





Meeting Minutes

Board/Committee:	The Riverside Group Ltd Board (the "Board")		
Date and time:	10:00am 13 May 2021		
Location:	Via video-conference		
Present:	• Terrie Alafat	(TA)	Chair
	• Pauline Davis	(PD)	Vice Chair
	• Ingrid Fife	(IF)	Board Member
	• Sandy Murray	(SM)	Board Member
	• Lisa Tennant	(LT)	Board Member
	• Peter White	(PW)	Board Member
	• Goi Ashmore	(GA)	Board Member (from 12pm)
	• Carol Matthews	(CMM)	Co-opted Board Member
	• Clarine Stenfert	(CS)	Co-opted Board Member
In attendance:	• Cameron Dougherty	(CD)	Tenant Observer
	• Maxine Cousens	(MC)	Director of People & Culture
	• John Glenton	(JG)	Executive Director of Care and Support
	• Ian Gregg	(IG)	Executive Director of Asset Services
	• Cris McGuinness	(CAM)	Chief Financial Officer
	• Patrick New	(PN)	Executive Director Customer Service
	• Hugh Owen	(HO)	Director of Strategy and Public Affairs
	• Sara Shanab	(SS)	Director of Governance and General Counsel
	• Alison Stock	(AS)	Director of IT & Digital Business
	• Anne-Marie Owens	(AMO)	Governance Manager (Secretary)
Apologies:	• Erfana Mahmood	(EM)	Co-opted Board Member
	• Jo Lucy	(JL)	Executive Director Business Support
	• Sally Trueman	(ST)	Board Member

Min Ref:	Agenda Item	Action
60/21	<p><u>Apologies for Absence (Item 1)</u> VERBAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies were noted from Erfana Mahmood, Sally Trueman and Jo Lucy. It was noted that Goi Ashmore would be joining at 12pm. 	
61/21	<p><u>Declarations of Interest (Item 2)</u> VERBAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMM, CAM and PD declared an interest in items 2.2 Development Quarterly Update and 2.3 Joint Venture Update as Riverside nominated directors of investment vehicles or Joint Venture Boards. 	
62/21	<p><u>Chair's Matters (Item 1.3)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair welcomed CC, the Chair of One Housing Group (OHG) and RH, the Chief Executive of OHG, to their first TRGL Board meeting and introductions were made. CC and RH thanked the Board for inviting them to the meeting and shared their view that the potential partnership between TRGL and OHG offered opportunities to create a stronger organisation, delivering significant benefits to both and which could support OHG in its development and regeneration aspirations in London. It was noted that both organisations shared a common social purpose and vision, and the relationship-building to date had been very encouraging, indicating organisational compatibility and a commitment to work together in a genuinely collaborative and open way. The Chair concurred with the views expressed. The Chair noted that there was a substantial agenda to deal with, and Treasury matters had been moved to later in the agenda to allow GA to join the meeting for these items. The Chair acknowledged the additional work created for the Executive Team and other staff through Project Neo including the significant time required for the Due Diligence exercise. The Board was asked to ensure it was utilising Convene to raise questions and comments on reports in advance of meetings. 	
63/21	<p><u>Customer Story (Item 1.4)</u> The Board received and noted the Customer Story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board was disappointed with the failures in service described in the story and agreed that the underlying issue was culture, attitude and behavior. The Board was pleased with the proactive and accountable approach taken by the member of staff who had resolved the issues and PN confirmed that appropriate recognition had been given. It was noted that the culture change programme, to embed Riverside values of taking ownership and putting the customer first, had been piloted in Carlisle between January 2021 and March 2021 and was now being rolled out across the business to all staff members. The Board agreed the importance of this programme and the need for leaders to role model the desired culture. The Board asked for further information to be provided on the culture change programme. PN confirmed that contacting a customer where they had been unable to reach a staff member through live chat was being explored. PN agreed to check the data available on the frequency of instances in which staff were not available to provide this service. The Board agreed that the quality of digital services to customers was a business priority. 	<p>PN</p> <p>PN</p>

