

GROUP BOARD MEETING 26 JANUARY 2023

Chairs Matters and CEO Update

The Chair made reference to having accepted the “NHF Chairs Challenge” which was a challenge for the sector to improve Equality and Diversity within the governance of housing associations and which was being launched at a conference in January. The Board noted a paper would be presented to the next GRC meeting and would coincide with Riversides refreshed EDI Strategy. The Board received an update on Victoria Quarter and on the Housing Solutions Project, noting that contracts had been exchanged, and also noting the remaining risks in the run up to completion.

Carol provided the Board with an update in relation to the recently received Moody’s Report, highlighting the areas Moody’s considered Riverside was performing less well against its peers and those areas where performance was good. The Board noted the actions to be taken to address the points raised in the report, the importance of continued focus on ongoing core projects, (including the TofE), the upcoming IDA and the need to drive out savings across the business. The Board also discussed the disappointing result of the tender for the helpline service and the need to focus on the customers in any transitional arrangements.

Customer Story

The Board received a presentation focusing on a customer’s story and the help and support which had been provided to improve and adapt the family’s home to support their son who had particular physical disabilities. The story demonstrated the positive impact Riverside had on the lives of many of their customers.

Better Social Housing Review

A report was presented to Board setting the findings of the recent joint CiH and NHF Report entitled Better Social Housing Review. The Board noted that Riverside supported the findings and its intention to engage further with both the CiH and NHF, perhaps as a case study pathfinder organisation and further information would come back to the Board as matters progressed

Group Budget 2023/4

The Board received an update from Cris McGuinness by way of scene setting and outlining the challenges for the budget discussions. The Board then engaged in a good discussion on budget priorities which should be focused on customers and ensuring services were good. The Board noted that in the current economic climate it was tough for both the customers and the organisation, and this may mean some of the aspirational projects might have to stayed to focus on core activities. The Board also discussed the existing Golden Rules and whether they needed to be altered, or indeed additional Golden Rules, particularly non-financial ones, (ie addressing quality or operational matters), should be added. The Board discussed the individual business areas, noting the performance and contribution to the Group as a whole and went on to focus on areas for investment, including addressing and improving the position on customer complaints handling.

TRGL/OHG Integration and TofE Update

Board received a report on progress towards integration noting that matters were progressing at pace. The Board also noted the work ongoing to complete the TofE by 31 March 2023 and again that matters were progressing well.

Compendium Living Business Plan

Board was presented with the report that set out the two-year business plan with ten-year projections (up to 2033), for the Compendium group of companies which trade as Compendium Living. The Board noted ten-year business plan reflected actual and forecast activity for the current year (2022) and set out future year plans in the context of current and anticipated market conditions. The Board also noted some of the key developments and discussed the risks and stress testing that had been completed.

People Plan

The Board received a report that set out what had been delivered within our People Plan for the first half of 22/23 against the plan agreed and detailed within the appendices. The Board noted some of the areas for further improvement and the areas with improved reporting including EDI.

Health, Safety, Environmental and Business Continuity Annual Report 2022

The Board received the annual report which provided assurance that HSE performance and risk management continued in a positive direction evident in the year-on-year reduction of major/RIDDOR incidents reported. The Board also noted the continued and improved incident reporting generally. The Board heard that the external accreditation around the Group HSE Management Framework, provided by ISO 45001, had been retained for a second year and that ISO 14001 (addressing Environmental Management) had also been achieved.

Annual Building Safety Report 2022

The Board was provided with the annual report on building safety noting that the Group had continued to embed the Building Safety Framework and developed new strategic priorities. The Board noted the significant change in risk profile following the merger with OHG and the changes to the approach to risk following the merger. The Board also heard that additional insight from customers was being provided by new customer transactional surveys. The Board noted the new legislation coming into force later in 2023 and also noted that a number of independent audits had been completed on Riversides approach to Building Safety which provided additional assurance.

Combined Risk Register

The combined risk register was presented to the Board and the significant changes highlighted since the register was last reported to Board, which included the continued focus on damp and mould, the current economic challenges and the impact of customers and the Group and the ongoing ToE work.

Pay Gap reporting

The Board received and noted an update provided on ethnicity and gender pay gap reporting, noting the work being done to close the gaps.

Combined Risk Register

The combined risk register was presented to the Board and the significant changes highlighted since the register was last reported to Board, which included the renewed focus on damp and mould, the social housing rent cap and the ToE work ongoing.

Committee and Subsidiary Board update

The Board received the paper and heard from each of the Committee and Subsidiary Chairs present at the meeting about the key discussions and matters arising.

Operational Performance Report

Performance against the key KPI's was considered by the Board with the report splitting out Riverside and OHG performance as well as a combined Group version. The Board noted the ongoing challenges

getting the Riverside colleague dashboard into the report. It was also noted that the format of the report would be improved for the next round of reporting.

Financial Performance Update

The Board noted that in relation to the overall performance of the Group, YTD operating margin was 1.7% adverse to Forecast but YTD Net Margin was 1.7% favourable to Forecast. Riversides operating surplus was £50.51m which was £2.03 favourable to Q2F. Net surplus was £27.69m which was £2.23m favourable to Q2F. The Board also noted the position for OHG. Overall potential impact of risks and opportunities for Riverside and OHG were discussed with the Board noting the overall combined opportunity from a consolidated group position. The Board also noted in particular the 6 red early warning signs contained within the report.

Quarterly Treasury Report

The Board received the report that provided an update, via the Group Treasury Committee, as to key treasury matters arising over the quarter ended 30 September 2022. The report incorporated information regarding key treasury developments since the previous report to the Board.

Customer Satisfaction Improvement Plan update

The Board received the report that provided members with a progress update on the key activities included within the Customer Satisfaction Improvement Plan 2022/23 and drew attention to the recently published research that has been completed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) into customer satisfaction across the sector.

Other reports noted

The quarterly development update, minutes from previous meetings, matters arising from previous meetings and the written resolutions and chairs actions paper were all noted.