

NOTES FROM JOINT BOARDS AWAYDAY FRIDAY 29 APRIL 2022

Present:	Caitlin McCorry Leigh Eardley Vendula Pavlikova Campbell Whyte	David Welsh Nicola McCowan Hill Brian Reilly	Kevin Anderson Jim Sherval
Staff:	Heather Kiteley Jackie Grant John Murray	Gordon Cameron Lynda Hanna Ngeme Ntuli	Wendy Farmer Lynnmarie McAllister Barbara Seel
Apologies:	Anthony Gillespie Anne Fergusson Nicola Dobson Lorraine Charnley	Sean Doherty Victoria Hennessy Iain MacPhail	Mark Milne Liz McLean Charlotte Gray

Caitlin opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to what she hoped would be an informative day.

Ice Breaker – Jackie Grant

Board Members learned to sign their own names in British Sign Language.

BRILLIANT HOMES – CREATING MORE HOMES – Wendy Farmer / Barbara Seel

Having had a quiet Year 1 of the current Strategic Plan (due to Covid), the development team is now in Year 3. 117 homes were completed in Year 2, at Bonnington Mill and Heron Place (the first with deck access). Developments were shown on a map and then individually with photographs of sites and layouts.

Current on site developments (365 homes) include Waterfront Plaza (Ocean Drive) with a S.75 development where a developer is obliged to provide social housing if there are more than 12 homes; Bath Road (Salamander Street), Brunswick Road (turning the ground floor commercial into three residential flats); Telford Drive and Chestnut Street (Plot S).

116 homes are in the pipeline at Iona Street, Wellington Place, Constitution Street and Madeira Street. Potential development sites for future are Baltic Street, Lochend Butterfly Way and Industry Lane.

BRILLIANT HOMES – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – Barbara Seel / Wendy Farmer

Background to the policy, recently approved by the POLHA Board, was provided. The themes in the Strategic Plan are followed for the delivery plan. A key development will be the Passivhaus plan for Constitution Street which was outlined in detail.

BRILLIANT COMMUNITIES – STRENGTHENING A COMMUNITY VOICE, SUPPORTING WELLBEING - John Murray

Background to the team was provided, changing from the former TOiL team to Community Works, now Placemaking. The commercial opportunity which has been put on hold was explained; it is hoped to resurrect this in 12-18 months time. Some income generation will be via community benefits and fundraising.

Two greenspace projects are at feasibility stage – at Shrubhill and Madeira Place.

Training will be done on various levels: commercial, community, employability and for staff.

The community flat at Heron Place is being used by various groups and there is a project with Granton Community Gardens who are running various activities for residents. Pilton Youth & Children Project will run activities, mostly for children, between October and March. Previous issues with the area's children are disappearing with the introduction of the activities.

A recent bid for £20k with Edinburgh City Food, YMCA and Inspiring Leith has been successful.

It was noted that community benefit was now coming in, with a member of staff working on it. Wendy suggested it may be useful to separate this from construction costs. Caitlin asked if Board Members could help in this.

BRILLIANT COMPANY – DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING BRILLIANT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES - BRANDING – Heather Kiteley

In Charlotte's absence, Board Members were informed that OSCR approval to change the name had now been received. Plans are going ahead to hold an SGM in either May or June. There would be a gradual rollout of items, rather than a full scale replacement at once, rather waiting until things have reached the end of their useful life.

Board Members carried out an exercise on perceptions and then scored their Top Three perceptions they would like for Harbour in future.

Caitlin suggested community benefit monies could be used to assist with rebranding elements.

BRILLIANT COMPANY – DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING BRILLIANT SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES – DIGITAL – Lynnmarie McAllister and Lynda Hanna

In Lorraine's absence, Board Members heard about the background to this project and noted completion of several small, yet impactful projects.

In replacing the core system, it is hoped to include a tenant portal, landlord portal and remote payment options, with one seamless system seen by end users. The team is reaching the end of the tender process and should be able to announce a winning bidder shortly.

Heather asked the Board to consider (not for decision today) whether digital transactions for tenants and customers should be forced, encouraged or simply provided as an option.

OVERVIEW OF OUR STRATEGIC CHALLENGES AND COMPETING PRIORITIES – Gordon Cameron

Context to these was provided, including the increasing cost of maintenance. By 2030 it is anticipated costs will have doubled to £8 million. It is estimated it will cost £47k to bring a property up to the required EPC 'B' level and noted that internal insulation will reduce the size of small flats further.

Housing Association Grant (HAG) has not increased in line with costs. Rents cannot be increased against development costs.

The group was divided into two to discuss ideas and suggestions for cost savings or efficiencies.

Group 1 – led by Ngeme, notes by Lynnmarie

1. Buy another housing association. Is this an option that could be further explored?
2. Dispose of older properties, ie good case to dispose of one-bedroom flats as they fall short of housing requirements and are not economical to upgrade to meet standards. There are c. 700 properties earmarked for disposal, currently at around 18 pa. Deadline for meeting standards is 2025. Is there a way to accelerate the disposal programme without jeopardising covenants? Are there any in prime locations which could be converted or used for facilities not requiring to meet housing standards – eg community benefit / service provision (subject to regulations)?
3. Rising costs mean homes are now c.£175k each. Is there a way to work differently with or challenge the contradicting council policies? Rising cost of living rates in the next few years mean potential rent increases are not a viable method of increasing revenue.
4. Expand TBM contracts and services by December 2022 or earlier, expand further into private sector.
5. Open Market Rent – potential for further increase in revenue in new developments.
6. ARCHIE – exploit our existing footprint? Small success but difficulty gaining traction. Community Works has and will continue to try to capitalise on this small revenue stream.
7. 108 Constitution Street – use 50% of the building for Kidztown project? Plan in place to review footfall over the next few weeks when office opens up generally. Also option for potential business centre. Similar exercise could be option for Admiral House.
8. Business Development Manager – appoint someone to cover the commercial income potential for the whole Group.
9. Move Group costs into Business Operations / hub / new subsidiary for re-apportionment.
10. PDL – now well established, could attract / secure funding in own right.

Table 2 – led by Gordon, notes by Jackie

1. Lobby for additional subsidy (SFHA lobbying government re this)
2. Disposal rate of 12-18 pa good for us, but who upgrades properties if we don't? Any benefit to transfer these to PDL, accepted private sector will require to meet EPC B by 2030.
3. Build for sale – same issues met, at higher risk

4. Harbour Holidays (with later conversion to social housing) – short term holiday lets, especially during Festival – create links with theatres and venues, discount to tenants
5. Expand TBM, especially for services less well known
6. Apprenticeship programme at TBM (could Quay host?)
7. Could TBM move into development (eg current Brunswick Road work)
8. What other service provider could be bought over? – eg Eden (door entry systems) or grow our own. Lift maintenance. Appliance maintenance – handyman service
9. Leave carpets, flooring etc in place in social tenancies if in good condition rather than ripping up. Leave appliances and just donate to incoming tenants. (carpets seen as beneficial to maintaining tenancy, consider cleaning if necessary)
10. Recycle furniture through other channels
11. Maximise the benefits of being in a group structure
12. Turn the office into a hotel or a community hub
13. Housing officers visit tenants rather than tenants come to office
14. Orbiting maintenance and housing team, rarely in office, incentivise with car allowance, remove pool cars
15. Be clear about where we are going, our direction.
16. Set up community hubs throughout area, use office as main base, but rent remainder of building
17. Pursue proper shared services with ARCHIE members, eg share GLT (same role in all associations)
18. Open market rent could have huge impact on rent figures