

Hanover (Scotland) Housing Association Ltd

Board Meeting

Minutes of a meeting held at 3.30pm on **Thursday 28 January 2021** via Microsoft Teams

Present	Mr M Martin (Chair), Ms A Campbell, Mr G Devlin, Ms A Erwin, Ms J Fitzpatrick, Mr Y Mattar, Mr F Mitchell, Prof Sir G Palmer, Dr L Reid, Ms J Roger, Mr R Rowe, Mr J Rowney, Mr A Stewart, Dr M Whoriskey, Mrs C Wyllie
In attendance	Ms A Currie, Mr A Curry, Mr D Gold, Mrs D Henderson, Mr C Milburn, Mrs E McNeill-McCallum (minute taker)
Apologies	None

1/21

Apologies

No apologies received.

Mr Martin wished everyone a belated Happy New Year and welcomed Ms Currie to her first Board meeting as Chief Executive.

2/21

Declarations of Interest

None.

3/21

Board Minutes & Actions (BRD6)

117/20 - Mr Martin noted that Mr Mattar was to attend the next Audit Committee meeting with a view to joining.

129/20 - Mrs Henderson was in discussions with Mr Stewart and Ms Fitzpatrick in relation to the Portfolio Lead for Performance.

80/19 - This was an action for the Board on the appraisal process. It had been put on hold the previous year but Mr Martin felt it should now be activated. As part of her own induction process, Ms Currie planned to meet with all Members on a 1:1 basis, and this could be linked into Board skills gaps and development needs to ensure they were all properly equipped. Ms Currie explained that an induction programme for new Members was being worked on, and this would also be available to existing Members as a refresher.

109/20 - Mr Martin discussed succession planning in terms of his role as Chair. Mr Martin encouraged all Members to give this some thought, and welcomed informal conversations either with himself or with Ms Currie during the 1:1 meetings. Ms Currie advised that a governance report would be presented to the March meeting to capture all appropriate Governance matters.

Action 107/20 - Ms Roger raised the intention to procure a consultancy on pay structure. While supportive of this being re-looked at, she was not supportive of an external consultant, noting Mr Curry and his team were capable of doing this.

Mr Martin noted that there were a few Actions on hold and asked the Executive Team to review to ascertain if these could be moved forward.

Decision

The Minutes were agreed and approved as a correct record.

4/21

CE Report (BRD1/01)

Mr Martin formally welcomed Ms Currie, acknowledging that it was a challenging time to commence a new role. Ms Currie reported having received a warm and open welcome and, as everyone was now used to the virtual environment, explained that she had been able to hit the ground running and had not lost time in planning and looking ahead.

Ms Currie had changed the format of the CE report and welcomed feedback. The key point was the suggestions for the Strategy Day. The current strategy expired in March 2022 and this would allow rich and deep discussions of what the new strategy would look like. The existing strategy had been set when the world was a different place, and the Executive Team were aware that parts of this would need a refresh during the final year. This would be an important time to reflect on lessons learned, along with the shift in priorities and focus.

The Strategy Day would be used for the new members of the Executive Team to provide “first impressions”, but also to plan for the future. This was an important day and would be planned carefully. Ms Currie proposed to circulate a draft programme at the March Board to ensure this was something that all Members were comfortable with.

The CE report also highlighted customer satisfaction in Factoring and the Telecare accreditation, and Members briefly discussed both.

Decision

Board Members noted the information.

5/21

COVID-19 Update (BRD1/02)

Mr Devlin had circulated some questions and observations on this report and Ms Currie took the opportunity to address those.

Although the highest level of restrictions were in place once again, the impact on service delivery this time was different. It was still possible to carry out allocations; while planned maintenance was being held up, essential and emergency works were going ahead, as were safety checks.

Testing on those members of the workforce that qualified was now happening systematically across the country. Those staff members that had key worker status were also being offered vaccination. In general terms, staff did not have to disclose if they had been vaccinated but a simple system was being put in place to encourage a record of both testing and vaccinations. As vaccinations were still at an early stage, the following Tuesday would be the first time the dashboard would provide the data.

It was acknowledged that it would be difficult to source similar information from residents but they would be encouraged to disclose this as it would be a helpful management tool to minimise risk.

The Board recognised that staff who declined the vaccination would pose an interesting HR dilemma. Ms Currie explained that staff were being encouraged, and it was hoped most would take this up.

There had been a small spike in the number of cases in January, but this had not been unexpected. Mr Milburn and his team were managing the approach to clusters well and there were no operational capacity concerns.

Mr Devlin asked if there was a risk register in terms of staff catching the virus and the implications of that. Ms Currie explained that there was a detailed risk register and a robust approach. Mr Milburn's team had put scenario planning and a winter plan in place to focus on Hanover's ability to deliver services.

On a similar vein, Mr Mitchell asked if agency staff posed a risk. Mr Milburn confirmed that close contact was being kept with the agencies to ensure they were adhering to protocols. It was thought that some points of transmission had been related to non-Hanover carers, however, even in non-Care developments there was a risk with home carers.

Decision Board Members noted the information.

6/21 **Partnership Committee - 25 Nov 2020 (BRD1/03)**

Ms Fitzpatrick realised the remit of the Partnership Committee stated that Minutes should be presented to the Board. She felt, however, that these were of limited assistance for the Board in their governance duty to monitor progress in relation to the Priorities Action Plan, which formed part of the Transfer of Engagement undertakings. She suggested an update to Board on these, perhaps twice yearly, might better inform. Noting that the Partnership Committee could only make recommendations to the Board, and it was up to the Board to endorse those, Mr Martin agreed that a succinct report highlighting the decisions that needed to be endorsed would be more helpful.

The priority actions part of the Performance Report to the Board did highlight status but it was acknowledged that this was perhaps not easily identifiable.

Ms Currie welcomed the feedback. She planned to put an Oversight Group in place to ensure delivery of the actions. [She proposed to bring a report to the Board that provider a higher-level progress report that included a link to the Minutes going forward.](#)

Decision Board Members noted the information and welcomed the revised approach.

7/21 **Authorised Signatory Request (BRD1/04)**

Mrs Henderson explained this was the start of the process of adding Ms Currie as a signatory to allow her to carry out her role.

Decision Board Members approved adding Ms Currie as an authorised signatory.

8/21 **Financial Planning 2021-22 (BRD1/05)**

This item was marked as private and confidential.

Decision Board Members noted the information.

Mr Mattar left the meeting due to previous work commitments.

9/21 **RSM Due Diligence Update (BRD1/06)**

This item was marked private and confidential.

Decision Board Members agreed with the proposals.

Mr Devlin left the meeting due to previous work commitments.

10/21 **Development Activity (BRD1/07)**

Mr Gold provided an update on the current development activity. There were no huge delays in the programme, and it was hoped the slight delays might be clawed back as development continued.

The Board noted Mr Gold's update and **agreed to pick up on future arrangements for types and locations of developments at the Strategy Day.**

Decision Board Members noted the information.

11/21 **Arklet Integration (BRD1/08)**

This was linked to service improvements and was fairly straightforward. A review was commencing as outlined in the report, and would involve all staff as ex-Arklet staff were now Hanover staff.

Decision Board Members noted the information.

12/21 **Working From Home Policy (BRD1/09)**

Mr Curry explained that this policy was largely being operated at present due to the pandemic forcing home working. It would be organic as lessons were still being learned. Ms Campbell asked about staff wellbeing, and Mr Curry explained the resilience programmes in place.

Decision Board Members noted the information.

13/21 **ICT Security Policy & Procedure (BRD1/10)**

This was a restructured policy where the operational content had been moved into the procedure. The full policy and procedure were available on the Board's Cloud site. Mr Milburn was pleased to report that there had been no recent cyber incidents.

Decision Board Members noted the information.

14/21 **Any Other Business**

Dr Whoriskey asked about the exact timings for the Strategy Day. Ms Currie explained this would be virtual and the intention was 10.30am to 2.30pm with relevant breaks. It was also intended to use break out rooms to keep the meeting active.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 18 March 2021 as follows:

- 15:00 Pre-Meeting (if required - Board Members only)
- 15:30 Board Meeting

Details of how the above meetings would be held to be circulated in due course.

Chairperson: 

Date: 18 March 2021