

**Minutes of the joint meeting of the Boards of  
Rooftop Housing Group Limited and  
Rooftop Housing Association Limited  
held at 9.30 am on Wednesday 25 January 2023  
at Dumbleton Hall Hotel, Dumbleton and electronically**

<b>Members present:</b>	Sally Higham (Chair)	Boris Worrall	Group Chief Executive (GCE)
	Colum Goodchild (Vice Chair and Senior Independent Director) (CG)	David Hannon	Executive Director - Investment (EDI)
	Claire-Elaine Arthurs Payne (CEAP)	Sam Morgan	Executive Director - Resources (EDR)
	Lenna Cumberbatch-Nichols (LCN)	Lisa Nicholls	Executive Director - Operations (EDO)
	Wayne Harris (WH)	Caroline Allen	Head of Governance (HoG)
	Myron Hrycyk (MH)	Andrew Ledger	Head of Risk and Assurance (HoRA)
	Tessa Rollings (TR)	Rob Bryan	Vantage (RB) (part) (via Microsoft Teams)
	Jonathan Wallbank (JW)	Will Simmons	Head of Property (HoProp) (part)
		Ruth Organ	Senior Governance Officer (SGO) (minutes)

**Action**

**3352 Apologies for absence**

There were apologies for absence received from Daisy Halford (DEH).

**3353 Declarations of interest**

Where members served on other bodies, their declaration of interest was taken as read.

All attendees declared an interest in agenda item 4.5.1 – annual salary increase review.

**3354 Any Other Business items**

There were no additional Any Other Business items raised.

The Chair read out a report provided by DEH on the Hemmingway gas explosion. DEH had advised that it had been a traumatic experience for all residents but the Rooftop team had attended the scene very soon after the incident happened and had looked after the wellbeing of all the residents, whether they were Rooftop customers or private owners. They had provided assistance above and beyond what they needed to do and continued to offer it to the Rooftop customers. The Chair added her thanks to DEH and her family for the support that they had provided to all the residents.

**3355 Draft minutes of the joint meeting of the Boards of RHG and RHA held on 23 November 2022**

**RHG and RHA:** It was **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes of the joint meeting of the Boards of RHG and RHA held on 23 November 2022 be approved.

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**CHAIR**

- 3356 Draft confidential minutes of the joint meeting of the Boards of RHG and RHA held on 14 December 2022**
- This item was minuted separately.
- 3357 Outstanding Actions List**
- RHG and RHA:** Members noted the progress on the Outstanding Actions List.
- 3358 Draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 11 January 2023**
- TR noted the discussion on the gas explosion incident and how there would be a debrief relating to business continuity at the next meeting. She highlighted the other key reports that the Committee discussed and the cyber risk walk through provided by the Head of Digital and ICT.
- RHG:** Members noted the contents of the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 11 January 2023.
- 3358.1 Minute number 1499: Discharge of Audit and Risk Committee responsibilities Q3 2022/23**
- RHG:** It was **RESOLVED** that the work of the Audit and Risk Committee during Q3 2022/23 in assessing the adequacy of internal controls be approved. This included DEH approval by email.
- 3358.2 Minute number 1501 External Auditor appointment – see minute number 3372 for board approval.**
- 3359 Draft confidential minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 11 January 2023**
- This item was minuted separately.
- 3359.1 Minute number 99: Annual salary increase review**
- This item was minuted separately.
- 3360 Group Chief Executive, Performance and Executive Team overview reports**
- The GCE reported on the key themes from the implications of the rent cap report to be discussed later in the meeting and the pressures to keep costs down. However, he noted the impact of the need to spend money on damp and mould cases and the installation of smoke alarms and CO detectors.
- He noted how the void loss figure was now under 4% and improving.
- The Chair commented on the regular conversations she held with the GCE and how there would be tough decisions to make over the next 12 months. The GCE added that there would need to be reputational management and the Board's tolerance of negative press may need to be higher. We needed to become factual and robust on our responses to the media and advise on the limitations of what we could do for customers in terms of landlord responsibilities.

The EDO and GCE explained the improved complaints processes with oversight and management provided by the Customer Experience Manager and the addition of a Key Performance Indicator recording the percentage of contacts made. The HoG added how the Governance team was monitoring the Housing Ombudsman (HO) referrals and how Rooftop was not afraid to question the HO where necessary. The HoRA stated that we were also following up with the HO against its timescales for reporting back to us. TR commented that the Audit and Risk Committee had discussed this area and a customer engagement and reputational risk walk through would be presented at its October meeting.

LCN queried the process for dealing with complaints from people who were not Rooftop customers and what types of areas the complaints were about. The EDO responded that the majority were related to Anti-Social Behaviour or estate management. The GCE noted that the Complaints Policy and process would be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee to include how we dealt with these non-customer complaints.

HoP

The EDO explained how social media channels were now monitored by the Customer Experience team to identify any potential escalation cases. The EDR added that out of hours monitoring of social media channels was being reviewed.

CEAP commented on the customer satisfaction figures, how we tracked our performance against the wider environment and whether improvements were due to our internal process or from the external environment. The EDO agreed to review how we reported on our performance tracked against the UK Customer Satisfaction Index. She added that the new tenant satisfaction measures were going live in April and would be reported on from April 2024.

EDO

CEAP stated that we needed to be cautious on reporting on the increasing number of complaints being logged as this may be due to the training of colleagues to identify and log cases better.

The GCE noted the Board challenge on customer satisfaction and further tracking and improved reporting would be provided. The HoG suggested that this would be most appropriate for the May meeting as we would be collecting the data from 1 April.

HoP

**3360.1 Performance**

The GCE noted the earlier discussion on customer satisfaction and voids performance. He commented that colleague turnover had stabilised with the right people being recruited into the right jobs and rent arrears was also performing well.

It was noted that the majority of the projects covered multiple years but were generally on track against this year.

**3360.2 Operations overview**

The EDO reported that the voids and relet times were improving and the repairs backlog was down to 90 jobs and expected to be completed within the next three weeks. MH noted the performance of Platform Property Care (PPC) to get to this stage of the backlog following the challenge by the Board. He asked that the thanks of the Board be passed onto them.

The resources at PPC for Rooftop was discussed and how one Full Time Equivalent post would move back to the core team once the backlog had been completed. The EDO added that it was expected that the use of sub-contractors would reduce to be used only for high value and void works. She advised that she would be meeting with PPC this week to manage the transition.

In response to a query from TR on comparable year on year data for former tenant arrears income collection, the EDO reported that this was a new workstream for Rooftop and there was no older data available.

**3360.3 Investment overview**

The EDI reported that Homes England was being supportive of the Almonry Close scheme in terms of grant payments, the team were ahead of target on the delivery of the development programme and that Wychavon District Council was providing grant for Rooftop to provide 10 homes for Ukrainian families which would then be returned to us as social housing.

An update on the St Oswald’s development was provided by the EDI with a final draft of the contract expected yesterday and he would update the Board when it had been agreed by all parties.

The EDI explained how Category One and Two hazards were managed when discovered as part of the Stock Condition Survey (SCS). CEAP asked for a breakdown on the hazards being identified as part of the Compliance, Health and Safety report.

HoRA

The EDI summarised the progress of the planned works programme and how figures were being calculated for the 2023/24 budget. The EDR added that the key data around lifecycle replacement and current condition from the SCS would feed into the Financial Business Plan (FBP) in May. The EDI advised that the data would be independently validated next year. The EDR commented that the budget was being worked on and some works may need to be pushed back to allow us to meet our covenant targets.

The Ukrainian family homes funding was discussed and how some of the older properties due for disposal could be improved to reduce the need to build all of the 10 homes.

There was a discussion on the decisions that needed to be taken regarding the Band C works programme, planned maintenance programme and those properties identified with a Category One hazard that would need work to resolve these issues. The EDI explained how the full analysis could not be made until the SCS had been completed and the data available. The GCE added that the Asset Management Strategy would be presented to the Board at the May meeting, when all the data would be available to set out the various streams of the planned maintenance programmes. The EDR noted that the FBP would also be discussed by the Board at this meeting.

