

BOARD MEETING UPDATE
BOARD PERFORMANCE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 9TH AUGUST 2023



CUSTOMER STORY

Our August Board meeting opened with a customer story where we heard about the impact on one customer's life of being able to move from a home where she felt trapped inside her own home into an accessible bungalow better suited to her needs and the needs of her family. The move has enabled her to live her life and regain her independence, going to university and now being able to get a job.

This opened up a wider conversation with board members about the challenges and opportunity associated with being able to better identify adapted and adaptable homes within our housing stock and to work together with our local authority partners, NHS and other housing providers to actively ensure we make best use of the homes available across the county.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Chief Executive's report provided board members with a broad overview of some of the current issues affecting us at GCH as well as the wider housing sector and highlighted progress we have been making on our priorities. We noted.

- Completion last week of our refinancing exercise which has extended our borrowing in line with our 30-year business plan ensuring we retain financial capacity to continue to reinvest in improving our existing homes and work to meeting local housing need.
- We acknowledged the recent passing of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act and updated board on our ongoing approach to ensure ongoing compliance. We are currently undertaking a self-assessment against the recently published draft consumer standards.
- The range of activities we hosted across national ASB week focused on early resolution and collaborative approaches together with our partner agencies as well as an update on our involvement in the multiagency approach to tackling youth violence and knife crime in the city.
- Recent improvements that have been implemented in our approach to the proactive management of complaints and customer feedback. Board members sought assurance that the improvements are beginning to impact and wanted to understand more about the approach, which will be a focus at our next Customer Experience Committee.
- The changes that have been implemented within our repairs service designed to offer a more timely and proactive service, responding to customer feedback, for example, introducing engineers calling ahead to let customers know that

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they are on their way, this is reducing situations where we cannot access the home, and booking follow on jobs before we leave a customer's home.

- The end-to-end review of our approach to preparing homes for reletting through which we are focused on efficiency improvements and improvements in customer satisfaction.
- Progress on the implementation of Totalmobile, our new repairs management system which is on track for implementation in January 2024 as well as the introduction of RepairSense this autumn which will provide us with significantly improved data about our homes.
- Work on 1,000 stock condition surveys has started.
- Publication of an updated board skills, succession and recruitment policy ahead of recruitment which will be undertaken in the autumn.
- A number of actions completed arising from our new people strategy including the successful introduction of a new Recruitment portal and onboarding platform, refreshed induction arrangements to welcome new starters to the business, a refreshed pay policy, the introduction of a colleague handbook and the launch of colleague voice.
- The successful transition onto a new defined contribution pension scheme for all colleagues
- Retention of 1 star in the annual Be heard Best Companies survey.
- A number of recent awards including Women in Housing Employer of the Year and the award for our Compliance Manger as Women in Safety & Compliance

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The board received and reviewed the annual financial statements for both Gloucester City Homes and Nerva Homes presented by our Director of Finance and External Auditor. These have previously been scrutinised by our Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee. We noted that we have received a clean audit letter on this occasion. Board members discussed a number of post year-end adjustments and sought assurance that they would be appropriately reflected within the final published accounts.

COMPANY SECRETARY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Following the recent departure of our Company Secretary who has relocated with their family the board formally approved the appointment of Rebecca Andrews as our new Company Secretary with effect from 25th September. Anne Southern continues as our Deputy Company Secretary.

The board agreed to co-opt onto the board Nilesh Bhudia-Luke, Nilesh was originally recruited last autumn initially joining the Customer Experience Committee. He will continue to serve on the Customer Experience Committee as well as joining the Colleague and Culture Committee.

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The board had a focused conversation reviewing our combined quarterly performance report, reflecting both on those areas where we continue to see strong performance as well as seeking to better understand areas where we have seen

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performance dip below our target. We had a detailed conversation about our approach to customer satisfaction and ongoing work to ensure we have better insight and are able to improve our response to customers including the recent introduction of our 'Making Every Contact Count' campaign, the role out of our Customer Charter and the establishment of a new centralised Customer Satisfaction Team where highlighted.

The full KPI report received by Board is available on our website via the link below,

[Performance - At GCH we have set targets to monitor our performance](#)

We acknowledge a priority now is to build upon our existing customer voice channels and mechanisms to ensure breadth as well as depth. Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee have agreed to focus their next deep dive on customer voice.

Board discussed both our health and safety and compliance performance, noting actions in place and approaches in place to continue to see a tightening in oversight.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

In reviewing the management accounts, the board noted the positive position against budget, recognising the impact of right to buy sales and shared ownership sales. Whilst it was recognised that there is an overspend in repairs the improvement in the latest management account was noted with a discussion on the operational changes that have been implemented seeking to manage the budget whilst retaining / improving quality, including reducing reliance upon contractors.

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Significant work has been undertaken in recent months developing our new People Strategy, developed around the 3 themes of 'Attract', 'Enable' and 'Include'. The strategy has previously been discussed at the Colleague and Culture Committee where members had an opportunity to discuss in more detail the drivers behind the strategy and the detailed action plan aligned with it. Members welcomed the new approach and acknowledged the energy and buzz associated with it. The board sought assurance that the strategy was more than just positive words and discussed the mechanisms in place to monitor the impact and outcomes.

QUARTERLY RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

The refreshed quarterly Risk management report was discussed by Board, noting changes highlighted by the leadership team and the mitigations in place. Board discussed the progress made over the last 12 months in developing a new approach to risk management which has created more of a focus on the mitigations and management of risk at a practical level both strategically and operationally. The board recognised the thread between the risk management framework and the board risk appetite which we began to develop at our last Board Strategy and Development Day and will follow up in October.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

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Towards the end of the meeting Chairs updates were received from each of the board committee meetings held over the last quarter and the board action log reviewed. Before we ended the meeting board members took the opportunity to thank Andrew, our outgoing Director of Finance for all his hard work over the last few years, in particularly the work associated with the continued development of our business plan and all the associated work that has enabled us to successfully refinance in what has been a challenging year in the financial markets.

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