



Barrhead Housing  
Minute of Governing Board Meeting  
Thursday 8 December 2022 at 6.00pm  
BHA Offices and by ZOOM Video Conference (VC)

Present

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| J Hamilton (Chair) | B Connelly MBE |
| R McGuire BEM      | D McVey        |
| D McKinney         | L A Junner     |
| P McIlvenny        | A Oliver       |
| A Glasgow (by VC)  |                |

In Attendance and by Video Conference

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| L Wilson    | Chief Executive (CEO)                             |
| I MacLean   | Corporate Services Coordinator (CoSC)             |
| S Stewart   | Director of Assets and Communities (DAM)          |
| O Yiga      | Interim Director of Customer Services (DCS)       |
| C McCulloch | Director Designate of Customer Services (DdCS)    |
| L Rice      | Director of Finance and Corporate Services (DFCS) |
| B Dando     | Community Investment Manager (6.1 only)           |

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|  | <b>Minute – BHA Governing Board Meeting</b>  |
|  | <p>Presentation: Our Communities</p> <p>The Community Investment Manager gave a short presentation to the Board.</p> <p>Following some questions, the Board noted the terms of the presentation.</p> |

*'at the heart of our community – investing in your future'*

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| 1 | <p><b>Apologies &amp; Sederunt Check</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from B Welsh.</p> <p>The sederunt was signed by those in attendance.</p>   |
| 2 | <p><b>Declaration of Interest: Board and Staff</b></p> <p>No declarations of interest were made.</p>   |
| 3 | <p><b><u>Approval of Minutes</u></b></p> <p>(a) <b>Board Meeting 27 October 2022</b></p> <p>The Board <b>approved</b> the minutes as a true record.</p> <p><b><u>For noting</u></b></p> <p>(b) <b>December 2022 Board Action Tracker</b></p> <p>All actions were noted as complete.</p>  |
| 4 | <p><b>Matters Arising from Above Minutes</b></p> <p>There were no matters arising. The CEO advised the Board of the ongoing SHR review of Board minutes.</p>   |
| 5 | <p><b>Matters for Approval</b></p> <p><b>5.1 Strategic and Business Planning Process</b></p> <p>The CEO advised the Board of the proposed approach to strategic and business planning for 2023/24. It was noted that the Delivery Plan and final budget for next year will come to the Board in February 2023.</p> <p>The Board <b>noted</b> the report and <b>approved</b> the strategic planning approach and timeline for 2023/24.</p> <p><b>5.2 Rent Increase 2023/24</b></p> <p>The CEO updated the Board on the current position and explained the proposed approach to customer consultation on the 2023/24 rent increase, following notification from the Scottish Government on the position regarding rent restrictions due in January 2023.</p> |

She advised the Board that our current rent levels are above average, but the new rent structure is intended to address this over time.

In relation to rent increases / freezes / caps, it remains unclear what the SG will propose for after March 2023.

Regarding affordability, an analysis has been undertaken and Board members have previously been provided with tenant feedback in relation to tenants' views on affordability.

Instead of offering options to tenants, it is proposed that we proceed with the lowest possible increase to our customers.

The CEO then took the Board through the outcome of the recent value for money workshop with customers.

Some discussion then took place regarding the timing of any proposed increase, with a suggestion made that any decision be delayed until the council tax increase was known.

Board members expressed that the quality of the consultation would be critical, and that customers would benefit from understanding what a 5% increase would mean for them, and what they might "get" in return i.e. investment in our homes.

The Board then discussed our stock mix, and households living in larger accommodation and whether they had the option to move to smaller accommodation, and/or how we might be able to facilitate this.

The CEO advised the Board that we will be visiting all our tenants over time, and that there will be additional opportunities in place to engage with our customers to raise awareness of the range of help and support available.

The Board **approved** the proposal to consult over a 5% rent increase, subject to a review of consultation material, and with the formal consultation delayed until the SG announcement in January 2023.

### 5.3 Draft Budget 2023/24 and 30 Year Business Plan

The DFCS provided the Board with the context in relation to the proposed budget and assumptions for 2023/24, and the 30-year business plan.

She then took the Board through the process which was followed in developing the draft budget, which involved input from all management and sought to reflect customer survey and workshop feedback, and explained that the budget itself was prepared on a “business as usual” basis, with no assumptions built in around any reductions in service delivery.

Discussion took place regarding Community Investment activity and it was suggested the Association include a small budget contribution towards activity costs.

One board member noted the proportion of fixed and variable rate loans we expect to have at 31 March 2024 and suggested that our exposure to variable rate loans, even if in compliance with the Treasury policy, should be kept under review. It was agreed that a further review would be undertaken in relation to our loan portfolio.

One board member asked whether we might be too close to our Asset Cover covenant. The DFCS explained that a June 2022 valuation was used to calculate this covenant, but by March 2024, we will have added three developments to our property portfolio which will improve this result and minimise this risk.

In relation to EESSH2, it was suggested that there should be some financial provision included in the final budget and business plan. The DAM explained the challenges around estimating costs while the guidance is being developed and costs are very uncertain and noted the business plan currently provides for heating systems and boilers which may be used to fund modern electric heating systems, and for new windows. A sustainability consultant is being procured with 3 other RSLs developed a fully costed plan in 2023. It was agreed that some explanation of assumptions will be included in the five-year return to the Regulator.

#### **A Glasgow left the meeting at this point**

The Board **noted** the draft budget, **approved** the proposal that senior officers may enter into contracts and spend which is in line with approved budgets, subject to an update on the financial regulations. The Board also **approved** the proposed change in the write-off process in line with policy and up to agreed levels, subject to regular Board reports and a small amendment to the Scheme of Delegation.

#### **5.4 Draft Sustainability Strategy**

The CEO gave the Board the background to the proposed Sustainability Strategy and explained the structures in place to deliver the strategy. The focus of the strategy is not just on our houses, but also in relation to the wider community/ environment, our offices, our ways of working,

behaviour change etc. The Board discussed opportunities for partnership working with the Council and other stakeholders.

The Board **approved** the draft strategic framework for consultation, and agreed to contact the CEO directly if any Board member wanted to become involved in future related work. A Oliver offered to be involved.

### 5.5 CAF Bank Deposit Platform

The DFCS explained the CAF platform background to the Board.

The Board sought some clarification in relation to the 0.25% fee and whether this offered value, and asked for a subsequent update which would inform our future investment strategies.

The Board **approved** the opening of the account, **approved** CAF as an investment platform for deposits and for the Treasury Management Policy to be updated, approved and authorised investments of up to £85,000 via the Platform, where the institution is UK based and assessed as low risk.

### 5.6 Partnership Working with ERC on Homelessness

The DdCS provided the Board with information in relation to recent partnership working with ERC on homelessness. He clarified the current allocation process in relation to homeless households, and explained the Council's alternative Choice Based lettings system which the Council are keen that we adopt for a trial period.

The Board **noted** the position and **agreed** to the proposed six-month pilot of participation in choice-based lettings for properties offered to homeless households.

### 5.7 Eviction

The DdCS explained the background of this case to the Board and that engagement has largely ceased with the tenant despite a notice of proceedings, visits, court action, an offers of appointments with the Director.

The Board **authorised** the proposed eviction (post-Christmas) and delegated to senior staff to negotiate any proposed settlement to repay the proposed debt to avoid enforcing the eviction decree, should this be deemed appropriate.

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|---------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| 6                   | <p><b>6.2 CEO Governance and Compliance Report</b></p> <p>The CEO took the Board through her regular update report. She highlighted the following main points for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposal for Tenant App and Portal has been deferred as the proposal is not compatible with our current system. Discussions are ongoing, and further information will come back to the Board in due course.</li> <li>- Wide range of recent partnership working ongoing.</li> <li>- The CEO has agreed to join a new engagement forum with the SHR.</li> <li>- Following on from the recent English case, new guidance has been issued to staff in relation to condensation/ mould, and training is being arranged for staff. A pre-inspection will be carried out in all cases in future where mould/ condensation is reported. A new policy will be developed in due course. Board members will be invited to training.</li> </ul> <p>The Board <b>noted</b> the update report and <b>approved</b> that John Hamilton complete and sign the National Westminster Bank PLC's banking application form for the provision of internet banking services, and accept the Bankline terms on behalf of Barrhead Housing.</p> <p><b>6.3 Arrears and Income Collection report</b></p> <p>The DdCS provided the Board with an update on the current position with arrears and income collection.</p> <p>The Board <b>noted</b> the current position on arrears and income collection which will be reported quarterly in future, and <b>agreed</b> the proposed update to the arrears procedures to delegate authorisation to the Director to seek decree, subject to Board approval for any eviction.</p> |                     |                               |                   |                          |     |                             |
| 7                   | <p><b>Parent Monitoring – next meetings:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Audit, Risk and H&amp;S</td><td>Next meeting 16 February 2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>Development Group</td><td>Next Meeting 8 June 2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>LPS</td><td>Next meeting to be arranged</td></tr> </table>  | Audit, Risk and H&S | Next meeting 16 February 2023 | Development Group | Next Meeting 8 June 2023 | LPS | Next meeting to be arranged |
| Audit, Risk and H&S | Next meeting 16 February 2023  |                     |                               |                   |                          |     |                             |
| Development Group   | Next Meeting 8 June 2023   |                     |                               |                   |                          |     |                             |
| LPS                 | Next meeting to be arranged  |                     |                               |                   |                          |     |                             |
| 8                   | <p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p>Nil.</p> <p>L Rice, S Stewart, and O Yiga left the meeting at this point.</p>  |                     |                               |                   |                          |     |                             |

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|    | <p>5.8 REDACTED</p> <p>L Wilson and I MacLean left the meeting at this point.</p>   |
| 9  | <p><u>For approval</u></p> <p>Governing Board Member Appraisal Report</p> <p>REDACTED</p>                                       |
| 10 | <p>Feedback from Vice Chair on Team Visits</p> <p>The Vice Chair updated the Board on his recent visit to Barrhead Housing.</p> |
| 11 | <p>Board Check Out</p>  |