

**Minutes of the Board Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 29 March 2023 at 6pm in person in**  
**The McGinlay Suite in the Association's offices**

**Present (in person attendees)**

Simon Gaunt (Chairperson) (SG)  
Kerry Clayton  
Kimberley Barker  
Allan Edgar  
Patricia Gallagher  
Helen Gracie  
Michael Smith

**In attendance**

Nicola Logan, Interim Chief Executive (NL)  
Donald Weir, Technical Director (DW)  
Kirsty Wilson, Housing Services Director (KW)  
Catherine Sloey, Minutes (CS)  
Emma Brown (observer)

**Welcome**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He also welcomed Emma Brown, who was in attendance at the meeting as an observer.

**1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

*Apologies:*

Apologies were received from Board Members Fiona Koroma, Johnson Ayorinde, and David McDonald.

*Declarations of Interest:* Staff declared an interest in item 19.2 – a confidential matter to be discussed by Board Members.

The Chairperson advised that as it was a busy agenda, he had agreed with NL to change the agenda order to ensure priority business items were discussed.

**2. Health and Safety Report**

DW advised that he had prepared some documentation that would require to be signed by the Chairperson at the end of the meeting. He highlighted some key issues from his report as follows:

Audit - He advised that that an audit of the Health & Safety Control Manual was scheduled for next month.

Lone Worker Application – Staff had commenced a four-week trial of a new App with Safepoint. To date, staff and the Senior IT officer were pleased with the trial. DW commented it was likely that the Association would enter into a new contract with Safepoint when the current contract was up for renewal in June.

Electrical Servicing – DW advised that compliance figures were currently up by 2% from the 81% figure reported in the ARC last year. Once the current level of uncertified services was taken account of a figure of around 90% is likely to be recorded.

He advised that this still leaves 10% of stock outstanding through hard no accesses although the current programme will continue after 31<sup>st</sup> March. The Association had sought legal guidance on hard no access situations and had been advised that the best course of action would be a court order. This will be incorporated into the Electrical Safety Policy.

A short discussion took place on how best to resolve this issue and ensure that the Association reached a 100% compliance rate. A Board Member commented that their Association had managed to achieve 100% compliance and recognised, however, that it had been challenging, particularly with individuals suffering from mental health issues. Their legal advice stated that force entry was acceptable.

It was raised by a Board Member that giving access to your property, for some people with Mental Health issues, was extremely difficult and caused increased levels of anxiety. Therefore, it was important that the Association took all necessary steps to ensure that conversations were held between both parties to ensure the tenant felt safe and listened to and reasonable adjustments were put in place. DW confirmed the access process and explained that cyclical maintenance staff spent a great deal of time negotiating access with tenants.

KW advised that communication between Technical and Housing colleagues had improved since hybrid working as being in the same office allowed greater collaboration between teams. When issues with mental health are raised the teams work together to support tenants and make reasonable adjustments to allow this work to be carried out.

The Board asked DW to speak with other Housing Associations and find out how they dealt with similar issues and to provide an update at the next meeting.

The Board **noted** the Health and Safety report.

### **3. Minutes of Previous Board Meeting**

#### **(1) Decisions taken between meetings.**

Nothing to report.

#### **(2) Board Meeting 18.01.23 and Confidential 28.01.23**

Amendment to Minutes – Page 9

A Board Member commented that as staff were asked to leave the meeting at item 19.2, it should be mentioned in the Minutes that staff declared an interest at the meeting and left the meeting when this item was being discussed.

NL also mentioned that the DPO suggested checking that some Board Members would prefer not to have their name appear against comments etc.

The Board discussed having their name included and it was **agreed** that no names would be added. Therefore, going forward all comments would be attributed to a “Board Member”.

