

BOARD MINUTES



Meeting Date: 01 February 2024
Time: 6pm
Venue: Almond HA Office

Board Members in Attendance

Adam Turner
Julie Riley
Neil Tulloch
Tricia Hill via MS Teams
Vicky Bluck
Martin Joyce
Craig Morton via MS Teams
Chris Boyle
Julie Riley

Apologies

Darren Lewis

Staff in Attendance

John Davidson	Chief Executive
Sandy Young	Director of Housing Management
Iona Taylor	Director of Asset Management
Craig Porter	Director of Finance and Business Support
Tammy Allan	Business Improvement Officer (minutes)

Others in Attendance

Lorna Shaw, Research Resource – for items 6959-6964

STANDING ITEMS

6959	Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
6960	Apologies A record was made of apologies from non-attendees.
6961	Use of Seal None
6962	AOCB Approval

	None
6963	<p>Declaration of Interest on any Agenda Items</p> <p>None</p>
PRESENTATIONS	
6964	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey – Research Resource</p> <p>Lorna Shaw (LS) from Research Resource informed the Board that they had recently carried out the Associations most recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey and moved on to provide an overview of the key areas that she has taken from the survey. LS detailed how the survey was carried out, including a proactive follow-up and she noted a return rate of 1063 tenants, equating to 43%.</p> <p>LS moved on to detail the satisfaction levels for each indicator and compared them to previous results and the Scottish average. For the most part, the Associations results were lower than previous years, however, LS was able to note that this is also in line with what her organisation is seeing throughout the sector.</p> <p>LS also detailed that tenants were also asked further questions out with the SHR indicators, and they were asked how they preferred to be contacted. More than half of the tenants who responded advised that they preferred email, which highlights changes that the Association needs to make in terms of communication. Tenants also noted their satisfaction with the changes that the Association has made to its opening times.</p> <p>The Board noted that there were some disappointing results, however none were surprising given the pressures that tenants are facing. This generated a discussion around areas where AHA need to focus on improvement, including the overall repairs service and the improvements required in terms of communication. With regards to communication, the Board also noted their wish for the results to be published.</p>
6965	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Board approved the Minutes from the previous meeting without amendment.</p>
6966	<p>Matters Arising/Update/Information Papers for Discussion</p> <p>None</p>
6967	<p>Board Members – Items for Future Meetings</p> <p>VB informed the Sub-committee that she could make arrangements for someone from Lloyds Bank to attend the strategy meeting in April to discuss the work that they are doing with regards to social housing.</p> <p>CB referred to the energy systems and district heating that were discussed at the recent Asset Management Sub-committee. He noted that is possibly something that should be discussed further as tenants may start to enquire independently regarding this matter.</p>
6968	<p>Board Training – Verbal</p> <p>None</p>
6969	<p>Chief Executive’s Report</p> <p>The report was presented, and the Board noted the positive feedback received from staff regarding the Association that was taken from the recent values session that was held.</p> <p>CP referred to the new Board SharePoint site that is being developed and advised that he was looking for 3 volunteers to test the site. VB, MJ and JR volunteered.</p>

	The Board noted the content of the Chief Executive’s report.
REPORTS FOR DECISION	
6970	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-Committee – Draft Annual Budget including Executive Summary</p> <p>VB presented the report to Board and noted that the Audit & Finance Sub-Committee had an in-depth discussion around where or not they felt that the Association was being too cautious with its budget for next year and by being solely financially driven, may potentially hinder future growth. She also noted that the Board should debate what their risk appetite is and move past the immediate problems, whilst also looking at wider ambitions.</p> <p>The Board also noted that there needs to be a debate around being ready when the option is there and continuing to invest whilst also keeping an eye on the shorter-term risk management.</p> <p>The Board approved the 2024-25 annual budget, as recommended by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6971	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Draft 30-Year Financial Plan</p> <p>CP informed the Board that SMT are currently reviewing all options available [REDACTED]</p> <p>Therefore, the draft 30-year financial plan would need to be brought back to the Strategy meeting in April for approval as it is a requirement of the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Associations lenders that the plan is presented and approved before June.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the work to prepare a draft 30-Year Financial Plan for submission to the next Board meeting for discussion and approves the approach of a fully assessed plan being presented to the Board for approval at the strategy meeting on 4th April 2024.</p>
6972	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>The Board noted the Treasury requirements in 2024-25 and the projected existing loan balances through-out the 5-year period. An updated 5-year plan will be provided with the 30 Year plan 2024 to the Board.</p>
6973	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Annual Rent Review 2024/25</p> <p>The report was presented to the Board and there was a discussion around the proposal of the rent increase of 5.4% when this wasn’t the most voted for option. The Board were also informed that the proposed rent increase letters that will go out to tenants will make clear the reasons behind the decision in order to provide transparency [REDACTED]</p> <p>The Board approved that the rent increase figure for the next financial year (2024-25) be set at the higher option given to tenants during the consultation which was 5.4% as recommended by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6974	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Risk Map</p> <p>VB informed the Board that this was a straightforward report and advised that there will be a follow-up based on previous discussions regarding risk appetite.</p>

	<p>It was also acknowledged that the risk map needs to be simplified, highlighting the strategic risks.</p> <p>The Board noted the status of the Risk Map.</p>
6975	<p>Reports to be approved following Audit & Finance Sub-committee – Bad Debt Write-Off</p> <p>There were no queries raised by the Board.</p> <p>The Board approved the proposed bad debt write-off/write-off of credit balances as recommended by the Audit and Finance Sub-committee.</p>
6976	<p>Reports to be approved following Asset Management Sub-committee – Chestnut Grove, Structural Report</p> <p>CB gave the Board details of the information that was included within IT’s report, noting that a lot of the Associations stock is of a similar age and all requiring an element of improvement work whilst also dealing with the upcoming problems with RAAC that needs to be addressed.</p> <p>CB also informed the Board that whilst other properties are being inspected for RAAC, we must pertain the liability of the advice that is being given by the contractors.</p> <p>MJ also requested that the wider Board group may benefit from receiving a copy of the presentation that was taken to the Asset Management Sub-committee.</p> <p>The Board approved the recommendation to permanently relocate tenants from the Chestnut Grove properties and note that proposals for the future of this stock will be presented at a future meeting as recommended by the Asset Management Sub-committee.</p>
6977	<p>Reports to be approve following Asset Management Sub-committee – RAAC update</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the report.</p>
6978	<p>Reports to be approved following Asset Management Sub-committee – Former Mill Centre, Sycamore Walk, Blackburn</p> <p>The Board homologated the Chairs approval of:</p> <p>Acceptance of the donation letter offer dated 22nd November 2023, received 28th November 2023, from Allia Social Impact Investments Limited in the sum of [REDACTED]</p> <p>Acceptance of the design and build tender offer received on 16th June 2023 from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</p>
6979	<p>Reports to be approved following Asset Management Sub-committee – Tabled paper, Howden Walkways</p> <p>IT presented the report informing the Board that the Howden Walkways are concrete bridges that lead into our properties where there are 17 Almond tenants and 67 private owners. The private owners were informed in previous years of repair work that was required to the bridges, however, we are now in a position where the work is essential.</p> <p>IT also informed the Board that following a failed procurement via PCS, a quick quote procedure was selected. There were four consultants approached, however, only one of which provided a bid.</p> <p>[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</p>

	The Board approved entering a 1-year contract with [REDACTED]
6980	<p>Reports to be approved following Asset Management Sub-committee – Tabled paper, RAAC Surveys</p> <p>IT informed the Board that during the recent Asset Management Sub-committee, there were good discussions that took place with regards to RAAC. She moved on to advise how she had gone out to 4 contractors, however, only 2 bids were received. She noted that CB had made contact with [REDACTED] however they were unable to assist.</p> <p>In order to provide a quality check and a 2nd perspective, it is proposed that AHA appoint 2 consultants with Harley Haddow carrying out 90% of the surveys and Dougal Baillie completing the remaining 10%.</p> <p>The Board approved entering into a 1-year contract with Harley Haddow to carry out 90% of the RAAC surveys for the tender sum of [REDACTED] and Dougal Baillie Associates to carry out 10% of the RAAC surveys for the tender sum of [REDACTED].</p>
Housing Management	
6981	<p>Tenant Engagement update</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of this paper.</p>
CONSENT AGENDA	
6982	<p>Consent Agenda</p> <p>The membership application was approved and the Board were made aware that this member, who is also currently part of the tenant focus group, has expressed an interest in potentially joining the Board. It was therefore agreed that they would be invited to attend the next Board meeting as an observer.</p> <p>IT also referred to the development report, and informed the Board that AHA are progressing with the Blackburn site, however IT also noted that at the previous strategy day, the Board approved pursual of the Glendevon site which [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] This generated a discussion around whether AHA would be able to develop on this site. It was then agreed to ask [REDACTED] if they would be willing to extend the terms to 4-years.</p> <p>The Board agreed to the recommendations within the consent agenda.</p>
6983	<p>AOCB</p> <p>It was noted that the proposed date of 4th April for the next strategy day may not be suitable for everyone due to this being during the school easter break. It was agreed than an email would be circulated in order to establish everyone’s availability.</p>
	Date of Next Meeting: 02 May 2024

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