

**CARE AND REPAIR SCOTLAND
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 3rd SEPT 2021
BY ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL**

Present: Gerry Power, The Alliance (Chair)
Gerry Begg, ALACHO
Stewart Wilson, Region 1
Andy Douglas, Region 3
Elizabeth Eadie, Region 4

Robert Thomson, National Director

1. Welcome and Apologies

Gerry Power welcomed Board members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Angela who is on annual leave.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minute of 4th June 2021 meeting was approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Action: Robert will collate from emails any comments received from conference delegates. It will serve as useful evidence in the future. He will also check with OSCAR and Dentons about our legal position around on-line Board meetings.

Emails were collated into a file. General guidance from OSCAR is that online meetings must meet quorum, must be clear about timings, allow voting and record or write minutes. If the governing document does not say anything about online meetings it is a good practice idea to add in a section but if we do we will need to pay solicitor's fees and send the amended document to OSCAR for approval. This guidance is for Trustees meetings and is not required for members meetings. Agreed to wait and then tidy up the document at our December meeting and have the new version available to OSCAR for 2022.

Action: Robert will discuss with SG a procurement process for the alarms at their next meeting.

Procurement process was discussed at length. SG want CRS to carry out the tender process and will not be involved in the decision process. They trust us to make our own judgement about the best manufacturer in terms of unit price and overall support and partnership working.

Action: Robert will follow up with C&R offices that did not send any representatives to the conference.

Would prefer to do this face to face and will have the first meeting with two offices on 26th August.

Action: Robert will draft a letter to EST and share with Gerry prior to sending. There will be a meeting of all equity teams in Scotland on 8th June and that will also inform the content of the letter.

The draft letter discussed with Gerry and sent to EST following meeting with equity teams.

Action: The March conference was considered a success. It is too soon to decide the format

of the 2022 event. Gerry and Robert will meet towards the end of October to discuss how best to proceed and will then report back to the Board at the December meeting.

5. National Director's Report

Fire Safety Alarm Scheme and Funding

The Cabinet Secretary launched the Fire Safety Alarms awareness campaign on Monday 16th August. During that week, the Scottish Government marketing division distributed leaflets to local libraries and Care and Repair offices. There was also a feature on Reporting Scotland that has attracted some interest. Unfortunately, CRS is trailing a little behind the campaign because, at the date of the Board meeting, funds have not been transferred to us by the Scottish Government.

Robert has tendered to three main manufacturers - Kidde, Fireangel, Aico.

There will be gaps in service delivery. South Lanark will cover North Ayrshire. East Ayrshire will cover South and North Ayrshire. Scottish Gas has offered to help fill in gaps in service, for example in areas where Councils have closed Care and Repair.

Most clients who phone in are unsure of where to fit the alarms and not sure how to set up interlink. people are offering to pay. Given the demand, it is likely that the money will be spent on paper by November. Gerry and Robert have discussed holding back £25,000 as an emergency fund.

Stewart asked about criteria is it Council Tax Band A-C **plus** the financial criteria? Robert confirmed this is the criteria agreed with Cabinet Secretary.

Elizabeth advised that Admiral Home Insurers have already confirmed that they will insist that alarms are installed.

The SG brochure does not offer free alarms through Care and Repair. It signposts people to CRS website with office location map. Robert advised that Google Maps has changed the terms and conditions for embedded maps on websites that has caused initial problems which have been resolved.

Robert previously agreed with the regional groups that he would share the bids and suggested allocations with the CRS Board for discussion prior to distribution. There was a discussion about how the money will be allocated and how we will resolve a situation where the bids exceed £500,000. Gerry suggested there is merit in everyone getting a basic sum of say £10,000 to allow a weighting for smaller areas. Then we could allocate the rest according to what we think the offices can reasonably spend. Robert and SG will review funding and if necessary reallocate underspend in November/December. Robert has asked larger areas like Edinburgh and Glasgow to look at the possibility of not charging for fitting and programming free alarms alongside chargeable work which will release more money into the system. Elizabeth confirmed that West Dumbarton will do that.

Aico will provide installer training through our regional meeting groups. Aico also have timetabled roadshows in all cities. They have also set up a residents forum through TPAS. Scottish Government Telecare also want to meet with our regions to discuss a pilot to examine the feasibility of linking the fire alarms to telecare systems.

Recommendation - Board agreed proposal to accept Aico tender as providing the best mix of cost, quality, back up resources and community engagement

Action: Robert will write to offices and request bids for funding based on Aico prices which will be national and available to all offices.

Equity Loan Scheme

The Scottish Government has published a call for evidence about the future of the scheme. They recently held three MS Teams meetings with key stake holders. However, there will be a significant change in direction if the pilot is extended throughout Scotland. The Scottish Government now wish to align the scheme with their zero carbon policies. The consultation can be found at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/equity-loan-scheme-call-evidence/pages/8/>

Stewart reported on the workshop he attended. Most people on the call had no understanding of the scheme. There are two new standards for retrofitting energy measures - PAS 2035 and PAS 2030/2019. One standard is about installation and the other about the process from referral to evaluation. SG is discussing using these standards for the equity loans scheme as it goes forward.

This is likely to reduce the numbers of contractors who will be involved in the scheme as they will need to register with Trustmark. SG also discussed an interactive website which will allow clients to go through the application themselves. It is our view that this will to reduce the number of people applying for the equity loan.

Robert noted that the client age group is most likely to deny that there is a climate emergency. The scheme at the moment appeals because they can future proof their houses with a mix of repairs and energy measures. If only decarbonisation is allowed the interest in the scheme will diminish. Andy commented that SG energy staff seems to have a lack of understanding of the housing conditions in Scotland.

No more oil or gas boilers will be funded by the scheme. Stewart advised that an air source heat pump in Western Isles will cost around £12,000. The new standards require whole house retrofit, so individual items will not be allowed unless every identified measure is put in place. A survey will take 6-7 hours under new standards. A medium term plan for all measures needs to be put in place and agreed with the client. But it should be noted that the third party checking body who will assess the retrofit coordinator's plan, will demand that fabric insulation and associated extensive ventilation measures must be done prior to any heat pump installation. Robert has made ALACHO aware of the consultation and asked them to comment, particularly around housing conditions. This is not taxation money - it is owner's own money that facilitates the work.

The officers from Glasgow and Argyll & Bute have resigned because of the direction the scheme is moving towards. The officer from Perthshire is looking for another job. He was owed £13,000 by EST. This has been resolved but he still intends to leave the scheme because of the frustrations of dealing with EST/Scottish Government. If he leaves, it was agreed by the Board that CRS will not continue supporting Perthshire as a managing agent. Stewart has not signed the MOU for Western Isles as it is impractical and the targets are unrealistic.

CRS stepped in to resolve an emergency situation in Perthshire but we did not make any commitments beyond that.

Action: Board members to send in thoughts for response to consultation. Stewart will send a copy of the Western Isles' response to Robert. The officers from Glasgow and Argyll & Bute will also respond and copy to Robert.

Scottish Housing Network

The SHN is taking forward a review of the Scheme of Assistance for home owners. Robert will be a member of the small steering group. So far it has reviewed the 32 different versions of the scheme documents that are offered to homeowners in Scotland. Scottish Government housing team intended to link this with their adaptations review but have notified us this week that their priorities have been changed and they may not be able to participate.

Scottish Quality Mark

East Lothian was awarded the Quality Mark in June. The evaluation visit for Lomond and Clyde will take place on Tuesday 31st. Robert is currently assisting Dumfries with their application as they are as the only team in Scotland that administers the grant claims and so their documentation will be more extensive than usual.

Fife Care and Repair

Ida Taylor is the longest serving Care and Repair officer in Scotland. Following ongoing issues with her management, she met with HR last week. The outcome was unsatisfactory to her and so she has resigned and is taking up an unrelated post with another Council. The Board thanked Ida for her considerable contribution to Care and Repair in Scotland.

Office Lease

As we approach the 6 month rental period, John Lewis Partnership directors have not yet signed the lease agreement which we signed in April. Robert was advised that it is due to the logistics of getting two JL Directors in a room during Covid restrictions. Dentons, our solicitors, will pursue the matter, and clarify our legal position.

6. Financial Statement

The Board noted and approved the Financial Statement.

The annual accounts were presented and approved.

Action: Gerry and Elizabeth will sign online. Robert will send signed accounts to OSCR and Companies House.

7. National Care Service

The Board discussed the new National Care Service document. There is no mention of Care and Repair and very little about housing. Kevin Stewart MSP has moved to health. As the former Housing Minister he should be keen to include it in this review. If everything else is being standardised, how will Care and Repair be standardised? A cast of thousands will respond to the consultation, and so it was agreed that CRS need to lay down a marker. The deadline is 2nd November.

Action: Gerry will go through relevant sections to see where we can comment on Care and Repair.

Gerry will write to Kevin Stewart and request some clarity of where C&R sits and how it will be funded. Gerry chairs The Third Sector Collaborative and they will hold a one hour session on the proposal. Robert will be invited.

8. A.O.C.B

There were no other items of business.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting: Friday 3rd December Zoom