WH queried the use of older properties for the Ukrainian family homes as his preference was to build new homes so that we met the net zero carbon homes target and have properties at the right standard.

**3360.4 Resources overview**

The EDR commented on the new finance system which went live in December with some minor issues but that the quarter end return to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) had been successfully completed using the new system.

She noted that a review of the Communications team tasks was being carried out following the departure of the Head of Service before Christmas.

The Chair commented on the positive result on the staff turnover performance.

MH praised the achievement in implementing the new finance system and how lessons learnt from this could be utilised against future projects.

**RHG and RHA:** Members noted the content of the Group Chief Executive, Performance and Executive Team overview reports.

**3361 Implications of the Rent Cap on the Financial Business Plan (Confidential)**

This item was minuted separately.

**3362 Supported Housing Service Review (Confidential)**

This item was minuted separately.

RB joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams and the HoProp in person.

**3363 Customer Voice**

The EDO noted the ongoing re-engineering of the customer engagement framework with Michael Hill of TPAS.

In response from a question by CEAP on communicating to those customers still waiting in the repairs backlog, the EDO explained that they were being updated regularly. The EDO commented that customer communication plans were in development for all service areas and within the repairs improvement project we would be exploring further ways to improve customer communication. The EDO gave the example of text messages, 'on the doorstep' follow up appointments and a technology trail that would all improve communication. It was agreed that a review of the communications to customers on when the repairs service would move back to Business as Usual waiting times be undertaken as part of the repairs improvement project work.

**RHG and RHA:** Members noted the content of the Customer Voice report.

**3364 Value for Money presentation by Rob Bryan, Vantage**

RB explained the peer group and how Rooftop was part of The Performance Indicator Club which would be sharing information on forecast views on what was expected over the next five years.

He gave a detailed presentation on the key trends from the 2021/22 figures in the sector and Rooftop against peer figures. He commented that the repairs costs were expected to increase through to 2024/25 by 10 - 11% to inflation but stabilise in 2025/26.

The Chair thanked RB for the clear presentation.

HoProp

There was a discussion on the savings of using PPC and how all housing associations had the same pressures whichever delivery model they used.

**RHG:** Members noted the content of the Value for Money presentation.

RB left the meeting.

**3365 Compliance, Health and Safety Report to 30 November 2022**

The HoRA commented on the new additions of the damp and mould and Fire Risk Assessment actions figures in the report.

CEAP asked for peer benchmarking on damp and mould reporting. The EDO noted that she was not sure whether these figures were currently available within the sector. However, it would be difficult to achieve a like for like comparison due to the variance of stock age and archetype for example. The EDI suggested contacting Vantage as to whether this was possible.

EDO

The EDO explained how she didn't expect cases of damp and mould to reduce at this time and there was training provided to the customer-based teams on how to identify issues and report them. All properties that had no access issues and capped gas supplies were being reviewed on a weekly basis.

There was a discussion on the ongoing work with gas compliance and how it had not been 100% for some time. The processes were discussed and how it was working well, regularly hitting 99.6% to 99.9% compliance. WH suggested that if there was evidence that we were following our processes even if there was a property that did not have a valid certificate, we could state that we were 100% compliant with the process. CG commented that it was important that we reviewed the costs and benefits of changing our processes to explore if we could hit the 100% compliance target, especially in light of the gas explosion incident. MH, as the Board representative for Health and Safety, agreed that we review what the best process was. CEAP noted that data was available on certificates and that we maintain documentation that processes were followed correctly to maintain the safety of the properties. The HoRA agreed to provide an update on this for the next board meeting. The EDO clarified that running a nine or 10 month increased programme would not likely achieve 100% compliance due to the reality of access issues and delays in court actions. She clarified that compliance at 99.96% meant that two properties were out of date with the longest being overdue since November 2022.

HoRA

**RHG and RHA:** Members noted the assurance given in the report and actions being taken to address areas of non-compliance.

**3366 Q3 2022-23 Risk update**

In response to a query from CG the HoRA explained that the risk of the viability regrade to V2 had occurred and he would be reviewing the inherent risk against this regrade. He added that the renegotiation of the contract with PPC was now included on the list. JW advised that the Audit and Risk Committee had discussed these changes at the last meeting.

**RHG and RHA:** Members noted the content of the Q3 2022-23 Risk update.

**3367 Damp, Condensation and Mould risk walk through**

The HoProp gave a presentation on the current processes on identifying damp, condensation and mould cases. The GCE noted that the QL housing management system had a new category to identify and record these cases with reporting tools available on these figures. The HoRA added that as part of Decent Homes reporting we needed to have an auditable trail of when a Category One hazard had been dealt with. He added that there was no move to self-refer to the RSH, as compared to the recent CO detector requirements.

The HoProp explained that this issue would remain a high risk for some time. Currently there was identification of cases with the Building Inspectors being trained to carry these out. They would then sample the works carried out by contractors. He noted that there was the potential to employ a specifically trained surveyor instead of using the current external surveyors.

The HoProp commented on how customers were being supported with hints and tips provided to them to eliminate the build up of damp and mould in their properties.

The HoProp explained how Category One hazard cases would become case studies and similar properties would be checked. The root cause of the issue was key for colleagues to identify. The EDO added that those customers who did not report repairs would also be contacted as these properties could be harbouring issues. This would be picked up through our new approach to periodic tenancy audits that will go live in April 2023.

The EDO noted the information that was provided to customers via the website and on sign up.

The GCE stated that this was a challenge for Rooftop and the new approach was needed to be embedded, which would take time.

The EDO added that the spotlight reports provided by the Housing Ombudsman on key areas were reviewed against our current performance and a gap analysis carried out. This resulted in early policy and procedure work in this area that would be further refined based upon new requirements and learning.

**RHG:** Members noted the content of the Damp, Condensation and Mould risk walk through.

The HoProp left the meeting.

**3368 RHG Development Strategy 2021-26 update**

The EDI explained that it was a light touch review of the Strategy with the removal of reference to the Young People Service target audience.

The EDI noted that reference was still made to working to provide housing for older people but not as an ExtraCare model, following a query from TR.

In response to a query from JW on land banking risks, the EDI explained how the document was commercially available so there were no specifics made on land banking and how the Land Bank Strategy would be temporary ending.

There was a discussion on meeting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion standards through community group partnerships and those contractors procured sharing our values. The EDI noted the procurement of contractors was through a framework and they needed to demonstrate a social value and some properties were also built to individual customer requirements. Ethnic groups were targeted and specific projects were generally approved by the Board due to the high cost nature of these. LCN asked that contractors provide us with their EDI standards. The GCE noted the discussion and how the Equality Impact Assessment would be improved, along with specific sections on EDI and community/customer involvement added to future strategies.

EDO/  
HoG

**RHA:** It was **RESOLVED** that the revised RHG Development Strategy 2021-26 be approved. This included DEH approval by email.

**3369 Dorothy Terry House disposal**

There was a discussion on the proposed disposal of Dorothy Terry House.

**RHG and RHA:** It was **RESOLVED** that the disposal of Dorothy Terry House be approved. This included DEH approval by email.

**3370 Carbon Monoxide detector works**

The EDO noted the key points of the report.

**RHA:** It was **RESOLVED** that additional budget of £178,000 for the installation of CO detectors be approved. This included DEH approval by email.

**3371 Temporary admission of Stonewater 2 to Cost Sharing Group (Confidential)**

This item was minuted separately.

**3372 External Auditor appointment**

The EDR advised that the Audit and Risk Committee had discussed the appointment and Committee Members JW and WH have been part of the appointment panel.

**RHG and RHA:** It was **RESOLVED** that the appointment of BDO LLP as external auditors for the financial year ended 31 March 2023 be approved. This included DEH approval by email.

**3373 Joint meeting of the Boards Forward Plan**

JW noted that there were currently several big topic reports proposed for the May board meeting agenda.

**RHG and RHA:** Members noted the content of the Joint meeting of the Boards Forward Plan report.

**3374 New or emerging risks**

There was no comment made by the HoRA due to the risk workshop being held following this meeting.

**3375 Any Other Business**

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1.02 pm.

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**CHAIR**