THE RIVERSIDE GROUP LIMITED

IRVINE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Thirty Second Annual General Meeting of the Irvine Housing Association held at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 16 September 2025 at the Fullarton Connexions Community Centre, Church Street, Irvine and via MS Teams

Unconfirmed Minutes

Present:

Mr J. Strang (Chair), Mrs M. Burgess, Mr G. Darroch, Mrs J. Deans-Regan, Mrs J. Galbraith, Miss S. Greene, Ms C. McGuinness, Mrs J. Mason, Mr P. Mason (T) and Mr J. Miller.

In attendance were: Mr G. Naylor, Mrs D. Boyle, Ms H. Duff, Mrs P. Forrest, Ms P. McEvoy, Ms L. Worrall (T) and Ms P. Sutch (T).

Apologies for Absence

Mr R. Hill, Mr B. Sadler, Mrs S. Petrie, Mr A. West and Ms E. Kerr.

1. **Preliminaries**

a) Quorum

Mr G. Naylor welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting and, in accordance with the Rules, confirmed that a quorum of 8 was present.

b) Election of Chair

Mr Naylor advised that in accordance with Rule 26a), the current Chair should preside as Chair of the Meeting and thereafter invited Mr J. Strang to act as Chair of the Meeting. Mr J. Strang then welcomed everyone to the 32nd Annual General Meeting of Irvine Housing Association, trading as Riverside Scotland.

2. **Previous Minutes**

The minutes of the 31st Annual General Meeting, held on Wednesday 18 September 2024, were approved on the motion of Mrs J. Galbraith which was seconded by Mr G. Darroch.

3. **Chair's Report**

Mr J. Strang gave his fourth report as Chair of Irvine Housing Association and highlighted another busy year for the organisation, where meaningful strides forward had been made. The work carried out reflected a deep commitment to providing homes and building safe, supported and thriving communities.

Mr Strang advised that the full annual report would be available from October and would report on how the Association performed against other Scottish housing associations. It would be transparent and would provide customers with a clear view of how Riverside Scotland worked and the improvements made over the year.

The improvements made were the result of the hard work, dedication and commitment of a brilliant staff team and the forward-thinking Senior Management Team. A team built over the previous three years by the outgoing Managing Director, Mrs D. MacLean, who had recently decided to take a well-earned career break. Mr Strang formally recorded his, the Board's and the staff of Riverside Scotland's, sincere thanks to Mrs MacLean for her leadership and commitment to the Association's customers.

Mr Strang welcomed new Managing Director, Mr G. Naylor to the role and looked forward to a continuation of the significant service improvements made in the last few years. Mr Naylor brought experience, knowledge and a firm commitment to customer care that would be utilised to build on the success so far.

Mr Strang highlighted the groundbreaking Housing First for Families initiative offering intensive, person centred support to families at risk of homelessness. The expansion into Dumfries and Galloway during the year reflected the success of the project and the growing realisation that this service should be replicated throughout the country to help resolve the Housing Emergency being experienced. 10,000 children presently were waking up in temporary accommodation. Continued increasing homelessness, families under stress and children's lives being affected by this meant there was a real housing emergency which had to be tackled.

The Association was more than bricks and mortar; it was about delivering exceptional services and positive outcomes for customer's wellbeing. Last year, the Affordability Officer secured £393k in financial grants for tenants and the Helping Hands Fund provided over £5,000 in emergency support for essentials, such as food, fuel and furniture.

The Bed Poverty Fund, in partnership with main contractors, the Bell Group and James Frew, delivered 20 beds and bedding to families in need. Real poverty lurked within communities, and the Association had to do all it could to alleviate the impact. The Association had also funded driving lessons for 4 tenants to support independence and create employment opportunities for them.

The Association had also, in conjunction with the Bell Group and Union Technical, Cash for Kids and staff, ensured that children living in our properties received a Christmas present to unwrap on Christmas morning, who may not have otherwise.

Striving to deliver the best for tenants in need underpinned the vision and professional and social ethos. The Association understood that strong communities, were the foundation of thriving neighbourhoods. He was delighted to report that during the year, community empowerment had gone beyond housing, with a focus on creating opportunities, supporting those in need, and building lasting connections.

Through targeted initiatives, strategic partnerships, and tenant led projects, the Association had helped foster resilience, promote inclusion and growth across communities. There was a firm belief that when communities were empowered, everyone in the community benefited. This was reflected in the 91.8% satisfaction score from tenants when they said they were satisfied with Riverside Scotland's contribution to the management of their neighbourhood. This was an important issue in the previous Big Conversation survey. The improved score demonstrated we asked, we listened, and we delivered.

Mr Strang reported on the launch of the Communities and Livelihoods Strategy the previous year. This was a long-term commitment to continued support for customers, strengthening neighbourhoods, enhancing engagement and improving the quality of life in communities. At the end of the first year, he reported the following outcomes:

- Service Improvement Group, made up of tenants, reviewed the complaints process and presented their findings to the Board. Actions in response to the recommendations were currently being worked on.

- Actively consulted on the planned maintenance programs, particularly in shaping the bathroom and kitchen replacement programme.

- Ongoing engagement within neighbourhoods and estates to successfully address local concerns.

- Developing a local handyman service.
- Implemented a rolling programme of health and wellbeing activities across the Retirement living schemes.
- Rolled out a device lending scheme to support customers without access to digital devices or internet services.
- Established partnerships with local employability and skills agencies creating a referral system to support tenants.
- Published a comprehensive directory of support services and local organisations to assist tenants during the cost of living crisis.
- Held walkabouts in all estates with Tenants Partners, local Councillors, local authority staff, Police and the landscaping contractor, ID Verde. Such events were now core practice throughout the stock.
- Introduced a neighbourhood plan process, involving detailed local surveys, ongoing local engagement to develop Plans tailored to the specific needs each community. This had strengthened relationships with customers, local authorities and local elected representatives.

Mr Strang advised that the Association was committed to providing good value for rents and service charges - 88.5% of customers thought their rent represented value for money.

The Association took antisocial behaviour within its stock seriously and had reviewed its policy and practice and issued a new updated policy to ensure processes were clearer and stronger.

The Association listened to customers when asked how best to communicate with them. The preference was bi-monthly newsletters and personalised letters. Items of interest were also regularly posted on social media platforms and in 2026 the Association would launch its new website.

Riverside Scotland was very focused on tenant participation and Customer and Community Engagement Officer, Mr G. Wiffen, played a key role in harnessing good practice. The Association fully supported the Customer Sounding Board, the Service Improvement Group, and local tenants and resident's groups. Customer feedback was valued and was important in shaping the future of homes and communities.

These successes were highlighted in recent customer feedback:

- 87.1% are happy with the quality of the overall service we provide,
- 98.2% feel we are good at keeping them informed, and
- 97.7% are satisfied with the opportunities afforded to them to participate in Riverside Scotland's decision-making processes.

The Association continued to invest in improving the quality of stock, the safety and energy efficiency of homes in the past year, with 86.9% happy with the quality of their home.

The Association had spent considerable sums upgrading properties including new kitchens, bathrooms, fire doors, new windows, cavity wall insulation and roof and render works. This investment would continue in the years ahead, as would investment in adaptations to ensure tenants could remain in their homes for as long as possible.

The Association was also an award-winning housing association and was named as Housing Association of the Year at last year's Energy Efficiency Awards, recognising the commitment to installing energy efficiency measures to benefit 300 homes in Dumfries and Galloway.

The success would be built on, with strategic partner, Union Technical, to carry out works in the Pennyburn estate in Kilwinning, where 30 homes would benefit from energy efficiency measures including new doors, windows, solar panels and insulation upgrades.

The Association had also carried out a £100k fence repair programme following the storms in January this year.

Mr Strang stated that year on year, the repairs and maintenance performance continued to improve and this was being recognised by tenants commenting on the improved level of service.

The Association's finances were sound and financial controls were robust, Mr Strang acknowledged there was much still to do. Tenants needed continued help and properties required continued future investment.

At Riverside Scotland, the Board and brilliant staff team were fully committed to strong engagement, transparent operation, providing the highest quality of customer service.

