**DRAFT Part A Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Avenue Services (NW) Limited held via video conference on Thursday 4 March 2021.**

Attendance record since AGM November 2020

**Present**

William Hogg, Chairman 2/2

Colleen Eccles, Board Director 2/2

Peter Williams, Board Director 2/2

Sarah Kirkup, Board Director 2/2

Sheila Little, Board Director 2/2

Keith Board, Board Director 2/2

Trish Richards, Board Director 2/2

Gus Cairns, Board Director 2/2

**In attendance**

Christa Ripley, Sanctuary Group, Head of Housing

Kimberley De Vegori, Sanctuary Group, Head of Housing

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services

Emma McGreevy, Sanctuary Group, Head of Finance - Maintenance

Claire Matthews, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Senior Service Business Manager - Shareholder and Traded Services

Helen Kelly, Avenue Services, Team Secretary

1. **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

The Board noted that with effect from 25 September 2020, the reappointment of William Hogg for an additional two-year term, totalling six years; and Keith Board for an additional three-year term, totalling six years.

1. **APOLOGIES**No apologies were noted and the Chairman reported that the meeting had been duly convened and that a quorum was present for the purposes of business to be considered and if thought fit, resolutions to be passed at the meeting.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**The Chairman reminded the Directors of the need, as a subsidiary of Sanctuary Housing Association (the Association), in accordance with the provisions of Sanctuary Group’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, to disclose any

personal interests in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting. It was noted that such disclosures would be recorded under the relevant agenda items for ease of reference when producing ‘extract minutes’.

The Chairman confirmed that all personal declaration forms had been completed and returned (75/11/20).

1. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2020**Part A of the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2020 were agreed as a true record and subsequently signed by the Chairman via DocuSign.
2. **ACTION POINTS AND MATTERS ARISING**The schedule of action points was considered and updates provided as follows:
3. **Blacon Health Hub (49/09/20)**

Colleen Eccles advised the Board that Sanctuary Group’s Development team held monthly meetings with the Public Health Manager, Head of NHS Estates, Councillor Carol Gahan and Paul Knight to review possible options for the ground floor and carry out initial discussions with local health providers. Once these initial discussions had progressed meetings with the community would be arranged. *A further update would be provided at the next meeting in June 2021.*

1. **Land adjacent to the Parade Enterprise Centre (57/09/19)**

Colleen Eccles advised the Board that construction on the site was progressing well and currently on target. The drainage, steel frame and lift shaft had been completed and brickwork had commenced. *A further update would be provided at the next meeting in June 2021*.

1. **My Blacon Newsletter (49/09/20)**

The Board noted that due to current budgetary constraints the funding and future production of the My Blacon newsletter would be reviewed at the March 2022 meeting.

1. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**
2. **Board Effect Training**

The Chairman confirmed that a Board Effect training session had been completed for the Avenue Services Board (75/11/20).

1. **Avenue Services Shareholder Meetings**

Paul Knight and William Hogg attended two quarterly shareholder meetings with Cheshire West and Chester Council (the Council) and the Association. An annual business plan review meeting was also held on 26 February 2021 with Cllr Gahan, Cabinet Member for Finance and positive feedback had been received regarding the outcomes achieved for Blacon residents especially during the current pandemic.

1. **Council Companies Task Group**

Paul Knight and William Hogg attended the Council Companies Scrutiny Task Group on 1 March 2021 to deliver a presentation and answer questions regarding the impact of the pandemic on the business plan during 2020/2021 and the potential impact during 2021/2022. Positive feedback was received from members of the task group who were very supportive of Avenue Services. One cabinet member stated that he wished the company could deliver services across the Chester Borough as the level of performance and engagement with the community was outstanding.

1. **Governance Manual Update**

The Board confirmed they had received and read the Governance Manual update from December 2020.

1. **AVENUE SERVICES PERFORMANCE**

Paul Knight provided an update on the performance of Avenue Services for the third quarter of the financial year 2020/2021.

The Board noted that with the exception of the level of income generation at Blacon Adventure Playground (the Adventure Playground) which had reduced significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic there were no operational indicators outside of the target tolerance set.

The closure of the Adventure Playground to the public throughout quarter one and reduced opening hours in quarters two and three had resulted in a significant reduction in income and ability to meet the quarterly target set.

Following the announcement of a lockdown by the Government on 5 January 2021, the Adventure Playground had been closed to the public and it was not anticipated that the income target for quarter four would be met. It was hoped that the playground could reopen in quarter one of 2021/2022.

Avenue Services had received no complaints for the quarter. Twelve compliments had been received, six for grounds maintenance and six for the Adventure Playground.

One incubation unit at the Parade Enterprise Centre had been vacant since January. The vacancy had been promoted through various channels including West Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Legat Owen.

*Claire Matthews agreed to explore promotion opportunities within the Council.*

The Board expressed their thanks to all Avenue Services staff for their hard work and achievements during the last year especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

1. **BUSINESS INITIATIVES**

Paul Knight provided the Board with an update on the progress of key business initiatives.

The Board noted that during December 2020 community organisations in Blacon had come together to deliver a Christmas programme for the local community.

Staff at the Adventure Playground had prepared festive hampers for local families and delivered more than 450 presents to children in Blacon; Blacon Beacon, Holy Trinity Church, Avenue Services and local councillors provided funding and worked together to deliver 200 Christmas meals to residents in Blacon; Here and Now and the North Wales and North West Rotary Passport Organisation provided gift bags for local children; Blacon Community Store

 supplied Christmas hampers to schools and a host of local businesses and

organisations, including Blacon Community Support, Morrisons and Blacon Butterflies Women’s Institute supported this initiative by volunteering their time or donating items.

In 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency with the aim to reach carbon neutrality by 2045. Avenue Services subsequently started working with the Group’s Energy team to develop plans to make the Adventure Playground carbon neutral. The Group committed funding to the project and contractors started on site on 1 February 2021 to replace the heating and lighting systems.

The next stage was to identify further measures that could be introduced and seek funding from the Council’s Climate Emergency Fund.

The Board noted that significant progress had been made in the funding and plans for the redevelopment of the King George V playing fields. A planning application for a new artificial pitch, grass training pitch, pavilion and car park was approved by the Council’s Planning Committee on 15 December 2020.

At the November 2020 meeting the Board approved the Avenue Services contribution payment of £100,000 out of the capital receipt from the sale of the former library site to this project.

The Board noted Sheila Little’s interest in Blacon Beacon and the Arches Primary School

1. **DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021/2022**

Paul Knight presented the eighth Blacon Neighbourhood Plan for 2021/2022 which included 30 projects. Two versions of the plan were discussed. The first assumed the same level of investment as 2020/2021 and the second presented a reduced plan which included a much smaller investment in light of reduced income due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

The Board noted the plan mainly focused on health and wellbeing, employment, education and poverty. The plan had been reviewed and signed off by the Council’s Locality team and links to Council priorities were referenced within the plan.

The Board noted Sheila Little’s declaration of interest in Blacon Beacon and the Arches Primary School.

The Board approved the reduced Neighbourhood Plan for 2021/2022 as the only affordable option based upon business plan assumptions.

**10/03/21** **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business the Chairman confirmed the meeting closed.

**Date of next meeting: 24 June 2021 at 1pm.**