**DRAFT Part A Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Avenue Services (NW) Limited held at Parade Enterprise Centre, Blacon, Chester on Thursday 6 February 2020.**

Attendance record since AGM September 2019

**Present**

William Hogg, Chairman 3/3

Colleen Eccles, Board Director 3/3

Gus Cairns, Board Director 3/3

Peter Williams, Board Director 3/3

Trish Richards, Board Director 3/3

Sarah Kirkup, Board Director 3/3

Sheila Little, Board Director 3/3

Keith Board, Board Director 2/3

**In attendance**

Christa Ripley, Sanctuary Group, Head of Housing

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services

Nick Garner, Sanctuary Group, Financial Controller

Alison Amesbury, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Senior Manager

Helen Kelly, Avenue Services, Team Secretary

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’.

1. **MINUTES OF PART A OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2019**Part A of the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2019 were agreed as a true record and subsequently signed by the Chairman.

1. **ACTION POINTS AND MATTERS ARISING**
2. **Land adjacent to the Parade Enterprise Centre (57/09/19)**

Colleen Eccles provided an update on the land adjacent to the Parade Enterprise Centre (Enterprise Centre). Due to a delay in finalising the lease with Cheshire West and Chester Council (the Council) and installing utility services, work is due to commence during the first week in March 2020.

*A further update will be provided at the next meeting.*

1. **Business Initiatives Update (77/12/19)**

Paul Knight confirmed that funds had been set aside in the budget from 2021-22 to cover costs of future repairs and maintenance for the play areas. An inventory had been set up to provide estimated costings and lifecycles. Final details were awaited from a playground equipment supplier to enable future forecasting of costs. External funding opportunities were still being explored.

*A further update on the costs, lifecycles and external funding opportunities for playground equipment will be provided at the next meeting.*

1. **Business Initiatives Update (77/12/19)**

Paul Knight provided an update on the impact and outcomes following the Summer Programme with funding received from the Department of Education via Council company Edsential. The programme had been a huge success and details were awaited for the bid criteria for 2020/2021 following which a bid will be drafted and submitted.

1. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**
2. The Board confirmed that they had received and read the updated Governance Manual, including in particular the new Freedom of Information policy, procedure and training.
3. The Chairman confirmed that a collective board performance review would be carried out at the next meeting in May 2020. New board directors would have an appraisal in February 2021 to bring them in line with the rest of the Board.
4. The Board reviewed the proposed meeting dates and agreed to move the meeting scheduled for 6 August 2020 to 3 September 2020.
5. **AVENUE SERVICES PERFORMANCE**

Paul Knight provided an update on the performance of Avenue Services for the third quarter of the financial year 2019/2020.

The Board noted that, with the exception of incubation unit occupancy at the Enterprise Centre, there were no operational indicators outside of the target tolerance set. At the end of December 2019 there had been two incubation units vacant however during January two businesses had taken up occupancy in these offices. All eight incubation units were now fully occupied.

Eleven compliments had been received for the period for the Grounds Maintenance team. No complaints had been received.

Income for Blacon Adventure Playground was above target for the first time due to the receipt of funding from West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce. The income generated from the playground had reduced during the quarter. Recruitment was due to take place to fill two vacant posts.

The Board agreed to remove the key performance indicators for Ash Tree Nursery as the business was now well established.

1. **BUSINESS INITATIVES UPDATE**

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

The Board noted that refurbishment works at the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Blacon Youth Village, Western Avenue play area and repairs to Saxon Way play area had been completed in December 2019. Refurbishment of eight Blacon play areas had now been completed utilising funding from the Council, external funding and a surplus contribution from Avenue Services.

At the September meeting the Board approved additional funding to enable Pennysmart to continue to provide the Blacon Money Advice Service in Blacon until the end of March 2020. Since Pennysmart commenced working in collaboration with Avenue Services in 2014 they had helped in excess of 275 households in Blacon.

Avenue Services had also provided funding to Blacon Community Health Hub to support the new Blacon Community Store on Western Avenue. The store provides access to affordable food to residents and aims to reach 600 residents in the first year of operation.

1. **A CONVERSATION WITH SANCTUARY**

Christa Ripley presented a report outlining plans to launch ‘A Conversation with Sanctuary’; a significant consultation exercise with Sanctuary Group’s (the Group) social housing tenants and residents.

The Board noted that a month’s trial would take place in Chester with a number of residents during February 2020 in advance of the main ‘conversation’ which would commence in April 2020. Information collected would be used to improve the services provided.

*Christa agreed to forward a copy of the conversation questions to the Board for information.*

1. **AVENUE SERVICES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2020/2021**

Paul Knight presented the seventh Blacon Neighbourhood Plan for 2020/2021 which included 37 projects.

The Board noted the plan mainly focused on health and wellbeing, employment, education and training and included the fourth and final year of an employment initiative funded by the Council, with four long-term unemployed residents receiving nine months work experience and related vocational qualifications.

Poverty, particularly for families with children, would also be a priority addressing longer term and immediate interventions such as working with organisations to provide financial advice for vulnerable families and providing immediate practical help.

Community events and festivals outlined in the plan would continue to provide the opportunity for Avenue Services to engage with residents in positive neighbourhood action.

The 2019/2020 Neighbourhood Plan addressed residents concerns around crime by including an intensive summer programme of activities and events as well as other projects specifically aimed at young people. Recently published police data showed a 62 per cent reduction in the number of incidents of ‘anti-social behaviour’ reported in Blacon during the summer of 2019 compared to 2017. Blacon Police believe that Avenue Services’ investment had been a significant contributor to the decline in incidents reported.

The Plan would be reviewed by the Group and Council for final sign off.

*The Board requested that a communications task group be set up to maintain the funding and future production of the My Blacon newsletter.*

The Board expressed their thanks to Sandra Hewitt for her hard work in producing the Plan within a tight timeframe.

1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**There being no further business the Chairman confirmed the meeting closed.

 **Date of next meeting: 7 May 2020**