

Cloch Housing Association

Minutes of Board Meeting held on Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 6.00pm At Cloch Offices and Online (Zoom)

Present via Teams: Brian Corrigan (Chair), Kelly Ferns (Vice-Chair), Eleanor Robertson, David Brown, Jackie Smith, Eileen Tamburrini

Attending in the office: Paul McVey (Director)
Louise Carlin (Head of Housing Services)
Shonaid Musgrove (Corporate Services Officer – Minutes)
Carolyne Swinney (Corporate Services Assistant – observer)

Attending Via Teams: Liz Bowden (Head of Corporate Services)
Paul McColgan (Head of Property Services)

1.	<p>Nominations for the post of Chair and Vice-Chair</p> <p>The Chair intimated that, due to a change in career, he would have to stand down from this position and that this meeting would be his last as Chair.</p> <p>The Board was advised that nominations for a Chair to stand in until the Annual General Meeting in September would now be sought.</p> <p>K Ferns (the current Vice-Chair) was nominated, seconded and approved for the position of Chair. This was accepted, and now left the position of Vice-Chair vacant. The Director intimated that the Board had been made aware of this situation previously and that H Thomson had indicated willingness to be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair. As there had been no other nominations H Thomson's appointment was approved in her absence.</p> <p>This left the position of Secretary to fill as H Thomson had been the Secretary. After some discussion and a nomination being declined the role was offered and accepted by E Tamburrini.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The following positions had been nominated, proposed and seconded according to the Rules and to be in place until September's AGM.</p> <p>Chair: K Ferns Vice Chair: H Thomson Secretary: E Tamburrini</p>
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2.	<p>Apologies & Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Apologies had been received from A Hutchison, H Thomson, P Marshall, K Robertson and S Skelton.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes of Meeting – 26 April 2022</p> <p>The Minute was approved.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Minute had been proposed, seconded and approved as a true record.</p>
3.1	<p>Finance & Corporate Services Sub-Committee – 2 June 2022</p> <p>The HofCS gave a verbal update of the main points of the meeting: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT support remains with existing company; Tecnica. • Factoring debt figures continue to be good. • Treasury Management and Quarter 4 accounts were approved. • Internal Audit action plan was discussed. • Significant changes made to the Flexible Working Policy that now encompasses Flexi/TOIL and the new rules that need to be followed. Also, clarification between part time working and job share working. • Two new policies discussed: Succession and Appropriate Documents (related to Data Protection policy). • FOI statistics for the year • Private & Confidential session. <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the verbal report.</p>
3.2	<p>Housing & Property Services Sub-Committee – 25 May 2022</p> <p>The HofPS reported on the following points from the meeting: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Board invited to the start of the meeting to discuss the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) that was presented, and approved. • The Head of Housing had left the organisation at this point and new postholder had attended although not officially in post yet until 1 June. • The Senior Housing Officer carried out the housing reports. • Lettings Plan and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults & Children policy had been approved.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the contract for reactive repairs and window contract had been provided. • After consultation with the Sub-Committee the timing of the meetings going forward will revert to a 6pm start time. <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the verbal report.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Matters Arising & Outstanding Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Kings Glen covered in the Director’s Report. • Clarification on the mileage allowances for electric cars. • Bid in for additional resources for the tenancy sustainment post. <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Performance & Risk (Business Plan)</p> <p>The Director spoke to the Board based on the reports that had been issued. The key headlines were as follows:</p> <p><u>Operational Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relet time reducing but figures being compared with those during covid times; the housing team will be looking to reduce this further. • Non-technical arrears still very low but some issues with legal action still problematic. • Emergency repairs completed on time is high at 95% but still hope to improve on that. • Gas safety inspection on time has failed to achieve the 100% but relates to Covid and not getting access. • Finance - all loan covenants met and staff costs down. • Corporate Services - absenteeism levels will come down now as had 3 long term absences last year: with no current long-term absences to report at present. • Board attendance good at 85%. <p><u>Strategic Priority Report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 areas to look at with changes proposed. Three of them are from the Tenants Satisfaction Survey (TSS) where results were down. Recommend doing another TSS in 2 years instead of the standard 3 years.