



## MARYHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

### MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021 AT 6.00 PM VIRTUAL MEETING VIA TEAMS VIDEO CALL

Board Members	Attended	Apologies
Roger Popplewell (RP)		✓
Caitlyn Maccabe (CM)	✓	
Colin O'Hara (CO)	✓	
Isabella McTaggart (IM)	✓	
Janaki LakshmiNarayanan (JL)	✓	
Jenny Crowe (JC)		✓
Lindsay Forrest (LF)	✓	
Najah Plakaris (NP)	✓	
Paul Imrie (PI)	✓	
Raphael Rickson (RR)		✓
Richard Turnock (RT)		✓
Tim Holmes (TH)	✓	

Officers	Items
Bryony Willett (BW)	1-12
Jennifer Simon (JS)	1-12
Rebecca Wilson (RW)	1-12
Alistair McArthur (AM)	1-12
Dawn Burns (DB)	1-7
Lesley Carnegie (LC)	1-12

Valerie Wilson (VW - observer)	✓
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Item No.	Issue	Action By
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
1.1	BW explained that RP had submitted apologies for this meeting and had proposed that PI as Vice Chair of the Association should Chair the meeting in his place. Board members agreed that PI would be Chair for this meeting.	
1.2	PI welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from JC, RP, RR and RT.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Approval of previous Board Minutes</b>	
2.1	Board approved the minutes from their meeting on 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2021, including the confidential minute ( <i>removed as confidential</i> ).	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Action Tracker</b>	
3.1	Board approved the updates to the Action Tracker including the actions proposed for closure.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Chair's Update</b>	
4.1	RP had provided PI with an update on activities he had been involved in since the previous Board meeting. These included providing feedback to Bryony from the	

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4.2	<p>Board members review of the last meeting, in particular about the papers for approval of the corporate plan. He also relayed the Board's view that the focus should be on items of strategic importance.</p> <p>As a result, there was a further discussion with officers about the schedule of board meetings and agendas. Part of this was questioning the value of the consecutive assurance meetings in June and August. The outcome of this discussion was covered in tonight's CEO report.</p>	
4.3	<p>RP had also provided comments on the proposed CEO performance management framework which was scheduled for discussion at tonight's meeting.</p>	
	<p><i>Details removed as confidential.</i></p>	
	<p>RP provided advice to the CEO about getting external support in reviewing arrangements for promoting staff wellbeing generally.</p>	
4.4	<p>Finally, RP had attended an online meeting of the chairs of the G8 group of housing associations, of which Maryhill Housing is a member. This focused on how associations are planning services post COVID.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Feedback from Board training / conferences</b>	
5.1	<p>PI advised that no courses had been attended since the last Board meeting. However, LC would be contacting Board members soon about upcoming courses that address development needs from their latest appraisals.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Communications Strategy</b>	
6.1	<p>LC introduced this item, explaining that the new three-year Communications Strategy had been prepared by the Corporate Officer with responsibility for communication and events. The strategy reflected a new focus on providing digital options while also retaining some more traditional communication methods that some customers preferred.</p>	
6.2	<p>PI noted that he was pleased with the strategy and that digital communication was evolving so the Association needed to move with the times. PI noted that social media was being used positively by the Association and reaching a significant number of followers. PI suggested that the Association should revisit the amount of paper documents that were still sent out to customers, and that the strategy should include mention of developing a paperless option within the three-year period. This should also be supported by digital inclusion work to help customers get online. This would be added to the final version of the strategy.</p>	LC
6.3	<p>TH suggested that there was the potential of using Zoom or Teams meetings instead of just phone calls with customers. LC agreed that there were already some examples of using Teams and also WhatsApp as lots of customers have this on their phones. It was agreed this would be added to the final version of the strategy as another communication method.</p>	LC

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6.4	IM noted that some older customers would not be interested in this. TH agreed that it was more about offering this as an option rather than forcing its use.	LC
6.5	LF suggested that the Health and Social Care Partnership should be added to the list of stakeholders. It was agreed this would be added to the final version of the strategy.	
6.6	With these amendments Board approved the Communications Strategy for 2021-2024.	
6.7	NP joined the meeting during this item.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Support for Community Centres</b>	
7.1	DB introduced this item, advising that Glasgow City Council had recently invited notes of interest on taking on Glasgow Life facilities. DB highlighted the risk tables in the report that outlined the risks of each option for each facility. DB recommended that Board choose option 2.	
7.2	PI agreed that option 2 was the most appropriate. TH also agreed, noting that taking on the actual buildings themselves can pose to significant a risk, so option 2 seemed sensible.	
7.3	IM noted that Ledgowan Hall is very well used. PI agreed that the current license holder was certainly making things work, so it should be more about offering them support in relation to governance. TH suggested that it should also be about supporting them in terms of succession planning, so the hall's success did not depend on just one person.	
7.4	LF noted that the cover paper was excellent and set out the options very well. LF agreed that option 2 seemed the most appropriate.	
7.5	IM asked if the Association gave Ledgowan Hall financial support a few years previously. DB advised that they had been awarded an amount through the Community Fund. DB noted that no funding is received from Glasgow City Council so whenever there was any maintenance or improvement work needed they had to raise their own funds. DB advised that the Association could support them to bid for future funding, particularly as their income had reduced during lockdown.	
7.6	Board then approved proceeding with option 2 for both Ruchill Community Centre and Ledgowan Hall.	
7.7	DB left the meeting at this point.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Development Policy</b>	
8.1	AM introduced this item advising that it had been three years since the last time policy was approved. AM noted that the proposed changes to the policy were summarised in the table at the end of the cover report. AM also noted that a further paper would come back to Board to review the Board approvals required	

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8.2	<p>during the development process. Officers were currently consulting with other housing associations and would bring proposals back for approval in May.</p> <p>CM asked about the definition of net present value. RW advised that this was how the financial viability of a project was tested over a 30-year period using a discounted cashflow. The project must at least break even over the 30 years. This was about making sure existing tenants were not subsidising new builds.</p>	
8.3	<p>PI noted that the housing needs and demand study was from 2017, asking whether anything is likely to have changed since then. AM advised that housing demand remained consistent with what was found in 2017, with significant demand for low level family housing and for accessible housing for older people and those with disabilities.</p>	
8.4	<p>TH noted that it was important for Board to make decisions on developments before it was too late, so they should be involved prior to contract award and at the earlier stages when there is still time to say no. AM agreed with this and advised that this would be reflected in the paper coming back to Board in May.</p>	
8.5	<p>Board approved the amendments to the Development Policy with the caveat that the governance arrangements are revised and come back to Board for further approval in May.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Company Secretary</b>	
9.1	<p>BW introduced this item explaining that it had originally been discussed in September 2020 and at that point Board suggested Company Secretary responsibilities should move from the CEO to the Director of Resources.</p>	
9.2	<p>PI advised that office bearers had discussed this quite a lot over the last six months, and that officers had confirmed they were comfortable with the proposed changes.</p>	
9.3	<p>BW advised that the items now being proposed for Board approval were the range of documents that set out roles and responsibilities. One additional item being proposed was the introduction of a standing Governance Report at every Board meeting. This would be in addition to the standing CEO Report and would further emphasise the separation of CEO and Company Secretary duties.</p>	
9.4	<p>TH asked if there were any grading implications in the change of job descriptions. BW advised that this was not the case and that it was appropriate to have the Company Secretary role sitting at a Director level post.</p>	
9.5	<p>Board then approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The revised Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation.</li> <li>• The revised job descriptions for the Director of Resources and Performance and Governance Manager.</li> <li>• The revised Protocol for Dealing with a Breach of the Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• The addition of a Governance paper to all Board agendas.</li> </ul>	

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<b>10.</b>	<b>CEO Performance Management Framework</b>	
10.1	BW introduced this item, advising that this addressed a gap in the Association's governance framework that had been identified earlier in 2021. PI noted that the proposed CEO Performance Management Framework meets the expectations of the Scottish Housing Regulator around monitoring the performance of the CEO while also bringing arrangements in line with those for other staff.	
10.2	TH noted that the framework included a 360-degree element, which was positive. TH suggested that this should include feedback from staff at all levels of the organisation rather than just direct reports and other managers. TH suggested this this could provide a better check on the CEO's performance as there can be a separation between senior managers and other staff views. It was agreed that the 360 feedback would include a range of staff at different levels of the organisation. This would be updated in the final version.	BW
10.3	TH referred to the 1-1 list appended to the report, noting that it focused on flagging any exceptions. TH suggested that it would be better to get the CEO's opinion on a number of things, not just exceptions. This could include having the CEO rate how some areas are performing or how they feel about where the organisation is. It was agreed that this would be added to the final version.	BW
10.4	PI asked if the Association was still using Best Companies to measure staff engagement. BW advised that this was the case, and that the Association would be participating in the Best Companies survey later in the year, possibly around September. The survey was not carried out in 2020 when a series of pulse surveys were used to get feedback from staff on the impact of covid and working from home.	
10.5	With these amendments Board approved the CEO Performance Management Framework.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>COVID impact and relaunch summary</b>	
11.1	RW introduced this item explaining that this included a more detailed route map, with the recent move to tier 3 meaning there had been some changes. Routine repairs were now re-started, and the backlog of repairs was now being worked through. It was projected that the backlog would be cleared by the end of May. The Housing Team had also re-started their inspections. JS explained that this was being re-introduced in phases so the backlogs could be prioritised and worked through over the next couple of months.	
11.2	BW advised that the final change was that Property Officers had now returned to working on a patch basis, which is better for both customers and staff. These officers were also back carrying out post inspections on voids, which had been an area of risk during lockdown. BW noted that all these changes were going well and that the upcoming move to tier 2 would not bring any real changes. The next biggest step would be the move to tier 1, hopefully in June, when customers could be allowed back in the office.	

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11.3	PI noted that it was good to see rent arrears decreasing, however also noting that the level of void loss remained considerable. PI asked whether the void figures would soon improve. JS advised that the main issue was that the Association had not started letting until August 2020 so there was quite a backlog in void properties, as well as a delay in the contractor mobilising on the void contract. JS advised that this was now starting to improve and that as long as there were no further lockdowns that stopped lettings, there would not be the same level of void losses going forward.																
11.4	The Board noted the COVID Impact Analysis as of 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021 and the progress on relaunch planning.																
<b>12.</b>	<b>CEO Report</b>																
12.1	BW introduced this item, beginning with the revised lettings targets. JS advised that Glasgow City Council had not been able to make enough homelessness referrals for the Association to meet the increased target. The targets were therefore being returned to the previous levels.																
12.2	<p>Board approved the revised lettings targets for 2021/22 as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="220 943 1054 1160"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="220 943 687 981">Percentage of lets to:</th> <th data-bbox="692 943 874 981">Original</th> <th data-bbox="879 943 1054 981">New</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 987 687 1025">Section 5 referrals</td> <td data-bbox="692 987 874 1025">48%</td> <td data-bbox="879 987 1054 1025">45%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1032 687 1070">Waiting list</td> <td data-bbox="692 1032 874 1070">27%</td> <td data-bbox="879 1032 1054 1070">30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1077 687 1115">Transfer need</td> <td data-bbox="692 1077 874 1115">18%</td> <td data-bbox="879 1077 1054 1115">18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="220 1122 687 1160">Transfer aspiration</td> <td data-bbox="692 1122 874 1160">7%</td> <td data-bbox="879 1122 1054 1160">7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Percentage of lets to:	Original	New	Section 5 referrals	48%	45%	Waiting list	27%	30%	Transfer need	18%	18%	Transfer aspiration	7%	7%	
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12.3	<i>Removed as confidential.</i>																
12.4	<p>Board then retrospectively approved the amended write off totals in respect of former tenant arrears, recharges and the period for the write offs and write backs as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The write off of £67,583.79 in respect of former tenant arrear debts for the period 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021.</li> <li>▪ The write off of £14,078.12 in respect of rechargeable repairs</li> <li>▪ The write off of £1,194.85 of factoring debt which was no longer recoverable</li> <li>▪ The write off of £923.98 of sequestered debt.</li> <li>▪ The write off of £5,450.00 of historic debt from the Ruchill Furniture Project</li> <li>▪ The write back of £2661.58 of arrears previously written off.</li> </ul>	BW															
12.5	PI asked about the list of notifiable events, asking if the event relating to the governance review could now be closed. BW advised that this should now be possible as the Company Secretary action was the last change to be approved.																
12.6	PI referred to the Housing to 2040 report, noting that the main concern would be the cost to tenants in relation to changes to heating systems. PI noted that there were a lot of positive elements to the report but that it would all be dependent on the funding and support available to social landlords.																

