



## MARYHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

### MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 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)	✓	
Paul Imrie (PI)	✓	
Richard Turnock (RT)	✓	
Tim Holmes (TH)	✓	
Valerie Wilson (VW)	✓	

<i>Najah Plakaris (NP)</i>	<i>Leave of absence</i>
<i>Raphael Rickson (RR)</i>	<i>Leave of absence</i>

Officers	Items
Bryony Willett (BW)	1-16
Jennifer Simon (JS)	1-16
Rebecca Wilson (RW)	1-16
Lesley Carnegie (LC)	1-16
Observer	
Freya Lees (North Star)	All

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<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
1.1	RP welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies and no declarations of interest.	
1.2	RP noted that Freya Lees from North Star consulting would be observing the meeting as part of the ongoing governance review.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Approval of previous Board Minutes</b>	
2.1	Board approved the minutes from their meeting on 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2021.	
<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 provided an update on activities he had been involved in since the previous Board meeting. These included carrying out the first CEO 1-1 using the new performance framework recently approved by Board. RP noted that the new framework had worked well. LF agreed that the new format was very effective	

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4.2	and useful. BW noted that with the framework requiring an assessment of all areas of work this had widened what was covered during the meeting, which was good.	
4.3	RP had also been involved in reviewing and approving the Customer Survey covering letter, as this would be written from the Chair.	
4.4	There had also been a Board walkabout, which was a successful way of Board members meeting one another while still following covid restrictions, and also seeing some of the Association's properties and new projects. The event had been popular and would be repeated.	
4.4	PI and CO joined the meeting during this item.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Feedback from Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b>	
5.1	RT provided an update on the Committee meeting held on 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021. The agenda included the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy, which Committee had considered in detail and approved for presenting to Board tonight.	Board members
5.2	An internal audit report on Business Continuity was presented, where a rating of Substantial assurance had been achieved. The auditor had confirmed that the Association was well ahead of the curve in this area.	
5.3	Committee also reviewed the Internal Audit Annual Report, noting that Arrears Management had been the one area where a Weak rating was received. Committee also reviewed progress against the actions to address the recommendations.	
5.4	The draft management accounts for the year to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 were presented to the Committee. These were pre-year end accounts that were also due to be considered by Board tonight.	
5.5	Finally, there had been the standing items of risk, governance registers and third line of defence reviews.	
5.6	RT noted that CM had joined the Committee meeting, although quorum had been made. This highlighted an issue with there being a shortage of Audit & Risk Committee members and RT suggested that it would be good to consider recruitment of additional core members for this Committee. It was agreed that any Board members interested in this should contact LC.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Feedback from Board training / conferences</b>	
6.1	RP noted that Board training on Maryhill Housing's partners and strategic relationships had been provided internally on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June. Board members agreed that this training had been very useful, giving more information on different work the Association is involved with and all the different partner organisations and other stakeholders.	

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6.2	RP noted that Board training on the budget had been provided internally on the 17 <sup>th</sup> June. Board members agreed that this had been a helpful session going through the budget and accounts step by step.	
6.3	RP advised that new Board member training on effective questioning had been provided jointly with Board members from other housing associations on the 21 <sup>st</sup> June. Those who had attended agreed that it had been very useful. It was particularly good to hear that other new Board members also worry about asking the right question in the right way. It was reassuring that it takes a while to fully understand everything. A second session was to be held in July for other new Board members to attend.	
6.4	LF had attended SHARE courses on Chairing Skills and Office Bearers as Ambassadors for the Association. LF advised that these were very different sessions but that both had been interesting and useful. It was also good to meet board members from other organisations.	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Bulk uplift pilot and future of the service</b>	
7.1	RW introduced this item noting that Board consideration and approval was required for any new activity carried out by the Association. Fundamentally the bulk uplift service that had been being piloted was Maryhill Housing stepping in to fill a gap from Glasgow City Council (GCC).	
7.2	RW noted that it was proposed that the ongoing service would only be provided for flatted properties. A complaint had been received about the Association not carrying out bulk uplifts for main doors, which is only done in exceptional circumstances due to resource restrictions. RW proposed that wider provision of the service could be considered by the Board at a future away day but that this paper was for flats only. RW confirmed that contingency had been built into the business plan and that the proposed service could be provided within this. RW noted that the difficulty would come if GCC started charging for bulk waste disposal as this could cost around £90k each year and this is not allowed for in the budget or business plan.	
7.3	RT asked if there were economies of scale to be achieved by joint procurement with other local housing associations. JS advised that most associations had an interim arrangement set up with their existing caretaking teams providing the service. However, if the service was to be more long term this could be revisited to see if any other associations would like to do something jointly.	
7.4	TH posed the questions of whether Maryhill Housing should be covering cuts to council services. TH noted that tenants were paying their council tax and would also eventually have to pay increased rents if the service continued, and costs increased. It was also important to consider what would happen if GCC cut other services. TH also noted that if a tipping charge was introduced and the Association's uplift service had to stop, this would be seen as a Maryhill Housing cut, rather than the council.	
7.5	PI agreed that this was a very difficult situation, and that there were reputational risks no matter what was decided. PI noted that the Maryhill area was only clean	

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	at the moment because associations had stepped in, and that if the service was not continued this would be bad for the area.	
7.6	JC agreed that the pilot service had made a huge difference to the area, but that it was very worrying that the council was stepping away from such core services. JC suggested that it would be good to lobby GCC in some way.	
7.7	IM asked if the service included the high flats. BW confirmed that the high flats were included, and that even if the bulk uplift service was not continued in full the high flats would be covered as part of the Neighbourhood Team/concierge service.	
7.8	CM noted that fly tipping was already bad in the area and that the removal of this service could only make this worse.	
7.9	TH suggested that the service could be continued while it was affordable, but that Maryhill Housing should try to get together with other associations to lobby GCC and advise that the service would not be affordable if they introduce tipping charges.	
7.10	VW agreed with the points raised, and noted the reputational risk involved, as well as the safety risk for residents. VW asked if the Association could investigate factored owners taking a share of some of the costs. RW advised that factored owners pay for a pull-out service but not for the additional cost of disposing of the waste. This is currently not in the schedule of service and legal advice is that it cannot be added unless there is 100% agreement. However, rents cannot subsidise owners, so if this was happening then the management fee would need to be revisited.	
7.11	JC asked if there would be a way of knowing which owners live in their flats and which ones are renting out their properties, with a view to charging the latter more. RW advised that the legal position would need to be checked. JS advised that this would probably not be possible but that this could be checked with the solicitors.	RW
7.12	RP noted that the general consensus was that the service is essential, but that there was real concern about taking on services from the council, especially if a disposal charge was introduced and the Association then had to terminate the service. Board members agreed with this summation.	
7.13	Board approved the Association undertaking the new service of delivering a bulk uplift service to customers in flat properties for an initial period running from 1 <sup>st</sup> August 2021 for up to one year, but with the proviso that in the event the council introduce waste disposal charges that continuation of the service would be reassessed at that point. Board requested that communication be very clear, and that this is badged as a council service being taken over only while it remains affordable to do so.	BW/JS
7.14	Board also requested that officers engage with other local housing associations and with local elected members to lobby GCC over the issue of potential future charges.	BW

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7.15	Board delegated authority to the Chief Executive to select the delivery method of either in-house provision or appointing a contractor, depending on which offered best value once the tenders for external provision were received in mid-July.	
7.16	Board noted that the council had also stopped their assisted garden scheme but that as this affects over 200 Maryhill Housing properties the Association did not currently have the capacity to step in to respond.	
7.17	Board noted that if there was to be consideration of replacing provision of any further reductions to council services this would need to include consideration of charging customers. Board agreed that it would be good to think through some underlying principles on what services may be consider essential. It was agreed that this would be given further consideration at a future away day.	BW/RW
<b>8.</b>	<b>Gas servicing and voids contract</b>	
	<i>Removed as commercially sensitive.</i>	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Treasury Management Strategy and Policy</b>	
9.1	RP noted that these documents had already been considered in detail at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting, and that these were critical documents due to the level of borrowing by the Association. RP also noted there was considerable comfort provided for Board by the external advice from DTP.	
9.2	Board then approved the Treasury Management Strategy 2021 and the amendments to the Treasury Management Policy.	
9.3	Board also approved amendments to the Development Gateway schedule.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>GDPR policies</b>	
10.1	LC introduced this item noting that it was now three years since the introduction of the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) so the original policies were now due to be reviewed. Due to Brexit some terminology also had to be changed, to reflect the change to the new UK GDPR. LC advised that the existing Privacy Policy for customers was being updated and a new Data Protection Policy for staff introduced. The Data Protection Policy set out what was expected from staff in relation to their processing of personal data. It was proposed that this would be a core policy that all staff need to sign off as part of induction, to confirm their understanding.	
10.2	TH had emailed LC in advance to ask if email address should be added to the list of information collected from tenants on page 2 of the Privacy Policy. LC confirmed that this had been an oversight and that this would be added to the final version before publishing.	LC
10.3	Board approved the revised Privacy Policy and the new Data Protection Policy.	

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<b>11.</b>	<b>2020/2021 staff survey results</b>	
	<i>Removed as confidential.</i>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Health and safety quarterly report</b>	
12.1	BW introduced this item, noting that the areas of material non-compliance were asbestos, water management and electrical safety. BW confirmed that all actions to address this non-compliance would be reported quarterly to Audit & Risk Committee as part of the overall audit action tracker.	BW
12.2	IM asked for details of what should be happening during the current water safety checks in the high flats. BW agreed to pick this up with IM outside of the Board meeting.	
12.3	RT asked what health and safety resource there was within the Association. BW advised that organisational health and safety fell to the Corporate Support Team, while the Director of Operations and Head of Property were responsible for landlord health and safety. BW advised that there was no single post holder within the Property Team with responsibility for health and safety but that in practice a lot fell to the Property Manager, who manages most of the cyclical and health and safety contracts.	
12.4	RT asked if officers were confident that the right level of resource was in place, with the correct level of training and accreditation for both senior and operational staff. BW confirmed that this had previously been raised at Board and that a detailed review of training requirements on the landlord side had since been carried out. The appropriate level of training for each post had been identified as part of that review, and training was now being booked. BW confirmed that this included senior managers, including the CEO and Directors. RT agreed that this would be useful in ensuring senior management appreciated the serious accountability and possible repercussions involved in this area.	
12.5	Board then noted the Health and Safety Assurance report and the Health and Safety Action Plan.	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Risk quarterly report</b>	
13.1	Board noted the extract of the highest ranked strategic risks as discussed in detail at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>Financial management quarterly report</b>	
14.1	RW noted that again this report had already been considered in detail at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting. RW also advised that this was the draft position and that the Finance Team would do a reconciliation for any differences between this and the final audited accounts.	
14.2	Board noted the draft financial results for the year to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021.	

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<b>15.</b>	<b>CEO report</b>	
15.1	BW introduced this item, which was a standard report for noting only.	
15.2	JS provided an update on the section of the report relating to the current eviction ban. JS confirmed that of the eight decrees noted in the report four had now been recalled or desisted, leaving four pending eviction.	
15.3	JS also advised Board that there had been a recent announcement that there would be a grant fund available from the Scottish Government later in the year to assist with financial support for those in rent arrears. The full details were not known yet, but the Board would be kept updated as this developed.	
15.4	TH had emailed a question regarding the Grenfell response and whether the action relating to 6 monthly checks of flat front doors referred to multi storey properties only, or to residential properties regardless of height. JS advised that this action related to multi storey properties only. In other lower flats it would be more about a focus on maintaining equipment and keeping communal areas clear.	
15.5	Board noted the content of the CEO report.	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Governance report</b>	
16.1	RP introduced each of the recommendations contained within this report. First was the extension to the delegated authority to the Audit & Risk Committee in respect of the refixing decision on the £3.36m loan facility. RW explained that this was due to the Committee delaying any decision until further work was undertaken and a further report provided by officers. RW confirmed that there was no negative impact from delaying the refixing decision.	
16.2	Board approved the extension of the delegated authority to the Committee in respect of the refixing decision on the loan facility.	
16.3	Board then approved the five year financial plan submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.	
16.4	Board also approved the amended Audit & Risk Committee remit presented as an appendix to the report.	
16.5	RP noted the section of the report relating to Board recruitment, noting that ongoing recruitment would now take place to look for additional tenant members. Board members were asked to let officers know if they knew of any tenants who might be interested.	
16.6	RP noted the results of the in-person meeting survey. The preference was for virtual meetings to continue via Teams at the moment. The July away day would also be deferred to a point where it was possible to meet in person. However, the recent walkabout was popular so the aim would be to do something similar on a Saturday morning in the near future.	

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16.7	RP noted that this year's Board reviews would take place in August with support from Freya Lees and North Star.	
16.8	RP also noted that the BoardPacks contract was no longer supported and as such a move to replace this software with Teams would be taking place. LC and the ICT manager would contact Board members to take them through this change.	
16.9	BW then announced that LC would be leaving the organisation in August and that plans for the post would be confirmed soon. Board noted their appreciation of LC's support and contribution over the years and wished her well in her new job.	
16.10	All officers left the meeting at this point.	
<b>17.</b>	<b>Meeting review</b>	
17.1	BW had asked Board members to discuss and provide feedback on the three papers included in this meeting's agenda that were for noting only. Board agreed that presenting these as three separate papers, instead of grouping within one cover paper, made it easier to consider each in turn.	
17.2	It was agreed that the discussion on the bulk uplift service had raised some important strategic issues about the Board's willingness to take on services previously provided by the council.	
17.3	Board discussed the feasibility of moving to in-person meetings or a hybrid whereby people could participate remotely if preferred. Some Board members with experience of hybrid meetings felt that they were challenging and could be difficult for remote participants. It was agreed that much would depend on the IT system in use.	
17.4	Several Board members indicated that they had not been receiving emails and had therefore missed events. There appeared to have been a change in the routing of emails and that people were not receiving messages delivered to their Maryhill Housing email address. This would be fed back to LC for investigation and correcting.	LC