

## TRUST HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

### Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday 12 September 2024 At 12 New Mart Road, Edinburgh EH14 1RL.

#### PRESENT:

#### Board Members

Dr Norval Bryson  
Gordon Laurie  
Kyle Ruparelia  
Ali Ross  
Sharron Elsdon

David Knight  
Steve McGowan  
Paul McFarlane  
Mary Niven

#### Officers in Attendance

Rhona McLeod, Chief Executive  
Zoe Purdie, Director of Finance & People  
Neil Ferguson, Director of Business Development & Digital  
Ian Davie, Head of Development & Asset Strategy  
Jenny Wallace, Director of Customer Experience  
Annette Brown (Company Secretary & Minute Taker)

#### ANNETTE BROWN IN THE CHAIR FOLLOWED BY DR NORVAL BRYSON

Agenda Item	Detail
1.	<b>Appointment of Office Bearers</b>
1.1	Annette Brown, Company Secretary, welcomed Board Members and the Executive Team to the meeting. Further to the AGM held earlier in the day Annette requested that Board Members appoint office bearers to take on the roles of Chair of the Board, Vice Chair of the Board, Chair of Audit & Performance Committee and Vice Chair of Audit & Performance.
1.2	Board Members agreed that Dr Norval Bryson be appointed as Chair of the Board. This appointment was proposed by Gordon Laurie and seconded by Steve McGowan.
1.3	Board Members agreed that Gordon Laurie be appointed as Vice Chair of the Board. This appointment was proposed by Kyle Ruparelia and seconded by Ali Ross.
1.4	Board Members agreed that Ali Ross be appointed as Chair of the Audit and Performance Committee. This was proposed by Steve McGowan and seconded by Paul MacFarlane.
1.6	Board Members agreed that David Knight be appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit and Performance Committee. This was proposed by Gordon Laurie and seconded by Mary Niven.
1.7	<b>Decision: Dr Norval Bryson was appointed Chair of Board</b>
1.8	<b>Decision: Gordon Laurie was appointed Vice Chair of Board</b>
1.9	<b>Decision: Ali Ross was appointed Chair of Audit and Performance Committee.</b>

1.10	<b>Decision: David Knight was appointed Vice Chair of Audit and Performance Committee.</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Chair's Opening Remarks</b>
2.1	Dr Norval Bryson, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the attendance of Ian Davie, Head of Development & Asset Strategy who was standing in for Jackie McIntosh, Director of Assets & Sustainability.
2.2	Norval referred to the AGM which had taken place earlier in the day and referred to the disappointingly low number of members in attendance at the meeting. He reassured the Board and Executive that this could also be a sign that members are content with the work of the staff at Trust. Gordon Laurie, Vice Chair, agreed that low attendance is most likely a positive sign but could also indicate that engagement with members in the run up to the AGM is not particularly strong.
2.3	Jenny Wallace, Director of Customer Experience, advised that the Customer Engagement Team refer to the AGM throughout the engagement process but it is not a key focus as not all tenants are members. In the past the team have gone through the process of trying to explain to tenants what it means to be a member in addition to removing inactive members from the registers. Jenny advised Board Members that the engagement team could do a recruitment drive to increase the number of members.
2.4	Norval confirmed that a recruitment drive was not required at this stage and the upcoming rent consultation may encourage tenants and members to engage.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Chief Executive's Open Remarks</b>
3.1	Rhona McLeod, Chief Executive, had no matters to raise in this section as all key areas for discussion were covered later in the agenda.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>
4.1	No Board Member interests were recorded.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
5.1	Apologies received from Board Members Laura Bornatici, Ian Gunning, Ian Mitchelmore and Graham Curran.
5.2	Apologies were also noted for Jackie McIntosh, Director of Assets & Sustainability.
<b>6.</b>	<b>24-25 Q1 Financial Update – <i>*please see private minutes</i></b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Care and Support Update - <i>*please see private minutes</i></b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>2025/26 Commercial Energy Procurement Update – <i>*please see private minutes</i></b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Approach to Rent Setting, Budget and 30 Year Plan</b>
9.1	Zoe Purdie, Director of People and Finance, presented a report outlining the proposed approach to rent setting, the budget and the 30 year plan. Zoe advised that given the

	ongoing uncertain economic and political climate and with ongoing fluctuation of interest rates it seemed prudent to delay the annual rent consultation and Board approval of the annual budget and 30 year plan to the December Board. Should the Board agree with the delay this will then mean that the rent consultation will be presented to the February Board and 30 Year Plan to April.
9.2	David Knight, Vice Chair of the Audit & Performance Committee, asked for Zoe's views on what to expect. Zoe advised that with the triple lock on one side and General Needs customers only seeing an increase of 2- 2.2% in line with CPI Trust could find itself in a difficult place regarding affordability metrics for the two different sides of the business. Zoe advised that the impact of the national living wage which may go up substantially more than CPI will also have to be considered.
9.3	Rhona McLeod, Chief Executive, advised that the team will work hard to ensure that the messaging regarding the rent consultation is empathetic and clear.
9.4	Dr Norval Bryson, Chair, agreed that it made sense to delay the rent consultation and approval of the annual budget until after the UK Government budget announcement in October.
9.5	<b>Decision: The Board agreed to delay the rent consultation and approval of the annual budget until after the budget in October.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Governance Update</b>
10.1	Annette Brown, Company Secretary, presented the proposed dates for Board meeting and away days in 2025 outlined in appendix 1; clarifying that the June away day has been moved to May and will now take place after the May board meeting. The Board agreed that they were content with the dates.
10.2	<b>Decision: Approved the proposed dates for Board meeting and away days in 2025.</b>
10.3	Annette updated the Board with the proposed format and schedule for Board development visits which, if approved, will begin imminently. Board Members were content with the new format and the frequency of visits.
10.4	<b>Decision: The Board approved the relaunch and frequency of Board Development visits.</b>
10.5	The Board noted the venue for the Board away day and confirmed that they were satisfied with the comprehensive agenda.
10.6	The Board noted that all policies and documents that require board approval are now saved on the board teams channel.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Write Off Report – <i>*Please see private minutes</i></b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Audit and Performance Committee: Annual Report to the Board 2023/24</b>
12.1	Ali Ross, Chair of Audit and Performance Committee presented the Audit and Performance Committee Annual Report to the Board for noting.

12.2	Board Members noted the report.
<b>13.</b>	<b>Board Meeting Minutes Approval</b>
13.1	Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 1 August 2024 were proposed by David Knight, Vice Chair of Audit & Performance Committee and seconded by Gordon Laurie, Vice Chair, Board.
<b>14.</b>	<b>Action Tracker</b>
14.1	The Board noted the action tracker.
<b>15.</b>	<b>AOB</b>
15.1	Gordon Laurie, Vice Chair, asked if the Welfare Benefits team were supporting tenants specifically in respect of the change to winter fuel payments. Jenny Wallace confirmed that this was indeed the case.
<b>16.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>
16.1	Thursday 24 October, Special Board Meeting - 24 October (in person, Dalmahoy and Country Club, Kirknewton, Edinburgh)

***\*Items marked private have been excluded from these minutes due to at least one of the following reasons:***

- ***Confidentially sensitive information***
- ***Discussion on commercial interests***
- ***Person specific information***