

**Minutes of the Board Meeting
Held on Wednesday, 27 March 2024 at 6pm in person in
The McGinlay Suite in the Association's offices**

Present

Simon Gaunt (SG)
Michael Smith (MS)
Kimberley Barker (KB)
Allan Edgar (AE)
Helen Gracie (HG)
Fiona Koroma (FK)
Emma Brown (EB)

In attendance

Nicola Logan, Chief Executive Officer (NL)
Cindy McNeill, Finance Director (CM)
Donald Weir, Technical Director (DW)
Martha Hutcheson, Corporate Services Manager (MH)
Catherine Sloey, Corporate Services Assistant (CS)
Professor Tim Sharpe, Dampness and Mould Consultant, (TS) Item 2

Prior to the meeting starting, a fire drill took place. The drill was carried out successfully with no issues.

1.0 Apologies and Declarations of Interest (including agenda item to which this refers)

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Board members Patricia Gallagher, Jennie Robertson and Johnson Ayorinde.

Declaration of Interests:

Item 7.1: MS declared an interest in this item and will leave the room when this item is being discussed.

Item 7.2: FK and Glen Oaks' staff declared an interest in this item and will leave the room when this item is being discussed.

2.0 Mould and Dampness Consultation

Professor Tim Sharpe, Head of Architecture at Strathclyde University, gave a presentation on dampness and mould, which was followed by a question-and-answer session. The presentation focused on the causes and types of dampness.

SG thanked TS for his informative presentation.

(TS left the meeting)

3.0 Health & Safety Report

3.1 Health & Safety

The Board **noted** the Health & Safety report.

4.0 Minutes of Previous Board Meeting

4.1 Decisions taken between meetings

Nothing to report.

4.2 Board Meeting 17 January 2024

The previous Minutes were **approved** as an accurate record of the meeting.

4.3 Matters Arising/Actions/Decisions

The Decision and Action reports were noted by Board. The Action report was updated as follows -

Board Development Programme (Fearless Leadership) – to be discussed in conjunction with the proposal to commission an external Governance consultant.

Board Recruitment – On agenda.

New Members – Housing, Technical and Health & Safety Sub-Committee - On agenda.

Stock Tour – Discuss in conjunction with training dates.

Tenant Participation / Community Engagement Training – On agenda.

5.0 Minutes of Sub-Committees and other Meetings

5.1 Finance Audit and Corporate Services Sub-Committee 22.11.23 & 28.02.24

The Minutes were **noted** by Board members.

6.0 Matters for Discussion

6.1 Chief Executive's Report

NL highlighted the following from her report.

Rent Consultation Proposal

NL reported that she was proposing to change the format this year and to carry out a pre-rent consultation exercise to gather feedback on tenant priorities. This would start at the Customer Conference on 5 June 2024. A presentation would then be given to Board members at the

meeting in August. Following this meeting, the rent increase proposal would be agreed and a further consultation carried out late October/early November. Therefore, tenants would not be given options on the rent increase.

As this was a new process, a Board member emphasised the importance of having a good communication strategy in place to ensure that all tenants were made aware of the new process.

The Board **approved** the rent consultation process for 2024/25.

Gold Service

NL advised Board members of the challenges of the current scheme and proposals to update, making it easier to administer and, overall, better for tenants. She added that there would be a change of focus to a reward participation scheme that would, hopefully, encourage increased tenant involvement.

Following a discussion by Board members, it was agreed that the scheme had to be fully inclusive for all tenants, particularly for individuals with disabilities. In addition, any new scheme must be widely communicated.

NL explained that there would be various forms of tenant engagement that would ensure all tenants could easily get involved.

Board members **agreed** that the current scheme was no longer suitable, particularly as the reward card was not easily accepted in shops. Also, if some tenants missed a rent payment, it was hard to rejoin the scheme.

The Board **approved** the review of the Gold Service scheme with a proposal being presented to the May meeting.

Housing Perks

NL confirmed that Glen Oaks' was launching a new discount scheme for tenants and staff, which, over time, could be used as an incentive for tenants.

Customer Conference 5 June 2024

It was noted that Glen Oaks' would be holding a Customer Conference on 5 June at 6pm at Ashpark Primary School. NL invited all Board members to attend the event.

If required, a Board Member mentioned that they would be available to speak at the event. A further suggestion was a Q&A session, giving tenants the opportunity to ask Board members questions.

Board Appraisals and Succession Planning

NL sought Board approval to commission an external Governance consultant, Linda Ewart (LE), to provide support for this year's Board appraisals and Board Succession Planning. LE would also assist in streamlining the governance framework.

If approved, LE suggested holding a collaborative workshop, with Board members and senior staff, on 24 April 2024 at 6pm. This could potentially be online, but the preference would be an in-person meeting. The outcomes of the workshop would provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Board, proposed action points and recommendations for change or improvement.

A discussion followed and Board **agreed** that the workshop would be a useful session to assist with appraisals and succession planning.

The Board **approved** NL to appoint an external Governance consultant and hold a workshop on 24 April 2024 at 6pm.

Board Training / Conferences

Following a discussion at a recent Finance Audit and Corporate Services Sub-Committee, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to provide Board members with details of up-and-coming conferences and training events. Anyone interested in attending an event should contact CS.

A Board member expressed an interest in the following:-

1. SFHA Governing Bodies Members forum on 16.04.24
2. GWSF Regeneration Conference on 07.06.24

Training sessions on tenant participation and human rights to be arranged over the next few months (proposed dates to be circulated).

Board Recruitment/Composition of Sub-Committees

As this was AE's last meeting, NL thanked him for his contribution to the Board and support over the last few years. She wished him every success in the future.

Board members discussed the draft advert and made the following comments:

- Format - make more visual and possible video option proposed;
- Quotes - include 2 quotes from Board members. MS agreed to provide a quote;
- Finance Skills - provide more detail on the skillset required;
- Abbreviations - in full;
- Advertising - include Universities and LinkedIn
- Date - review date of the advert.

Future Board pack – include the Jargon buster document, particularly useful for new Board members - post meeting note, this is included in the resources section of decision time.

The Board **approved** the Board recruitment advert noting the amendments above.

Performance Analysis Visit

A Board member asked if there was a correlation between the value for money and the comments relating to poor repairs in the Complaints report?

NL replied that although repair satisfaction had gone down, she was pleased to report that this had now changed and was beginning to show an improvement.

6.2 Business and Financial Plans 2024-25

NL spoke to the revised Business and Financial Plans 2024 - 25.

NL commented that she was introducing a new performance system that would include organisational objectives that would cascade down to all staff. It was noted that the staff team had discussed the document at 2 staff briefings.

Overall, Board members thought it was a clear, concise document and liked the inclusion of the key outcomes and how they were clearly measurable.

Referring to the Financial Appendix, CM reported that this was a 30-year plan to 31 March 2054 and backed up the Business Plan. This showed that Glen Oaks would be able to pay back the bank loans and generate surpluses each year. She highlighted that it was important that Board looked at the cashflow figures every year for the next 30 years to follow where money is being generated and spent.

The Statement of Comprehensive Income shows a surplus for each of the 30 years but it is not an indication of cash generated as it includes non-cash accounting adjustments, such as depreciation and amortisation of grants, which act to smooth out large items of expenditure and grants over the number of years they relate to.

Cash in year one showed that Glen Oaks is projected to generate less income than the expenditure. This is due to the extensive planned maintenance and IT programmes for 2024/2025. It is critical that Glen Oaks keeps up to date with IT and software security. Also, the office refurbishment is included in next year's figures and is a significant spend.

CM added that the Annual Budget is year one and overheads are assumed to stay the same and just increase by inflation, however, the maintenance programme will be subject to variations over the 30-year period. Overall, there was a healthy cashflow position at year 30.

Responding to a Board member's question on whether the 30-year plan included the new development, CM advised that it did not, however, it was included as a scenario.

A Board member pointed out that there will be a new valuation on pensions that the Association may have to account for in future years.

