



WHEATLEY HOUSING GROUP LIMITED

SC426094

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wheatley House, Glasgow
on Wednesday 20 December 2023 at 10.30 am

Directors Present: Jo Armstrong (Chair), Maureen Dowden, Jo Boaden, Lindsey Cartwright, Bryan Duncan, Caroline Gardner, Eric Gibson, Bernadette Hewitt, John McCraw, Alison McLaughlin, Alastair Murray and Manish Joshi.

In Attendance: Steven Henderson (Group Chief Executive), Anthony Allison (Group Director of Governance and Business Solutions), Pauline Turnock (Group Director of Finance) and Hazel Young (Group Director of Housing and Property Management – item 6 only), Lorna Shaw (Research Resource – item 6 only), Frank McCaffety (Group Director of Repairs and Assets – item 8 only) and Laura Pluck (Group Director of Communities – item 9 only).

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest

The Board noted the standing declarations of interest.

3. a) Minutes of meeting held on 8 November 2023 and matters arising.

Decided: The Board approved the minute of the meeting held on 8 November 2023.

b) Action List

Decided: The Board noted the action list.

4. Group CEO update

The Board were provided with an update on a range of matters including the 2024/25 Scottish budget, the new Social Housing Net Zero Standard, National Care Service, the Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022 consultation, City Building Glasgow review, and recent Political Engagements and Awards.

5. Chair updates – Audit, RAAG and WDSL

The Board received feedback from each Chair on the work of the Committees/Board since the last meeting. It was confirmed no issues were identified for escalation.

The Board noted that the use of performance bonds, and the use of risk mitigations more widely, was subject to detailed and ongoing review by the Board of Wheatley Developments Scotland.

6. Learning from customer insight

The Board received a presentation setting out the results of our recent customer satisfaction surveys, including an analysis of how they compared to previous results and the wider sector picture.

The Board discussed the improvements in satisfaction across the Group, particularly the very strong results in relation to customer engagement and the incremental improvements in repairs satisfaction. The Board were updated on the key drivers of satisfaction overall, with the repairs service remaining the most significant driver.

The Board were updated on the discussions at partner Boards, who considered their results in detail alongside the actions planned to continue to enhance satisfaction.

The Board discussed communication with tenants more widely and the importance of this in ensuring there is high awareness of our operating model, services and digital channels.

Decided: The Board noted the report.

7. 2024/25 rent and service charge uplift

The Board were provided with a report outlining the 2024/25 rent and service charge proposals. The Board were updated on the context of our rent setting relative to inflation and comparators at RSL level over recent years and the planned approach to tenant consultation.

The Board were updated on how we will ensure that any customers who need support will continue to have access to our range of wraparound services and noted this was a key priority from partner RSL Board discussions.

Decided: The Board approved the options for consultation on the 2024/25 rent and service charge increase by each RSL.

8. Regeneration update (Presentation)

The Board were updated on progress with the rehousing strategy, the ongoing customer engagement and the ongoing focus on the options for the future provision of community facilities.

The Board discussed the future timeline, where each of the elements they were updated on would fit within the timeline and the implications for each in terms of sequencing.

Decided: The Board noted the update.

9. Group Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Framework

The Board were provided with a summary of the revised group Antisocial Behaviour (“ASB”) Framework (the “ASB Framework”) and the key changes and updates contained therein.

The Board noted that the ASB Framework was developed based on extensive engagement and feedback from both customers and staff.

The Board discussed the challenges associated with noise nuisance; in particular how general living noise is distinguished from ASB. It was explained that we plan to develop a new Neighbourhood Management Policy and toolkit to set out our approach to neighbourhood incidents that don’t constitute ASB, including noise nuisance.

The Board emphasised the importance of our ASB policy and a new Neighbourhood Management Policy very clearly defining what constitutes ASB and referencing expectations under the tenancy agreement.

The Board discussed the importance of ensuring that we consider our overall ASB data and undertaking analysis to allow us to learn lessons and potentially implement mitigations in future.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Approved the revised Group ASB Framework.**
- 2) Noted that RSL-specific ASB Policies and a Neighbourhood Management Policy will be taken to relevant Boards for approval.**

10. Governance update

The Board were provided with an update on a range of governance related matters, including recommendations from the Group RAAG Committee in relation to the Group Governing Body Remuneration Policy; an updated Group Code of Conduct; and an updated Governing Body Member Expenses and Allowances Policy

The Board noted that a number of the updates were to streamline and simplify our approach while maintaining the principles of our existing approach.

Decided: The Board:

- 1) Approved the revised Group Board Remuneration Policy and remuneration levels.**
- 2) Approved the revised Group Code of Conduct and associated breach protocol.**
- 3) Approved the updated Governing Body Member Expenses and Allowances Policy.**

11. Finance report

The Board were provided with a summary of financial performance for the year to date. It was explained that we were beginning to see the impact of our actions in relation to repairs costs.

The Board discussed the variances, the impact of vacancies in relation to staffing costs and the forecast for the remainder of the financial year.

Decided: The Board noted the Group management accounts for the period ended 31 October 2023 at Appendix 1 of the paper.

12. Contract award – Cleaning Services

The Board were provided with a report which set out the procurement process undertaken and proposals to award a new Group-wide contract for the provision of corporate office cleaning services.

The Board discussed the option to apply the Living Wage to the contract and the cost associated with this. The Board agreed that we apply the Living Wage to the contract and continue to explore seeking Living Wage accreditation at Group level.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Approved entering a contract for the provision of corporate cleaning services to ISS Facilities Services Limited at a value of £5.4m (Inc VAT) over 4 years.**
- 2) agreed whether we fund the additional cost (approximately £55k per annum for 2024/25) to meet the Real Living Wage level.**
- 3) Noted the contract will allow us to reconsider options, services, and costs at the 2-year stage before taking up the optional 2-year extension.**

13. AOCB

There was no other competent business.

Signed _____ (Chair)