



**WHEATLEY HOMES SOUTH LIMITED
MINUTE OF BOARD MEETING
held on Wednesday 20 November 2024
Microsoft Teams**

Members Present: Jo Boaden (Chair), John Henderson, Garry Legg, Martin Dorby, Michael Greaves Mackintosh, John McCraw, Karen Hunter

In Attendance: Pauline Turnock (Group Director of Finance), Alex Lamb (Wheatley Homes South Managing Director) Eilidh Mowat (Governance Business Partner), Lindsey Dryden (Financial Controller)

In Part: Neil Addie, Director of Group Health and Fire Safety Compliance (Items 9 and 10)

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Board noted the standing declaration of interest. No new declarations were made.

3. a) Minute of 18 September 2024 and matters arising

Decided: The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 18 September 2024.

b) Action list

Decided: The Board noted the action list.

4. Chair and Managing Director updates

The Chair provided a summary of the key items considered by the Wheatley Group Board at its meeting on 13 November 2024.

The Chair gave an update on a recent tour of our care facilities which are managed by Wheatley Care. The Chair commended the excellent services and engaged staff. The Board agreed that it would be useful to arrange a future tour of those services.

Decided: The Board noted the update.

5. Neighbourhood plans (Presentation)

The Board received an update on our vision and approach to neighbourhood planning in Lochside, Dumfries and Dickshill, Stranraer. The Board were appraised of the refreshed service model and the next steps developed as a result of the feedback received from our pilot approach.

The Board commended the intensity of the resources and commitment applied to date and the outcomes achieved. Going forward, the Board received the assurance that a relevant framework is in place that will support a targeted implementation across the wider region taking account of linkage with our asset plans and continued learning from our ongoing partnership and engagement opportunities.

Decided: The Board noted the update.

6. 2025 rent setting

The Board were provided with a report which sought approval for the 2025/26 rent and general service charge increases and set out proposals for engagement and consultation with our tenants on rent increase options.

The Board considered the balance between the economic climate and associated cost pressures; versus our future obligations in relation to building compliance and increased investment in homes.

The Board discussed the proposal and that we agree on a range for the rent increase with the ability to finalise where within this range we will consult in December.

The Board sought assurance that our average rents are currently well within the range of affordability.

The Board discussed learning from our engagement with customers last year and how we will use that in our focus groups this year. The Board further considered the draft consultation booklet and sought assurance that the booklet design would reflect the rural region.

Decided: The Board;

- 1) Agreed to undertake an initial consultation with rent focus groups on a 6.9% increase with an additional option of 7.9% for the 2025/26 rent and service charge increase;**
- 2) Noted that the final approval of the rent increase within the range will be presented for approval at the Group Board December 2024 meeting following the completion of the tenant focus groups delegate authority to the Chair to agree the final level (between 6.9% - 7.9%);**
- 3) Subject to the approval of the above, note that the Board will be updated on the decision on the proposed increase on 18 December 2024; and**
- 4) Noted that the Board has delegated authority to agree the 2025/26 rent and service charge increase where it is within the agreed range.**

7. Performance and Delivery Plan

The Board were provided with an update on sector comparisons for Annual Return on the Charter following the publication of 2023/24 sector-wide data, the Board were updated on performance delivery against targets and strategic projects for 2024/25 for the end of Q2.

The Board noted and discussed the strong performance against targets for 2024/25 in several areas including tenancy sustainment, CFC, Allocations and NETs CSATs, reducing emergency repair numbers, emergency repair timescales, repairs completed right first time, new build completions, the number of children and young people benefiting from targeted Foundation programmes, the number of people accessing services which help alleviate poverty and average time to re-let properties. Arrears remain a continued area of focus.

The Board discussed anti-social behaviour cases and the definition of when those cases were resolved.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

8. Health and Safety update

The Board were provided with an update on Health and Safety performance across the first two quarters of 2024/25.

The Board were advised of an additional RIDDOR which had been reported; the Board discussed and sought assurance in respect of the actions and steps taken to ensure a RIDDOR is correctly reported.

The Board noted Key H&S developments during Q1/2 which included; the deployment of WE Notify incident reporting system, continuing high completion levels for H&S E-Learning courses, a new schedule of Management Arrangements, and a planned new H&S Audit programme commencing during Q3.

Decided: The Board noted the contents of the report.

9. Fire Safety update

The Board were provided were provided with an update on the performance of the Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework, specifically on the performance of Fire Prevention and Mitigation for the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024.

The Board further received a verbal update on a recent fire which had taken place in one of our properties. The Board were assured that further updates would be provided as they become available.

Decided: The Board noted the update and progress of our Fire Prevention and Mitigation Framework for the period 01 April 2024 to 30 September 2024

10. Finance Report

The Board was provided with an overview of the Finance report for the period to 30 September 2024 and the Q2 forecast. The Board was also updated on the Group's funding and security arrangements.

The Board discussed the financial performance for the period to 30 September.

Decided: The Board

- 1) Noted the Finance Report for the period to 30 September 2024 and Q2 forecast; and**
- 2) Noted the Funding and Security update.**

11. Risk register

The Board were provided with proposed changes to the Risk Register for consideration.

The Board noted that a review of the Risk Register has identified four risks that are outside the risk appetite, no risks with high inherent or residual risk scores that have not been reviewed, and two further risks for consideration.

Decided: The Board approved the updates within the Risk Register.

12. AOCB

No other items of business were raised.

Signed:.....(Chair)