***MINUTES OF MEETING NO.691***

***QUEENS CROSS HOUSING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGEMENT***

***HELD ON 27 AUGUST 2024 AT 6.00 P.M.***

Andrew Burns, Chibuzo Ehieze, Ian Elrick, Margaret Glass, Sadie Gordon, David Horner, John McIntyre, Matt Millar, Anne Ramsey, Bronwyn Wyper

Other: John Dunn - Observer

Heather Anderson (Director of Neighbourhood Services), Donalda Hogg (Depute Director), Elizabeth Hood (Depute Director), Neil Manley (Director of Finance & Corporate Services), Alison McKay (Governance Advisor) – Minutes, Fiona Smith (Head of Customer First), Shona Stephen (Chief Executive Officer)

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|  |  | ACTION |
| **1.0** | Housekeeping |  |
| 1.1 | Housekeeping noted.  |  |
| **2.0** | Welcome and Apologies  |  |
| 2.1 | Andrew Burns, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Board Members noted John Dunn in attendance as an observer. Apologies were noted from Phil Daws, Director of Property and Placemaking. Prior to the meeting a Board Member application from Chibuzo Ehieze who observed the last meeting in May was circulated. There were no objections to this application and Chibuzo was co-opted to the Board until the AGM on 9 September where he will stand for election for a fixed term of 1 year.  |  |
| **3.0** | Declarations of Interest  |  |
| 3.1 | None  |  |
| **4.0** | Q1 performance reports |  |
| 4.1 | **KPI’S**The purpose of this report was to provide the Board of Management with performance information for the first quarter of the financial year 2023-24 This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Services.  |  |
| 4.1.1 | The Board noted the report covers key areas of performance for Q1 as of 30 June 2024. Section 2 of the report details the current performance against KPI’s for 24/25 with the key areas detailed in red and amber. The Board noted some improvement for absence and emergency repairs in Q1. Neil highlighted the traffic light analysis within the KPI performance and the overview report which provided a narrative on any KPI’s not met within the quarter.  |  |
| 4.2 | **Complaints and Compliments** The purpose of this report is to provide the Q1 Complaints and Compliments Report for the Board of Management for the period 01 April – 30 June 2024. The complaints process meets the requirements set by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and Scottish Housing Regulator requirements. This report was presented by Elizabeth Hood, Depute Director.  |  |
| 4.2.1 | Improvement was noted across all areas. Complaints are showing improvement due to the good work and investment in the management of the new repairs contract. Heather Anderson, Director of Neighbourhood Services advised the Board that training has been carried out for all front facing staff and internally a learning from complaints working group is now meeting regularly to monitor and review complaints to improve our services.  |  |
| 4.3 | **Strategic Risk Register** |  |
| 4.3.1 | Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support advised the Board this register is regularly updated at Executive Team meetings and the Board will have an opportunity to carry out a full review of the register again at the next business planning event on 29 November.  |  |
| 4.4 | **Management Accounts**The purpose of this report is the quarterly financial information for the Association up to the end of Quarter 1 2024/25 (30 June 2024). The report consists of the narrative report and financial reporting appendices for the association and the subsidiaries, Queens Cross Factoring and Queens Cross Workspace. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support.  |  |
| 4.4.1 | The Board noted a deficit against budgeted forecast deficit to Q1 of £being an adverse variance f to the budget target, this is due to overspend in reactive repairs which will continue to be monitored. The board noted that for the past few years, the cost of correcting void properties has increased due to the return conditions and the cost of materials rising. An explanation of void properties was provided for observers, new Board members and staff present. Overall, the only area of concern in Q1 is the budget pressure on reactive spend and this is being closely monitored.  |  |
| 4.4.2 | The board noted that that the subsidiary companies QC Factoring and QC Workspace are both operating well  |  |
| 4.4.3 | The Board held a discussion around voids and noted that where investment takes place, there is minimum work required when these properties become lettable again, resulting in a quicker turnaround. The Board discussed the increasing reactive repairs spend and across the sector other Associations are also seeing significant increases. A sector wide discussion with lenders and government will be required around the solution for trade, immediate and wider expectations. The Association are currently undertaking a stock condition survey on our current properties to form a 30 year outlook. There were no further questions on the finance report.   |  |
| 4.5 | Hamiltonhill Project ProgressShona Stephen, Chief Executive Officer, advised the Board rent levels have still to be agreed and explained that the current rent structure and restrictions will determine how these can be set.  |  |
| 4.5.1 | The Board held a discussion on phase 2 rolling forward with the huge cuts to government funding now that phase 1 is coming to completion. The Board was advised that discussions are on ongoing with Glasgow City Council on funding options. Regular updates will continue to be reported to the Boad.  |  |
| **5.0** | Annual Complaints report. |  |
| 5.1 | The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a summary of the Association’s complaints and compliments performance from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, and to demonstrate performance against the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman’s (SPSO) target. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support.  |  |
| 5.2 | The Board noted the summary of the annual trends of our complaints and compliments.  |  |
| **6.0** | 2023/2024 Annual Accounts for approval  |  |
| 6.1 | The purpose of this report was to present the QC Group annual accounts and letter of representation for approval by the Board. These accounts were presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support.  |  |
| 6.2 | The QC group accounts, and management letter were reviewed at the Audit Committee meeting held on Monday 19 August. The Committee took considerable time reviewing these documents and held a useful discussion with Scott Gillon, Partner from WBG (Audit) Limited. The Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that committee had scrutinised the accounts and there were no issues to be reported, and the committee was recommending that the board sign off the accounts. The key message from the auditors was that a clean audit had been conducted with no areas for concern. The committee had asked for independent advice to be taken for next year on the Group Accounts as there may be an option for these accounts to be presented differently to make the process simpler and clearer for tenants.  |  |
| 6.3 | Neil explained to the Board their responsibilities to sign off the annual accounts noting the Board are singing off the responsibilities listed on pages 12 and 13. A financial highlights report will be issued to all members in advance of the AGM with copies of the accounts available on the website and paper copies on request.  |  |
| 6.4 | The Board approved the 2023/2024 annual accounts.  |  |
| **7.0** | GCC Programme 2024/25 |  |
| 7.1 | The purpose of this report was for the Board to note the proposed Affordable Housing Supply Programme grant allocation to the Association for 2024/25 and consider its implications. This report was presented by Shona Stephen, Chief Executive Officer.  |  |
| 7.2 | The Board noted the total grant allocation has now been confirmed by GCC towards funding the Association’s development programme in 2024/25. The allocation is significantly less than identified in the Association’s SDFP, due to the extent of the Scottish Government cuts. Earlier this year the Board agreed a programme of projects they would like to fund with the anticipation of funding being approved. The cuts to funding may have a major impact on our programme funding in future years, although the extent of funding for this period is still unknown. Hamiltonhill Phase 1 will still have £2m in grant to draw down, so this allocation will carry forward into the next Financial Year, with a potential impact on other project funding in that year. The level of spend in the identified future programme may require the Association to top up the reduced grant funding to a significant extent and may require the overall programming of projects to be reviewed and potentially delayed. The Glasgow West of Scotland Forum (GWSF) wrote to First Minister asking for funding to be reinstated. This was rejected therefore discussions will be had with the housing minister.  |  |
| 7.3 | The Board noted a particular problem for the Association was the hope to receive funding from Sustrans for works at Woodside. This application along with two others have now been passed to Transport Scotland, none of which have been approved due to the funding criteria changing and the Association no longer qualifying. Sustrans has spoken with the transport minister and local members. The Association will consider formally raising concerns. Matt Millar declared an interest in this subject and took no part in the discussion.  |  |
| **8.0** | Business Planning  |  |
| 8.1 | For the purpose of the new members in attendance Shona explained the process for Boards within the QC group to create a business plan. This process includes consulting with tenants and staff. In 2023 the Association undertook a number of surveys and interactive sessions with tenants where the key themes were identified as affordable rents, high quality public spaces and investment. In 2024 sessions have been held with each Board in the QC group, key themes are being compiled on the aspirations of our tenants and planning sessions are also taking place with staff across the Association. |  |
| 8.2 | Shona advised that there will be further discussion at the business planning day on 29 November and the final be presented to the board in January for approval . |  |
| **9.0** | Good Governance Matters  |  |
|  | The purpose of this report is to present information to evidence compliance with SHR Regulatory Standard 6 and the Association’s Rules. This includes compliance with the constitution, priorities and actions resulting from the QC Group Board Member Annual Performance Review (APR) meetings. This report was presented by Alison McKay, Governance Advisor.  |  |
| 9.1 | The Board were asked to note that, in accordance with Rule 68, sections 62 to 67 of the Association’s Rules have been followed.  |  |
| 9.2 | The Board noted the priorities and actions resulting from the QC Group Board Member 2023/24 Annual Performance Reviews which took place between April and June.  |  |
| 9.3 | The Board reviewed and approved the QC Group training plan for 2024/25 noting the mandatory Health & Safety training, two dates will shortly be circulated to Board members.  |  |
| 9.4 | The Board Noted the arrangements in place for the upcoming AGM’s; Association, Monday 9 September, Workspace, Thursday 5 September and Community Foundation, Thursday 3 October. A short Board meeting will take place immediately following the Association AGM to confirm appointments.. |  |
| 9.5 | The Board approved delegation of the annual report to the Chair and Chief Executive.  |  |
| 9.6 | The Board noted the position regarding appointments to all QC Group Boards (including office bearers), considered the Association Board Succession Plan and agree priorities for QC Group board member recruitment during 2024/25.  |  |
| 9.7 | In line with rules 39.1 to 42.1 the Board approved the nominations for vacancies on the Board that will be presented at the AGM..  |  |
| **10.0** | Non recoverable rent arrears – Elizabeth |  |
| 10.1 | The purpose of this report was for the Board to approve the write-off request for the period January 2024 – June 2024 as detailed in appendix 1 of this report. This report was presented by Elizabeth Hood, Depute Director.  |  |
| 10.2 | Section 3.2 of the report breaks down the write off figure per area and appendix 1 gives the reasoning for each.  |  |
| 10.3 | The Board agreed the write -off request for the sum of £41,256.27.  |  |
| **11.0** | **Allocations Policy** |  |
| 11.1 | The purpose of this report was for the Board to: * Approve the revised Allocation Policy – noting the minor changes
* Agree to a 5-year review cycle for the Allocation Policy
* Note the Consultation Report detailing feedback on the policy
* Note the successful expansion of Find my Home to now include Maryhill Housing Association

This report was presented by Elizabeth Hood, Depute Director.  |  |
| 11.2 | At the meeting in April a review of the allocations policy was presented to Board following tenant consultation carried out via café conversations and online surveys. Response to the survey was good; feedback was mainly positive and supportive of changes; However, it has been noted that communication around Priority Banding needs to be communicated more effectively to allow better understanding of the allocation system. As agreed, a final draft policy was presented to the Board for approval taking account of the consultation feedback. |  |
| 11.3 | The draft allocations policy was provided to the Board as appendix 1. Section 4.4 of the report set out the changes made to the policy. The Board noted that the Find my Home partnership is working well with Maryhill HA, a review of the outcomes will take place in March/April 2025.  |  |
| 11.4 | The Board approved revised allocations policy including the 5 year review.  |  |
| **12.0**  | ­SPSO Report |  |
| 12.1 | The Chair advised that a complaint had been investigated by the SPSO. This has now been reviewed by our independent data protection officer. The DPO report had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting and also uploaded to the board portal. The Board discussed the case and in particular what information can be requested under the freedom of information requests (FOI) It was noted that a new system to support the recording and management of these types of requests was now in place.  |  |
| **13.0** | **Health and Safety** |  |
| 13.1 | There were no matters to report. |  |
| **14.0** | New Membership Applications |  |
| 14.1 | There were no new membership applications. |  |
| **15.0** | Update from Chair of Audit Committee  |  |
| 15.1 | An update from the Audit Committee meeting held on 19 August 2024 was provided by the Chair.  |  |
| 15.2 | The Board noted updated on the outstanding actions raised at the previous meeting. One Assurance Review of Corporate Governance – Regulatory Standards has been completed and substantial assurance had been given.  |  |
| **16.0**  | Minute of Meeting No. 690The minutes of meeting no 690 were reviewed for accuracy with a minor amendment at item 12.1 on page 4 should read RIDDOR. These minutes were approved by Anne Ramsey and seconded by David Horner.  |  |
| **17.0** | Action Tracker |  |
| 17.1 | CEO Report from EVH October and agreed to move the update on H&S to November |  |
| **18.0** | **AOB** |  |
| 18.1 | Anne Ramsey provided the Board with a review of the QC Gala Day which took place on Saturday 17 August. Over 2000 people attended the event.  |  |
| 18.2 | Andrew thanked Bronwyn on behalf of the Board for her contribution and noted a more formal thanks will take place AGM.  |  |
| **19.0** | Date and Time of Next MeetingThe meeting concluded at 7.50pm.The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Monday 9 September immediately following the AGM.  |  |
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|  | I certify that the above minute has been approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings:Chair: ………………………………….. Date: …………………………………… |  |