**GROUP BOARD MEETING 13 MAY 2021**

**Customer Story**

The Board received a presentation in which a customer shared their story of how Riverside services had not met the required standard. While the Board was disappointed that a customer had not received the service they deserved, they were pleased to note that the situation had been resolved and positive action taken to learn from what had gone wrong and prevent recurrence.

**Runcorn Regeneration**

The Board noted an update on a multi-million pound investment programme to regenerate neighbourhoods in Runcorn and the significant progress which had been made in delivering renewal of the area. The Board was pleased to approve next steps to move the project forward.

**Development and Joint Ventures**

The Board received an update on Riverside’s development activity including where the organisation were undertaking projects with partners through Joint Ventures. The Board was pleased to see good performance across the development area of the business particularly in light of the challenges and impacts of COVID-19.

**CEO Update**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on a number of significant matters relating to the state of the Group and its operating environment.

It was noted that changes to the operating model within the Customer Service Centre, designed to improve services to customers, were embedding well although further work was required.

**Equality Diversity and Inclusion Update and Action Plan for 2021/22**

The Board noted progress made over the previous 12 months to improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at Riverside. The Board was pleased to note that considerable progress in delivering the objectives and activities set out in the agreed action plan for 2020/21 had been achieved.

The Board welcomed the intention to broaden Riverside’s focus in the coming year to deal more directly with the experiences of customers, including prioritising the establishment of online networks for a diverse range of customers, which would assist in satisfying the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper and the National Housing Federation’s Together with Tenants Charter.

The Board approved the priorities for the coming 12 months as set out in the EDI Action Plan and asked the Executive Team to explore how Board Members could get more directly involved in leading and supporting Riverside in achieving its objectives with respect to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

**Annual Treasury Matters**

The Board was pleased to note that it had been another extremely strong year in terms of treasury performance, with clear progress and added value achieved across the Riverside Group.

The Board approved the Group Investment Policy and the Group Treasury Policy for the coming year, as well as the Annual Treasury Strategy.

**IT Strategy Update**

The Board received an overview of Riverside’s IT strategy & roadmap for the 5 years April 2020 to March 2025 noting that to remain current and gain maximum benefit from technology, Riverside intended to keep investing in IT both now and in future years. The Board welcomed the significant progress made in developing IT capability and extended its thanks to the IT team for the work it had carried out to support the business during the pandemic when a substantial proportion of the workforce moved out of offices to working from home.

**People Services Update**

The Board received an update on the delivery of ‘Our Riverside People Plan’ which set out the people outcomes, objectives and priorities for the three year period from April 2020 – March 2023. The actions being taken to manage sickness absence and retain and attract staff were welcomed.

**Our Riverside Plan 2020-23 – Strategic Report – Year-end 2020/21**

The Board received the year-end (2020-21) Strategic Performance report based on ‘Our Riverside Plan 2020-23’, comprising KPI performance dashboards for each of the ‘People’, ‘Homes’ and ‘Places’ objectives.

It was noted that although performance had in some areas been impacted by the unavoidable disruption to services arising from COVID-19, it had been strong on the whole, with overall customer satisfaction with services up, a positive colleague perception score achieved and development outputs just short of target.

**Riverside Performance**

The Board reviewed operational performance at year end. While customer satisfaction was noted as improving, complaints handling was not where the business wanted it to be and this would be a key focus in the coming year. Income performance was noted as strong with the Let’s Talk Rent initiative proving effective in supporting customers who might be experiencing financial challenges. There were a number of service areas where performance had been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions however work was underway to recover.

The Board noted financial performance at year end. While savings targets had largely been achieved it was noted that Riverside’s operating margin might fall below target due to a number of factors and this was being closely monitored.

The Board also received an update from each of its Committees and Subsidiary Board and the Riverside Customer Voice Executive on activity in the reporting period.

**COVID-19**

The Board received an update on the actions which had been taken across the business in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Board welcomed the ongoing commitment to supporting staff wellbeing, as well as the ongoing efforts to maintain services and communications to customers under the ongoing restrictions, while prioritising safety. It was noted that the opportunity for staff to return to offices would likely be in October 2021, however this would be dependent on the Government’s roadmap being delivered.

**Governance**

The Board considered a number of governance related matters and approved recommendations arising from a review of Riverside’s compliance against its new Code of Governance (the National Housing Federation’s Code of Governance 2020).