



West Lothian Housing Partnership (SC188968)

MINUTE OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Date: 20 November 2019
Time: 2pm
Venue: 64 North Bridge Street, Bathgate, EH48 4PP

Chair: John Hill

Present: Mairi Martin
Lesley Bloomer
Fiona Burden
Judith MacGlashan
Lesley-Anne Williams

In attendance: Steven Henderson, Group Director of Finance
Alex Lamb, Head of Housing
Morgan Kingston, Finance Manager
Moray Nichol, Governance and Secretariat Manager
Stephen Wright, Deputy Company Secretary (in part)
Kirsty Ward, Group Universal Credit Lead (in part)
Elsbeth Lang, Development Manager (in part)
John Crooks, Group Health and Safety Manager (in part)
Helen Berry, Head of Assurance (in part)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Bill Yeoman.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the standing declarations of interest.

3. Minute of Board Meeting held on 2 October 2019, action points and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 20 November 2019.

4. Director's Update

The Board received an update on the ballot of Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership tenants on partnership plans with Wheatley Group and the ballot of Barony tenants on the proposal to transfer housing stock to WLHP.

5. Universal Credit and Welfare Reform Update

The Board received an update on our response to the UK government's roll out of Universal Credit, the impact of this on our tenants, communities and business and how we are managing and mitigating these impacts.

The Board discussed in particular the work undertaken to support our tenants, protect income through our approach to rent collection and to gain a better understanding of future challenges through learning journeys and the analysis of performance data.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) Noted the update on Universal Credit and Welfare Reform; and**
- 2) Noted the range of mitigations in place to manage the impact of Welfare Reform on our tenants, communities and business.**

6. Housing Performance 2019/20 – Quarter 2

The Board received a report on progress against delivery plan measures and projects to the end of the second quarter. The Board noted in particular the low level of staff absence from work through sickness. The Board discussed our approach to defining strategic projects linked to strategy, and requested further detail on progress updates be incorporated into future reports.

Decided: The Board noted the content of the report and the actions highlighted to maintain and improve performance.

7. Rent Campaign (Presentation)

The Board received a presentation on the rent campaign for 2019-20 which would go live in December. The Board noted the competing demands on customers and discussed the importance of ensuring we reach as many customers as possible to help ensure they understand the need to continue to pay their rent since this has a direct impact on our ability to continue to provide services to them.

8. Health and Safety Update

The Board received the report and was provided with assurance about the robust approach to health and safety including the management arrangements in place to support this particularly in relation to: fire safety, gas safety, control of legionella, construction design and management, and transport safety. The Board was also informed about our approach to enhance our health and safety arrangements and discussed our approach to communicating health and safety advice and information to staff. In particular, how we adapt our approach to ensure key messages are understood by employees who may be illiterate.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of this report.

9. New Build Performance Dashboard

The Board received an overview of the new build development programme, the number of units completed to date and progress with developments on site. The Board discussed the project at Jarvey Street, Bathgate and work required to conclude the project. It was agreed a further update will be provided at the next meeting.

Decided: The Board noted the report and new build performance dashboard.

10. Finance Report for the period to 31 October 2019

10.1 The Board received the finance report for the period to 31 October 2019. The Board discussed running costs, repairs and investment expenditure, the variance in net capital expenditure largely driven by the Almondvale, Dixon Terrace and Jarvey Street developments and the second quarter forecast to 31 March 2020.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) Noted the management accounts for the period to 31 October 2019;**
- 2) Approved the draft EIB consent letters and delegated authority to any Board member, the Group Chief Executive, Group Director of Finance, Director of Treasury or Company Secretary to agree the final form of the letters and execute same on behalf of WLHP;**
- 3) Approved the draft funding syndicate consent letter and delegated authority to any Board member, the Group Chief Executive, Group Director of Finance, Director of Treasury or Company Secretary to agree the final form of the letter and execute same on behalf of WLHP; and**
- 4) Noted that the funding syndicate letter can also be signed by Wheatley Housing Group Limited as agent of WLHP.**

11. Governance Update

The Board received an update on the 2019 Board appraisal process and Board appointments. The Board discussed support and development for Board members and agreed a risk workshop for the Board should be arranged in the new year.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) Noted the outcomes of the Board appraisal process; and**
- 2) Agreed to the appointment of Bryan Sherriff as a director.**

12. Information Governance Update

The Board received an update on our approach to information management and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

Decided: The Board noted the status of the FOISA implementation plan.

13. Group Assurance Update 2019/20

The Board received the report and discussed the internal audit activity to September 2019 which had identified no findings that were classified as “important” or “critical”.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

14. WLHP Corporate Risk Register

The Board received the report which included an updated risk register and discussed in particular the assessment of risk relating to the likelihood of our properties being flooded.

Decided: The Board approved the revised Corporate Risk Register and confirmed that it appropriately captures the current corporate risks.

15. AOCB

There was no other competent business.