The Board **approved** the Business and Financial Plans 2024 – 25 and the Budget for the year to 31 March 2025

6.3 Financial Statement Surplus Levels

SG commented that after reading the report and the appendix, detailing operating surplus to turnover ratios, Glen Oaks' surplus was fairly low compared to other RSLs in Scotland and generating a surplus was, therefore, not an area for concern.

However, as there were currently large spends on maintenance, it was important the Board took stock and reviewed figures closely to ensure that the Association made a surplus in the financial year and to also consider future spends.

CM reported that it was necessary for Glen Oaks' to generate a surplus each year to meet lender covenants and to save up for the planned maintenance programme.

There was a brief discussion about budgets that were underspent. NL pointed out that the half-year budget is always presented to the Board, giving them the opportunity to review areas of underspend.

The Board **noted** the report on the financial Statement of Comprehensive Income Surplus levels.

7.0 Matters for Approval

7.1 Strategy and Development Funding Plan

MS declared an interest in this item and left the meeting.

DW spoke to his report and sought approval for the following:-

- Approve the Strategy and Development Funding Plan
- Sign off the Arden Phase 6 Scheme Approval
- Approve payment of additional Planning Fees for the Old Darnley Project

The Board **approved** the Developments in DW's report.

(MS rejoined the meeting)

7.2 EVH Employers' Ballot 2024

FK and GO staff declared an interest in this item and left the room when this item was being discussed.

The Board **agreed** to support the recommendation on salaries for April 2024 as detailed in the Employers' Ballot paper.

(FK and GO staff rejoined the meeting)

7.3 Financial Regulations

A short discussion took place on the proposed changes to the authorisation levels. No issues were raised by Board members.

The Board **approved** the changes to the Financial Delegated Authority and Procurement of Goods and Services.

7.4 Eviction Reports

The Board discussed the 3 Eviction reports submitted within the Board pack. Board received reassurance from NL that all necessary support had been offered to tenants before reaching this stage.

The Board **approved** the recommendation in the eviction reports.

8.0 Performance Reports *(for information)*

8.1 Risk Management

The Board **noted** the Risk Management report.

8.2 Quarterly Business Plan Report

The Board **noted** the Quarterly Business Plan report.

8.3 Complaints Report

The Board **noted** the Complaints report (October to December 2023). They asked for compliments to be included in future reports.

8.4 Management Accounts for the period to 31 December 2023

The Board **noted** the Management Accounts for the period to 31 December 2023.

8.5 Treasury Report for the period to 31 December 2023

The Board **noted** the Treasury report for the period to 31 December 2023.

8.6 Report on Nationwide Loan Repayments

The Board **noted** the report on the Nationwide Loan repayments.

8.7 goConnect Update

The Board **noted** the latest funding report for the goConnect project.

9.0 Assurance Statement

9.1 Regulatory Standard 7

The Board **approved** Regulatory Standard 7.

9.2 Regulatory Standard 2

The Board **approved** Regulatory Standard 2.

10.0 Strategy and Policy Review

10.1 Strategy and Policy Register

The Board **noted** the Strategy and Policy Register.

11.0 Report back from Meetings/Conferences Attended

Share Conference – FK, advised that, unfortunately, she had been unable to attend the event.

Training: 'Questions you should be asking Finance' - SG recommended Board members attend the training run by Share.

In addition, a Board member commented the 'working at home' training run by EVH had been very informative.

12.0 Any Other Competent Business

12.1 Disturbance Payment (window programme) – A Board member asked if Glen Oaks had a policy on disturbance payments. They commented that some tenants had issues with blinds that no longer fitted following the installation of the new windows.

It was agreed that NL would look into this further for the next meeting.

Voids – A Board member asked if there were specific reasons for the recent improvement in standard of properties coming back for relet e.g. had the tenants been there long-term? DW agreed to look at this in more detail and report back.

13.0 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 24 April 2024 at 6pm. This will be a workshop facilitated by Linda Ewart as detailed in the CEO report.

The following meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 29 May 2024 at 6pm.