The Chair closed by recording his sincere thanks to the Board, Senior Management and the full Riverside Scotland Team. He was immensely proud of the team and gave his view that they were the best part of the wonderful Riverside Group and the best Housing Association North of the Border.

4. **Election of Board Members**

Mr J. Strang explained that, in accordance with Rule 39(a), a third of the Board was required to retire at the AGM. Mrs J. Galbraith, Mrs S. Petrie, Mr G. Darroch and Mrs M. Burgess were therefore standing down, which resulted in there being 5 vacancies on the Board. Mrs Galbraith and Mrs Petrie were standing for re-election to the Board and were eligible to do so without nomination in accordance with Rule 39(d). Mr Darroch and Mrs Burgess were also eligible to stand for re-election, having had their terms of office extended for a further year at the earlier Special General Meeting that evening and both had offered themselves for re-election. Mr Strang confirmed that all required re-election documentation had been delivered to the Association.

Mr Strang advised that in line with Rule 40(a), where Board Members offering themselves for re-election, together with any other Members of the Association duly nominated for election, did not exceed the number of Board Member vacancies, then said Board Members and Members nominated should be declared to have been duly re-elected or elected without a vote being required.

Mr Strang, therefore declared Mrs Galbraith, Mrs Petrie, Mr Darroch and Mrs Burgess to have been duly re-elected to serve on the Board of the Association.

5. **Annual Accounts and Auditor's Report**

Mr J. Strang confirmed that members had been provided with copies of the accounts at the meeting and then invited Ms L. Worrall, Group Financial Reporting Manager, to give a presentation on the annual accounts.

Ms Worrall advised that the financial statements had been audited by external auditors, BDO, and the Auditor's Report, at pages 10 - 12 of the accounts, gave the Association a clean audit report.

Ms Worrall then went on to highlight the key points from the statement of comprehensive income and statement of financial position, on pages 13 and 15 of the accounts.

*Ms Worrall reported that turnover had increased by £612k and this was mainly made up from income of £605k generated by the rent increase applied in April 2024. Operating costs had increased by £788k which had been mostly due to an increase in void repair costs of £230k and repairs and maintenance costs of £361k. This resulted in an increase in operating surplus of £489k.

Ms Worrall reported that interest payable had decreased by £403k, due to reduced inter-company borrowings during the year, which significantly reduced interest costs and had resulted in the surplus for the year, after tax, increasing by £124k.

Referring to the Statement of Financial Position, Ms Worrall, reported an increase in fixed assets in the year. The Association had invested £3m in its existing homes which had been offset by depreciation.

Ms Worrall advised that debtors had decreased to £774k in the year, due to a reduction in rent arrears and a decrease in accrued income of £568k The Association's cash, as normal, remained minimal, due to the Association making full use of its revolving credit facility with Group, which allowed it to keep cash balances as low as possible in order to minimise interest payments.

The reduction in creditors was due to the amount owed to the Group decreasing by £2.3m. This resulted in an increase of £2.7m on reserves, bringing total reserves up to £31.3m.

The Annual Accounts and Auditor's Report were thereafter adopted on the motion of Mr G. Darroch which was seconded by Mrs M. Burgess.

Post Meeting Note:

The following note represents the accurate position on the accounts and should replace section * above:

"Ms Worrall reported that turnover had increased by £517k and this was mainly made up from income of £605k generated by the rent increase applied in April 2024. Operating costs had increased by £846k which had been mostly due to an increase in void repair costs of £230k and repairs and maintenance costs of £361k. This resulted in a decrease in operating surplus of £310k."

6. **<u>Appointment of Auditors</u>**

Mr J. Strang advised that in accordance with Rule 73(a), an auditor appointed to act for the Association for the preceding year of account shall be re-appointed as auditor of the Association for the current year of audit, subject to satisfying the relevant criteria.

Mr Strang thereafter confirmed that BDO satisfied the required criteria to be re-appointed as auditor and proposed a resolution that BDO be re-appointed as auditors of the Association. Miss S. Greene seconded the resolution and Mr Strang thereafter confirmed the resolution carried.

7. **Any Other Business**

There being no further items of business, the Chair declared the Meeting closed.

Chair: …………………………………………………

Date:…………………………………………………..

G Naylor
Secretary
17 September 2025
GN / db