

**CARE AND REPAIR SCOTLAND
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 25th FEBRUARY
2022 BY ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL**

Present: Gerry Power, The Alliance (Chair)
Stewart Wilson, Region 1
Andy Douglas, Region 2
Angela Brunton, Region 3

Robert Thomson, National Director

1. Welcome and Apologies

Gerry Power welcomed Board members to the meeting. Apologies from Gerry Begg and Elizabeth Eadie.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minute of 3rd December 2021 meeting was approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Action: Robert will forward details of the Scottish Government meeting with hearing impaired representative groups to Gerry, so that he can liaise with the Alliance.

Meetings were held in December with representatives of The Alliance and BDA Scotland. Following those meetings, Scottish Government advice to Care and Repair teams remains that we signpost all enquiries from this client group to HSCP. The official statement is:

“Any financial support offered by Care and Repair service will help fund the standard alarms and may also help with any new accessories which will be necessary for deaf and deafblind homeowners. It has come to light that there is an issue around the new interlinked alarms not always being compatible with the deaf alert accessories. This is being investigated by Housing Social Care Partnership (HSCP) sensory impairment services to ensure the specialist accessories installed will be compatible with the new system. It is necessary that HSCP liaise with Care and Repair to ensure they are installing systems which will also be able to offer full functionality for specialist deaf alerts.”

Action: It was agreed that Robert will canvass the views of offices on the best date to hold an online conference in 2022 and will start putting together speakers for the event.

The offices agreed that March and April are not good months for them and that w/c 9th May is the most suitable time. We have therefore agreed to hold the digital event on Wednesday 11th May and have confirmed this date to each office.

Action: It was agreed that we should have a session on the proposals for a National Care Service at the Care and Repair Conference.

Jack Walker, Senior Policy Manager, SG Directorate for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care, has confirmed that someone will attend the meeting and will answer questions.

Action: It was agreed that Robert will send proposed dates in early January.

Dates: Friday 25th February, Friday 24th June, Friday 23rd September, Friday 9th December.

5. National Director's Report

Stewart had to leave the meeting to attend an emergency meeting about restructuring TIG. He provided a comprehensive overview of the situation and the Board spent some time discussing the situation. Stewart is hopeful that Care and Repair will not be affected although there will be redundancies within the Group.

Action: Robert and Stewart to discuss how CRS can help.

Fire Safety Alarms

As advised by email on 1 February, The Scottish Government offered CRS an additional £500,000 which I accepted on behalf of the Board on 4th February. The only change to the offer from that of August is that funding can be allocated to Councils that do not have a C&R service, or did not participate in the scheme last year, provided they can demonstrate they will set up a supply and fit service for homeowners. CRS have had discussions with Clackmannan, Falkirk, East Dunbartonshire, West Lothian, Mid Lothian and Highland Councils (Inverness). Mid Lothian has never had a Care and Repair service and may not participate in this scheme but has agreed to look at how a Care and Repair service might be started. The other Authorities have agreed to participate.

Highland Council will give match funding that will allow some administrative staffing support for offices. Discussions with Highland Council have revealed that Inverness and Caithness offices did not advise their funders that they are not participating in the scheme. Highland Council will therefore administer the distribution of funding this time around and will ensure coverage in those areas.

The bidding process will end on Friday 18th February and I will review the bids with the Scottish Government team on Monday 21st. At the time of writing, bids total £678,000 so these will need to be reduced. Robert will email the Board the final allocations prior to the Board meeting. Funds will be distributed as soon as possible so that the £500,000 clears the CRS account before 31 March. RBS has a £50,000 daily transfer limit which means the payments will be made in stages.

There was a marked increase in emails and phone calls to all offices between 1 January and 1 February with CRS received around 150 emails per day. Things have settled down now that the legislation is live and the Cabinet Secretary has announced additional funding. The new funding can be spent throughout the financial year 22/23.

Equity Loans Scheme

The managers and officers met with EST on Monday 14th to discuss the arrangements for ending our involvement in the equity pilot scheme on 31 March 2022. Our responsibility for Perthshire will come to an end and Trevor will move on to his new role as Clerk of Works for a building company. CRS will have no further administrative or legal responsibilities for the scheme.

It was agreed that each officer will prepare a final report on outstanding client cases and will return all case files to EST. Digital records will be wiped from officer's laptops. CRS and EST will discuss a complaints procedure in event of disputes arising after the closure of the scheme. So far, we have agreed that CRS will pass each complaint to EST for action and the client will be notified that officers are no longer employed by either organisation. The Board may wish to comment on these arrangements.

The Scottish Government has given no indication of how the equity loan scheme will be developed or rolled out in future. We will agree a formal wording for a website statement prior to mid-March.

Care and Repair Digital Conference

The conference will be held on Zoom on Wednesday 11th May 2022. It will be similar to last year's event pre-recorded presentations and at least one live session.

The following organisations have confirmed they will participate:

DRAFT

Care and Repair Ireland
Scottish Government National Care Service Team
Manchester Care and Repair (Winners of Best Housing Improvement Agency 2021)
Rebuilding Together, Washington DC, USA
Scottish Flood Forum

Scottish Quality Mark

Ross-shire and Sutherland C&R managed by ILM Highland received the Quality Mark in February.

Age Scotland Housing Survey

Age Scotland has distributed a number of paper copies of its latest survey to Care and Repair offices. The last time the survey was completed, offices felt that comments made about Care and Repair lacked context and were in some cases inaccurate.

Adaptations Review

The review of adaptations in Scotland still continues. Scottish Government has made some funding available to Stirling University to allow them to interview clients who have gone through the adaptation process. Stirling University would like to work with Care and Repair Scotland on this project and it will commence once a researcher is in place.

The Board approved the report.

6. Financial Statement

The Board noted and approved the Financial Statement.

7. A.O.C.B

There were no other items of business.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 24th June 2022.