

The West of England Friends Housing Society
Minutes of the Board Meeting held at Avenue House on Tuesday 13th November 2018 at 6:45pm

Present: *Board Members:* Tim Wye (Chairperson)
Neil Allan, Janet Lynch, Melanie Mackintosh, Colin Milsom, Jerry Oliver, Michael Tuckwell, Angela Vaitilingam
Avenue House: Caroline Cooper, Karen Parkin (minutes)
Bishop Fleming: Claire Argrave
Observers: Jo Gray, Chris Szpojnarowicz

1. Moment of Silence

As per our Quaker values, a moment of silence was taken prior to the start of the meeting.

2. Apologies and welcome

All Board Members were able to attend the meeting following its change in time. Welcome to Jo Gray and Chris Szpojnarowicz - prospective Board Members who had been invited to attend the meeting.

3. Agreement of minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2018 were agreed as being a true account of the meeting, and were signed off by Tim.

4. Financial Report by Bishop Fleming & Agreement of Budget

Actions arising from previous meeting:

- *Redecoration of Kirwin House to be added to budget - COMPLETED*

The 2019 Budget was agreed by the board. Details of discussion can be found in confidential section of these minutes.

5. Reserves Policy

In October 2016, the then-Treasurer Esther Giles wrote a paper making recommendations regarding the Reserves Policy, including the proposal to reduce our reserves to 6 months operating costs instead of the current 12. (This would be in line with the Charitable Incorporated Organisation's guidance of 6-9 months).

- Some Board Members said they would feel safer with the current 12 months.
- A suggestion of waiting to see if the new build goes ahead, then reviewing was made.
- It was agreed that the Reserves Policy remain at 12 months until the year-end figures are finalised. To review in February 2019- item to be put on agenda.

Action: Karen

6. Verbal update from Manager

Actions arising from previous meeting:

- *Consideration to be given to employing an independent outside agency to devise and analyse resident satisfaction surveys – TO LEAVE AS IS AT PRESENT*

- Letter to be written to builders carrying out bathroom refurbishments formally appointing them and asking about the possibility of accelerating the works - COMPLETED

Kirwin House

- Currently has one vacancy – a renovation discussion was held:
 - A quote to update the bathroom has been received to the sum of £3960. To replace the bath with a shower would be £4920. Pros and cons of baths vs showers were discussed – it was agreed to go ahead with installing a shower.
 - Colin's drawings regarding altering the layout of the flat were discussed – it was agreed to leave the layout as it is for the time being.
 - It was agreed that once the renovation work is completed, the flat will be relet at an increased rent of £95.01 per week.
- One of the flats has some damp issues.
 - 1 quote to remedy to the sum of £2,000 has been received, a 2nd is yet to arrive. It was agreed that this should proceed and the decision on which quote devolved to Caroline (Tim happy to discuss)
 - It was agreed that reasons for the damp should be investigated - a possible drain blockage or leak? **Action: Caroline**
- Tenants are aware of the mediation plans discussed at the previous meeting – Melanie to follow this up with a letter and pass contacts to Caroline to set up mediation. **Action: Melanie**

Lansdowne House

- Flat 4 had a serious leak through the bathroom ceiling as a result of a drinks can becoming trapped in the rainpipe on the flat roof above. The leak has been addressed but redecoration is required. It appears that tenants from the adjacent building are throwing things onto the flat roof from their stairwell (lots of cigarette ends etc) – a letter to be written to the property owner. **Action: Caroline / Tim**

Avenue House

- 9 bathroom refurbishments have now been completed.
- We currently have 2 vacancies, down from 4.
- We are still working towards the Gold Standards Framework accreditation – the 'Wish Tree' that has been implemented by one of our activities coordinators has been a magnificent contribution to this.
- 1 Senior Care Assistant is currently off sick for 4 weeks due to a broken wrist. Her shifts are being covered in house. Staffing levels are otherwise good.
- Some of the staff are going to be undertaking a 'virtual dementia tour' at Oakhill Mansions Nursing Home – this will give staff an idea of what it is like living with dementia.
- Staff are also due to undertake a Manual Handling practical training session, fire safety and the chefs will be updating their food safety.

At this point, Jo and Chris left the meeting – many thanks to both for attending.

7. Housing Policies

- The 4 remaining Housing Policies have been read and amended as necessary by Tim, Jerry, Melanie and Michael. All were approved.

8. Proposal to alter the types of dwellings planned

- A meeting was held in October with the architects to discuss the possible costings for plans for alternate numbers of dwellings – their estimate would be around £500,000, however in order to get a more accurate costing a Quantity Surveyor would need to be employed at a cost of £1250 + VAT. This was agreed.
Action: Colin
- Whilst a Quantity Surveyor was agreed, it was noted that there are many factors to weigh up in regards to the need / demand for accessible housing, and also around alternate ways to use the cash reserves we have. Tim to draw up a paper of all of these factors, with the view to having a special meeting to discuss this issue solely.
Action: Tim

9. Key learning points following visit to Sewell House / Hosting of Sewell House staff

Caroline, Carol and Natalie from Avenue House visited Sewell House along with Colin in October. They were very accommodating and it was a very interesting visit. Their refurbished flats are very modern, in lovely rural grounds, however they do have 8 vacancies, possibly due to their location. Their set up is quite different to ours in several ways:

- They offer sheltered housing only
- The wardens are on site and provide more support
- The tenants come together for one communal meal per day
- A Board Member attends every tenant meeting, and are much more involved with the tenants.

A date for a return visit from them to us is still to be arranged.

Tim suggested visiting other Housing Associations with a similar set up to our own and/or with older stock.

Action: Tim and Caroline to discuss

10. Board Membership

- Roger Davies declined the Board's offer to join as Deputy Chair.
- Tim's other contact (ex-nursing home manager at St Monica's) declined invitation for now.
- Jo Gray and Chris Szpojnarowicz observed the meeting today – the Board are happy to continue with both of their applications if they remain interested in joining the Board.

11. Board Governance / Subgroups

Tim has drawn up a discussion paper which was circulated to Board Members prior to the meeting identifying 5 priority areas of work for the Board, which was discussed.

The 5 areas suggested were agreed:

- Finance
- Capital works program
- Tenant relations
- Ensuring quality / Health & Safety / CQC compliance

- Thinking how Quaker values are met in WEFHS

All areas will be looked at – it may be that in some we are doing as much as we can and further work is not required.

Tenant Relations

It was agreed that support is required for staff to manage action plans for tenants, separated from the Complaints Policy – Caroline, Tim & Melanie to discuss. Proposal that the tenants issue section of the Board should be used to discuss these action plans.

Quaker Values

Michael to look at.

Action: Michael

Health & Safety

Neil offered to carry out a quarterly Health & Safety audit.

Action: Neil

CQC/Governance

Jerry has circulated the framework for the monthly Board Member visits as a way to address this important issue – this is designed to, over a 12 month period, cover all of the CQC key lines of enquiry.

- Schedule for visits to be drawn up by Karen **Action: Karen**
- It was agreed that 3 visits be carried out before Christmas (by Tim, Jerry and Melanie), then monthly thereafter.
- Visits should be announced initially, with the intention to move towards unannounced visits.
- Jerry is happy to accompany any member that may be unsure.
- The form to complete is electronic – simply insert your comments under the relevant section.
- 2 sections should be assessed per visit.
- Jerry to circulate an example completed form. **Action: Jerry**
- Karen to populate comments from visits onto one form.
- Item to go onto agenda for next meeting to update on progress.

Action: Karen

Month	Board Member	Sections to be assessed
December 2018	Tim	C1, W2
December 2018	Jerry	S1, E1
December 2018	Melanie	S4, E5
January 2019	Neil	S2, S5
February 2019	Colin	S3, R2
March 2019	Michael	E4, W3

12. Confidentiality of Board Meetings

It was agreed that not all of the Board Meeting minutes are confidential, and that they should be made public (with confidential items removed) by uploading to our website and displaying around the buildings. Tim agreed to present current minutes in this way.

Action: Karen / Tim

13. A.O.B.

Michael's paper (circulated to Board Members prior to this meeting) regarding Avenue House access and corridor width was discussed. Ideas about how to improve access and widen the corridors were suggested which are to be thought about if the new building does not go ahead. This feeds into the discussion that needs to be held at a special meeting regarding accessible housing and other ideas for use of our reserves which Tim emphasised need not just be about capital projects.

14. Dates for next meetings

Tuesday 19th February 2019 6:45pm
AGM - Wednesday 22nd May 2019 2pm
Tuesday 28th May 2019 6:45pm

Meeting Closed 8:50pm

Summary of action points:

Action	By whom	By when
Enable the Domestic Staff to earn the Living Wage whilst also keeping a differential with Care Staff.	Finance subgroup	2020 budget meeting
To review Reserves Policy in February 2019- item to be put on agenda.	Karen	February 2019
Reasons for the damp in Kirwin House flat to be investigated - a possible drain blockage or leak?	Caroline	December 2018
Melanie to write to Kirwin House tenants re: Mediator	Melanie	December 2018
Letter to be written to the property owner of building adjacent to Lansdowne re: tenants throwing things onto flat roof.	Caroline / Tim	December 2018
Quantity Surveyor to be appointed to give accurate costings for build.	Colin	COMPLETED
Tim to draw up a paper of factors for and against build of accessible housing, plus potential other uses for our reserves, with the view to having a special meeting to discuss this issue solely.	Tim	Next Board Meeting

To explore setting up a visit to other Housing Associations with a similar set up to our own and/or with older stock.	Tim/Caroline	Next Board Meeting
Consider how we might embed Quaker values further	Michael	
Health and Safety Audit	Neil	
Schedule for monthly Board Member visits to be drawn up	Karen	COMPLETED
Example completed Board Member visits form to be circulated	Jerry	December 2018
Update on Board Member visits to be added to next agenda	Karen	Next Board Meeting
Make public Board Meeting minutes (confidential items removed)	Karen / Tim	December 2018