

ATRIUM HOMES

Minutes of Meeting of the Board held on Tuesday 28 February 2023

At 6:00 p.m. at 14 Central Avenue and via Zoom

Present: Joe Keen, Carolyn Hope, Steven Fraser, Julie Templeton, Alan White, Craig Leitch, Maureen Gimby, Ron Sharpe

Attending: Joyce McCroskie, Director of Operations (DoO), Barry Lees, Director of Investment (Dol), Shannon Watson, Chief Executive (CX)

Chair: Joe Keen

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.

Confirmed

Item	
1	Apologies
	Dominic O'Donnell, Alistair Reid, Ken Tudhope
2	Declarations of Interest
	Staff attending declared an interest in items 7 and 8
3	Minutes of Meeting on 31 January 2023
	The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 31 January 2023 were reviewed and approved. <i>Approved for publication</i>
4	Matters Arising
4.a	Board noted the updates given on actions arising from previous meetings, and progress made to date. <i>Noted</i>
4.b	Board noted that Atrium is up to date with all compliance requirements. <i>Noted</i>
5	Applications for membership
	Board noted that applications for membership received from two individuals were put to the meeting and the Board approved these. <i>Approved</i>
6	Draft Budget for 2023/24 and Business Plan Review
	Board considered the draft budgets presented to the meeting as well as the update provided around the key objectives of the business plan which was approved in August 2021. CX noted the key assumptions made in the draft budgets, particularly the 5% rent increase approved by Board on 31 January 2023. CX further noted that the draft budgets had been shared with RBS to facilitate the finalisation of the relaxation of the Interest Cover Covenant required for 2023/24, which will enable phase 3 of the Homes Fit For 21 st Century Living Standard (HFF21CLS) works to be completed. Board noted the update provided to the key objectives of the business plan, with an update on numbers of properties upgraded to date under the HFF21CLS programme, the number of properties planned to be upgraded in 2023/24 and the number of properties still awaiting upgrades. Board noted the summary of the 2021/22 customer satisfaction survey results which had previously been reported to the meeting in January 2022 and which were provided as an

	<p>update to the results included in the business plan. Board noted that the satisfaction score for Opportunities to Participate in Decision-Making had fallen and that the survey had been carried out during a period impacted on by COVID restrictions; this is a key score for Atrium however and CX confirmed that opportunities to improve our communication with tenants and how we involve them in decisions are at the forefront of staff's minds.</p> <p>Board approved the draft budgets for 2023/24 and noted the updates to the business plan provided.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
<i>Items 7 and 8 were moved to the end of the meeting</i>	
9	Update to Nationwide Loans Mandate
	<p>CX introduced the paper advising that, due to staff changes, an updated mandate is presented for Board approval.</p> <p>Board considered and approved the mandate.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
10	Eviction Approval
	<p>Board considered the information provided regarding the proposed eviction of a tenant. It was noted that substantial efforts had been made to contact the tenant and that the decision to evict was not taken lightly.</p> <p>Board approved the proposal to commence eviction proceedings.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
11	Finance, Audit & Staffing Sub-Committee
11.a	<p>Board noted the minutes of the Finance, Audit & Staffing Sub-Committee meeting held on 13 February 2023 were a good summary of matters considered during the meeting.</p> <p>Board noted the discussion which had taken place in the meeting around the Internal Audit report on Contract Management and the updated responses which reflect the CX's plans to implement a comprehensive Scheme of Delegated Authority document which will include all aspects of Atrium's business in one central document.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
11.b	<p>Board noted the contents of the Strategic Risk Register including the items which had been highlighted due to risk assessments changing as a result of changes in circumstances both internally and externally. Board also welcomed the new summary sheet which groups the strategic risks and shows how they impacted on the Strategic Objectives of the Business Plan.</p> <p>Board further noted that the Finance & IT Manager, who has a background in Risk Management within a large corporate entity, has been tasked with carrying out a detailed update to the Strategic Risk Register for presentation to FASSC at the August 2023 meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
11.c	<p>Board noted the content of the Quarterly Performance Report to 31 December 2022 and approved this.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
12	Investment Sub-Committee
	<p>Board noted that the minutes of the Investment Sub-Committee meeting held on 7 February 2023 were a good summary of the matters considered during the meeting.</p> <p>Board asked whether the delays experienced in the Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard works programme were contributing to the increased volume of Reactive Repairs</p>

	<p>being experienced, and it was noted that a detailed analysis of trends was being undertaken by management.</p> <p>Dol noted that all staff have undergone training on the common causes of condensation, damp and mould in tenants' homes, and were briefed on the steps Atrium is taking to manage and monitor these cases. All staff are aware of the risks and warning signs and so will assist Atrium to identify cases as early as possible when visiting tenants' homes.</p> <p>It was noted that the risk of condensation, damp and mould becoming a problem in tenants' homes was not just limited to our older stock, as many tenants are struggling to afford to turn the heating on at present and so their houses will be colder.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
13	Operations Sub-Committee
	<p>Board noted that the minutes of the Investment Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 February 2023 were a good summary of the matters considered during the meeting.</p> <p>Board noted that, despite the challenges being faced by tenants, it is encouraging that arrears levels still remain low due staff members' efforts. Board noted that staff have secured funding of £140k from various sources which is being used to support tenants who are struggling with the cost of living.</p> <p>Board further noted that a decision has been made by East Ayrshire Council that it will fund 56 days' void loss incurred by RSLs on properties which have been held for rehousing Ukrainian refugees.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
14	Health & Safety (standing item)
	<p>Dol noted that there were no incidents to report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
15	Any Other Competent Business
	<p>JK noted that the CX's and Chairs of the Eydent group had met on 20 February. The group now comprises Atrium, Shire, Ayrshire and Riverside Scotland, and the group had an initial conversation on challenges being faced by social landlords across Ayrshire and how we might collaborate more effectively. The CXs were tasked with meeting up separately to discuss practical ideas on collaboration.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Noted</i></p>
<i>DoO and Dol left the meeting</i>	
7	Cost of Living Increase Pay Award for 2023/24
	<p>JK asked CX to stay to inform the Board of the updated budget assumptions and how these assumptions may affect any potential cost of living rise for staff, including CX being available to answer questions from the Board members on what the normal custom and practice arrangements are within Atrium Homes.</p> <p>Based on the information on the updated budget assumptions and other information provided, Board were happy to support a cost of living pay rise in line with the EVH negotiated deal as this was affordable within the budget which included a 5% rent increase.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>This decision will be finalised at the meeting on 28 March 2023.</i></p>
8	Changes to Pension Offering
	<p>CX answered questions from Board members to clarify that the addition of the DC pension scheme for auto enrolment was not removing any existing pension options for staff and that new starts who were in the DC scheme would be entitled to move to the CARE 120th pension scheme should they wish.</p>

	Based on the budget assumptions and other information provided, Board were happy to support the addition of the DC salary exchange scheme as a pension option for staff, and to fund the cost of the provision of 3 x life cover. <i>Approved</i>
16	Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 6:00 p.m. <i>Noted</i>
	The meeting closed at 7:25 p.m.