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We recognise that the commercial sensitivity of information may decline over time and the harm arising from disclosure may be outweighed by the public interest in openness and transparency. We commit to review the redaction of any such information from time to time.

Some information has been redacted as it contains personal data which identifies an individual. Disclosure of this information would place Irvine Housing Association in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Board Meeting Agenda
240th Meeting: Thursday 28 January 2021
At 5.30 p.m. by MS Teams video conference

AGENDA

		Data Class
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Previous Minutes – Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday 19 November 2020.	Public
4.	Matters Arising	
5.	Substantive Business	
5.1	Covid-19 Pandemic Update	Public
5.2	Financial Plan	Restricted
5.3	Tarryholme Phase 2, Irvine – Development Project	Internal
5.4	Irvine Office Contract	Confidential
5.5	Additional Information Report: IHA Branding	Internal
5.6	Additional Information Report: Monkton Development, South Ayrshire	
5.7	Progress Reports on Development Projects	Internal
5.8	Operational Performance Report	Public
5.9	Financial Performance Report	Restricted
5.10	MD Report	Public
6.	Minutes/Updates: a) Unconfirmed Audit & Risk Committee Meeting – 11 January 2021 b) Approved Group Neighbourhood Services Committee Meeting – 26 November 2020 c) Group Board Core Brief – October 2020 - December 2020	Confidential Confidential Confidential
7.	Disclosure	
8.	Any Other Business	
9.	Date of Next Meeting – 5.30 p.m. on Thursday 25 March 2021 – Board Meeting via MS Teams video conference	

Date:	28th January 2021
Subject:	COVID-19 Pandemic Update
Author:	Paul Hillard
Sponsor:	N/A
Appendices:	Appendix 1: SHR Covid-19 Report for November 2020 Appendix 2: Update Report to the SHR re Covid-19 made on 12 th January 2021
Action:	Information
Data Class:	Public

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report provides an update to Board members of the Association's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the consequent 'lockdown' measures.

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that Board note and comment on the contents of this Report.

1 Background

- 1.1 The UK Government announced initial lockdown measures on 16th March 2020 with a request for people and businesses to maximise working from home. Further, more significant 'lockdown' measures were announced on 23rd March 2020.
- 1.2 The measures contained in The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 became effective from 7th April 2020. Subsequent legislation has been passed to give statutory power to additional lockdown measures effective since 4th January 2021.
- 1.3 Subsequent COVID-19 Pandemic specific guidance has been issued from the Scottish Government, The Scottish Housing Regulator and the Health and Safety Executive relating to the functions and services of the Association.
- 1.4 The Association commenced home working for all staff, with limited on-going estate and property based working for some colleagues, from 18th March 2020. Where necessary a risk-assessed scheme of working has been devised and appropriate PPE issued.

2 Delivery of Services

- 2.1 The move of the entirety of the Association's operating area into Tier 4, effective from 26th December 2020, and the subsequent national lockdown, effective from 5th January 2021, has meant restrictions of the Association's services.
- 2.2 The key elements of the current service being offered by the Association are set out below:
 - 2.2.1 Repairs – the Association has reverted to an emergency repairs only service.
 - 2.2.2 Safety checks – Landlord compliance safety checks are being carried out. This included gas safety inspections and enforcement action is now being undertaken. The processes for enforcement are taking account of cases where Covid-19 self-isolation or shielding by customers is in place. There is, once again, some

resistance from customers to gas safety visits. There is a significant risk that a small number of gas safety inspection certificates will lapse in these circumstances.

- 2.2.3 Void Properties –are being inspected and works carried out to make them available to let. Safe working practices and additional cleaning means that there is a notable increase in void turn round times to c.21 days.
- 2.2.4 Lettings – are being carried out in accordance with normal policies. New mutual exchanges are not currently being processed.
- 2.2.5 Estate Inspections – are being carried out by the Estate Caretakers, where possible from within their cars.
- 2.2.6 Landscape Maintenance – a full service is in place.
- 2.2.7 Arrears Recovery– the First Minister has announced that the no evictions element of the Coronavirus legislation will be extended to the end of March 2021. Arrears are currently c.£100K higher than at the same point as a year ago, and the current trend is still rising, although the rate of increase has slowed in current weeks. To address this issue procedures have been introduced that deploy more Housing Officers' time in pursuit of rent arrears to supplement the activity of the Income Collection Team.
- 2.2.8 Tenancy Sustainability - the team is prioritising work assisting new universal credit claimants through the process. The number of the Association's tenants in receipt of universal credit has increased from c. 450 in April 2020 to c.800 in January 2021.
- 2.2.9 Responding to Anti-Social Behaviour – We have sought to continue to respond to this through telephone contact with tenants.
- 2.2.10 Major Repairs – external major repairs contracts are continuing, however, those for internal works have been postponed. This has meant that a boiler replacement and kitchen renewal programme intended to run between January and March has had to be postponed.

3 Use of the Office

- 3.1 Use of the office is being kept to an absolute minimum with use being restricted to essential administrative functions, checking mail, scanning and printing to ensure business continuity and occasional visits by assets colleagues as part of the void management process.

4 Colleague Welfare

- 4.1 The Management Team are continuing to give priority to support colleague well-being during the pandemic. We are taking an approach of continuing with much more frequent team meetings, usually weekly, and ensuring that there is regular contact between colleagues. We have also actively sought to encourage colleagues to take annual leave during this period.
- 4.2 This has been supported by a range of Riverside-wide initiatives and resources to support wellbeing, including on-line activities and national workshops and events.

5 Scottish Housing Regulator

- 5.1 The SHR's Covid-19 Return for November is attached as Appendix 1. The SHR suspended the need for returns for December 2020.
- 5.2 In view of the significant restriction of services offered by the Association, because of the December and January lockdown measures, an update was provided to the SHR, using the Notifiable Events process in January 2021. This is attached as Appendix 2. The SHR has confirmed that they do not require further information on this matter at the present time.

6 Risks

- 6.1 A COVID-19 specific Risk Schedule has been developed and shared with the Audit and Risk Committee. It is available for Board members on the REX site.

7 Recommendation

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Board members note and comment on this Report.



Landlord:

Definitions

Month:

Please submit this return within one week of the end of the calendar month

Please tell us your staff absence level on the last day of the month:

Total number of staff (FTE)	<input type="text" value="34.33"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
Total number absent (FTE)	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>

Percentage of staff absent

Number of staff placed on furlough (FTE)	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Gross rent arrears	<input type="text" value=""/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
Total rent due	<input type="text" value=""/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>

Gross rent arrears (%)

Empty Homes (last day of previous reporting month)	<input type="text" value="4"/>		
Empty homes (arose during the reporting month)	<input type="text" value="11"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>

Empty homes (last day of reporting month)	<input type="text" value="5"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Number of lets to homeless (SST)	<input type="text" value="2"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
Number of lets to homeless (short SST)	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>

Number leased to relevant local authority	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Number of lets to others	<input type="text" value="8"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Total lets and leased (during reporting month)

Balance	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Cash balances as at last day of the month	<input type="text" value=""/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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Number of court actions initiated and properties recovered during the reporting month:

Total number of court actions initiated	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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The number of properties recovered having obtained decree for non-payment of rent	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Comments:	<input type="text"/>
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The number of properties recovered having obtained decree for anti-social behaviour

Comments:

The number of properties recovered having obtained decree for other reasons

Comments:

Number of Notice of Proceedings issued during the reporting month for:

Rent arrears

Comments:

Antisocial behaviour / criminal activity

Comments:

Other reasons

Comments:



Irvine HA

**Update on Covid-19 Pandemic Lockdown Measures and Services
To the Scottish Housing Regulator**

Introduction

The increase in Scottish Government lockdown measures, initially to Tier 4 and subsequently to a national 'lockdown', and the subsequent guidance issued, has restricted the Association's services.

From 26th December 2020 the Association has been offering the following services:

Repairs and Maintenance

Responsive Repairs – Emergencies only

Gas and other health & safety inspections – full service

Landscaping works – normal service for this time of year

Capital works – external works only

Voids – normal service

Communal cleaning – normal service

Where services are being carried out this is with defined safe ways of working, including appropriate use of PPE.

Lettings

Normal service

Arrears management

Pursuing arrears through telephone contact.

ASB and tenancy management

Generally being managed through telephone contact with customers. Specific visits to customers are being authorised where there is felt there may be a safeguarding issue, but without entry to the property.

Office

The Association's office remains closed to customers and staff. The only exception being visits to ensure safety of equipment on site, some occasional administrative duties. All such visits are carried out in with social distancing and other safe working practices.

Communication to Customers

We have changed our website information for customers to reflect the above and will promote this on social media. The Association also provides a recorded phone message for customers that provides an update on services.

Risks

The Association is ensuring safe ways of working by its own staff and contractors to ensure their, and customer safety, from transmission of the virus.

The Association is experiencing some resistance to contracts undertaking gas safety certification visits. Although continuing to take enforcement action we are anticipating some lapsing of safety certificates during the period of lockdown.

The Association's rent arrears have increased by c. £100K since the pandemic commenced. This is within business plan tolerances.

If the lockdown restrictions continue beyond the initial period it is probable that aspects of planned improvements, specifically kitchen renewals and boiler replacements planned for the last quarter of 2020/21 will have to be differed.

Governance

The Association's Board Members have been advised of the restriction on services being offered during lockdown.

The associated risks were considered by the Association's Audit and Risk Committee on 11th January 2021. The Committee was also advised of this update to the SHR.

A Covid-19 Pandemic Update Report will be provided to the Board at its meeting on 28th January 2021.

Paul Hillard
Managing Director
12th January 2021

Date:	28 th January 2021
Subject:	Operational Performance Report
Author:	Heather Anderson
Sponsor:	Paul Hillard
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Operational Performance Dashboards Period 9
Action:	Information
Data Class:	Public

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper and appendices sets out performance across the operational KPIs as at the end of December 2020 (P9).

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is asked to consider and note the performance position.

1 Background

- 1.1 Performance against the current agreed KPIs is reported to each Board meeting using the newly developed performance reporting system, Tableau. The revised performance dashboards as at December 2020 are attached to this report as Appendix 1.

2 Performance Context

- 2.1 The agreed KPIs for 2020/21 for Irvine are:
- Total unadjusted arrears (4 weekly average)
 - Arrears movement per unit.
 - Void rent loss.
 - Rent Evictions
 - Repairs timescales.
 - Gas Compliance
 - Tenancy Turnover
 - Tenancy Sustainability
 - Overall satisfaction
 - Listening to Views
 - Repairs and Maintenance
 - Latest Repair satisfaction
 - Complaints Handling
 - Complaints resolved at first stage.

3 Performance update and analysis

- 3.1 Following the Covid-19 crisis, total arrears have increased significantly over the year, and currently stand at a 4 week average of 4.75%. The following are key points from recent analysis:
- There are currently 797 tenants claiming Universal Credit, this is an increase of 450 tenants since that start of the pandemic in March 2020.

- The overall UC tenant arrears are approximately £270,000, accounting for two thirds of the total arrears figure.
- The key reason for UC related arrears is the initial delay of approximately 8 weeks before a tenant receives their first payment, and the issue of UC 'skip cycles', which means that over a 12 month period every tenant claiming UC which 'skip' a 4 weekly payment. This is due to the payment DWP payment schedule for Irvine. Work is ongoing with Group colleagues and the DWP to either, use Riverside credit reference number for UC payments (which will mean we receive the payment in 'real time' with no skip cycles, or to develop Irvine's own DWP landlord portal.
- The rent free weeks in December had a lower impact proportionately than previous year due to timing of UC payment schedule, however we did see a considerable reduction in arrears w/c 4th January when a UC payment was received for a large number of tenants.
- Four Housing Officer continue to be dedicated to arrears recovery work and are supported by the Income Collection team. The Tenancy Sustainability Team is currently focusing on assisting tenants to make UC claims and income maximisation work.
- Officers are ensuring that the legal process is followed in each case as required up to court action, to ensure everything is in place for cases to be taken to court if needed when legislation allows. Bespoke letters developed by our solicitors Harper Mcleod are being issued to all high risk cases.

