

# Eildon Public Board Minutes

Meeting: Board Meeting of Eildon Housing Association Ltd.

Date: Wednesday 18 August 2021

Time: 5:35pm

Location: Weaving Shed / Virtual

Present: Mr D Alexander (Chair), Mr R Beardsley, Ms A Ballantyne, Ms C Fancy, Mr P Gilbert (virtual), Ms A Harvie (virtual), Ms E McHugh, Mr A Lundmark (virtual), Dr A Mordue, Mr E Swinton and Ms C Younger.

Attendance: Mr N Istephan, Chief Executive & Company Secretary (CEO)  
Ms L Mirley, Director Business Support (DBS)  
Ms A Miller, Director Community Services (DCS)  
Mr N Wilson-Prior, Director Property Assets (DPA)  
Ms S Spence, Governance Officer (GO)

Presided: Mr D Alexander

Ref	Subject
<b>Board Items</b>	
<b>21.08.01</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b> The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Mr Highton.
<b>21.08.102</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> None.
<b>21.08.103</b>	<b>Minutes for Approval</b> The minutes of the Board meeting held on 9 June 2021 were then approved as an accurate record on the motion of Ms Fancy and seconded by Mr Swinton.
<b>21.08.104</b>	<b>Action Points &amp; Matters Arising.</b>  Presented by: CEO CEO advised the improvements on recording Performance Indicators will be actioned for Q2 meeting on 10 November 2021. Outcome: The Board noted the paper.
<b>21.08.105</b>	<b>The Board's Minutes, Seals, Registers and Books</b>  Presented by: CEO CEO reported this paper is to confirm to the Board that over the course of the reporting year 2020/21, we have complied with our Model Rules with respect to our administration of Board Minutes, use of Seal and keeping of our Registers and Books. In addition, following auditors' recommendations, we have expanded this report to summarise Data Protection, GDPR and Freedom of Information issues. Outcome: The Board noted the paper.

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21.08.106	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety Policy – Statement of Intent</b></p> <p>Presented by: CEO CEO advised that Eildon now has a dedicated Health &amp; Safety Manager, who is responsible for the Statement of Intent. Board members discussed the mechanisms of reporting Health &amp; Safety. Outcome: The Board noted the arrangements recently put in place with respect to Health &amp; Safety matters and approved the content of the ‘Statement of Intent’.</p>
21.08.107	<p><b>Updates on Short Life Working Groups</b></p> <p>Presented by DPA and CEO respectively.</p> <p><b>Sustainability – Existing Homes and New Developments</b> DPA reported the working groups had met over two meetings and worked well and have covered sustainability principles and agreed the level of activity required.</p> <p><b>Board Portal</b> CEO reported that the SLWG had agreed the preferred platform for a Board Portal would be to use Office 365 and is deciding on a range of functions expected on the portal.</p> <p><b>Board Away Day</b> CEO reported the first meeting had been held and the Away Day is being planned to be held in Peebles Hydro.</p>
<b>Strategic Items for Discussion/Approval</b>	
21.08.201	<p><b>Q1 2021/22 Financial Report and Management Accounts</b></p> <p>Presented by DBS The main points discussed by Board members were:</p> <p><b>Development Programme:</b> DPA and team are closely monitoring the programme.</p> <p><b>Staffing Costs:</b> DBS advised there has been an increase in staff costs due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• temporary staff costs to cover long term absences and additional workload pressures due to the scale of work ongoing in Eildon</li> <li>• Pay related costs linked to staff rates of pay</li> <li>• Budget assumptions for Dovecot and Wilkie Gardens compared with the changes highlighted in the budget.</li> <li>• One off costs of Dovecot and Wilkie Gardens connected to staff recruitment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Reactive and Relet Repairs:</b> Spend on repairs had been amended due to the rise in average costs per property and this trend will be investigated further.</p> <p><b>IT Costs:</b> had been brought forward to enable tenants to make online rent payments during the pandemic restrictions.</p>

Ref	Subject
	<p>Outcome: On the motion of Mr Beardsley and seconded by Ms McHugh, the Board approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Q1 Management Accounts</li> <li>• The revised estimated out-term for 2021/22</li> </ul>
21.08.202	<p><b>Q1 Development &amp; Treasury Management Report</b></p> <p>Presented by: DPA</p> <p>With no further questions Board members noted site work had continued at a slower pace due to the pandemic restrictions and future tenders are expected to have increased costs and will be reported on.</p> <p>Outcome: The Board noted the movement in the development programme and agreed the extension of the programme.</p>
21.08.203	<p><b>Q1 Performance Report 2021/22</b></p> <p>Presented by CEO</p> <p>CEO highlighted the main points of the Q1 Performance Report as:</p> <p><b>Policy Register:</b> The Policy Register Framework is being reviewed to allow greater visibility of the status of each policy within the framework.</p> <p><b>Relet times:</b> are returning to a normal level..</p> <p><b>Staff Attendance:</b> has declined although this is attributable to 7 long-term cases that are monitoring closely.</p> <p><b>Rent Arrears:</b> Good progress has been made on collecting rent arrears.</p> <p>There were no questions raised by Board members.</p> <p>Outcome: The Board noted the contents of the paper and the Quarter 1 Performance Booklet.</p>
<b>Other items for Board Approval/Noting</b>	
21.08.301	<p><b>Customer Complaints Annual Review 2020/21</b></p> <p>Presented by CEO</p> <p>CEO advised with the launch of the Customer Experience Hub and the addition of a Customer Experience Manager.</p> <p>The main points of the review discussed by Board members were:</p> <p><b>Increase in complaints:</b> In comparison to 2019/20 there has been an increase in complaints recorded and this can be attributed to expressions of dissatisfactions being included as complaints as a change of recording.</p> <p><b>Average Days to Complete:</b> The average number of days to complete complaints has reduced from 4.39 days to 3.17 days.</p> <p><b>Complaints Procedures:</b> The revised SPSO complaints procedure was adopted in December 2020 and training on this has been delivered and built into the induction for new staff members.</p> <p>Outcome: The Board noted the Complaints Review for 2020/21.</p>

Ref	Subject
<b>21.08.302</b>	<p><b>Care and Repair Annual Report 2020/21</b></p> <p>Presented by: DPA DPA advised the Care and Repair Contract with Scottish Borders Council is under negotiation. Board members noted their compliments of the Care and Repair service and its cost-effective way to help towards tenancy sustainment. Outcome: The Board noted the outputs of Borders Care and Repair over the previous financial year.</p>
<b>21.08.303</b>	<p><b>Customer Engagement Strategy Update</b></p> <p>Presented by: DCS Following the presentation there were no further questions or discussion from Board members. Outcome: The Board noted the progress in the review of the Customer Engagement Strategy and approved the revised review date of February 2023.</p>
<b>21.08.304</b>	<p><b>Extra Care Housing Project Plan Update</b></p> <p>Presented by: DCS DCS highlighted three main points from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed the Care Inspectorate Registration will be ready for 31 August.</li> <li>• Revised tenant charges for Dovecot Court, will be applied from 13 August.</li> <li>• The formation of a short life working group to design a care service reporting framework to be presented to November Board</li> </ul> <p>Outcome: The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted the project plan update and progress set out in the covering report.</li> <li>• Discussed and nominated four Board members to join the 'Performance Framework in Care Services' short life working group.</li> </ul>
<b>21.08.305</b>	<p><b>Legal Actions – Rent Arrears</b></p> <p>Presented by DCS. Board members noted the two cases where approval is required to seek Decree for Eviction and the similarities between these difficult cases.</p> <p>Outcome: The Board approved the Decree to Evict if the agreements put in place are not maintained.</p> <p><b>NB</b> With the length of time of the Board meeting reaching 2hours 30mins the Chair asked Board members if they wished to continue for a further 30 minutes in accordance with the Standing Orders. Board members agreed to continue the meeting for an additional 30 minutes to complete items on the agenda.</p>

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	<b>Legal Actions – Update Report</b>  Presented by DCS The Board noted the progress with regard to the legal action cases included within the report.
21.08.306	<b>Tenancy Related Write Offs</b>  Presented by: DCS DCS explained a more detailed report on Rent Arrears will be presented at November Board. With no further questions;- The Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted the balance of arrears and credit/prepayments written off under delegated authority.</li> <li>• Noted the balance of arrears at key stages of the recovery process.</li> <li>• Approved the write off of £8,495.78 of former tenant debt – (after writing back the credit adjustment £875.59).</li> </ul>
<b>Other Eildon Group Business</b>	
21.08.401	<b>EEL AGM</b>  Presented by: Ms Younger as Chair of EEL AGM Mr Alexander had nominated Ms Younger to Chair. Outcomes: Ms Younger advised that at the AGM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board had considered and approved the Annual Financial Statements.</li> <li>• Approved the appointment of the auditors.</li> <li>• Confirmed Board membership, to be ratified by EHA Board as Mr Alexander, Mr Lundmark, Ms Harvie, Ms Younger.</li> </ul> <b>EEL Board 18 August 2021</b> Ms Younger advised that EEL Board had adopted the Management Accounts and Mr Lundmark had accepted the nomination by Ms Harvie to continue as Chair of EEL for 2021/22.
<b>Standard Items</b>	
21.08.501	<b>Disposal of Land/Property</b> None
21.08.502	<b>Payments &amp; Benefits</b> A relative of a member of staff had been offered a tenancy.
21.08.503	<b>List of Signings and Use of Seal</b> None
21.08.504	<b>Guidance Notes</b> None
21.08.505	<b>Membership Applications</b> None

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21.08.6.01	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Office Refurbishment</b> CEO work was due to commence end of August, with a completion date of 15 November.</li> <li>• A Board member raised a couple of points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Referring to new Scottish Government recommendation for Fire Risk Assessments, how was Eildon responding to this. The DPA responded that we were engaged with the SFHA and our advisers on these issues and will ensure that we remain fully compliant.</li> <li>○ Highlighted that they are aware of a new grant programme to support zero carbon improvements to existing social housing. The DPA responded that we are aware of this opportunity and are investigating the possibility of a bid, including a potential joint bid with local RSLs in collaboration with Warmworks.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>With no further business to discuss the Chair closed the meeting at 8.35pm</p>

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David Alexander, Chairman