



**MEETING of the
GOVERNING BODY OF
SCOTTISH VETERANS' RESIDENCES
On MS Teams, Friday 5 March 2021**

Record of Decisions

Present: George Lowder MBE, Chairman
 Rev Neil N Gardner (NG)
 Sue Bomphray (SB)
 Richard Edlmann (RE)
 Troy Johnson (TAJ)
 Tony Jones (TJ)
 Iain Lindsay (IL)
 Clive Masson (CM)
 Sqn Ldr Derek Morrison (DM)
 Pippa Shields (PS)
 Sandy Telfer (ST)
 Lt Lynsey Youngson (LY)

In attendance: Dave Roberts, Treasurer (DR)
 George Corbett (DCEO)
 Susie Hamilton, Head of External Relations (HER)
 Martin Nadin OBE, Chief Executive (CEO)
 Gayle Templeton, MagentaHR (GT)
 Susan Duthie, Company Secretary (Minutes) (CS)

Apologies: Maj Roddy Laing (RL)
 Jonathan Tweedie, Vice Chair (VC)

	Subject	Raised by	Additional Documents	Decision
1	Chairman's Introduction	Chairman		
	The Chairman confirmed that everyone was happy for the minutes to be recorded. CS will delete the recording after the minutes have been completed.			
2	Apologies	CS		
	As noted above. Maj Laing has now left the Army and will be removed from membership of the Governing Body.			

3	Election of new Governing Body Member	Chairman		Elected
<p>Chairman welcomed Sandy Telfer to the meeting. The CS had raised at the meeting in December that a member with housing association experience would be a welcome addition to the diversity of the governing body. RE knew ST and introduced him to CEO. Following further discussion with the Chair, CEO and RE, ST had kindly agreed to become a member.</p> <p>Everyone introduced themselves to ST online.</p> <p>ST brings experience from his previous role on the board of another large Housing Association and his legal background in property development.</p> <p>Election: Everyone agreed unanimously to the election of Sandy Telfer as member of the Governing Body.</p>				
4	Previous Minutes	SD	Minutes	Approved
<p>Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting of SVR held on 11 Dec 20 were reviewed and accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.</p> <p>Minutes accepted: Proposed by: S Bomphray Seconded by: C Masson</p>				
5	Action Log	Chairman		
<p>Actions:</p> <p>55. Risk Management – no update, c/f.</p> <p>63. Whitefoord House Bowling Green redevelopment – No reply has been received from The Beechgrove Garden’s production company, Tern TV. Now approaching George Anderson directly, thereafter Alan Titchmarsh. c/f</p> <p>66. Service updates, no update c/f.</p> <p>71. TV advertising – Paused, c/f</p> <p>72. New GBM with HA experience – ST confirmed today, action closed.</p> <p>73. Bellrock Close Review - CEO advised that an additional sheet has been added to the Action Log. It contains the 13 recommendations from the external review of Bellrock Close. The plan has still to be discussed with the Senior Management Team. The Staff Review will be a challenge and CEO would prefer to postpone commencing the review until Q3 when it can be done in person. SB agreed to the postponement of the Staff Review until after the lockdown.</p> <p>74. Art Club Business Plan – Action tracker updated with progress made since December; 2 trustees have been identified, the governing document is in place, OSCR application still to be submitted. Chairman asked if there was a deadline which there is not. CEO said most of the work done and will be brought back to the next meeting. HER confirmed that was achievable. Chairman asked if comfortable with support for governance. HER replied that Kenny Noble, Dr Marie Murphy, plus a 3rd person were all very enthusiastic to join as trustees.</p>				

6	Sub-Committee Reports	Chairs	Minutes	Approved
6.1	Audit & Risk Committee Last meeting 22 Jan 21			
6.12	TJ welcomed back TAJ and thanked RE for standing in whilst TAJ was absent. TJ noted that following the January meeting TIAA Ltd were appointed to provide the internal audit service and are proceeding with that according to the agreed schedule. RSM (Auditors) and TJ had had a conversation as part of the external audit. TJ confirmed external line of communication directly by Internal Audit and External Audit should it be necessary.			
6.2	Investment, Remuneration & Finance Committee Last meeting 1 Feb 21			
6.21	Chairman noted that Rathbones provided an investment brief at the last meeting. Whilst a bumpy year the financial position is reasonable. JT compared the target yield versus the actual compared over 15 years. The investment has performed satisfactorily but does not always achieve the target.			
6.22	IRFC still committed to holding a pay review by the end of June.			
6.23	Tenders for Investment Management have been requested. JT has sent letters to 3 providers, including Rathbones.			
	Afternote: All 3 providers provided tenders, which were reviewed and scored on 28 Apr 21. Given the close scoring, the tender panel decided it wished to interview the investment managers of each potential provider, who would have responsibility for SVR's portfolio. Interviews will take place on 4 Jun 21.			
6.3	Quality Committee Last meeting 10 Nov 20.			
6.31	Developed Quality Assurance Policy and framework. Care Inspectorate published its Quality Framework for Housing Support Services in Feb and will need to confirm the draft matches the CI framework.			
6.32	Internal Audit to examine the service provision, Level 3 review. Planned for 2022 or 2023. The level 2 reviews will be reinstated after COVID restrictions are lifted.			
6.33	PS thanked CEO and staff for hard work during this difficult time.			
6.34	SB raised that at her school board safeguarding was raised. CS added that the OSCR safeguarding policy is shared annually with the governing Body and that all members are registered on the Protecting Vulnerable Adults (PVG) Scheme with Disclosure Scotland.			
6.35	Chairman asked CEO if staff mental health and welfare was being looked at. CEO said that the operational managers are looking after their staff. Provision has been made for staff to use the in-house counsellors.			
7	Residence Committee Reports			
7.1	Bellrock Close – SB			

<p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p>	<p>Restrictions still prevent on site visits. All is ticking over not with-standing the outputs of the external report. CEO added that Void levels are reduced and doing better than the other residences. The residents are being innovative in activities and very competitive in a recently organised bake-off.</p> <p>Rosendael – CM CM also reported a light touch. The residents remain positive and no concerns. Chairman announced that the manager, Alison McQuillan, has applied for a new role as Head of Assisted Living for Bield Housing Association. AM will depart during April. Continuity will remain with the Depute Manager in place acting up. CEO, CM and GT will have a follow-up conversation and produce the preferred course of action to recruit a replacement whether it be internal or external recruitment. GT raised if the deputy would be a direct replacement or if he should be paid acting up allowance.</p> <p>Afternote: Following a meeting with CM, the Depute Manager confirmed they did not wish to be considered for the Manager’s appointment. They will be paid an acting up allowance. Advertisement of the role commenced on 31 Apr 21 with a 2-week window.</p> <p>Whitefoord House – NG NG has been monitoring the residence and keeping in touch with the Residence Manager. He has concerns for staff mental welfare and offers to help the manager with that where he can.</p> <p>The front wall by the entrance had been damaged by a delivery driver.</p> <p>Afternote: Now repaired.</p> <p>The Chairman updated that our Royal Patron, spoke with the Chairman and offered help. HRH praised the Residence Managers’ leadership which had led to no outbreaks of COVID. HRH had written individually to each Residence Manager to thank them, which was well received.</p>				
<p>8</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="331 1285 639 1357">Strategic Risk Register</th> <th data-bbox="639 1285 868 1357">CEO</th> <th data-bbox="868 1285 1155 1357">Risk Register</th> <th data-bbox="1155 1285 1439 1357"></th> </tr> </thead> </table>	Strategic Risk Register	CEO	Risk Register	
Strategic Risk Register	CEO	Risk Register			
	<p>There were several new items on the register and the version dated 23rd Feb was included in the pack.</p> <p>002/20: Operational – Infectious Disease Bi-weekly COVID testing is taking place for operational staff and they have all been offered the vaccination. 90% plus have taken up the offer. A considerable number have now had the second dose. The residents who are most at risk have also been offered the vaccination and none have refused.</p> <p>Chairman asked why some staff were refusing the vaccination offer. CEO noted that there are no more than a few affected, one in Rosendael and 2 or 3 in Whitefoord. GT added that it would be a struggle to force existing employees to take the vaccination however it could be included in new terms and conditions for new staff. It would be difficult to force people to be vaccinated especially where people are moving in and out.</p> <p>Chairman asked if these people were believing fake news. CEO has written to all staff to encourage them to accept the vaccination offer but if they do not, we must accept the risk.</p>				

No cases of Covid-19 had been reported in our residents before vaccines became available. Their availability provides an additional means to reduce infection and transmission. All residents, staff and visitors are requested to observe social distancing, additional hygiene measures, wear face coverings. Staff are tested bi-weekly by Lateral Flow testing.

GT thought that people may find the vaccination more acceptable as time passes and they see that there are no ill effects. At the same time as the prevalence of the virus goes down due to the vaccination the overall risk reduces.

SB agreed in continuing with best endeavours.

CM noted an acceptance rate of 90% is better than Health Boards own staff take up and it would be interesting to see how the Health Boards react to their own staff who refuse the vaccination.

Action: CEO to add a note of this conversation in the risk register.

CEO added that at the last Audit & Risk Committee the adverse impact on Residents' mental health was raised. This had been satisfied through in-house counselling and local NHS services which has met the increased levels requested.

001/19: Cyber Security

This risk was brought up from the Operational Risk Register given the increased number of incidents to provide assurance to the governing body. CEO circulates the monthly Cyber Scotland newsletter and attends Cyber Security events. SVR is taking part in the Cyber Exercise in a box on 31st March, sponsored by Scottish Business Resilience Centre. CEO is doing the Cyber Executive Education Programme with the Scottish Business Resilience Centre which is a series of 4 seminars in April and May.

The Digital Transformation Programme will provide more security with Multi-Factor Authentication. Also now added in another back-up contract with Datto.

Once DTP has completed, Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus will be revalidated to give an independent review of our systems.

001/21: Finance

This is a new risk to show the impact of COVID-19 on cashflow and reserves. The Risk has been defined as requiring treatment. Measures include:

- Offsetting operational costs through grants. HER has succeeded in securing grants, including recently £25k from the Communities Recovery Fund. HER has raised £146k so far;
- Pay restraint. The pay award for 2021 is to be reviewed by the end of June;
- Reviewing projects for their feasibility in terms of cost;
- Housing staff support residents to maximise benefit income;
- Investment, Remuneration and Finance Committee monitoring the investment portfolio to achieve growth in income;
- Achieving saving in procurement of services, such as new printer contract saving £19k, and DCEO has negotiated savings on the landscaping contract of £30k; and
- Advertising that SVR remains open, e.g. on the COBSEO website.

TAJ raised the use of Microsoft Decisions for the board pack which would be cheaper. CS will trial MD on one of the committees and bring back the result.

<p>GC percentage rent increases for 2021 included additional catering and staff costs relating to COVID-19. Voids levels higher during lockdown, also less travel during lockdown out with local boundaries.</p> <p>CEO is looking into the potential of Social Care subsidies to offset the increase in void levels due to COVID.</p> <p>Chairman asked if were getting funding via COBSEO. CEO confirmed that we were applying for all opportunities. Chairman thought people were still able to move home under the restrictions so what is preventing people coming in from outside the local area.</p> <p>Action: Chairman asked CEO to look at why people were not coming in to Whitefoord House from outside Edinburgh. Speak to LAs and their housing officers.</p> <p>We continue to insist on new residents self-isolating for at least 10 days and that this may dissuade them.</p> <p>Chairman asked if there was a value against the costs of COVID-19. We made provision for it last year. DR said that we could quantify it. £85k can be directly attributable to costs and then additional staff and catering costs of approx. £50k on top. Last year most of this was covered by £120k of grant funding. Chairman stated that this left a £15k shortfall and this year is still to be counted. CEO believes that we are about breaking even.</p> <p>004/19: Internal Audit</p> <p>The first IA report is to be presented before this risk is closed. The programme for the next 3 years has been confirmed.</p>				
9	Treasurer's Report	DR	Reports	
9.1	<p>The quarterly accounts are also the draft year end accounts to 31st December and show a surplus of £37k which is £87k worse than budget. Net £430k made on investments. End of year £465k surplus against a budget of £124k</p>			
9.2	<p>Voids worse than budget, especially Whitefoord. Maintenance below budget but a lot of planned work was deferred into 2021 because of Covid-19 restrictions. Catering ahead of budget. Additional staff costs.</p>			
9.3	<p>£120k in for COVID fund £180k total rest of restricted donations Unrestricted less this year.</p>			
9.4	<p>Investment income was less than budget. £8m in investment portfolio £1m in bank £17.8m total balanced sheet total</p>			
9.5	<p>Operationally behind budget but investment income brought it back to show a healthy Balance Sheet.</p>			
10	SVR Business Plan 2021	CEO	Note	