3.2 Gas safety check compliance has increase to 100% following the resumption of normal processes and the gas safety check process will continue throughout this period of restriction.

3.3 Void rent loss remains slightly out with target due to the ongoing impact of suspension of voids during lock periods and the deep clean included at the start and the end of the process which adds on average 5 days to re-let time. The Asset and Housing staff continue to meet on a weekly basis to monitor throughout of voids and track the end to end process for each property.

3.4 We have seen an improvement in overall satisfaction and Complaints handling satisfaction over the period. This may be attributable to the new process that has been put in place with the Asset Services Support Officer acting as a single point of contact until the issue is resolved to the customer's satisfaction. A refresher training session will be delivered to all frontline staff by the Head of Service on complaints handling in February, ensuring staff are aware of how to process complaints on our new Salesforce system, identify and record lessons learned from negative feedback, and improving communication with tenants throughout the process.

4 Next steps

4.1 Arrears recovery remains the Association's key priority over the coming weeks, and staff will be focused on this work, as well as ensuring the smooth allocation of properties to priority households during this period of lockdown.

5 Recommendations

5.1 As described in the Executive Summary.

Irvine Performance Dashboards

As at Period 9 End (30/11/20 to 03/01/21)

Irvine Operational KPIs - Board...

Report Date
03/01/2021

Rent Evictions
0

Repairs Completed in Ti..
97.4%
Total Repairs: **3,919**

Gas Compliance
100.0%
Expired: **0**

Tenancy Turnover
3.5%
Tenancies Ended: **79**

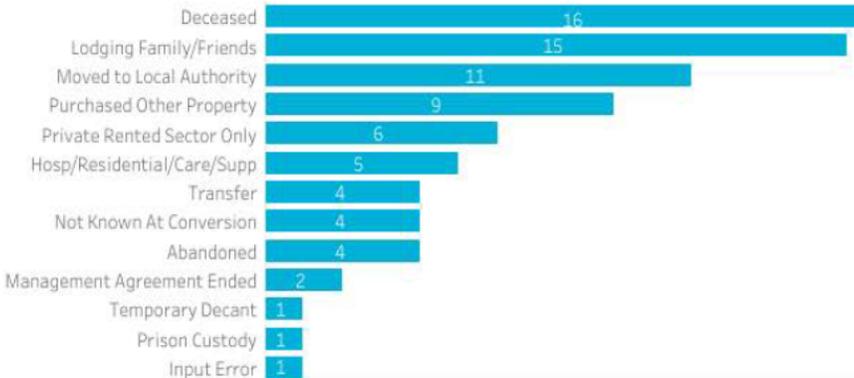
Tenancy Sustainability
4
Evictions (any reason) and abandonments

Refusals
3.66%
82 Lets with 3 refusal

Average Relet Days Week by Week



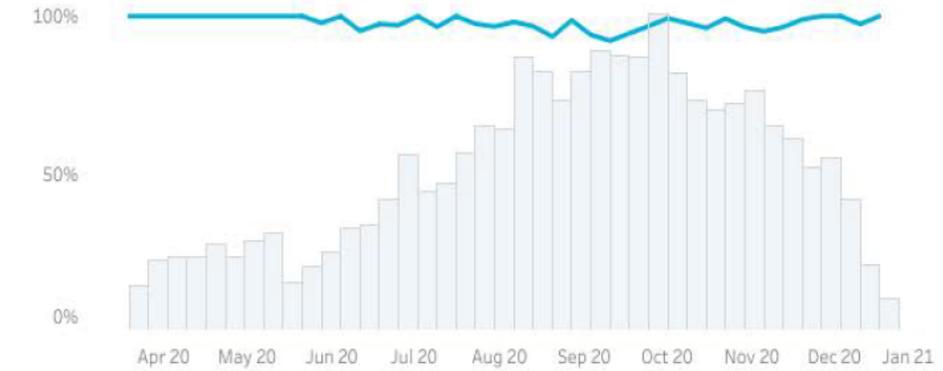
All Ended Tenancies



Commentary:

- There have been 4 abandoned tenancies over the course of the year. The Tenancy Sustainability Team continues to pursue contact at initial abandonment stage.
- No rent evictions have taken place due to extension of Scottish Covid legislation. Cases are being managed by Housing Officers and supported by the IC team. Legal letters have been sent to all high risk cases and process followed in each case to prepare for re opening of legal route if necessary.

