

**Minutes of Shire Board Meeting Held on 24 February 2021  
at 6.00 pm via Microsoft Teams Application (Covid-19)**

**PRESENT:** L Campbell (Chair), H Carr (Vice Chair), N Allan (Convenor of the Audit Committee), W Gallacher, R Irvine, D MacLeod, A Malik, W Paterson, A Rae, S Roberts

**CHAIR:** L Campbell

**IN ATTENDANCE:** J Munro (Director), C Donnelly (Head of Corporate Services), J Allison (Head of Housing), M Scott (Asset Manager), J McLelland (Minute Secretary)

**The meeting commenced at 6.00pm**

**The Chair welcomed the new Head of Housing and Asset Manager to their first Board meeting. The Board introduced themselves and mirrored the Chair’s welcome.**

Item		Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Formal Business</b>	
1.1	<u>Apologies</u> None.	
1.2	<u>Declaration of Interest</u> None.	
1.3	<u>Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 January 2021.</u> The Chair presented the minutes and invited comment or corrections.  <b>The Board approved the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting of 27 January 2021.</b>	
1.4	<u>Action Plan</u> - Item 3.3 26/08/20; <b>Roof Replacement Programme</b> The Director (DIR) advised that the roof replacement programme is progressing well despite a period of adverse weather. The DIR advised that a Health & Safety incident which occurred during the programme will be discussed under Item 1.8.  - Item 2.2 27/01/2021; <b>Budget Underspend</b> The Head of Corporate Services (HCOR) advised that three quotes were obtained from IT consultants. Following a review of these quotes, the HCOR has had discussions with DTL Creative regarding their support in the development of an ICT Strategy.  The Board welcomed the marketing spend on West FM advertisements, which has resulted in 4 expressions of interest in properties in the Association’s Difficult to Let areas.	

Item		Action
	<p>The DIR advised that a professional marking video, showcasing difficult to let properties, is being arranged. The DIR will explore options around reconfiguring the property to be shown in a graphic – including the possibility of creating a home working space.</p> <p>The DIR confirmed that a ‘tidy up’ of estates is also being arranged.</p> <p>- Item 2.1 16/12/2020; <b>Castleview Avenue</b> [FOISA Status- Exempt under Section 36 (Confidentiality)]</p> <p>- <b>ICT Hardware</b> The HCOR asked that Board members, who have not already done so, complete and return the survey on the use of devices.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the contents of the Action Plan.</b></p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u> None.</p>	<p><b>DIR</b></p> <p><b>DIR</b></p> <p><b>BOARD</b></p>
1.5		
1.6	<p><u>Notifiable Events</u> None.</p>	
1.7	<p><u>Membership Report</u> The Governance Assistant presented the report to the Board.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the termination of 1 member under Rule 11.1.2 and welcomed the membership marketing campaign.</b></p>	
1.8	<p><u>Health &amp; Safety Report</u> The Asset Manager (AM) presented the report to the Board and advised that there have been no accidents or incidents since the last meeting in January 2021. There was one near miss, which occurred as part of the roof replacement programme, where high winds lifted loose materials from the site to neighbouring properties. The AM confirmed that the contractor attended site and no damage had occurred. The AM advised that the contractor has held “toolbox talks” to mitigate against future occurrences. Going forward, notification letters containing contractor details will be issued to neighbouring properties, as well as those properties receiving the work.</p> <p>The AM confirmed that, in line with the tighter lockdown restrictions introduced by the Scottish Government on 26 December 2020, the Association is currently only carrying out emergency or urgent repairs and outdoor repair work. The Board noted that work to void properties continues to progress, whilst planned maintenance works, such as kitchen and window replacements, remain on hold until restrictions are lifted or relaxed.</p>	

