

BOARD MINUTES



Meeting Date: 04 February 2021

Time: 5pm

Venue: Virtual meeting

Board Members in Attendance

Martin Joyce
Adam Turner
Jeremy Hewer
Steven Prevost
Ann Wilson
Chris Boyle
Caroline Rodgers
Andrew Saunders
Neil Tulloch
Victoria Bluck
Bryony Stocker

Apologies

Anne Gault
Craig Morton

Staff in Attendance

John Davidson	Chief Executive
Sandy Young	Head of Housing Management
Angela Coutts	Head of Corporate Services
Joanna Voisey	Head of Asset Management
Craig Porter	Head of Finance and ICT
Gillian Lennox (for items 6547 & 6548)	Development Manager
Tammy Allan	Quality and Performance Officer (minutes)

Others in Attendance

Pol MacDonald, Op-en – For items 6547 & 6548
Shaun McCarthy, Amber Rei – For items 6547 & 6548
Colin Smith, Turley Associates– For items 6547 & 6548

Please note that these minutes have been edited to remove any commercially sensitive or confidential discussions.

If you need this publication in larger print, audio, Braille, or in another language, please contact our office and we will try to help you.

PRESENTATION

6547	Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Pol MacDonald, Shaun McCarthy and Colin Smith, who had been invited to present their plans for the Drumshoreland development.
6548	Drumshoreland Development Presentation Information removed or edited due to information relating to personal/confidential items or being commercially sensitive.

STANDING ITEMS

6549	Apologies A record was made of apologies from non-attendees.
6550	Use of Seal None.
6551	AOCB Approval <ul style="list-style-type: none">JV advised that she would like to inform the Board of a new potential development site.AC advised that she would like to inform the Board of a new opportunity that had arisen which would allow the Association to further support local families.
6552	Declaration of Interest on any Agenda Items <ul style="list-style-type: none">NT advised that his wife and daughter run a business which has close links with Veterans Housing Scotland.BS is a resident of Drumshoreland.
6553	Membership Applications None.
6554	Matters Arising/Update/Information Papers for Discussion None.
6555	Minutes from Previous Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">Under min ref 6542, BS noted that the discussion around business resilience was not mentioned. MJ had enquired if AHA storage could be held elsewhere. CP confirmed that the back office and recovery business resilience is designed for short-term storage only to get AHA over the disaster period. The more affordable delivery option is on site storage due to the applications used by the Association.CB asked how the security release (min ref 6540) was progressing. CP advised that the security release has not been completed as the valuation requires information that comes from the results of the 2020 stock condition survey.AW highlighted that the minutes stated she was both in attendance and had given her apologies. It should have read that she had given her apologies.

6556	<p>Board Members – Items for Future Meetings</p> <p>Following the recent announcement from the Scottish Government regarding the ban on evictions over the Christmas period, JH queried if this would have any impact on the Association. SY confirmed that evictions are not normally carried out by AHA over this period.</p>
6557	<p>Board Training – Verbal</p> <p>BS advised that she had recently attended the On Board training, which she found to be really useful.</p> <p>JH confirmed that he recently attended a housing webinar that was held by Scotland Excel. If the slides from the webinar are made available, JH will forward them so they can be uploaded onto the Virtual Boardroom portal.</p>
6558	<p>Chief Executive’s Report</p> <p>JD presented his report and informed the Board that this would be JV’s last Board meeting as she had been offered an exciting post with Hanover Housing Association. Recruitment for her successor has begun with the assistance of Aspen People Limited and JD advised that he is hoping to have someone in post by July. JD moved on to advise that a decision has been made to revise the job title for the Heads of Service. The job title will now be Director which JD feels is more reflective of the role. Also, at present the AEL Manager is currently line managed by the AEL voluntary Board with a liaison link to the Head of Corporate Services. However, following discussions with the current Chair of AEL, a proposal will be submitted to the AEL Board on 18th February to establish a line management function under the new Director of Asset Management. It is felt that there are clear links between both functions and to establish a line management function will allow for substantial growth opportunities within AEL.</p> <p>NT asked if any consideration had been made to use a third party to line manage the AEL Manager. JD advised this would affect the Independence Agreement, but he could look into this as an option.</p> <p>JD advised that the initial results of the Dolphin Index survey had been received and a staff focus group is due to meet to discuss the results ahead of the final report being made available. Once the final report has been received, the SMT will develop an action plan.</p> <p>AW asked whether any themes had become apparent from the results of the initial survey. JD advised that staff are looking to feel more empowered, which did not come as a surprise.</p> <p>With regards to the Covid-19 update, CB asked if there were protocols in place with only one member of staff being in the building at any one time. JD confirmed that there is a rota in place and the Association’s lone working procedure also covers the steps staff should follow.</p> <p>Both AT and SB expressed their interest in being involved with the return-on-investment evaluation of the Housing First for Youth Project.</p> <p>BS queried how the changes in line management would affect the manager’s employment contract. AC confirmed that a contract variation would be required and that this would cover the proposed changes.</p> <p>The Board noted the content of the Chief Executive’s report.</p>
6559	<p>Approval of Consent Agenda</p> <p>Information removed or edited due to information relating to personal/confidential items or being commercially sensitive.</p>
<p>REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION</p>	