Min Ref:	Agenda Item	Action
64/21	<p data-bbox="280 226 874 255"><u>Runcorn Regeneration Programme (Item 2.1)</u></p> <p data-bbox="280 255 1318 322">The Board noted an update on delivery of the investment programme to regenerate neighbourhoods in Runcorn and proposals for next steps.</p> <ul data-bbox="280 360 1318 2056" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="280 360 1318 427">• It was noted that a site visit to the renewal areas in Runcorn would be considered for the Board event in September. <li data-bbox="280 465 1318 763">• The Board welcomed the progress made and the role identified for Compendium. It queried if consideration had been given to the involvement of Prospect. CAM advised that this had been considered however due to the small number of properties for sale sharing the profit would not be financially sound, however as the programme progressed new opportunities might arise. It was noted that there was greater potential for using Prospect in the Carlisle renewal programme and the development team now ensured that opportunities across the Group arising from development activity were appropriately explored. <li data-bbox="280 801 1318 1003">• Concern was expressed that if external funding was not secured, place making initiatives could be compromised. CAM gave assurance that scaling back the programme would be avoided and should funding become an issue, the matter would be referred back to Board. In response to a query, CAM agreed to check that Robin Hood Energy were not on the list of potential suppliers. <li data-bbox="280 1041 1318 1137">• CAM advised the Board of the team in place to deliver the programme and gave assurance that should additional capacity or capability be identified as required it would be put in place. <li data-bbox="280 1176 1318 1435">• IF noted that she had raised questions in advance on the contract delivery for the retirement living development and the potential disruption to elderly customers of the work. She confirmed that she had received sufficient assurance that Compendium had the right experience to deliver the work, that the impact on customers had been fully considered and mitigated and the benefit to the business of the extra retirement living stock made sense. It was noted that Halton Borough Council were supportive of the programme. <li data-bbox="280 1473 1318 1608">• In response to a query, IG confirmed that Osmosis Consult were currently analysing a further option that would include Air Source Heat Pumps, in addition to the measures in Option Two for retrofitting properties and the approach would be kept under review as technology developed. <li data-bbox="280 1646 1318 1883">• The Board queried if there was confidence in the tenure mix and if the retail proposals were future-proofed. CAM advised that colleagues in Shared Ownership had been fully involved and there had been both internal and external advice provided on values and demographics. Assurance was given that there was confidence in the proposed tenure mix and the provision of existing retail was not considered a material risk as retailers wished to stay on site. <li data-bbox="280 1921 1318 2056">• RH commented that the work completed to date was impressive with a strong business case, consideration of risk, bringing diverse funding streams together in a complex construct and noted that the place making ambitions came through strongly. 	CAM

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following due and careful consideration, the Board APPROVED the progression of the proposed Runcorn Regeneration scheme to the next stage including engagement, funding and planning discussions and the procurement of a delivery partner – noting the anticipated cost to Riverside of c £36m, noting the amount included in the 2020/21 Business Plan was £74m for Runcorn and Carlisle. 	
65/21	<p><u>Development Quarterly Update CONF. (item 2.2)</u> The Board noted the first quarterly update on development activity which complemented the monthly reporting received by the Investment Appraisal Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board was pleased to note that during a challenging year, the development activity across the Group had been strong with 773 new homes being built and sales target of homes achieved in Prospect. It was noted that while the full report on this occasion had been shared with the Customer Experience Committee, future reporting would contain customer satisfaction and defects performance content only in line with the Committee's remit. The Board welcomed the introduction of a quarterly report on development and agreed that the content and format were fit for purpose. It asked that its thanks be extended to development colleagues across the Group for achieving strong performance under challenging circumstances. 	CAM
66/21	<p><u>Joint Venture Update (Item 2.3)</u> The Board noted the update on Joint Venture (JV) activity across the Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that the report was presented separately from the development quarterly update as not all JVs were development vehicles and the report is about governance rather than performance. The Board agreed that the additional assurance and visibility of JV activity provided by the report was useful, as was the structure in which performance was assessed within the five key themes set out in the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020. The Board agreed that a site visit to Stanton Cross would be arranged when circumstances allowed. 	
67/21	<p><u>Chief Executives Report (Item 2.4) CONF.</u> The Board noted the update from the Chief Executive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An update on the implementation of a new operating model in the Customer Service Centre (CSC) was noted. PN advised that there remained only one staff member who had not been matched to a new shift pattern and the appropriate procedure was underway to resolve this and there are a number of staff on long term sick who would be managed on their return. It was noted that there remained challenges in embedding the desired culture across the CSC but work continued to achieve this. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •  •  	
68/21	<p><u>Equality Diversity and Inclusion Update and Action Plan for 2021/22 (Item 2.5)</u> HO joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Board noted the report setting out 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 EDI action plan for 2020/21 had been achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 importance of carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment on all policies which those presenting policies for approval are able to speak to was agreed. HO noted that significant progress had been made in embedding EIAs into the policy framework and his team were now working on ensuring that the assessments were conducted earlier in the policy review/development process so that they had a meaningful influence. • The success of the LGBTQIA training provided earlier in the year was noted and the Board agreed that other training opportunities with an interactive element would be useful. • The Board asked HO to explore how it could be more directly involved in leading and supporting Riverside in achieving its objectives with respect to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. • Following due and careful consideration, the Board APPROVED the EDI action plan for 2021-22. <p>HO left the meeting.</p>	HO

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69/21	<p><u>Financial Crime Policy (Item 2.8)</u> The Board received the revised Financial Crime Policy which was recommended by the Group Audit Committee for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board discussed the increasing incident of cybercrime and asked if staff were sufficiently trained to identify issues/potential issues and respond appropriately. CAM advised that a significant amount of knowledge and awareness raising had been done with budget holders and non-finance colleagues, and this education work complemented controls put in place. CAM agreed to confirm that the Equality Impact Assessment had been completed. Following due and careful consideration, the Board, on recommendation of the Group Audit Committee, APPROVED the Financial Crime Policy. 	CAM
70/21	<p><u>IT Strategy 2020- 2025 (item 2.9)</u> AS joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Board noted the update on delivery of the IT Strategy 2020-2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of highlights from the year were noted including the success of phase one of the digital business rollout, rapid rollout of Microsoft 365, the expansion of the digital offering to customers and a reduction in costs. The Board noted the work to improve information security and the preparation for Cyber Essentials Plus in 2022. The use of best practice standards and benchmarking for cyber security since 2019 was welcomed as was the ongoing training and communications with staff in this area. The Board noted 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 work from home. <p>AS left the meeting.</p>	
71/21	<p><u>Our People Plan and YE 20/21 People MI Update (Item 2.10)</u> MC joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Board noted 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MC presented the report and highlighted that while sickness absence had been impacted by COVID-19, it had remained largely static over the year and the focus was on managing short-term intermittent absence which was the biggest issue. The Board noted that there was an agreed plan in place to address this. It was noted that attrition rates were positive when compared to industry and while short term attrition had reduced it remained a challenge. MC noted that the People Plan would be key in creating an environment which attracted talent and encouraged people to remain with Riverside. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted that while the People Plan had been paused in November 2020 in response to the risk of information fatigue in the business and to allow a period to consider staff survey results, the Plan was due to be launched shortly with clear commitments and promises communicated to staff. • It was noted that a number of questions had been raised in advance of the meeting and responded to. These would be appended to the minutes. • The Board queried the sickness absence rate excluding COVID-related absence and noted that it was marginally over 4%. MC advised that the trend was improving and this was in part due to more proactive management of sickness across the business. • The Board asked what preparation had been made for a potential change in voluntary attrition following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. MC responded that the strategy for recruiting and retaining talent had recently been approved and summarised the range of actions to be taken in this area. • IF supported the benchmarking of attrition and sickness absence in Care & Support with social housing as a means of driving improvement however acknowledged that the impact of COVID-19 had been greater in the Care & Support sector. • TA noted that she had requested that the information on days lost over time be revised in future reports to show a greater level of granularity. <p>MC left the meeting.</p>	
72/21	<p><u>Annual Treasury Matters (Item 2.6)</u> GO joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Board received and noted the report presenting the outcome of the annual review of the Group Treasury Policy, the Group Investment Policy and the Treasury Strategy which had been undertaken by the Head of Treasury and Corporate Finance, along with an independent, high level review undertaken by Centrus Treasury Advisors and Devonshires Solicitors as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the documents had been considered in detail by the Group Treasury Committee (GTC) who recommended approval. • CAM summarised the proposed changes to the documents presented and the rationale for each. • It was noted that GTC had challenged on the feasibility of delivering plans in the year and were content with the assurance provided. • GA shared the view of the GTC that the Treasury Team had performed well in a difficult year. It was noted that the Committee had challenged the provisions for cash held and liquidity within the Treasury Management Policy and were satisfied with the basis of these provisions. GA advised that there was unanimous support for the Treasury Strategy from the Committee noting that raising debt had been a focus in 2020 and 2022 would possibly be a 	

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	<p>more volatile year therefore 2021 was an ideal time for the required Treasury housekeeping activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board discussed ethical funding sources and CAM advised that this was of increasing importance, and while Riverside's primary concern was responsible stewardship of the organisation's funds and assets, the development of feasible, ethical and green lenders who Riverside could work with was closely monitored. • Following due and careful consideration the Board, on recommendation of the Group Treasury Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ APPROVED the Group Investment Policy for the next year; ▪ APPROVED the Group Treasury Policy for the next year; ▪ APPROVED the Annual Treasury Strategy; ▪ NOTED the Treasury Plan on a Page for 2021/22; and ▪ NOTED the results of the Treasury Team with regards to the Treasury Strategy for the year ended 31 March 2021. 	
73/21	<p><u>Tax Strategy</u> The Board received the Tax Strategy noting that it was returning to Board following adoption in December 2020, to align its review with other finance policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAM advised that there were no significant changes other than updates to the tax risk matrix. The Board was pleased to note that an experienced Tax Manager had been recruited and work was beginning to raise knowledge and provide support to tax risk owners across the business. • Following due and careful consideration, the Board APPROVED the Tax Strategy. 	
74/21	<p><u>Quarterly Treasury Report (Item 2.7)</u> The Quarterly Treasury Report for the Quarter ending 31 March 2021 was noted. No material matters were raised for discussion and GA confirmed that GTC had no concerns for escalation to Board.</p>	
75/21	<p><u>Committee & Subsidiary Boards Update (Item 3.1)</u> The Board noted the update from Committee and Subsidiary Board meetings which had taken place since it last met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PD advised that the London Development Committee had met the previous day and had a significant discussion on the approach to a tenant ballot at Calverly Close, which had a range of factors to be taken into consideration. It was noted that the objective was to sign the JV agreement with Countryside in the near future. • SM noted that Group Audit Committee had good discussion on risk and welcomed the links and connections emerging between work streams across the business. • The Board noted that the Irvine Board had approved a rebranding for Irvine to Riverside Scotland which was a significant step for the business. The 	

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	<p>Board asked that it be kept updated on progress with the MMC development in Tarryholme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CS noted that investments had increased in Riverside Foundation and it was agreed that Foundation should be the subject of an item at a future Board meeting. PW noted that Customer Experience Committee had significant discussions on affordability with respect to sinking funds and service charges. It was noted that considerable increases were possible and support for customers was being put in place. It was noted that performance was improving in cash collection and customer satisfaction, there was work to do in improving call handling although the direction of travel was positive. IF reported that the annual joint meeting of the Riverside Care & Support Committee (RC&SC) and CEC had taken place with a focus on regional plans which would be revisited in autumn. 	AMO
76/21	<p><u>Our Riverside Plan 2020-23 Strategic Report Year end 2020/21 (Item 3.2)</u> HO joined the meeting.</p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that a conscious decision had been taken to retain the agreed Corporate Plan and objectives despite the COVID-19 lockdown which occurred shortly after the Plan was agreed. This had been proven to be the correct decision as 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 improving, a positive colleague perception score achieved and development outputs just short of target. The Board noted that the focus was now delivery of Year 2 objectives. <p>HO left the meeting.</p>	
77/21	<p><u>Monthly Exec KPI Reporting – March 2021 month end update (Item 3.3)</u> The Board noted the operational performance report for the period ending 31 March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that year end performance had been as anticipated with customer satisfaction continuing to improve and complaints handling requiring improvement but making progress which would be a key business focus in the coming year. The Board noted that high risk overdue actions had been impacted by COVID-19 but were on track for completion by the end of June. PW commented that performance in the year around compliance needed to be viewed in the context of COVID-19 however, a clear understanding of good performance under normal circumstances was required to support effective performance monitoring and assurance moving forward. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board was pleased with cash performance and the impact of the Let's Talk Rent initiative. It was noted that customer satisfaction in Care & Support had been impacted by a reduced service in retirement living due to COVID-19 and in April had increased by 1.5%. 	
78/21	<p><u>Financial Performance Report (Item 3.4)</u> The Board noted the Financial Performance Report (FPR) Summary for March (Period Twelve), compared to the Quarter Three Forecast (Q3F) and the one red and three amber Early Warning Signs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was noted that the report was prior to any statutory adjustments that could be made over the coming weeks in preparation for the External Audit by KPMG and an update would be provided at July's meeting. It was further noted that Operating Margin was 20.3%, above the minimum golden rule of 20%. However, there was a potential risk in relation to a pension exit credit currently within Operating Surplus, of which an element might need to be treated below Operating Surplus. This would be confirmed when the year-end actuarial reports were received in May. If this materialised at the worst case scenario, Operating Margin would drop to 19.9%, marginally below the Golden Rule. It was confirmed that RC&SC would receive additional information at its forthcoming meeting on additional costs for Hull PFI Extra Care Schemes. The Board welcomed the savings targets achieved in the majority of business areas and the strong Social Housing EBITDA-MRI performance. CAM advised that early warning signs and triggers would be reviewed before the next report to ensure that they were appropriately positioned to support the Board's risk oversight and management. 	
79/21	<p><u>Minutes of Meetings 25 March 2021/ 29 April 2021 (item 4.1) CONF.</u> The minutes of the meetings held on 25 March 2021 and 29 April 2021 were approved.</p>	
80/21	<p><u>Matters Arising (Item 4.2) CONF.</u> The update on matters arising from previous meetings were noted.</p>	
81/21	<p><u>Chairs Actions and Written Resolutions (Item 4.3)</u> The Board noted the decisions taken since it's meeting in March 2021, under delegated authority to the Chair and received the report on the proposed decant strategy at Pike Close which had been approved.</p> <p>The Board noted that on 21 April 20201, the Chair approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an amendment to the Board's resolution changing the date of exchange of contracts for the Guinness stock acquisition to 31 May 2021. [REDACTED] 	
82/21	<p><u>Compliance with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020 (Item 4.4)</u></p>	

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	<p>The Board noted the work carried out to date to deliver compliance with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020 which was adopted in March 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that the GRC were overseeing the compliance work and had approved for recommendation to Group Board those actions identified in phase one of the compliance assessment as priorities. • The Board agreed that the transition to a six year maximum tenure should give due regard to the sensitivities where members of the Governance Community were more immediately impacted and ensure that the balance of skills, knowledge and experience across the governance structure was appropriately protected. It was noted that the GRC were due to meet later that day and would agree a suitable implementation plan. • Following due and careful consideration, and on the recommendation of GRC, the Board APPROVED THAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The mission and values of the Group be subject to review and reaffirmation as part of the annual Board Strategy event; ii. A periodic 'state of the corporate group structure' report be provided to Board which would review the ongoing appropriateness of the Parent/Subsidiary set up and the provisions of the relevant intra-group agreements; iii. Holding to account the organisation's subsidiary boards, committees and senior staff for the exercise of any powers delegated to them be added to the Governance Standing Orders and the Matters Reserved for Board; iv. Riverside adopts the six year maximum term of office with an option to extend tenure up to nine years where it is in the best interest of the organisation to do so. Extensions will be by annual renewal to ensure that these are treated truly as exceptions. 	
83/21	<p><u>Covid-19 Update (item 4.5)</u> The Board received and noted an update on Riverside's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that colleagues were now allowed back into offices for broader Health and Wellbeing issues and or performance issues, with a broader return anticipated at the end of June/Step 4 of the government's roadmap and a fuller return anticipated in October once all adults had been offered a vaccine. • The Board discussed the Government consultation on mandatory vaccination for those providing care in schemes with customers aged over 65. JG advised that Riverside had no staff within that category however supported a consultation with a wider scope and had responded to the NHF on this point. IF noted that the RC&SC would be monitoring the position. 	
84/21	<p><u>Any Other Business (Item 5)</u> There was no further business raised.</p>	
85/21	<p><u>Chairs Summary (Item 6)</u> The Chair noted that it had been a very productive meeting and thanked CC and RH for their attendance and contribution.</p>	

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	CC and RH left the meeting.	
86/21	<u>Date of Next Meeting (Item 7)</u> To be held on 1pm on 18 June 2021 via videoconference. The Chair noted that the Board would be asked at this meeting to take a decision to proceed with the TRGL/OHG merger and subject to that decision, a joint event would be held in London on 23 June, with a further joint event on 9 September.	
87/21	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 80px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> <li style="margin-bottom: 10px;">■ <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></div> 	

Signed:

 Terrie Alafat, TRGL Board (Chair)

Date

TRGL Board Meeting 13 May 2021

Questions and Responses raised in advance of the meeting

Questions raised by Terrie Alafat:

Question / Comment	Answer
<p><u>Our People Plan – Item 2.10</u> What is the reason that we are worse than the industry average if mental health issues are similar? Is there another reason? P264, section 3, summary of key people metrics.</p>	<p>Much of our sickness absence relates to short term intermittent absences. We have been actively managing the top short-term sickness absence cases with the business. In addition we have reviewed our sickness absence policy to tighten triggers points and consequences as a result. Policy temporarily on hold as we focus on flexi changes. We will be concentrating this year on upskilling managers on effective sickness absence management</p>
<p>I am interested in benchmarking our people performance. I cannot always tell from the stats what is good and where we need to get better P264, section 3, summary of key people metrics.</p>	<p>For all metrics where we are able, we do include a benchmark. For example we have an industry benchmark (ie eNPS, Sickness, Attrition) or Office National Statistics (Diversity). We have a company target in others eg sickness absence. We aim to be within industry benchmark where possible. There are some metrics where just no available comparison, eg number of ER cases We can look for the next report how we more clearly show how we compare.</p>
<p>Also low response rate. As part of the engagement plans it would be good to get more staff responding p265, section 3, summary of key people metrics, hive survey response rate.</p> <p>Agree it would be good to get higher response rates. We have enough response rates however to make sure that it give us a true picture of sentiment and feeling of our colleagues.</p>	<p>This is our first full engagement survey in 3 years Response rates are higher than previous engagement surveys, as we are building credibility in the survey, confidence in confidentiality. We will drive response rates by ensuring results are cascaded, people can see meaningful action being taken as a result of their feedback. Our people plan roll out will help with this. Playing back to people what has changed as a result of their feedback, fulfilling our commitments. From experience it usually takes c3 years to build really strong response rates in surveys when you are starting from scratch or needing to build confidence.</p>
<p>Do we have an issue about upcoming retirement in parts of the business as an issue? More generally across housing I know this is an issue esp in terms of housing professionals. P272, EDI demographics.</p>	<p>We do generally and historically have an older workforce within Riverside and our aim has been to focus on also attracting younger talent in Housing, we are much lower than ONS at 13% v Riverside 4%. To ensure that we have a pipeline of talent as we lose some of our older staff to retirement etc. Risk to loss of expertise is something that we will continue manage within business areas.</p>
<p>Loss of knowledge and experience is something that we manage locally in terms of locally people planning. It looks like from the table that our turnover is higher not lower? – p269, headcount and attrition table.</p>	<p>Attrition metrics (Riv 8.9% v Ind 15.3%) Turnover metrics (Riv 14.7% v Ind 20.7%) We are lower than the industry on both which is positive.</p>