#### **(3) Draft Board Strategy Meeting Minutes 22.02.23**

The minutes were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### (4) Matters Arising 18.01.23 Actions / Decisions

The Board **noted** the Actions report and discussed the following:

- **Lone Worker Application** – discussed above (trialing new App)
- **Dampness and Mould Policy** – completed.
- **Fire Drill** – all actions completed. New actions:
  - Fire drill to be held at the staff briefing session on Wednesday, 5 April 2023.
  - Locks on fire exits – ensure locks on doors were disability friendly – explore push bar option.
  - Ensure all signs were visible.
- **Board Confidential Minutes** – introduction of redaction of minutes commenced for publishing on website and checking with DPO – completed.
- **Board Strategy Event** – completed.
- **Residents' Satisfaction Survey** – completed.
- **Staff Business Planning Session** – completed.
- **Investors in People** – update on action plan discussed at FAC Sub-Committee meeting – completed.
- **Estate Co-Ordinator** - KW reported that the new Estate Co-Ordinator - started last week. Already she had been able to deal with some long-standing cleansing issues in relation to cleaning out contaminated blue bins.  
New action – The Board requested to see some progress photographs, these will be provided at the next meeting and will also be featured in the summer Newsletter.
- **Rent Consultation Feedback and Review of Service Charges** – completed.
- **Summarise feedback for inclusion in the cover letter for the rent increase notification pack** – completed.
- **Consider the suggestion to include information about lost rental income in rent increase letter i.e. 5.4% over 12 months** – completed.
- **Reactive Maintenance Contract** – on agenda for discussion and update.
- **Project Overview – Communication Strategy and Money Matters** – KW reported that these two items were outstanding as she had been off work unexpectedly. However, would ensure they were prioritised and actioned by May.

A Board Member commented that due to the number of actions, it was suggested giving more time to allow actions to be completed.

The Board **noted** the Decisions report.

#### 4. Minutes of Sub-Committees and Other Meetings

##### (1) Draft Minutes of Housing, Technical and Health & Safety Sub-Committee – 01.03.23

**Noted.**

It was commented by a Board Member that more Members were required to join this Sub-Committee as often these meetings were postponed as they had not been quorate.

The Chairperson **agreed** to raise this issue with Board Members who were not currently on Sub Committees and discuss scope for joining.

## **5. Matters for Discussion / Decision**

### **5.1 Interim Chief Executive Report**

**Board appraisals** – CS circulated potential slots, offered by Olwyn Gaffney, and asked them to choose their preferred slot. CS to forward to Olwyn.

The Board **noted** the report.

### **5.2 Business and Financial Plans 2023-2028**

NL advised that she was seeking Board approval on the Business Plan 2023-28. She reported that there were a few changes to the Business Plan and the overall document had been streamlined. A new 'People' Objective had been added and the SWOT and PESTLE analysis had been updated. She said that some photographs would be added and some final formatting to tidy up the document. In addition, a new KPI had been added – homeless indicator.

The Board thanked NL for her report and felt the document looked better streamlined and reflected clearly what the Association was aiming for. A short question and answer session followed from Board Members.

Overall, they felt it was a good document and commented that the new People Objective was beneficial. A Board Member raised if the business strategy was linked to staff one to one sessions.

NL confirmed that staff were all made aware of the Business Plan via the staff briefing. She also confirmed that the strategic objectives were fed through to the departmental plans and discussed at one-to-one sessions.

The Chairperson raised that the document showed staff numbers at 37 but requested it showed full time equivalent. NL to amend the Business Plan as requested.

The Board **approved** the Business Plan 2023-28.

### **5.3 Draft Budget for the Year to 31 March 2024**

NL spoke to her report and highlighted the following for the Budget and the Financial appendix to the Business Plan: **See Confidential Minute**

NL outlined the assumptions used in the financial plans and confirmed that the Budget and the 30-year financial plans meet all lenders covenant requirements. She also confirmed that sensitivity analysis had been carried out and that results reflected a strong Business plan.

The Board **approved** the Budget and the 30-year financial plans.

## 5.4 Workingrite Report

KW advised that her report updated the Board on the outcomes achieved by the Workingrite project in 2022/23 and sought approval to renew the Service Level Agreement for 2023/24 at the cost detailed in the report.

It was explained that fewer tenants from Glen Oaks had connected with the scheme and considered that the HA could do more to advertise the scheme e.g., through social media and reignite with contractors etc. She added that there had been some issues with engaging with young people due to the pandemic, however, this has been reviewed and additional services were added to the project to provide a more intensive supporting approach.

Workingrite would consider the measurement of social value going forward, which they recognised would help funding applications as well as demonstrating value for money.

A Board Member asked if it was restricted to Glen Oaks Housing Association. KW confirmed it was open to the whole of the South.

KW provided a brief update on the Project Co-Ordinator's role and links with other agencies.

The Board thanked KW for her report and taking the initiative to raise with Workingrite possible ideas for connecting tenants with the project.

