



PUBLIC MINUTES
of the Board meeting
on Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 0930
FG47, 2 Marsham Street, London

Present

Simon Dow (SD)	Interim Chair
Liz Butler (LB)	
Paul Smee (PS)	
Ceri Richards (CR)	
Jo Boaden (JBo)	
Deborah Gregory (DG)	
Fiona MacGregor (FM)	Chief Executive

In attendance

Jonathan Walters (JW)	Deputy Chief Executive
Maxine Loftus (ML)	Interim Director Regulatory Operations
Will Perry (WP)	Director, Strategy
Emma Tarran (ERT)	Assistant Director, Head of Legal Services and Company Secretary
Harold Brown (HB)	Senior Assistant Director, Investigation and Enforcement
Jim Bennett (JB)	Assistant Director, Regulatory Strategy – for item 6
Marcus Roe (MR)	Regulatory Framework and Strategy Manager – for item 7
John O'Mahony	Assistant Director, Corporate Services and Performance – for item 8
Chris Kitchen (CK)	Minutes

1 Welcome and apologies

01/11/19 Richard Hughes joined the meeting by phone for the confidential session and gave his apologies for the rest of the meeting.

2 Declarations of Interest

02/11/19 There were no new declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the last meeting – 22 October 2019

03/11/19 The confidential minutes and the public minutes of the last meeting were AGREED subject to minor amendments.

4 Matters Arising

04/11/19 Members noted the updates to the actions from previous meetings.

5 Forward Planner

05/11/19 Members NOTED the forward planner.

6 Chief Executive update

Policy Updates

Brexit and contingency planning

Green paper

07/11/19 We continue to engage with MHCLG.

General Election

09/11/19 CEO gave an overview of the housing elements of the manifestos from the Labour, Liberal Democrats and Conservative parties.

MAP closure

10/11/19 WP gave members an overview of what the remit of the Maintaining Assurance Programme (MAP) had been. There had inevitably been changes during the life of the project to account for operational planning cycles and business assurance projects, but by the time the programme was formally closed in September 2019 it had achieved most of its objectives and most have moved into BAU or closed. There were two areas where work is still ongoing and these are monitored and reported on to the Executive Group. There is a lessons learned exercise being undertaken, however the work programme has given the organisation a good level of assurance and informed an updated approach to assurance. LB added that the programme had been run with a good level of rigour to provide the assurances required.

Value for Money reporting review and metric analysis - 2019

12/11/19 There has been an improvement on reporting compared to previous years, but there is scope to go further and we intend to use this data to give a clear message to providers for the next reporting round. Providers need to be open about their targets and what they are doing to achieve these targets and to recognise that it is acceptable to report if they have been unable to meet all the targets, as long as they are able to provide explanations.

Staff Conference

13/11/19 CEO reported that the all staff conference in Birmingham on 12 November, had been a good day.

14/11/19 The board will get a report on the staff survey results.

Registrations

15/11/19 Members NOTED the update on the one refusal of registration.

Grenfell Tower Fire and Public Inquiry

16/11/19 JB joined the meeting and updated members on recent developments with the Grenfell Tower inquiry. The findings of the phase 1 inquiry were wide-ranging and robust, with a focus on the fire brigade and building regulations. Preparation for Phase 2 is underway.

Performance Review

17/11/19 Members NOTED the performance report. Discussions are underway with the Government Property Agency in respect of securing additional desk space in the Leeds office.

Stakeholder engagement

18/11/19 The CEO advised members that there continues to be engagement with stakeholders, albeit restricted as a result of being in purdah.

Publications

19/11/19 Members NOTED the number of RSH publications and with the completion of the quarterly surveys, the publication of RJs and further GURs.

Media

20/11/19 NOTED.

7 Approval of guidance on Use of Powers

21/11/19 HB introduced the paper and MR joined via telephone. The guidance forms an annex to Regulating the Standards and board had seen the consultation document, which had been out for comment for 8 weeks. The consultation response was low, but this was not unexpected, as there had been prior discussions with the sector with the introduction of the Housing Administration regime. The comments fed back have been accommodated and queries answered. It was acknowledged that the document does need a fuller review which will be scheduled as soon as time permits.

22/11/19 Board was being asked to review the final amendments to the guidance document and the decision statement and to sign it off to enable publication during w/c 16 December 2019.

23/11/19 There were questions about the level of response and members were given assurance that the message about the changes has been picked up by the sector despite not many completing the complete survey. MR confirmed that other than the public consultation, we have also had direct conversations and contact with law firms, insolvency experts and direct contact groups.

24/11/19 There were some specific questions raised in respect of some sections and it was agreed that this warranted further discussion between DG/HB and ERT. Following these discussions, the board AGREED to delegate the sign-off to the CEO

8 Equalities Objectives

25/11/19 JOM joined the meeting to present the paper which was inviting the board to discuss and agree the contents of the consultation and DELEGATE the final sign-off to the CEO.

26/11/19 Following agreement at the July board meeting to the three equality objectives the draft statutory consultation is drafted to be clear on our statutory remit and the rationale for proposing the objectives. The intention is to publish the consultation in January after purdah restrictions are lifted.

27/11/19 It was AGREED that board would get a report in future on the effectiveness of the equalities objectives in achieving their aims. Subject to a few drafting suggestions the board DELEGATED the final sign-off of the consultation document to the CEO.

9 Private Finance Update

JBo left the meeting for this item.

28/11/19 WP presented the paper which was for information.

29/11/19 The Investors' Conference had not raised any major concerns. Investors continue to monitor market sale exposures, but understand that this is concentrated in a minority of providers.

JBo re-joined the meeting after this discussion.

10 Resilience Planning

30/11/19 FM and WP spoke to this paper. The priorities as set out in the paper were NOTED.

31/11/19 It was AGREED a further paper will be taken to Board in the new year.

WP

11 Finance and Corporate Services update

32/11/19 RBP presented the paper. Members were updated on the underspend. There was a favourable variance to budget in respect of pay costs which will reduce to some extent as the recruitment of resource review posts begin. There is expected to be an adverse variance to budget in respect of travel costs as staff numbers increase – this will be taken into account when setting next year's budget. The reasons for a favourable variance on the corporate services budget were noted. It was noted that the final figures for legal and financial investigation spend is difficult to predict as these are both contingency budgets. Members noted the explanations in the paper for NROSH revenue costs and capital spend.

33/11/19 Members were updated on the current discussions with Homes England in respect of the HR element of the SLA – further updates will be provided when available. Digital services are on track for the roll-out of O365 at the beginning of December.

12 Operations Update

35/11/19 ML presented the paper and Members NOTED 32 RJs had been published in October. Additionally 25 RJs were completed in November to manage the increased volume of publications during the stability check period. Members noted the updates and grade changes on individual providers. Board requested that information be provided on annual engagement meetings in future updates.

ML

13 IDA Programme Update

36/11/19 The report confirmed that the initial 4 year IDA programme which started in October 2015 was now complete. By September 2019, 231 IDAs had been completed.

37/11/19 The frequency of subsequent IDAs will use the differentiated engagement principles. Members noted that there will be a transitional period to reach the desired frequency on IDAs set via MAP. Board noted the analysis set out in para 12 of the paper. The draft planned programme to March 2021 was NOTED.

14 Investigation and Enforcement update

38/11/19 HB introduced the paper and provided further updates on some of the intensive regulatory engagement cases listed in the paper. A regulatory notice had been published for Larch HA and RNs for Runnymede BC and LB Lambeth were noted.

39/11/19 Members were advised that three providers were placed on the GUR list the previous week before – Larch HA, New Roots Limited and Prospect Limited.

Lease Based Providers update

40/11/19 *Westmoreland*

Inclusion

41/11/19 Regulation continues.

13 Any Other Business

42/10/19 There was no other business.