

ATRIUM HOMES

Minutes of Meeting of the Board held on Tuesday 31 March 2020 at 2.00pm Via ZOOM

Present: Joe Keen, Jim O'Neill, Graham Piggott, Alistair Reid, Ken Stewart, Marie Coyle, David Sherlock, Ken Tudhope (from Item 3)

Attending: Stephen Black, Chief Executive; Celia Taylor, Director of Investment; Joyce McCroskie, Director of Operations; Valerie Wilson Head of Finance & Corporate Services; and Shelley Hunter, PA/Corporate Administrator.

Observing: Ken Tudhope (Items 1 & 2 only)

Apologies: Angela Milloy

Chair: Joe Keen

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

It was noted that all Board members were audible and visible to each other.

Confirmed

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1. Advice Note on Board Decision Making

Board was invited to note the content of the report, which contained options for decision-making at Board level during the COVID-19 crisis.

Noted

2. Confirmation of New Board Member – Ken Tudhope

Board was invited to appoint Ken Tudhope to the Board of Atrium Homes to fill a casual vacancy, until the next AGM and note the position in relation to three other prospective Board members.

Approved/Noted

3. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Angela Milloy.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Board Meeting on 25 February 2020 – The minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the Board held on 25 February 2020 were submitted for approval.

In response to questions staff advised that one of the flood damaged properties is complete and was handed over before the office shut down. The two remaining properties are in the final stages and will be returned as soon as the businesses are operational again.

Page 2, item 4.1 the heading should read Finance, Staffing & Audit Sub Committee Meeting.

There being no further comments or questions, the Board approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting and approved them for publication.

Approved for publication

5. Application of Rent Increase & Mitigation

Board considered the application of the rent increase and determined that the increase should proceed as planned. Board confirmed Atrium's Business Plan for the next few years remains focused on delivering "Home Fit for 21st Century Living Standard" Works across the stock. This work has started in several areas and although temporarily affected by Covid-19 restrictions, will recommence as soon as restrictions are lifted. Our tenants have been promised these improvement works, (which are linked closely to our short and longer term income stream projections and therefore rent increases), and when the current situation passes will expect them to be delivered.

The Board understands that this is a difficult time for some tenants who are being severely impacted by the economic effects of the Covid-19 crisis. Atrium has always helped tenants to manage their rent commitments through tenancy support, welfare advice and financial inclusion services – and we will continue to do this for all our tenants who require it through this difficult time. In addition, Board determined that we will consider other ways in which we can mitigate individual situations of financial hardship going forward, utilising our own resources.

Staff were remitted to look at this in more detail.

Approved/remitted to staff

6. Atrium Homes Final Budget

6.1 Board was reminded that the draft Budget presented in February was to be updated and returned for approval to Board in March. This report presented the revised 2020/21 budget for Board to consider and approve. The report highlighted key variances from the current business plan and previous draft budget. The key points from the budget were:

- The budget shows that the organisation will be fully covenant compliant,
- Gearing ratio is expected to reduce from 61% to 60%,
- The levels of cash balances are budgeted at £4.8m.
- An operating surplus of £1,539k is budgeted. This surplus is required to ensure compliance with the interest cover covenant which is calculated after adding back depreciation and deducting capitalised expenditure.

Board was invited to approve the budget for the financial year 2020/21.

Approved

7. Furloughing of Staff during Covid-19 Crisis

Board was invited to note the contents of the paper and to consider whether it wishes to begin furloughing staff due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Board considered the recommendations by the senior management team and in depth discussions took place. Staff answered Boards queries including:

- What are other Registered Social Landlords doing in this situation

- The possibility of rotating staff to be furloughed if the situation continues for a longer period of time
- Would this be considered a notifiable event

Following in depth discussion, Board agreed to the furloughing of required staff and gave delegated authority to the Executive Team to start looking at ways to implement it. It was agreed that the Executive Team will consult with Board before any final decisions are made or discussions with affected staff take place.

Approved

In response to questions, Staff advised that a separate decision on furloughing would be required by the Board of Atrium Initiatives.

Noted

8. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 15.45pm.

Chair:

Date: