

The Riverside Group Limited - Report of Committees and Subsidiary Board (May 2020 – June 2020)

The Board is asked to **NOTE** this summary of activity at Group committee and subsidiary board level in the period since the Board last met. Full sets of minutes for all subsidiary board and committee meetings are made available on REX as soon as available, or can be requested from the Governance Team.

London Development Committee 13/05/2020

<p>Business dealt with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] • Noted the Housing Management Update • Noted the Market Update • Appointed an external supplier to facilitate the 360 appraisal process for the Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • Approved the actions emerging from the Local Partnerships Review
<p>Key matters arising</p>	<p>The Committee noted the market update. The lockdown imposed to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus had frozen the housing market and as such it was problematic to forecast next steps with any certainty. It was nonetheless noted as encouraging that sites were beginning to re-open following the lifting of partial restrictions to the lockdown. Early indications suggested that developers had not seen the large number of cancellations that initially had been forecast – although the ongoing impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic would continue to be monitored.</p> <p>The Committee noted the Housing Management update. Covid-19 pandemic had had a significant impact on estate operations, with only emergency/essential services being deployed in most cases, however, Housing Officers had been making wellbeing calls to all tenants to ensure their continued safety and wellbeing. The feedback received to this additional communication had been extremely positive. No actions were being taken towards tenants currently in arrears, although Income Management teams were being supported by Housing, Income Maximisation and support teams to offer advice, signposting and financial support to tenants.</p> <p>The Committee noted the London Regeneration Programme update. Social distancing restrictions as a result of Covid-19 had had an impact on the programme, although it was noted as encouraging that to date there had been little significant delays in the undertaking of key day to day activities. It was acknowledged that this remained a risk if current social distancing measures were maintained for a longer period, although this would continue to be monitored.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	

	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee noted the report relating to the recent gateway review undertaken by Local Partnerships and accompanying draft action plan which responded to the recommendations made. The Committee approved the actions as outlined in the plan.</p> <p>The Committee confirmed the appointment an external supplier to facilitate the 360 appraisal process for the Committee, the outcomes of which would be reported to the July meeting.</p>
Recommendations	There were no recommendations to Group Board.

Governance & Remuneration (14/05/2020)

Business dealt with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted an update on Board Member Recruitment • Noted Board & Committee Membership Update • Review of Skills, Knowledge and Experience of TRGL Board and Election of Board Members at AGM 2020 	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
Key matters arising	<p>The Committee received an update on the Board Member recruitment exercise noting that the process was proceeding in line with agreed timescales and informal interviews had commenced.</p> <p>The Committee received an update on Board and Committee membership and noted that all groups were operating in line with their constitutions with the exception of Riverside Foundation where board membership had fallen below the minimum requirement. The Governance Team were reviewing options for Foundation’s governance and would revert with proposals in due course. The Committee also agreed that the GTC would continue to operate with two members, with the position to be reviewed following completion of Board recruitment.</p> <p>The Committee noted the conclusions of the review of skills, knowledge and experience of Group Board and considered the proposals for Sally Trueman and Terrie Alafat to be recommended for re-election/election at the Annual General Meeting in September 2020. The Committee also agreed it was appropriate to recommend to the Board that an exception to the nine year rule is granted relating to Sally’s third and final term of office on the Board until June 2023.</p>	

	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
Recommendations	<p>That the Group Board approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills, Knowledge and Experience of TRGL Board and Election of Board Members at AGM 2020 • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED]

Care and Support Committee 21/05/2020 and 18/06/2020

Business dealt with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted a report from the Executive Director • Noted a Business Development Update • Noted an Equality and Diversity Report • Noted Financial and Operational Support Performance Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted a report on Hull Extra Care performance and Agreed to close the Working Group • Noted an internal audit highlights report, quality and compliance report and risk register update • Noted a report on Risks and Opportunities from COVID-19 and resultant Service Changes
Key matters arising	<p>The Committee received an update on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and noted that all schemes have been kept open during lockdown and no staff have been furloughed, staff from Evolve and Riverside Direct have been redeployed to support Care & Support. Some improvement programmes may have to be re-planned, especially in areas with large numbers of people in at-risk groups such as Retirement Living.</p> <p>It was noted that work was now underway alongside other social housing providers to support and rehouse those rough sleepers accommodated in hotels during lockdown alongside other work to support keeping people from returning to the streets.</p> <p>The Committee noted a report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities including the Ethnicity Pay Gap analysis, Riverside’s status as a Disability Confident Employer and the Sunflower campaign on hidden disabilities.</p>	

	<p>The Committee received reports on Financial performance, showing an increase in repair spending on voids and an adverse impact on new services are being brought online slower than anticipated. The Operational Performance Reports show that Colleague absence rate has returned to a normal level and stock voids have increased slightly to 3.7% impacted by the difficulty of moving home during lockdown.</p> <p>A report on Hull Extra Care Performance was received and noted that deductions were at their lowest level to date. The Committee approved the closure of the Working Group.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The committee discussed risks and opportunities arising from COVID-19 and noted the changes which have been made to Services as a result of the pandemic.</p>
Recommendations	There were no recommendations to Group Board

Evolve Board Meetings 21/05/2020 and 19/06/20

Business dealt with	<p>Additional meeting to discuss the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mitigation measures which had been implemented to date and intended next steps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted an update on COVID-19 response • Approved the Financial Statements for the Year End and Management Representation Letter • Noted a Financial Performance Update • Noted the Riverside Direct Performance Dashboard • Discussed Board effectiveness
Key matters arising	<p>Following the shutdown of planned works in March 2020, the majority of planned labour was focused on key Care & Support works, although some operatives were assisting with Emergency Repairs & Voids.</p> <p>Risk Assessments were currently being updated to provide safe systems of works for Windows, Doors & Planned Boiler Works, with the aim of mobilising these work streams from mid-June. The Board was assured that such works would be undertaken in a safe and secure manner, and would adhere to strict QSHE requirements. The importance of communication with customers during this process was highlighted as paramount.</p>	

A bespoke call team had been established to ensure all customers were appropriately informed and sufficiently updated on the nature of the installation, and the measures which have been applied to ensure safety. Work was continuing to operate essential emergency repairs only, in line with current government guidelines, although additional support was still being provided to Care & Support across all regions.

Early mobilisation planning continued, with a review of non-essential repairs that had been abandoned due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [REDACTED] The importance of communication and transparency with customers throughout this process was again highlighted.

Repair and complaint numbers had fallen noticeably as a result of the pandemic, although it was stressed that this was also a reflection of the excellent long standing work which had been undertaken to address customer complaints prior to the lockdown.

Work was continuing to review all Risk Assessments across all key areas throughout the organisation. This included ensuring that planned maintenance tasks could be performed under a safe system of work, as well as the ongoing review of Empty Homes, Responsive Maintenance, Electrical Testing, Gas Servicing and Care and Support Assessments. The Board was assured that all Risk Assessments were shared with the Group and placed on the RIC to ensure visibility and consistency across all areas. Supplies of PPE remained secure and plentiful, and were being fully utilised.

The Board was assured that extensive work was ongoing to communicate with all colleagues on a regular basis. This included all front line workers who continued to operate, as well as colleagues that were working at home and those shielding or self-isolating.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Board expressed thanks to all staff for their continued hard work and dedication during this challenging and difficult time.

The Board received a detailed report on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic including returning to planned works, instituting safe ways of working and returning with a safe and secure programme in which customers can feel confident. Currently only essential emergency repairs are being conducted and there is a backlog of repairs to work through. Communications with customers must be carefully considered to ensure customers know what to expect when repairs are carried out and also to reduce unnecessary visits.

	<p>Phase 1 of returning to repairs are those which are external or can be completed quickly to reduce exposure for customers. There are currently no issues with the supply chain.</p> <p>Fire and Gas compliance works have seen some impact from lack of access to properties but is starting to recover. Works required for safety are receiving particular focus to ensure access is granted.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Board approved the Financial Statements for 2019/20 and Management Representation Letter.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
Recommendations	There were no recommendations to Group Board.

Irvine Board Meeting (27/5/20) and Irvine Special Board Meeting (9/6/20)

Business dealt with	<p>27/5/2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved the Annual Return on the Charter for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator. • Approved the Annual Loan Portfolio Return to the Scottish Housing Regulator. • Approved the proposed changes to Thistle Housing Services’ Articles of Association. • Agreed to adopt Group’s Treasury Policy. <p>9/6/20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved the proposed Rule Changes, and subject to Group Board approval, instructs the Company Secretary to hold a Special General Meeting for the membership to consider the proposed Rule Changes when legislation allows meetings to take place. • Approved the amendments required to the Annual Return on the Charter for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.
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Key matters arising at 27/5/20 Meeting

The Board noted the Covid-19 Update Report which included updates in relation to, current service delivery, the current arrears position and plans to re-introduce the arrears recovery processes, the cash position, the planning and phasing of the switch-on of services, the planning for some staff to return to the office and also future Board / Committee meeting processes. Board also considered the covid-specific risks.

The Board noted the updates given in relation to the 2017/2020 Corporate Plan objectives, the current progress with the draft 2020/2023 Corporate Plan and the Risk Register Update.

The Board noted the Operational Performance, discussing in particular gas safety, customer satisfaction, the complaints handling process, the KPI targets for 2020/21 and also the implementation of more on-line services moving forward.

The Board noted the Financial Performance, in particular that a reforecast would be carried out and the likelihood that the capital investment programme for 2020/21 would require to be altered.

The Board noted the MD's Report which included updates in relation to the Corporate Plan 2020/2023, the Proposed Rule Changes, arrangements for General Meetings and the Data Incident Claim.

The Board noted the Group Board Appraisal Summary Results and undertook to supply the Managing Director with any feedback for inclusion in the Action Plan.

The Board noted the schedule of Write-Offs for the year.

The Board noted the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity 2020 Action Plan and Monitoring Sheet.

The Board noted the formal Customer Involvement Strategy Update Report.

Recommendations

None.

Impact Committee Meeting 12/06/2020

Business dealt with

- [REDACTED]

- The new MD presented a detailed MD update covering a wide range of subjects including; changes to the senior management structure; Impact legacy booklet; and stakeholder engagement and compliance with the Regulatory standards which will be submitted to the August Committee with shows compliance and a small number of improvement actions.
- A governance update was provided which updated the forward plan of agendas based on feedback and links with Group, along

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee approved the update on the expanding of the Cumbria Growth Strategy and the work progressing and next steps to develop opportunities for the future. 	with Committee approving some local changes to the SoDA to replace Bryonie Shaw with Andrea Thorn as the new MD
Key matters arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee expressed they're thanks to staff for dealing with the Covid-19 situation. The update was thorough and committee discussed the metrics, results from customer care calls and the approach to supporting the Money Matters team with the increased volume in calls. Committee noted the Integration Update which mapped out the proposed governance structure. Committee asked for further information on the Integration Roadmap and the arrangements for what is presented to Impact Committee and what their role is in the project linked to their ToR. Thanks were expressed to Carol for all her support since being nominated as the Riverside representative on the committee and previously the Board since November 2018 and the work prior to this from the end of 2017 on the merger proposals. Committee are looking forward to working with Jo Lucy who will replace Carol and has already had an informal meeting with the Chair and Officers and attended the last two committee meetings as an observe 	
Recommendations	Jo Lucy is appointed and confirmed as the Riverside Executive on the Impact Committee. This recommendation will be considered by GRC at its meeting on 9 July.	

Prospect Board Meeting 17/06/2020

Business dealt with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the Management Accounts for the two month period ending 31 May 2020 Noted the measures which had been implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic Approved the Financial Statements for Year Ending 31/03/20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted the Risk Register [REDACTED] Noted the Managing Directors' Report [REDACTED]
Key matters arising	<p>The Board discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and stressed that the prime focus remained the continued health and well-being of staff. Daily contact was being made with all staff members to ensure everyone was managing the situation effectively. Site staff and the Sales team had returned to work early May.</p> <p>The Board was assured that all Covid-19 guidelines issued by the Government, HBF and the Construction Leadership Council were being followed. The Board was also reassured by the robust and rigorous nature of the Covid-19 health and safety inspections. It was noted as encouraging that contact had been made by the Cabinet Office to provide a case study on Prospect Homes on the decision to safely return to work. A video was recorded and the Cabinet Office had published this on their website, LinkedIn and other social media platforms.</p>	

	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Board approved the Financial Statements for Year Ending 31/03/20.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The extremely positive nature of the Committee Effectiveness Review results was noted, with the overall average score having increased from 4.07 out of 5 in 2018 to 4.66 in 2020 and represented a six year high. The Board noted the excellent progress that had been made in the last two years.</p>
Recommendations	There were no recommendations to Group Board.

Group Audit Committee 18/06/2020

Business dealt with	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended to Group Board approval of the Going Concern basis as an appropriate basis for the preparation of the Group's 2019/20 financial statements. Recommended approval of the Group Financial Statements to the relevant Board of Directors/Trustees, subject to any minor amendments Recommended to Group Board that the statement on internal control assurance was included in the financial statements Recommended for approval to Group Board the revised Scheme of Delegated Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [REDACTED] Recommended for approval to Group Board the Financial Crime Policy [REDACTED] <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Register Annual Internal Audit Report 2019-20 Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended to Group Board that Riverside's Assets & Liabilities Register meets the requirements of the GFVS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year End External Audit Highlights Report Anti-Fraud Report 2019-20 Committee Effectiveness Review 2019-20
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Key matters arising	<p>The Committee received an update on the Strategic Group Risk register. Previously the impact of COVID-19 had been included in each of the strategic risks. All aspects of COVID risk had now been collated into a single COVID-19 risk. Income Collection risk had been increased due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the potential increase in unemployment continued to be monitored, with a notable increase in Universal Credit cases. Headroom had been increased to mitigate this risk of potential loss of income.</p> <p>The Committee noted the increased costs incurred by the COVID-19 pandemic and was reassured that this was reflected within the presented accounts. The importance of continuing to monitor the risks of what would be considered 'day to day' activities was also highlighted, and the Committee were reassured to see that this remained in place. The ongoing risk to the wellbeing of both staff and customers would continue to be monitored. The Committee praised the open and detailed nature of the Risk Register and welcomed the level of assurance provided.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee noted the Annual Internal Audit for 2019-20. The report was substantially based on audits completed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, whilst some KPIs had dipped in April and May, overall performance indicated that the control environment had been maintained. The extensive and comprehensive updates relating to COVID-19 were highlighted and provided a good basis for scrutiny by the governance community. The Committee highlighted the positive nature of the report and the encouraging strides that had been made</p> <p>The Committee noted the Internal Audit Strategy for 2020/21. The first priority would be COVID-19 and based on the Risk Register a range of areas had been identified where assurance would be sought. The Committee was assured by the robust and detailed nature of the Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21, and welcomed the emphasis on continuing to monitor the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst at the same time ensuring that monitoring and assurance for fundamental day to day 'business as usual' activities was maintained.</p> <p>The Committee noted the going concern update which provided an assessment of each entity within the Group to ensure that it had capacity to continue to operate as a going concern. Despite the current situation in relation to COVID-19, the Group's financial position was strong, and was not expected to be damaged significantly by the impact of COVID-19. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
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	<p>The Committee agreed that it was content that the financial statements presented a true and fair view of the state of the companies' affairs, and therefore agreed to recommend to the relevant Board of Directors/Trustees for approval subject to inclusion of any minor amendments. The Committee further agreed to recommend to Group Board that the statement on internal control assurance was included in the financial statements.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee approved the Financial Crime Policy for recommendation to Group Board.</p> <p>The Committee considered the results of the recent Committee Effectiveness review and noted the positive progress made.</p> <p>The Committee recommended to Group Board that the revised Scheme of Delegated Authority.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee expressed considerable thanks to Tim Croston, who was stepping down as Chair of the Committee, for his dedication and service</p>
Recommendations	<p>That the Group Board approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• [REDACTED]• The Going Concern basis as an appropriate basis for the preparation of the Group's 2019/20 financial statements.• The Group Financial Statements, subject to any minor amendments• Statement on Internal Control Assurance• The Assessment of Compliance against the Governance and Financial Viability Report.• Scheme of Delegated Authority• Assets & Liabilities Register• Financial Crime Policy <p>These items will be submitted for approval at the Board's meeting in July with the exception of the Financial Crime Policy which will be considered by Board at its August meeting.</p>

Neighbourhood Services Committee (25/06/20)

Business dealt with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted Executive Director of Asset Services Update • Reviewed Operational, Financial, Customer Services, Building Safety, Responsive Repairs and People Services performance updates • Noted Customer Services Risk Register and GAC Internal Audit Highlight Report from 18 June 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted update on Service Charges Improvement Project • Noted report on Customer Satisfaction • Approved the Rent Framework • Received update reports on Formal Customer Involvement and EDI
Key matters arising	<p>The Committee received the Executive Director of Asset Services Update, including Covid-19 impact on customers and colleagues, re-mobilisation plans for Responsive Repairs, Neighbourhood Sustainability Project and rough sleepers updates. The [REDACTED]</p> <p>The Committee noted the key finding from audits considered by GAC in June and requested sight of the Warning Marker Project Plan and that further consideration be given to the scope of the Safeguarding re-audit to ensure it provided assurance to both NSC and C&SC.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed Operational and Financial Performance Updates, [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] key risk to the budget from Service Charges was also highlighted and the Committee was pleased to note progress being made and the comprehensive scope of the review. Consideration of Run Rates within existing budgets within this review was also requested.</p> <p>The Committee noted Customer Services performance update, in particular, increasing call volumes resulting in pressure points during certain periods [REDACTED]</p> <p>An update on Building Safety Compliance was noted, [REDACTED], however, progress was being made, the level of customers now providing access was improving and focus on managing compliance and customer vulnerability continuing.</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note the initiatives being implemented to achieve a real impact on responsive repairs performance in 2020/21 and requested an update at the NSC Away Day in October.</p>	

	<p>The Committee was grateful for the work being carried out to review the approach to customer satisfaction, including key actions being taken to improve through customer insight information and requested a further report setting out targets set and a trajectory be submitted to the next NSC meeting.</p> <p>The Committee noted a Formal Customer Involvement update and agreed that increased focus on engagement between RCVE and NSC/C&SC, with a view to strengthening links, was required.</p> <p>It was agreed that further reflection on both the Committee's Effectiveness Review and its role with regard to achieving deeper engagement with EDI be considered at the October Away Day.</p>
Recommendations	There were no recommendations to Group Board