

THE RIVERSIDE GROUP LIMITED

RIVERSIDE SCOTLAND

Two-hundred and Seventieth Meeting of the Board held at 5.30 p.m. on
Thursday 22 January 2026 at 44-46 Bank Street, Irvine, KA12 0LP via MS Teams.

Minutes

Present:

Mr J. Strang (In the Chair), Mrs M. Burgess, Mr G. Darroch (T), Mrs J. Deans-Regan (T), Mrs J. Galbraith, Miss. S. Greene (From Item 5.c), Ms C. McGuinness, Mr P. Mason (T)(From Item 8), Mr J. Miller, Mrs S. Petrie (T) and Mr B. Sadler (T).

In attendance were: Mr G. Naylor, Mrs D. Boyle, Ms H. Duff, Mrs P. Forrest, Ms P. McEvoy and Mr R. Wilson (Items 1-7).

Apologies for Absence

Nil.

Declarations of Interests

No declarations

1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Chair's Remarks**

The Chair gave his compliments of the season and wished everyone a Happy New Year and a Happy Burns Night on the coming Sunday.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests to declare.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meetings – 269th Board Meeting held on 20 November 2025**

The minutes of the 269th Board Meeting held on 20 November 2025 were APPROVED as accurate records.

5. **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

Mr G. Naylor provided updates on the actions identified at previous meetings included in the report. The following points were particularly highlighted:

a) Disposals

The sale of the 2 properties at [REDACTED] had been completed with funds received.

b) Contact Centre Strategy

A session was to be delivered at the March 2026 Board Strategy Day on the Contact Centre Strategy update.

Miss S. Greene joined the meeting.

c) Neighbourhood Plans

Two Neighbourhood Plans had been completed and a further two were currently in progress.

d) SIG Report - Complaints

Progress on actions against the improvement action plan would be reported to the Board in May.

e) Group Service Charge

An update was provided in the Managing Director's report advising on progress on the review of the Constitutional Partnership Agreement which would include a section on the notice period for future discussions in relation the Group Service Charge.

f) Continuous Improvement

The action plan for the Voids continuous improvement review was in progress and a review of the repairs process was currently being worked on with great collaboration from the teams. The Board noted the intention to introduce reporting on the outcomes of the reviews.

g) Quarterly Performance

From 1 April, mutual exchanges would not be permitted in the first year of a tenancy, unless there were special circumstances due to the vulnerability of the customer.


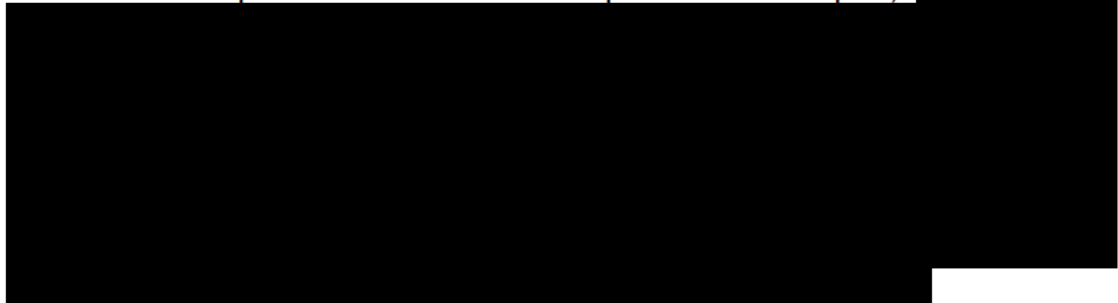
h) Leases

Ms P. McEvoy referred to the appendix report to the Matters Arising Action List which detailed the current nature of the 26 non-commercial and one commercial leases in place. [REDACTED]



The Board thereafter NOTED the updates provided in the Matters Arising report.

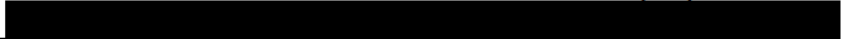
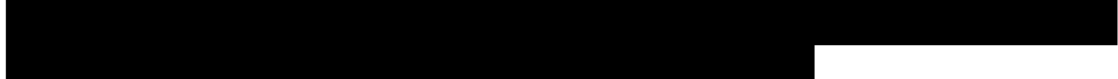
6. **Finance Performance Report**

Mr R. Wilson presented the financial performance report, 


The Board advised they were pleased with the changes made to the report which provided more explanation to assist with understanding the data presented.

The Board thereafter NOTED the report on the financial performance at the end period 9 across the business.

7. **Financial Plan**

Mr R. Wilson reported on the key highlights from the draft operational budget for the financial year 2026/27 which had been based on the proposed rent increase of 5.7%. 


Mr Wilson stated that the void loss figure had increased, however, this target was set a Group level, rather than it being reflective of the Association's performance, which was expected to improve further during the year following the continuous improvement review. Bad debts figures had also been set in line with the Group target.

Ms P. Evoy advised that additional line details on the Group Service Charge had been included in the budget, following requests at the previous meeting.

The Chair was pleased to note that covenant compliance was comfortable in the budget, [REDACTED]

Mr Sadler noted the increased margin and queried if there was enough provision in the budget for repairs costs. Ms H. Duff had advised that budgets had been set in line with income levels and to ensure covenant compliance. The continuous improvements work was expected to drive cost savings in the repairs budgets, however, officers would continue to closely monitor spend in this area throughout the year. The Chair requested that the matter was brought back to Board if there were significant variances in projections which required further consideration at any point.

Mr J. Miller enquired if there was a strategy in place to seek to reduce the bad debt provision. Ms C. McGuinness advised there was significant work in the background across Group to reduce debts, however, there were several external factors impacting this area which was always challenging. The Chair highlighted that the Association's factoring debt was also an area of debt recovery which was being worked on and progress was being made to improve performance in this area.

Following discussion, the Board APPROVED the operational budget for the financial year 2026/27.

Mr R. Wilson then left the Meeting.

8. Rent Increase Consultation

Mrs P. Forrest presented the findings of the 2026/27 Rent Consultation exercise. She advised that the consultation had taken place from 1 December 2025 to 5 January 2026, with a range of engagement methods being used including written communication, digital channels and follow-up reminders. A total of 283 tenants had participated, representing an 11.34% response rate. Mrs Forrest explained that this was lower than the previous year, however, this had potentially been due to the consultation presenting only **one option** for consideration this year.

Mrs Forrest highlighted that **87.3%** of tenants supported applying the *lowest possible rent increase*, and **88.3%** agreed with the Association's identified

investment priorities, which included repairs, property upgrades, estate improvements, safety and compliance. The Board noted the significant volume of tenant comments received, which included concerns about delays in repairs and upgrades, communication challenges, contractor performance, and investment only in certain areas. Mrs Forrest confirmed that all customers who requested a follow-up call had been contacted, and that the themes aligned with priorities previously discussed at the October Strategy Session.

In relation to affordability, Mrs Forrest advised that **40%** of respondents received full Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, while **36.7%** paid full rent from their household income. The Board considered the balance of these groups and the need to ensure that future rent decisions did not negatively impact working households who may not receive benefit support.

Mrs Forrest reported that benchmarking results demonstrated that the proposed **5.7% rent increase** was within sector norms, with comparable increases reported across local Registered Social Landlords and within the wider Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum.

Mr P. Mason joined the meeting.

Following full discussion, the Board acknowledged:

- the need to monitor communication approaches to seek to improve response rates in future years
- the importance of transparent messaging to tenants regarding investment plans
- the risks associated with under-investment in properties, if increases were set below sustainable levels.

The Board thereafter **APPROVED** the proposed **5.7% rent increase** for implementation from April 2026.

9. **Corporate Plan 2023/26 Update**

Ms P. McEvoy provided an update on progress against the year 3 objectives in the Corporate Plan delivery plan advising that 19 of the 20 actions were currently in progress, with many actions continuing to be progressed throughout the year.

Referring to the headline acts in the current Corporate Plan, Ms McEvoy gave the following updates:

- Homes – continuous improvement reviews for voids and repairs services were being progressed and were delivering good results.

- Customers – neighbourhood plans, community and livelihood plans and maximising social value projects were delivering service improvements to customers.
- Colleagues – participation by the Senior Management Team and Leadership Team in the leadership development programmes and the benefits to colleagues of their participation in the continuous improvement process were coming to fruition.

The Chair advised that he had highlighted the Association's work on continuous improvement at the recent Customer Experience Committee and suggested that contact was made with the team to share best practice.

Mr P. Mason referred to the legend in the action plan and suggested that a further status was included which allowed the Board to monitor more closely the actions in progress, to establish if they were on target to be completed within timescales. Ms McEvoy undertook to review this and align the legend with a standard model used for plans and project work across most sectors – and transition to a new model across all plans including the Corporate Plan implementation plan.

The Board NOTED the updates on work to progress the Year 3 objectives in the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan.

10. **Corporate Plan 2026/31: Progress and Storyboard**

Mr G. Naylor provided an update on the development of the new **Group Corporate Plan 2026–2031**, advising on the extensive consultation work which involved colleagues, stakeholders, partners and customers. He reported that more than 1,000 engagement touchpoints had been recorded across surveys, workshops, team discussions and the stakeholder strategy event held in Manchester in November.

Mr Naylor highlighted that the consultation work had assisted to develop **five strategic ambitions**, focusing on:

- delivering quality, safe and healthy homes,
- providing reliable and easy-to-use services,
- strengthening customer voice and trust,
- enabling colleagues to thrive through skills and support, and
- ensuring financial resilience to invest back into homes and communities.

The Board noted the draft **Storyboard**, which summarised the consultation findings and set the direction for the final Corporate Plan. Mr Naylor outlined that the Group Executive Team were currently finalising the full document, supported by four underpinning strategies and an enabling strategy for digital, technology and data.

The Board discussed the emerging themes, with particular consideration given to:

- proposed national approaches such as repairs models and how these applied to Scotland
- the need to clearly articulate Scottish-specific delivery plans alongside the Group-wide strategy
- the position of care and support within the new plan, and how learning from Group's service could enhance provision in Scotland
- the importance of communication to ensure the final plan did not raise concerns about stock disposal or service changes.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr Naylor confirmed that:


- the final draft Strategy would be reviewed by Executive Directors in February,
- a session would be included at the March Board Strategy Day to enable detailed Board input before Group Board approval in March, and
- the Association's delivery plan would follow, to ensure priorities for Riverside Scotland were clearly aligned to the Strategy and were appropriately resourced.

The Board thereafter NOTED the update on the development of the Group Corporate Strategy 2026–2031 and the next steps for final approval.

11. **Board of Management Recruitment and Succession**

Mr G. Naylor reported that the Chair, Mrs M. Burgess, Mr G. Darroch and Mrs J. Galbraith were due to reach their end of terms at the Annual General Meeting in September. Mr Naylor highlighted their huge contribution of knowledge and skills to the Association over the years and thanked them for their support.

Mr Naylor highlighted the proposals for the recruitment process, engaging David Bond to carry out the recruitment exercise. Mr Naylor advised that the outline timetable for both recruitment exercises was planned to allow for successful candidates to be able to attend Board Meeting/s in advance of the Annual General Meeting, where they would stand for formal election to the Board.

 He requested that any existing Board Member interested to learn more about the role or attend a future Committee meeting as an observer to contact him.

The suggested make-up of the recruitment panel was discussed and Mr Naylor asked that any Board Member particularly interested in participating on the panel should contact him.

Mrs S. Petrie referring to the Chair recruitment pack, enquired if previous Chair experience should be an essential, rather than desirable criteria. A discussion followed and it was agreed that previous Chair experience should remain as desirable criteria to ensure it did not exclude suitable candidates with significant Board experience with potential to grow into the Chair role, given the learning support available.

Mrs J. Deans-Regan questioned if there were plans to increase tenant membership on the Board. Mr Naylor confirmed this was on the agenda and officers would give consideration to the appropriate recruitment process and timing for tenant Board Member recruitment, given there would be 5 vacancies on the Board at the Annual General Meeting this year.

[REDACTED]

The Board thereafter NOTED and AGREED the process and timeframes for the proposed recruitment of a new Chair and Board Members in advance of the Annual General Meeting in September 2026.

