

Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting

Thursday 15 August 2019 at 10.00am in The Wallace Suite, Leving House

Present:	Frances Wood (Chair)	In attendance:	Isla Gray
	Beverley Graham		Elaine Whyte*
	Bob McDougall		Emma Wilson*
	Chris Baird		Lorraine Utterson*
	Douglas Taylor		Sharon Brady-Wardrope*
	Jean Hamilton		
	Jill Pritchard		Liz Jarvis, Chair of the Board, LinkLiving*
	Jim Watt		
	Stuart Dow		
	Susie Fitton		Michelle Proust (Minutes)

* Excluding Private/Reserved items

4396 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Frances Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from, Bob Hartness, Janice Flanagan, and Grant Carson.

4397 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PRIVATE/RESERVED BUSINESS

The following items were considered Private/Reserved Business and a separate confidential minute produced. With the exception of Isla Gray and Michelle Proust, no other staff were present during consideration of the following two items.

4398 Confidential Minute of the meeting held on 11 July 2019

4399 Confidential Matters Arising

Staff members Sharon Brady-Wardrope, Elaine Whyte and Lorraine Utterson were welcomed to join the meeting. Liz Jarvis, Chair of the Board of LinkLiving, was welcomed to join the meeting.

ITEMS FOR DEBATE/DECISION/APPROVAL

A special welcome was extended, and introductions made, to Liz Jarvis, Chair of the Board of LinkLiving, who was attending the meeting as an observer. Frances Wood confirmed that she had also received invitations to attend other subsidiary Boards as an observer, and that it was hoped that these opportunities to observe the work of other Boards would improve understanding of the work carried out by each area of the organisation and how Link functions as a whole.

4400 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2019

The minute of the meeting was approved as an accurate record.

Moved: Bob McDougall
Seconded: Bob Hartness

4401 MATTERS ARISING

Staff member, Emma Wilson joined the meeting.

4401.1 Strategic Services Review – Update

Frances Wood provided a verbal update on the progress of the Link Group Strategic Services review, reporting that the consultants supporting the review (Indigo House) have held face to face meetings with each of the Chairs and Managing Directors/CEOs of each subsidiary, and of the Link Board, seeking open and honest feedback on themes such as operational effectiveness, governance structures, financial strength and organisational culture. Frances and Liz - who confirmed that she had also completed her interview as part of the review - had found the interviews interesting and positive.

Board members confirmed that many of them had completed the Leadership survey that had been circulated to all Boards by the consultants. Feedback from members was positive in the main, although it was felt that while the survey asked valuable questions on the past and present of the organisation it has lacked questions on the future for the organisation. It was hoped that the all Boards event which would follow the Link AGM on 28 August would provide members the opportunity to express and expand upon their hopes and aspirations for the future of the organisation.

4401.2 Care and Repair North Lanarkshire Tender – Update

Isla Gray reported that the tender for the Care and Repair North Lanarkshire contract has been submitted, and it was hoped that notification of the outcome of the bids would be provided before November.

4401.3 Succession Policy - Update

Isla reported that, in discussion with Frances and taking into consideration the current recruitment of a new CEO and change of Chair that will follow the AGM, it had been agreed that consideration of the Succession Policy would be deferred until later in the year.

4401.4 AGM: Retiral Of Committee Members

Stuart Dow, Bob McDougal, Douglas Taylor and Susie Fitton all confirmed that they would retire and stand for re-election at the AGM in August.

Isla provided the Board with verbal confirmation that, in accordance with Rule 68, the Association complies with Rules 62 to 67.

It was noted that Rule 68 requires this confirmation of compliance to be provided to the Board as a written report at the last meeting before the AGM. To achieve this compliance, Board members accepted the verbal assurance provided by the Managing Director, and it was agreed that a written compliance report would be circulated to the Board outside the meeting.

The procedures for the AGM and the annual work plan would also be updated to ensure the requirement for submission of a written compliance report to be submitted to the last meeting of the Board prior to the AGM would be met in future years.

4402 RENT STRUCTURE REVIEW AND POLICY

The previously circulated report updated the Board on the progress with the rent structure review and outlined the timeline to receive the final report from Indigo House on the proposed rent restructuring and the key principles to be incorporated into the revised policy.

During discussion it was noted that any consideration of a phased implementation would require the consideration of the Board, and the wording of the report would be amended to make clear that any decision on phased implementation would sit with the Board.

