

TRGL BOARD MEETING

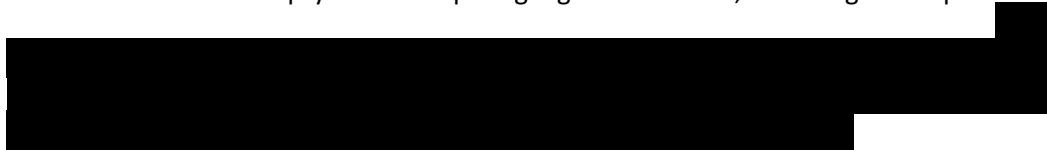
ITEM: 3.1

The Board is asked to **NOTE** the update on Committee and Subsidiary Board Activity for the period May 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.

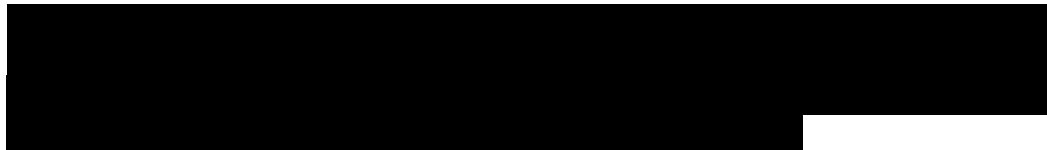
Evolve Board Meeting 05/05/21 Attendance 100%, Length 1.5 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

An early warning was given into budget commitments for the coming year due to volume of repairs now coming through as lockdown ends and current high costs which are being investigated. The desire for quick return of empty homes presents a budgetary pressure with around 75% of empty homes requiring high value works, some regions in parti



Compliance works were largely unchanged under COVID and remained in-line with expectations.



Noted complaint handling satisfaction has deteriorated due to staffing issues and an improvement plan is being progressed. A senior member of staff is now responsible for ensuring that Stage complaints, or those escalated through, for example an MP, are satisfactorily concluded.

Items to note

Claire Allcock has been appointed as the lead staff member at Riverside Direct and will discuss the RD action plan at the next Evolve Board meeting.

Assurance and Risk

2021-2026 GLA programme – The bid had been submitted, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Items to note

- Market Update
- Neighbourhood Management Update
- Group Board Highlights Report
- Committee Effectiveness Review 2020/21

Assurance and Risk

The Committee spent significant time discussing Riverside's Board and Committee Membership and how to transition to the new 6 year tenure rule in a way that would not destabilise Riverside's governance and treated all colleagues sensitively. An implementation plan was agreed and delivered. Recommendations were presented to Group Board via Written Resolution.

The Committee met for a one item meeting on 11 June 2021 to consider the outcomes of the Cu

[REDACTED]

The Committee scrutinised the assessment of Riverside's governance against its Code of Governance for the year 2020/21 [REDACTED] anance to Group Board that there is a compliant position [REDACTED]

The Committee received a report of Phase 2 of the work to comply with the newly adopted NHF Code of Governance 2020 and were content that appropriate progress is being made to bring Riverside into a compliant position by the deadline of April 2022.

The Committee considered Board Members due for election at the AGM in September against th [REDACTED] e on the Board and agreed recommendations to Board. [REDACTED]

Items to note

Approved a Death in Service benefit payment.

Appointed 2 TRGL nominees to JV Boards.

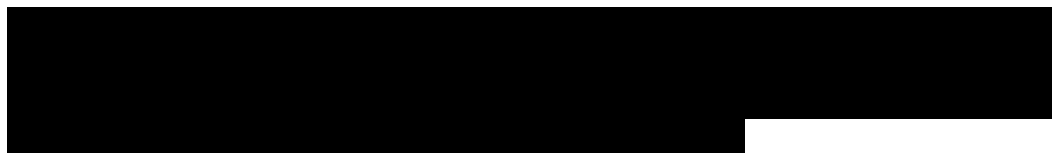
Agreed to recommend the CEO Pay Award which is on the Board agenda as the first item of business.

