

Readers may note that some information within these documents have been omitted / redacted.

Some information has been omitted / redacted as disclosure may prejudice the commercial interests of Irvine Housing Association trading as Riverside Scotland.

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 t/a Riverside Scotland in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018.

THE RIVERSIDE GROUP LIMITED
IRVINE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Two Hundred and Forty Ninth Meeting of the Board held at 6.00 p.m. on
Thursday 30 June 2022 via MS Teams.

Minutes

Present:

Mr J. Strang (In the Chair), Mrs M. Burgess, Mrs M. Crearie,
Mr G. Darroch, Mr S. Easton Mrs. J Galbraith, Mr R. Hill, Mr
P. New and Mr T. McInnes.

In attendance were: Mrs D. MacLean, Mrs H. Anderson, Mrs
D. Boyle and Ms C. McGuinness (Items 1-6).

Apologies for Absence

Mrs S. Petrie, Mr S. Stewart and Mrs M. Hutchinson

Declarations of Interests

Nil.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mrs S. Petrie, Mr S. Stewart and Mrs M.
Hutchinson.

The Board requested that their best wishes were passed on to Mrs
Hutchinson for a speedy recovery.

2. **Preliminaries**

Mrs D. MacLean advised that Ms C. McGuinness was attending the
meeting in Mrs M. Hutchinson's absence to answer queries on the draft
financial statements paper.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests to declare.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting – 248th Board Meeting held on 26 May 2022**

The minutes of the 248th Board Meeting held on 26 May 2022 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

5. **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

6. **Draft Financial Statements**

Ms C. McGuinness advised that the draft accounts had been considered in detail at the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting on 13 June and the external auditor, Mr P. Jenner of BDO, had been in attendance at this meeting. The Committee had provided some feedback to the content of the Irvine Housing Association's accounts which had been incorporated in the versions presented for approval. She highlighted the content of the ISA 260 letter which confirmed a clean audit and advised that Thistle Housing Services was dormant and exempt from audit.

Ms McGuinness reported on an operating surplus of £4.8m which resulted in a [REDACTED]. This resulted in a total surplus of £3.5m in line with operating costs. She then reported on the detail contained in the paper regarding the cost fluctuations during the year and the statement of financial position and cash flow. The Board noted that the Association remained comfortably within all of its loan covenants at year end and commented on the excellent quality of the report which drew out the key features of the accounts.

Ms McGuinness highlighted some minor typographical errors which had been identified which would be updated.

Mr R. Hill highlighted the changes the Audit & Risk Committee requested to be made to the accounts and reported on the meeting Committee Members had with Mr Jenner of BDO, without officers present, which included a discussion on succession planning and was pleased to report that the Association had been given a clean bill of health from BDO. The Audit & Risk Committee Members confirmed they were pleased to recommend approval of the accounts by the Board.

[REDACTED]

Mr S. Easton enquired if there were concerns around the fact that the current liabilities were higher than the current assets [REDACTED]

Mr Hill advised that the matter of current liabilities levels had been discussed at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting and this was a managed position to take advantage of a revolving credit facility, in order to minimise interest costs. There had also been a discussion about the monitoring of threshold levels moving forward.

[REDACTED]

Mr P. New highlighted an error in the report which referred to the operating cost of £471 which should read £471k.

The Chair highlighted the importance of communication around the Association's reserves and how they were used, in the context of future debates around rent increases. It was also noted that these reserves had allowed the Association to make the investments in stock that it had to date and the importance of having these reserves would prove crucial in the difficult years ahead.

The Board thereafter:

- a) APPROVED the accounts and associated covenant position for Irvine Housing Association for the year ended March 2022.
- b) APPROVED the accounts for Thistle Housing Services Ltd for the year ended March 2022.
- c) NOTED the content of the ISA 260 letter.
- d) APPROVED the Letter of Representation.

Ms McGuinness left the meeting.

7. **Succession Planning**

The Chair advised that following discussions with Mrs M. Crearie, Mr G. Darroch and Mrs M. Burgess, they had indicated a willingness to stand for re-election to the Board and this would be discussed further as part of the appraisal process.

The Board enquired on progress for the identification of Tenant Board Members. Mrs D. MacLean advised that a letter would be issued to the Membership during July regarding nominations to the Board. In addition, as part of the Big Conversation, 45 tenants had expressed an interest in being involved more in decision-making and planned to attend the focus group meetings being arranged in the summer. It was intended that potential Board Membership would be discussed at these meetings.

Mrs M. Crearie suggested that, in order to address comments made at last year's Annual General Meeting, information was provided about the Association's Board Members. It was agreed there should be careful drafting of this information to ensure it did not create any barriers to anyone wishing to join the Board.

A discussion then followed about the length of tenure on Riverside Scotland's Board and that of Group's Board due to the different regulatory environments and also the Association's rules.

The Board noted that, in the absence of voluntary stand downs at the Annual General Meeting, Mrs M. Crearie, Mr G. Darroch and Mrs M. Burgess would form the third of the Board required to stand down at the AGM in line with the Rules. The Board further noted that Mr S. Easton would also be required to stand down at the AGM in accordance with the Rules relating to co-optees.

8. **Policy Updates**

Mrs H. Anderson advised that the Group Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (E,D&I) Policy had been updated in order reinforce the fundamental values and ensure they were delivered throughout all services. Clear action plans were being developed and performance against these plans would be published annually.

Mr T. McInnes enquired on the resourcing of appropriate expertise to deliver policy outcomes. Mrs D. MacLean advised that the Association's safeguarding lead was the Tenancy Sustainment Team-Leader. E,D&I was also embedded in front line service provision and appropriate training was provided for all staff.

Mrs Anderson advised that the requirement for Riverside Scotland to have separate policies on child protection and adult support and protection to Group was to ensure compliance with Scottish legislation. The policies clarified Riverside Scotland's role in these processes, which the local authority led on.

Mrs M. Crearie highlighted the importance of standard reporting protocols with regard to the recording of referrals. Mrs Anderson confirmed there were clear procedures in place which included a

standard reporting format and register to record all referrals. This area had recently been audited and no issues had been identified. Mrs MacLean advised that safeguarding was also now being recorded as part of the health and safety performance reports which would be presented to Board and the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Board thereafter:

- a) ADOPTED the updated Group Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- b) APPROVED the Riverside Scotland Child Protection Policy
- c) APPROVED the Riverside Scotland Adult Support and Protection Policy.

9. **Any Other Business**

a) **Staff Recruitment**

Mr T. McInnes referred to the recent staff changes and enquired on the recruitment process. Mrs H. Anderson advised that there had been a good response to the advertisements and candidates were currently being shortlisted.

..... The Chair commented that there seemed to be a sector wide issue, as a significant amount of housing associations were currently advertising posts. The Board then discussed the change in focus for the business, in order to address customer satisfaction issues, to improve services, and confirmed that they were supportive of the journey that Riverside Scotland was currently on. The Board concurred they were keen to build a good reputation with customers, staff and peers moving forward.

b) **Board Member Appraisals**

The Chair confirmed that all Board appraisal appointments had been arranged during July and he looked forward to having those discussions with Board Members.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

5.30 p.m. on Thursday 18 August 2022 at the Gables Hotel, Irvine.

D MacLean
Secretary
1 July 2022
DMcL/db

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Date: