, Angie Kennedy Head of Finance, Scott Currie Head of Corporate Services and Business Development, Brenda Gibson Repairs Manager, and Lesley Carr Minute Secretary.

Item	Details	Action
1.	<b>Welcome and Chairs remarks</b>	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that members had received their papers on time.	
2.	<b>Apologies</b>	
	Apologies were received from <b>Rab McNally, Steven Webster (LA), Angela Westrop and Aileen Naismith</b>	
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	Members were invited to declare any interest in any of the items on the agenda, in terms of the Association’s published policy.	
3.1	There were no declarations made by those present.	
4.	<b>Minute of the Board Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 – for Approval</b>	
	Members were invited to consider the minute of the Board Meeting held on 25 <sup>th</sup> May 2022.  <u>Item 7 - 30-year Financial Plan/5 Year Financial Projection</u> – a member asked if the reconfirmed minimum cash balance of £1.5m as detailed at item 7.1 was the minimum amount that the Association would hold. The HOF confirmed that the Board had made the decision that the cash reserves would not fall below this amount.	
4.1	Members approved the minutes as a correct record of the meeting as <b>PROPOSED</b> by John Paterson and <b>SECONDED</b> by Heather Stirling.	

MATTERS ARISING	
5.	There were no matters arising from the previous minute.
MATTERS FOR APPROVAL	
6.	<b>CEO Report</b>
	<p>Members were invited to consider a report by the Chief Executive, the main purpose of which was to advise the Board on a range of relevant issues currently being considered and to seek approval for matters as noted throughout the report where required.</p> <p>Board is aware that the CEO had met with staff members on a one-to-one basis to introduce himself and to discuss various aspects of working for Bridgewater. This has been a valuable exercise and has identified priority areas to address to ensure that staff have the correct environment and tools to do their jobs effectively. The report outlines the key areas identified which correlate in the main, with the information the CEO had reviewed and his own view of matters.</p> <p>Now that the one-to-one meetings have been completed the CEO updated that a full staff engagement survey will be carried out, this is likely to commence August/September this year. This will be an anonymous survey and will give staff a real opportunity to be honest about the areas we need to improve or expand in the coming months/years.</p>
6.1	The Board <b>NOTED</b> the contents of this report.
6.2	<b>NOTED</b> the information contained within the final quarterly Covid19 return.
6.3	<b>CONFIRMED</b> that they <b>AGREED</b> that the Board member recruitment process be undertaken via FLAIR, EVH and Engage Renfrewshire. Board will be kept up-to-date on progress.
6.4	Board will be kept up-to-date of progress with arrangements for the Board and Senior Staff Away Day.
6.5	Board will be kept advised of proposals for collating Equalities Data for Tenants and applicants.
6.6	It was <b>AGREED</b> by those present that Heather Stirling, Denise Love, Steven Webster and Angela Westrop, being the longest standing members of the Board, will stand down at this year's AGM.
6.7	<p>Members <b>NOTED</b> the update provided on Staffing Matters and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>AGREED</b> to a temporary amendment to the delegated authority, which would provide delegated authority powers to the Repairs Manager and the Factoring Manager until the new Property Services Manager has taken up the post.</li> <li>• The CEO provided those present with an update following on from the recent recruitment process and confirmed that Steven Ferrie, had been offered the position of Head of Property Services. Steven is hoping to take up the post on 1<sup>st</sup> August.</li> </ul> <p>Members <b>NOTED</b> this update.</p>