<p>This chart would be better as a histogram or rolling average. Showing it as cumulative doesn't show us whether at particular times of year the numbers increase/decrease. – p271, sickness absence rate previous to current year.</p>	<p>We can look into how we can better show this next time. We do have a dashboard that we produce on metrics so I can take feedback on how Board would like to see this information better displayed</p>
<p><u>COVID-19 Update item 4.5</u> Do we have a view on the current consultation by Government on making vaccinations of staff who work in care homes with residents over 65? – p381</p>	<p>Riverside support personal choice regarding vaccination and feel that education and encouragement are more effective and ethical in terms of vaccination uptake. However, should vaccinations be made mandatory this should be on the understanding that all the relevant groups were included and care home staff should not be singled out. Staff employed to deliver personal care including: home care staff, care home staff, extra care staff, NHS staff delivering personal care to older or vulnerable groups should all be considered as part of this consultation.</p> <p>We also feel that the “trigger” of one person over 65 denoting a setting where vaccination would be compulsory is too simple, we should be looking at not just age but also the vulnerability of the customers in the setting. For example a person could be 21 but still be extremely clinically vulnerable due to underlying health conditions.</p>

Questions from Ingrid Fife
Runcorn Regeneration Report item 2.1

Question / Comment	Answer
<p>Regarding the design & build proposal with Compendium. For the extra care scheme we have previously discussed challenges finding suitably experienced contractors for design & build so does this proposal give us more control/security? What if any risks are there in terms of know how within compendium for the more complex developments? (or have I misunderstood the arrangement?)</p>	<p>It is proposed that the development will be delivered by Compendium Living in totality thus providing added control and security compared to allocating different elements / sites to different contractors.</p> <p>Compendium Living are a specialist regeneration developer whose construction is carried out by Lovell Partnerships Limited, a company that Riverside has more than 25 years' experience of working with. Compendium Living has developed significant expertise in developing and selling homes for sale and providing construction services for the social and affordable housing sector.</p> <p>Lovell, as Compendium Living's construction partner has a proven track record of complex mixed tenure regeneration schemes and completed the Joseph Williams Mews Retirement Living Scheme in Liverpool for Riverside in 2015 to a high standard with accompanying apartments and bungalows. Lovell has other experience of developing extra care and retirement housing across the country (e.g. for Wrekin Housing Trust in Shrewsbury) and has a specialist arm (Morgan Sindall Later Living now Lovell Later Living) that operates nationally.</p>
<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>

<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>In terms of numbers what is the net effect for C&S units pre & post regeneration?</p>	<p>Pre-regeneration: 41 Extra Care units in Dorset Gardens. Post-regeneration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 41 Retirement living units (Dorset Gardens) - circa 72 unit extra care scheme (within 2 minutes walking distance from Dorset Gardens). - 11 independent over 55s apartments (opposite new extra care scheme) - Creating a Retirement Living quarter within this area of Palace Fields
<p>I note the letter of support from the council for the extra care proposal. I have previously asked about whether there is sufficient customer demand given that a large new extra care scheme is currently on site in the borough. The letter is clearly supportive of improving the quality. Do we think this also confirms that there is demand for more units?</p>	<p>Demand research and analysis was undertaken by TRG Care & Support team utilising Riverside and Halton Council data which looked to determine if there will be demand in the future for the older persons housing proposals. The agreement that there is demand for the proposals was endorsed by care & support colleagues and the Runcorn Regeneration Steering Group (internal), who reviewed the analysis. This data analysis along with context of the wider regeneration plans was shared with the Halton BC Adult Social Care Commissioning Board who endorsed the future care and support demand within this locality in relation to our proposals and confirmed this within their letter of support.</p>
<p>Regarding the valuations for purchasing back from home owners which were supplied by the Home Ownership team How recently has the teams valuation been tested against the current market? I keep seeing headlines around house price inflation so how might this affect owner expectations?</p>	<p>The valuations were undertaken in March 2021 and will continue to be reviewed at regular intervals as the acquisition strategy is developed for the programme.</p>
<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p>