

## Meeting Minutes

### Board Meeting

Thursday 15 February 2018 at 10.00am in the Leving House, Livingston

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<b>Present:</b>	Frances Wood (Chair)	<b>In attendance:</b>	Julia Fitzpatrick
	Beverley Graham		Isla Gray
	Bob Hartness		Carol Bonham*
	Bob McDougall		Elaine Whyte*
	Chris Baird		Lorraine Utterson*
	Douglas Taylor		Sharon Brady-Wardrope*
	Grant Carson***		
	Janice Flanagan		Jim Watt*
	Jean Hamilton		
	Jill Pritchard**		Michelle Proust (Minutes)
	Susie Fitton		

\* Except for Private/Reserved items 4175 & 4176

\*\* Items 4173 to 4186 only

\*\*\*Item 4175 onwards

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#### 4173      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Chris Baird declared his interest in relation to Item 12 – Strategic Influencing: Research and other activities, as he is a peer researcher with University of Stirling, involved in the Match Me partnership research with Horizon and Housing Options Scotland.

There were no other declarations of interest.

#### 4174      **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Stuart Dow and Stan Rae.

Frances Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting, with special welcome extended to Jim Watt, prospective Board member.

#### **PRIVATE/RESERVED BUSINESS:**

*Jim Watt was asked to leave the meeting prior to consideration of the Private/Reserved Business items. Julia Fitzpatrick, Isla Gray and Michelle Proust were the only members of staff present.*

**4175 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2017**

**4176 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2017**

The above two items were considered as confidential business and a separate minute prepared.

**BUSINESS MATTERS**

**4178 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

*Staff and Jim Watt were welcomed back into the meeting.*

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**Moved: Susie Fitton**  
**Seconded: Chris Baird**

**4179 MATTERS ARISING**

The Board noted the previously circulated paper which provided information and updates on four matters arising from the previous meeting that were not covered under items on the agenda.

- **Subcommittee Membership**
- **Link Strategy: Feedback From Horizon**
- **Nationwide Building Society – Expiry of Fixed Rate Loans**
- **Policy Reviews**

Members noted two further verbal updates:

- **Asset Management**

Sharon Brady Wardrope confirmed that the bathroom replacement contract has been awarded, and that all costs fall within the agreed budget.

- **Sense Re provisioning Project**

Isla Gray advised that a draft lease and a schedule of costs for project work and for any abortive costs are under review. A property is currently under consideration and a further update will be provided to the Board meeting on 19 April 2018.

## ITEMS FOR DEBATE/DECISION

### 4180 RENT & SERVICE CHARGE REVIEW

Members discussed the previously circulated paper and received a report of the Audit Committee's prior consideration at its meeting on 7 February, and the Committee's recommendation to approve a 2.7% rent increase.

The Board was appreciative of the impact that any rent increase can have on tenants. It was noted that the proposed increases would enable Horizon to continue to provide its recognised high standard of service and accommodation at a rent and service charge level that has been reviewed and found to be affordable through the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations affordability tool. It was further noted that the proposed increase was likely to fall below the sector average, so continuing Horizon's efforts to reduce the gap between its average rent levels and those of other RLS landlords.

#### **Decision:**

The Board approved:

- An increase of 2.7% to rent, service charges, occupancy charges and factoring fees from 1 April 2018. An increase of 4.9% for leased properties.
- An increase of 2.7% to management charges for Access Ownership properties and maintenance charges increased to reflect actual and forecast expenditure, in line with policy adopted in 2017.

### 4181 BUDGET 2018/19, 5 & 30 YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

Members considered the circulated papers, received a report of the Audit Committee's prior consideration at its meeting on 7 February of the budgets for the 5 year period 2018/19 – 2022/23 and the 30 year financial plan.

#### **Decision:**

The Board approved the revenue and capital budgets for 2018/19 to 2022/23 and the 30 Year financial Plan.

### 4182 BUSINESS PLAN 2018-23

During Members consideration of the previously circulated Business Plan, the following comments and suggestions were made:

## **Executive Summary and Introduction**

It was suggested that:

- the key strategic targets be reflected in the summary, in order to draw out. Horizon's commitment to influencing and finding ways of working with Link and other housing providers to achieve the aspiration of 10% wheelchair accessible housing across Scotland.
- the outcomes and not just the outputs from the work carried out by Horizon be emphasised in these sections.
- in the context of Horizon's influential research work, greater focus be given in the earlier narrative parts of the document to Horizon's passion and drive to increase accessible homes.

## **Vision, values and objectives/Strategic Framework sections**

- A number of edits were suggested to make the plan more succinct e.g. removing duplicate information about Horizon and Link's objectives.