6560	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Outcome of the Annual Rent Review 2020 and Rent Setting Consultation – Proposed Annual Rent Increase 1 April 2021</p> <p>AT confirmed that a very comprehensive discussion regarding the proposed rent increase had taken place at the Audit and Finance Sub-committee meeting. It was acknowledged that the response to the consultation was not what the Association would have liked and AHA must recognise that the current time is difficult for the majority of tenants.</p> <p>AT advised that the Audit and Finance Sub-committee felt that keeping rents low was the right thing to do and although CPI may be less than 1.5%, the Association should proceed at this level as this is the basis of the consultation.</p> <p>The Board approved that the rent increase figure for 2021-22 be set at projected CPI minus 0.5% to give a 1% increase.</p>
6561	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Draft Annual Budget including Executive Summary</p> <p>It was advised that the proposed staffing changes noted within the budget are detailed within the improvement plans. These changes will keep AHA in line with the other members of the G8.</p> <p>SP noted that £150K had been allocated for wider role projects and queried whether any of this would be used to support drug rehabilitation services. AC advised that this service is provided by West Lothian Council and is not something AHA would look to replicate.</p> <p>The Board approved the draft annual budget.</p>
6562	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Draft 30-Year Financial Plan</p> <p>AT advised that the draft 30-year plan included currently known income and costs, along with updated assumptions for income growth and cost increases. However, the results of the stock condition survey may result in rephasing to ensure the Association meets its loan covenants.</p> <p>CP advised that AHA can justify keeping rents where they are due to forward planning. He noted that there may be pressure points throughout the plan, but contingencies are in place to control costs.</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed draft 30-Year Financial Plan as recommended by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6563	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>AT advised that the Audit and Finance Sub-committee was content with the Draft Annual Budget, Draft 30-Year Financial Plan and the Treasury Management Strategy for the upcoming year and that they were also comfortable that CPI would support all three.</p> <p>The Board approved the Treasury Strategy 2021-22 as submitted by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6564	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Risk Map: Q3 Review</p> <p>AC advised the Board that as the risk map had undergone an extensive review in Q2 following a recommendation from TIAA, it was felt that no new risks or amendments were required at this time.</p>

	<p>BS queried if contractor insolvency is regularly monitored. JV confirmed that it is through regular meetings, KPI checks and checks carried out by external auditors. JV also confirmed that there are no red flags at present, but if there were, AHA would react immediately.</p> <p>The Board noted the status of the risk map as submitted by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6565	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Telephony</p> <p>The Board was in agreement that a 12-month contract allows sufficient time to review the service in full before being tied into a longer contract.</p> <p>The Board approved the purchase of a replacement telephony system via direct negotiation with Dialpad for a 12-month contract as submitted by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6566	<p>Reports to be approved following the Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Bad Debt Write-Off</p> <p>AT highlighted that the requested write-off amount for this quarter was extremely low compared with previous periods.</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed bad debt write-off/write-off of credit balances as submitted by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6567	<p>Service Improvement Plans 2021-22</p> <p>JD informed the Board that the proposed Service Improvement Plans were interim plans to cover the next 12 months. JD then advised that 3–5-year strategic plans will also be created throughout the next year.</p> <p>JD advised that the Heads of Service had worked together to ensure the plans were inter-linked and not created in isolation.</p> <p><u>Asset Management Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>JV advised that the Asset Management Improvement Plan was dependent on the results of the stock condition survey. She also advised that the improvement plans detail upcoming development work and the proposed investment in the Almond property standard.</p> <p><u>Customer Excellence</u></p> <p>SY informed the Board that the current telephone system does not support the staff in the way he would like it to and it needs to be improved, so it has been included within the customer excellence plan.</p> <p>Information removed or edited due to information relating to personal/confidential items or being commercially sensitive.</p> <p>SY advised the Association could provide improved services if there was a better understanding of the needs of each its tenants. He has therefore planned to carry out detailed customer profiling to obtain the information required.</p> <p><u>Digital</u></p> <p>CP noted that there is a lot of crossover between departments with the work that is detailed within each individual plan and ICT needs to be able to support this. The work proposed within the Digital plan details how this will be done.</p> <p><u>People</u></p> <p>AC advised the Board that the Association must have a clear vision in place for staff and that the improvement plan details what we are looking to achieve.</p>

	<p>JD advised that additional staffing will be required. Some of the proposals include the recruitment of the following posts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Manager –to provide a more in-depth service • Maintenance Assistant –to assist with the stock condition survey results. We must ensure that this data is stored and managed better than it was in previous years • Communications and Engagement Manager –to ensure we have the right people doing the right things and to provide an additional layer between Directors and staff. <p>JD advised that the additional headcount would bring AHA in line with Clyde Valley, but we would still be light in comparison with the remainder of the G8. However, AHA still performs well against each of them. He also advised that the Association’s headline costs are competitive and he does not feel the plans include unnecessary changes to staffing.</p> <p>CR noted that the plans reflect previous discussions and asked if we had considered using a project manager to track all of the proposed changes and ensure they are both qualitative and quantitative.</p> <p>SP asked if staff feel under pressure with the workloads involved. JD confirmed that on occasion they do, and that the Association is light with support services to assist frontline staff.</p> <p>BS referred to the People plan and noted that there was no mention of staff wellbeing. AC advised there are other items in place that would cover this. However, the 3-5 year plan would include a more detailed approach.</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed improvement plans.</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed staffing resources to enable the delivery of the plans.</p> <p>The Board agreed to receive quarterly updates on progress against the improvement plans.</p>
--	---

Asset Management	
-------------------------	--

6568	<p>Landscaping Contract Extension – Continental Landscapes</p> <p>JV informed the Board that the current landscaping contract is due to come to an end on 31st March 2020. However, it has become apparent that a number of issues, including resource availability, will make it extremely difficult for a full review to be carried out within the allotted time. JV requested that the contract be extended for an additional two months to allow for a review to take place.</p> <p>The Board approved a limited extension on the current Landscape Maintenance Contract for two months to allow for the re-procurement exercise to be completed.</p>
6569	<p>Quarterly Update – Planned Programme to end quarter 3</p> <p>JV advised the Board that the quarterly update report detailed the planned work that had been completed within the period. She advised that only 77% of the programme had been achieved, but a review showed that Covid had reduced the available working days by 50%. JV confirmed that the progress made was on par with the members of the G8.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the report.</p>

Corporate Services	
---------------------------	--

6570	<p>Key Performance Indicators – to end quarter 3</p> <p>AC informed the Board that supporting commentary had been provided within the KPI pack for any KPIs that had triggered red in quarter 3.</p>
------	---

	<p>AT noted that he likes the new format with the additional supporting commentary. He queried if tenants had been understanding of any delays that have occurred. JV confirmed they had, although members of the G8 were not getting the same response from tenants.</p> <p>JH noted that some of the KPIs are based on percentages and queried what numbers they were based on. AC confirmed the KPIs are in line with the current ARC indicators and if there are any others that anyone would like, she can provide these. JD advised that additional commentary can be included to support the percentages.</p> <p>The Board noted the action taken on the red KPI information, and agreed the action being taken by officers.</p>
6571	<p>AOCB – A new potential development</p> <p>JV informed the Board that a new potential development, in line with the SHIP, has become available in Sydney Street. The development would consist of 65 properties and a report will be brought to Board once more information is available.</p>
6572	<p>AOCB – Opportunity to support local families</p> <p>AC informed the Board that an exciting opportunity had arisen which would allow the Association to support local families with IT devices. AC advised that the Association could obtain the devices from Reusing IT and these would be donated to families who require them. Each device would include free data. AC moved on to advise that £35k of gift aid was due to be received from AEL and approximately £20k would be used to fund the initiative.</p>
	<p>Date of Next Meeting: 04 March 2021</p>

Approved by:

Date: