

# FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting |MINUTES

**Date:** Tuesday 14 March 2023  
**Time:** 6:00pm  
**Location:** Via 'Teams'

## Members Present

Lesley McInnes,  
Chair

Carl Patching,  
Vice Chair

Ian Fosbrooke,  
Secretary

Nile Istephan,  
Member

David Cargill,  
Member

Nicola McLelland,  
Member

Fiona Mustarde,  
Member

Jim Convery,  
Member

## In Attendance

Kirsty Morrison,  
Chief Executive Officer  
(CEO)

Andrew Martin,  
Dir. of Finance & Corporate  
Services  
(DF&CS)

Audrey Murphey,  
Interim Dir. of Governance &  
Business Improvement  
(DG&BI)

Maureen Knight,  
Dir. of Customer Services &  
Property  
(DCS)

Caroline Madden,  
Head of Property Services  
(HPS)

Laura Morgan,  
Corporate Governance Officer  
(CGO) – minutes

## ACTION

### 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies had been received from Angela Currie, Clea Warner, and Laurie MacLeod.

### 2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

2.1 No conflicts of interest were noted.

### 3. STANDING ITEM

#### 3.1 Board Remit

3.1.1 The meeting met the quorum as set out within the Board Remit.

### 4. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

#### 4.1 Confidential

**ACTION**

*The Leadership Team joined the meeting at this point.*

**5. PREVIOUS MEETING**

5.1 Minute of Board Meeting: 25 January 2023

5.1.1 The minute of the last meeting was approved. This was proposed by Jim Convery and seconded by Nile Istephan.

5.2 Matters Arising

5.2.1 A written update on the action items had been provided and was reviewed. All actions were complete or in progress.

**6. DECISION PAPERS**

6.1 Q3 Performance Report

6.1.1 The DC&PS and the DF&CS presented the Q3 Performance Report to the Board.

6.1.2 The Board enquired as to why the target average time of 8 hours to complete emergency repairs was higher than the national average of 4 hours. The DC&PS advised that this was due to the challenging geographic area that the Society covered which meant that it would be impossible for some contractors to meet a target of 4 hours.

6.1.3 There was a discussion about the increasing number of last minute housing refusals in hard to let areas such as Caithness. The DC&PS advised that this was unusual and suggested it might be the result of people being worried about the costs of running a household in the current economic climate.

6.1.4 The Board enquired as to the volume of complaints received by the Society. The DC&PS advised that volumes tended to be steady but that Q3 had seen a dip in those received. The DC&PS accepted an **action** to include the volume of complaints received in future performance reports.

**Maureen Knight**

6.1.5 The Board requested that an executive summary be provided at the start of the performance report. The CEO advised that the Leadership Team was currently developing an improved performance report and that this would include an executive summary. The Leadership Team accepted this as an **action**.

**L'ship Team**

6.1.6 The DC&PS commented that the forthcoming customer services redesign would support improvements in service delivery which would be reflected within future performance reporting.

6.1.7 The Board approved the Q3 Performance Report. This was proposed by Nile Istephan and seconded by David Cargill.

## ACTION

### 6.2 Q3 Management Accounts

- 6.2.1 The DF&CS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the Q3 Management Accounts. It was noted that an update on the development programme was now included within this report.
- 6.2.2 There was a discussion about reactive maintenance costs continuing to be ahead of the revised forecast as a result of increased volumes compared to budget. The DF&CS suggested that an underspend in cyclical maintenance might potentially be contributing to an increase in reactive repairs. The DC&PS advised that there had been an increase in reactive repairs resulting the raised awareness and inspection of damp and mould issues. The CEO added that partners in the Highlands were also reporting significant increase in reactive repairs spend.
- 6.2.3 The Board approved the Q3 Management Accounts. This was proposed by Nile Istephan and seconded by Carl Patching.

### 6.3 Albyn Group Business Plan 2022-27, Year 2 update 2023/24

- 6.3.1 The CEO spoke to her paper and sought Board approval of the Albyn Group Business Plan 2022-27, Year 2 update 2023/24.
- 6.3.2 The CEO noted that the update reflected the external challenges faced by the Society, but also recognised the considerable achievements of the past year. The strategic objectives had been updated and the 'measures of success' would be incorporated into the Delivery Plan, with progress reported to Board.
- 6.3.3 Carl Patching, Chair of Albyn Enterprises Ltd, requested the DF&CS provide Board with an overview of developments to move the company into dormancy. The DF&CS advised that it was hoped to have the move to dormancy completed by close of the financial year.
- 6.3.4 The Board approved the Albyn Group Business Plan 2022-27, Year 2 update 2023/24. This was proposed by David Cargill and seconded Jim Convery.

### 6.4 Budget 2023/24

- 6.4.1 The DF&CS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the recommendations within it.
- 6.4.2 There was a discussion about the ratio of investment in infrastructure as compared to the capital spend on development, and if the former was enough to implement the data management systems required by the organisation. It was suggested that as most systems were now cloud based, the real investment required was in having good data analysts to interpret data captured. The Board advised that underinvestment in this area was a potential risk to the Society.

## ACTION

6.4.3 The Board enquired as to the timescales for fixing the variable rate facility as proposed. The DF&CS advised that this could be completed within a week and assured Board that he would consult with the Society treasury advisors ATFS throughout the process. There was a general discussion about the benefits of fixed and variable rates.

6.4.4 The Board approved the following recommendations:

- The proposed budget for 2023/24.
- The long-term financial forecast presented alongside the annual budget for 2023/24 for the next 5 and 30 years.
- The recommendation to move the current RBS facility B with a balance of £9.047million to a fixed rate dependent upon current pricing.

This was proposed by Jim Convery and seconded by Fiona Mustarde.

## 6.5 Former Tenant Write Offs

6.5.1 The DF&CS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the recommendations within it.

6.5.2 The Board approved the recommendation to write off £13,399.83 rent and £146.98 non-rent debt. This was proposed by Jim Convery and seconded by David Cargill.

## 6.6 Highland Residential (Inverness) Ltd Strategic Direction

6.6.1 The DG&BI spoke to her paper and sought Board approval of the recommendations within it.

6.6.2 The Chair of Board thanked the HRIL Chair of Board, David Cargill, and HRIL Director, Carl Patching, for their efforts in overseeing the development of the strategic direction of HRIL.

6.6.3 The Board approved the strategic direction of HRIL for the next three years as follows:  
Cease the selling of open market private sales and concentrate on sales for the affordable market only.

- Maintain the current factoring numbers of owner occupiers. New clients will have to meet the criteria as set out within the conclusion section.
- Maintain being the letting agent for MMR properties and the current 16 private lets, but close applications for any new private lettings from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.
- Explore growth of MMR opportunities by using other resources than just new supply.

This was proposed by Jim Convery and seconded by Nile Istephan.

**ACTION**

6.7 Aviemore Biomass Service Charge

6.7.1 The DC&PS spoke to her paper regarding proposed options for an increase to the Aviemore biomass service charge. Approval of an option for the increase had been granted by the Chair outwith the meeting.

6.7.2 Board homologation was sought for the Chair's approval of the Aviemore biomass service charge increase as follows:

- Daily standing charge to be removed
- Albyn's charge to increase to 7p / kWh.

The Board homologated this approval.

**7. POLICIES**

7.1 None.

**8. INFORMATION PAPERS**

8.1 None

**9. APPROVED MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR NOTING**

9.1 Remuneration Committee: 24 November 2022

9.1.1 The Remuneration Committee met on 16 February 2023 and approved the minute of its last meeting on 30 August 2022.

9.1.2 The Board noted the minute.

9.2 Albyn Enterprises Ltd: 24 November 2022

9.2.1 The Board met on 23 February 2023 and approved the minute of its last meeting on 24 November 2022.

9.2.2 The Board noted the minute.

**10. AOB**

10.1 Regulatory Status Update

10.1.1 The CEO gave a verbal update to the Board on the regulatory status of the Society which had been changed from 'compliant under review,' to 'compliant'. The Society was

**ACTION**

still systemically important and so the CEO would continue to engage with the Regulator on a monthly basis. A staff briefing would be issued to inform staff.

- 10.1.2 The Board welcomed the update, and the Chair noted her thanks to the staff team and Board in achieving this result.

- 10.2 Board Member eLearning

- 10.2.1 The DG&BI gave a verbal update on the eLearning platform for Board Members. All Members should have received a login email from LearnPro and been issued with a mandatory course to complete. It was requested that Board Members contact the DG&BI should they not have received this email.

- 10.3 Asset Management Strategy Follow Up

- 10.3.1 The DC&PS gave a verbal update on the Asset Management Strategy. Following the dedicated session with Board on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023, the DC&PS requested that any Members who had any further queries, feedback, or suggestions to contact her as soon as possible. A Special Board meeting had been called for the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 to approve the Asset Management Strategy.

- 10.4 Board Review

- 10.4.1 The Chair gave a verbal update on the Board review process. Collective Board surveys were due for completion by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023, and Members were encouraged to return these. Individual appraisal sessions would be held at the end of April / May 2023 and invitations would be sent to Members in due course.

- 10.5 Co-optee

- 10.5.1 The Chair advised that Scott MacLeod, who was currently Co-optee to the Audit & Risk Committee, was to be asked to attend Board meetings as well. The Board noted this point.

**11. DATES OF FUTURE BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 11.1 The dates of upcoming meetings were noted by the Board.

The meeting ended.