## **Performance indicators**

- Clarification was provided on how the Scottish Housing Regulator's requirements for Annual Reporting on the Charter (ARC) shape the selected KPIs and the format of the KPI report.
- Members were keen to see KPI targets that were appropriately ambitious and stretching. There was a desire to see more ambitious KPI targets around repairs balanced against the need for targets to be realistic. Potential for separately reporting Link Property and in house team performance in this regard was considered,
- It was suggested that the workstreams/projects that support and contribute to the expected Equality and Human Rights Commission recommendations could be highlighted and consolidated under this heading i.e. providing advice to tenants on adaptations, and work around the inclusive design standard.

It was proposed that a postcard sized handout could be developed drawing out the Business Plan objectives, key actions and targets to give an 'at a glance' guide for staff and partners.

## **Decision:**

With the aforementioned amendments in mind, the Board approved the Business Plan, for submission to the Link Group and incorporation into the Group-wide Business Plan, and as the basis for Horizon's annual work plan.

The revised Business Plan would be presented to the Horizon Board on 19 April 2018 for ratification.

4183

#### **LINK SUBSIDIARIES: JOINT INITIATIVES**

Members considered the previously circulated report.

**Decision:**

The Board endorsed the approach, and mandate the shared leadership group to progress the identified actions, incorporated into the respective Business Plans of each subsidiary and collectively proposed for inclusion in the Link Group plan.

4184

#### **REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Board considered proposed revisions to the Financial Regulations, which had been subject to the Audit Committee's considerations at its meeting on 7 February. The Audit Committee's further revisions had been incorporated for presentation of the revised draft to the Board.

**Decision:**

The Board approved the adoption of the revised financial regulations.

4185

#### **POLICY REVIEW**

- **PENSIONS POLICY**

The Board considered the proposed Pensions Policy, which also included provision for a salary exchange scheme, following consideration by the Audit Committee and consultation with staff.

**Decision:**

The Board approved the Pensions Policy for implementation from 1 April 2018.

4186

#### **STRATEGIC INFLUENCING: RESEARCH AND OTHER ACTIVITIES**

The Board considered the previously circulated report and noted the research progress and other activities linked to influencing change in relation to housing for disabled people.

The Board commended Julia Fitzpatrick on her work on '*Still Minding The Step*', and recognition was given to the strategic influence the publication will have over the coming months.

Members endorsed the recommendations arising from '*Still Minding The Step*' and requested that one of the regular Board governance training sessions be tailored to focus on the strategic issues identified in the *Still Minding The Step* publication and being addressed in the *Match Me* project

## ITEMS FOR PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING

### 4187 QUARTER 3 KPI REPORT

Members considered the previously circulated paper, and noted the content of the report.

*Jill Pritchard, who had another engagement to attend, left the meeting.*

### 4188 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS Q3

Members considered the Management Accounts for the period ending 31 December 2017, previously considered and recommended at the Audit Committee meeting on 7 February.

**Decision:**

The Board approved the Management Accounts for the period ending 31 December 2017.

### 4189 RISK REGISTER REVIEW

The Board noted that the Risk Register has been regularly reviewed by the Audit Committee and Management Team and is up to date. It was agreed that a risk mapping exercise involving Board members and the Management Team would be beneficial and this would be scheduled to follow on from the meeting of the Board on 19 April 2018.

## ITEMS FOR NOTE

### 4190 UNCONFIRMED CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEETING: 31 JANUARY 2018

The Board noted the unconfirmed confidential minutes of the Employment Sub Committee meeting held on 8 November 2017.

### 4191 WELFARE REFORM STRATEGY

The Board noted that the draft Link group-wide Welfare Reform Strategy had been completed, incorporating changes and additions suggested by Horizon's Board, and that this had now been approved by the Link Group Board.

**OUR REGULATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING: A DISCUSSION PAPER**

Member noted the previously circulated discussion paper from the Scottish Housing Regulator. Members were invited to feedback any comments to Julia Fitzpatrick who would submit these for inclusion in the SFHA's response on behalf of the sector.

**AOB**

- **OSCR – Keeping vulnerable beneficiaries, volunteers and staff safe**

An email issued by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator had been circulated to members for information. The email highlighted key actions for charity trustees to take in relation to safeguarding and Notifiable Events.

An opportunity would be provided at the Board meeting in April to raise any questions or comments arising from the information contained within the email.

- **Thistle Foundation – Assignment of Minute of Agreement** The Board noted that the previously approved proposal to accept the assignment of a Minute of Agreement, from Thistle Foundation to Partners for Inclusion has now been finalised. This relates to a capital contribution in 2000 by Thistle Foundation towards development costs at Clark Street, Renfrew.

- **Link Group Credit Rating**

The Board were pleased to note that Link Group have been awarded an A+ credit rating by Standard and Poor, and the Link Group Board have recently approved that this will become a public rating.

Date of the next meeting

**The date of the next meeting is Thursday 19 April 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in Livingston.**

Signed: .....

Date:.....