



Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 9 December 2008 at 4.00 pm at 2c New Mart Road, Edinburgh.

Present:	Mr R Robertson (Chairman)	In attendance:	Mrs H Bayne
	Mr E Banks		Mr C Culross
	Mr T Clark		Mrs B Higgins
	Mr A Colston		Ms E Johnston
	Mr P Foreman		Ms M Middleton
	Ms W Hayhurst		Mr J Pollock
	Mr J Hinton		Mr C Sanderson
	Mr D McMillan		Ms J Wilson (Minutes)
	Mr J O'Neill		

BUSINESS

- | | Action |
|--|---------------|
| 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | |
| None | |
| 2. APOLOGIES | |
| Apologies were received from Mr Macneill, Mr Reidford and Mr Esslemont (Leave of Absence) | |
| 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2008 | |
| The minutes were approved: | |
| Moved: Mr Clark | |
| Seconded: Mr Banks | |
| 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2008 | |
| 4.1 Millarston Drive Paisley | |
| CONFIDENTIAL | |
| 4.2 Strategic Action Plan | |
| The Board noted that the review of the Customer Service Centre had been carried out and an action plan prepared. The Strategic Action Plan had been updated accordingly. | |

4.4 Key Performance Indicators

The Board accepted the clarification of the staff turnover statistics as originally reported to the November Board meeting and that future reports will make the cumulative position clear in the column headings.

CC

4.5 Former Board Members Reception

Mr Sanderson proposed that a Dinner should be held in honour of Mr Stephen-Samuels. **The Board agreed** and Mr Sanderson confirmed he would investigate dates. Mr Sanderson reported that he had not yet been able to get in touch with Ms Sibbald and Mr Leask.

CS

4.6 Linstone Maintenance Costs

Mr Robertson confirmed that a lunch had been held with Linstone Committee Members on Monday 8th December. Mr Robertson, Mr Foreman, Mr Clark, Mrs McMillan and Mr Sanderson had attended the lunch. Linstone's Committee Members had advised that Ms Adele Fraser (Linstone's Managing Director) had been instructed to review the advantages of joining the Link group (or, indeed, any other group) particularly in light of the economic and other changes that had taken place in the last two years.

The Board noted that the likelihood of Linstone joining Link now seemed remote and only "essential" work would be undertaken by Link until the outcome of the review was known (expected end of January 2009)

4.7 RBS Loan Facility

Mr Hall advised that short term fixed interest rates were around 2.6% and these were slightly lower than current short term floating LIBOR rates. As a further cut in bank base rates was expected **the Board agreed to roll over the floating rate loans for a further month and revisit the matter in January 2009.**

JNH

4.8 Any Other Matters Arising

4.8.1 Older Persons Advice Project – Chartered Institute of Housing Award

Mr Sanderson advised that although Linkwide had been commended the award had been won by a subsidiary of Riverside Housing Group.

4.8.2 Glasgow Commonwealth Games

Mr Sanderson advised the Board that the Consortium must submit its initial proposal to Glasgow City Council by 12th January 2009.

Mr Sanderson requested that the Board agreed to delegate responsibility to consider the proposal, as the submission date was before the next scheduled Board meeting. **The Board agreed that Ms Hayhurst, Mr Foreman and Mr Colston were delegated authority to approve the proposal**

CS

4.8.3 Torwoodlea, Larbert

Mrs Higgins advised the Board that the site at Larbert had now been approved for acquisition through the accelerated grant funding route.

5. LINKLIVING VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Voluntary Severance

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the 13 applications for voluntary severance, which would cost £41,899. HB/EJ

5.2 LinkLiving Terms and Conditions

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the recommendation to increase the salary protection period to two years, at a cost of £58,000 (to be “underwritten” by Link Group). HB/EJ

6. STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDING PLANS

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the submission of Strategy and Development Funding Plan (SDFP) – 2009 to 2014 to the Scottish Government (Various Local Authority Areas) and to the City of Edinburgh. BH

7. STANDING ORDERS

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the request to defer the review of the Standing Orders until March / April 2009.

8. LINK 30 –YEAR PROJECTIONS

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the recommendation to commence the procurement of additional loan facilities of up to £15M from RBS and Lloyds TSB. It was further agreed that the fees and margins charged by other lenders would be investigated in parallel with the procurement of additional facilities from Lloyds TSB and RBS. JNH

9. STRATEGIC AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Deferred to be discussed under agenda item 13.

10. LINK GROUP MANDATE – DUNFERMLINE BUILDING SOCIETY

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the existing officers and Board members who are authorised signatories for the Royal Bank of Scotland to be similarly nominated as authorised signatories for Link’s loan transactions with Dunfermline Building Society.

11. **SHELTERED HOUSING OFFICERS – WORKING TIME & NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE IMPLICATIONS**

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the recommendation that authority be delegated to the Directors of Housing and Technical Services and Human Resources, to negotiate a settlement with a view to avoiding costly employment tribunal proceedings. HB/ MBM

The Board also approved the request to delegate authority to the two Directors to settle up to a maximum of £50,000 and further agreed to delegate authority to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to resolve the dispute if agreement cannot be reached within the £50,000 figure.

12. **SUBSIDIARY BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

The Board considered the previously circulated report and approved the recommendation to appoint Mr Robert Lalely to the Board of Link Housing Association Ltd.

13. **RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Mr Foreman updated the Board on the recommendations of the Risk Management Meeting held earlier that day.

The Risk Management Committee recommended acceptance of the following projects:

Gracemount (A), Edinburgh
Gracemount (B), Edinburgh
Wauchope Square, Craigmillar, Edinburgh
Granville Street, Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire

The Board approved that the 4 projects listed above would be progressed further.

The Board also approved investment in two strategic opportunities:

*West Johnstone, Renfrewshire (£25,000 option)
Milton of Campsie, East Dunbartonshire (£20,000 option)*

The Board further approved delegated authority to RMC members to sign off The Thomas Mitchell Homes site at The Crescent Oakwood, Cumbernauld Village.

The Board also agreed in principle to housing stock acquisitions in Edinburgh and Glasgow through the accelerated HAG funding programme available from then Scottish Government.

14. **GROUP STRUCTURE REVIEW**

The Board discussed the previously circulated report and agreed that Larkfield should report on its performance directly to the Link Group Board. It was also agreed that it would be appropriate to involve Larkfield's Senior Officer in Senior Management Group Meetings when the subjects being discussed were relevant to Larkfield

It was agreed that debate on the group structure should be continued at the next Convenors Group meeting to be held early in 2009 CS
Ms Wilson confirmed that once Larkfield had set its meeting dates for 2009 these would be circulated to Board Members who should indicate which meetings they could attend. JW/
ALL

15. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Board considered and noted the previously circulated report.

16. SUB COMMITTEE REPORTING

16.1 Audit Committee

The Board considered and noted the previously circulated report.

16.2 Nominations Committee

The Board considered and noted the previously circulated report. It was noted that training modules were being developed.

17. FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The Board considered and noted the previously circulated report.

18. EXECUTION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS

The Board considered and noted the previously circulated report.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 Investors In People (IIP)

Mr Sanderson advised the Board that the Link Group had been successful in retaining its IIP status. The Chairman thanked all the staff for their hard work during the accreditation review process.

19.2 City of Edinburgh Council Authorised Signatories

The Board considered and approved the following delegated signatories as the persons authorised to sign application forms for project approvals for the City of Edinburgh Council.

<i>Craig Sanderson</i>	<i>Chief Executive</i>
<i>Neil Hall</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Colin Culross</i>	<i>Asset Management Director</i>
<i>Brenda Higgins</i>	<i>Director of Regeneration and Development</i>
<i>Maureen Middleton</i>	<i>Director of Housing and Technical Services</i>
<i>John McDowall</i>	<i>Development Manager</i>
<i>Lorraine Utterson</i>	<i>Finance Manager</i>

19.3 Action Group Investors In People (IIP)

Mr Sanderson advised the Board that he had seen a copy of the Action Group's IIP report. The Board noted that it was a very positive report and particularly encouraging as the Action Group were in discussions with LinkLiving regarding partnering opportunities.

19.4 LIFT Open Market Scheme

Mr Sanderson advised that the Scottish Government had designated a number of regions for the purpose of continuing the LIFT open market shared equity scheme. A Letter from the Scottish Government had been sent to all Housing Associations asking if they were interested in administering the expanded scheme.

The Board agreed that Link would register an interest for Lothian and the Borders, the West of Scotland region and Forth Valley / Tayside.

19.5 Scottish Government – Glasgow Homeless Services Thematic Inspection

The Board was advised that Link had been asked to participate in the inspection, as it was a national housing association operating in Glasgow. Substantial background information and a response to a question required to be submitted by 5th January 2009 and the Strategy and Business Support team would be preparing the submission.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 20th January 2009 at 4:00pm in the Sievwright Suite, 2c New Mart Road, Edinburgh.

The Meeting closed at 5.20pm.

“Investing in Affordable Housing: A Consultation”

Following the meeting Mr Sanderson gave a presentation on the consultation document, issued earlier in the day which outlined the Scottish Government's proposals with regard to Lead Developers, HAG competition, etc.