



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board
held on Thursday 27th July 2023 at 11 am at Linlithgow**

PRESENT:	Lesley Holdsworth Robert Fernie Angus MacRae Isabel McGarvie Margaret Moore Dougie Peters Cath Strachan Derek Breingan Brian McLaren	Chair
IN ATTENDANCE:	Lynne Douglas Debbie Collins Nikki Ritchie Tracey Howatt Clare Beesley	Chief Executive Chief Operating Officer Director of People & OD Director of Customer Experience Governance Manager

3730. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Graeme Russell, Willie Smalley and Andrea Paterson.

3731. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3732. Strategy & Business Plan

(i) Confidential Item: Redacted

(ii) Strategic Performance Framework

The Board received Report B/3(ii)/JULY/23 from the Chief Operating Officer.

The Chief Operating Officer confirmed the baselines have been updated which led to some of the targets changing.

The Board approved the new performance indicators for 2023/24

(iii) Review of Factoring Services Withdrawal – Final Report

The Board received Report B/3(iii)/JULY/23 from the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive advised Bield have now withdrawn from the 16 factored services. The report provides an insight on what we've done, what we learned and what we are doing in terms of future arrangements.

There is no statutory requirement to have an Owner Services Forum for shared ownership properties. The last Owner Services Forum took place in 2022. Tenant engagement and how best to communicate with tenants in the future is being looked at. There is a KPI around owner satisfaction so need to engage with this group in a meaningful way. The Board suggested an Interested Parties List.

The Board noted the withdrawal from these services had been handled well and the way staff have organised communication has been excellent.

The Board approved this report

3733. Audit & Risk Committee

(i) Audit & Risk Committee Chair Update

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee provided a verbal update and advised that a meeting of the Committee had taken place on 19th July 2023. The following areas were discussed:

- Recommended approval of the annual report.
- Recommended approval of the letter of representation.
- Reviewed cyber security internal audit and noted recommendations.
- Focused on outstanding action points, now only 4 remaining.
- Approved treasury strategy.
- Agreed content of the ARC Report.

The Board noted the Audit & Risk Committee Chair update.

(ii) Annual Financial Statements & Final Audit Findings

The Board received Report B/4(ii)/JULY/23 from the Chief Operating Officer.

Audit & Risk Committee recommended the annual financial statements and external auditors report. The Auditors made minor recommendations; these are highlighted in section 4.4. The final position was a loss for the year following the implementation of the equalisation account.

The Board:

- (i) **reviewed the External Audit Report Findings;**

- (ii) **heard the recommendations from the Audit and Risk Committee and approved External Auditor's Audit Findings Report; and**
- (iii) **heard the recommendation from the Audit and Risk Committee and approved the Annual Financial Statement for 2022/23 to the Board and the Letter of Representation for signing by the Chair.**

(iii) Procurement Strategy

The Board received Report B/4(iii)/JULY/23 from the Chief Operating Officer.

The previous strategy was reviewed in 2018. The new procurement strategy focuses on our procurement compliance. It has been agreed to expand the procurement team from 1 to 3 which will help procurement review around benefits and although the property team to focus more on the delivery of the strategic asset management plan.

The Board approved the Procurement strategy to comply with its obligations in line with the Procurement Reform Act 2015 and to support Bield's new strategy.

(iv) Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

The Board received Report B/4(iv)/JULY/23 from the Chief Operating Officer.

The Board noted the annual report from the Audit and Risk Committee.

3734. People & Staff Governance Committee

(i) SHPS Update

The Board received Report B/5(i)/JULY/23 from the Director of People & OD.

The Director of People & OD confirmed the closure of the defined benefit scheme. Employers can give individuals the opportunity at any time to get a value of the amount they could take out of defined benefit to be transferred into the defined contribution pot. The Director of People & OD will ascertain if Bield need to offer this. PWC offered staff a range of options for their pension and staff were also signposted to TPT.

The Board advised some schemes in deficit are going to surplus, and queried whether we should look at this. The 3-year valuation due at the end of September this year, dropped from 38 to 23 in accounts. There is a plan to complete our contributions by 2028. The Board queried how many parties are involved and the Director of People & OD will check the current membership.

Where trustees have a court case coming up, the issue is around how an interest rate was changed a few years ago. The Board recommended this element be retrospectively looked at, as this would be a financial impact on anyone who has left Bield. It was noted there is a section on pension liability for the end of 2024 in the report. The new Valuation should be brought to Board in January or February 2024

The Board noted the update from the Project from PWC and confirmation that the project has successfully concluded.

3735. Other Items for Discussion

(i) Health & Safety 6 month update

The Board received Report B/6(i)/JULY/23 from the Director of People & OD. It was noted that queries had been raised, and responded to, in advance of the meeting.

One claim was taken to a Solicitor and was settled in March. It was highlighted the claim should be treated as confidential. There was no additional cost to Bield for the claim as Bield have an excess.

The Board queried why there was no post fire inspection regarding the fire in the external bin store. It was confirmed the fire & rescue service deemed no need for an inspection as the situation was not suspicious.

The Board noted the content of this report.

(ii) Tenant Engagement Annual Report

The Board received Report B/6(ii)/JULY/23 from the Director of Customer Experience.

The Director of Customer Experience confirmed the recruitment of tenant engagement lead Alan Morris.

There is increasing interest from tenants as the focus is on things they are really interested in. Tenants are currently working on the portal and rainbow network which is going well.

The Board queried whether there is evidence on how BIG and PF connect and how it is ensured tasks are not duplicated. The Director of Customer Experience advised this is being looked at. There are 9 tenants participating and the majority are on both groups. Work is ongoing with managers to encourage participation.

The Board queried what measures are in place to improve the response rate of the tenant engagement survey, due to the previous bad response rates. The Director of Customer Experience confirmed two annual meetings have been arranged with tenants which will take place just before the surveys are distributed and this will be highlighted. A QR code will be offered; teams are obtaining confirmation of email

addresses; local staff to offer to speak to tenants and encourage them take part.

The Board congratulated the team for all the work that has been done.

The Board

- (i) noted the Tenant Engagement Update Report 2022/23 and progress made in relation to the Engage strategy; and**
- (ii) made no recommendations on strategic or operational activity.**

(iii) Q4 KPIs – Operational Report (L1/2)

The Board received Report B/6(iii)/JULY/23 from the Chief Operating Officer which sets out performance in the last quarter The following areas were highlighted:

- Long term voids are still in the same position but there has been improvement at the end of year. Our lets are happening quicker, but long terms ones will askew this.
- Operating surplus - when you take out the adjustment for the equalisation fund it is close to target.
- Leadership will be focusing on the KPIs that need improvement at monthly meetings.
- Emergency repairs – there was a reporting error which has now been fixed and the target is now met.
- Arrears – there were some issues with the rents being put into incorrect lines, and some technical arrears were in the report. Nothing underlying to report.
- Complaints – the move from reporting on Cirrus to CX proved problematic therefore amendments have been made to the process. A learning process has been put in place for staff. Tenants are involved in the compliments and complaints working group. Complaints are now monitored and discussed at Leadership Team meetings.

The Board suggested looking at the wording of “percentage of complaints in stage 1 that were answered within timescales” what does this mean - it was confirmed this means resolved. The Director of Customer Experience will look at this.

KPI for quarter 1 will go to the next Audit & Risk Committee in September and thereafter to Board.

The Board noted the 2022/23 Q4 KPIs

3736. Governance

- (i) Confidential Item: Redacted

(ii) Confidential Item: Redacted Scheme of Delegation and Committee Remits

(iii) Confidential Item: Redacted

(iv) Annual Assurance Statement 2023

The Board received Report B/7(iv)/JULY/23 from the Governance Manager.

The 2 standards for scrutiny for this year are Standards 1 and 4. The proposal is the Executive Management Team look at the evidence bank, which should provide assurance we have all the information we need should the regulator come in. Any scores marked as high or medium are added to an action plan.

In addition to Standards 1 and 4, there is letter from the Regulator which focuses on Health & Safety Compliance and Human Rights. The Executive Management Team will look at the evidence back and bring the findings to the September Board. The Company Secretary will open the Board meeting.

A Board meeting will be arranged on the back of September Audit & Risk Committee meeting which will recommend for approval the Assurance Statement and Procurement Strategy and board will thereafter approve and sign off; and approve appointment of a Chair.

Board members noted the content of this report and agreed the proposed Standards for scrutiny for the 2023 Statement.

3737. Minutes

(i) Approval of Minutes and Confidential Minutes

The Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2023, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chair.

(ii) Action List

The Board noted the Action List.

3728. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 28 September 2023

The next Board meeting will take place on Thursday 28 September 2023 at the AGM and be held at Leonardo Murrayfield Hotel, 187 Clermiston Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6UG.

3729. Any Other Business None.