

ALMOND ENTERPRISES LTD

MINUTES

of the virtual Board meeting held at 5.00pm on Thursday 18th November 2021

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Alistair Barton
Kevin Clark
Ian Crawford
Tatyana Duffie

APOLOGIES:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Vicky Wilson	AEL Manager
John Davidson	Chief Executive, AHA
Angela Coutts	Director of Corporate Services, AHA
Iona Taylor	Director of Asset Management, AHA
Tammy Allan	AHA - Minutes

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

STANDING ITEMS

606	Welcome AB welcomed everyone to the meeting.
607	Apologies No apologies were received.
608	Approval of Previous Minutes The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 19 th August 2021.
609	AOCB Approval None.
610	Declaration of Interest None.
611	Matters Arising AB advised that agenda item 15 provides an update to the query raised under minute ref 595.
612	Manager's Report VW presented the Manager's report to the Board and highlighted the success of the winter checks that are currently being carried out. VW advised there are only 41 remaining and the process for properties where staff are having difficulty obtaining access has changed. This has been successful with no abortive calls recorded to date. With regards to business development, VW confirmed that another costing exercise had been carried out for the garden contract with AHA. The TUPE implications have been taken into consideration and VW confirmed that the results will be presented to the Parent company within the coming days. AC highlighted that the garden contract previously wasn't viable because of the TUPE implications and she queried what factors had changed. VW stated that she had been asked to revisit this contract and advised that she was unsure if the current contractor would TUPE all of their staff over. VW moved on to discuss landfill and recycling amendments. Travelling costs to Dunfermline were higher, but overall Dunfermline is most cost-effective as they only charge for the final weight that is being disposed of and Scotwaste charges for each individual item plus the final weighted cost. VW confirmed she will keep this under review. VW advised that where AEL are finding there are tenants with hearing difficulties whilst they are carrying out the winter checks, they will feed this information back to the Housing Officers. The Board noted the Manager's report.

PRESENTATIONS

613	None.
-----	-------

PAPERS for APPROVAL

614	2021-22 Budget Re-forecast VW presented the report and advised that the £52,000 gift aid amount was based on an estimate. There were no questions from the Board.
-----	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

	<p>The Board approved the reforecast budget for the year ended 31 March 2022, with the amendments presented.</p> <p>The Board approved the gift aid payment of no more than £52,000.</p>
615	<p>Finance report to September 2021 & proposed Gift Aid payment</p> <p>VW presented the report and advised that the bad debts previously reported had been recovered. The Board noted that AEL was in a healthy position and wanted to pass on their thanks to VW and the team.</p> <p>VW advised that the proposal to gift aid a further £6k to the parent company was following a recommendation from the auditors, and it would save in future tax payments.</p> <p>AC advised that the gift aid payment would go towards funding the community soup event in February which is hosted by the Parent company.</p> <p>The Board noted the financial position at 30 September 2021.</p> <p>The Board approved the additional gift aid payment of £6k to AHA for the financial year 2021-22.</p>
616	<p>Increase in staff hours</p> <p>AB provided a verbal update and reminded the Board that there was a report presented at the previous meeting. This report was amended after that meeting and circulated via email amongst Board members and the increased hours were approved.</p> <p>The Board gave retrospective approval to the increase in staff hours.</p>
617	<p>Pay award & annual bonus 2021/22</p> <p>A report on the proposed pay award for 2022/23 and annual bonus for 2021/22 was submitted.</p> <p>Following discussion it was agreed to defer consideration of the pay award until the February meeting. We would be applying the increase to the National Living Wage for the Operatives, but further time was required for a review of the increase for the remaining staff in view of the current increase in the rate of inflation and other factors.</p> <p>With regard to the annual bonus, AC advised that the previous level of £50 paid to sessional staff was set as they had only been with AEL for a short period of time when the bonus was introduced. As the sessional staff had now worked with AEL for some time it was proposed that they be awarded a £100 bonus this year.</p> <p>The Board approved the payment of an annual bonus at a level of £200 each to permanent staff and £100 to sessional staff, to be paid as part of the December payroll.</p>
618	<p>Business Plan Objectives 2022/23</p> <p>The proposed business plan key objectives for 2022-23 were presented, and the Board noted that this was the first stage in drafting the Business Plan each year. The full Plan would be considered at the February meeting.</p> <p>The Board approved the key objectives for 2022-23.</p>
619	<p>Contract value increases 2022/23</p> <p>VW presented the report proposing that the annual increase to each contract value be applied to external contracts only, and not to the contracts with AHA, in view of AEL's favourable financial position and the need in current circumstances to minimise additional costs for tenants. IT confirmed that if this was approved the position would be monitored throughout the year.</p> <p>VW advised that two small contracts due for review before the date of this meeting had agreed to renew for another year with a 5% increase in costs.</p> <p>The Board agreed that all external clients be advised of a proposed contract value increase of 4.5% from April 2022.</p>

620	<p>Policy Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whistleblowing • Retention of Documents <p>Both policies were last reviewed three years ago and no changes were proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Code of Conduct <p>This was a new policy which had gone through a consultation process with all staff who were in agreement with the proposed Code.</p> <p>The Board approved the reviewed policies, with a further three-year review period.</p> <p>The Board approved the new Staff Code of Conduct, with a three-year review period.</p>
FOR INFORMATION	
621	<p>Finance report to 30 September 2021</p> <p>The Finance report to 30 September 2021 was submitted.</p> <p>IT advised there was a significant surplus sitting with AEL and confirmed that it is the equivalent of six months of working capital.</p> <p>IT advised that AEL was looking to develop and was exploring possible training opportunities. There would be a considerable amount of work involved in getting AEL into a position where they could provide alternative services and some project management support may be required. However, as AEL cannot borrow from the parent company, the additional surplus would allow for this opportunity to be explored in the future.</p> <p>IC noted that it was nice to see the surplus being put to productive use.</p> <p>JD advised that this money would be of great benefit to AEL, whether it is used for software purchases or funding training.</p> <p>The Board noted the financial position as at 30 June 2021.</p>
622	<p>AEL Strategy – update on progress</p> <p>The Board was presented with a list of possibilities that were available for AEL and IT advised that the Board was welcome to provide further suggestions of areas they would like to see AEL explore. IT also advised that AEL is looking at how they can manage alternative opportunities and what training options are available.</p> <p>KC queried whether AEL intended to remain within the Teckal parameters. AB confirmed that as this guarantees AEL 80% of its income, it would be wise to remain in this position meantime. AC also advised that AEL previously adhered to Teckal, but stepped away from it as the market allowed this to happen. However, it now provides a good safety net for core work.</p> <p>The Board noted the strategy update.</p>
623	<p>Business Plan 2021/22 -Action plan update</p> <p>VW provided an update on the progress being made against the action plan and drew the Board’s attention to the positive feedback that had been received from Parkways.</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the report.</p>
624	<p>Performance report</p> <p>The performance report was presented to the Board and VW advised that the inability to meet the 90% target for creditor days was outwith AEL’s control as the delay was as a result of the length of time taken for John Lewis to issue their invoice.</p> <p>There were no queries or questions from the Board and the Board noted the contents of the report.</p>

625	Board Members – items for future meetings IT informed the Board that there may be some additional expenditure for ICT, and therefore the surplus may be utilised before the end of March to cover these costs.
626	AOB None.
627	Date of Next Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Thursday 17th February 2022 [online]