

The West of England Friends Housing Society
Minutes of the Board Meeting held Tuesday 22nd November 2022 at 5pm at Avenue House

Present: *Board Members:* Tim Wye (Chairperson)
Christopher Denman, Jo Gray, Andrew Lux, Melanie Mackintosh, Chris Szpojnarowicz.

Via Zoom: Geralyn Meehan
Avenue House: Caroline Cooper, Karen Parkin (minutes)
Bishop Fleming: Claire Argrave
Rathbone Greenbank
Investments (Item 6 only,
Via Zoom): Rosie Sparrowhawk, David Nicholsby

1. Moment of Silence

In accordance with our Quaker values, a moment of silence was taken prior to the start of the meeting.

2. Apologies and welcome

Apologies received from Tomas Hazelle and Jerry Oliver.

3. Agreement of minutes of the meeting held on 23rd August 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd August 2022 were agreed as being a true account of the meeting and were signed off by the Chair.

4. Board Membership

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- *Trustee nomination for replacing Michael on the finance sub-group*
– Christopher Denman appointed.
- Ros Mills has left Avenue House – a formal note of thanks was made as her contribution to the Board has been invaluable. To send flowers and letter of thanks.
Action: Karen
- This leaves a vacancy for a resident representative on the Board. Unfortunately, at present we do not have a suitable candidate. Alternatives were discussed:
 - Relative Representative - This would require a proper Role Description. To pick up again when Government guidance around visiting changes.
 - Care Assistant Representative – A discussion around this was held. The role could potentially involve a Care Assistant joining the Board Meetings for one item only, to give an update on staff thoughts and feelings etc. It was ultimately decided that this idea would be left for now, but for Board Members to be more engaged with staff on their monthly inspection visits.
- Tim Southall has stepped down from his role on the Board as he feels he has taken on too much at the present time. He is very happy however to provide housing advice when required.
- Any new introductions to the Board would be very welcome – perhaps another clinician?

5. Financial Report by Bishop Fleming

- There are currently 6 vacant rooms in Avenue House, 3 of which have been occupied by respite residents.
- There is a year-to-date surplus of £50k, mainly due to the Government funding received at the beginning of the year.
- If any Board Members have any feedback on the presentation of the monthly accounts, please let Claire know.

5a. Budget

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- Claire to allow extra allowance for Registration Fees in next budget – COMPLETED
 - To propose new Food Budget in discussion with Chef – COMPLETED
 - Tim to write to residents / relatives with regards to a 6-monthly fees review – Carry forward to January once budget signed off. **Action: Tim**
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- Food budget increased by 20%
 - Fuel budget increased by 100%
 - A budget of around a 7% increase for staff wages has been proposed (a lower increase of 5% for higher paid staff)
 - The average rate of pay for Care Assistants in Bristol is £10.89 per hour, and the Real Living Wage has been increased to £10.90. The St Monica Trust are currently paying £11.04 per hour. A higher increase would be required for our care assistants to achieve this. Jerry and GERALYN are due to meet to discuss this next week and will report back.
 - Budget to be finalised once this piece of work by GERALYN and Jerry has been completed.

Karen and Caroline were asked to leave the meeting at this point whilst a confidential discussion was held

- Budget to be agreed and signed off at December's Board Catch up by Zoom. Karen to circulate date and Zoom link. **Action: Karen**
- Tenants would like more notice of the increase in rents. **Action: Karen**

6. Presentation from Rathbone Greenbank Investments

- We have a large amount of cash across several different bank accounts, so have started to think about better (and ethical) ways of using that money. Therefore, Rathbone Greenbank Investments were invited to give a presentation about what they can offer. Main takeaways:
 - Rathbone Greenbank Investments want to empower investors to be a force for good with their money.
 - Advice can be tailored and bespoke (following the investor completing a detailed questionnaire), or set packages put together by Rathbone Greenbank can be chosen.
 - Risk levels (ranging from level 1 (low risk) to level 6 (high risk)) were discussed.
- Going forward, the following needs to be thought through:
 - How much do we want to release into investment?

- How long are we prepared to tie money up for?
- Do we need regular access to our cash?
- What level of risk are we prepared to take? Most investors take risk level 4.
- Do we want to keep a pot of money and tie up the rest, or invest more with a view to taking a regular income from it?
- Critical reserve level to be decided upon.
- It was agreed that Rathbone Greenbank send a list of questions to Tim and proceed from there. Most Board Members were happy with risk level 4.
- It was noted that the FCA only protects up to £85k per account. We currently have 2 accounts with considerably more than this in them at present.

7. Verbal update from Manager including incident reporting

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- *Look at sickness policy / T&Cs – meeting being held next week.*
- *Look into offering apprenticeships – in progress*
- *Job adverts to be circulated amongst Ukrainian & Somalian network - COMPLETED*
- *Complaint to be made to BRI after a resident was discharged to Avenue House without a Covid test – decided against this.*

Avenue House

- Current occupancy of 25.
- 1 resident now requires a nursing placement.
- 1 resident very poorly – GP does not think they are end of life however the resident refuses at this point to eat or drink.
- A DoLS has been authorised for one resident.
- A further 2 DoLS applications have been made – they are being assessed but are not urgent.
- Environmental Health visited on 18th November – we have retained our 5-star rating.
- The CQC has sent through the Provider Information form to be returned by 9th December. An inspection is therefore due anytime soon.
- 1 accident recorded – a resident tripped when they left their room. No injuries, just some bruising sustained.
- We still have vacancies for a Weekend Kitchen Assistant, Laundry Assistant and Senior Care Assistant.
- Agency staff usage has reduced as our existing staff have been picking up some extra shifts.
- The residents have had their Covid boosters and flu vaccines. We are encouraging staff to have these too but are experiencing some resistance to this.
- No changes to visiting / testing guidance.
- Installation of the new call system starts on 30th November. Will take around a week to complete.

Lansdowne House

- 1 vacancy. A Ukrainian lady looked at it today. It will need some redecoration before it can be let – Bristol City Council have said they will pay for this along with one month's rent, deposit and £1k.

Kirwin House

- Flat 8 vacant

- Flat roof leaking. 3 quotes being obtained for this work.

Incident Reporting

None to report.

8. Front Extension Works

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- Check with architect that sustainability has been fully thought through – COMPLETED

- Progress is being made – detailed specs are almost finished. Sustainability has been discussed at length.
- Work has gone out to tender and the first site survey by John Perkins Construction is being carried out on Monday 28th November.
- This will mean a considerable upheaval for the residents and staff, and whilst we will do our utmost to make the work as hassle free for the residents as possible, we will expect some inevitable complaints.
- We will also have an expectation that any timescales given are likely to overrun, due to materials taking some time to source at present.

9. Business Risk Register

- No updates.

10. Update on Business Plan

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- Ask around for recommendation for EPC work – carried forward. **Action: Chris S**

- The Workstreams paper previously circulated was discussed. Please continue to report back with any progress:

Workstream	Who	Timescale	Comment
Conservatory		From now for circa 18 months	Initial task to review quotes, particularly inflation
Electronic Records	Mel	See across	This is quite a task but increasingly required by CQC.
Long term future of housing stock	Chris S		We have completed one task in making Kirwin not supported. There are lots of questions about the future of our housing and Chris has agreed to do some early options appraisals
Community services	Tomas		We have started to give this some thought. We are piloting warm spaces as a toe in the water of this. That specific area needs support plus future plans. At some point we may need to employ someone to develop this
Staff Benefits	Geralyn		We continue to need to ensure we are competitive on pay and conditions. WPA health cash plan possibility?

Sustainability			I have had some initial discussions. Anything meaningful will be millions in retrofitting (do need EPCs done asap) Can also look at small changes e.g., ensuring we use locally sourced food etc.
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11. Report from Tenant Representative (Kirwin & Lansdowne)

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- o Discuss Support offering to tenants (non-registerable, chargeable services) – on hold at present.
- o Look into an outside charging point. **Action: Tim W**
- o Discuss tenants devising their own Housing Policies – on hold at present.
- o Look into Government Energy Grants – if tenants have their own energy supply this will be applied directly by their energy provider. Any communal energy or energy provided to the building as a whole is not covered by the grant scheme as this is a business account.
- o Write to tenants of Kirwin informing them of the new tenant – COMPLETED.
- o Deal with issues arising from Cleaners missing certain areas – Cleaners changed.

Issues raised by tenants to Christopher Denman:

- Moss needs clearing from paving **Action: Caroline / Sean**
- Paving in slabs in Kirwin House garden very uneven **Action: Caroline / Sean**
- Historic issues between users of the Guest Room and a tenant remain – Christopher Denman to attempt a conversation. **Action: Christopher D**
- Tenants are asking when they can re-commence joining the activities at Avenue House. Unfortunately, guidance around visitors mixing with multiple residents at Avenue House has not changed, however as soon as it does, we will inform tenants and invite them over.

12. Housing Admissions Policy

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- o Check with our lawyer about the need to offer vacancies to the Local Authority first – this does not apply to Avenue House.
- o Covid restrictions to be added to point 12 – COMPLETED
- o Amend wording to clarify that not all flats are self-contained – COMPLETED

13. Board Governance / update on Board Member visits

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- o Catch up on outstanding visits – see rota below with visits to be completed. Please arrange directly with Caroline. Relevant documents have already been emailed out by Karen. **Action: Tim, Andrew, Chris S**

Month	Name	Sections to assess
September 2022	Tim Wye	S2, S5
October 2022	Andrew Lux	E7, W2

November 2022	Chris Szpojnarowicz	S1, E1
December 2022	Jerry Oliver	S6, E6
January 2023	Melanie Mackintosh	S4, W3
February 2023	Tim Wye	R1, W4
March 2023	Jo Gray	R2, W5

- o Board Members to complete the following training (or forward on relevant in-date certificates):

- o GDPR **Action: Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Jerry, Chris S**
- o Safeguarding Adults **Action: Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Chris S**
- o Equality & Diversity **Action: Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Geraldyn, Jerry, Chris S**

- Following on from a recent Inspection Visit, new Laundry Trolleys have been purchased.

14. A.O.B.

None

15. Proposed dates of next meetings:

Tuesday 21st February 2023 5pm
AGM – Tuesday 23rd May 2023 2pm
Tuesday 23rd May 2023 5pm

Meeting Closed 7:20pm

Summary of action points:

Action	By whom	By when
Flowers and thank you letter to be sent to Ros Mills	Karen	ASAP
Write to residents / relatives with regards to a 6-monthly fees review	Tim	Next meeting
Arrange December catch up	Karen	ASAP
Give tenants more notice of rent increase	Karen	January
Look at EPC work required	Chris S	Next meeting
Outside charging point	Tim	Next meeting
Clear Moss from Kirwin paving	Caroline / Sean	ASAP
Deal with uneven paving in Kirwin garden	Caroline / Sean	ASAP

Attempt conversation about use of Guest Room with tenant	Christopher D	Next meeting
Outstanding Board Inspection visits to be completed	Tim, Andrew, Chris S	ASAP
Complete GDPR training	Christopher D, Jo, Mel, Jerry, Chris S	ASAP
Complete Safeguarding Adults training	Christopher D, Jo, Mel, Chris S	ASAP
Complete Equality & Diversity training	Christopher D, Jo, Mel, GERALYN, Jerry, Chris S	ASAP