

ATRIUM HOMES

Minutes of Meeting of the Board held on Tuesday 31 January 2023

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

Present: Joe Keen, Alistair Reid, Carolyn Hope, Steven Fraser, Julie Templeton, Alan White, Craig Leitch, Dominic O'Donnell, Ron Sharpe (after item 3)

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
	Ken Tudhope and Maureen Gimby
2	Declarations of Interest
	JT and RS noted that as tenants, they have a conflict of interest in item 7
3	Appointment of Board Member
	Board were advised that Ron Sharpe had applied to join the Board. Board agreed that Ron would be a welcome addition to the Board and approved him joining as a Co-Optee. Following this item, Ron was formally admitted to the meeting. <i>Approved</i>
4	Minutes of Meeting on 29 November 2022
	The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 29 November 2022 were reviewed and approved. <i>Approved for publication</i>
5	Matters Arising
5.a	Board noted the updates given on actions arising from previous meetings, and progress made to date. <i>Noted</i>
5.b	Board noted that Atrium is up to date with all compliance requirements. <i>Noted</i>
6	Applications for membership
	Board noted that applications for membership received from nine individuals were put to the meeting and the Board approved these. <i>Approved</i>
7	Annual Rent Review
	Board considered the report on the outcomes of the consultation exercise, together with the detailed financial information previously provided to Board on cost pressures being experienced by Atrium and the potential impact on planned investment in tenants' homes of a capped rent increase being applied to tenants' rents. Tenants were consulted in December and January on rent increases of 5% or 7%, with a clear message being given that annual investment in tenants' homes would need to be capped

	<p>and that in particular the Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard (HFF21CLS) work programme would need to be slowed down in order to facilitate capped rent increases.</p> <p>Board noted that due to a concerted effort by staff to promote participation by tenants in the consultation, Atrium received 226 responses (18.7% of our tenants, compared to a 9% response rate in the previous year). 15.93% of respondents supported a 7% increase, 62.39% supported a 5% rent increase and 21.68% did not support either of the increases.</p> <p>Board members also noted the feedback which had been received from tenants and received an assurance from staff that where comments required a response, appropriate action had been taken by team members.</p> <p>CX noted that in January the organisation had been advised that its property insurance premiums might rise by more than previously expected in 2023/24; this information was received after the consultation documents had been issued to tenants. CX therefore asked Board to consider a rent increase of 6%, as the additional income this generated might limit the detrimental impact of the increased insurance cost on future investment in tenants' homes.</p> <p>The Chair asked members in turn for their views before leading a general discussion on the matter. Board members agreed that tenants are facing a number of challenges, coping with the current increased cost of living. Board also acknowledged that Atrium had experienced delays in delivering its HFF21CLS programme in the last few years stemming from the impact of COVID and other wider economic influences.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that a 7% rent increase would provide more income to assist Atrium to cope with uncertainty around rising costs and enable it to invest more in tenants' homes, but Board wished to keep rents as low as possible for the coming year.</p> <p>Board therefore approved a 5% increase to rental charges for residential and garage properties.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
8	<p>Reactive Maintenance and Void Works Procurement</p> <p>Board noted the contents of the report and progress made to date on procuring the reactive maintenance services and void works within Area 2.</p> <p>Board approved delegating authority to staff to conclude the contract requirements in order to achieve implementation of the new contract arrangements with effect from 1 April 2023.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
9	<p>Policy Review</p> <p>Board noted the contents of the report and the update provided on policy review timings, particularly for the Common Allocations Policy, the timetable of which is driven by East Ayrshire Council which is the lead organisation within this partnership arrangement.</p> <p>Board considered the new Data Protection Policy tabled and approved its implementation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>
10	<p>Schedule of Future Board and Sub-Committee Meetings</p> <p>Board reviewed the proposed schedule of meetings for the 2023/24 year and discussed the current arrangements and proposed changes. CX noted an update to the June meeting date provided ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>Board agreed that the Board meetings would continue to take place outwith office hours, and the schedule of dates was approved.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Approved</i></p>

11	Managing Condensation, Damp and Mould
	Board noted the report provided which set out the organisation's current approach to managing cases of condensation, damp and mould. It was noted that more detailed reporting on these cases would be provided to the Investment Sub-Committee within its delegated remit to oversee SHQS compliance and Landlord Responsibilities for Health & Safety. <i>Noted</i>
12	Eviction Update
	Board noted the update provided by the Operations Team with regards to one case previously approved. <i>Noted</i>
13	Public Holidays April 2023 to March 2024
	Board noted the schedule of public holidays for 2023/24 and that the organisation would ensure that the normal out of hours arrangements are in place on the days that the office is closed. <i>Noted</i>
14	Health & Safety (standing item)
	CX noted that there were no incidents to report. <i>Noted</i>
15	Any Other Competent Business
	None noted
16	Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 28 February 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
	<i>Noted</i>
	The meeting closed at 7:28 p.m.