

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING OF
MID-WALES HOUSING ASSOCIATION HELD AT TY CANOL HOUSE,
NEWTOWN ON WEDNESDAY, 19th SEPTEMBER 2018**

Present: Mr. Peter Swanson (Chair), Ms. Olivia Morris (Deputy Chair), Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Alex Gambroudes, Ms. Morag Bailey (via Facetime – part) and Ms. Elenor Bonner-Evans (via speakerphone).

Observer: Cllr. J. M. Williams (Powys County Council).

Officers: Mr. Shane Perkins (Chief Executive), Mr. Charles Brotherton (Director of Finance and Company Secretary), Mrs. Jean O’Neill (Acting Assistant Director of Customer Services - part) and Mrs. Janet Price (Governance Officer – minute taker).

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Action
1.1	Apologies were received from Mr. Tony Bowron, Ms. Joy Garfitt (leave of absence), Miss Susan Havard, and Ms. Liz Jenkins (Board Members), Cllr. Catherine Hughes (Ceredigion County Council), Mrs. Sian Howells (Director of New Business) and Mrs. Anna Orton (Director of Care & Repair in Powys).	
1.2	Also recorded as absent was Mr. Mark Roberts (Board Member).	
1.3	The Chair and Members were upstanding for a minute’s silence in memory of Mrs. Pam Smith, former tenant and Board Member, who had passed away earlier in the month.	
1.4	Members decided to consider agenda item 10 at this point, which is recorded under the Confidential Minutes of the Board of Management meeting of Mid-Wales Housing Association. Given the subject matter, Cllr Williams (Powys County Council Observer) was invited to stay to take part in the discussion <i>Cllr. Michael Williams was present during discussion of this item and Ms. Morag Bailey left the meeting after this item concluded.</i>	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
2.1	Mr. Richard Martin declared an interest in agenda item 15, specifically the issue concerning the Quorum for Board and Committee Meetings. All officers declared an interest in item 15 – Employee Contracts.	

3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY 2018</p> <p>3.1 Mr. Richard Martin proposed and Ms. Olivia Morris seconded that the minutes of the Board of Management meeting held on 11th July 2018 be approved as a true record.</p>	
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>4.1 Members agreed that the first item within the paper on <i>Routine Home Visits to Tenants</i> should be deleted from the matters arising as circumstances had changed and there are currently insufficient resources to consider it.</p> <p>4.2 The Chief Executive reported that formal consent had been received from the Association’s three lenders in relation to the acquisition of EOM. Completion is anticipated by the end of October 2018.</p> <p>Members received the paper for information.</p>	
5.	<p>WHQS POSITION UPDATE</p> <p>5.1 The Chief Executive introduced the paper, which gave a progress update in meeting Welsh Housing Quality Standards by 2020.</p> <p>5.2 Members’ attention was drawn to the significant number of properties with a SAP rating of below 65 and were advised that many of these properties were old and may never be able to reach this figure. The Welsh Government have acknowledged that housing associations are constrained by such issues, which are known as “acceptable fails”. Apart from this area, the Association is “broadly compliant”, he reported.</p> <p>5.3 A recently elected member questioned the definition of “acceptable fails” and was given an explanation of the term and reasoning.</p> <p>5.4 Members noted the progress made to meet WHQS across its social housing stock by 2020, in accordance with Welsh Government regulations and the Association’s own Asset Management Strategy/ Compliance Policy documentation.</p>	
6.	<p>RENT AT START OF TENANCY (HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY)</p> <p>6.1 The Acting Director of Customer Services told Members that the current Housing Allocations Policy is not always working in relation to new tenants paying a full week’s rent at the start of their tenancy.</p>	

6.2	The Acting Director's report proposed that in cases of extreme hardship, officers may be given the discretion to waive this requirement, or accept a lower sum.	
6.3	The Acting Director read out comments provided by email by an absent Board Member who was concerned about the concept of further discretion leading staff to "take an easy option" leading to a probable increase in administrative costs, a negative impact on cash flow and the potential to undermine tenants' confidence in managing their own household budgets.	
6.4	The Acting Director explained that the Association is not in favour of securing payment at allocation stage, as an offer to view a property does not always result in an actual formal offer of accommodation. A Member was concerned that any flexibility in the policy could put pressure on front-line staff to agree to waive such a payment. However, the Acting Director felt that there was a clear and rigid set of criteria upon which such discretionary decisions could be based.	
6.5	Ms. Olivia Morris proposed and Mr. Alex Gambroudes seconded that the Association should continue to seek one week's rent at the start of a tenancy; however, officers may be given discretion to waive this requirement, or accept a lower sum, in cases of extreme hardship. The AADoCS to monitor closely	
7.	AUDIT REGISTER	
7.1	Members approved the entries in the audit register, which had previously been presented to committee. The Chief Executive reminded Members of the "policy holiday" that Members had agreed earlier in the year and cautioned that a number of actions in audit reviews may be impacted by it	
7.2	Mr. Richard Martin proposed and Ms. Olivia Morris seconded that the Audit Register be approved.	
8.	HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE	
8.1	The Chief Executive introduced the report and advised Members that the Association had recently appointed a Senior Health & Safety Maintenance Officer.	
8.2	The meeting reviewed the report, and Mr. Alex Gambroudes proposed and Ms. Olivia Morris seconded that:	

	<p>a) Responsibility is delegated to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee to monitor Landlord & Employer Health & Safety Compliancy Assurance; and</p> <p>b) The contents of the report are noted and the provisions made or needed to manage Health & Safety matters within the MWA Group.</p>	
9.	USE OF SEAL	
9.1	The Use of Seal was tabled at the meeting.	
9.2	Mr. Richard Martin proposed and Mr. Alex Gambroudes seconded that the Use of Seal was ratified. All Members were in agreement.	

Agenda items 10 to 21 are recorded under the Confidential Minutes of the Board of Management of Mid-Wales Housing Association held on 19th September 2018.

Minutes produced by Governance Officer on 15th October 2018.

Checked by:	Date
Shane Perkins	5th November 2018
Charles Brotherton	7th November 2018
Sian Howells	Not present
Anna Orton	Not present
Jean O'Neill	19/10/18