

**WHEATLEY HOMES EAST
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING
held on Thursday 17 August 2023
New Mart Road, Edinburgh**

Members Present: Alastair Murray (Chair), Helen Howden (Vice Chair), Mark Keane, Jane Menzies, Judith MacGlashan, Anne McGovern, Heather Macnaughton, Jack Cadell, Ruth Kynoch.

In Attendance: Hazel Young (Group Director of Housing and Property), Laura Henderson (Managing Director), Lyndsay Brown (Director of Financial Reporting), Lynsey Fotheringham (Head of Housing), Pauline Donald (Governance Business Partner), Stephen Wright (Director of Governance – item 10), Joe Lambie (Housing and Commercial Specialist Director – item 6).

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence and the Chair confirmed the meeting as quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minute of previous meeting held on 25 May 2023 and action list

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

4. Chair and Managing Director update

The Chair provided an overview of the key items of business considered at the recent Group Board residential and strategy workshop held in June 2023.

The Board noted an update from Mark Keane and Jane Menzies following their attendance at the recent TPAS Conference.

The Managing Director reported on the recent successful visit to West Craigs by the Housing Minister which had been attended by our Board Members, Heather Macnaughton and Helen Howden.

The Board was asked to note that the Wheatley Group will host an event for the Chartered Institute of Housing which will be held at NewMart Road on 13 September 2023. The event will focus on celebrating Scottish Housing Day and housing as a career of choice.

The Managing Director also advised that she had represented the Group in the recent interview process for new graduates and was highly impressed by the number and high calibre of applicants.

5. Strategy 2021-26 update (draft and feedback from strategy workshop)

The Board received a revised 2021-26 strategy which had been updated to reflect the outcome of the Board's workshop in May 2023. The Board was reminded that the strategy is the first Wheatley Homes East and that it has been strongly influenced by customer insight and is focused on what we know are tenant priorities.

The Board considered the updated strategy and confirmed that it reflected the discussions held during the strategy workshop.

The Board discussed the continued rise on demand for repairs. The Board was advised on the approach being taken to monitor our trends of planned to reactive repairs noting that this is one of our key performance indicators.

The Board noted that the Strategy will be published on our website.

Decided: The Board approved the Wheatley Homes East Strategy to 2026.

6. Customer First Centre – Independent Evaluation

The Board received an outline of the findings of the independent evaluation of the first full year of the Customer First Centre ("CFC") and our response to the recommendations raised.

The Board noted the improvements that had been made by the introduction of the CFC, particularly the introduction of specialist teams within the CFC such as repairs. The Board received assurance that the introduction of Cloud Telephony will provide extended metrics through which we can more effectively analyse

Decided: The Board noted:

- 1) The findings of the independent evaluation of the first full year of the Customer First Centre.
- 2) The recommendations highlighted in the evaluation report and our response to these.

7. Homelessness policy update

The Board received an update on the progress of our Group Homelessness Policy and highlights to the contribution to the recent Scottish Government strategy – *Reducing the Use of Temporary Accommodation*

The board noted that the Scottish Government has recently published a new strategy *Reducing the Use of Temporary Accommodation* which includes a range of approaches to reduce the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation. The board also noted that Wheatley is a contributor to the national objective of alleviating homelessness, and most of the approaches outlined in this strategy also feature within our Group

Homelessness Policy. We are on track to deliver the 10,000 homes for homeless households which is a key commitment in the Group 2021-26 strategy *Your Home, Your Community, Your Future*. As part of their new strategy, the Government has announced a ringfenced fund within the Affordable Housing Supply Programme of £60million for market acquisitions by local authorities and RSLs for social housing. We have been carrying out early engagement with local authorities to understand how we can access this funding to deliver more social rented homes in our areas.

The Board Decided:

Board were asked to note the homelessness update and make any comment.

8. Performance report

The Board received an an update on performance delivery against targets and strategic projects for 2023/24 as of the end of quarter one

The board noted that the Wheatley Group continue to have strong performance in several key areas; lets to homeless, tenancy sustainment, right first time repairs and adaptation completion timescales. Days to let, new build handovers, repairs timescales and sickness absence are in focus and that good progress has been made with several strategic projects during quarter 1.

The Board Decided:

The board noted the contents of the report.

9.a) 2022/23 Financial Statements

The Board were provided with an overview of the 2022/23 financial statements.

The board took note of the overview of the statutory accounts for the year to 31 March 2023.

The Board Decided:

The Board:

- 1) Approved the 2022/23 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.

9.b) Annual Internal Audit Report and opinion

The Board were provided with an update for noting of the Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2022/23, previously reported to the May 2023 Group Audit Committee

The board noted the Internal Audit team has completed its planned work for 2022/23 and the Director of Assurance has issued his annual opinion, as outlined at paragraph 4.3.

The Board decided:

The Board noted the contents of this report, including the Annual Internal Audit opinion detailed in Section 4.

10. Governance Update

The board were updated and, where applicable, asked to approve the following governance related matters which are reported to the Board annually in August:

- Final schedule of meetings for the remainder of the 2023 calendar year, including the Annual General Meeting (“AGM”)
- Annual Secretary Report
- Board appraisal
- Succession planning

The board were provided with the key standing processes within governance arrangements. refreshed succession plan reflects the Board’s recent changes to the Board composition and need to actively oversee its succession planning.

The Board Decided:

The Board:

- 1) Instructed the Secretary to call the Annual General Meeting for Thursday 21 September 2023 at 5pm.
- 2) Noted the Secretary’s Report under Rule 68.
- 3) Noted the update on the Board and individual appraisal process.
- 4) Recommended the appointments and re-appointments of Board Members (Heather Macnaughton, Alastair Murray, Helen Howden and Anne McGovern).

11. Finance Report

The Board were provided with:

- An overview of the financial results for the period to 30 June 2023 including the Q1 forecast:
- Seek approval of the proposed new [redacted] debt facility with Allia Social Impacts Investments Limited (“Allia”)
- An update on the review of new build appraisal target return rate and seek agreement this be updated on the new build approval criteria for Wheatley Homes East project approvals by Wheatley Developments Scotland.

This board noted the financial performance position for the development programme and the management accounts and Q1 forecast for the company for the period to 30 June 2023. It also includes details of a new loan to be delivered through WFL1 from Allia. An update on the review of our target internal rate of return (IRR) to be used for appraising new build projects is also provided.

The Board Decided:

The Board:

- 1) Noted the management accounts for the period to 30 June 2023 and Q1 forecast at Appendix 1
- 2) Approved the new [redacted] facility to fund new affordable homes
- 3) Noted the revision to the target return rate for new build social and mid-market rent developments and agree the criteria for Wheatley Development Scotland approving projects on our behalf is updated to reflect this.

12. AOCB

Signed:.....(Chair)