



**MEETING of the
GOVERNING BODY OF
SCOTTISH VETERANS' RESIDENCES
SVR Boardroom and MS Teams on Monday 23rd May 2022**

Record of Decisions

Present: George Lowder MBE, Chairman – Present
Sue Bomphray (SB) – Online
Richard Edlmann (RE) – Online
Lt Ray Gidney RN (RG) – Online
Troy Johnson (TRJ) – Online
Tony Jones QC (TJ) – Online
Sqn Leader Derek Morrison – Online
Isla Tabberer (IMT) – Online
Sandy Telfer (ST) – Online
Jonathan Tweedie, Vice-Chairman (VC) – Online

In attendance: Jeremy Chittleburgh, Treasurer (JC) – Present
George Corbett, Depute CEO (DCEO) – Present
Susie Hamilton, Head of External Relations (HER) – Present
Archie Park, Executive Office Administrator (EOA) – Present
Martin Nadin OBE, Chief Executive (CEO) – Present (Minutes)

Apologies: Rev Neil N Gardner (NG)
Iain Lindsay (IL)
Clive Masson (CM)
Maj Christian Taylor (CT)
Gayle Templeton, HR Consultant, (GT)

	Subject	Raised by	Additional Documents	Decision
1	Chairman's Introduction	Chairman		
1.1	Having confirmed that attendees were content to continue on directly from the AGM, the Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He noted that we were quite far into the year. He thanked the CEO and Management Team for getting SVR to its current position in good order and with relatively good health and safety outcomes; this was a huge achievement, and although not yet completely clear of Covid-19, it felt like were on the road to recovery. He asked that his thanks were passed on to the staff.			
2	Apologies	CEO		Noted
	Apologies had been received from Rev Neil N Gardner, Iain Lindsay, Clive Masson. Maj Christian Taylor, and Gayle Templeton. The CEO confirmed that the meeting was quorate.			

3	Previous Minutes	Chairman	Draft Minutes 11 Mar 22	Approved
	<p>Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting of SVR held on 11th March 2022 were reviewed and accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, noting that Item 16 should be renumbered to 15, and the date of the next meeting had been set as the 23rd and not 25th May. There were no matters arising.</p> <p>Minutes accepted: Proposed by: Tony Jones Seconded by: Richard Edlmann</p>			
4	Action Log	Chairman	Action Log	Noted
4.1	<p>The Chief Exec reviewed progress against each serial of the Governing Body's Action Log:</p> <p>Ser 55. Risk Management Training. – All Managers have completed Risk Management training. Audit & Risk Committee Members confirmed agreement for removal from the tracker.</p> <p>Ser 71. Two animations remain available for broadcast at a suitable time. It was agreed that the Falklands themed animation was to be used on social media over the Falklands 40th Anniversary period. 2nd animation was to be held and used during the latter quarter of the year. Chairman requested that Governing Body members and SMT use the the animations via their own social media networks.</p> <p>Ser 75. Employee Support Service/Assistance Programme – Chief Exec confirmed he had made enquiries of a number of providers. He explained that only Life Works provided a programme that wasn't linked to corporate insurance, noting that SVR already had extensive corporate insurance cover for staff, which included a number of benefits. He set out the costs of the Life Works package being offered and confirmed that an initial contract would be for 36 months. Following discussion amongst the Governing Body during which legal liability, benefits, and staff reaction and need were covered, the decision to enrol in the programme was delegated to the Chief Exec, with the caveats that he should be satisfied that no vicarious liability fell to SVR as a result of the Life Works legal helpline; that staff were in favour of the programme; and that the contents of the programme offered benefits.</p> <p>Ser 77. Governing Body and SMT Thank You Event – Chief Exec confirmed he had not yet distributed a poll seeking dates for the event but would do so. It was confirmed that a meal with partners was preferred. The Chairman added that he was keen for the event to go ahead in 2022.</p>			
4.2	<p>Bellrock Close Review Action List – Chief Exec reviewed progress against the open serials within the Bellrock Close Action List:</p> <p>Ser 2 Drug Use – Chief Exec reported the potential for a partnership with the charity '<i>With You</i>' formerly branded as Addaction. Chief Exec and Residence Manager to meet with Regional Lead to discuss the feasibility of <i>With You</i> establishing a Community Link Hub at Bellrock Close.</p> <p>Ser 3 Staff Dynamics - Chief Exec noted that the new Deputy Manager was receiving management training.</p> <p>Ser 5 Inconsistencies across SVR –It was noted that collaboration was increasing and the SMT will continue to identify further opportunities. Given that there were no metrics</p>			

4.3	<p>against which to measure achievement of this issue, it was judged appropriate to retain oversight of cross-Residence collaboration for one year post staff restructuring.</p> <p>Sers 6 & 9 Maintenance Costs and Benchmarking Group – further work required. C/F.</p> <p>Sers 7 and 8 Arrears and Voids processes – Legal review requested from TC Young; awaiting response. C/F.</p> <p>Ser 10 Employment Transition – In discussion with <i>Walking With The Wounded</i> (WWTW) to discuss implications of the proposed change to its operating model in Scotland. Service Level Agreement between SVR and WWTW is out of date and requires revision. C/F.</p> <p>Ser 11 Lack of Awareness of Bellrock Close – Noted that Residence Manager continued to liaise with referral agencies to good effect, and following end of local elections it would be possible to engage with the housing staff of Glasgow City Council.</p> <p>Ser 12 Extended Support – C/F.</p> <p>Ser 13 Outcome Targets – C/F.</p> <p>The Chairman noting the progress that had been made addressing the issues identified during the review sought the view of SB (as the Governing Body lead for Bellrock Close) as to whether there was a sense of progress within the Residence. SB sensed there was; the Residence Manager conducted monthly meetings with the Residents and despite the Bellrock Close Residents being more transitory in general than those in the other Residences, she felt they has a sense of progress. The Chairman commented that the Governing Body would be guided by SB if she thought we were going backwards or there was no progress.</p>			
5	Sub-Committee Reports	Chairman		Noted
5.1	<p>Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) – TJ drew attention to the significant risks on the Strategic Risk Register; the Financial Impact of Net Zero carbon (NZC); and a new Health & Safety risk associated with a fire risk for Residents with addiction issues. The Chief Exec confirmed that the Internal Audit Programme for 2022 had been agreed and received. The 3 audits taking place this year would be, GDPR; Financial Controls; and Health & Safety at Work.</p>			
5.2	<p>Investment Remuneration and Finance Committee (IRFC) – the Chairman noted that the RODs from the 11 Feb IRFC meeting had been circulated within the Meeting Pack. He also confirmed that the IRFC meeting planned for earlier in May had been cancelled. This was because fundamentally, the financial situation remained the same; there was uncertainty, and the markets were volatile. It had been noted by the IRFC that SVR had sufficient cash liquidity to continue to operate effectively. The Investment Manager’s advice was to maintain our current approach and strategy, which was supported and endorsed by VC.</p>			
5.3	<p>The Chairman confirmed that previously it had been agreed to review staff salaries at the mid-year point and in the face of significant inflation it was appropriate to discuss this now. The discussion widened to also include the impact of inflation on SVR’s Tenants. The Chief Exec suggested it would be appropriate to make a ‘hardship’ payment to Tenants in light of the rising cost of energy. There was general discussion which agreed that a ‘hardship’ payment would also be appropriate for staff, and that the timing of the payment would be important for both Tenants and staff. It was agreed that the Chief Exec and DCEO should keep the issue under review, continue to gather evidence and present</p>			

5.4	findings at the September Governing Body meeting.			
	Quality Committee (QC) – in CM’s absence, the Chairman confirmed that CM had dropped him a note confirming the main outcomes from the Quality Committee meeting held on 13 May 22. Chief Exec briefed the Governing Body on the key agenda items of the meeting; an update from DCEO on the Annual Return on the Scottish Housing Charter; agreement to conduct quarterly Quality Committee meetings, timed to precede the Governing Body meeting schedule; and agreement for publication of SVR’s annual Duty of Candour Report.			
6	Treasurer’s Report	JC	Quarter 1 Management Accounts and Verbal Brief	Approved
6.1	JC commenced his report with a resume of the cashflow, which builds in all known costs, income and planned capital spends, and stressed the importance of monitoring the cashflow. He confirmed that the low point would be reached at the end of the year, prior to rising again in the next year. Some capital projects were going to be undertaken in-year, but that each would be considered at the time for affordability before going ahead. In this way, he sought to ensure SVR will retain sufficient funds. Overall, the cashflow situation was relatively comfortable and he acknowledged that further cash was available for the investment portfolio if required. However, he thought that having to access that cash was very unlikely.			
6.2	He went on to describe the format of the new Management Accounts, confirming that C+T would be happy to receive feedback on the new format. He noted that the deficit was slightly greater than that budgeted, which was driven chiefly by void levels. He added that the level were nowhere near as significant than the previous year. His main message was that operationally SVR was slightly behind the budget due to void levels. In other areas there was variability with some cost centres being underspent and others overspent against the budget. He asked for questions.			
6.3	JC also noted the requirement to submit 5-Year Financial Projections to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and that work to provide these was ongoing.			
6.4	The Chairman asked if there was evidence that the policy change to support those in employment was having an impact. JC replied that there were indications to suggest ‘Yes’, to which the Chairman suggested it was perhaps too early to be emphatic about a change. DCEO and SB commented that there were Residents coming in as a result of the change.			
6.5	The Chairman asked if there was anything further SVR should be doing, that it hadn’t yet done. Chief Exec responded by saying that with the local elections now complete, it was important to meet with Local Authority Housing Staff to ensure they had visibility of SVR’s services.			
7	Annual Return on Scottish Social Housing Charter 2022	DCEO	Draft Return	Endorsed
7.1	DCEO took the Governing Body through the key aspects of the Annual Return’s Summary Page. He noted that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There had been a higher than usual turnover (43%) of senior staff (Company Secretary and 2 Residence Managers), although the overall staff turnover of 23% was not inconsistent with the broader Social Care sector. 			

7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff sickness level had increased – exacerbated by staff having to remain absent from work for 7 – 10 days having tested positive for Covid-19. ➤ Overall Residence occupancy was 20% down on pre-Covid-19 levels, probably due to inability to travel and the availability of hotel accommodation for the homeless. ➤ The Tenant/Resident survey statistics had been rolled over from the 2021 survey (as allowed by SHR). ➤ 100% achievement of Scottish Housing Quality Standard. ➤ There had been a slight increase in the time taken to effect repairs, largely due to Covid-19 restrictions and the availability of maintenance staff. ➤ Overall, the rent increase had been 4.55%. <p>He confirmed that the Return was required to be submitted by 31 May 2022 and invited questions. Discussion followed regarding the differentiation of Tenants and Residents and the applicability of various sections to each. DCEO explained where the sections had relevance to both and where there was differentiation.</p> <p>Decision: The Governing Body endorsed the Return and directed it should be submitted to the SHR.</p>
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8	Female accessibility to SVR	CEO	Brief	Review authorised
8.1	<p>Chief Exec introduced his request to review SVR’s service provision and accessibility for female Veterans by acknowledging that within the sector there was growing recognition of a lack of female Veterans in leadership and management roles with the sector; service design had generally been for male Veterans; and rarely has female Veterans been involved in service design. He acknowledged that female Veterans and female Managers had contributed to the design of SVR’s strategy. However, he sensed that there may be a gap in service provision as anecdotally homeless female Veterans were not accessing available bespoke Veterans’ services.</p>			
8.2	<p>He thought it appropriate to ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is SVR visible to and appealing to female Veterans? ➤ Is SVR a safe organisation in which female Veterans would be accommodated? ➤ Do referral agencies know that SVR supports and accommodates female Veterans? <p>Consequently, he thought it was appropriate to review SVR’s service provision and sought the Governing Body’s support to conduct a review, liaising with external agencies as necessary, and reporting back with recommendations.</p>			
8.3	<p>The Chairman asked if there were any questions.</p>			
8.4	<p>ST requested an indication as to how well we provide accommodation for female Veterans at each Residence. Chief Exec responded that each Residence had , or is currently accommodating females. He felt that intuitively the numbers were about right in comparison to the serving female population and overall number of Veterans. He confirmed that SVR had the capacity to accept further female Veterans.</p>			
8.5	<p>IMT thought that now was the right time to undertake the review, as we had not yet been asked to do so and we could define the questions we wanted to ask of ourselves; what SVR needs now; and what it would need in the future. We would be able to respond in our own time.</p>			
8.6	<p>Chief Exec confirmed to the Chairman that there was the capacity to undertake the review and the Governing Body gave its approval.</p>			

9	Residence Committee Reports	SB IMT & NG	Report	Noted
9.1	<p>Bellrock Close – SB noted that on average 2 or 3 Residents attended Residence meetings, but as the weather was improving, activities were being planned and these were attracting greater participation. The Manager was continuing to make his mark. SB asked if there were any plans for the café/kitchen, as it had previously been a focal point for Residents and the local community. Chief Exec confirmed that the OT students had used it with Residents to develop cooking skills, and that the Catering Manager was due to visit and would hopefully come up with some suggestions for its use. The tree planting in recognition of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee had been delayed until October, to provide better conditions for the tree’s survival.</p>			
9.2	<p>Rosendael – IMT confirmed that the last Residence meeting took place on 3 May 22, which had been attended by CM. Plans had been made to hold a barbecue to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, although the tree planting had been postponed until October. The idea of a Veterans’ Champion had been proposed by the Residence Manager, with those interested requested to speak to the Manager. There had been some disquiet from a minority that alcoholic drinks were not being provided at events. Following a survey the Manager had confirmed that the majority did not favour any change to the current policy that self-purchased alcohol was only to be consumed in Residents’ own rooms.</p>			
9.3	<p>Whitefoord House – in the absence of NG, Chief Exec noted that the Whitefoord House Residents had formed a Residents’ Association. He had signed off its Constitution and was waiting to see how it progressed. He thought it would be helpful for all the Residences to have an Association but recognised it was somewhat easier at Whitefoord House to recruit sufficient officers, given its greater capacity than the other Residences. If a Committee couldn’t be created then he judged a Residents’ Champion would be a good idea.</p>			
9.4	<p>Whitefoord House’s Platinum Jubilee event was scheduled for 3 Jun 22, with over 100 guests invited for a barbecue and live music. Recruiting was also taking place for a second JILWO, who would be based at Whitefoord House.</p>			
9.5	<p>SB noted that as yet, there hadn’t been any interest shown at Bellrock Close for a Committee or a Champion.</p>			
10	CEO’s Report	CEO	Report	Approved
10.1	<p>Key Chief Exec headlines from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Service delivery was challenging through inflation and availability of maintenance and building services. ➤ Successful recruitment of IT Manager. ➤ Operational change programme had been completed, which resulted in one redundancy. Budgeted £25k for change, with actual costs being <£10k. ➤ Electric cars due for delivery. ➤ Applying for sustainability funding from EWHT and Scottish Government. 			
10.2	<p>DCEO explained the increasing costs of the planned capital works. There was discussion regarding affordability and balancing priorities of ‘hardship’ payments to mitigate inflation against capital project spend. It was proposed that the Treasurer, DCEO and Chief Exec would conduct a regular prioritisation and affordability check and proceed with capital works only if affordable. The Chairman sought agreement for this approach from the Governing Body, which was agreed.</p>			

10.3	DCEO also provided an update on SVR's utilities contracts. He confirmed that the gas contract had risen by 6% when last renegotiated, but that rate was not fixed until 2025. The Rosendael electricity contract had been renegotiated with difficulty and had suffered a trebling from c£30k to c£90k annually. The current Bellrock Close and Whitefoord House electricity contracts expire on 31 March 2023 and it was possible that we would incur a similar increase when renegotiating those contracts. He emphasised that we would seek the best value for money contract and using the Government's Energy Supply Framework might mitigate some of the potential cost increase.			
10.4	HER updated the Governing Body on the progress of grant applications. She confirmed that £26k had been received from The Soldiers' Charity for the lift refurbishment project at Whitefoord House. She also confirmed that it was possible to adjust a grant application to the Queensbury Trust, which currently aimed to provide £50k towards the relocation of the Whitefoord House gym. The scope of the grant would allow for allocation against a capital project, if the Governing Body deemed that to be more appropriate. Following a quick discussion it was agreed to seek a reallocation of the grant to offset the cost of external works at Whitefoord House.			
10.5	In terms of media, there had been good coverage of the Queen's Green Canopy tree planting at Whitefoord House, and the Scottish Veterans Wellbeing Alliance, of which SVR was a member had also been launched. The programme would run for 2 years and it was expected that membership may help reduce voids through referrals from other members of the Alliance.			
10.6	The Annual Report was in draft awaiting financial information and it was agreed to circulate the draft to the Governing Body for final comments prior to publication.			
10.7	The Chairman thanked and congratulated HER for the success of the recent round of grant applications.			
11	Service Updates	RG/CT/DM/IL	Brief	Noted
11.1	The Chairman recorded that DM had provided a written report for which he was thanked. He asked if there were any headlines that DM wished to highlight. DM responded by noting that RAF transformation was underway better to prepare RAF personnel for transition to civilian life. This was exemplified through the mapping of RAF Roles and Trades to the relevant civilian profession, including the award of civilian qualifications.			
11.2	<p>Royal Navy – RG covered the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Change of RN's Director of Strategy and Policy and gave a short biography of the new incumbent. ➤ Recruiting and Retention – a slight drop from 149k to 148k in the overall size of the Armed Forces. Unable to provide Service breakdown as MoD had not updated the individual Service figures since December 2021. ➤ Naval Regional Forum – an invitation to attend would be sent to Chief Exec and HER. ➤ HMS ALBION – would berth in Leith for 2 weeks in support of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. SVR Residents and staff would be welcome to the Ship's Open Day. 			
11.3	Army – Chief Exec confirmed that CT had submitted a written report that morning, which he would circulate with the Minutes.			
11.4	The Chairman thanked DM and RG for their reports.			
12	Risk Register	CEO	Register	Noted
12.1	CEO went through the Strategic Risk Register and made observations.			

12.2	Risk 001/22 – Finance – Impact of conservation and renovation of the Whitefoord House (WH) Campus on Reserves. Edward Eastham, SVR’s Conservation Architect had visited the Whitefoord Campus to inform his development of the Conservation Statement required to submit a grant application to EWHT. To access the Social Housing Net Zero Fund, a feasibility study was required to identify options for the development of the Campus. The Chief Exec thought that the best way to achieve this was through accessing a Consultancy via one of the Frameworks; Scottish Procurement Agency, of Scottish Excel.		
12.3	Risk 002/22 – Health Safety & Environment – Fire. Chief Exec described the background to the addition of this draft risk onto the Register. Following the action taken he now felt the risk was manageable as an operational risk and would be content if it was transferred to the Operational Register to be managed by the SMT. The Chairman noted that he and commented twice previously on whether Residents should smoke in their rooms and acknowledged that the MoD had now banned smoking within its establishments. He also acknowledged that a Residence was the home of each resident. The Chief Exec noted he had previously suggested that a thematic meeting be held to consider SVR’s policies on Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs and whether they remained fit for purpose and appropriate. It was agreed that the Executive should undertake the review and report back in due course.		
12.4	Risk 001/21 – Finance – Impact of Covid-19 measures on cashflow and reserves. Chief Exec noted that although no longer required to do so, SVR was still taking some preventative measures. He noted however, that the financial impact of the measures was negligible and he recommended that the risk was transferred to the Operational Register. Following consultation the Governing Body agreed the recommendation.		
12.5	Risk 002/20 – Infectious Disease. SVR no longer able to access staff PCR testing, although still undertaking LFTs whilst stocks last. Infrequent individual cases amongst staff and residents. Lessons learnt review to take place on 14 June, Chief Exec proposed to transfer risk to Operational Register thereafter.		
12.6	Risk 002/19 – Business Continuity Plan. E learning course identified for Exec and Managers to complete by end of June.		
12.7	Risk 001/18 – Policy and Procedures. Tenant Participation Strategy not yet completed for Governing Body Review. c/f.		
13	AOB	Chairman	
13.1	Rosendael 90 th Anniversary. Chief Executive had approached the Royal Patron’s Private Secretary, who was strongly supportive. A ‘visit window’ of July – September 2023 had been offered and a response was awaited from KP.		
13.2	The Chairman though that the visit could also be the vehicle for his handover to the Vice Chairman, who will take over as Chairman.		
13.3	The Chairman closed the meeting and extended his thanks to all present for their continued support and work on behalf of SVR.		
14	DONM – Tuesday 13th September 2022, 1200 – 1400, at Rosendael, postponed until 10th October 2022.		