<b>7.</b>	<b>SHR Loan Portfolio Return 2021-22</b>	
	<p>Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Finance, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with the 2021/22 Loan Portfolio Return submission, which has been prepared by the Head of Finance and externally verified by the Finance Consultant who is, as far as reasonably possible, confident of its accuracy.</p> <p>Members will be aware that the Loan Portfolio Return (LPR) is required to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by 30 June 2022. The return is appended to this report. This return gives details of stock levels, and loan balances as at 31 March 2022 and the loan covenant position.</p>	
<b>7.1</b>	The Board <b>NOTED</b> the contents of the report and <b>APPROVED</b> that the 2021/22 Loan Portfolio return will be submitted to the SHR by 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>FOI and EIR Policy reviews</b>	
	<p>Members were invited to consider the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations Policies presented by the Head of Corporate Services and Business Development, the purpose of which was to provide general understanding of FOISA and EIR and outline where responsibility lies for complying with the legal duties of the Association on under the regulations.</p> <p>The HCSBD updated that a recent EIR request prompted him to refer to the existing joint FOI and EIR policy which had been based on the SFHA 2019 Model, where it came to light that the policy incorrectly set out functions covered by FOISA as being covered by both FOISA and EIR. This prompted the HCSBD to consult the Associations Data Protection Officer who provided a copy of their organisations' own model Policies on which the proposed new Bridgewater policies are now based. These set out separately, the Association's responsibilities under FOISA and EIR Regulations and more clearly detail the roles, responsibilities and implications.</p>	
<b>8.1</b>	The FOI and the EIR Policies were <b>APPROVED</b> by Ken McIntosh and <b>SECONDED</b> by Suzanne Austin.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Office Accommodation Report</b>	
	<p>Members were invited to consider a report by the Chief Executive, the purpose of which was to provide members with information concerning work that has been undertaken to carry out an options appraisal for Bridgewater's Office provision and to seek approval to proceed with the agreed option to provide more suitable office premises for staff. The report also seeks budget approval, subject to the option being approved to ensure that there is sufficient funds to carry out all of the works required. Members should note that the office is leased and not owned by the Association however, whichever option is considered this would be a long-term lease arrangement of a minimum of 10 years being entered into.</p> <p>Board was asked to review the details within the report and the options appraisal including the financial analysis and agree which option should be taken forward taking into consideration the Leadership Team's recommendation.</p> <p>The CEO provided those present with a background to the current lease and reminded members the steps that have been taken in the past to resolve the issues with the</p>	

accommodation. The CEO and the HCSBD have considered all viable options available

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**9.1** The Board **NOTED** the content of the report and following on from a full discussion and consideration of the information contained within the report and the option appraisal, **APPROVED** the Leadership Teams recommendations to pursue leased office

[REDACTED]

**9.2** **AGREED** that notice should be provided

[REDACTED]

**9.3** Board **AGREED** to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to implement these decisions as a result of this options appraisal with a view to delivering the preferred options during 2022/2023. Board to be advised if the costs detailed within the options appraisal exceed 15% of the stated amount.

	<p>The decisions made by the Board were <b>ENDORSED</b> by Ken McIntosh and <b>SECONDED</b> by Heather Stirling.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Entitlements, Payments, and Benefits</b>	
	<p>Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Corporate Services &amp; Business Development (HCSBD) and the Chief Executive (CE), the purpose of which was to advise the Board of the recruitment of relatives of members of staff.</p> <p>The HCSBD updated that following the Care &amp; Repair Admin Assistant informing him of her intention to leave her post, the process to recruit a replacement commenced. One of the applications submitted and shortlisted was a relative of a member or the Care &amp; Repair Staff, this relationship was declared in the application form. The applicant was interviewed along with five other candidates as per the Association’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and was successfully appointed, subject to obtaining satisfactory references and Board approval of this report. The member of staff to whom she is related was not involved in the recruitment process.</p> <p>The CEO updated that on 30th March 2022, the Board approved a temporary restructuring of the Technical Department following intimation from the Technical Services Manager (TSM) that he would be retiring from post. The restructure included the appointment of a temporary property maintenance officer on a 6-month contract. The post required a candidate that was suitably qualified and experienced, had prior knowledge of the stock and who could take up the post without undue delay. The candidate was interviewed by the TSM and met all the essential criteria for the post. The candidate was also able to take up the temporary post almost immediately. EVH did not have any candidates that met the criteria at the time. The TSM also reached out unsuccessfully to other local Association’s to enquire if any spare capacity existed within their technical teams for a potential short-term secondment. This applicant was related to a member of the Finance Department who was not involved in the recruitment process. The CEO noted that this report should have been submitted prior to appointment but after he reviewed the paperwork it was noted that this had not been done. This was an oversight caused by Covid-19 restrictions and the need to urgently fill the role. This report is therefore provided seeking retrospective approval of the appointment.</p>	
<b>10.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the information contained within both reports, and <b>NOTED</b> that the Association Declaration of Interest Register will be updated to reflect both positions as <b>APPROVED</b> by Alastair Morris and <b>SECONDED</b> by John Paterson.	
<b>MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION, COMMENT AND NOTING</b>		
<b>11.</b>	<b>QEF Annual Statistical Return</b>	
	Members were invited to consider a report by the CEO, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with the 21/22 Annual Statistical Review (ASR) from the Quality and Efficiency Forum (QEF) Benchmarking Group based on the Charter (ARC) submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).	

	<p>Members will be aware the QEF is a group of 23 members drawn from the RSL sector in Scotland and meets on a quarterly basis to carry out statistical, processes and best practice benchmarking. The group also discusses topical issues and invites speakers to present on key matters.</p> <p>This is the 15th annual statistical review (ASR) report was provided for members of the RSL Quality and Efficiency Forum (QEF) and compares performance submitted by all members against the ARC for 2021/2022.</p>	
<b>11.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> the content of this report.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Annual Treasury Management Report</b>	
	<p>Members were invited to consider a report by the Head of Finance, the purpose of which was to provide the Board with the 2021/22 Treasury Management Report.</p> <p>The Association's TM Policy notes the requirement for the Head of Finance to submit an Annual Treasury Report to the Board meeting following the end of each financial year and in any case, no later than three months after the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The Annual Treasury Report covers the whole of the financial year's treasury activities and includes final annual measures of performance. The overriding objective of the Annual Treasury Report is to form a stand-alone document that provides a full picture of treasury activities, plans, policies and results, independent of other reporting during the year.</p>	
<b>12.1</b>	Members <b>NOTED</b> annual performance in relation to Treasury Management Activities as contained within this report.	
<b>MATTERS FOR BRIEFING AND INFORMATION ONLY</b>		
<b>13.</b>	There were no items for Briefing or Information.	
<b>REGULATORY ISSUES</b>		
<b>14.</b>	<b>Notifiable Events</b>	
	<p>There were no new notifiable events for consideration.</p> <p>Members were updated on live notifiable events at item 6 on the agenda.</p>	
<b>A.O.C.B</b>		
<b>15.</b>	<p>The Chief Executive update members that we currently have provision in the budget for £300 for charitable donations and he asked members if they would be mindful to increase this provision to £1000. This would allow the Association to provide support to local groups and would allow the Association to build a positive image in the local community.</p> <p>A member reminded those present that the HOHCE had been successful in securing funding to provide services to the Community during Covid. The CEO agreed that the HOHCE had been very successful in securing external funding however, these monies which come from external sources, come with strict criteria, and may not reach some local groups who would benefit, this is the areas that our own donations budget would target.</p>	

	Members <b>AGREED</b> to raise the Associations Charitable Donations Budget to £1000 and reconsider this if this needs to be increased going forward.	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
<b>16.</b>	<b>Issues which the Chair has agreed as urgent</b>	
<b>16.1</b>	There we no urgent issues for consideration.	
<b>17.</b>	<p><b>Meeting concluded - 7.15pm</b></p> <p><b>Proposed date of next meeting - 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022</b></p> <p>Members <b>AGREED</b> to the date for the next meeting.</p> <p>The CEO intends to produce a programme of meeting dates, this will be produced and provided following on from the AGM and will give members more notice of meeting dates going forward.</p>	



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