

**MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 676**  
**QUEENS CROSS HOUSING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 6.00 P.M.**

Andrew Burns, Margaret Glass, Sadie Gordon, David Horner, Ian Elrick John McIntyre, Matthew Millar, Anne Ramsey, Bronwyn Wyper.,

Shona Stephen (Chief Executive), Neil Manley (Director of Finance & Corporate Support), Rona Anderson (Director of Property, Enterprise & Regeneration), Louise Smith (Director of Neighbourhood Services), Donalda Hogg (Head of Business Services), Fiona Smith (Executive Office Manager), Niall McKinnon (Head of Development – Item 4 only), Margaret Brannan (Business Strategy Manager – Item 9 only), Lynn Armstrong (Continuous Improvement Officer – Item 9 only), Alison McKay (Governance Advisor) minutes.

**ACTION**

**1.0 Housekeeping**

1.1 Noted.

**2.0 Welcome and Apologies**

2.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Elizabeth Hood (Depute Director of Neighbourhood Services).

The Board noted that this would be Rona's last Board meeting as Director of Property, Enterprise & Regeneration at Queens Cross Housing Association. Andrew thanked Rona on behalf of the board for all of her had work and support over the years and expressed gratitude for all that Rona had achieved during her time at Queens Cross and wished her all the best for the future.

**3.0 Declarations of Interest**

3.1 There were no new declarations.

**4.0 Acquisition of shops within the Garscube Tenements for approval.**

4.1 The purpose of this report was to invite the board to consider the acquisition of 9 commercial units on 639-675 Garscube Road from the Wheatley Group. Niall McKinnon, Head of Development, presented the report.

4.2 The board noted that the Housing Association acquired the tenement flats on Garscube Road from Glasgow Housing Association in 2011 however were unable to acquire the commercial units at this time due to unrealistic commercial valuations. The Wheatley Group have now confirmed the desire to sell these units to QCHA and indicated our valuation is acceptable. It was noted that the acquisition of these properties will provide the Association with control over the tenement blocks as it owns the majority of flats above the commercial units.

4.3 The board also noted that the proposal provides future development opportunities which can be considered for a joint approach between the Association and QC Workspace. The board was pleased to note the proposal to retain 3 of the commercial units including Lloyds Pharmacy to provide an area of service to the area.

4.4 The cost of this acquisition will be met by grant funding provided by Glasgow City Council however the Association may require carrying out some advanced works to make good the void units in the short-term.

- 4.5 After discussion the Board approved the acquisition of 9 commercial units at 639-675 Garscube Road from Wheatly Group at the valuation of £297,000. Individual valuations for each property were listed in section 5.1 of the report.

Niall left the meeting at 6.20pm

## 5.0 **Condensation, Mould & Dampness Review for Discussion**

- 5.1 The purpose of this report was to present the Board with the progress of an internal review process and invite members to consider improvements to the Association's current approach to the issue of Condensation, Mould and Dampness in QCHA properties. Rona Anderson, Director of Property, Enterprise & Regeneration presented the Condensation, Mould & Dampness report

- 5.2 Rona provided the board with some background information that had prompted a review at Queens Cross. There had been significant media coverage of the tragic death of a young child whom the coroner's report advised died of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home which was a home rented from a Housing Association in England. In December 2022, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) had written to all RSL's with an instruction to *"to consider the systems they have in place to ensure their tenants homes are not affected by mould and dampness and that they have appropriate, proactive systems to identify and deal with any reported cases of mound and damp timeously and effectively"*. Following review RSL's are required to report any concerns to the SHR.

Rona

- 5.3 The board noted that the analysis of the repairs data for the Associations for stock was carried out covering a 3 year period 2019 – 2022. This report showed that around 16% of our stock was impacted. This analysis highlighted the potential for under reporting where cases are ongoing, unresolved or inaccurate recording of the issue. Rona highlighted Appendix 1 where the map highlights the areas of our stock affected., including property types.

- 5.4 The board noted that an internal working group has been set up and is prioritising opportunities for preventative activities and have identified two new streams of preventative activity. The first of these is taking the opportunity when carrying out the 5 yearly electrical testing to do a "health check" on the property also. This would result in all of our properties being checked for risk factors of CMD being checked and any issues being flagged. Secondly at the Void stage, where CMD has been and issues previously, there will be the opportunity to undertake further investigations or disruptive works to ensure any issues are cleared before the property is relet.

There was some concern from the board that 5 yearly checks alone are not frequent enough. It was confirmed that this will only be one part of a number of checks. A robust awareness campaign will be put in place for all staff, but particularly those regularly in tenant's homes and existing and new contractors. Then everyone will be checking properties for any sign or damp or mould at all routine visits to any property and reporting these issues for action.

- 5.5 The review has also highlighted the need for a policy on how CMD should be reported and responded as the absence of written procedure could result in an inconsistent level of reporting and response. The intention is to create a culture change around the to create joined up approach with the Association working with tenants to educate and work together to eradicate CDM in our properties.

- 5.6 The board noted an error in section 5.1 of the report – **Financial Implications**. The cost of £70k to address CMD issues in our stock was for the period 2019-2022 and not the noted 2021-2022. It is anticipated that the reporting of CMD may increase

repairs costs in the short term however if we get on the front foot the costs will save money in the longer term.

- 5.7 The Board felt the working group was being proactive and was assured by this. There were a number of questions:

It noted that the Working Group is currently meeting monthly and an action plan will be developed it was agreed to bring an update to the Q4 performance meeting on 30 May.

Rona

## **6.0 Former Tenant Rent Arrears Write Off for approval**

- 6.1 The purpose of this report is to present the former tenant write off report for approval. Louise Smith, Director of Neighbourhood Services presented the report.

- 6.2 The report was for the period January – December 2022 as detailed in appendix 1 of the report. The Board noted that the write off value was 0.2% of the overall debt. The total former tenant debt is £91,441.00 with the write off amount requested being under the write off budget.

- 6.3 The Board approved to write off £33,084.65. The Board also noted thanks to all involved in reducing the debt which has fallen significantly since previous reports.

## **7.0 Gas Maintenance Procurement 2023-2027 for approval.**

- 7.1 The purpose of this report was to advise the Board that the mobilisation from the current Repairs and Maintenance contractor to the new contractor is taking place and to invite the Board to approve the tender received from Saltire Facilities Management Ltd for the Gas Servicing contract.

- 7.2 The Board noted that Saltire Facilities Management Ltd is a well-established national contractor with over 20 years' experience. The tender noted within this report highlighted Saltire Facilities Management Ltd scored the highest overall in terms of cost and quality.

- 7.3 After consideration the Board approved the appointment of Saltire Facilities Management for the Gas Safety tender 2023 – 2027 in the amount of £822,424.10

## **8.0 Q3 Performance 2022-2023 for discussion**

- 8.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Management with performance information for the third quarter of the financial year 2022-23. This report covers key areas of performance for Q3 and were applicable as of 31 December 2022:

- KPIs
- Complaints and Compliments
- Strategic Risk Register
- Management Accounts
- Hamiltonhill Progress Report

The board noted that there are 2 KPI's flagged as amber and 3 KPI's flagged as red and that an improvement in performance by the next quarter was unlikely. It was noted that there was currently no figure available for the Q3 Tenant Satisfaction with the repairs service as new consultants have been appointed and that only data on external contractors and not our own in house tradespersons had been shared. This will be corrected for Q4. The new survey targets will include tenants who have requested a job awaiting completion as well as those who have had jobs completed. The board noted that Donaldda had been appointed as the Depute Director and takes up the post tomorrow. She will be working closely with Shona and Rona to improve performance on repairs.

- 8.2 It was noted that there has been a higher level of staff sickness levels. This appears to also be an issue with other RSL sector and not only at Queens Cross. A monthly audit of sickness absences has been introduced to identify support is provided to ensure absence procedures are dealt with appropriately.
- 8.3 Neil presented the Q3 Management Accounts and reported a £1,989,191 surplus against year-to-date budgeted forecast surplus of £1,597,343 this is a £391,848 favourable variance to the budget target. It was noted that technical services section of is showing an adverse variance of £526k, £3.96m spend against a non-pay budget of £3.43m for the relevant repairs and maintenance budgets (R&M) budgets. The Board asked if there is a concern that next year's proposed budget for voids may not be sufficient if this increase continues and the response was that the budget has been increased overall however there are still some questions on spend which is important to look at before finalising the budget for next year. The spend on bulk uplift is over budget and is an area for close control next year. The 2023/24 budget will be brought to the March meeting for discussion and approval.
- 8.4 Rona presented the report on Hamiltonhill Project Progress it was noted that the phase one contract signing date should be 24<sup>th</sup> March and not 23<sup>rd</sup> March as set out in the report. The board noted the risk summary on page 5 of the report and that Scottish Water have advised they are not prepared to allow the drainage for the parks to be directed into the existing sewers until the full SuDS system is linked to the canal, which will not be until Phase 2 of the housing. This will then require a separate, stand-alone drainage system to be installed, at a cost of £274k. The Housing Association is still negotiating with Scottish Water to find an alternative solution which will not involve this cost being incurred, or at least not in full.
- 8.5 It was noted that a successful application was made to Glasgow City Council for advanced grant funding with an offer being made of £429,364. £224,000 would be repaid back to GCC once contribution payments have been received from Urban Union.
- 9.0 Reviewing and Demonstrating Compliance with the SHR Regulatory Standards – HA Membership – For Discussion.**
- 9.1 The Board members had agreed to explore the current membership of Queens Cross Housing Association (QCHA) as part of its agreed approach to reviewing and demonstrating compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) Regulatory Standards .In preparation for this discussion, Board members had been provided with three documents: QCHA's Membership Policy (Appendix 1); QCHA's Membership Form & Rules (Appendix 2); QCHA Board Recruitment Research Report (Appendix 3). Margaret Brannan, Business Strategy Manager and Lynn Armstrong, Continuous Improvement Officer, facilitated the session.
- 9.2 At the discussion session, Board members were invited to consider and discussed the following questions:
1. Given that the Association is compliant with regulatory standards, what are we planning to do about the falling membership and why?
  2. What do Board membership think of their own QCHA membership?
  3. Who, if anyone, would we want to target for membership? e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, location.
  4. What should we be saying to any target audience?
  5. How will they be reached?
- 9.3 Although there had been a full discussion there was no final decision on a way forward. It was agreed that a summary of the discussion would be prepared and circulated and recommendations on a way forward presented to the board for consideration.

**Margaret**

**10.0 Health and Safety**

10.1 There were no Health and Safety issues or items to report.

**11.0 New Membership Applications**

11.1 There were no new membership applications to approve.

**12.0 Minute of Previous Meeting**

12.1 The minutes of the meeting 675 were reviewed for accuracy and matters arising.

12.2 Page 6 – a replacement minute for item 15.0 was provided by Shona Stephen, Chief Executive. This item noted the resignation of the Director of Property, Enterprise and Regeneration and acknowledged the contribution made to the success of the QC Group since her appointment.

12.3 John McIntyre provided a summary of the audit committee that had taken place on 9 February and the Board approved the recommendation that Matt Millar be appointed to the Audit Committee.

**13.0 Action Tracker**

13.1 It was agreed to add an update from the Condensation, Mould and Damp Working Group in 3 months. It was agreed to add an update against the action to report to the board on Mid-Market Rents.

**Donalda**

**14.0 AOB**

14.1 The Board approved changing the date of the AGM from 11<sup>th</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> September.

14.2 The Board were advised of the appointment of Donalda Hogg as Depute Director of Property, Placemaking and Community Enterprise. The Board congratulated Donalda on her new post.

14.4 The Board noted thanks to Rona for all her hard work and support to the QC Group Boards and in particular the Association Board during her appointment at Queens Cross.

**15.0 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 March at 6.00pm

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

Chair: ..... Date: .....