

MINUTES OF MEETING NO.643
QUEENS CROSS HOUSING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
HELD ON TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2020 AT 5.00 P.M. VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE

Andrew Burns, Marilyn Clewes, Ian Elrick, Margaret Glass, Sadie Gordon, David Horner, John McIntyre, Anne Ramsey, Robert Takenzire, Bronwyn Wyper.

Shona Stephen (Chief Executive), Neil Manley (Director of Finance and Corporate Support), Louise Smith (Director of Housing and Housing Support) Elizabeth Hood (Depute Director), John Boyle (Head of Property Services), Fiona Smith (Executive Office Manager) and Adele Drennan (Governance Officer).

ACTION

1. Welcome and Apologies

Marilyn welcomed everyone to Board Meeting 643 and handed over to Shona Stephen, Chief Executive to chair the meeting.

Apologies received from Donalda Hogg (Head of Business Services) and Rona Anderson (Director of Property, Enterprise and Regeneration).

Board members had been invited to submit questions in advance of this meeting and these have been recorded and responded to and circulated to all members. This information can be found in Appendix 1 of this minute. It was agreed that response to the governance questions raised was satisfactory and there were no further questions.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no new declarations.

3. Allocations Policy

3.1 The purpose of this Report was for the Board to note progress of the Allocation Policy Review and to give approval to carry out a full consultation exercise.

3.2 In April 2019 Board members received a presentation on the implications of the Housing Act 2014 in relation to allocations and tenancy rights. A separate presentation outlined matters for consideration in relation to a Glasgow wide Common Housing Register (CHR) and Choice Based Lettings systems (CBL).

It was noted that there was an opportunity to revise the Allocations policy and to give further consideration to the opportunities to join city wide Common Housing Register and to introduce a Choice Based Lettings system.

3.3 Following discussion, the Board:

- a) Agreed the proposed changes to the Allocation policy in principle and subject to consultation.
- b) Agreed that a comprehensive programme of consultation in relation to changes to the allocation policy is carried out in line with legal and regulatory requirements.
- c) Agreed that a consultation is carried out simultaneously on the potential for moving to Choice Based Lettings in line with legal and regulatory requirements.
- d) Noted that there is an anticipated capital cost of £50k to invest in the software that would allow us to move to Choice Based Letting.
- e) Noted that limited progress has been made on a city wide Common Housing Register. The Board and senior staff were disappointed with lack of progress and agreed that a common approach would be of benefit to tenants.

Elizabeth

- f) Noted that the proposed consultation will be carried out over the summer with a view to an amended policy being brought to the Board in October 2020 and that a full programme of consultation activities is set out in Appendix 1 of the Report.
- g) Noted that consultation and implementation of a new Allocations Policy will be accommodated within existing resources and budgets.

4. 2020/21 Lettings Plan

- 4.1 The purpose of this Report was for the Board to approve the Lettings Plan for 2020/21 and note the outcomes of the Letting Plan for 2019/20. The Lettings Plan is reviewed annually to allow us to forecast how our future empty properties should be allocated. Targets are set targets for each letting category to ensure that there are fair opportunities for all applicants.
- 4.2 After discussion, The Board:
 - a) Approved the Lettings Plan for 2020/21
 - b) Noted the Lettings Plan outcomes for 2019/20
 - c) Noted that the Letting Plan for 2020/21 is applicable from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

5. 2020-25 Business Plan

- 5.1 The Chief Executive delivered a virtual presentation on the progress of the 2020-2025 Business Plan and which has been delayed by approximately a month as a result of responding to the COVID -19 outbreak . The Board agreed that Covid-19 will have an impact on the 2020-2025 Business Plan and how we deliver services over the next 5 years.
- 5.2 After discussion, the Board:
 - a) Agreed the direction of travel for the 2020-25 Business Plan.
 - b) Agreed with the unified branding for the QC Group.
 - c) Noted that there will be changes to how we facilitate our Board Business Planning event currently scheduled for 19 June 2020.

6. Review of QC Group Governance Regulations

- 6.1 The purpose of this Report was for the Board to approve the revised Governance Regulations being presented (Appendices 1-8 within the Report), including the financial and non-financial delegations for the QC Group.
- 6.2 These are the third in a series of reports to present changes to the Housing Association's Governance Regulations to establish Governance Regulations that can be applied consistently across the QC Group. The review has been carried out with due regard to;
 - SHR Group Structures and Constitutional Partnerships Statutory Guidance (February 2019).
 - SFHA self-assessment of SHR Regulatory Standards.
 - Existing Workspace, Factoring and Garscube governance and regulatory documents.
- 6.3 It was also confirmed that in relation to Appendix 8, the following Policies should (and have been) approved at Board level and the schedule will be updated to reflect this:
 - Hate Crime and Racial Harassment
 - Rent Arrears
 - Rent and Service Charge setting
 - Reactive Repairs

- Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing policy

ACTION

- 6.4 After discussion, the Board:
- Approved the reviewed Section 3 (Summary of Control Arrangements) and Section 4 (Subsidiary roles and responsibilities) of the Group Governance Regulations.
 - Approved the reviewed Section 9 (Urgency Procedures) of the Group Governance Regulations.
 - Approved the reviewed Section 10 (Delegated Authorities and Financial Instructions) of the Group Governance Regulations.
 - Approved the new Appendix 17 Group Authorising Framework of the Group Governance Regulations.
 - Approved the reviewed Appendix 18 of the Group Governance Regulations (Standing Financial Instructions).
 - Approved the reviewed Appendix 18a of the Group Governance Regulations to the Standing Financial Instructions Appendix A.
 - Approved the reviewed Appendix 18b of the Group Governance Regulations Scheme of Non-Financial Delegated Powers.
 - Approved the List of policies referred to in scheme of non- financial Delegated Powers Appendix 18b subject to the schedule being updated to reflect the policies that require to be approved by the Board (as noted above at 6.4).
 - Noted that a full set of the QC Group Governance Regulations will be presented to the Workspace, Factoring and Garscube Boards for review and adoption.

7. **Cedar Investment Programme - Due to commercial sensitivity, this report is not for publication.**

8. **Covid-19 Update**

- 8.1 The purpose of this Report was for the Board to discuss the content of the Report and agree the action taken by the Executive Team in relation to Covid-19. Management of the response of the Association from CV 19 risk and remains the highest priority and the Executive Team are meeting daily to assess and manage this risk. To date these include:
- Use of the Job Retention Scheme to mitigate impact of lost rent
 - Budget adjustments to account for assumed rent loss over the period
 - Communications strategy to ensure that tenants, elected members and wider public know what QCHA is doing to address the crisis and support its tenants.
 - Notifying SHR as required of changes to service delivery and providing information as requested.
 - Reviewing the Covid-19 – A Framework for Decision Making released by the Scottish Government.
- 8.2 The Board wished to note their thanks and appreciation for the staff continuing to provide vital services during these difficult times ensuring the safety and cleanliness of our properties and neighbourhoods and providing support for some of our most vulnerable tenants. There was a discussion about a number of new services have been developed to respond to Covid including an emergency fund with a donation from the Garscube Community Foundation and the re-launch of our Community Chest Fund.
- 8.3 The Board noted and agreed the current proposed response by the Executive Team.

9.0 Health and Safety

- 9.1 This is an opportunity to report on safety performance, funding requirements, safety failures and any other H&S related issues, to allow the board to give all such issues due consideration.
- 9.2 The Executive Office Manager advised that the safety of our tenants and staff during the Covid-19 crisis continues to be our main priority. We are keeping up with, and interpreting guidance as well as working closely with our Health and Safety Consultant, continually reviewing the Role Based Risk Assessments and providing advice for all staff whether they are working on the front line, working from home or on furlough.

To date, there have been no health and safety issues that require to be notified to SHR or HSE.

10. New Membership Applications

- 10.1 There were no new Membership Applications to be considered.

11. Audit Committee Meeting – 15 April

- 11.1 The Chair of the Audit Committee provided a verbal update following their meeting on 15 April.
- 11.2 The Board noted that:
- a) Noted that the robustness of the audit process and methodology will not be compromised as a result of the COVID-19 situation as technology can be applied to ensure that the audit can run effectively will continue to be carried out in the same rigorous way.
 - b) Approved the Expenses Policy.
 - c) Noted that the Internal Audit Report on Development achieved substantial assurance.
 - d) The full minute will be available on the portal.

12. Minute of Meetings 641 and 642

- 12.1 The Minutes of meeting 641 were agreed as an accurate account, proposed by Margaret Glass and seconded by David Horner.
- 12.2 The Minutes of meeting 642 were agreed as an accurate account, proposed by Anne Ramsey and seconded by Bronwyn Wyper.

13. Action Tracker

- 13.1 In relation to the review of the SFHA affiliation fee, the Board noted that the Chief Executive's meeting with Sally Thomas, Chief Executive of SFHA to discuss this had been postponed due to the coronavirus and will require to be re-arranged.

14. AOB

- 14.1 The Executive Office Manager informed the Board that she had participated in a SFHA Webinar along with Michael Cameron, Chief Executive of SHR. During the webinar, SHR advised that they may not be seeking submission of an Annual Assurance Statement this year and may alternatively request that landlords submit a Response Action Plan following the Covid-19 crisis.

SHR has advised that options for holding AGMs are currently being looked into and they also appear to be relaxed about RSLs holding an SGM to adopt the new model rules. Further information will be provided to the Board as and when this becomes available. The Board were also informed of our new Regulation Managers at SHR.

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The meeting concluded at 7.15pm.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 19 May 2020 at 6pm via Zoom video conference.

I certify that the above minute has been approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings:

Chair: Date: