

Minutes of the Board Meeting
Held on Wednesday, 29 October 2025 at 6pm
Hybrid at The McGinlay Suite in the Association's offices and online

Present

Michael Smith (MS)
Simon Gaunt (SG) (online)
Kimberley Barker (KB)
Patricia Gallagher (PG)
Helen Gracie (HG)
Fiona Koroma (FK)
John Russell (JR)

In attendance

Nicola Logan, Chief Executive Officer (NL)
Donald Weir, Asset Director (DW)
Kirsty Chalmers, Customer Services Director (KC)
Martha Hutcheson, Executive Support Manager (MH)
Hollie McGarry, prospective Board Member (Observer)
Melissa Bell, prospective Board Member (Observer)

1.0 Apologies and Declarations of Interest (including agenda item to which this refers)

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Board member David Mulhern

NL introduced the two prospective Board members and thanked them for coming along to observe the meeting. She went on to say that Andrew McCafferty had submitted a request for leave of absence until 31 March 2026. This was **approved**.

2.0 Minutes of Previous Board Meeting – 24 September 2025

Finance Director vacancy: NL advised that the closing date is Friday (31 October) and, at this point in time, there would be five potential candidates for interview.

Strategy Event: The Board discussed the format of the event in January and agreed it would be sufficient to hold a scaled-down version, given the current staffing challenges. The Board acknowledged the need to start considering rent harmonisation and its impact on the Asset Management Strategy.

The Minutes were **approved** by the Board, subject to the above change.

Proposed: Kimberley Barker **Seconded:** Patricia Gallagher

3.0 Health & Safety

DW explained that the Fire Safety policy had been updated to include Appendix E which details the work to be carried out in the next few years. The Board said it would be helpful if policy changes can either be tracked or summarised within the accompanying report.

The Board **noted** the KPI summary and asked for clarification on the number of immersion heaters to be included in future reports (as well as %).

DW confirmed that the recent audit of the Health & Safety Control Manual had gone well. It highlighted the need for staff to complete fire safety training and for Board members to complete Health & Safety training. It was suggested that Vicki Cutler could carry out Board training and DW agreed to contact her. DW also reminded the Board that a fire drill will be carried out during a future Board meeting. A Board member asked if they could be given a report on the Health & Safety walkabout/inspection carried out in the office (this had been asked for previously). DW confirmed that the report would be available in the Resources Section of oneAdvanced (formerly Decision Time).

4.0 CEO Report

Homemaster: NL provided an update on the implementation of Homemaster. She advised that the finance system is a risk due to the current staff situation. In order to mitigate the risk, additional sessions have been arranged and visits will be organised to other Associations already using Homemaster. She also asked the Board to agree to the office closing on 5 separate dates to allow the staff team to fully test Homemaster. The Board **agreed** with this proposal. There was some discussion about the timescale for implementation and whether or not it could be delayed. NL advised that there would be a greater risk to the success of the project if there was insufficient or ineffective testing.

Development: the Board **approved** delegated authority for KB to sign the offer of grant.

Staffing Sub-Committee: NL advised that, due to workload pressures, there would be a slight delay in issuing the reports for the Staffing Sub-Committee meeting on 7 November.

Strategy Session: the Board discussed the timing of the Strategy Session and agreed that this could be held at an appropriate date in 2026/27 when the new Business Plan was being formulated.

5.0 Matters for Approval

5.1 Assurance Statement

MH referred to the report and highlighted some of the key areas from the self-assessment process. She hoped the Board found the new process beneficial and said that the staff team thought it worked well. The recent internal audit confirmed overall compliance with the regulatory requirements and the standards as a social landlord, including tenant and resident safety requirements, with no material areas of non-compliance identified. The Board discussed various points contained within the Action Plan and requested that the appraisal report be finalised earlier next year. MH explained that, since some of the training planned for 2025 had not taken place, there would be a greater focus in the coming year. The Board **approved** the Assurance Statement.

5.2 Rent Consultation 2026/27

NL apologised for the delay in circulating the report on the Rent Consultation, but this had been **agreed** by the Board at their last meeting to allow her to use the latest CPI figure available for calculating the financial projections. NL went on to explain in detail how the key components of the Business Plan will be affected by the proposed rent increase. She referred to two potential options for the increase (4.8% and 5%) and demonstrated how each would impact on the Association's surplus and 30-year cash balance. NL also confirmed that all lenders' covenants would continue to be met if either level of increase is applied. The Board expressed their appreciation for the work that NL has done in preparing this information in the absence of the Finance Director and Senior Finance Officer. Following discussion on the key points, the Board **agreed** to consult on an increase of **4.8%**.

5.3 Customer Service Strategy

KC explained that the Customer Service Strategy had been developed using insights from the Triennial Satisfaction Survey. There had also been extensive staff consultation to ensure the Strategy and standards reflect operational realities and frontline experience.

A couple of amendments were suggested in relation to:

- Section O: aim to resolve repairs at first visit
- Section S: expand on the point about 5 working days to respond to a request for alterations

The Board **approved** the revised Customer Service Strategy and proposed amendments to our service standards.

5.4 Ending of Membership

Board **approved** the cancellation of two shares as set out in Rule 11. Both members have not attended five annual general meetings in a row without submitting apologies.

6.0 Policies & Performance

6.1 Draft Disruption & Compensation Payments Policy

DW explained that this new policy was the result of two other policies being merged together. There was a brief discussion on how the figures for compensation payments were calculated. DW said he was confident that the levels set out in the policy would ensure there was sufficient flexibility to reflect the circumstances of the complaint. The Board **approved** the policy.

7.0 Report back from Meetings / Conferences

It was **agreed** that it was beneficial for a Board member to attend EVH meetings where possible. NL will also check if it is necessary to have representatives for GWSF. The Board **asked** for EVH & SFHA monthly bulletins to be circulated.

8.0 Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business.

9.0 Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday 21 January at 6pm

Signed: **Date:**