12. **Asset Management Strategy Update**

Ms H. Duff referred to the significant progress made toward the achievement of the Year 1 objectives in the report and particularly highlighted the collaborative working between teams in the past year.

Ms Duff then reported on the proposed objective actions for Year 2 of the Strategy to deliver the Association's long-term objectives.

Following a query from Mr B. Sadler, Mrs P. Forrest advised on the positive results of the pro-active visit initiative which ensured that all customers received an annual visit by the Tenant Partner which assisted in identifying tenancy issues and customer support needs.

Mrs S. Petrie queried investment plans for greenspace areas. Ms Duff advised that plans for greenspace investment in Year 1 had been changed, with additional works being carried out [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Officers would continue to liaise with customers on proposals for investment in greenspaces and work with the contractor to deliver improvements via community benefit schemes.

Mrs M. Burgess commented on the planned whole house approach to delivering capital works programmes and the potential for this to affect customer satisfaction, particularly if these works were not being carried out in specific areas due to the timing of programmes. A discussion followed and the

importance of communicating decision-making with transparency to ensure customers understood the reasons why programmes were taking place in certain areas was agreed.



The Board were pleased with the excellent progress made in Year 1 of the Strategy, expressed thanks to the teams for their efforts and thereafter NOTED the update on the progress of the objectives in Year 1 of the Strategy and the proposed objectives for Year 2.

13. **Reactive Repair Spend**

Ms H. Duff reported that following concerns regarding increasing costs, a review of the reactive repairs spend to identify trends and specific cost drivers was carried out. The review identified that increased costs had been mainly due to increased labour and material costs and an increased volume of repairs being required due to previous investment levels, storm damage and an aging housing stock. Ms Duff advised that these issues were sector wide, with housing providers being required to invest more in their stock and carefully plan future works, based on accurate data. Ms Duff suggested that this area continued to be monitored closely and a further report presented to Board in 6 months.

Mrs M. Burgess supported the careful planning of future works, given that some reactive repairs works was effectively patching up components which were due for replacement.

Mr B. Sadler concurred with plans to report further to Board following a further monitoring period and also suggested that a report on the outcome of the planned stock condition surveys was also presented. Ms Duff undertook to bring a future report to Board on the survey results.

The Board NOTED the update on the review of reactive repairs spend during 2025 and AGREED that this area should continue to be closely monitored with a further update on spend to be reported to the Board in 6 months.

14. **Quarterly Performance Report Q3 2025/26**

Ms H. Duff highlighted that satisfaction reporting within the report was taken from the Group satisfaction survey to allow Board to monitor the 3 month rolling

trends. The Board had, however, previously agreed to use the satisfaction survey results from the external Research Resource survey for ARC reporting purposes which was also detailed within the report.

Ms Duff drew particular attention to the positive performance in the following areas:

- average time to re-let properties
- rent loss through properties being empty
- complaints handling

The Board thereafter NOTED the Association's performance against the key operational performance indicators covering Quarter 3 of 2025/26 and were pleased with the performance improvements being achieved.

15. **Riverside Group Policy Review**

Ms P. McEvoy advised that the Tenancy Fraud Policy was a new Policy which had previously been in place at One Housing Group and had been subject to minor review in order to be utilised across the Group, with Scottish differences being highlighted throughout the Policy. In line with the consultation process, it had been reviewed by the Association's Service Improvement Group and Senior Management Team.

Ms McEvoy highlighted the minor changes to Building Safety Policy to take account of new legislation and update roles and responsibilities across Group.

After consideration, the Board NOTED the updates to the Building Safety Policy and thereafter APPROVED the Tenancy Fraud Policy.

16. **Riverside Scotland Policy Review**

Ms P. McEvoy advised that minor changes had been made to the Void Management Policy and a further review of the Policy was planned later in the year following completion of actions in the Voids Continuous Improvement Action Plan.

Ms McEvoy advised that the extension request for the review of the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information had been to allow it to be incorporated within the Group Transparency Policy. The development of this Policy had, however, been delayed due to the issue of guidance on STAIRs by the government and was currently envisaged for completion by the end of the year. Ms McEvoy stated that the risk related to the delay of the policy review was low due to the number of information requests that the Association received.