10.1	CEO circulated the note out-with the board pack. This sought to delay the development of the business plan to Q3. CEO is awaiting the results of the condition surveys (delayed by lockdown). The contractors have been able to review Whitefoord House and Rosendael, still to complete Bellrock Close and Gilmerton flats.		
10.2	Without the condition surveys it will be difficult to develop a business plan to look forward 30 years, as required by SHR.		
10.3	Some indicative costings from aspects of the surveys that have been completed:£1.03m over 30 years on external work for WFH £3.3m over 30 years on internal work for WFH Decision: All agreed to delay the requirement and produce the business plan in Q3.		
11	Sustainability Strategy	CEO	
11.1	CEO researching what the government targets will mean to SVR. UK government target is net zero emissions by 2045. That is within the 30-year business plan horizon.		
11.2	Scot Gov aim is to reduce to 75% by 2030. Need to recognise the sustainability target in the business plan.		
11.3	Technology will not provide the answer by itself. Needs a change in culture. This will require a strategy and plan of activity.		
11.4	CEO wants SVR to become intelligent consumers. We do not know our current carbon footprint. There is a Carbon Literacy project lead in Scotland by Keep Scotland Beautiful. CEO wants to provide training to staff to become carbon literate, this involves 8hrs of e-learning. The goal is to become a carbon literate accredited organisation by the end of this year. This will enable more knowledgeable consultation with agencies to progress changes.		
11.5	CEO to design strategy and campaign plan and start to execute what needs done. Recognise sustainability within our business plan and this will become increasingly important.		
11.6	Chairman believes closer horizon than 24 years. Edinburgh aim for 0% by 2030. Which will be very difficult to meet. Glasgow CC are also aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030 and Dundee CC is aiming for a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.		
11.7	ST added that Historic Environment Scotland are looking at the same issues and the carbon footprint of their historic buildings to establish a baseline position to show how they could improve.		
11.8	Chairman asked if the cost of training is in the budget. CEO felt it depended if he uses e-learning or a trainer. Bronze level accreditation cost £500 with the training costs on top. £15k is budgeted for sustainability consultancy this year and not yet spent.		
11.9	Chairman added that it was unfortunate that we are trying to be sustainable but using plastic cutlery.		

11.10	CEO updated on the electrical vehicle charging points. One at each site, hopefully this year. Grant achieved for 50% of the costs. Thereafter change to an electric car fleet.		
12	CEO's Report	CEO	Report
12.1	Operationally, void levels are the key area of focus especially Whitefoord House. Level 4 lockdown, people not travelling out-with the Local Authority and a 10-day quarantine.		
12.11	At the last COBSEO housing meeting; Stoll, Haig, Launchpad all had higher levels of voids than expected. We will see the impact when hotel accommodation funding stops - £5m cut in homeless support in Edinburgh budget.		
12.12	Residences remain COVID-19 free, however, the CEO has noted that both staff and residents have become fatigued by the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. Chairman asked if there is anything more than can be done. CEO believes everyone is looking forward to meeting in person in preference to virtual meetings which has reached maximum tolerance.		
12.2	DCEO		
12.21	Revised plans for Rosendael Lodge including the latest building control requirements. Very complex conversion. Building control changed decision extending the time lines. The property meets current EESSH requirements and planning for EESSH 2 (2032) whilst property empty, eg ground source heat pumps. Gas to electric – increased cost to tenants for improved carbon footprint.		
12.22	It is hoped that by end of April non-essential work can recommence in properties.		
12.23	Since reporting the CEC framework for homeless accommodation has a new additional framework for temporary accommodation which may supersede the homeless framework. We need to complete a single procurement document – preparing this now.		
12.3	Head of External Relations		
12.31	HER continues to look for opportunities for fund raising as funds open up. The Armed Forces Community Trust is opening another fund in April.		
12.32	New website is designed, not yet released. Will publish in advance of the next meeting. HER shared the new website on screen. The homepage has one of the new video clips. Designed to be mobile friendly. New 'Text Donate' service included. Easier access to view and upload FOI related information. Easier for people to see how to apply for accommodation. Tenanted properties are shown under the heading of 'Our Flats.' Chairman suggested replacing the phrase ' <i>Where We Work</i> ' with ' <i>Where We Are</i> '		
12.33	HER will send link to all to look at.		
12.4	Company Secretary		
12.41	PVG Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme. The new Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 has been enacted however Disclosure Scotland will not be ready to implement it until late 2021.		

