

WHEATLEY HOMES EAST BOARD MEETING

Date: Thursday 9 February 2023
Time: 5pm
Venue: New Mart Road, Edinburgh

Chairperson: Alastair Murray

Present: Jack Cadell (via MSTeams), Jane Menzies, Judith MacGlashan, Anne McGovern, Bryan Pitbladdo.

In Attendance: Hazel Young, Group Director of Housing and Property
Frank McCafferty, Group Director of Assets and Repairs
Stephen Wright, Director of Governance
Laura Henderson, Managing Director
Lyndsay Brown, Director of Financial Reporting
Lynsey Fotheringham, Head of Housing

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Howden (Vice Chair) and Mark Keane. The Chair confirmed that a quorum was present.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. a) Minute of 24 November 2022 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 24 November 2022.

b) Minute of 12 January 2023

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 12 January 2023.

The Board received an update on the ongoing arrangements in place to monitor radon gas at properties in Hyvots.

4. Rent and service charges 2023/24

The Board received and scrutinised a report (i) containing feedback from our consultation on the 2023/24 RSL rent, service and other charges increase; and (ii) seeking Board approval for the 2023/24 rent, service and other charges increases.

In considering the proposed rent, service and other charges the Board carefully considered the current economic climate and the impact of inflationary pressures on customers and our business. The Board scrutinised the consultation which had been independently managed by Civica. The Board noted in particular the external factors impacting the timing of the consultation and was pleased with the level of responses gathered through a range of mail, instantaneous digital methods and telephone.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Noted the feedback received through the consultation process with tenants on our 2023/24 RSL rent, service and other charges increase;**
- 2) Approved a 2.5% rent, service charges and other charges (including garages and lock ups) for 2023/24 effective from the 1st April, with the exception of ex-WLHP which is the first Monday in April;**
- 3) Approved a 2.5% increase for shared owners; and**
- 4) Agreed that we formally write to tenants and shared owners to confirm this subject to relevant Group Board approval.**

5. Financial Projections 2023/24

The Board received the projections for investment in assets and services over the period to 2028, in support of our strategy, Your Home, Your Community, Your Future. The Board was informed about the inflationary pressures which were having an impact on our business and customers and the economic forecasts about the longer-term interest rates. In considering the financial projections the Board was considered repairs demand; capital investment requirements; and our new build housing programme. The Board scrutinised our financial covenants and was satisfied that our financial projections allowed these to be met.

The Board welcomed the work undertaken and the balance between driving efficiencies within in our business, maintaining services and keep any rent increases during the period covered by the projections affordable.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Approved the updated projections for investment in assets and services over the five-year period to 2028.**
- 2) Approved that the projected 2023/24 figures form the basis of next year's annual budget which will be presented to the Board for final approval in March.**

6. [redacted]

7. Five-Year Capital Investment Plan in existing homes

The Board received a report seeking approval of the five-year capital investment plan in existing homes for the period 2023-28 (investment plan). It was explained that the investment plan is a key part of our strategic commitment to make the most of our homes and assets and supports our wider ambition to reduce carbon emissions by 20,000 tonnes across the Group by 2026.

The Board reviewed the programme which was based on the three themes of: providing warm high quality homes; safe homes; and great neighbourhoods. The Board also welcomed the approach to customer engagement and proposal to give customers greater choice and control of their home by helping choose investment priorities. The Board discussed the role of technology, both in relation to the inclusion of this in homes and also in relation to our engagement approach. The Board reiterated the need to ensure that we support tenants with any training requirements they have as a result of any new technology that is installed in their homes.

Decided: The Board approved Wheatley Homes East Five-Year Asset Investment Programme 2023-2028

8. Customer insights - update

The Board received an update on the work we do to support and strengthen neighbourhoods and customer satisfaction with the management of neighbourhoods. The Board was pleased with the insight work undertaken and emphasised the importance of peaceful neighbourhoods and customer satisfaction.

The Board considered the outcome of our work in this area and the actions being taken, including our new approach to managing noise complaints; improved communication with customers around Anti-Social Behaviour and interactive access to our environmental services to see in real time what services they receive, what has been completed and to record their satisfaction levels with these services. The Board welcomed the development of this interactive approach and reiterated the need to ensure that tenants without access to technology continued to be able to provide feedback on our services through more traditional channels.

Decided: The Board noted this update on actions to improve customer satisfaction with our management of neighbourhoods.

9. Care Evaluation – Reprovisioning of East Services (HMOs)

The Board were provided with an evaluation of the success of the reprovisioning programme which had seen the reconfiguration so eleven shared living properties and involved close working with three local authority areas and positively impacted 55 care customers.

The Board discussed the reprovisioning and how this allowed our care model to more closely align with the Social Care (Self-Directed Support)(Scotland) Act 2013 and the various 'framework contracts' that Wheatley Care had with local authorities across our operational areas.

Decided: The Board noted the content of the report.

10. Performance Report

The Board received an update on performance delivering against targets and strategic projects for 2022/23 as of the end of quarter 3.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report and note the strategic project change

11. Finance Report

The Board received and considered:

- An overview of the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2022 including Q3 forecast.
- proposed amendments to our two finance contracts with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to change [redacted].
- [redacted]
- an update on the review of the new build appraisal target return rate.

The Board discussed the matters contained in the report and noted the provisions made in relation to pension liability.

Decided: The Board

- 1) **Noted the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2022 at Appendix 1.**
- 2) **Approved the amendments to the EIB finance [redacted]**
- 3) **[redacted].**
- 4) **Noted the outcome of the review of the internal rate of return targets.**

12. Governance update

The Board were provided the annual agenda planner to the Board for review.

Decided: The Board noted the annual Board agenda planner.

13. Group Sustainability Framework

The Board were provided the report on the approved Group Sustainability Framework which had been finalised following feedback from partner Boards, including ours. The Board welcomed the Framework and the opportunity to have provided input during its development.

Decided: The Board noted the Group Sustainability Framework at Appendix 1.

14. Corporate Risk Register

The Board received and considered our corporate risk register. The Board considered the updates made to the register and sought and received assurances about our ability to achieve mould and damp response times. The Board also discussed the importance of ensuring our staff were trained on how to identify and respond to mould and damp issues.

Decided: The Board approved the updates to our corporate risk register.

15. AOCB

There was no further business considered.

Signed.....
(Chair)