

TRGL BOARD MEETING

ITEM: 3.1

The Board is asked to **NOTE** the update on Committee and Subsidiary Board Activity for the period March 2021 to date. It will note that the format of the report has been refreshed to better focus on areas of risk and assurance in response to Campbell Tickell's observations. Feedback on the new reporting format from Board Members is welcome. The report will continue to be refined and developed by the Governance Team. Minutes of all meetings in the period can be found on Convene or are available upon request.

Governance & Remuneration Committee 25/03/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Recs to Board To approve changes arising from NHF Code of Governance 2020 (item 4.4 on agenda)
To approve appointment of Irvine Chair (will be submitted in July)

Assurance and Risk

Findings on TRGL's compliance against the new NHF Code of Governance were received and the Committee is content that while actions are required (see recs) there are no material areas of concern and the work underway will bring TRGL into a compliant position by mid-year.

While not an area of concern at this point, the Committee is focussed on managing a number of vacancies across the structure and will receive a report in May capturing all factors to be considered for effective succession planning both in the short term and longer term.

Outcomes of Group appraisal surveys were received and no areas of concern identified with performance. These will now be reported to Boards and Committee for consideration and objective setting for the coming year.

The Committee noted a report detailing the findings and lessons learned from a whistleblowing/grievance matter relating to Ash Grove, a retirement living scheme in Birmingham and is satisfied with the process followed and the actions taken in response to findings. There are no matters of concern to be escalated to Board.

Items to note

A presentation was received from the Customer Involvement (CI) Team on TRGL's CI model and priorities.

Pauline Ford was appointed to RC&SC and GAC for a 3 yr term and Sukie Jandu to GAC on a 1 yr co-option.

The Committee agreed a process to be facilitated by PwC for a review of Flexitime as a benefit.

The Riverside Group Pension Trustee Board 9/03/21 Attendance 100%, Length 3 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

The Board raised a number of questions in relation to Riverside's financial and operational performance as well as the treasury position. CMM and E Turner (who was in attendance as an observer) provided satisfactory responses.

It was noted that the most recent funding update showed the continuing trend of improvement seen since the valuation date, and that the technical provisions deficit is now estimated to have fallen to around £7.5 million.

It was noted that should the next valuation in 2023 show that the funding position was above 100%, conversations about getting to full self-sufficiency funding and the need for future contributions would then take place.

The Board noted that there were no material concerns with the fund's investment performance. Steps to develop a de-risking framework for the investment Strategy were agreed including consultation with Riverside.

It was noted that the original intention to complete Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) rectification for the 164 pensioners within scope, in time to coincide with the GMP increases in April was not achievable. SM confirmed that the sub-group is now aiming for all pension corrections and revised splits to be completed by the time of the October pension increase.

Items to note

This was C Matthews last meeting having served on the Board for 9 years and the Board offered its sincere thanks for her long and distinguished service. E Turner has been appointed as her successor.

It was agreed that a Riverside Finance Colleague would attend the next meeting to present on the Business Plan.

The investment consultant objectives for 2021 were noted.

The Board agreed to run a separate auditor tender process to Riverside in order to take control of its own process and appoint an auditor that is more responsive to its needs.

London Development Committee 10/03/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2.5 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

Friar's Close Update – Work ongoing to address the observations made by the Borough Planning Officers and the GLA. Work ongoing to develop a proposal incorporating this feedback. [REDACTED]

Items to note

Neighbourhood Management Update - The Civil Courts were opening slowly following the restrictions imposed by the lockdown. The ban on evictions would remain in place

[REDACTED]

Calverley Close Update – Following Board approval of additional fees, consultants had been instructed, and the Committee acknowledged that the potential redesign would likely increase scheme costs.

[REDACTED]

throughout March, with an anticipated lead in time of 6 months in order to address the backlog. The Committee was reassured that there were no current serious cases that would require consideration of eviction due to arrears.

Group Audit Committee 18/03/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2.5 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

A review of the Risk Register and Sector Risk Profile identified some key areas for focus moving forward, including post COVID risks, both from a financial and non-financial perspective that can be fed forward into the planned re-write of the risk register in April 2021 and also Internal Audit Strategy for the coming year.

The Committee require more detail be brought to GAC around how TRGL will be compliant with the Social Housing White Paper and the Grenfell Hackitt review as well as regular updates on breaches. Further assurance on TRGL's compliance with the new NHF Code of Governance and quarterly reviews of the Internal Audit Strategy going forward was agreed.

Items to note

The Group Appraisal outcomes were reviewed and objectives that were agreed are:

- A strategy day to further develop the relationship between the Board members and Executive Directors
- Review of existing training schedule to ensure all included elements are completed.
- Development of a "Deep Dive" programme to have focussed discussions on specific topics.

Irvine HA Board Meeting 25/03/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

Accepted Recruitment Panel's recommendation to formally elect Jim Strang as new Chair after AGM subject to TRGL Board approval.

Noted the Succession Planning report and instructed recruitment exercise for 3 new Board Members.

Noted impact of lockdown restrictions on some Corporate Plan objectives and alternative target deadlines. Noted the fluctuating risk score of political and regulatory uncertainty in the context of BREXIT / Scottish Parliament Election 2021. Noted the impact of future ways of working on staff health and wellbeing risk.

Items to note

Jim Strang appointed to Board filling casual vacancy created by resignation of Christopher Donohue (approved by GRC on 25 March).

[REDACTED]

Noted the outcome of the second stage repairs and maintenance options appraisal process to tender for a single contract over 10 year period and the recommended future service delivery model. Noted the start on site of the Kilmarnock Road, Dundonald modular development and the imminent start on site of the Tarryholme 2 development.

Prospect Board 21/04/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Recs to Board

The Board noted the Revised Articles of Association for Prospect (GB) Ltd, which had been approved by TRGL Board out of cycle.

Assurance and Risk

Financial Performance - Concern was expressed that during the year £744k of additional costs of sales had been posted to the accounts, due primarily to reductions in gross profit margins between February 2020 and February 2021 cost to complete. This was acknowledged as high, although was due in part to long standing historical sites which were secured prior to the current Management Team being in place, a problem exacerbated by the temporary closure for 6 weeks and supply chain issues as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Items to note

Board Appraisal Results 2020/21 – The Board noted the progress made through the year and agreed next steps to continue development.

Prospect completed the financial year with 107 sales completions, one ahead of budget. Work has also been undertaken to adapt the way homes are marketed sales achieved, which has included refreshing the website.

Impact Committee 22/04/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

Committee were content with the confirmed interim arrangements in place for colleagues leaving Impact. They were reassured by the management arrangements and the review processes in place. A retention programme is being agreed to retain some key staff through to integration.

Concern was raised about the ongoing level of outstanding LGSR's (6), however with effective management this has now reduced to 3 since the papers were circulated.

Committee agreed that separate Covid reporting will cease and will be incorporated into standard performance reports. Excellent performance on arrears was highlighted at only £3k above target. Given Covid implications this is great performance.

A strategic risk review showed close alignment to Group risks for the future. The only mitigating actions to be added to Impact's risk was actions on carbon zero into the "Failure to deliver the stock investment programme to timescale" risk.

Items to note

Presentation from John Glenton on the Care & Support service and the commitment to integration which was assuring to committee.

Impact was expected to find savings of approximately £190k which resulted in £261k being identified. Despite the effects of the pandemic further exceeded the identified savings by £494k, delivering £755k in total.

A very positive customer journey story was shared which showed the benefits of multi-agency work which supported a vulnerable customer with domestic abuse, immigration, housing, food, benefits and child protection issues.

It was agreed to no longer report on Impact's corporate plan dashboard due to integration. However, the objectives within it will continue to be monitored at operational levels.

Committee were assured of strong governance arrangements in place for the integration project covering data migration and the close working to align and manage care and support prior to integration.

