

**WHEATLEY HOMES EAST  
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING  
held at 5pm on Thursday 22 August 2024  
New Mart Road, Edinburgh**

**Members Present:** Alastair Murray (Chair), Heather Macnaughton, Jack Cadell, Judith McGlashan and Fiona Burden

**In Attendance:** Anthony Allison (Group Director of Governance and Business Solutions), Laura Henderson (Managing Director), Lyndsay Brown (Director of Financial Reporting), Lynsey Fotheringham (Head of Housing), and Stephen Wright (Director of Governance), Pamela Paton (observer) and in part Danny Lowe (Director of Group Repairs) (Item 7) and Samatha Bett (Director of Treasury) (Item 11).

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Ruth Kynoch, Anne McGovern and Helen Howden.

The Board granted Anne McGovern a leave of absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The Board noted the standing declarations. No new declarations were made.

**3. a) Minute of the previous meeting held on 23 May 2024, matters arising and action list**

**Decided: The Board approved the minutes of the above meeting.**

**4. Chair and Managing Director update**

The Board noted the resignation of Jane Menzies and recorded its thanks to Jane for her dedicated contribution.

The Chair provided an update on the discussions and outcomes from the last Group Board meeting for information. The Chair also highlighted the upcoming Group-wide governance event which will take place in September in New Mart Road.

**Decided: The Board noted the update.**

## 5. 2023/24 Financial Statements

The Board were provided with an overview of the 2023/24 audited financial statements and were provided with a summary of the key highlights.

The Board scrutinised the annual financial statements and the annual report. In relation to the annual report, the Board considered that it provided a fair reflection of our business. In relation to financial performance, the Board discussed the repairs spend and noted the adjusted operating surplus from core social housing activities.

The Board was reassured by the audit summary and the unqualified audit opinion provided by our external auditors, KPMG.

**Decided: The Board;**

- 1) Approved the 2023/24 financial statements;**
- 2) Confirmed the preparation of the financial statements using the going concern basis;**
- 3) Delegated authority to the Chair and Group Director of Finance to approve any non-material changes to the accounts; and**
- 4) Approved the letter of representation from the auditors and note the related letter of comfort from management.**

## 6. Annual Internal Audit Report and opinion

The Board were provided with the Internal Audit Annual report and opinion for financial year 2023/24.

The Board considered the report and noted that the audit team had completed its planned work for 2023/24. The Board welcomed the opinion provided by the Director of Assurance which provided a substantial level of assurance that there are sound governance, risk management and control processes in place. The Board was also provided with confirmation that there were no matters of material concern that required to be brought to the Board's attention.

**Decision: The Board noted the Annual Internal Report, Including the Annual Internal Audit opinion.**

## 7. Repairs update

The Board were provided with a report on the progress of our repairs service enhancements. This included a summary of the ongoing customer engagement which will inform future repairs enhancements.

The Board discussed the ongoing focus on repairs communication and the need to ensure that we keep customers up to date with the repairs journey. The Board discussed the improvements being made, including the introduction of a store facility in New Mart Road. It was explained that this would be more efficient for trade operatives in the west of the city.

The Board noted the changes made in relation to van stocks and the changes we have introduced to the service more generally. The Board sought and received assurance that we take into account the needs and experience of our staff when designing changes.

It was also acknowledged that our performance results may temporarily reduce as we work through the backlog of repairs that have occurred due to the changes in our systems, material and van stocks.

In considering the Book it, Track it, Rate it score the Board requested that future reports include an analysis on the number of responses against each of the 5 star ratings.

**Decided: The Board;**

- 1) noted the progress with repairs service enhancements;**
- 2) noted ongoing customer engagement to inform future service enhancements; and**
- 3) noted the updated repairs budget position for 2024/25.**

## **8. Homelessness update**

The Board were provided with an update on the progress towards the key commitments within our Group Homelessness Policy, including our contribution to alleviating homelessness across our footprint and our response to the housing emergency declared by the Scottish Government on 15 May 2024.

The Board discussed the report and noted we were on track to deliver our contribution towards the key homelessness policy commitments. Wheatley Homes East is working closely with stakeholders and local authorities.

The Board discussed the percentage of lets to homeless applicants in Edinburgh between 1 April and 31 July 2024, (67%) against the increased contribution of that we had agreed (60%).

The Board also considered the introduction of the visitor levy in Edinburgh, noting that part of this would be allocated by the local authority to help address homelessness. It was explained that we continue to work closely with the local authority and will seek opportunities to further support the provision of homes for those in housing need.

**Decided: The Board noted the Homelessness update**

## **9. Performance update**

The Board received an update on the delivery against our performance targets and strategic projects for 2024/25.

The Board noted that we continued to show strong performance against a number of our targets for 2024/25 and discussed our continued focus on repair completion timescales, repairs staff sickness absence, arrears and days to re-let.

The Board scrutinised performance in relation to damp and mould and noted that we had attended 81.4% of mould inspections within 2 working days. The Board discussed this performance and noted that it included properties (i) where we had not been provided with access or (ii) where tenants had requested an alternative date, out with our 2-day window for their own convenience. It was agreed that we would provide additional reporting on these cases. In addition, it was agreed that further detail would be provided for any cases that are identified and recorded as “severe”.

The Board further discussed the impact of the recently proposed changes to the winter fuel payments and how this may impact our customers.

**Decided: The Board noted the contents of the Performance report.**

## **10. Finance Report**

The Board were provided with a report with an overview of the financial results for the period to 30 June 2024 including the quarter 1 forecast and required corrective conveyancing for properties at Hatters Lane, Edinburgh.

The Board was also provided with an update on the corrective conveyancing required for the properties at Hatters Lane, Edinburgh.

**Decided: The Board;**

- 1) Noted the Finance Report for the period ended 30 June 2024 and Q1 forecast.**
- 2) Approved the required conveyancing for properties at Hatters Lane, Edinburgh by way of a Board Minute and Officer’s Certificate.**

## **11. [redacted]**

## **12. Governance update**

The Board were provided with an update on governance-related matters including the final schedule of meetings for the remainder of 2024 including the special and Annual General Meetings, Board recruitment, Annual Secretary’s Report, Annual assurance statement and policy framework with proposed updates.

The Board noted the Annual Assurance Statement 2023/24 which confirmed compliance with the SHR requirements and will be submitted to Group Board for approval.

The Board discussed the tenant Board member pathway programme and the importance of ensuring we create opportunities for tenants who wish to join our Board, including through this pathway programme.. Taking into account learning from our partner organisations, the Board agreed to recommend to the members at the upcoming SGM that the number of tenant board members be reduced to “up to 3” and the number of independent members be increased to “up to 8”.

**Decided: The Board;**

- 1) Instructed the Secretary to call the Annual General Meeting for Thursday 19 September 2024 at 5pm;
- 2) Instructed the Secretary to call a Special General Meeting for Thursday 19 September at 5.15pm;
- 3) Noted the Secretary’s Report under Rule 68;
- 4) Approved the change in Registered Office to 25 Cochrane Street, Glasgow, G1 1HL;
- 5) Agreed to revise the composition of the Board to: up to 3 tenant Board members, 8 independent members and 1 parent appointee;
- 6) Approved Pamela Paton’s application for membership and note that her nomination for appointment to the Board will be put to the members at the AGM;
- 7) Noted that Ruth Kynoch and Fiona Burden will be nominated for re-appointment at the AGM;
- 8) Noted that Helen Howden will retire at the AGM;
- 9) Noted the outcome of our annual self-assessment against the SHR’s Regulatory Framework and proposed Annual Assurance Statement for agreement by the Group Board;
- 10) Noted the 5 members who have been removed as members of the Association; and
- 11) Noted the update on our review of policies, including the amendment to our Group Complaints Policy.

**13. AOCB**

No other competent business

**Signed:** ..... (Chair)

**Date:** .....