

Please note – these Minutes have been edited to remove any commercially sensitive or confidential discussions.

ITEM 2

MELVILLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minute of the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 15 November 2023
at 6.00 pm Hybrid Meeting - Office and Zoom Video Conference Call

PRESENT: Donna Bogdanovic
Cathy Hanlon
Clare Marshall
Barbara Shearer
Brian Wilkie
David Bond
Bill Takhar
Christine Moore

IN ATTENDANCE: John McMorrow, Chief Executive
Jane Burnett, Head of Housing Services
Rich Murdoch, Head of Asset Management
David Dewhurst, Acting Head of Finance
David Todd, Property Manager
Dan Hughes, Communications and Corporate Services
Manager (Minute)

D BOGDANOVIC IN THE CHAIR

1a.	CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, explaining that Paul Cameron and Caron Quinn had been at the SFHA finance conference earlier and might not make it.	Action Required
1b.	DECLARATIONS OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS <u>Noted</u> that there was no other competent business.	Note
1c.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST <u>Noted</u> that declarations from Ironmills Directors were duly noted.	Note

1d.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p><u>Noted</u> that apologies were received from Kirsten Dean.</p>	<p>Action Required</p> <p>Note</p>
2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING 11 OCTOBER 2023</p>	
2.1	<p><u>Noted</u> that the Chair invited the Chief Executive to lead on the minutes on behalf of the Secretary.</p>	<p>Note</p>
2.2	<p><u>Noted</u> that Members agreed that these were a true and accurate minute of the meeting. The minutes were <u>approved</u> by Donna Bogdanovic and <u>seconded</u> by Barbara Shearer.</p>	<p>Note/ Approved</p>
3.	<p>MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ITEMS</p>	
3.1	<p><u>Noted</u> that the Chief Executive gave an update on matters arising and outstanding items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity training now carried out ▪ 4 day week survey now completed ▪ Bad debt profile to come ▪ Minor changes made to Domestic Abuse policy ▪ Eviction approved and agreed 	<p>Note</p>
3.2	<p>The Board <u>noted</u> the contents of this report, approved the removal of completed items from the register and <u>noted</u> the list of information table.</p>	<p>Note/ Approved</p>
4.	<p>DEVELOPMENT UPDATE</p>	
4.1	<p><u>Noted</u> that the Head of Asset Management presented the development update, requesting Board approval for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to redacted sum to establish viability of proceeding with mid-market homes at site B of Midlothian Council's Newbattle High development. ▪ Entering into a pre-construction service agreement with Morris & Spottiswood for redacted sum to carry out site investigation work on land at end of Old School Crescent. 	<p>Note</p>
4.2	<p><u>Noted</u> that the Head of Asset Management explained that both sites are part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). He was then asked if the Old School site was definitely earmarked for housing, replying that he was almost certain</p>	<p>Note</p>

	it was but would come back to Board if that turned out to be incorrect.	Action Required
4.3	Noted that he then went on to explain that the Council will start work shortly on site A at Newbattle High, and that the risk to Melville is minimal as the land purchase would be grant funded and at worst could be land banked (with planning consent) until the financial climate and costings made the project more viable.	Note
4.4	Item redacted.	Note
4.5	The Board noted the contents of this report and approved the two requests for funding.	Note/ Approved
5.	GOVERNANCE	
5.1	Noted that the CEO gave an update on governance, saying that since the last meeting there had been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No new notifiable events ▪ One new request under FOISA (full response provided) ▪ Two new Subject Access Requests (SARs) under GDPR (one resolved, one outstanding) 	Note
5.2	Other things to note include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of equalities training ▪ Strong audit assurance for staff working hours and reactive maintenance ▪ That there is one Board code of conduct form outstanding ▪ Work is ongoing to appoint new Board members with a couple of meetings still outstanding 	Note
5.3	Noted that a discussion took place on a potential transgender policy. Board agreed that the trainer who carried out the equalities training should be approached for views on the policy to ensure it is adequate.	Note
5.4	Noted that three policies were up for review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Racial harassment policy to be dropped as contents are covered by harassment policy ▪ Only minor alterations to legionella policy 	Note

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abandoned homes which is both a policy and procedure 	Action Required
5.5	The Board noted the contents of this report.	Note
6.0	YEAR END FINANCE REPORT	
6.1	Noted that the acting Head of Finance presented the quarterly figures (ending 30 September 23) saying that results were positive and ahead of budget. He gave a detailed breakdown of profit and loss saying that the main costs that had gone over budget were accommodation and legal/consultancy. He also gave an explanation of the loan situation saying that the recent fall in inflation was a welcome development that could have a positive impact.	Note
6.2	Noted that a discussion took place on garage plots and lock-ups, raised because of rental income of £23k. It was agreed that, as a housing provider, we should only be providing these if they make economic sense. If not cost effective then we will consider using the land for other purposes, such as development if appropriate.	Note
6.3	Noted that a discussion took place around debts and cashflow, with an increase in debtors and a decrease in creditors. Head of Finance (Acting) explained that this seemed to be more of a timing issue than anything else. Several big ticket costs were paid out in April but will even itself out. Money spent on Newbattle is also an issue for cashflow but might also justify drawing down larger (redacted sum) loan previously. Acting Head of Finance will provide more detail as follow-up.	Note
6.4	Noted that a brief discussion took place around sound proofing and the tenant participation budget. It was explained that tenant participation budget currently also covers tenancy sustainment.	Note
6.5	Noted that the CEO explained that work is to be done next year looking at budgets and where/when cash is spent, making sure cashflow matches spending. He finished by saying that the good current financial position might not be	Note

	so healthy in future when decarbonisation work begins in earnest.	Action Required
6.6	The Board noted the contents of this report.	Note
7.0	MID YEAR FORECASTS	
7.1	Noted that the acting Head of Finance gave a detailed run down of budget versus forecasts (up to 31 March 2024) saying that at this point, he expects to close the year ahead of budget.	Note
7.2	Noted that a discussion took place about the situation with the office heating. Head of Assets explained that cost likely to be under the redacted sum set aside in the budget and that work should be starting shortly. The appointed contractor was not only the best for value-for-money but also the one that could act quickest. Potential obstacle is the gas meter but work going on to expedite.	Note
7.3	Noted that the ground source heating, and its future, will be looked at again in the new year once the gas back-up is in place.	Note
7.4	The Board noted the contents of this report and approved the forecast. Also noted that the chair congratulated the Housing team for keeping arrears under 2%.	Note/ Approve
8.0	BAD DEBTS AND CREDIT WRITE-OFFS	
8.1	Noted that there were no bad debts or credit write offs.	Note
8.2	The Board noted the contents of this report.	Note
9.0	PROPERTY MAINTENANCE REPORT	
9.1	Noted that the Property Manager gave an update on Property performance and issues up to 30 September 2023. Highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reactive maintenance tender – items redacted commercially sensitive. ▪ Void performance has been impacted by 9 recent tenant deaths 	Note

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planned maintenance programme is going well but is front loaded so there will be less to report in the second half of the year ▪ Asbestos training recently carried out for Property team ▪ We will be reserving the right to force entry for electrical safety going forward 	Action Required
9.2	Noted that a discussion took place on forced entries. When asked about the cost of forced entries he explained that this would be recharged to the tenant however would need to make sure we had robust evidence to back up what the contractor tells us.	Note
9.3	Noted that a brief discussion then took place on incentives for leaving a property in good condition. The Head of Housing said that this was a discussion currently taking place with other members of the Scottish Housing Network.	Note
9.4	Noted that a discussion took place on the reactive maintenance tender – Response redacted commercially sensitive.	Note
9.5	The Board noted the contents of this report.	Note
10.0	EESH UPDATE	
10.1	Noted that the Head of Assets gave the update saying that performance has been good with compliance up from 97.6% to 98.2% and that we are in a strong position currently.	Note
10.2	Noted that an application for grant funding with company name redacted in Forth for 13 properties was successful. Grant will fund air source heat pumps and insulation. Development Manager will run the project with the help of the housing officer for the area, where there are some complex lifestyles that might make engagement challenging.	Note
10.3	Noted that there is no update on introduction of EESH 2, although end of the year still seems to be the target. Indoor air quality expected to be a major consideration.	Note

		Action Required
10.4	The Board <u>noted</u> the contents of this report.	Note
11	REGISTERS	
11.1	<p><u>Noted</u> that since the Registers were last presented to the Board the following entries have been made:</p> <p>Declarations of Interest - 1 entry in this register (Donation details redacted).</p> <p>Entitlements, Payments and Benefits – 7 entries - details are available in the register.</p> <p>Seal Register - 2 entries for new Association Memberships.</p> <p><u>Noted</u> that there were no entries in the following registers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bribery & Corruption ▪ Fraud <p><u>Noted</u> that the Chair signed the Registers at the end of the meeting and Members were reminded that these registers are available for review at any time.</p>	<p>Note</p> <p>Note</p> <p>Note</p>
12.0	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS	
12.1	<u>Noted</u> that there was no other competent business raised.	Note
13.0	REDACTED ITEM (Item 13.1 – 13.6)	
13.7	<u>Noted</u> that the Chair asked that the Board’s thanks be passed on to the staff for all their hard work.	Note
13.8	<u>Noted</u> that two new appointments have been made recently: a new Welfare Benefits Adviser and Housing Assistant.	Note
13.9	<u>Noted</u> that the appointment of a Senior Property Officer has been put on hold for the time being.	

13.10	Noted that digital CEO appraisal survey will be sent to staff shortly and then sent to Board members.	Action Required
13.11	Noted that there's been an excellent level of interest in the search for new Board members with seven strong candidates coming forward to fill the four places. It was suggested that successful candidates be invited along to the Board away day at the end of the month.	Note
13.12	Noted that the Board approved delegated authority for the Chair and Vice-chair to appoint new members ahead of the next meeting.	Note
14.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
14.1	Noted that the next meeting of the Board is Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 6pm and that this will be a hybrid meeting.	Note
14.2	Meeting closed at 20.18 (following extension to standing orders requested at 20.00)	

Minutes Approved By:

Signature: _____

13 December 2023