12.42	<p>There will be several changes including one for which a decision is requested from the Governing Body. Currently for PVG applications all regulated staff and volunteers (60 in total) are registered for work with adults, including 16 – 18 year-olds who are treated as adults in our service.</p> <p>If SVR wishes to continue taking in veterans under 18 years of age, the new Act will require anyone working with children, to include 16–18 year-olds, to be registered for work with children. Or SVR stops taking in veterans under 18.</p>			
12.43	<p>PS suggested taking legal advice regards accommodating 17-year-old. Concerned that we would potentially have children living amongst adults.</p> <p>Chairman stated that although we do not accommodate many 16 –18-year-olds we would not want to turn anyone away in need.</p> <p>DCEO added that the definition of a veteran is anyone who has served at least one day and we would have to change that if we change the age limit.</p> <p>Action: CS to bring back with further information on legal position and what are other similar organisations doing.</p>			
13	KPI's	CEO	Report	
13.1	The usual report was shared. A workshop was held with the SMT on KPIs and the process will be automated during this year.			
13.2	In addition to the draft Balanced Score Card circulated in 2019. CEO will draft proposals and bring back to the Governing Body. Important to report meaningful and objective measures.			
13.3	Chairman explained for benefit of ST that the KPIs are reported using an historic format. It was decided that the new Information Management system will host the reporting mechanism.			
14	Service Updates			
14.1	Royal Navy – LY			
14.11	Op RESCRIPT, the military response to COVID-19, now has the largest number of mobilised personnel on a non-war footing. 460 are deployed in Scotland. RN taking a cautious approach to any engagement events. Looking at the REMT and Op STRIKE WARRIOR.			
14.12	The AF Firm Base Conference taking place on 17 Mar. (SVR will attend). Veterans Scotland and transition activity. AF Covenant legislation.			
14.13	Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) conference 23/24 Mar for transition of service personnel and families.			
14.2	Army			
14.21	No update as Maj Laing has left his post; the replacement will arrive in July. CEO is to thank 51st Infantry Brigade and HQ Scotland for Maj Laing's contribution to SVR.			
14.3	Royal Air Force – DM			

14.31	RAF Lossiemouth continues to expand. 5 out of the 9 RAF Poseidon aircraft are on site. These and the establishing of the UK Space Command launch site will see service personnel will increase by 750 to 1,000 within 2 years.
14.32	Project Astra to review RAF offer. Simplifying 60 trade groups to be aligned into 11 branches. Changes to Terms & Conditions of service to allow more flexibility in contracts which is all aimed to increase the average length of service to 12 – 16 years in the long-term.
14.33	Looking to double RAF reserve numbers by 2030. Highlighted ‘Inside Air’ podcast series. Focus on well-being for personnel and work with charities. Chairman asked if retention was holding up. DM and LY did not have the figures but believe it to be at a steady state.
14.4	Merchant Navy – IL
14.41	Nautilus have taken on 2 new case workers who will aid merchant and retired Royal Navy personnel. £1.1m raised in 2020. £2m set aside for COVID, spent £1.4m so far. Chairman asked IL to advise the new case workers about SVR.
15	AOB There was no other business and the meeting was concluded.
16	DONM – Friday, 28 May 21, 11.00am, Microsoft Teams