Reviewed pay trends in the sector.

Reviewed and approved a proposal for a redesigned Individual Appraisal Programme for Board and Committee Members.

Assurance and Risk

The Committee were informed of maintenance issues affecting the lift and heating system at Weetslade Court. The Committee were assured that works are being undertaken to remedy these faults and a review will seek to identify any lessons learned including potential latent defects. Additional staff and equipment have been brought in to maintain access for customers. Customers are being kept informed of the situation and there is likely to be a compensation offer required.



The Committee noted that around 95% of Care staff, and 90% of the remainder of the C&S workforce had received the COVID vaccine. It was not envisaged under the current government proposals that vaccinations would be made mandatory for C&S colleagues, which would present its own risks. Riverside has responded to the government consultation on compulsory vaccines for residential care home staff.

The Committee were advised of positive tendering performance in 2020/21. The Committee noted upcoming business development activities, with local authority tendering activity starting to return to normal. The key risks in this area were identified as Local Authority contract values pressuring margins; short-term contracts in homelessness; increasing complexity of customer needs; ability to secure suitable properties.

The Operational Financial Performance to 31 March 2021 was presented. It was noted that the Care & Support business was slightly adverse to budget which in the context of the difficulties faced throughout 2020/21 was considered to be a positive outcome.

Items to note

The Committee reflected on the life of the Director of Business Development, Rik Hughes, who passed away in April.

A positive Customer story was shared, highlighting work done within the homelessness service on the Next Steps Accommodation Programme including bringing unused homes back into use.

The Committee were advised that the Next Steps Accommodation Programme has reached delivery stage and is bringing hard-to-let housing into use for rough sleepers.

The Committee received the Care and Support Annual Summary and noted that the response to the Coronavirus dominated the year.

The Committee received an update on efforts to improve Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and noted that focus has moved to customers.

An update on Housing Management Operational Performance was provided.

The Committee received an update on the Hull Extra Care Scheme and noted that the contract is performing well and that Hull City Council have indicated the care contract will go to tender.

The Committee received the Building Safety Compliance Dashboard.

Business Plan Stress Testing against risks and combinations of risks was presented. Those undertaken included changes in environment, inflation rates, investment markets and covenants in single-variant and multiple variant scenarios.

The Internal Audit Highlights were presented, the Committee noted that Scheme Viability and volunteer induction and training had been audited. There were no outstanding Grade 1 recommendations.

The Care and Support Risk Register was received and noted that the risk relating to COVID had decreased as the number of colleagues and customers testing positive had decreased; the risk relating to Finance had reduced owing to a reduction in the value of arrears.

The Committee received the results of its effectiveness review survey and agreed its objectives for the coming year.

The Committee agreed that it would continue to conduct two meetings per year remotely and two in person with the first scheduled to be the November meeting to combine with a site visit.

Irvine HA Board Meeting 20/5/21 Attendance 100%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

Noted there is a risk of late submission due to a fault on the SHR website and therefore authorised the Chair to approve the 2021 Five Year Financial Projections Return subject to it being retrospectively presented to the next Board meeting. Due to this the Return deadline for the Annual Loan Portfolio had been extended and this will be considered at the June Board meeting.

Approved the TRGL Anti Money Laundering Policy for use by IHA, agreed to adopt the TRGL Treasury Policy and noted the contents of the TRGL Tax Strategy.

A backlog of capital works gathered during lockdown will be addressed by carrying forward the allocation of funds from the previous financial year.

Noted the Managing Director's report, including an update on a proposal to restructure the Customer Services function including reporting this change to the SHR as a notifiable event; Board Succession Planning; and reviewed the tender documentation for Repairs and Maintenance.

Items to note

Approved the ARC submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Approved a revised Membership Policy which had been reviewed to align with the Association's new Rules.



Received progress reports on current development projects.

Assurance and Risk

Received a presentation on Irvine's Annual Customer Satisfaction Summary highlighting overall satisfaction and customer perceptions, responsive repairs, resolving queries and complaints satisfaction and recommendations to drive further improvements. The Board highlighted the importance of benchmarking against and learning from other Scottish Housing Associations and requested an update on outcomes of discussions with similar sized organisations within the G8 benchmarking group.

Approved the Association's suite of Asset Management Policies Asset Compliance Management in relation to Electrical Safety, Asbestos Management, Fire Safety, Legionella and Gas Safety. The Board requested further assurance in relation to the assessments carried out in relation to the decision to adopt a 'Stay Put' policy for two communal blocks and highlighted the importance of clear communication to customers.

Noted the Operational Performance report, highlighting, in particular, that Housing Officers remained focused on arrears recovery work and receiving assurance that all possible steps had been taken to mitigate the nine potential evictions once the ban on evictions had been lifted.

Items to note

Approved Financial Statements for Irvine Housing Association and Thistle Housing Services Ltd for the year to March 2021 and submission of the covenant position to funders.

Noted the decision in line with the Chair's Action Procedure in relation to approval of the submission of the Five Year Financial Projections Return to the Scottish Housing Regulator and approved the 2021 Loan Portfolio Return.



Noted the outcome of the recent recruitment exercise for new Members and accepted the recommendations of the Recruitment Panel to appoint four new Board Members and a Co-optee with effect from the AGM in September 2021.

Noted progress with the rebranding of the Association as Riverside Scotland, with a detailed timeline and draft communications for key stakeholders, including customers and colleagues, prepared and engagement with the Association's tenants to get their views on proposals carried out. The branding change would be ready for implementation on 27 July 2021.

Assurance and Risk

[Redacted]

Developments - The Finch Dene development was progressing well, whilst Lee Park and Lineside had also commenced on site. Contracts had been exchanged on Dobbinetts Lane.

[Redacted]

ted as the preferred developer. Work was ongoing with regards to technical due diligence with a view to a detailed planning application being submitted August/September 2021.

Resources - Significant material price increases had become evident from both suppliers and via the supply chain due to a shortage of certain raw materials, with joists, timber, trusses and concrete cited as items difficult to source across the sector. Assurance was provided that, although this had led to an increase in lead in times, no significant issues in terms of sourcing such materials was currently evident, although this would continue to be monitored closely as there was the potential for the situation to worsen.

Financial Statements – The Board approved the Management Accounts for Period ending 31 May 2021

Items to note

- Management Accounts for Period ending 31 May 2021
- Market Update
- Risk Register
- Annual Plan of Work

Assurance and Risk

Items to note

RCVE involved in Estate Service Tenders –next meeting in July.

Business Continuity Planning (Mark Lea, Head of Health, Safety and Environment)

Input will be sought from RCVE to help shape plans for the future.

Business Continuity Lifecycle:

- 1 Business Impact Assessment
- 2 Business Continuity Planning
- 3 Crisis Management Plan
- 4 Specific Threat Plans
- 5 Assurance Activity

Task and finish groups to be set up and to include RCVE. Details to be shared with Cameron Dougherty (RCVE secretary) at a later date to register interest of members.

Supported Housing Asset Review presented by Simon Allcock (Head of Improvement, Care and Support)

Discussion took place around involving customers affected by the works and how they will be supported to be involved in the consultation process and also supported while the various works are taking place. Plans are in place to address these issues.

Discussion took place about the importance and advantages of involving local businesses and community groups while the works are taking place.

RCVE members concerns and updates

Discussion took place around gas safety checks and customers being sent letters and the confusion around warning letters sent to customers at the wrong stages in the process. Vic Andrews (RCVE Chair) will mention this issue to Patrick New at their next meeting.

