

**The West of England Friends Housing Society**  
**Minutes of the Board Meeting held Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 5:30pm at Avenue House**

**Present:** *Board Members:* Tim Wye (Chairperson)  
 Christopher Denman, Andrew Lux, Melanie Mackintosh, Geralyn Meehan, Chris Szpojnarowicz  
*Avenue House:* Caroline Cooper, Karen Parkin (minutes)  
*Observer:* Stephen O'Shea  
*Bishop Fleming:* Claire Argrave  
*Via Zoom:* Jo Gray, Jerry Oliver, Ann Cornelius

**1. Moment of Silence**

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

**2. Apologies and welcome**

Apologies received from Tomas Hazelle.  
 Welcome to Stephen O'Shea (who prefers to be called Steve) - proposed new Relative Representative.

**3. Agreement of the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 were agreed as being a true account of the meeting and therefore signed by the Chair.

**4. Board Membership**

Term dates:

<b>Name</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> term ends</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> term ends</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Melanie Mackintosh	May 2017	May 2020	Has extended term
Jerry Oliver	May 2019	May 2022	Has extended term
Tim Wye	May 2022	May 2025	
Jo Gray	May 2022	May 2025	
Chris Szpojnarowicz	May 2022	May 2025	
Christopher Denman	May 2022	May 2025	
Geralyn Meehan	May 2023	May 2026	
Tomas Hazelle	May 2025	May 2028	
Andrew Lux	May 2025	May 2028	

Melanie plans to step down from her position on the Board at the AGM in May. Another GP to replace her would be extremely useful. She would be prepared to stay on in an advisory capacity.

**5. Financial Report by Bishop Fleming**

*Actions arising from previous meetings:*

- *Review split of expenditure between houses – CARRY FORWARD*
- *Look at changing financial year end – This financial year end will be changed from December 2024 to March 2025. We will then operate 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> March moving forward.*

- *Look at Utility contract renewal – CARRY FORWARD*
- The draft accounts have been prepared for the 2023-year end. The auditors are starting their work next week.
- Surplus for the year shows as £68k.
- There is a new layout for the monthly management accounts from January 2024 and it is hoped that they will be more helpful. The first set should be read in conjunction with Claire's email explaining them– feedback is encouraged.
- Occupancy – 26 permanent residents, 3 respite. 1 vacancy which means income is £10k over budget for January.
- Some minor alterations have been made to the staff pay structure due to a discrepancy with the Real Living Wage, but this has made no huge difference to the budget.
- There is a £13k net profit for January across all 3 houses.
- 1 vacancy in Kirwin House,
- Lansdowne House remains fully occupied.

## **6. Verbal update from Manager including incident reporting.**

*Actions arising from previous meetings:*

- *Deal with neighbour complaint about staff smoking – Fence erected.*
- *Look into company contract to keep policies updated – 1 company currently being spoken to.*
- *Discuss options to increase EPC rating of flat 2 Lansdowne House – part of wider discussion around housing,*
- *Staff benefits:*
  - *Look at provider options for Health Cash Plans. Check with Bishop Fleming about whether this would be classed as a trivial benefit by HMRC – This would not be a trivial benefit, therefore would be taxable. Not a viable option, therefore.*
  - *Create a list of options regarding Occupational Sick Pay – CARRY FORWARD*

### Avenue House

- 1 vacancy.
- 1 viewing this week.
- 1 death in the past month.
- 1 resident in hospital.
- 1 resident soon moving to nursing care.
- 1 resident is having their care needs reassessed by Social Services. There is a concern that the Local Authority would prefer to keep residents who have increased care needs in Avenue House by providing us with hoists, tilt chairs, floor mats etc., however, our registration is for Residential care without nursing. We have been penalised by CQC in the past for keeping residents in Avenue House by using this equipment, rather than them moving to more appropriate nursing care (in an end-of-life scenario, this of course would be different).
- There were 2 falls resulting in injury this month – one fractured wrist and one skin tear to the leg.
- We have recruited the following staff:
  - 2 x night care assistants

- 1 x day care assistant – she is an agency staff member that has been coming to us for a while and asked for a job. She is really good, so we have agreed to pay the £2500 agency fee.
- 1 care staff member is pregnant,
- We are still looking for an alternate weekend cook – we are currently using agency cover for this.
- Some residents' care needs have increased. Following the completion of a Staff Dependency Tool, we do have enough staff on each shift (just) - 4 care assistants in the morning and 3 in the afternoon. This may have to be increased to 4 in the afternoon.
- First Aid training is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> February.
- There is a leaking flat roof on the first floor which appears to be a problem with the coping stones. One quote has been received so far.
- 2 of the bedroom carpets have been replaced.
- Some automatic door closures need replacing and are on order.
- Complaints – Safeguarding picked up a concern from CQC following a complaint by (we believe) a disgruntled ex-staff member. This complaint has since been dropped.
- The CQC portal rollout is happening from 11<sup>th</sup> March. Our inspector has asked for certain evidence to be scanned to her before 5<sup>th</sup> March, which is currently being collated. The inspector would also like the contact details of some relatives and visiting professionals to speak to.
- The Electronic Care Plans are coming into full time use in March.
- The last fire risk assessment completed by an external assessor was completed in 2019. To be arranged ASAP. **Action: Jerry and Caroline.**

#### Kirwin House

- One vacancy.

#### Lansdowne House

- Fully occupied.

### **7. Introduction to new Relative Representative.**

Steve O'Shea has a mother in Avenue House and was introduced to, and welcomed by, the Board. Formal elections will take place at the AGM in May. For now, the Board are pleased to co-op Steve to the Board.

### **8. Update from Tenant Representative**

No issues that need to come to the Board. There have been some issues that have been sent straight to Caroline for action.

### **9. Community Services**

*Actions arising from previous meetings:*

- Tomas to look into 'Social Prescribers' - CARRY FORWARD
- There has been some interest in the Lunch Club, which is being progressed forward.

### **10. Long Term Future of Housing Stock – Ann Cornelius attending.**

Ann's recent report, which had been previously circulated to the Board, was discussed. Some key points:

- Tenant Satisfaction information needs to now be sent to the regulator.
- Our complaints procedure needs to be sent to the ombudsman by the end of March.
- We do not currently comply with rent standards.
- We do not have a long-term financial plan to look after the buildings.
- We should be very clear on the strategic purpose of the Society. We have been registered as a Registered Social Landlord since 1976 – do we want to continue to be registered? If so, we MUST comply with their rules.
  - We do not currently have the skills in house to deal with this – we could buy in services to manage this compliance.
- It was noted that Steve's wife has lots of contacts in housing that could be used for advice with regards to getting the flats up to scratch EPC-wise.
- Discussion was held around the possibility of becoming an Almshouse – Ann has received lots of positive feedback from societies that have gone down this route.

**Actions:**

- Look at Almshouses in more detail.
- Look at what other Quaker organisations are doing.
- Talk to area meeting,
- Look at what is required to de-register.
- Talk to tenants.
- It was noted that the rights of our tenants would be retained, regardless of what decision is made regarding the housing.
- Agreed to separate the governance of housing (e.g. whether we want to de-register) from the other questions raised about EPC and long-term future.

**11. Business Risk Register**

To be added:

- Housing regulatory compliance
- Plan for unexpected succession of manager.
- Wider distribution of work amongst Board Members, so it doesn't all get given to the Chair – there is the potential to look into employing a vice chair as there is still £2.5k in the budget for this.

**12. Update on business plan.**

Workstream	Who	Timescale	Comment
Electronic Records	Mel / Jo / Caroline	ASAP	To be in full time use March 2024
Long term future of housing stock	Chris S / Tim		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Almshouses in more detail.</li> <li>• Look at what other Quaker organisations are doing.</li> <li>• Talk to area meeting,</li> <li>• Look at what is required to de-register.</li> <li>• Talk to tenants.</li> </ul>

Community services	Tomas		Small lunch club to commence. Tomas looking into Social Prescribers. Work ongoing.
Staff Benefits	Geralyn		A Health Cash Plan and various options around enhancing OSP have been discussed. Caroline and Geralyn to collate some options to discuss at the next meeting.
Sustainability			Some initial discussions held. Anything meaningful will be millions in retrofitting. EPCs completed. Some small changes made: energy efficient light bulbs in place and recycling bins in use.
New CQC framework	Jo /Mel / Jerry		Project working group formed 28.02.23. To ensure tie into new Electronic Care Plans. Incorporated into Board Inspection Framework but this will need some reworking as new framework becomes clearer.

### 13. Board Governance / update on Board Member visits.

Actions arising from previous meetings:

- Board members to complete the following training:
  - GDPR (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Steve)
  - Safeguarding Adults (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Steve)
  - Equality & Diversity (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Geralyn, Steve)
- Catch up outstanding inspection visits.
- Christopher D feels he should be exempt from training as he is a tenant. Tim to ascertain whether this is the case and feedback. **Action: Tim**
- Board member visits rota for 2024/2025 to be devised. **Action: Karen**

Month	Name	Sections to assess
September 2023	Melanie Mackintosh	S2, S5
December 2023	Geralyn Meehan	S6, E6
January 2024	Tomas Hazelle	S4, W3
February 2024	Andrew Lux	R1, W4
March 2024	Chris Szpojnarowicz	R2, W5

### 14. A.O.B.

- It was agreed that the monthly Board member catch up meetings are no longer required. Extra meetings will be called as and when needed.

## 15. Proposed dates for next meetings

AGM – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 2pm

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 5pm

- Set dates for subsequent meetings. **Action: Karen / Tim**

### Meeting Closed 7:20pm

#### Summary of action points:

Action	By whom	By when
Review split of expenditure across houses	Caroline / Tim / Claire	End of financial year
Discuss utility contract renewal	Board	Next meeting
Create a list of options regarding Occupational Sick Pay	Geralyn / Caroline	Next meeting
Arrange external fire risk assessment	Caroline / Jerry	ASAP
Look into 'Social Prescribers'	Tomas	Next meeting
Housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Almshouses in more detail.</li> <li>• Look at what other Quaker organisations are doing.</li> <li>• Talk to area meeting,</li> <li>• Look at what is required to de-register.</li> <li>• Talk to tenants.</li> </ul>	Board	ASAP
Add the following to the Business Risk Register: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing regulatory compliance</li> <li>• Plan for unexpected succession of manager.</li> <li>• Wider distribution of work amongst Board Members.</li> </ul>	Caroline / Tim	ASAP
Complete the following training: <p>GDPR (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Steve)</p> <p>Safeguarding Adults (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Steve)</p>	Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Steve	ASAP

<i>Equality &amp; Diversity</i> (Christopher D, Jo, Melanie, Geraldyn, Steve)		
Catch up any outstanding inspection visits	Melanie, Geraldyn, Tomas, Andrew	ASAP
Decide whether Tenant Representative needs to complete training	Tim	ASAP
Board Member visits rota for 2024/2025 to be devised	Karen	March 2024
Business Plan refresh to be added to next agenda	Karen / Tim	Next Meeting
Set dates for meetings post- May	Karen / Tim	Next meeting