Committee agreed to sign off the development pledge based on handovers received and current pipeline resulting in no further new build handovers to Impact whilst we complete integration.

Committee agreed to postpone a small number of internal audits due to integration and workloads, however, a plan is in place which will review the recommendations post integration to ensure they are embedded into Riverside's processes.

Riverside Customer Voice Executive 22/04/21 Attendance 80%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

Lee Buss-Blair updated the RCVE on the Thor Project specifically on Service charges. One key area of working:-

Responding to Customer Service Charge queries

- Identifying process
- Defining responsibilities
- Collation and Management of Queries
- **Defining SLA timeframes**
- **Identifying language/presentational barriers**

Patrick updated the RCVE on the proposal engagement pathway project discussed with the RCVE chair, Vic Andrews, which will aim to give clarity and set expectations from the outset for customers when they engage and get involved with Riverside at any level. Further discussions and setting out of the framework to continue.

Respite Accommodation deferred to a separate meeting to review in its entirety.

RCVE Facebook Hubs - Engaging 1000+ customers and concerns being raised around customers comments on the lack of response from Riverside in relation to repairs. Patrick New agreed to raise with Phil Pemberton

Designated Tenant (Tenant Complaint Panel)

Items to note

Working with the Customer Engagement Partners to find out :

- Causes of any dissatisfaction
- Clarity of information
- Expectations in relation to timeframes

Setting up three focus groups:

- RHO
- General Needs
- C&S

RCVE members will undergo a refresher complaint training in May 2021. Stephen Hewitt to deliver.

3 complaints outstanding.

1 has been referred to the Housing Ombudsman

1 is in the completion stage

1 is still outstanding due to tenant being overseas (since the pandemic started) and has requested that the panel await his return

Tonia Punter-Ojong and Vic Andrews met with the Complaints Compliance Manager to agree and clarify handing over a complaint over to the RCVE (Designated Tenants Complaints Panel)

RCVE Chair, Vic Andrews updated the RCVE on the following

RCVE representation on the White Paper Groups set up by Riverside : –

Customer Engagement - Vic Andrews

Consumer Regulations and Complaints – Richard Nichols

Data/Metrics - Cameron Dougherty

RCVE Chair updated the group that there were 8 applications to the RCVE and the applicants will be contacted week commencing 26/04/21 to arrange a meeting at the beginning of May

Group Treasury Committee 22/04/21 Attendance 90%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Recs to Board

The Board adopt the Group Treasury Policy and proposed changes at their meeting May 2021.

The Board adopt the Group Investment Policy at their meeting in May 2021

The Board adopt the Group Treasury Strategy at their meeting in May 2021.

Assurance and Risk

The Group Treasury Policy and proposed changes were reviewed and approved. The Committee felt that the report reflected that there was not a structural shift in what TRGL

Items to note

The Group Investment Policy was reviewed and approved with no proposed changes to note at this time.

were doing in terms of liquidity and good rebalancing was evident. It was also well calibrated with the business strategy.

The Committee applied a good level of scrutiny to ensure there were no unexpected shocks that could not be absorbed. It was felt that the value for money point of ensuring excess cash was not being held unnecessarily was entirely appropriate.

The Group Treasury Strategy was reviewed and approved. The Committee commended the excellent job that the Treasury Team had done during challenging circumstances, having met almost all objectives. The approach of focussing on good housekeeping for the coming year during a period prior to an increase in inflation that was expected in 2022/2023 was noted as sensible.

The Group Appraisal outcomes were reviewed and the objectives agreed were:

- Reflecting on training and development needs
- Site Visits
- EDI Training
- Increased Meeting Frequency

The GTC Annual Program of Work was reviewed and approved.

Foundation Trustee Board 27/04/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

The Board noted that ongoing funding from TRGL is in place up to 2022/23 and have deferred longer-term business planning pending further discussions with TRGL.

The Board noted that the Foundation's investments have continued to increase in value benefitting from delaying liquidating investments however the fund must be drawn down to provide working cash. There are projected reserves at year end of £404,669.

Items to note

Operational Targets for 2021/22 and updated criteria for applications for Small Bids to the Foundation were approved.

The Group Appraisal outcomes were reviewed and the objectives agreed were:

- To hold an Away Day once COVID restrictions permit as a large percentage of the Board are new. To include a session on stakeholder mapping.
- Monitor the effects of the new Communications Plan on awareness and knowledge of the Foundation.

Consider improving diversity in future recruitment including possible appointment of a service user as a trustee.

Joint Customer Experience and Riverside Care & Support Committee meeting 29/04/21 Attendance 86%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance & Risk

Committees requested sight of high level measures/targets within Regional Plans indicating what success looks like for each objective to enable scrutiny and challenge and to provide assurance around value to customers being delivered.

Committees discussed customer feedback through Facebook Hubs and agreed further thought was to be given to the route for dealing with and resolving issues, with transparency of communication and 'You said, we did' important in giving confidence in how customer feedback is used. Committees also requested more robust complaints data and feedback in customer reports, noting an Action Plan was in place to drive improvements in complaints monitoring.

Committees requested sight of a Roadmap on White Paper and Together with Tenants proposals (between now and 2023).

Items to note

Committees approved the LCR, North and South & Central Regional Plans 2021-23 and requested and further updates on Delivery Plans in the Autumn.

Committees received a RCVE update, noting key highlights of 2020/21 included the significant shift to digital engagement, scrutiny of the Planned Maintenance customer journey and increase in digital diversity in online activities, particularly age range and BAME customers.

Committees received a presentation on the White Paper and Together with Tenants Charter, noting the number of further developments within the sector in recent months, including a revised NHF Code of Governance, Complaint Handling Code and TPAS National Engagement Standards, and that a senior working group had been established to determine how this all fits together.

Customer Experience Committee 29/04/21 Attendance 90%, Length 3 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

The Committee reviewed the Social Housing Risk Register and requested a review of the risks relating to Disrepair.

Items to note

A positive Customer story was shared, highlighting additional support provided to a family of four and the life changing difference Riverside had made for them all, with this culture of

The Committee received a report on summary of the actions undertaken in response to an Ombudsman complaint relating to domestic violence and was grateful for both the transparency provided and lessons being learnt, including the report being shared across the business and a case study to support the training in management of domestic violence cases.

The Annual Customer Feedback report was considered by the Committee and strong improvements in customers' overall satisfaction levels with Social Housing and RHO customers was highlighted. The Committee noted that complaints satisfaction levels had plateaued and that additional analysis and a dedicated complaints handling satisfaction recovery plan was in place to ensure that progress continued throughout 2021/22.

The Committee welcomed a report on Sinking Funds and raised concerns in relation to potential affordability issues for customers.

A spotlight session was held on Service Charges and the Committee was assured as to progress being made with Project Thor, highlighting, service charges were a complex area, a key measure of satisfaction for customers and the associated reputational risk.

The Committee recognised positive performance in relation to Cash and Customers, highlighting, in particular, improvements in Income Collection performance and FTA collection exceeding target.

The Committee scrutinised Customer Services report, noting the improvement in performance and continuing focus on My Riverside adoption and digital participation, including a Digital Adoption Working Group driving actions to improve.

value of care and going the extra mile shown being embedded across the organisation.

The Committee received an update on the development and roll out of the Neighbourhood Sustainability Index (NSI) which would replace the Riverside Sustainability Index, using both internal and external data to allow for both strategic and operational decisions to be made for each Riverside neighbourhood and would be a key tool for Regional Planning Teams to prioritise focus and develop SMART Neighbourhood Plans to drive improvements.

The Committee received a Development Update report, including Defects and Customer Satisfaction with new homes performance updates and agreed future Development updates were to be incorporated within Regional Plan updates.

The Committee discussed their performance in 2020 and agreed objectives to improve performance for the upcoming year.