

**WHEATLEY HOMES EAST
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING
held at 5pm on Thursday 28 March 2024
New Mart Road, Edinburgh**

Members Present: Alastair Murray (Chair), Mark Keane, Jane Menzies, Heather Macnaughton, Martin Dorby and Helen Howden (via Teams)

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)

In Part Danny Lowe (Director of Group Repairs, Investment and Compliance), Jennifer Anderson (Wheatley 360 Lead), Stephen Wright (Director of Governance), Laurie Carberry (Director of Procurement, Fleet and Utilities)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Judith MacGlashan, Anne McGovern, Ruth Kynoch and Jack Cadell. The Chair confirmed the meeting as quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the standing declarations.

3. a) Minute of the previous meeting held on 8 February 2024, matters arising and action list

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

The Board noted the further clarifications provided on the financial projections presented at the previous meeting, the efficiency targets detailed and alignment to our 2021/26 Strategy.

4. Chair and Managing Director update

The Chair provided an update on the activity of the Group Board including discussion on mould and damp, the recent building fire in Leith as well as a summary of the key items as reported by the Group Chief Executive.

The Chair also advised of the appointment of Alex Lamb as Managing Director of Wheatly Homes South. The Board expressed their appreciation to Alex for her work to support Wheatley Homes East and wished her well in her new position.

No further update was provided by the Managing Director over and above the papers being presented at the Board meeting.

Decided: The Board noted the update.

5. 2024/25 Budget

The Board were provided with a report of the 2024/25 Budget.

The Board noted the budget summary compared against the financial projections as well as the key movements including gift aid paid to WHE from Wheatley Developments Scotland Ltd, the cost-of-living uplift for staff, and the review of the provision for bad debts.

The Board received further clarity on the projected year-end financial position in terms of the budget proposals with the recommendation from the Board to draw on lessons learned in 2023/24 taking account of the factors in the budget that could influence 2024/25.

Decided: The Board approved the 2024/25 Budget.

6. Home safety building compliance update

The Board were provided with an update on the home safety building compliance work streams during 2023/24.

The Board were further updated on our continuing focus to complete all compliance activities as required to meet our obligations and keep our customers and homes safe. The Board were advised that our “one and done” approach is delivering similar compliance activities, subject to asset cycles, property attributes and customer requirements, in a single visit.

In discussion, it was confirmed that going forward, the number of forced entries undertaken would be reported in the performance report.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report

7. Neighbourhood management: Neighbourhood and ASB policies

The Board were provided with a report on our Antisocial Behaviour (“ASB”) Policy and Neighbourhood Management Policy. The Board noted that the ASB Framework had also been approved by the Wheatley Group Board in December 2023 and our WHE-specific ASB Policy and Neighbourhood Management Policy are aligned to this framework.

The Board was advised that the ASB Policy has been drafted to take account of customer and staff feedback. The policy includes an outline of what comprises ASB, how to report it, our time commitments to customers in handling the concerns and what support those impacted can expect to receive.

The Neighbourhood Management Policy sets out our approach to neighbourhood incidents that don’t constitute ASB and is our first dedicated policy for supporting the identification of issues or concerns that impact good neighbourhood management.

The Board were encouraged to note the triaging methodology that has been put in place and that through our safer communities recording platform, we will be able to raise cases involving concerns with the management of our neighbourhoods and ASB in one place; providing a much more detailed picture of the range of concerns being raised in our communities.

The Board recommended that the wording related to noise be amended to read 'noise concerns' rather than 'noise nuisance' to limit the risk of the wording being interpreted out of context.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Approved the Wheatley Homes East ASB Policy; and**
- 2) Approved the Wheatley Homes East Neighbourhood Management Policy**

8. EDI action plan/ EDI Update

The Board were provided with an update on the next iteration of the Group Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan, *One Group Many Voices 2024/25*.

The Board noted our continued strong commitment to ensuring the delivery of EDI services, demonstrated through the Action Plan and the oversight of EDI being a formal responsibility of the Wheatley Solutions Board.

The Board noted the shift in language to 'equity' which is in keeping with the wider practice in EDI but does not fundamentally change our approach in terms of our action plan. It was confirmed that this will be reflected throughout all documentation.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

9. [redacted]

10. Group engagement framework

The Board received a report on the review of the Stronger Voices, Stronger Communities Customer Engagement Framework.

The Board noted the Group 'Stronger Voices, Stronger Communities' Customer Engagement Framework demonstrates that the Framework has considerably improved the organisation's approach to customer engagement and that this has positively impacted customer satisfaction.

The Board were advised that the review recommended minor changes to modernise the Framework, and some practical changes to improve the already high customer satisfaction levels with the customer voice programme.

The Board noted the efforts and range of approaches taken to engage customers in the consultation process and the future approaches that will be undertaken to support continuous improvement.

Decided: The Board noted the presentation.

11. Strategy workshop: structure and approach

The Board received a report detailing the outline for the May strategy workshop.

The Board noted that the refresh of the annual strategy provides an opportunity to reflect on progress to date and to consider key strategic issues.

The Board noted that the structure reflects what stage the strategy is at and that several areas are already delivered or well progressed, narrowing the number of areas which would benefit from a more detailed discussion.

Decided: The Board approved the approach and workshop structure

12. Finance report

The Board received a report with an overview of the management accounts for the period to 29 February 2024.

Decided: The Board noted the Finance Report for the period ended 29 February 2024.

13. Group procurement annual strategy and policy updates

The Board were provided with a report on the annual updates to the Procurement Strategy, Procurement Policy, Group Sustainable Procurement Policy, and Group Community Benefits Statement.

The Board noted that we must comply with legislative requirements and contracting arrangements due to the classification of Contracting Authority. The updates to the suite of procurement documents presented to the Board and publication on our website are part of our approach to achieving compliance.

The Board were advised that the figure for carbon omissions as reported will be defined in the context of our total carbon emissions as a Group. The Board also noted the commitment to zero waste to landfill within our contract considerations with confirmation of implementation advised in due course.

It was confirmed that the Community Benefits statement will be further updated to reflect the shift in language to 'equity' within our EDI approach.

The Board received assurance of the controls in place to ensure that our contractors maintain our standards and how they are held to account.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

14. AOCB

The Board considered and approved the grant of a replacement standard security over properties received from West Lothian Housing Partnership. It was noted that this was principally an administrative exercise that ensured the security against those properties reflected us as the new owner. The Board approved the standard security and legal minute which had been circulated to the Board and which had also been reviewed by our legal advisors and by our funders.

Signed: **(Chair)**

Date: