

Minute of Langstane Housing Association’s virtual Board of Management Meeting held at 680 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 1SL on 14 December 2023 at 12.30pm

Meeting start time	12:46pm	Meeting end time	1.44pm
---------------------------	---------	-------------------------	--------

Present	Members - in person	Members - remote attendance
		J Knowles, vice chair
	T Dinozzi	S Gray
		D MacLeod
		A Stevenson
In Attendance	In Person	Remote Attendance
	H Gauld, chief executive	
	M Ballance, director of property	
	J Sutherland, director of housing	
	H Lawson, team leader - executive office (minute taker)	

Apologies	
	D Bain
	J Drummond
	I Jamieson
	M Martin, chair
	G Urquhart
	M Macarthur, director of finance and corporate services

Not present / No apologies	
	A Habib

1. Chief Executive Statement

The chief executive confirmed there was nothing on the meeting’s agenda that knowingly contravenes the rules, regulations and regulatory requirements of the Association.

2. Apologies / Absence

The apologies noted above were intimated to the Board.

3. Declaration(s) of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Draft Minute – Board of Management – 19 October 2023

Decision: The Minute of the previous meeting was approved as an accurate record.

4.1 Matters Arising

4.1.1 – 5.1. Pay negotiations – **restricted item**

5. Draft Minute – Board Away Day – 9 November 2023

Action: Update page 5, paragraph 3 for accuracy. Regarding a section 75 agreement J Fraser wished to clarify the Association should not be stuck with the lower standards of developers and ahead of entering a section 75 agreement, the Association could increase specification.

Action: Update page 5, paragraph 9 – Quantity Surveyor instead of Quality Surveyor.

Decision: Upon the aforementioned amendments, the Minute of the previous meeting was approved as an accurate record.

5.1 Matters Arising

5.1.1 – 4. Draft Asset Management Strategy

A Stevenson queried the timeline for the consideration of additional resource in order to carry out the key objectives. The CEO confirmed this would be considered by People Committee as of January 2024.

6. Statement of Outstanding Business

The CEO confirmed the leadership team are aiming to tailor all items on the statement, to come together at the same time. The rent level update report will feed into the business plan, which will sit next to the asset management strategy. There is a need to review the development strategy and policy and these are both programmed for later in 2024.

Decision: The Board reviewed and noted the Statement of Outstanding Business.

7. Financial Information

7.1 Financial Report to 30 November

The Financial Report to 30 November is currently with the leadership team and due to timings this has not been turned around in time for presentation to the board of management.

The CEO reported the levelling-off of repairs spend and noted the ongoing challenges in being able to pull data from the new integrated finance and housing system.

The CEO confirmed to board that things are tight regarding covenants, in particular the interest covenant. Full reports will be circulated to the board, via the AdminControl portal, as soon as possible.

The covenant reports are updated quarterly and a true reflection of the position will be available by the end of December 2023.

The CEO confirmed the regulator is not required to be notified unless there has been, or there is a strong possibility there is, a breach of covenants.

The CEO confirmed Mandy Macarthur, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, is looking into the possibility of easing the covenants on the loan agreement.

A Stevenson asked for clarification regarding the retirement benefit deficit contribution scheme for 2024. The CEO confirmed there were no current deficit payments due and it is not expected that any future claims would affect the 2025-26 budget as normally notification is given 1-year in advance of any monies due.

D Macleod asked how much stock is loan ready and whether it was onerous in terms of net zero. The director of property confirmed phase one related to 787 unencumbered properties. The team are currently working through the unencumbered stock and have finalised documentation required by the banks including building warrants and title deeds. The solicitors have not confirmed there is a requirement to provide documentation in relation to net zero, instead the team have collated the energy certificates for each property. The same work will be carried out for encumbered stock released from a loan in January 2023 so they are ready. This will be phase 2.

The director confirmed banks are currently looking at environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategies. The Association has an ESG strategy in place and the banks are to look at these in a holistic manner to assess how Langstane tackles environmental issues. If the Association meets the targets set out in the strategy over a period of time they may be in a position to reduce interest rates. The director confirmed there has been no request made by legal teams to collate specific information with regards to the ESG strategy.

Decision: The board noted the Financial Report to 30 November update.

7.2 Budget 2024-2025: – restricted item

7.2.1 Rent Affordability and Consultation

7.2.2 Langstane Housing Association Limited Budget 2024-25 – restricted item

7.3 Detailed mid-year financial review

J Fraser highlighted the date noted on the bottom of the update report was 2022, not 2023.

Decision: The board noted the update on the mid-year financial position and outturn to 31 March 2024.

8. Chief Executive Update

8.1 The Board noted the CEO's report which covered updates on the following:

- Scottish Housing Regulator's consultation's on regulation – due to close 15 December 2023
- Scottish Government's update on revised EESSH2 guidance – now known as the Social Housing Net Zero Standard in Scotland (SHNZS)
- Homewards information – the Royal Foundation
- Unite – pay negotiations update
- Register of Members update
- Items referred from Performance Committee
- Decision making at Performance Committee (ratified by Board), and
- New Housing Bill.

Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR / the Regulator) Consultation

In response to J Fraser, the CEO confirmed there is currently no independent process available to housing associations (and other social landlords) to appeal the SHR's decisions. There followed detailed discussions regarding

this and members noted the position with other regulatory bodies – who do have an independent process built into their processes.

Decision: The board support and approve the CEOs response to the SHR consultation on the way in which the Scottish Housing Regulator regulates the social housing sector in Scotland. Decision: The board noted the chief executive's update report and ratified the decisions made at Committee.

9. Langstane Housing Support – Annual report

The annual report had previously been presented to the performance committee who asked that it be brought to the board for their information. The report sets out the important work done by the Langstane housing support team.

In response to D Macleod, the director of housing acknowledged work is to be done in order to promote the good news stories included within the annual report, whilst remaining conscious of the sensitivities around each case. Work will be carried out in 2024 to fully promote all partnership working and highlighting positive tenant stories.

The vice-chair, supported by the board, acknowledged the work carried out by the team and the impact on vulnerable tenants.

10. Calendars

10.1 Draft annual planning calendar 2024

Decision: The board noted the draft annual planning calendar for 2024.

10.2 Draft meeting schedule 2024

Decision: The board approved the meeting schedule 2024.

Action: H Lawson will add all board and committee meetings to the diary followed by the final schedule being circulated to all members.

11. Corporate document

11.1 Annual policy review timetable

Decision: The board noted the policy review timetable for 2024.

12. Minutes (Available to view)

The board considered and approved the draft minutes which had been available to view in the portal and listed below as item 12.1.

12.1 Draft minute – performance committee – 7 November 2023.

13. AOCB

There were no items for discussion under agenda item 13.

14. Governing Body Annual Reviews

The governing body annual reviews will be added to calendar once the chair has advised of their availability. To be actioned early in January 2024.

15. Human Rights Presentation

The director of housing sought to bring the new Scottish Parliament Human Rights bill to the attention of the board.

A Stevenson acknowledged the presentation stating it had been useful to understand the proposed bill which may or not go ahead.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 8 February 2024.