

LEASE – The Leasehold Advisory Service

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 23rd September 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)

Observer: Sandra Simoni (SS), MHCLG

1. 2020/09/1 Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

2. 2020/09/2 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. 2020/09/3 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Board meeting held on 20th July 2020

3.1 The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 20th July 2020 were approved as a true and accurate copy.

4. 2020/09/4 Matters arising and action points from previous meetings

4.1 The paper was noted and AE notified the Board that GPA continue to seek LEASE's formal commitment for 10 South Colonnade, the Board advised AE to inform GPA that more time is needed and that a commitment cannot be given at this time.

5. 2020/09/5 Chair and Chief Executive's Report

5.1 The Board asked for confirmation that all sector developments noted in the paper have been added to the LEASE website. AE informed the Board that this had been completed however he would need to confirm that the Welsh Government's Building Safety Update had been added. **(ACTION AE)**

5.2 WG updated the Board that

- Meeting with new Director's for Leasehold & Private Rented Sector, Caroline Crowther and Charlotte Spencer will now take place on Tuesday 29th September 2020; and
- The Project Review Board is scheduled to meet on Wednesday 30th September 2020.

6. 2020/09/6a Performance Report to August

- 6.1 The Board noted the performance to August, and after some discussion agreed it would be a nice gesture to provide staff with a one-off meal voucher, however this would be subject to any spending controls required by MHCLG **(ACTION AE)**

The Board asked AE to check if LEASE is eligible for reduced business rates as part of the rent payment to GPA **(ACTION AE)**

7. 2020/09/6b Business Case for Cloud Migration

- 7.1 The Board approved the business case, but the project cannot proceed until written confirmation is received from MHCLG that a business case seeking exemption from the spend controls is not required. **(ACTION AE)**

The Board also sought clarification on a) liability under the ongoing costs and what the break terms would be; and b) the cost incurred for each month of the project. **(ACTION AE)**

8. 2020/09/7a Finance Report to August

- 8.1 The Board noted the paper and requested that AE contact the Welsh Government over the delay in receiving Q1 2020/21 GiA payment. **(ACTION AE)**

9. 2020/09/8a Future Work Plan and Meeting Dates

- 9.1 The Board approved the work plan and agreed the date for July 2021 meeting.

10. 2020/07/8b Any Other Business

- 10.1 SS notified the Board that policy addressing leasehold and freehold abuses were now part of Lord Greenhalgh's ministerial responsibilities.

Next Board meeting date and time: Wednesday 18th November 2020 at 12.30pm online via Microsoft Teams

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W.C.', located at the bottom left of the page.