

Board Meeting

Held: Board Room, Viewpoint Offices

Minutes of the meeting of the Board
at 4.00pm on **19 February 2025**

Paper 0

Meeting No:7

Date of Meeting: 19 February 2025

Board Members

Mr D McIntosh (Vice Chair)
Ms P Russell (PR)

Ms L Anderson (LA)
Mr Martyn Kerr (MK)

Mr L Parry (LP)
Mr J Clyne (JC)

Attending

Jean Gray, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
David Aitken, Head of Finance (HF) (via Teams)

Megan Macdonald, Governance and Compliance
Officer (GCO) (minute taker)

Tom Hainey, Director of Assets (DA)
Howard Vaughan, Director of Finance and Business
Support (DFBS)
Sue Shone, Director of Housing and Care (DHC)

Apologies received

Mr T Roehricht (TR)

Mr S Robertson (SR)

Minutes

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
1	Welcome to Board Meeting		
1.a.	Apologies		
	There being a quorum present, the Chair welcomed all and opened the meeting. Apologies had been received from TR.		
1.b.	Declarations/Conflicts of Interest		
	There were no declarations and no conflicts of interest declared.		
2	Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising		
2.a.	Minutes of previous meeting held on 18 December 2024		
	There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 18 December 2024 and the Board unanimously approved them as an accurate record.		
2.b.	Outstanding actions		
	There were the following outstanding actions		

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
	Action 221: Review policy approval process. This is still ongoing.	Exec	Early 2025
	Action 242: CEO to meet with Board members not at Away Day. This was covered in the Strategy Board Meeting on 14 January 2025. The CEO will meet with JC as he missed both meetings.	CEO	Early 2025
2.c.	Verbal update from the Finance Risk and Audit Committee meeting of 29 January 2025		
	<p>DM updated the Board on the key areas discussed at the meeting as follows;</p> <p>Our internal auditors, wgb had provided two reports following their audits carried out In December 2024. Repairs and Works Orders – strong assurance with very few, minimal actions. Given the difficulties we have had in these areas in previous years it was a very good report and a testament to the work done by the Assets team in making these improvements.</p> <p>The Follow Up audit had provided substantial assurance. Of the 20 outstanding recommendations, 12 had been fully implemented, 5 partially implemented and 3 not yet due. Some of the partially implemented recommendations have been progressed and are included later in today's meeting papers. Again DM highlighted that from where we have been previously this is a good report showing marked improvements in many areas.</p> <p>The Management Accounts to 31 December 2024 had been presented by HF and a separate meeting of the Finance Short Life Working Group had been held to discuss these Accounts together with the Reforecast at the end of Q3.</p> <p>The Treasury Management Report highlighted that the funds of [REDACTED] had been transferred over from the Viewpoint Trust to Viewpoint in late December 2024. There had been an update from the HF, who had attended a recent session regarding the Pensions Trust Defined Benefits deficit. The key points to note here are;</p> <p>The deficit is still to be confirmed and as such is still unknown. It is likely that members will have to restart deficit contributions. Our previous contributions were [REDACTED] per month but the expectation was that new contributions may be [REDACTED] of the previous amount. We would continue to follow our usual treatment in the statutory accounts with the necessary detail provided within a note to the accounts.</p> <p>The current Risk Register was presented then the GCO provided a demonstration of the new [REDACTED] which had been populated from our current Excel based Risk Register. The CEO confirmed that since this meeting further work has been undertaken to further improve the data.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>		
3	Finance papers		
3.a./b.	Management Accounts to 31 December 2024 and Reforecast to 31 March 2025.		
	<p>The HF explained that the Management Accounts to 31 December 2024 had been presented to the FRAC meeting on 29 January 2025 and a meeting of the Finance Short Life Working Group on 14 February 2025 had also considered these together with the Reforecast to 31 March 2025.</p>		

