

MINUTES OF MEETING NO.701
QUEENS CROSS HOUSING ASSOCIATION BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
2 WESTERCOMMON DRIVE G22
HELD ON 26 AUGUST AT 6.00 P.M.

Andrew Burns, John Dunn, Margaret Glass, Sadie Gordon, David Horner, John McIntyre (online).

Heather Anderson (Director of Neighbourhood Services), Phil Daws (Director of Property & Placemaking), Elizabeth Hood (Depute Director), Neil Manley (Director of Finance & Corporate Support), Alison McKay (Governance Advisor), Shona Stephen (Chief Executive Officer), Fiona Smith (Head of Customer First).

ACTION

1.0 Housekeeping

1.1 Housekeeping noted.

2.0 Welcome and Apologies

2.1 Andrew welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Ian Elrick, Chibuzo Ehieze, Matt Millar & Anne Ramsey. It was agreed that John McIntyre would join the meeting later as he had been delayed at work.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

4.0 Q1 Performance 2025/2026

4.1 KPI's

4.1.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to note the Association's performance for Q1 2025/26 April, May & June 2025. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate Support.

4.1.2 The Board noted the KPI's, and discussion focussed on KPI's below target and plans in place to improve performance. The board noted the report.

4.2 Complaints and Compliments Report

4.2.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to note the Q1 complaints and compliments for the period on 1 April – 30 June 2025. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate Support.

4.2.2 The board noted that stage 1 complaints have increased by 10% compared to Q4, stage 2 complaints decreased again by 17% compared to Q4. The repairs service is the area of the business that receives most complaints, this is similar to most organisations. There is robust contract management arrangements including monthly meetings with the contractors are in place with regular monitoring and inspections of work raised and completed and regular surveying of tenants to identify issues, actions are set out in an action plan, and we expect to see an improvement by the end of the financial year. Three complaints were passed to the Ombudsman in Q1, all were closed with no further action required. Heather highlighted a slight decrease in stage 2 complaints quarter by quarter indicating complaints training is working. The Board acknowledged the increase in complaints resolved within 5 days and noted the frontline staff are seeing the benefits of the Customer Contact Centre receiving training on complaints and resolving at first point of contact.

4.3 Strategic Risk Register

- 4.3.1 The strategic risk register was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate Support.
- 4.3.1 The Executive Team review and amend the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis and, following the Board away day and budget discussions in December 2023 and January 2024 respectively, a significant number of updates have been made to the register. The register is a live document to be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis by the Board. The Board requested any major changes are clearly highlighted in red. Neil
- 4.4 Management Accounts**
- 4.4.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to note the rly financial information for the for Q1. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate support.
- 4.4.2 The continued delay in letting the new Hamiltonhill stock is driving the income adverse position. It is anticipated that the first lets will take place in the next few months, however the adverse variance to date will not recover for the remainder of the year.
- 4.4.3 The expenditure position shows a favourable variance of £4,000. The overall salary spend figure includes any payments made as part of the TUPE transfer of the DLO service and we would now expect the overall favourable variance to increase as the year progresses. The 92k adverse variance on housing and welfare advised is mainly due to timing setting the budget prior to finalising insurance costs.
- 4.4.4 The current QC Factoring & QC positions are set out in the report and are in line with their budgets. There are no concerns.
- 4.4.5 Appendix 4 detailed performance against the financial covenants which are currently being met for this point of year.
- 4.4.6 Page 61 of the performance papers provided photographs of the Hamiltonhill development. Phil Daws, Director of Property & Placemaking provided the Board with an update on the current status. The initial handovers of completed properties have now been put back to August 2025, with all future handovers then pushed back into January 2026. It is understood that Robertson Partnership Homes will take over the management of the construction contract from October. A Planning application for Phase 2 has been submitted, with no response received to date. the layout and design based on cost.
- 4.4.7 The Board noted good progress with the Burnbank Gardens development.
- 4.4.8 Phil advised a paper on Glenfarg Street will be brought to the Board in October following details from Glasgow City Council regarding funding. Phil
- 5.0 Annual Complaints Report 2024-25**
- 5.1 The purpose of this report was to provide the Board with a summary of the Association's complaints and compliments performance from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, and to demonstrate performance against the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) target. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate Support.
- 5.2 The table at point 2 shows a positive trend with decreasing stage 2 complaints in the current quarter. The Board noted the decline in email contact with tenants going back to telephone communication. The Association want to offer tenants increased

options for contact and reporting more ways of contact and accessing information particularly for those who are unable to make contact during normal working hours. Hopefully CX Feedback and the new app will provide useful for some tenants.

2024/2025 Annual Accounts

Neil asked the Board's permission to move onto item 7 until John McIntyre could join the meeting.

6.0 Financial Covenant Change 2025/2026 Virgin Money Loan

- 6.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to formally approve a revision to the loan covenants linked to Virgin Money /Clydesdale. The rationale behind the changes to the covenant from 2025/26 onwards was outlined within the budget paper presented in March 2025. The Board is asked to agree and authorise a board member to approve the attached extract board minute, side letter and Officer Certificate. This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance & Corporate Support.
- 6.2 The board had expressed as part of the **2025/26** discussion to revise its interest cover covenant going forward to provide greater flexibility in its investment and budget plans. This is the first of three reviews. The Board is asked to review the draft extract minute detailed in appendix 2. Agreement of this minute will allow Neil to agree the covenant amendment allowing a more flexible way of working and investment in the next 5 years. Negotiations with other lenders are coming in upcoming, all lenders are understanding of why we want the change and see the value in amending our covenants. Board approved signing of the minute via Docusign.

7.0 Non recoverable rent

- 7.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to approve the write-off request for the period January – June 2025 as detailed in appendix 1 of this report. The value of the debt is £44,033.36. This report was presented by Elizabeth Hood, Depute Director.
- 7.2 In accordance with the Rent Arrears Policy, the Association pursues all former tenant arrears cases. Each case is regularly reviewed up to the point where there is no prospect of recovery or it becomes financially unviable to pursue the debt. When this situation arises, the Association will consider writing off the arrear as bad debt. The Board noted we have recently appointed a new Debt Recovery Provider – Credit G. This company has an excellent track record working with other RSL's and we hope that through partnership working we will be able to successfully recover a higher proportion of former tenant arrears. Early indications are positive and there have been some successful tracings. Where appropriate, cases proposed for debt-write off will be passed to Network Credit G. Any monies recovered will be credited to the tenant's account. The total value of former tenant arrears at the end of Q1 is £127,640.46 (0.5% of overall rent & service charge debit). Existing former tenant arrears not submitted for write-off are currently being pursued. The total write off of £44,033.36 for this period represents 0.18% of the total rent and service charge debit.

- 7.3 The Board had no questions on this report and approved the write off of £44,033.36.

8.0 Compliance with SHR Regulatory Standard 6

- 8.1 This purpose if this agenda item was an opportunity for the Board to seek assurance on compliance with SHR Standard 6 '*the governing body has the skills and knowledge they need to be effective*'. This is consistent with the boards agreed approach to reviewing and demonstrating compliance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) Regulatory Standards. (January 2023). The discussion was led by Neil Manley

Director of Finance and Corporate Support, and members were asked to read documents laid out in item 1.3 of the report to contribute to the discussion.

8.2 Appendix 2 highlighted 6 of our 9 board members have now served for 9 years or more. To ensure orderly succession, board members should give notice if they intend to step down within the next 3 years. Ideally 18 months' notice would be useful, (Ideally at the Performance Reviews in May for the AGM the **following** year. Succession planning means having the right balance of experienced and new members and this requires careful planning. Since 2022 a recruitment campaign for tenant / local members, has taken place annually in February, this has had some success, and we continually review the format to ensure its fit for purpose. There is a recruitment campaign currently underway for independent board members with a focus on 'suitably' financially qualified members. An update can be provided at the board meeting. Andrew Burns, Chair advised the Board, the four Chairs within the group met to review the annual appraisals, training and recruitment requirements.

8.3 The Board were asked if they are assured that we are meeting SHR regulatory standard 6, that the governing body has the skills and knowledge it needs to be effective and if not what areas could be improved. Andrew noted the Chairs meeting highlighted learning and development is really effective however there is a risky period coming up in terms of recruitment and this is a key area the Board should be thinking about in the coming months. The Board discussed targeted recruitment for those with finance experience and noted it can take around 3 years for members to gain a full understanding of their responsibility as a Board member and the topics discussed at meetings. John Dunn provided positive feedback on his experience since joining the board last year. The Board also discussed increasing staff awareness on the role of the board through their corporate induction and board members attending a SIE event as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations.

8.4 The Board agreed that they were assured on learning and development however there needs to be more focus on recruitment.

John McIntyre joined the meeting at 6.45pm.

9.0. Good Governance Matters

9.1 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.

9.2 The Board approved all recommendations as set out in section 1 of the report.

10.0 2024/2025 Annual Accounts

10.1 The purpose of this report as for the Board to:

- Note the content and representations made in the letter of representation (Appendix 1, page 16 of the Annual Report), confirm their agreement to its content allowing this to be signed off via Docusign.
- Review the Annual Report including audit findings at section 3.3 and the audit recommendations at page 7.
- Review the detailed annual accounts statement and approve them to be authorized by the Chair and other relevant board members.

This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support.

10.2 The annual report did not identify any substantial points that required to be addressed. Included at Section 3.3 of the annual report to the board on page 7 is the associations

external auditors Wbg opinion with the accounts seen to give a "true and fair" view of the Association's finances. The Audit Committee reviewed the accounts and were assured by Scott Gillon from Wbg that it was a strong audit.

- 10.3 The Board had no questions on the 2024/2025 annual accounts and approved signing of the annual accounts and letter of representation by signatories.

11.0 Audit Committee Terms of Reference

- 11.1 The purpose of this report was to recommend the Board approve the amendment to the Audit Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 1). This report was presented by Fiona Smith, Head of Customer First.
- 11.2 At its meeting in May, the Board agreed that as a result of Ian Elrick standing down from audit committee, the terms of reference should be amended to reflect the minimum number of members, who are financially qualified, on the committee. After a short discussion the Board requested wording should be amended to say a minimum of one member should have finance knowledge.
- 11.3 The Board approved the new Audit Committee Terms of Reference subject to the amended wording.

12.0 Voluntary Severance

- 12.1 The purpose of this report was for the Board to consider the level of interest in the voluntary severance scheme and agree the next steps. This report was presented by Shona Stephen, Chief Executive.
- 12.2 The board had no questions and agreed to the next steps as laid out in the report.

13.0 APPROVAL OF FINANCE POLICIES

- 13.1 The purpose of this report is for the Board to consider the recommendation to approve amendments to the following finance policies:
- Reserves Policy
 - Management Accounts Policy
 - Internal Audit Policy
 - Financial Reporting Policy
 - Fraud Policy
 - External Audit Policy
 - Capitalisation Policy
 - Budgeting Policy
 - Factoring Policy

This report was presented by Neil Manley, Director of Finance and Corporate Support.

- 13.2 It is set out in the delegation that it is the responsibility of the board to approve these policies. At the meeting on 25 February 2025 the QCHA Board delegated review these policies to the Audit Committee. Following the meeting of the Audit Committee on 5 August 2025, the committee now recommend that the board approves these policies.
- 13.3 The Board approved the amendments to 9 finance policies.

14.0 UPDATE FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 14.1 The purpose of this verbal report was to provide the Board with an update from the Audit Committee meeting on 5 August 2025. This report was provided by John McIntyre, Chair of the Audit Committee.

- 14.2 At the meeting on 5 August 2025, the Audit Committee reviewed the 2024/2025 annual accounts in detail, an internal audit on digital strategy, amendments to a number of finance policies and discussed succession planning for the committee. The committee discussed the audit action points and expressed some frustration with the lack of progress of some actions. The committee has now requested quarterly updates on several items from departmental managers who will be asked to attend audit committee meetings.

15.0 UPDATE FROM NWP STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

- 15.1 The purpose of this verbal report was to provide the Board with an update from the first meeting of the NWP Strategic Alliance. This report was provided by John Dunn.
- 15.2 The first meeting of the NWP Strategic Alliance took place on 10 June 2025. Anne Ramsey was appointed Chair of the committee. The Committee agreed their remit. Staff from both associations have received updates on the alliance at their staff information sessions, via their intranet and emails from the association Chairs. Further communications including rebranding will be provided after the AGM. The key message is that the alliance is about working together to benefit staff & tenants and is not a merger.

16.0 Health and Safety

- 16.1 None

17.0 New Membership Applications

- 17.1 The Board approved 14 new membership applications.

18.0 Minute of Meeting No.700

- 18.1 The minute of meeting no 700 held on 27 May 2005 was reviewed for accuracy and matters arising. The minutes were proposed by John Dunn and seconded by Margaret Glass.

19.0 Action Tracker

- 19.1 The Board agreed the action tracker items review of internal audit guide and lift maintenance should be moved to December 2025 to keep a realistic time scale.

20.0 AOB

- 20.1 The board meeting was closed and all staff except the CE and Director of Finance and Corporate Support left the meeting .

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The meeting concluded at 8.00pm.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on

- Monday 8 September 2025 following the AGM.
- Tuesday 28 October 2025 at 6.00pm

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

Chair: **Date:**