Repairs Completed in Time vs Volume of Repairs



Repairs Completed in Time by Priority



- There have been no repairs out-with timescales throughout P9.



Currently Showing: **Irvine A**

Current Arrears
£0.50M
£10.59M (4.75%)

Arrears 4 Week Average **This Year** vs **Last Year**
The latest week is fixed at the centre of the chart



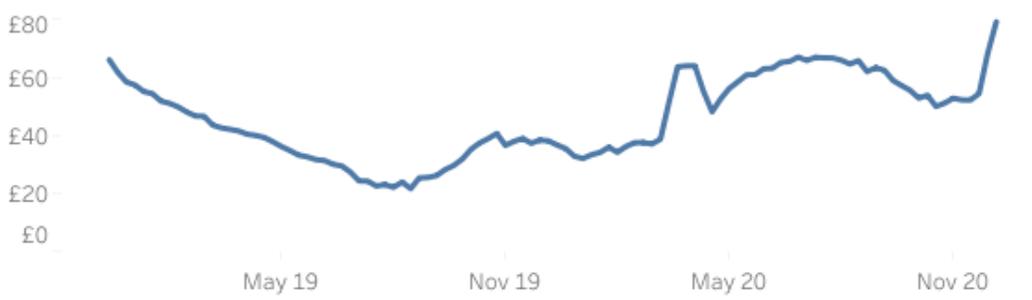
Commentary

- Arrears decreased by approximately £77k due to the rent free weeks in December. There was a further significant decrease of arrears w/c 4th January due to timing of UC payments.
- The impact of UC 'skip' cycles on Irvine arrears is significant and accounts for approximately two thirds of the arrears figure. Work is ongoing to try and get Irvine our own DWP landlord portal, or make use of Riverside creditor reference numbers to align our UC payment schedules with 'real time' processing – which is the process across other regions in Group.

Year Movement Per Unit

+£79

Yearly Movement Per Unit
(Arrears Per Unit - Arrears Per Unit 1 Year Ago) + Arrears Moved to Former in Year per Unit



Commentary

- We continue to see an increase in the number of tenants moving onto UC, with 797 tenants now claiming UC, an increase of 450 since last April. Staff continue to assist tenants with UC claim forms and pursue a payment of £5 per week to address initial shortfall.
- We continue to have four Housing Officers dedicated to arrears recovery work who are supported by the IC team.

Void Rent Loss Weekly
The Rent Loss for each individual week

Void Rent Loss
0.29%
£22,405 / £7.75M



Commentary

- Void rent loss remains slightly out with target due to increasing number of voids in recent weeks and the impact of Covid deep cleans etc on turnaround times.
- The Association is continuing to let properties during the current restrictions under safe methods of working.
- Weekly meetings take place between Asset and Housing teams to identify potential voids, streamline void works, and to monitor the end to end process for each property.

Social Housing Customer Satisfaction - NSC Paper...

Report Date
03/01/2021

Region
IRV



Currently Showing: IRV
Rolling 3 Month Measures

Overall Satisfaction

83.5%

Responses: 139



Commentary

- Overall satisfaction has improved since October. We may be starting to see the impact of our new 'single point of contact' complaints process, as well as our customer contact campaign throughout the Covid pandemic.

Listening to Views

67.9%

Responses: 140



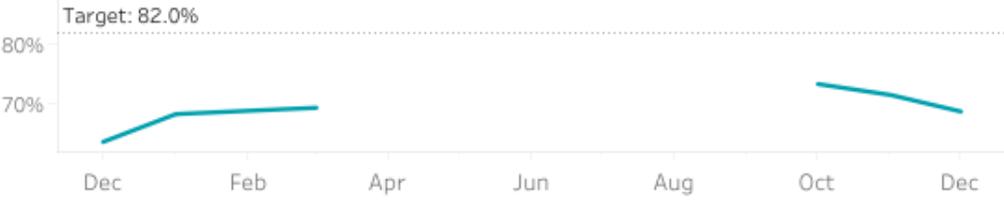
Commentary

- Listening to views has also improved slightly since October. We have restarted our welfare calls to high risk tenants during this period of lockdown, and have been working with our tenant and resident groups to assist them to move to online meetings and chats.