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
	<p>In respect of the Management Accounts to 31 December he highlighted the following key areas;</p> <p>The year to date housing voids loss of income remains under budget although there had been a slight deterioration in December 2024 which in part is due to tenants not wishing to move around Christmas.</p> <p>On care home fees, St Raphael's income was up on budget due to better than expected occupancy. The tight control of staff costs had also continued.</p> <p>Marian House fee income was also up on budget due to both better than budgeted occupancy and also a better private to local authority mix than expected. Staff costs were also still well under control.</p> <p>Moving to the Balance Sheet, HF highlighted that two of the larger [REDACTED] care home fee arrears had now been received and work on other outstanding fee cases continues with plans to escalate these to seek recovery. There is also a plan to tighten up the admissions process which should in turn reduce our exposure to such large debts.</p> <p>On the Q3 Reforecast the surplus has increased by [REDACTED] mainly due to the increase in care home fee income and costs being lower than budget in some other areas.</p> <p>Table 3 shows the movement between the 2024-25 original budget and the Q3 Reforecast. The key highlights of this movement are;</p> <p>Insurance premiums have increased due mainly to the reinstatement valuation exercise on our properties.</p> <p>Void repairs have reduced due to savings on redecoration work required in each property.</p> <p>Within planned maintenance there is approximately [REDACTED] for RAAC and related works. However there have been delays in carrying out this work due to tendering issues and consequently it is possible that this work may not be started in the current financial year.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>The Central Support costs have been reforecast down with the main savings being in staff salaries (due to longer vacancies than budgeted) and computer costs (two projects delayed to next year). These savings are partially offset by overspends in across various other lines.</p> <p>JC queried what the expenditure for planned maintenance was for Lennox House and asked if there had been damage to the property, it was confirmed this was routine security costs and the fix of a small leak.</p> <p>There were no further questions on the Management Accounts to 31 December 2024 or Reforecast to 31 March 2025 and these were both approved by the Board.</p>		
3.c	Rent Consultation Outcome Report		

The DHC presented the report which was based on the proposals agreed at the Board meeting in November 2024 and confirmed that it was designed to give the Board background into the information which influences decisions. She noted that

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
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the report had been condensed slightly from previous years but if the Board wanted more information, it could be added back in.

The total number of responses to the consultation was 202 tenants which was a rate of 15.92% of tenants, a 1% decrease from last year. The DHC expressed that she was unhappy with the low response rate but that work would be done to increase involvement ahead of the next rent and service charge consultation process. She noted that she was impressed by the number of responses that agreed that a rent increase was necessary to maintain service and investment in stock. The summary of the responses was:

- 51% of tenants agreed that 'a rent increase is necessary to maintain services and investment in our stock'.
- 24% were ambivalent
- 18% disagreed
- 56% of tenants agreed that they felt they 'get value for money from Viewpoint.'
- 19% were ambivalent
- 23% disagreed
- 47% of tenants felt that their 'rent is affordable'.
- 28% were ambivalent
- 20% felt their rent was unaffordable
- 54% felt that 'the service charges are fair and affordable.'
- 14% were ambivalent
- 22% disagreed

In terms of affordability the DHC informed the Board that Viewpoint uses the SFHA measure of affordability to assess if rents are affordable to tenants and prospective tenants. As shown in the report, Viewpoint rents are lower for most tenure types than other local Housing Associations so she noted that she was comfortable with the recommendation of the below:

Social Rented/Loanstock Properties:

A 6.7% increase in rent along with the following changes to service charges:

- A 5% increase in Housing Support
- A 1.7% increase in Common Area, landscaping and laundry
- A 52% increase in Central Heating and Hot Water

Sharing Owners:

A 6.7% rent increase along with the following changes to service charges:

- A 56% increase in insurance charge
- A 5.7% increase in services
- A 10% increase in contribution to sinking fund
- A 5% Increase in factoring fee

The Board approved the rent and service charges increases proposed.

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
3.d	Final Budget 2025/26		

The DFBS explained that after the November 2024 Board meeting the proposed surplus was [REDACTED] which was based on the 5% rent increase. Following suggestions made by the Finance Short Life Working Group the Board agreed that the consultation should be based on an 6.7% increase in rents

The revised surplus [REDACTED] with the adjustments since the first draft in November 2024 is outlined in Table 2.

In terms of borrowing the CAF Bank loan, interest rates have reduced so this has been adjusted for in the Budget.

Also the receipt of the [REDACTED] from Viewpoint Trust means an increase in the budgeted interest receivable from deposits.

Table 5 of the paper outlines the potential sensitivities which could impact on the budget.. The DFBS highlighted the improved figures on void loss in comparison to previous years.

He reassured the Board that the organisation's cash flow was comfortable, and the cash flow statement included the assumed sales proceeds for the two housing properties included in the opening balance as at 1st April 2025.

The amount of borrowing versus the most recent market value of the estate gives a significant amount of borrowing capacity for further loans for future capital projects.

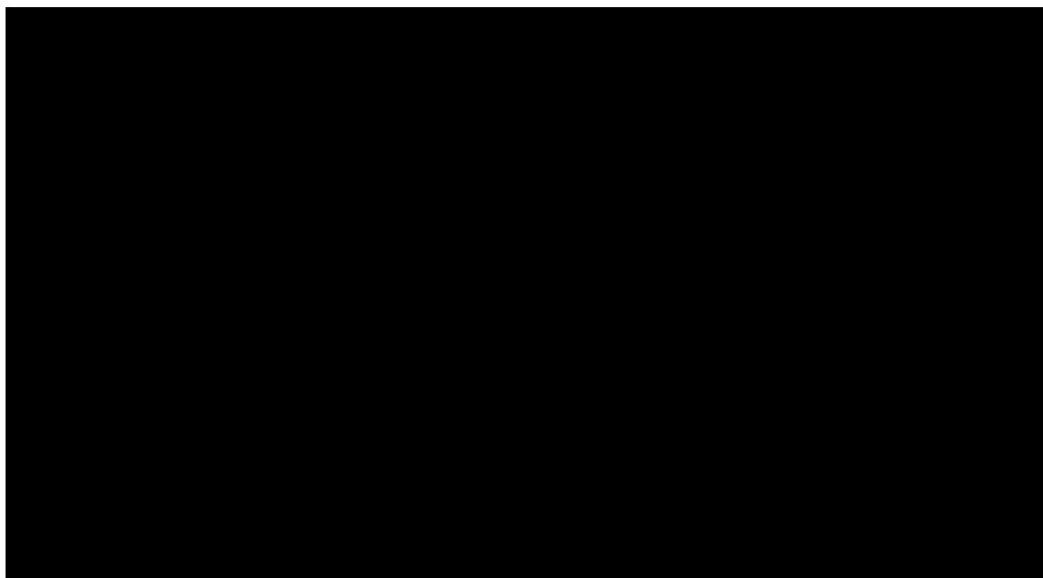
There were no further questions and the budget for the financial year 2025/26 was approved subject to any changes discussed in the private session per Agenda item 3.e.

3.e	Remuneration Committee Discussion		
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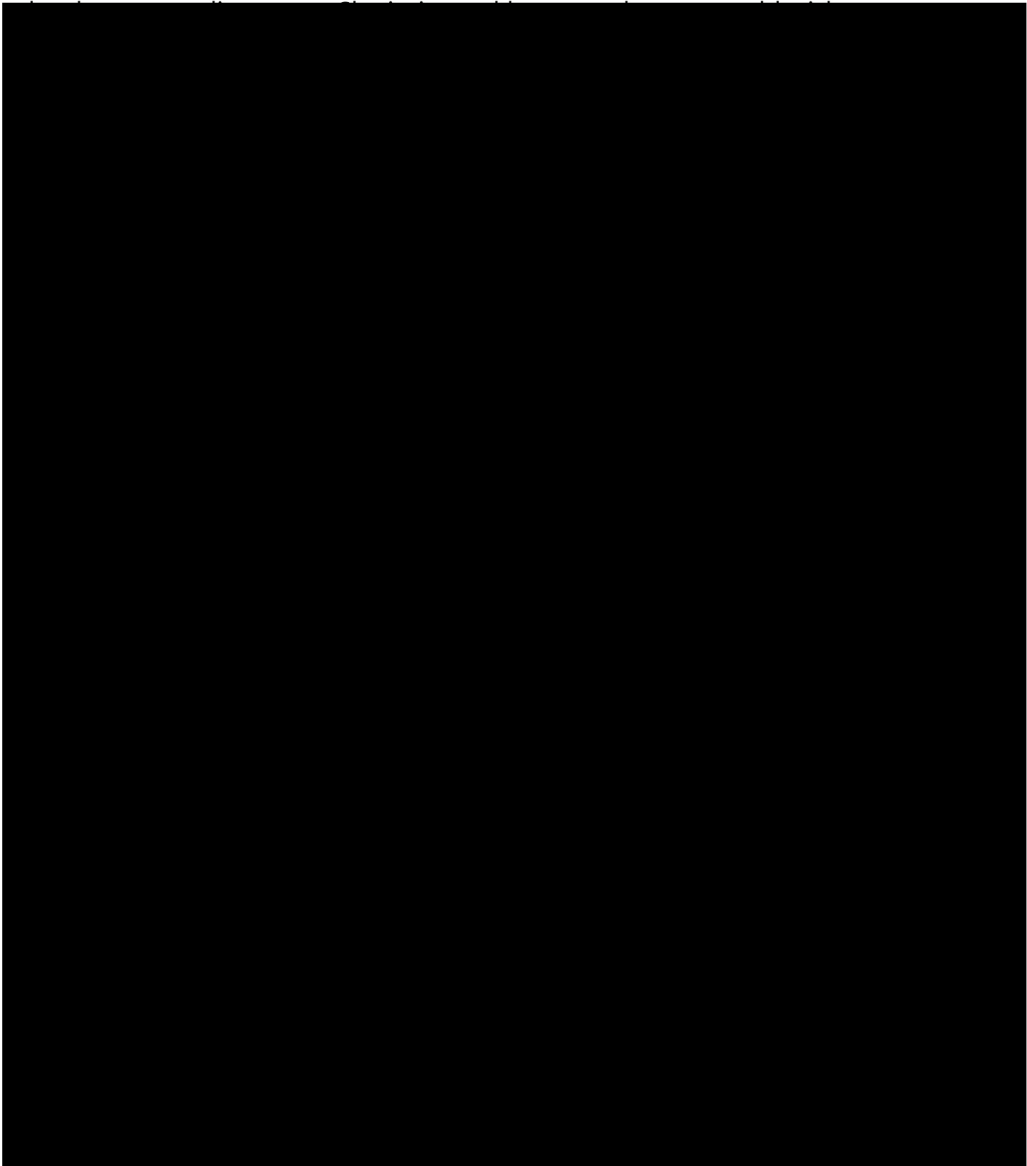
All staff left the meeting at this stage with the exception of the DFBS, who the CEO explained was closely involved in the preparation of the paper and had attended the meeting on 5 February 2025.

She explained that the Committee had discussed the paper at length at the remuneration Committee meeting on 5 February 2025.

The main proposals were;



Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
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Salary Increases

CEO and DFBS then left the meeting to allow the Board to discuss the salary proposal.



4	CEO Update Report		
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Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
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[REDACTED]

There were no further questions, and the Board noted the CEO report

5	Governance Report
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[REDACTED]

There were no further questions, and the Board noted the Governance report

6	Internal Management Plan 2024-25 Q3
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The DFBS noted that the Q2 Internal Management Plan was presented in December 2024rather than November so there had not been as much time since the last report. He reminded the Board that a lot of the amber points were longer term actions and will be ongoing for a while. It was confirmed that there were no major changes, red

[REDACTED]

currently used.

PR noted that there was items in amber towards the end of the report and noted that some were not due yet. DHC explained that a lot of the care ones were being worked on now that the new team was in place. PR confirmed that she was looking forward to the results of the tenant satisfaction survey which is currently being undertaken by [REDACTED] and the work to be done in that area.

It was also confirmed that the tenant conference had been delayed until June 2025 due to the availability of the facilitator, JC noted that the tenants would probably find this date better anyway due to the summer weather.

The DFBS noted that the HR actions, were challenging obtaining a new HR system would require extensive work. He confirmed this was likely to move to the 25/26 objectives due to the absence of key team members.

There were no further questions and the Board noted the Internal Management Plan 2024-25 Q3

Item	Subject	Action	Due Date
7	Performance Report 2024-25 Q3		
	<p>The DFBS presented the Performance Report noting that he believed there was sufficient narrative included for any adverse variances on the KPI's. There was discussion around whether the figures for the length of stay in the care homes needed to be included and the CEO noted this had been included historically after a question from the Board but may no longer be needed. She also noted that if one resident stayed for a long period of time this may affect the figures. DM noted that it might be worth looking into the trend of the age of new residents. JC asked if there were often residents in their 60's and it was confirmed that younger residents tended to be dementia patients.</p> <p>There were no further questions and the Board noted the Performance Report 2024-25 Q3</p>	DHC	Next Ops Meeting
8	IT Disaster Recovery Plan		
	<p>The DFBS informed the Board that the need for an IT Disaster Recovery Plan was flagged within the last IT Systems Internal Audit and as a reminder given within the December 2024 Follow Up Audit. He noted that this Plan had been drafted by the IT team and would be a good starting point and will be developed further in the future.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>LP noted that the content was good and highlighted the need to follow up on the tests included within the report and feedback on their outcomes. He also stated that it was of equal importance to have plans and procedures in place for how to continue working if systems do fail. The DFBS confirmed that Support Key do regular patch testing and that this has been included as a control within the new Risk Register.</p> <p>An annual penetration test is also conducted by an external company and Viewpoint staff were sent test phishing emails to see how they react. There is also a Cyber Security Training module within Access LMS which all staff have to complete.</p> <p>PR asked whether this was a plan or strategy and when it would take affect from. The DFBS confirmed that it was being presented today as a draft and that if approved it would go live from tomorrow and ongoing improvements would be made in due course. DM asked how it would be tested and the DFBS confirmed that a plan would be put together to implement testing.</p> <p>PR asked how priority was decided and if there was a way of reporting and gathering the statistics of the tests. The DFBS confirmed that priority was decided by the "acceptable downtime" section on the table included on page 1 and 2 on the document. JC stated that tests would need to be conducted regularly by a designated person and logged accordingly. There was discussion around reporting and it was suggested that once testing and reporting was established these should be presented regularly to the Operations Committee for review.</p> <p>The Board approved the IT Disaster Recovery Plan with the assurance of tests being conducted and reported to the Operations Committee on a regular basis.</p>	DFBS/ ITM	ASAP

Item	Subject
9	AOCB

The DFBS informed the Board that The Royal Bank of Scotland require a Minute to note approval of the Board to add the DHC to the mandate.

The Board approved the decision to add Sue Shone, Director of Housing and Care to the RBS Mandate.

Formal meeting closed at 17.35.

Approval of the minutes

Signed as a true record of the meeting, following the approval of the draft minutes by a meeting of the Board.

Signed:

Date: