

ATRIUM HOMES

Minutes of Meeting of the Board held on Tuesday 25 March 2025

At 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Alistair Reid, Carolyn Hope, Ken Tudhope, Craig Leitch, Dominic O'Donnell, Maureen Gimby, Alan White, Julie Templeton, Ron Sharpe, Scott Cunningham,

Attending: Joyce McCroskie (Director of Housing & Community Services, DoHCS), Barry Lees (Director of Property Services, DoPS), Shannon Watson (Chief Executive, CX)

Chair: Alistair Reid

The Chair opened the meeting asking everyone to confirm that they had read and understood the papers which had been circulated via DropBox the week prior to the meeting.

The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Confirmed

Item	
1	Apologies
	None
2	Declarations of Interest
	No declarations of interest in business to be discussed were noted.
3	Minutes of Meeting on 25 February 2025
	The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 25 February 2025 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record of the meeting. <i>Approved for publication</i>
4	Matters Arising
	a) Board noted the items which remained in progress. CX noted that Board had been sent a link to the folder where the themes from the 2024 Customer Satisfaction Survey and the flier detailing the outcome of the Rent Increase Consultation in January 2025 were shared with Board. CX noted that a detailed customer survey is to be undertaken in 2025/26 which will inform the new strategy to be developed and will be key to engaging with tenants. <i>Noted</i> b) Board noted that Atrium is up to date with all compliance requirements. <i>Noted</i>
5	Annual Assurance Considerations SHR's Standards of Governance and Financial Management for RSLs
	a) <u>Standard 1</u> – the governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and service users

	<p>Board considered the contents of the paper in order to agree whether Atrium is adequately demonstrating its compliance with the SHR's standards based on the matters discussed at this and previous meetings, and other evidence supplied.</p> <p>Board considered the statements made on how Atrium complies with each of the requirements in Standard 1 and agreed that it was a good record of Atrium's work and that this paper, together with the other papers discussed at this and previous Board meetings, demonstrated Atrium is complying with the standard.</p> <p>A Board member noted that under standard 1.1 no reference had been made to the current arrangements for the Strategic Risk Register being reviewed at every Board meeting as well as at Sub-Committee meetings, and this should be noted as an additional control in place. CX agreed to add this control to the text.</p> <p>Board agreed that the document was a comprehensive record of Atrium's compliance with Standard 1 and approved this document to be carried forward and updates included as matters changed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p> <p>b) A Board member asked how changes to evidence for standards already discussed would be communicated to Board. CX confirmed that while updates would be noted within each paper in red and these documents would be included in the background documents folders for every meeting, any key changes would be highlighted to Board in the covering paper for the assurance review immediately following the change occurring.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
6	Final Budget for 2025/26
	<p>Board considered the contents of the paper which provided Board with a reconciliation between the 2025/26 surplus reported to the February meeting and the final budgeted surplus being reported to this meeting. Board noted that there had been a number of updates to the budgets as a result of the final pay settlement for 2025/26 and updated information received on planned activities for the year.</p> <p>The largest change to the budgeted surplus was an £89k saving on the insurance premiums for 2025/26 as a result of the broker securing more favourable terms with an alternative insurer. Board noted the assumptions and planned activities which had been incorporated into the annual and five year budgets together with the 30-year financial plan presented.</p> <p>Board considered the scenarios presented in order to test the sensitivity of the budgets to potential future changes in inflation, borrowing costs and a number of other assumptions employed in the final budgets. Board noted that in a number of scenarios the lenders' financial covenants might be breached and / or cash reserves depleted.</p> <p>Board discussed that these impacts would be managed by the annual review of the budgets set combined with Atrium's current practice of regular reporting of actual results and reforecasting of figures to the end of the year during the course of the</p>

	<p>financial year. Any cashflow impacts of serious detrimental changes to the operating environment would need to be managed through a combination of identified cost savings and careful management of Atrium's planned investment programme.</p> <p>Board approved the final budgets and also approved the submission of the Five Year Financial Projections to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
7	<p>Draft Internal Management Plan for 2025/26</p> <p>Board considered the draft document which had been prepared by the Executive Management Team. This document provides an update on recent activities of the organisation in working to achieve the key business plan targets.</p> <p>Action plans for key high level activities to be undertaken by the management of the organisation during 2025/26 both in Atrium Homes and Atrium Initiatives were considered by Board as well as the Policies which require to be reviewed during the coming year.</p> <p>No changes to this document were considered necessary and Board approved the finalisation of the Internal Management Plan. A Board member asked whether management would be publishing any of the detail of the plans for tenants' information and CX agreed to consider how this might be done and linked in with the work on getting tenants' input into Atrium's new strategy.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
8	<p>Insurance Arrangements</p> <p>Board noted the detail of the document which set out the insurance renewal quotations which had been secured by the broker. Board noted that Atrium's current insurer was looking for a significant increase in premiums again, despite there having been no significant claims made by the organisation in the past couple of years.</p> <p>Board noted that a different insurer was offering property insurance premiums which were lower than those paid in the previous year, together with a long term agreement (LTA) for 3.5 years (taking into account an 18-month first cover period to change Atrium's renewal date from 1 April each year to 1 October).</p> <p>CX noted that, while the organisation would have ordinarily re-tendered the insurance contracts during 2025/26, it would be advantageous to sign the offered long term agreement for 3.5 years which provided for a cap on increases to annual premiums of 2.5% (subject to total claims in a year being less than 45% of the annual premium payable).</p> <p>Not putting the insurance services out to open tender in 2025/26 would sit slightly outwith the framework of Atrium's Procurement Policy, but with the uncertainty remaining in the RSL insurance market, Board considered it prudent to sign the LTA offered on placing insurance with the new provider and approved management undertaking this action.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>

9	Atrium Initiatives Limited
	<p>a) Board considered the minutes of the meeting of the subsidiary Board on 4 March 2025 and the updates to business provided therein. In particular, Board noted that the Factoring Administrator had worked with the local authority to identify and secure prosecutions of fly tippers in estates that Choice Places manages.</p> <p>Board noted the conversations held on the increase to administration charges for Factoring services and the fact that staff will be reviewing the work needed in the estates to consider whether the administration charges represented a fair value for the work required.</p> <p>Board noted that we would not stop factoring services in mixed tenure estates as the regular upkeep is crucial for the quality of Atrium's housing. It was also noted that the work needed on the one estate which is comprised entirely of owners represents a reasonably small proportion of the total factoring activity undertaken by the subsidiary.</p> <p>Finally, Board noted that the subsidiary had made a small loss in the nine months to December with a number of one-off costs and a small loss on disposal of one of the market let properties in the third quarter.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p> <p>a) Board noted the contents of the subsidiary's Business Plan for 2025-30 which assumed that the business will remain largely static for the coming year, with the 58 new build units at Moorfield coming on as factored owners during 2025/26.</p> <p>Board noted the key assumptions in the budgets and the operational targets for 2025/26 and approved these.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
10	Applications for membership
	<p>Board noted that eight applications for membership received from individuals who are tenants of Atrium Homes were put to the meeting together with an application from a new Board member. Board approved these.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
11	Strategic Risks – emerging risks and changes (standing item)
	<p>Board considered the current strategic risk register which had been included in the papers for the meeting.</p> <p>Board considered the risks on the register and agreed that no further changes were needed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Discussed</i></p>
12	Health & Safety (Standing Item)
	<p>DoPS confirmed that there were no new matters to report to the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>

13	Any Other Competent Business
	<p>a) CX noted that following the survey of Board members regarding alternative meeting times and formats, Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. continued to suit most Board members. CX proposed that most meetings be conducted via Zoom during 2025/26 with August being an in-person meeting as seven members are required to be present in person at the AGM to achieve quorum, and this is ordinarily held in August after the Board meeting.</p> <p>CX noted that there would be training on Strategy Setting provided to Board at the start of the meeting in June 2025. Board will also be asked to respond to a Doodle Poll on their availability for an all-day strategy setting meeting in late October / early November 2025.</p> <p>The Chair noted that they had an additional item of business which required staff to leave the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
Staff left the meeting at 6:39 p.m.	
13	Confidential Item – Chief Executive Pay Arrangements
	<p>Board considered the pay scales for the Chief Executive which had been set at the time of recruitment to the post in 2021/2022 and noted that the final spinal point allocated in the current pay structure would result in pay which is a small percentage higher than the membership body benchmark used for all roles in Atrium Homes.</p> <p>Board noted that CX had indicated their willingness for this final spinal point to be removed which would mean that their pay was comparable to those for other roles in the organisation.</p> <p>Board approved this change to the CX's pay scale.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
14	Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday 29 April 2025 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom
	The meeting closed at 7:05 p.m.

Chair:

Date: 29 April 2025