



**MEETING of the
GOVERNING BODY OF
SCOTTISH VETERANS' RESIDENCES
On MS Teams, Friday 28 May 2021**

Record of Decisions

Present: George Lowder MBE, Chairman
Jonathan Tweedie, Vice Chair (VC)
Sue Bomphray (SB)
Richard Edlmann (RE)
Troy Johnson (TAJ)
Tony Jones (TJ)
Iain Lindsay (IL)
Clive Masson (CM)
Sqn Ldr Derek Morrison (DM)
Sandy Telfer (ST)
Lt Lynsey Youngson (LY)

In attendance: Jeremy Chittleburgh, Treasurer (JC)
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: Rev Neil N Gardner (NG)
Pippa Shields (PS)

	Subject	Raised by	Additional Documents	Decision
1	Chairman's Introduction	Chairman		
	The Chairman acknowledged that an enormous amount of work has continued to keep Residents, Tenants and staff safe. This has tested our business continuity. Chairman is hugely grateful to all who have kept the business going and the veterans safe and well in challenging conditions. It is a measure of our resilience.			
2	Apologies	CS		
	As noted above. Pippa Shields has today retired from the Governing Body.			
3	Previous Minutes	SD	Minutes	Approved
	Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting of SVR held on 5 Mar 21 were reviewed and accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.			

	Minutes accepted: Proposed by: S Bomphray Seconded by: R Edlmann		
4	Action Log	Chairman	
	<p>Actions:</p> <p>55. Risk Management Policy – staff will attend IOSH courses. CEO waiting for ACOSVO LinkedIn Members Group to suggest approved suppliers. c/f.</p> <p>63. Whitefoord House Bowling Green redevelopment – Referred to in CEO Report. c/f</p> <p>66. Service updates, no update c/f.</p> <p>71. TV advertising – Paused, c/f</p> <p>73. Bellrock Close Review – CEO updated separately.</p> <p>74. Art Club Business Plan – Action tracker updated with progress. Referred to in Srl 11.</p> <p>75. Voids – CEO advised that there was a reticence to travel during lockdown and the requirement to isolate on arrival at SVR. There has been an upturn in applications and enquiries since further restrictions have been lifted.</p> <p>76. Disclosure Act – research completed on the effect on accommodating 16 – 18 year olds. There is no change. Referred to in Srl 10.41. Close</p> <p>Bellrock Close Review Action List</p> <p>1 & 2 are now on the Operational Risk Register</p> <p>9. Metrics – CEO meeting with Riverside and Launchpad who carry out similar work. Meeting on 2 Jun to look at appropriate metrics.</p> <p>13. Targets – CEO posed the question <i>“Is it appropriate to set targets for transition to employment and independent living.”</i> CEO feels that it would be difficult to set meaningful targets, not all residents are employable or able to transition to independent living. Targets should be on a best endeavours basis rather than achieving a fixed target. TJ does not feel that targets reflect the needs of the individual and would not be helpful. Chairman referred back to the Strategy Day held (6 Mar 19) where it was agreed that targets could be set where appropriate, acknowledging that for some residents, targets would not be possible. CEO wants to get the balance right and is working with other third-sector providers to formalise a pathway for employment. Some residents have found employment but not through a structured route. Now that the COVID-19 restrictions are lifting the Parliamentary All-Party Group for Veterans and the Armed Forces will reconvene. Its scope will cover Veterans’ employment. It may be appropriate to set targets for employment but not for transition, which should have a more formal pathway rather than a rigid target. SB added that there are barriers to taking up employment as the resident will lose their Housing Benefit and then have to move out. It will be interesting to see if any changes will be made by ScotGov to the benefit system.</p>		

	<p>DCEO added that for people in supported accommodation, ScotGov's priority is Housing First, to keep people supported in permanent homes. Rapid Rehousing Transition plans are expected from all LAs to show how they will reduce use of supported accommodation. There is pressure to reduce the use of supported accommodation which is part of the HARSAG and ScotGov proposals. SVR currently has an Employment Rent Relief scheme which tapers the rent increase over 12 weeks to aid a smooth transition. SVR also works with SSAFA for help with furnishings.</p> <p>Chairman asked about the staff dynamics action 3 – CEO replied that it was difficult to get to the bottom of the issue without carrying this out in person. Staff dynamics have been fundamental to the challenges since the opening of Bellrock Close. The Bellrock Close Manager has given notice of her retirement which will take effect in July. The challenges of running the residence during COVID has left PM exhausted and has brought forward her retirement date from 2023. A decision needs to be made on whether to review the staff dynamics after the appointment of PM's successor or before. There is a wider challenge around recruitment in the health and social care sector as we come out of COVID and some people may retire early from the sector. Chairman acknowledged the huge effort to keep the residences open and the challenges around recruitment.</p> <p>CEO added that a Staff Resilience Survey is being conducted to provide evidence to the Governing Body as to how the staff are coping and how they judge the support measures. Chairman also asked about the recruitment for the new Manager at Rosendael. CEO has received 4 applications and will take 2 forward. The extended closing date is 31 May. Chairman asked if there is a fall back plan for Bellrock Close if there is a risk of not finding a suitable replacement. GT added that it is a difficult market and perhaps SVR should look at headhunting. Chairman wants the staff dynamics piece to be progressed as soon as is possible. SB felt it would be good to be proactive and can start mapping now how any gap would be covered in the interim. The remainder of the action list serials have later completion dates.</p>			
5	ARC to SHR	CS	Draft report and summary	Approved
5.1	CS advised that the full ARC report was sent out in the pack. Some metrics had been updated and republished in the final pack.			
5.2	Since the pack was published the final report from the external research company used to carry out the tenants' and residents' survey has been received. It provides greater detail and it will be discussed with the senior management team. The survey results form part of the ARC return.			
5.3	<p>CS highlighted key statistics from the executive summary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst there was zero senior management turnover up to end of March, the figure for other staff turnover was higher than previous years at 23%. • Days lost through sickness has reduced significantly to 2.1% • Number of people supported is reduced against previous years at 69. This also comes through on the report in increased voids. Comments have been added to reflect the significant effect COVID-19 has had on resident in-take. It was noted that the Regulator expects all services to have been affected. • Tenants satisfied with the overall service has gone up from 80% to 84%. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants satisfied with landlords keeping them informed remained the same at 85%. • Tenants satisfaction with opportunities to participate has gone down from 89% to 77%. Whilst there have been less opportunities for face to face participation during the pandemic, communications by other means have continued. The research company advised that this question has gone down across all their other HA clients. • 100% of stock meets SHQS requirements. • The questions relating to EESSH (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) are now included in the one ARC report whereas they formed 2 separate reports in previous years. • Satisfaction with their home has gone down slightly from 91% to 89%. • Repairs completed right first time has gone up. COVID restrictions will have reduced the overall number of repairs however emergency repairs were still able to be carried out. The score has increased from 87% to 94%. • Time taken increased slightly to 3.6hrs. • Average length of time taken is up from 3.3 to 5.75 days which is still well within the recommended time scale. • 100% achievement of gas safety checks. • Tenants satisfied with repairs down from 88% to 83%. • The report specifies which locations have issues that bring the average scores down. • Value for money has increased from 75% to 82%. • The report shows that the re-let time has increased due to the increase in void rooms. • All complaints have been dealt with within the recommended timescales. • The response rate for the survey has gone up to 72% which is higher than normal. Last year's survey was halted due to COVID however it is normally carried out face to face. This year due to the restrictions it was carried out using telephone, online and postal forms. <p>Chairman opened up to questions or comments from the Governing Body.</p> <p>DECISION: The Governing Body approved CEO to submit the ARC to SHR on their behalf.</p>				
6	OOB Decision Ratification	CEO	Brief	Approved
6.1	CEO explained that this relates to a planned maintenance contract issue. An offer was received from ECG, our current maintenance provider, to extend the contract with the current pricing structure for a further 2 years.			
6.2	The briefing note was sent out to the Governing Body Members explaining the total cost over the 2 years of £212k including VAT. Market prices are rising at the moment. The note confirmed the recommendation by our consultant who supports the offer from ECG.			
DECISION: This decision was approved by the Governing Body OOB and all now agreed to ratify the decision.				
7	Sub-Committee Reports	Chairs	Minutes	Approved
7.1	Audit & Risk Committee Last meeting 23 April			

7.11	<p>TJ updated that the external audit report was presented by RSM. It was a clean audit report with nothing material found.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting show at 4.19 the Committee recommended the audit for approval to the GB.</p> <p>7.13 the committee recommended retaining the auditors, RSM, for another year thereafter retender for auditing services for 2022.</p>
7.12	<p>First external internal audit by TIAA is in course.</p>
7.13	<p>Chairman added that time was spent on the Risk Register and focusing on the COVID risk. TJ assured the GBM that time is spent on the risks at the committee.</p>
7.2	<p>Quality Committee Last meeting 13 Apr</p>
7.21	<p>CEO advised that the key items were CS briefing on the new complaints procedure, it had been agreed to adopt the SPSO Model Complaints Handling Procedure. This included a decision not to accept complaints by social media as SVR is not digitally mature and do not monitor social media 24/7.</p>
7.22	<p>CS briefed on the new Equalities requirements from SHR. Need to record and hold protected characteristics. Includes staff, residents, tenants and volunteers including the Governing Body Members. SHR do not need to see but compliance is to be disclosed in the AAS.</p>
7.23	<p>CEO will update the infection control policy.</p>
7.3	<p>Investment, Remuneration & Finance Committee Last meeting 10May</p>
7.31	<p>CEO to complete the minutes.</p>
7.32	<p>Chairman received update from Rathbones. Investment portfolio rebounded well from the COVID-19 fall. The Risk level is 4 on a scale of 1 – 6.</p>
7.33	<p>Income is less as companies are not paying or are reducing dividends.</p>
7.34	<p>Loss of revenue from voids £75k in Q1.</p>
7.35	<p>The Committee recommended to the Governing Body that a pay increase of 2% be awarded to staff, except for those on the Real Living Wage, wef 1 Jul.</p> <p>Decision: Governing Body agreed that a pay increase of 2% be awarded to staff, not on the Real Living Wage, wef 1 Jul.</p>
7.36	<p>Review of investment management tenders from 3 companies showed little to choose between them. Decision to interview all 3 on 4 Jun.</p>
7.37	<p>JC added that voids, especially in Whitefoord House, were high causing income to be behind by £75k over the first quarter. There has also been lower expenditure as items have been delayed due to COVID restrictions.</p>
7.38	<p>There is a strong cashflow, the organisation is cash positive and continues to be cash generating.</p>
7.39	<p>The cost of the pay rise will be £30k and is affordable within means for this year.</p>

7.40	DCEO advised that the rent revenue declared to councils includes an assumption of a 1% pay rise in January. Housing Benefit has been received so they would need to be advised if a pay rise was not awarded in 2021.		
7.41	CEO reminded that in Whitefoord House & Rosendael up to 10% of civilians can be taken through an arrangement with the councils. CEO suggested that this figure is increased, even on a temporary basis. The risk is potentially reputational as we are a veterans charity, but it would mitigate the void issues.		
7.41	Chairman believes it should be extended across all sites. This solution caters the charity for the future long term financial security. TJ agrees that it is not inconsistent with its objects as the income allows SVR to continue to operate.		
	ACTION: CEO and DCEO for Bellrock, Neil Stewart for Rosendael, KSB for Whitefoord House to approach respective councils to increase number of civilians accommodated.		
8	Residence Committee Reports		
8.1	Bellrock Close – SB A resident had passed away recently. One resident intimated that he wanted raise a complaint to the Governing Body. CEO referred the complainant to SB but neither CEO nor SB have heard anything further. CEO added that there was a wobbly period with 2 challenging residents who have now left.		
8.2	Rosendael – CM CM has met with Neil Stewart (NS) Deputy Manager at Rosendael who is now acting as Interim Manager. CEO has also been up to Rosendael in the last 3 weeks and feels that NS is handling Rosendael well and is briefing CEO appropriately. CEO to convey GB thanks to NS. CM hopes to have the next residents committee in June in person either inside or in the garden.		
8.3	Whitefoord House CS added an update from NG that he hopes to start face-to-face residents meetings from June. Also work on the summer house has been delayed due to material costs and delays.		
9	Treasurer’s Report	JC	Reports
	JC had nothing further to add to his earlier comments in srl 7.		
10	CEO Report	CEO	Report
10.1	High void levels at Whitefoord House. There are signs of a recovery as more referrals and enquiries are being received.		
10.11	Significant staff turnover. One manager left and one has submitted notice. New Executive Office Administrator, Joanna Milne, is now in place. A new Business Intelligence Analyst was selected but later rejected due to lack of transparency, leaving the post still vacant.		
10.12	Staff shortages, sickness and hospital treatment have led to staff working very hard and CEO thanked the SMT for maintaining standards and levels of support.		

10.13	<p>Whitefoord House Bowling Green</p> <p>No response from George Anderson or the Beechgrove Garden team. CEO has written to Alan Titchmarsh. If no reply is received then CEO will engage a partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens. Their current Director is an ex Royal Marine.</p> <p>Secretary's Afternote: After discussion between Chair and CEO regards sustainability and carbon net zero, it was felt that the bowling green site may be required as a location for an alternative heating source. Therefore the Garden project will potentially be paused, subject to ratification by the GB.</p>
10.14	<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>
10.2	<p>DCEO Report</p> <p>Condition surveys have been completed for all properties except Bellrock Close due to the area being in Level 3 restrictions. All surveys show properties to be in good condition and compliant with SHQS.</p>
10.21	<p>Rosendael Lodge</p> <p>The Building warrant has still not yet been received. The QS and architect were asked to revise the cost plan and this had an additional £66k to the original cost estimate. This is due to requirements by Building Control for additional compartmentation and acoustic work between flats and into the roof space plus increased fire protection. Additional costs in labour and materials added another £27k.</p> <p>The estimate now totals £291k inc VAT and fees.</p> <p>DCEO and CEO no longer believe that this project represents value for money with an approximate cost of £100k per one bedroom flat. One bedroom flats cost around £60 - £80k in Dundee.</p> <p>There are long orders for materials with timber now scarce and therefore increasingly expensive. There are other options for the use of the Lodge that were evaluated previously.</p> <p>Chairman asked for comments.</p> <p>TJ thought the increase in material supplies might be COVID related and therefore temporary.</p> <p>RE added that construction costs are up across the industry, it should be temporary, possibly 4 – 6 months.</p> <p>Chairman asked if the property is still habitable.</p> <p>£56k of the increased costs are to meet building control and are not COVID related. The total is £250k if the material increase is taken out.</p> <p>DECISION: GB agreed not to proceed with the conversion at this time.</p> <p>Chairman suggested put it back on the rental market. DCEO reminded that as an RSL we cannot do Short Secure Tenancies which effectively means a life tenancy. Chairman noted that we have previously looked at the options before reaching the decision to convert but this needs to be refreshed.</p> <p>ACTION: DCEO to bring back options paper and recommendation for the use of the Rosendael Lodge</p>

10.22	Whitefoord Progress has been made with the window repairs but is now paused as the existing materials have been used and there are delays in sourcing new material supplies. The fire alarm upgrade has been completed for the Whitefoord flats.
10.23	Referrals 6 for Whitefoord House and 1 for Rosendael last week.
10.3	Head of External Relations Approval received for funds from the Scottish Veterans In Reach Project for Rosendael.
10.31	Funding received for half the cost of the electric vehicle charging points. HER has applied to Blackrock for the other half of the cost.
10.32	There has been a rise in donations online.
10.33	Good press coverage of Rosendael received in The Courier.
10.34	Coverage received by Royal British Legion Industries who stopped off at Whitefoord House during their <i>'Tommy's Race to Victory'</i> cycling event.
10.35	Freedom Of Information There were 6 FOI requests. One resident has put in repeated Subject Access Requests which will involve the DPO and may go to the ICO.
10.4	Company Secretary
10.41	Disclosure Act 2020 CS contacted the Care Inspectorate regarding the changes to classification of under 18 year olds under the new Act. They are content SVR continues to take 16 – 18 year olds as long as managers let them know when we have one in residence.
10.42	Social Care Payment The funds have not yet been received. CS in contact with ScotGov to resolve the delay. Secretary's Note: The funds were received on 14 Jul and paid to staff on 30 Jul.
11	Bellrock Art Club HER
11.1	2 Trustees have signed up to the new SCIO application. Dr Maria Murphy a clinical psychologist and Kenny Noble a local businessman and volunteer for SVR. HER is meeting with the 2 trustees and a potential 3 rd trustee Brian McPhee, owner of an electrical contracting business, on 31 May to review the founding documents. Attending will be a resident of Bellrock who has set-up a SCIO in the past and can provide lived experience. Also attending will be Emily, a volunteer fundraiser for the SCIO.
11.2	The draft founding documents include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Operational/Business Plan based on the GCVS model (Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector) • Risk Register based on the UK Government model for charities. • Income and Expenditure forecast

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travellers Insurance Quotes (£700 standalone, £100 under SVR's insurance)
11.3	<p>It will take around 3 months for OSCR to review the application form. HER has bid for funds of £15k which will be decided in June. £500 has already been received from the Glasgow Art Fund and this is in a separate restricted fund. Any remaining funding balance to be transferred to the SCIO in due course.</p>
11.4	<p>A Treasurer will need to be appointed. Kenny Noble has a name to approach.</p>
11.5	<p>The Art Club is not fully open due to the location being under Tier 3 restrictions. Allan Clarke is still signing up users. Members of the Governing Body who wish to visit, when it is safe to do so, will be warmly welcomed.</p>
11.6	<p>HER proposes to formalise a partnership between the SCIO and SVR with a Memorandum of Understanding to provide some protection and management risk for the SCIO.</p>
11.7	<p>Chairman asked if it was a SCIO yet. HER confirmed not yet.</p>
11.8	<p>Chairman asked how much SVR is paying. HER confirmed that SVR are covering all costs for the club at the moment. Rent and utilities of £6,780pa. Our insurance is covering essential Health & Safety work to the fire detection system.</p>
11.9	<p>Chairman noted that SVR is out of pocket in continuing to run the Art Club but once the SCIO is established SVR will hand-over all responsibility to the SCIO.</p>
11.10	<p>Chairman asked if the business case is viable. HER confirms that it is and that there is demand for their services. SVR has been successful in getting funds on its behalf. The SCIO would be able to apply to funds on their own that they can no longer apply for as part of SVR.</p>
11.11	<p>Chairman remains concerned of the reputational risk if we set up the SCIO and it fails.</p>
11.12	<p>HER advised that there is a reputational risk either way. HER confident it will succeed as a small grass roots organisation. Running an Art Club is not part of SVR's business.</p>
11.13	<p>The AFCT (Armed Forces Covenant Trust) has recently funded a similar organisation. SVR's turnover prevents access by The Art Club to this and similar funds. Other partners are looking to work alongside them such as the Coming Home Centre and the Reid Macewen Activities Centre. If it does not succeed as an independent charity then it could be questioned why we were supporting it within SVR.</p>
11.14	<p>CEO noted there is a risk but HER's work developing the business plan and finding appropriate trustees gives an auditable record of setting it up for success and mitigates the risk. It is time to spin it off, it is getting too big to remain within SVR and we have prepared it for success.</p>
	<p>DECISION: The Governing Body agreed to support The Art Club being spun off as a SCIO in its own right.</p>