The Board **noted** the report and **approved** the financial contribution for 2023/24 to allow continued partnership with Glen Oaks Housing Association and Workingrite.

## 5.5 Lettings Plan 2023-24

It was **noted** that this would be raised at the Sub-Committee in May.

## 5.6 Quarterly Business Plan Report

These were presented **for information only**.

## 6. Board Priorities - On Hold

- Board Training
- Rent Harmonisation
- Succession Planning and Staff Resources
- Office / Community Hub
- Tenant Communication / Transparency

## 7. Assurance Statement

- 7.1 Assurance Statement Review Programme
- 7.2 Review of Regulatory Standard 2

The Board **noted** the Assurance Statement and Review of Standard 2.

## 8. Update on the Association's Development Programme

See item 16.4.

## 9. Risk Management Update

Nothing to report.

## 10. Notifiable Events

See item below on Reactive Maintenance follow-up action.

## 11. Staffing

Nothing to report.

## 12. Membership

Nothing to report.

## 13. Use of Seal

Nothing to report.

## 14. Policy Review

### 14.1 Draft Dampness, Mould and Condensation Policy

A Board Member suggested that a clause be inserted in the policy stating that damp and mould would be "designed out" in any planned maintenance and new build specifications.

A Board Member asked for clarification that legally all national bodies were involved in the guidance of this policy.

DW confirmed that this was correct.

The Board **approved** the policy subject to the change raised by the Board Member.

### 14.2 Draft Procurement Policy

The Board agreed to **carry forward** to the next meet Board meeting.

### 14.3 Draft Governance Framework

The Board agreed to **carry forward** to the next Board meeting.

### 14.4 Safeguarding Policy

Board **approved** the revised policy.

### 14.5 Review of Policy Register

The Chairperson highlighted that the Board spent a lot of time reviewing policies and procedures. The paper presented to the Board proposed that the standard review of policies would be moved to a 3 to 5-year cycle unless there was a critical review required due to a change in legislation or regulatory standard. It was hoped this would spread out the timescale and staff's workload. If agreed by Board, NL would present a revised policy cycle at the May Board meeting.

The Board **agreed** that it would be beneficial to review the cycle and the number of policies. it was also noted that some policies contained procedures which could be removed.

The Chairperson raised the format that draft policies were presented to Board Members for approval. He requested a simpler and clearer format going forward.

The Board **agreed** to move the policy schedule to a 3 – 5-year plan, except for policies that required to be reviewed annually. It was also **agreed** that all policies should be presented with a covering report outlining the changes.

## **15. Community Regeneration**

### **15.1 goConnect Funding Overview**

The Board **noted** the funding that the goConnect Project had applied for and received this year.

### **15.2 Digital Inclusion Assistant**

**See Confidential Minute**

## **16 Matters for Information**

16.1 Management Accounts for the Period to 31.12.22 – *nothing to report.*

16.2 Treasury Report to 31.12.22 – *nothing to report.*

16.3 Complaints Report to 31 December 2022 – *for information only.*

### **16.4 Development Report**

The Chairperson **highlighted** that no monies had been included in the budget for development. He added, it was important that this was noted when reviewing the budget and that full financial appraisal would be presented to the Board prior to proceeding with any development.

DW spoke to his paper and highlighted the following: (**See Confidential Minute**)

Kilmuir Close - Arden Phase 6

Board noted contents of the report.

Reactive Repairs Contract - **See Confidential Minute**

### **16.5 Garden Care Scheme 2023-24**

The Board recommended that a communication was issued to tenants advising that the Association was currently reviewing the terms and conditions of the scheme.

The Board **agreed** that this item should be reviewed by the CMT and brought back to the next Board meeting for a further discussion on the way forward.

### **16.6 Darnley Windows and Doors - Tender Report - See Confidential Minute**

## **17 Report back from Meetings / Conferences Attended**

Nothing to report.

## **18 Correspondence and Other Matters for Decision**

The reports for information only.

## **19 Any Other Competent Business**

- 19.1 A Board Member raised concern about the number of complaints and timescales for getting back to tenants.

The Board **agreed** this would be discussed at a future meeting.

- 19.2 The Chairperson asked staff to leave the room to allow the Board to discuss a confidential matter. At this point staff declared an interest and left the room.

## **20 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 24 May 2023 at 6pm.