GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

6.30PM – WEDNESDAY 20th MARCH 2024

AGENDA

1.	**APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**	(Report attached – *for action)*
2.	**MINUTES**	
2.1	Minute of Board of Management Meeting of 21/02/24	(Report attached – *for approval)*
2.2	Matters Arising from above Minute	
3.	**FINANCE & STAFFING MATTERS**	
3.1	Financial Report to 29/02/24	(Report to follow)
3.2	Arrears Report to 29/02/24	(Report attached – *for information*)
3.3	Pre-Audit Planning Memo	(Report attached – *for approval)*
3.4	Wages Ballot	(Report attached – *for action*)
4.	**HOUSING/ESTATE MANAGEMENT MATTERS**	
4.1	Window/Door Replacement Programme Update	(Verbal Report)
5.	**GOVERNANCE**	
5.1	Risk Management Review Session	(Report attached – *for action)*
5.2	Business Strategy Quarterly Review	(Report attached – *for discussion)*
6	**POLICY REVIEWS**	
6.1	Unacceptable Actions	(Report attached – *for approval)*
6.2	Dignity at Work	(Report attached – *for approval*)
6.3	Personal Relationships at Work	(Report attached – *for approval*)
6.4	Stress Management	(Report attached – *for approval*)
7	**AOCB**	

GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MINUTE OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING

WEDNESDAY 20th MARCH 2024

PRESENT:	G Ross (GR) - Chairperson J Smith (JS) J McArthur (JMc) A Crook (AC) S Garrioch (SG) S Thomson (ST)
IN ATTENDANCE:	A Dickie (AD) K Milne (KM) I Byers (IB) S Ahmed (SA) – PATH trainee

GR opened the meeting by welcoming (virtually), Richard Mackie and Sam Hennerley of RSM who would present their summary of the Risk Survey Questionnaire results – Agenda Item 5.1 was therefore pulled forward to the start of the meeting.

AD explained that Saj Ahmed, PATH trainee, was in attendance as an observer at this evening's meeting – as this forms part of his training with PATH. She also explained that Saj had been successful in attaining a job as a Housing Officer with Fife Council.

5.1 Risk Management Review Session

Richard Mackie took Board through the responses to the questions, which Board were familiar with.

Members were then referred to the Potential Risks Themes not covered in the current Risk Management Strategy and the Emerging Risk Radar, based on 194 survey responses from board members and professional advisors from across all industries (not just housing).

5.1.1 AC referred to mention of extreme weather at 3.2 Environmental risks on Page 37 and asked if any of Glen's stock at risk of floods. AD confirmed that Watt Crescent which sits next to the River Leven was considered so when the insurances were reviewed. AD added that it's not just flood risk that needs to be considered in terms of extremes of weather, we also need to take account of infrastructure in terms of roofs and run offs. Richard suggested this is where we should consider that insurances are fit for purpose as well as business continuity plans.

5.1.2 Board were asked to consider the list of Risks on Page 38, with the following agreed:

- Risk 19 – Mould – should now be incorporated into Operational Risk 3, Health & Safety.

AD referred to the scoring and asked how Board felt about changing the Target Risk Level column title to Future Risk Level, however much debate, it was decided that for the sake of semantics, this should remain as is.

5.1.3 Richard concluded the presentation by confirming the next steps are for him and Sam to work with AD, IB and KM to update the Risk Register with the emerging risks (as appropriate) and the resultant risk scoring.

Richard added that he is happy for AD to circulate his email address to Members, should they have any queries.

1. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies:	B Allan (BA) T Newman (TN) P Milne (PM) I Muirhead (IM)
Declarations of Interest:	BA emailed his comments in prior to the meeting, however as he is an employee of an EVH affiliated employer, he declared an interest in Agenda Item 3.4.

2. MINUTES

2.1 Minute of Board of Management Meeting 21/02/2024

The above Minute was proposed by AC, seconded by JMc and approved as a true record of the meeting.

2.2 Matters Arising from the above Minute

2.2.1 Item 2.2.1 - AD advised that she had spoken with A Berwick yesterday and he confirmed that he had been in consultation with Triodos and

CAF and both had suggested competitive indicative terms on what they are able to offer.

Triodos have confirmed they can offer a revolving credit, whilst CAF don't, however they do offer flexibility with drawdowns.

Board can anticipate a report to the April Board Meeting from A Berwick. The delay has been in part due to our Relationship Manager from Triodos being on holiday.

2.2.2 Item 2.2.2 – AD confirmed that Norah had started on 1st March as anticipated and seemed to be settling in fine.

2.2.3 Item 3.3.1 – IB confirmed that 65% of those that agreed with the rent increase, are in receipt of some form of assistance. AC thanked IB for this info.

2.2.4 Item 3.5 – IB advised that he had clarified the situation with the no. of DMEVs being fitted – where there is an existing fan in the WC, this will be replaced; the vast majority of our properties don't actually have an existing fan in this particular room due to its small floor area.

3. FINANCE AND STAFFING MATTERS

3.1 <u>Financial Report for the year to 29/02/2024</u>

AD presented this item, explaining that the delay in getting the report out to Members was due to the fact that Tracy had been concentrating on updating our Asset Register in time for the audit. TT had confirmed that there was nothing out of the ordinary and Members were referred to her detailed report accompanying the accounts. The accounts as presented were **approved.**

3.1.1 IB advised that an Energy Support Fund was made available to all RSLs a few weeks ago, with a short date to apply on behalf of tenants so there had been a intense effort to get the info out to tenants and applications in for the funding. JMc acknowledged this placed an additional burden on staff but better to be in that position than not.

IB explained that where we have been successful in clearing fuel debt for tenants, they are then referred on to Greener Kirkcaldy etc to help them out of that trap of getting back into debt.

SG asked about the mechanism for capturing tenants in need – IB advised that there is constant chat amongst staff on the best way to reach everyone. SG referred to the loss of corporate knowledge with the staff turnover and asked if some of this had been regained with these projects – IB countered this by explaining that, as time goes by, the corporate knowledge that was lost is likely to be no longer applicable.

3.1.2 AD advised that she had received an email from the Regulator in relation our Engagement Plan, (which remains 'compliant') – in the 5 Year Financial Projections last year we had indicated a cashflow funding requirement of £2m in 24/25. Consequently, SHR are asking for an update on the borrowing requirement for 24/25 and our latest monthly cash flows to 31 March 2025 – to be sent by 30/04/2024.

3.2 Arrears Report to 29/02/2024

IB presented this report which was **approved.**

3.2.1 Present Tenant Arrears

IB referred to the decrease and confirmed that this included a £1000 Aberlour fund that Ben had applied for on behalf of one of our tenants. Board expressed thanks to Ben and his Housing Management colleagues in all but reaching the target %.

IB cautioned that the arrears may rise again in April as a result of the rent increase being applied – many people forget to amend their standing orders accordingly.

3.3 Pre-Audit Planning Memo

AD presented this report. Board confirmed they had reviewed the content of the Memo and were happy to **approve** this report.

3.4 Wages Ballot

AD presented this report. Board **approved** the proposal of an increase of 6% on all salary points from 1st April 2024, for one year. AD to submit the ballot paper accordingly.

AD confirmed that although the office cleaner is an independent contractor, they are paid more than the Real Living Wage of £12 per hour.

4 HOUSING/ESTATE MANAGEMENT MATTERS

4.1 Window/Door Replacement Programme Update

IB gave a verbal update on the programme:

- Pilot property now complete – lot of learning points from it, however, that was to be expected. IB confirmed the tenants had provided very positive feedback in terms of the difference the new windows had made; nothing to report on the new ventilation so far.

- Revised start date for the first phase – 08/04/24. Delay in obtaining materials which has been caused by the profile of the window design (fully reversible – currently, we have fully reversible and tilt & turn), as well as the colour choice (rosewood – not a popular colour so equipment has to be reset to accommodate this).

- IB advised that the latest building regulations dictate a different style of window in some properties (fixed pane at bottom, depending on size of window and height from the ground), and he reiterated how beneficial it has been having the technical experience from Changeworks.

5. GOVERNANCE

5.2 Business Strategy Quarterly Review

AD presented this report which was noted, with the following discussed

Priority 1 – Zero Carbon/Energy Efficiency Agenda

5.2.1 AD advised that she had tried to re-contact Keep Scotland Beautiful earlier in the day to no avail. The plan, if they can do it, and at an affordable cost, is for bespoke accredited training for up to 15 attendees.

5.2.2 With reference to item 1.6 – secure necessary finance/funding – AD referred to previous discussions around the whole house retrofit funding application and confirmed the intention is to await the outcome of the finance review from A Berwick before going ahead with an application through Changeworks.

GR referred to the potential for Allia funding which AD explained as government funding for which you don't require to give security, however, that security does need to be available – this is one of the potentials to be considered with A Berwick.

6. POLICY REVIEWS

IB presented the following 4 reviewed policies for approval:

6.1 Unacceptable Actions Policy

Approved as presented.

6.2 Dignity at Work Policy

Approved as presented.

6.3 Personal Relationships at Work Policy

ST expressed concerns around ensuing tribunals where termination of employment has to be resorted to. IB reminded members that this is a model EVH policy and in any such circumstance, we would defer to them for advice which would minimise any risk to the Association.

Approved with the following amendments:

6.3.1 Item 1 – Definitions

Personal Relationship – this should be slightly reworded for clarity to:

For the purposes of this policy, the term personal relationships is defined as any relationship, from close friendship through to 'being in a relationship together.'

6.3.2 Item 4 - You Can Expect Glen Housing Association:

First bullet point should be reworded for clarity to:

to treat any information concerning a personal relationship connected to your work in the strictest of confidence. If you are staff or volunteers of the Association, this will also be recorded on both personal files.

6.4 Stress Management Policy

Approved as presented.

6.4.1 Item 8.2 – Reactive Measures – Managing Individual Stress Concerns

ST asked about reasonable adjustments within the attendance and absence management policies for stress related absences – IB confirmed that there is enough flexibility within the procedures to deal with stress related absences.

7. AOCB

7.1 GR raised the news that Fife Council is expected to declare a housing emergency imminently. Much discussion ensued around the impact this will have on the Association with IB summarising as follows:

By declaring a housing emergency, Fife Council will have to develop an action plan; this may force Housing Associations to increase their allocations to Homeless applicants. It could be argued that this is self-perpetuating, with more people declaring themselves homeless to increase their chances.

A number of other Councils have declared a housing emergency, Argyll & Bute Council were the first to declare one and with Edinburgh and Glasgow and now Fife, this will put more pressure on the Scottish Government.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.20pm