Repairs and Maintenance

64.3%

Responses: 140



Commentary

- We have recently carried out our rent increase consultation and have been working closely with Group Marketing and Comms to ensure we are distributing valuable information via our online platforms and service updates.

Latest Repair

85.9%

Responses: 99



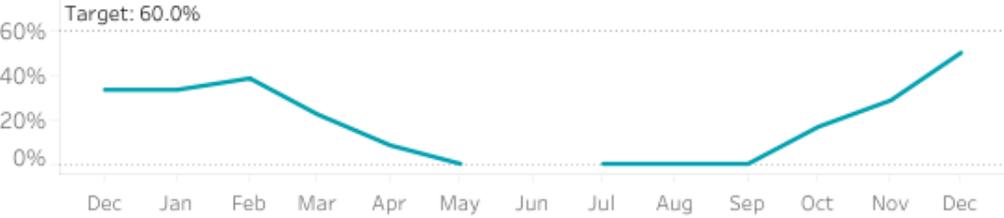
Commentary

- Our repairs service options appraisal process is ongoing and the second stage report is due for completion in the next fortnight. A key aspect of this will be to improve customer satisfaction, specifically how we can ensure customers are kept update don repairs process, and increase our range of self service options. We hope to have our online repairs appointments system up and running from April.

Complaints Handling

50.0%

Responses: 4



Commentary

- Complaints handling has improved considerably since September, this may be attributable to our new complaints coordination process.
- A recent review was carried out on our complaints handling process and actions identified for improvement. A full service session with all staff is being held on 26th January.

Date:	28 th January 2021
Subject:	Managing Director's Report
Author:	Paul Hillard (paul.hillard@irvineha.co.uk)
Sponsor:	N/A
Appendices:	None
Action:	Noting
Data Class:	Public

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report is provided to Board to give an update on the following matters where no formal decisions are required at this time:

- Board Chair Recruitment
- Appointment of External Auditors
- Repairs Option Appraisal
- G8 Conference
- Board Learning and Development Plan
- Board Strategy Event

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended that Board Members note and comment on the contents of this Report.

1 Board Chair Recruitment

- 1.1 The advertisement for the position of the Board Chair was placed in the media over the Christmas and New Year period. It has been advertised in the Scottish News Group, which offers specialist emailed daily news bulletins to key professions, on the Goodmoves website and on the SFHA's website. Additionally the role has been promoted on all of the Association's social media channels. The advert and Recruitment Pack has also been made available on the Association's website. The closing date for applications is 29th January 2021.
- 1.2 As agreed at the last meeting of the board the interview panel for the position will comprise of Robin Hill, as Chair, Margaret Burgess, Janice Murray and Cris McGuinness. Proposals for the next phase of the recruitment process will be presented at the Board meeting.

2 Appointment of external auditor

- 2.1 As Board are aware, KPMG have audited our annual financial statements for a number of years and their tenure as external auditor was due to come to an end. However, due to the extenuating circumstances surrounding Covid-19, it was not possible to complete the procurement process for external auditors in time for the 2020/21 year end. KPMG will therefore continue in post for the audit of the 2020/21 financial statements and new auditors will be appointed in good time to commence planning for the 2021/22 audit. An "open tender process" will be conducted in the coming months with appropriate support from the procurement team. Board will be

kept up to date on progress and will be asked to approve the appointment of the new external auditor before final approval is sought from Group Audit Committee in September.

3 Repairs Option Appraisal

- 3.1 The repairs service delivery options appraisal process led by Echelon is progressing well. The first part of the process, which focused on identifying an interim delivery option for the Association's housing stock in Dumfries due to termination of the DG1st contract,

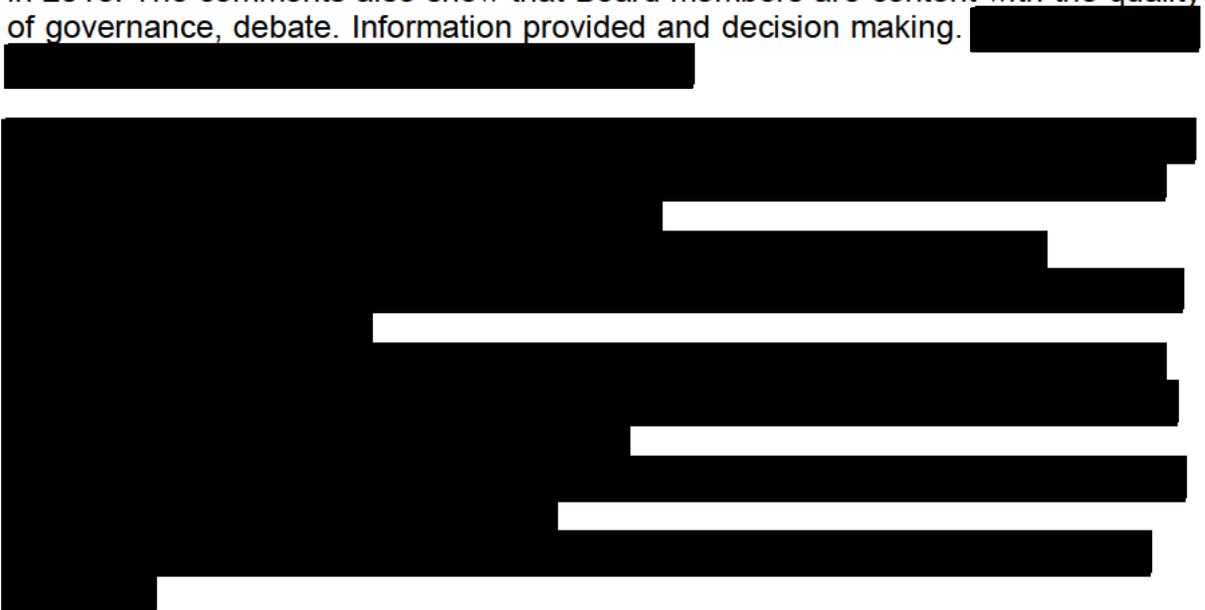


4 G8 Conference

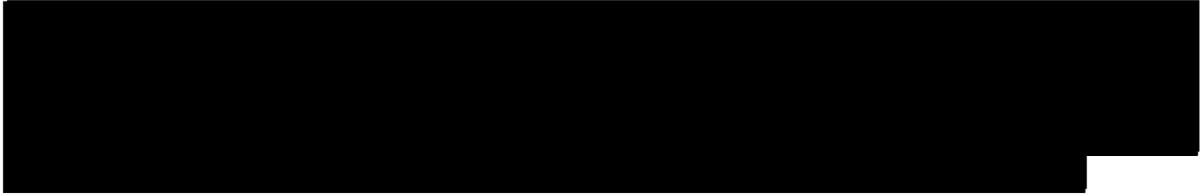
- 4.1 In December the Association successfully hosted the 2020 G8 Annual Conference. This was an online event with the senior teams and Chairs of the 8 member housing associations attending – a total of 60 delegates.
- 4.2 The event included plenary sessions on the future of work, presented by Distinctive People and a well-being session by The Art of Brilliance. There was also a facilitated session for the Chairs only. The Chairs group has now decided to meet on a regular basis with its first meeting planned for later in January 2021.

5 Board Learning and Development Plan

- 5.1 Irvine HA's whole Board appraisal resulted in an overall score of 4.42, up from 4.25 in 2018. The comments also show that Board members are content with the quality of governance, debate. Information provided and decision making.



5.2



6 Board Strategy Event

6.1 In normal circumstances, the board would hold a strategy event in February. A discussion about the format of this event, given the current restrictions will take place at the meeting.

7 Recommendation

7.1 It is recommended that Board Members note and comment on the contents of this Report.