Following consideration, the Board thereafter:

- a) APPROVED the Void Management Policy and
- b) AGREED the extension requests for the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Policy.

17. **Board Training Plan**

Mrs D. Boyle advised that the dates of the proposed Board Training Plan could be subject to change pending discussion with Group colleagues regarding support and availability to deliver the proposed sessions.

Referring to the Board Objectives section of the report, Mrs Boyle highlighted that further to consideration of the options for Board to hear tenant / employee opinions it had been found that a significant number of options for reporting views were currently utilised which the Board concurred with. It was therefore agreed that if Board had any specific suggestions for additional reporting, this should be provided to Mrs Boyle.

The Board thereafter AGREED the proposed Board Training Plan for 2026/27.

18. **Formal Registers**

Mrs D. Boyle highlighted that the Senior Management Team reviewed the Staff Declaration of Interests Register to ensure that conflicts were managed appropriately in order to protect the Association and staff members from any risk.

The Board thereafter NOTED the entries in the Association's Declaration of Interests, Fraud and Loss, Gifts and Hospitality and Grant of Benefits Registers.

19. **Managing Director's Report**

Mr G. Naylor presented the report providing an overview of current issues and activity across the business and highlighted the following points:

a) **Strategic Risk Register Update**

The recruitment of the new Chair had been added to the Strategic Risk Register as a new risk. The outline timetable and proposed process were the mitigating actions to be progressed, ensuring there was adequate time to recruit to the post prior to the Annual General Meeting in September. It was noted that the Risk Register was due to reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee at its next meeting on 12 February 2026.

b) **Constitutional Partnership Agreement Update**

His meeting with Group's Director of Governance & Deputy Company Secretary to progress the review of the Constitutional Partnership, where

comments and proposed changes had been discussed, following review by Group Executive Directors (EDs) and himself. The proposed changes sought to address concerns the Board had around the notice period for agreeing and applying Group's Service Charge. Ms McGuinness advised that the Agreement would also ensure it reflected current service delivery by the Finance Team.

The Board noted the intention that Group's and Association's lawyers would review the draft Agreement prior to it being prepared for consideration by Group ED's, the Association's Board and Group's Governance and People Committee, prior to final sign-off by Group Board in July 2026. The Board requested that a session on the proposed Constitutional Partnership Agreement was arranged at the Board Strategy in March 2026. Mr G. Naylor undertook to incorporate a session within the agenda for the day.

c) Financial Planning Update

A key focus of the Senior Management Team (SMT) had been to ensure the Association was maximising investment spend in the housing stock in the coming years. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As part of this process, the Group Finance Team had been advising the SMT on options for maximising spend in these areas [REDACTED]. It was noted that [REDACTED] options would be brought to Board for consideration and discussion.

d) Next Board Meeting and Strategy Away Day

The current plans for the next Board Meeting and Strategy Day to be held at the Riverside Lodge Hotel on 5 and 6 March 2026 and requested that the Board contact Mrs D. Boyle regarding accommodation requirements.

Mrs M. Burgess gave apologies for the meetings.

The Chair confirmed his contentment with current progress on the review of the Constitutional Partnership Agreement and the Board thereafter NOTED the contents of the Managing Director's Report.

20. Minutes / Updates

The Board NOTED the following minutes and updates:

- a) Unconfirmed Customer Experience Committee Minutes – 27 November 2025.
- b) Group Board Meeting Highlights – 11 December 2025

21. **Any Other Business**

Internal Audit

[REDACTED] his service would now report to Group's Director of Governance and Deputy Company Secretary, Mr M. Hayday, and would be managed by Corporate Audit Manager, Ms H. Rasul, with external support as required. Mrs D. Boyle advised that Ms Rasul was due to attend the next Audit & Risk Committee Meeting scheduled for 12 February 2026.

22. **Date of Next Meeting**

271st Board Meeting – 5.30 p.m. on Thursday 5 March 2026 and Board Strategy Day – 10.00 a.m. on Friday 6 March 2026 at the Riverside Lodge Hotel, Annick Road, Irvine, KA11 4LD.

G Naylor
Secretary
23 January 2026
GN/db

Signed

Dated