

SKYLIGHT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday 07 May 2024

16.30

SHG Boardroom, Cornerstone, 2 Edward Street

**PRESENT / IN-ATTENDANCE:****Trustees (Present):**

- Priti Butler (Via MS Teams)
- Marie Gilluley
- Kathryn Hanna
- Roger Phillips (Chair)
- Tessa Wiley (Via MS Teams)

Officers (In-attendance)

- Rachel Cossey, Governance Manager
- Samantha Donigan, Head of Assurance
- Anne-Marie Heil, Assistant Director – SKYlight (Lead Officer)
- Jonny Kelly, Governance and Scrutiny Officer (minute-taker)
- John Kennedy, Assistant Director of Finance
- Julie Nelson-Hall, Social Inclusion Team Leader
- Amanda Ward, Employment & Support Services Manager
- Si Welch, Director of Housing Plus

01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Action
	David Nicholson and Andy Kippax sent their apologies. There were no declarations of interest.	
02a/ 02b	MINUTES FROM MEETING 05 FEBRUARY 2024 AND ACTION MONITOR FROM MEETING 05 FEBRUARY 2024	
	<p>The minutes from the meeting 05 February 2024 were approved.</p> <p>Progress with the action monitor was noted.</p> <p>The Board discussed action no.9 relating to Youth Work from the previous meeting 'The Board suggested that SKYlight should explore taking a leadership/coordinating role within these community groups to influence development and delivery of a cohesive strategy.' They asked that an update be brought to a future Board on progress with this, so that Board can have continued oversight on this.</p>	JNH / AW
03	VULNERABILITY POLICY (PRESENTATION)	
	<p>The Head of Customer Access introduced the presentation to provide an update on SHG and SKYlight's work surrounding understanding the vulnerabilities of its customers and noted the increased emphasis on this from the Housing Ombudsman Service and Consumer Regulation. The presentation focused on what SHG currently has in place and planned work for 2024. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Board asked how SHG plan to target and identify customers who may not disclose their vulnerabilities. The Head of Customer Access highlighted the mechanisms that are in place, where customers will be visited by SHG</p>	

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	<p>and where data is captured. He noted that there will be some unavoidable gaps, where customers do not disclose vulnerabilities, but provided the Board with assurance that there is confidence that most vulnerabilities of customers will be identified.</p> <p>The Board noted that key members of front-line staff will be trained and provided with guidance on how to deal with customers who have certain vulnerabilities. They asked whether there were any cost implications on the training for staff. The Head of Customer Access explained that the training will be made as efficient as possible, for example by being online and identifying those staff who most need it. He added that there will be costs associated to this, but the cost of failing to identify and appropriately support those with vulnerabilities would be more significant.</p> <p>The Board suggested that economic inactivity should be included as a vulnerable group linked to the risk of poverty. They also suggested that customer who fall into this category should be targeted for YLP, as they could benefit from the service the most. The Head of Customer Access explained that the Customer Finance Team and that information is available to be extracted and assessed. although this is not typically identified as a 'vulnerability, SHG do collect financial data on customers via the Customer Finance Team and that information is available to be extracted and assessed.</p> <p>The Board suggested that the term 'Vulnerabilities' may not be the right term to use, due to the stigma associated with it. The Head of Customer Access agreed and confirmed that SHG are trying to move away from using this term.</p> <p>Board asked that an update on progress be brought back at a later date.</p>	MS
04	SKYLIGHT STATUTORY ACCOUNTS 2023/24 & ANNUAL REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Assistant Director of Finance introduced the report to present the draft year end statutory accounts for SKYlight. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Board commended the Statutory Accounts.</p> <p>The Board noted that the current Reserves Policy relates to a minimum level of reserves being equivalent to one months' expenditure. They sought assurance on whether this was sufficient, as it was suggested that it was common elsewhere for minimum reserves to be the equivalent to three months expenditure. The Assistant Director of Finance explained that this had been considered and it was viewed to be prudent to hold costs for one month. This was based on a low risk of contracts being terminated at the same time, and therefore more than one month would likely not be required. He added that holding three months of reserves would severely limit SKYlight's activities for the remainder of the year, as it would require a considerable figure to be held. The Board confirmed that they had now received the appropriate assurance on this.</p>	

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	The Assistant Director of SKYlight confirmed that a short, glossy version of the Annual Report highlighting key achievements will be produced for wider dissemination and that discussions are underway regarding the production of a short video.	
	RESOLVED: The SKYlight Board noted and commented on the draft Financial Statements including Directors' reports and Reserves Policy for SKYlight. The Board noted that they will subsequently be requested to approve these later in the summer, following completion of the external audit.	
05	SKYLIGHT – USE OF GIFT AID (ASSURANCE)	
	The Assistant Director of SKYlight introduced the report to provide an update on SKYlight's use of Gift Aid in 2023/24 and planned use of Gift Aid in 2024/25 and advised that the report will also be taken to the Stockport Homes Board. The discussion covered: The Board sought assurance on whether the projects delivered by SKYlight would be sustainable in the event of there being no Gift Aid. The Assistant Director – SKYlight explained that some of the services within SKYlight are not reliant on Gift Aid, and instead Stockport Homes are recharged for them which would mean that they could continue without Gift Aid. The Board noted this and asked that it be made clearer in future reporting that some projects are not funded by Gift Aid, which would ease any potential	
	RESOLVED: SKYlight Board noted and discussed the use of Gift Aid	
06	SKYLIGHT PROGRESS AND FINANCE UPDATE (ASSURANCE) (CONFIDENTIAL)	
	The Assistant Director of SKYlight introduced the report to provide a Progress and Finance update of SKYlight's business activity to the end of Q4 2023/2024. The discussion covered: The Board discussed the additional charitable donations that SKYlight will be providing to support to the Third Sector and other charitable activities and asked whether this had been budgeted for. The Assistant Director – SKYlight explained that this will be paid from SKYlight's reserves in 2024/25 but will be budgeted for in future years. She added that it is not expected to be a large spend. The Board noted that some of the projects within SKYlight failed to appoint some staffing posts immediately when they became vacant throughout the year, and asked for assurances on whether there were any issues relating to these delays and whether there was a risk that funding might have to be returned. The Assistant Director – SKYlight provided assurance that the majority of the delays related to slow recruiting processes and not any issues relating to filling the vacancies. She added that most of the delays to recruitment were able to be covered by other members of the team and	

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	therefore funding was not at risk. The Board commended the list of funding streams for the various projects, highlighting that this enabled them to have oversight of how individual projects were funded.	
	RESOLVED: SKyLight Board noted and discussed the progress and financial position to date	
07	SKYLIGHT GOVERNANCE REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Governance Manager introduced the report to seek approval on SKyLight's approach to recruitment to the Board in 2024.</p> <p>The Governance and Scrutiny Officer provided an update on the SKyLight Code of Governance, noting that this will be brought to the SKyLight Board in August 2024 for their consideration.</p> <p>The Board noted and approved the approach to the recruitment of the Chair and up to two new SKyLight Board members from September 2024.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: That SKyLight Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Noted the self-assessment against the Small Charities Code of Governance will be brought to the next Board meeting in August 2024. ii. Approved the approach to appoint up to two Board members to the Board and to appoint the Chair from within the existing Board membership 	
08	YOUR LOCAL PANTRY (YLP) REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Social Inclusion Team Leader introduced the report to update the Board on the changes made to YLP following customer consultation and a review of the current service delivery and to approve the medium-term operating model. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Board sought clarity surrounding the role of the Co-op with YLP. The Social Inclusion Team Leader explained that they have committed over £500k towards the expansion of the Pantry franchise model, working alongside Church Action on Poverty and are aiming to develop some sustainability into the infrastructure and support the reduction in food waste.</p> <p>The Board noted that the report has clearly considered and actioned the issues discussed in previous Board meetings. In particular, they were pleased that SKyLight staff were no longer manually purchasing goods from supermarkets and have now been freed up to support customers and deliver other projects.</p> <p>The Board were pleased to see that cooking sessions were being delivered to YLP members, as this is a valuable life skill for customers who may be in poverty.</p>	

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	<p>The Board questioned why SKYlight had budgeted £6k on marketing. The Employment & Support Services Manager explained that there was considerable spend on the change to the YLP signage, to recognise the change to opening arrangements. She provided assurance to Board that this was a one-off fee.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged that whilst the YLP model requires continued investment, this is offset by the support provided to customers to tackle poverty and the cost of living and the wider social value delivered by the model.</p> <p>The Board highlighted that they would like to see a deep dive at a future meeting into the impact that YLP has had on customers.</p>	JNH / AW
	RESOLVED: That Board note and discuss the report and approve the existing model of service delivery, with recent changes, for the medium-term.	
09	SKYLIGHT QUARTER FOUR 2023-24 RISK REPORT (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Head of Assurance introduced the report to provide an update on the delivery of risk control actions at the end of Quarter Four / Year End 2023-24 within the SKYlight Risk Register, provide an update on delivery of the Internal Audit Plan and a wider assurance update for Board Members. The discussion covered:</p> <p>The Board discussed the SMBC review of SHG, as there are clear risks for SKYlight associated. The Director of Housing Plus explained that SHG's Executive Leadership Team have had sight of an initial scoping document provided by council officers. Updates will be provided to SKYlight Board as more information is provided.</p> <p>The recent local election results were discussed, and the Board asked whether they would have any impact on the decision from SMBC to review SHG. The Head of Assurance explained that whilst the Liberal Democrats won two more seats, the decision to review SHG will likely not be impacted.</p>	
	RESOLVED: That the SKYlight Board take assurance from the contents of the Quarter Four Risk Report.	
10	SHG REPORTS FROM PREVIOUS QUARTER (ASSURANCE)	
	The Governance and Scrutiny Officer noted the various reports from SHG Board and its committees, that have been uploaded to TeamEngine in the last quarter, which have implications for SKYlight and may be of interest for SKYlight Board members.	
11	FORWARD PLAN (INFORMATION)	
	The Governance and Scrutiny Officer introduced the forward plan of the expected business for 2024-25.	

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	The Board noted that this was the final SKYlight Board for Si Welch, Director of Housing Plus. They thanked him for his dedication and service and wished him luck in the future.	
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