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2 areas referred to % of homes meeting EESSH 2. Engaged Changeworks who are an energy consultant via SFHA to prepare a report. The HofPS will bring this to a future Board meeting. Changeworks say only 52% of existing stock would meet EESSH 2 requirements. Rest would fail on certain components. However, there is currently a review ongoing with EESSH, expected to know more in 2023. ➤ Net Zero – the Net Zero agenda and EESSH are not compatible, hence the review. ➤ Work on Social value is outstanding. Need to consider more partnership working to achieve this and this will be taken on later this year. <p><u>Risk Management Register</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements have changed as risks change. • <i>Significant change of Leadership</i> - this is now happening as staff move to new roles. The Senior Succession Policy and extensions to notice periods will hopefully mitigate the effect of this. • <i>Maximise the value of our assets (homes no longer fit for purpose)</i>. The Director stated this title should be renamed as very negative. The homes won't necessarily not be fit for purpose but due to extremely high tender costs being returned and issues with contractors, there may be some deferment of work. The Board will be advised of plans to tackle this issue in due course. <p>A Board member agreed that the “homes no longer fit for purpose” should be renamed as our ambition is to continue to provide quality homes. The Director noted that the risk has not changed but we could refer instead to adherence to the asset management strategy.</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>The Director to add in the new risk/amendment as mentioned above.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the report and agreed with the proposed realignment of strategic priority targets.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Annual Complaints Report</p> <p>The new HoHS took the Board through the report highlighting the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report is up to 31 March 2022 and summarises all the complaints received; 611 in total. • Difficult to compare like-for-like figures as complaints increased substantially during Covid when some services were not in place.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloch record all intimations of dissatisfaction as a complaint. • Some delays to responses as awaiting information from other agencies (eg the police). • Bulk of complaints are recorded against reactive repairs contractor. • Some complaints made against staff but nothing major. • Increase in number of complaints against our gas contractor. Issues with new portal development and slippages as a result. • The housing association sector as a whole has experienced a higher volume of complaints. • 2 SPSO complaints; not been upheld. • Solutions – working with gas contractor to improve performance and staff training on (a) difficult conversations, (b) debt collection and (c) resilience. <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Loan Portfolio return to Scottish Housing Regulator</p> <p>The Director spoke to the report that had been prepared by our Finance Consultant. He explained that this is an annual report that has to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by 30 June 2022. It relates to our loan funding position on 31 March 2022. The Director explained that Appendix 1 of the report gives an extract of the loan portfolio.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board proposed, seconded and approved the Loan Portfolio for onward submission to the SHR.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Employee Engagement Survey Outputs</p> <p>The Director made a presentation to the Board on the outcomes from the staff survey, which had been completely anonymous. He advised this presentation had also been made to the staff at the recent staff meetings. The key points to note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 staff did not understand the role of the Board; this could be newer members of staff. This will be an action for us. • Majority of staff felt supported and encouraged. • Learning & Development – most agreed they had access to this. • Inclusion & Fair Treatment - staff felt they were treated with dignity and respect. • Workload – most agreed this was manageable. Some comments were (1) staff absences made this harder, (2) better now with 3 area teams in housing.

- Pay & Benefits – majority agreed these were good.
- Future intentions – 86% stated they saw themselves working for Cloch for at least the next 3 years.
- Discrimination, bullying & harassment – no staff indicated they had experienced this.
- Health & Safety/Welfare of staff – staff indicated that they thought this was good in Cloch; especially during the pandemic.
- General comments:
 - Higher preference for hybrid working - the Director advised that those that want to work from the office only can do so.
 - More should be done to deal with difficult customers - it could be this person does not understand the complex situations being dealt with.
 - Teams can be stretched at times - the Director acknowledged this.

The Director advised that in order to make a comparison of the results, our consultant used the Employee Index from the Civil Service list. Cloch's overall result scored 88%. No other department or organisation on the list scored this high. The nearest was 71% for the SHR. Education Scotland was 58% and OSCR (Scottish Charities Register) was 51%.

The Director advised that our results were excellent and that the next steps would be to form an Action Plan, and this would include things such as:

- ✓ See what we could do differently
- ✓ Explain the Board's role
- ✓ Explain policies to staff (e.g., Whistleblowing)

The Board were pleased with the results and the many positive comments that had been made. The Director stated that the morale of staff was good but this was also a reflection of the Board for their vision and values too. They wanted to bridge the gap between the Board and staff and plans were in place to address this (e.g., a staff/Board event such as bus trip) which would be for all staff but aimed at the newer members of staff. The HofCS confirmed that this would take place on 11 August 2022 and details would follow shortly.

ACTION

The HofCs to organise an event for 11 August 2022.

RESOLUTION

The Board noted the survey results.

<p>9.</p>	<p>Board Recruitment Policy</p> <p>The HofCS stated that there had been no covering report for this policy as there was only 1 change being proposed at item 4.4 – the use of social media and our website to promote Board recruitment.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board proposed, seconded and approved the change to the policy.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Director's report</p> <p>The Director made a presentation based on the report that had been circulated previously. The key points to note were: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First 3 bullet points redacted due to sensitive nature.</i> • Pensions update. Past service payments will cease on 30 September 2022 so we will not need to have this figure included in the budget until the next tri-annual valuation review. This will be in the region of a £300k saving. The results from the most recent review are due imminently. • Employee issues: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Senior Staff Succession policy was approved. ➤ We have advertised again for a Head of Finance post. It was decided that the finance team need the stability of a permanent member of staff. A Board member will be required to sit on the panel for this interview. ➤ New Head of Housing appointed and in post – L Carlin. ➤ Team Leader post now advertised. This being graded at EVH 6/7 as could be a development opportunity. ➤ 2 posts regraded due to the increased responsibilities of the posts and also require to give 12 weeks' notice period: up from 4 weeks. ➤ Moving to appoint a Modern Apprentice for the IT section. £10k funding been given as well as £10k for the graduate apprentice post which is now solely with Cloch (no longer jointly with OTHA). ➤ The Director has submitted his resignation. • Scottish Government/SHR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social Housing Net Zero fund – investigating whether this is something we can draw from. ➤ <i>This bullet point has been redacted as is of a sensitive nature.</i> ➤ The SHR has also been advised about the Chair's resignation and that the Vice-Chair is expected to step up. ➤ Disposals reported to SHR at Killearn Road. ➤ Board appraisals will be commencing soon with consultant. ➤ Kings Glen – final defects being carried out. Still some landscaping concerns but OTHA are on top of this.

	<p>The Director intimated that they were keen to progress quickly with the Safe as Houses initiative but would understand if the Board wished to delay this until the new Director was in post. The Board advised that they were happy to proceed with the project provided that the solicitors gave assurance that the Association would not be liable for any costs at this time. A Board member enquired if it was only Cloch that had been approached/considered. The Director replied that other housing associations had been considered but that Cloch was considered to be the best fit.</p> <p>RESOLUTION</p> <p>The Board noted the contents of the report.</p>
11.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>There was no other business.</p>
12.	<p>Reflections</p> <p>12.1 <u>AGM – 21 September 2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This bullet point redacted due to sensitive nature.</i> • The HofCS stated that the Association produces an Annual Report for the AGM which incorporates the final figures for the ARC, and these will not be ready until late August. • <i>This bullet point redacted due to sensitive nature.</i> • <i>This bullet point redacted due to sensitive nature.</i> <p><u>Hybrid Board Meetings</u></p> <p>Currently most Board members are attending remotely. The Director stated that recently there has only been 1 Board member at a time attending in the office. They suggested that it might be a good idea to have an office-based Board meeting so that the Board can meet face-to-face as some members have been appointed during the pandemic and have not been to the office.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a staff and Board event take place, perhaps next year.</p> <p>12.2 RESOLUTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AGM date to remain 21 September 2022. 2. Leadership Team to act collectively during the period of the Director leave and successor in post. 3. To take forward a joint staff/Board event for the future.

	The HofCS, HofHS and the CSA left the meeting at this point; 7.30pm.
	See separate minute for the Private & Confidential section.