12	Sustainability	CEO	Brief	
<p>a) CEO funding available for Vehicle Charging Points and aims to have them in place this year. CEO will develop policy for covering charging and payments for staff and visitors.</p> <p>b) Potential for funding in partnership with EWHT (Edinburgh World Heritage Trust). They are keen to work with SVR and Whitefoord House is a good fit with their aims.</p> <p>c) Hydraulic and Plant Optimisation, CEO completed a question set and has passed on their replies to that question set to our maintenance company who will now review the responses to see if it is worth doing.</p> <p>d) Carbon literacy, an aspiration for this year for some members of staff to complete carbon literacy training and achieve Bronze Accreditation with the Carbon Literacy Project.</p>				
13	Strategic Risk Register	CEO	Risk Register	
<p>002/20: Operational – Infectious Disease Making amendments and taking a cautious approach on lifting restrictions.</p> <p>001/19: Cyber Security SBRC (Scottish Business Resilience Centre) Cyber exercise and report to follow. CEO also completed the SBRC Cyber Executive Programme, slides to follow.</p> <p>001/21: Finance IRFC reviewed the financial impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>002/19 Operational Business Continuity Audited by TIAA and draft report received. TIAA confirm SVR currently achieves a reasonable level of assurance. CEO has replied to TIAA, the report and reply will be sent to the Audit & Risk Committee.</p> <p>004/19: Internal Audit The first IA report is to be presented before this risk is closed. The programme for the next 3 years has been confirmed.</p> <p>Operational Risk Register 001/21 Lone Working Risk This risk was included as a result of the Bellrock Close review. Currently the risk impact is minor and therefore adequately mitigated by the arrangements in place now.</p> <p>Operational Risk Register 002/21 Resident Drug Use Risk level is High. CEO has set out the actions that need to be taken. It is possible that a resident could take drugs with a fatal (catastrophic) outcome. This may have been the cause of death of a tenant. Not a risk we can tolerate at its current level and it must be reduced to a level that is tolerable.</p> <p>Decision: GBM approved adding those 2 new risks to the SRR, with no dissent.</p>				

14	KPI's	CEO	Report	
14.1	The standard pack was shared. CEO working with Riverside to develop appropriate metrics for the supported HAs.			
14.2	Chairman asked if the complaint at Bellrock was likely to materialise. CEO spoke to the resident who was voluble at the time but nothing heard in the last few weeks so unless he has taken it directly to the CI or SPSO it is unlikely to materialise.			
15	Service Updates			
15.1	Royal Navy – LY			
15.11	Changes at Naval Regional Command with new interim Chief of Staff, Lt Cdr Si Giles in place until the permanent COS Lt Col Pete Kemp arrives in August along with the new NRC Brig Muddiman who will replace Capt Chris Smith RN.			
15.12	Engagement with Veterans increases as we re-emerge from COVID and move to face-to-face engagements.			
15.13	Regions are reducing from 6 to 3 and Scotland and NI will merge with North England.			
15.14	Recruiting targets have been increased by 500. Exit numbers are steady.			
15.15	OP RESCRIPT remains ongoing with reducing commitment.			
15.16	RFEA continues to offer spousal support.			
15.17	Relationship with NHS - Op Courage - only applicable to England and Wales. Merged 3 services to create the Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service. Also in England Veteran Friendly GP practices working with NHS. Veterans 1 st Point and NHS are the equivalent in Scotland.			
15.2	Royal Air Force - DM			
15.21	Looking at the future resettlement of personnel, DM advised that it is difficult to get the information in order to predict numbers and locations. CTP do not answer specific questions but have sent out their annual statistics.			
RAF numbers are not broken down into regions however 20% of leavers are in Scotland. There were fewer during COVID although having RAF service is seen as desirable to employers. There is 4% unemployment of Service Leavers in the RAF. 85% of leavers go into employment. 11% are either retired, students or unemployed.				
15.3	Merchant Navy - IL			
15.31	MN have received extensions to both the COVID fund and the re-training bursary programme. £1.4m raised last year (£250k raised so far this year).			
15.32	Merchant Navy Day will be held on 3 Sep. IL looking to arrange an event on a tall ship.			
15.33	2 new case workers for NE England and Cardiff who will also support Royal Navy. Port Welfare includes Relate for family breakdowns.			

15.4	RE suggested moving the Service updates further up the agenda to let them leave. LY and DM are happy to stay and gain awareness. IL comfortable either way.
16	<p>AOB</p> <p>Chairman recognised that there is a lot of work going on with added staff and governance changes. The hard work by staff on behalf of residents and tenants to provide the service and keep people safe is recognised and appreciated.</p> <p>There was no other business and the meeting was concluded.</p>
17	DONM – Friday, 3 Sept 21, 12.00 - 2pm, Microsoft Teams and Whiteford