The full report would come to the Board for consideration in October. Based on the Boards approval at that meeting, communication to tenants would then

follow later in October. In December, the reworded policy – in line with what was agreed at the October Board meeting – would be presented for approval to the Board.

With the above comments in mind the Board noted the progress of the rent structure review and the proposed next steps.

4403 ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Board considered the previously circulated 2019-2024 Asset Management Strategy which would be subject to final data assurance checks to be carried out in September 2019.

In response to queries raised by the Board, Sharon Brady-Wardrope and Emma Wilson provided the following explanation and/or clarification on specific details in the report:

1. The increase in groups with a negative present value (NPV) were believed to be the result of anomalies in the data caused by a data input error. These errors would be corrected, and it was expected that this would significantly improve the NPV, reducing or removing all the NPV results.
2. It was anticipated that some of the lower scoring around home satisfaction may be due to the timing of the surveys from which the data has been drawn, as the cycle of planned maintenance has since been completed, and the outcomes of that maintenance will have improved individual satisfaction levels with their property. This data is recorded on the new Property Management Forms.
3. Explanation was provided on where the Asset Management strategy dovetails with other operational plans such as the Business Plan.

To improve clarity in the report the Board requested the following detail be added:

1. Explanatory paragraph which details how the Asset Management Strategy dovetails with the Business Plan and other operational plans.
2. In sections of the report where statements are made that highlight particular challenges for the future (examples given were those of the increasing need for wheelchair accessible properties, and future compliance with energy efficiency targets) the narrative should include some indication of ways in which Horizon influence in these areas and aspire to meet those challenges.
3. The Executive summary would be drafted capturing the feedback provided by the Board.

In response to a request from the Board for clearer measures within the report, Sharon Brady-Wardrope clarified that the Board would be provided with an annual update on progress with the action plan, with the RAG status, and that the Asset Management Strategy would be revised in accordance with significant changes in the business plan.

Decision:

With the above comments in mind, the Board approved the 2019-2024 Asset Management Strategy.

4404 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS Q1: 1 APRIL 2019 – 30 JUNE 2019

The Board considered the previously circulated Management Accounts and accompanying report for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019, noting the year-end adjustments. Lorraine Utterson tabled an updated report, providing explanation for the original typo and miscalculation, the impact the changes had to overall budget, and assurance that with the amendments in place the financial position for the first quarter is as would be expected for the end of the first quarter.

The updated documents and cover report would be added to the Board Extranet.

Decision: The Board approved the updated Management Accounts for the Period 1 April 2019 – 30 June 2019.

4405 RESIDENT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Members reviewed the previously circulated Resident Participation Strategy and Action Plan for the delivery of the strategy in 2019/20.

In response to Board members questions, Elaine Whyte provided the Board with further information on the structure of the Residents Improvement Group (RIG), with nine members, who's residences cover a wide geographic spread of Horizon developments. It was noted that the RIG currently attend and present two scrutiny reports per year to the Board, and that their engagement, efforts and enthusiasm are appreciated and welcomed by the Board. It was requested that the narrative in the RPS make that link between the RIG and the Board clearer.

It was noted that the document would be subject to further proof-reading for formatting and consistent use of terminology.

The Board welcomed the positive figures regarding tenant engagement with the new Tenant App that had recently been launched, noting that all staff member continued to promote and raise the profile of this new facility for tenants.

Decision:

The Board approved the:

- Resident Participation Strategy 2019/20
- Resident Participation Action Plan 2019/20

4406 POLICY REVIEW

The Board considered each of the previously circulated policies.

4406.1 Board Expenses Policy (Updated)

Decision:

The Board approved the Board Expenses Policy.

4406.2 Membership Policy (Updated)

The Board queried the removal of equalities and diversity monitoring for Ordinary Members, and this policy would be re-considered at the October meeting when this information would be available.

4406.3 Accessibility and Inclusive Design Policy (New)

The Board welcomed that the policy incorporates the commitment by Link to achieve wheelchair accessible standards in 10% of its properties as part of the groups extensive programme for new build developments, and that the emphasis of the policy being towards a whole systems approach. The positive influence of the Inclusive Design team (IDT) across the group, during the drafting of this policy was commended.