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12.7	TH noted that it seemed like development costs would increase as there was a need to build larger houses, asking if there was any indication that Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding would increase. AM advised that there was an indication that it will increase because of this and because regulations were changing, and this would also increase the cost of new development.	LC
12.8	TH noted that another part of the Housing to 2040 report was the potential expansion of the role of housing associations in relation to welfare rights and other areas. BW advised that she had wondered whether this would be in more isolated areas, rather than in cities like Glasgow where there are a range of other networks and services available.	
12.9	TH noted that it was positive to see the Association was ahead of the game in terms of providing internet for tenants. PI agreed that this was positive, particularly as it was backed by digital inclusion support for customers.	
12.10	TH suggested that the Housing to 2040 Strategy might be a useful area for discussion at a future away day. BW agreed that this could be investigated, and that maybe bringing in a guest speaker to talk about it would be beneficial.	
12.11	BW referred to item 1.10 in the cover report, asking any Board members who wanted to be involved in the development of the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy to let officers know.	
12.12	BW advised that RP has suggested Board could have an in-person meeting for an outdoor coffee and walk around some of the Association's developments. LF agreed that this would be useful and that groups should involve a mix of old and new Board members. It was agreed that this would be taken forward and that evenings would be preferred.	BW
12.13	It was noted that Betty Smith was stepping down from her Ambassador role. Board agreed that a note should be sent to Betty thanking her for her work on the Board, along with some flowers.	
12.14	<i>Removed as confidential.</i>	
12.15	BW advised that Glasgow City Council were proposing to close Maryhill Library, asking if Board wanted officers to be involved in the campaign to save it. LF expressed concern about the amount of library and other services currently provided from the library, and where these might be relocated. PI agreed that there was a wider impact on the community and that it was important for the Association to retain an interest in the decision and to reflect that to the council.	LC
12.16	JL confirmed that the library was a very useful facility for Citizens Advice Bureau customers as council staff based themselves in the library at certain times to be more accessible to local people. The facilities were also used by a lot of people for applying for work.	

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12.17	<p>The Board agreed that BW should write to the council to express the Association's views on the closure of the library, including concern about the impact on the community and the need for assurance that the range of services currently provided be continued elsewhere. The link to the Association's objectives should be emphasised, and the fact that the building was used for a lot more than borrowing books, especially for job applications and advice and support services.</p>	
12.18	<p>BW should also request that the Association be kept informed of future plans for the building and its services.</p> <p><i>Removed as confidential.</i></p>	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Meeting Review</b>	
13.1	<p>Board members reviewed the meeting and were generally very happy with how the meeting went and that the small amendments being proposed by Board had been accepted by staff.</p>	
13.2	<p>Board members discussed the problems at the previous meeting in terms of volume of papers and agreed this was improved for the April meeting. It was also recognised that the April meeting was more manageable as the items of business seemed less heavy.</p>	
13.3	<p>VW enjoyed her first meeting observing and noted that papers presented by staff were thorough.</p>	