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<p>2.0</p> <p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p>	<p>The AM advised that the EWI and reroofing contracts continue to progress, with work anticipated to finish by year end.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the content of the Health &amp; Safety report.</b></p> <p><b>Items requiring a Board Decision.</b></p> <p><u>Budget 2021/22</u></p> <p>The Head of Corporate Services (HCOR) presented the report to the Board, highlighting the changes made since the draft budget was presented in November 2020.</p> <p>The HCOR advised that the reactive repairs budget has been increased in line with the expected increase in wider reactive repairs costs and catch-up work and that additional cyclical maintenance costs had been included following an initial review by the new AM.</p> <p>There has also been an increase in budgeted staff related costs to allow for temporary agency cover.</p> <p>The Board noted that component replacement work may have to change over the course of the year due to the uncertainties brought about by the pandemic.</p> <p>The HCOR advised the Board that she has had discussions with The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) who have indicated that they are amenable to adjusting the headroom in the 2021/22 covenants once the outturn for 2020/21 is known.</p> <p>The AM advised that an additional £30,000 spend for Westgate House in the current year relates to remedial works to two staircases which are deteriorating. The AM is currently awaiting quotes before progressing the works.</p> <p>The Board requested that the AM obtain quotes for drone footage of Westgate House as this will help the Association assess the current position and anticipate any future works which may be required.</p> <p>The Board thanked the HCOR for a very informative and well-presented report.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the changes between the draft and final budgets and approved the final budget for 2021/22.</b></p> <p><u>Potential Membership of the SFHA (Scottish Federation of Housing Associations)</u></p> <p>The Director (DIR) presented the report to the Board and welcomed Boards views.</p>	<p><b>AM</b></p>

Item		Action
	<p>The Board fully discussed the pros and cons of membership. The Board agreed that the Association is an outward looking, collaborative organisation with ambitious plans going forward, and that membership of SFHA could benefit the Association substantially. The Board also felt that the training benefits will aid in the delivery of both Board and staff development and mitigate a proportion of the membership cost.</p> <p>The DIR confirmed that the Association would remain a member of GWSF, with any overlaps being identified going forward. The Board noted the support given by GWSF in helping the Association secure community grant funding during the pandemic.</p> <p>The Board requested that the Audit Committee track the benefits and usage of SFHA membership going forward to allow the Board to review the position in a year.</p> <p>The DIR will arrange for the CEO of SFHA to attend a Board meeting to give a presentation.</p> <p>The DIR will also explore associate membership of Scotland Excel, with a report presented to a future Board Meeting.</p> <p>The Board agreed to record the membership cost as a variance throughout the year rather than amend the budget approved at Item 2.1.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed to re-join the SFHA for 1 year, with the Audit Committee tracking the benefits and usage of membership. Board will review the position next year.</b></p>	<p><b>AC</b></p> <p><b>DIR</b></p> <p><b>DIR</b></p> <p><b>HCOR</b></p> <p><b>DIR/AC</b></p>
2.3	<p><u>Draft Revised Standing Orders</u> The HCOR presented the report to the Board.</p> <p>The HCOR highlighted that the only suggested change that is not directly attributable to the Model Rules relates to holding meetings remotely. Given the desire of the Board to continue with the current format in future, this change allows for all members to participate remotely beyond the pandemic and emergency measures. The Board noted that some face-to-face meeting will still take place when the situation allows.</p> <p>The Board requested that the Financial Delegated Authority section references the financial policies and procedures - in relation to segregation of duties.</p> <p><b>The Board approved the revised Standing Orders, subject to the amendment above.</b></p>	<p><b>HCOR</b></p>
2.4	<p><u>Bad Debt Write-off Report</u> The Head of Housing (HH) presented the report to the Board,</p>	

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	<p>highlighting that the suggested bad debt write off is well within the 2020/21 Business Plan assumption and Debt Management practice.</p> <p>The HH advised that she will undertake an exercise to analyse former tenant arrears.</p> <p>The HH also advised that staff have been piloting Saturday morning calls to former tenants, which is delivering good results thus far. The HH highlighted that this also supports staff and their work/life balance, providing flexibility.</p> <p>The Board asked that the HH pass on their thanks to staff members for their hard work.</p> <p>The DIR confirmed that the HH and AM will be progressing the potential acquisition of 34 Meikleholm Drive, Patna.</p> <p>The Board had a full discussion around Westgate House and possible options going forward. The Board agreed that options are very much dependant on the future plans for regeneration of Newmilns as a whole. Available options will be explored by the AM.</p> <p><b>The Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approved the write-off of £25,987.45.</b></li> <li>• <b>Approved the fourteen off-charge long-term void properties that are not being actively let because there is no current demand or are subject to asset decision.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>HH</b></p> <p><b>HH/AM</b></p> <p><b>AM</b></p>
2.5	<p><u>Board Development Action Plan</u></p> <p>The DIR presented the report to the Board.</p> <p>The DIR advised the Board that some dates may change depending on the availability of relevant training.</p> <p>The Board fully discussed the Board Development Action Plan. The Board requested that the Action Plan is brought to Board for review in September 2021 to maintain momentum and track progress.</p> <p><b>The Board approved the Board Development Action Plan.</b></p>	<p><b>DIR</b></p>
2.6	<p><u>Proposed Salary Increase Consultation – EVH (Employers in Voluntary Housing)</u></p> <p>The DIR presented the report to the Board and highlighted that no recommendation has been made to allow Board full autonomy.</p> <p>The Board fully discussed the proposed increase and determined that this was a reasonable settlement.</p> <p>The Board felt it was important to acknowledge that staff have gone through a challenging year and have coped exceedingly well.</p>	

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	<p>The Board approved the wage settlement recommended by EVH and Unite and instructed the Director to complete and return the Employers' Ballot Paper.</p>	<b>DIR</b>
2.7	<p><u>Confidential H.R. Update</u> See confidential minute.</p>	
<b>3.0</b>	<p><b>Items for Discussion</b></p>	
3.1	<p><u>Verbal Update on Investors in People, and Investors in Young People</u> The HCOR provided the Board with a verbal update on the IIP/IIYP 3-year re-accreditation. A full staff survey was completed, with high levels of participation achieved. The assessor met with 6 members of staff yesterday and provided some initial feedback, which was very positive. The HCOR advised that the assessor will share the outcome by the end of the next week at the debrief meeting. The full report will be shared with the Board when available.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the verbal update on IIP/IIYP.</b></p>	<b>HCOR</b>
4.0	<p><b>Reports for Information Only</b> None.</p>	
5.0	<p><b>Training</b> None.</p>	
6.0	<p><b>Deferred Items</b> None.</p>	
<b>7.0</b>	<p><b>AOCB</b></p>	
7.1	<p><u>Newbiggin Terrace Insurance Claim</u> The DIR advised the Board that an interim payment of £60,000 has been agreed. Some costs are still being queried around the remaining £14,000 but progress is being made. The Board will be kept abreast of any developments.</p>	<b>DIR</b>
7.2	<p><u>Reactive Maintenance Contract</u> The DIR advised that 2 tenders were received. The AM, A McGrath and Ewing Somerville Partnership will meet on Friday 16 February to score the tenders. Results from this and a recommendation to progress the appointment of a new contractor will be made to the Office Bearers due to timing requirements.</p> <p><b>The Board authorised for the Office Bearers to approve the tender.</b></p>	
7.3	<p><u>Audit Committee Meeting</u> The HCOR requested that Audit Committee members confirm which dates they are available for the March meeting.</p>	<b>AC</b>

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	<p>The Convenor of the Audit Committee took the opportunity to thank L Gallacher for joining the Audit Committee.</p>	
7.4	<p><u>Director's Appraisal</u> The Chair advised the Board that the Director's appraisal went well and was a very positive session.</p>	
7.5	<p><u>Chair Training</u> The Chair advised that he participated in a SHARE training course around governance. The Chair enjoyed the session and advised that it provided him with great confidence that the Association has strong governance practices in place.</p>	
7.6	<p><u>Barbieston Road</u> The DIR confirmed that the final Option Appraisal Report has been shared with the Scottish Government and East Ayrshire Council. [FOISA Status – Exemption under Section 33 (Commercial interests and the Economy)]. Board will be updated on the outcome of the meeting.</p>	DIR
	<p><b>Date of Next Board Meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wednesday 31 March 2021</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Venue: MS Teams.</b></p>	
8.0	<p><b>Meeting Concluded at 8.15pm.</b> I confirm this Minute is a true and accurate record of the meeting:-</p> <p>Chair _____</p>	