In response to questions from the Board, it was confirmed that Horizon's own housing stock currently exceed the 10% Link target, with all of Horizons properties built to housing for varying needs standards and 25% being wheelchair accessible.

Comments from the Board on the policy were positive and, with the findings of both the Match Me and Still Minding The Step research in mind, the feedback from the Board was that it would be aspirational for Link to consider making their goal a 'minimum' of 10% wheelchair accessible properties.

Decision:

The Board approved the Accessibility and Inclusive Design Policy.

4406.4 Sustainability Policy (New)

Decision:

The Board approved the Sustainability Policy.

4406.5 Tenant Recharge Policy (New)

Decision:

The Board approved the Tenancy Recharge Policy.

4406.5 Succession Policy

The Board noted the reasoning detailed in the cover report as to why, following implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, a Succession Policy would no longer be required. With the rules around succession being strictly prescribed by legislation. Instead, clear group wide procedures would be developed for staff on how to deal with succession, and those procedures would be accompanied by clear information which will be made available to tenants.

Decision:

The Board approved the adoption of the approach and of the implementation of group wide procedures from 1 November 2019, and that these will replace the need for a formal policy.

4407 DELEGATION OF POLICY APPROVAL

The Board considered the previously circulated

The Board requested further review and amendment of the delegation of policy approval, and this would be brought back for further consideration at the Board meeting in October.

4408 ACCESS OWNERSHIP

The Board considered the previously circulated Access Ownership Purchase report which advised the Board of the Link group purchase of an additional Access Ownership property in East Renfrewshire which will be managed by Horizon.

It was noted that, to avoid any 'personal model of tragedy' language, when describing attributes of a disability the word 'suffers' should be avoided and that it is be more appropriate to use the word 'experiences'.

The Board noted the Link group purchase of the property under their Access Ownership budget which Horizon will manage once the purchases are finalised.

ITEMS FOR PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

4409 GDPR AND FOI UPDATE

The Board considered the previously circulated report, which provided an update on the GDPR compliance action plan – which was last reported to the Board in December 2018 – and provided an update on the preparations that are being made to comply with the extension of Freedom of Information legislation.

The Board noted the information provided within the report.

4410 KPI REPORT – Q1: 1 APRIL 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2019

The Board considered the previously circulated paper which contained information on the proposals for improvements to KPI reporting to reflect changes to the ARC indicators and provided performance reporting for Quarter 1 against KPI targets approved in the Business Plan for 2019-24.

The Board noted the continued and sustained efforts of staff to address rent arrears, and that the roll out of Universal Credit is now having an impact on those figures.

Updated figures on Gross Rent Arrears would be provided to the Board under Matters Arising at the October Board meeting. It was requested that figures which provide a like for like comparison between the 2018/19 and 2019/20 gross rent arrears would be provided.

Decision: With the above request for further figures in mind, the Board:

- noted the updates to KPI reporting to reflect changes to the ARC indicators
- approved the updated business plan extract covering performance targets and
- noted the quarter one performance as detailed in Appendix 3

4411 ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS OUTCOME REPORT

The Board noted the information provided in the previously circulated Annual Allocations Outcome report.

4412 ANNUAL CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT AND ANALYSIS

During consideration of the Annual Customer Feedback Report and Analysis the Board queried the frequent cause of Stage 2 complaints being that follow-up contacts were not being made. The Board were provided with assurance that improvements to the Housing Management System, including the introduction of a 'monitoring' function capable of generating a work-flow that will capture the requirement for a follow-up and allocate to a team member on a specified date should reduce the number of missed follow-ups.



The Board noted the assurances provided, and the content of the previously circulated report.

4413 ARC AMENDMENT

The Board noted the previously circulated report which advised of a correction to the ARC data, subsequent to its submission. It was noted that amendments were not material and that the Regulator had been informed in time to amend the published performance information for Horizon.

4414 LOAN COVENANT COMPLIANCE – Q1: 1APRIL 2019 TO 30 JUNE 2019

The Board noted the continued compliance with loan covenants.

ITEMS FOR NOTE

4415 BOARD AWAY-DAY: 21-22 NOVEMBER 2019 - REMINDER

Board members noted the date and venue for the Board away-day, and that a draft agenda for the event would be presented for consideration at the meeting in October.

4416 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items of business.

Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Thursday 10 October 2019 at 10:00 a.m. in Livingston.

Signed.....

Date.....