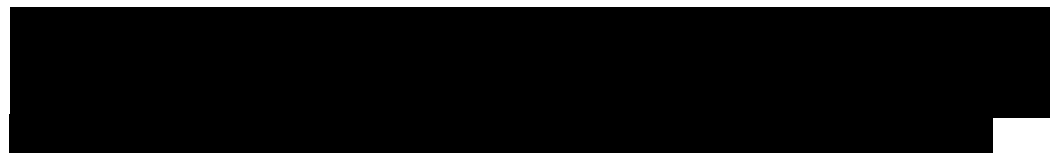
Discussion about the Riverside Direct repairs service and general dissatisfaction and issues experienced by customers. Vic confirmed next area for Scrutiny for RCVE are ASB and Front Line Service Delivery. Working groups to be agreed and timescales agreed in July.

Group Audit Committee 17 June 2021 Attendance 100%, Length 2.5 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

External Audit Highlights Report, noting that there were no material issues identified. The inclusion of lessons learned from last year which resulted in a smoother process this year was commended.

Revised Group Risk Register, noting that recommendations made by GAC in previous



Internal Audit Highlights Report, commending the progress that had been made in resolving past difficulties with Lone Working and DBS.

Items to note

Several audit tasks still to be completed. GAC meeting dates to be reviewed and aligned to the external audit process going forward.

KPMG's length of services to be included in the letter of independence.

Annual Audit Plan for 2020/21, noting how well the Internal Audit Team had adapted to the challenges of COVID-19 and had continued to give assurance to GAC throughout the year.

Annual Audit Plan for 2021/22, noting that the audit plan was built around a number of themes to facilitate a more strategic discussion of priorities. Assurance was sought on correct resource levels being in place for Internal Audit. The Executive Team gave assurance that resource levels were appropriate and emphasised the importance of continued scrutiny to ensure the right priorities have been identified.

Annual Review of the Internal Control Framework, expressing their appreciation of the oversight the report provided to GAC.

Asset & Liability Register Report, which was commended. Assurance was sought and given by the Executive Team on the accuracy of the detail sitting behind the Dashboard Report.

Annual Fraud Report, noting there were no material frauds.

The Committee **APPROVED** the following items:

Going Concern Report, noting that the Group's financial position was strong and is not expected to be damaged significantly by COVID-19 or any other known risks. The year on year strengthening in the rigor of the assessment was commended.

Policy for Provision of Non-Audit External Services, noting that no changes were being proposed.

Annual Assessment of Compliance with Regulatory Standards, expressing their appreciation of the level of detail and efforts undertaken to produce the report. The outcome of the compliance assessment was approved in order to give assurance to the Board that findings support a statement of compliance in the financial statements.

Central Compliance Assurance Update, expressing their gratitude for the level assurance gained from the very detailed work that had been undertaken. The Committee sought assurance on the quality and consistency of data in the regulatory returns. Assurance

Additional "Conclusion" section agreed to be added to the report before submission to the Board.

was given by the Executive Team that validation activity was undertaken to ensure accuracy.

External Audit Tender Process, approving the proposal to continue the process with the one bid received from BDO, noting that the highlighted risk from only one bid is likely to be small.

Challenges currently being faced by Housing Associations in obtaining bids from audit firms will be raised with the Regulator by Riverside's Chief Executive at their next meeting.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to the relevant Boards **APPROVAL** of the 2021 Financial Statements, giving delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer for any non-material adjustments to be made prior to submission to the Boards.

Impact 22/06/21 Attendance 87.5%, Length 2 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

A key risk was highlighted around customer service and call management due to a severe lack of resources, impacting on performance and the potential impact on customer satisfaction. Colleagues have been asked to provide a monthly update on performance in this area along with risk mitigations and consider any communication to customers.

Committee were assured that detailed plans are in place for both general customer comms and tailored comms. Good discussion around the difference from a very local personal service to TRG's model. Key comms will be around managing customers' expectations and focusing on the enhanced service they will receive post integration.

The contingency plan for the possibility that the major contractor could serve notice to terminate contract will be shared with Committee to provide assurance on mitigating actions. A very positive relationship is in place with the contractor.

Items to note

Presentation from Ian Gregg and Phil Pemberton on the current and future plans for the maintenance of, and investment in, the homes in the Impact portfolio focusing on integration/pledges, compliance, stock investment and carbon zero.

The financial update confirmed we are very close to budget with any adverse variances being closely monitored.

A customer journey was shared which was around ongoing damp issues which is very topical at the moment. Committee were assured to learn from Riverside that there's a real focus on tackling the issues around damp.

[Redacted]

Integration project has now turned green and a lot of intensive work undertaken on data migration mapping and testing.

Committee will consider emerging risks of carbon zero, and business continuity linked to colleague resources at the August meeting.

A draft template of what success looks like for integration was presented and will be completed for August meeting which can then be used to Audit success post integration. It was felt that this could be beneficial for learning on future integration projects.

Two new audits to report on Asbestos and Stock Investment. No Grade 1 recommendations were noted in either audit. There were also no overdue audit recommendations.

A disposals update was noted.

Customer Experience Committee 1/07/21 Attendance 90%, Length 3 hrs, Mode: VC

Assurance and Risk

The Committee reviewed the Customer Service Risk Register and requested a further review of the Helpline Risk relating to Business Continuity plan testing.

The Committee also welcomed the review of risks relating to disrepair and updated information on mitigation activities, designed to positively impact on the level of risk to Riverside of disrepair claims.

The Committee received a report providing a deeper dive understanding of the key topics identified within the high level Annual Customer Feedback Summary shared at April's CEC meeting. The Committee highlighted the strong improvements in customers' overall satisfaction levels over the last 12 months in Social Housing and RHO. Key themes of dissatisfaction with repairs & maintenance were noted, as were the key drivers of complaints satisfaction, poor communication and not resolving complaints before they were closed. The Committee was assured that Customer Experience and Complaints Handling Satisfaction Action Plans were building on the deep dive topics identified.

The Committee welcomed the first Complaints Quarterly Review report, highlighting, in particular, operational challenges in relation to increased Asset Services complaints from

Items to note

A Customer story relating to a Subject Access Request and

[Redacted]

through a full review, had been the focus of a recent internal audit, and was now fit for purpose, safe, effective and legally compliant and detailed guidelines were in place for staff.

The Committee received an update on progress with the Customer Experience Delivery Plan 2020/21 and plans for 2021/22, noting the appointment of Mustard Market Research to assist with Customer Journey Mapping and build knowledge and capability with key business functions.

The Committee scrutinised the Operational Performance Report and noted the proposed targets to be achieved by March 2022 for

volumes of repairs, recruitment to trades and reliance on subcontractors. The Committee also noted a further deep dive into levels of complaints, including benchmarking, and a review of the customer relationship management system capturing lessons learned would be carried out.

The Committee received an update on the Complaints Handling Project, noting that a number of options had been explored to improve complaints, resulting in the establishment of a quality function, revised Policy and Procedures having been produced and focus being given to improve first point of contact resolution, storage of information and understanding of root cause. The Committee welcomed the focus on complaints in view of the White Paper and noted an evaluation would be carried out in February 2022.

The Committee welcomed the update on work undertaken to establish a robust framework for managing personal safety, in particular, out of hours emergency response and requested further clarity in relation to non-executive monitoring and scrutiny.

A spotlight session was held on Voids and the Committee received assurance from the number of in progress and planned improvement activities.

The Committee was assured as to the number of action plans in place to drive improvements and requested a review of all those within CECs remit at an annual away day event.

Social Housing and Riverside Home Ownership in relation to Arrears, Repairs and Complaints were ambitious, however, reflected the fundamental changes expected from cultural, structure and process changes.

The Committee received the Customer Services report, noting the improvement in abandonment rates and that the process of invoking the flexibility clause within colleague contracts would lead to further improvements in performance. Continued focus on My Riverside participation, with the Digital Adoption Working Group driving actions to improve customer adoption of digital services and the My Riverside App due for release on 10 August 2021. The Committee was also pleased to note Digital Tenancy Sign Up was on track to go live on 6 July 2021.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
