

## **LEASE – The Leasehold Advisory Service**

### **Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 online via Microsoft Teams**

#### **Present:**

Wanda Goldwag (Interim Chair) (WG), Steve Jackson (SJ) and Victoria Elvidge (VE)

#### **In attendance:**

Anthony Essien (Chief Executive) (AE), Nicolette Davis (ND) (Note taker), Michael Tourville (MT) Beever Struthers (for Part)

**Observer:** Sandra Simoni (SS), MHCLG

#### **1. 2020/07/1 Welcome and apologies for absence**

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

#### **2. 2020/07/2 Declarations of interest**

2.1 WG declared that she is an advisor to Smedvig Venture Capital; a lay member of the QC appointments panel; a Non-Executive Director of the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust; Chair of the Financial Conduct Authority's Consumer Panel; an Associate Non-Executive Director at Whittington Health NHS Trust. She is also the Independent Panel Chair of the Modification Panel for the Joint Office of Gas Transporters.

2.2 SJ declared that he is a member of the Audit Committee of Southway Housing Trust, a not-for-profit charitable organisation that is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. SJ makes the comment for the record as alongside its main social housing rental activities, it is also a freeholder that has dealings with leaseholders through their low-cost home ownership activities.

2.3 VE declared that she is Chairing the Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group.

2.4 VE, SJ and AE all declared that they are long leaseholders.

#### **3. 2020/07/3 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

3.1 The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were approved as a true and accurate copy.

**The Chair recommended MT present Paper 5, item 7a**

#### **4. 2020/07/7a Draft 2019-20 LEASE and Lease Conferences Audited Accounts**

4.1 MT reported to the Board that the audit went smoothly and there were no concerns. After discussion, it was agreed that the dormant company Lease Conferences Ltd should be closed within the next 12 months (**ACTION AE**)

4.2 AE notified the Board that the narrative in the draft audited accounts required final amendment. The Board requested that once the amendments were made, the draft should be re-submitted to the Board and Beever Struthers before submission to MHCLG (**ACTION AE**)

**At this stage MT left the meeting**

#### **5. 2020/07/4 Matters arising and action points from previous meetings**

5.1 The Board noted the paper

#### **6. 2020/07/5 Chair and Chief Executive's Report**

6.1 The paper was noted and WG further updated the Board that:

- Anne Frost has now retired, and John Hall is currently acting as interim Director;
- MHCLG's review of LEASE is still ongoing; and
- WG and VE have had their terms extended by the Secretary of State for a further 12 months, and MHCLG is in the process of reviewing the extension of SJ's term. There are currently no plans to recruit new Board members.

**7. 2020/07/6a Performance Report to June**

7.1 The Board noted the performance to June and congratulated LEASE's staff for their good performance and expressed their admiration for doing so whilst dealing with ongoing challenges. Management was directed to forward the Board's appreciation to staff. **(ACTION AE)**

7.2 The Board expressed the importance of maintaining training standard levels and suggested that AE listen to advisers calls in addition to existing quality measures. **(ACTION AE)**

**8. 2020/07/7b Draft 2019-20 Auditor's Management Letter and LEASE and Lease Conferences Draft 2019-20 Letters of Representations**

8.1 The Board approved the Auditor's Management Letter and the Draft 2019-20 Letters of Representations for LEASE and Lease Conferences.

**9. 2020/07/7c Draft 2019-20 Regulatory Compliance Report**

9.1 The Board approved the Regulatory Compliance Report.

**10. 2020/07/7d Finance Report to June**

10.1 The Board noted the paper.

**11. 2020/7/08a Future Work Plan and Meeting Dates**

11.1 The Board approved the work plan and requested that the Board meeting scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be rearranged; and that Board meeting dates for 2021 are agreed and entered into diaries **(ACTION ND)**

**12. 2020/07/8b Any Other Business**

12.1 AE raised the migration of the customer database and web applications into the Cloud. The Board requested that management submit a mini business case for the migration. **(ACTION AE)**

12.2 The Board agreed that the Letter of Intention for the move to 10 South Colonnade should not be signed and submitted to GPA. **(ACTION AE)**

12.3 After some discussion the Board agreed that Beever & Struthers should be reappointed for one year, subject to written confirmation from MHCLG confirming that this will be compliant with procurement rules. **(ACTION AE)**

**Next Board meeting date and time: Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 at 12.30pm online via Microsoft Teams**

