**Minutes of a hybrid meeting of the Board of Avenue Services (NW) Limited held on Thursday 2 March 2023.**

Attendance record since AGM December 2022

**Present**

William Hogg, Chairman 2/2

Gus Cairns, Board Director 2/2

Sheila Little, Board Director 2/2  
Sarah Orme, Board Director 2/2

Nigel Pell-Ilderton, Board Director 2/2

Keith Board, Board Director 1/2

Trish Richards, Board Director 1/2

**Apologies**

Colleen Eccles, Board Director 1/2

**In attendance**

Kimberley De Vergori, Sanctuary Group, Head of Housing

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services

Helen Kelly, Avenue Services, Team Secretary

James Rone, Sanctuary Group, Head of Finance - Housing

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

**01/03/23 APOLOGIES**

The Board noted apologies from Colleen Eccles.

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.

**02/03/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**The Chairman reminded the Directors of the need, as a subsidiary of Sanctuary Housing 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’.

**03/03/23 MINUTES OF PART A OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2022**Part A of the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 were agreed as a true record and arrangements were made for the Chairman to sign them via DocuSign.

**04/03/23 ACTION POINTS AND MATTERS ARISING**The Board noted updates on the actions below.

1. **73/12/22 - Blacon Health Hub (19/09/20)**

Paul Knight provided an update received from Danielle Wrigley, Senior Development Manager. The GP surgery was progressing well and due to be completed by June 2023. Negotiations and discussions were taking place within the NHS to finalise service provision within the Healthy Hub. Heads of terms were drafted in principle, subject to costs being agreed.

*The Board requested a further update at the next meeting.*

1. **75/12/22 - Avenue Services Performance (19/09/21)**

It was noted from Danielle Wrigley’s report, that a variety of community services had been included in the initial proposal for the Health Hub which would provide a good initial offer.

*The Board requested a further update at the next meeting.*

1. **75/12/22 - Avenue Services Performance (52/09/21)**

Claire Matthews provided an update on the proposal submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council (the Council) for the Blacon Cemetery contract and potential opportunities for Avenue Services to undertake further grounds maintenance work on behalf of the Council.

*Paul Knight agreed to submit a revised quote to the Council for Avenue Services to carry out the work.*

1. **75/12/22 - Avenue Services Performance**

Paul Knight and Nigel Pell-Ilderton had met to discuss additional information requirements and means of improving communication.

This was an ongoing project which would raise the importance of community awareness of events, meetings and activities and the outcomes of projects undertaken by Avenue Services. The Board noted that work was being undertaken by a Blacon resident to produce a directory of services in Blacon.

**05/03/23 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

1. **Board Director Appraisals**

The Chairman reported that board director appraisals were being carried out and a collective board appraisal would be held at the June 2023 meeting.

1. **Blacon Adventure Playground**

The Chairman advised the meeting that there had been a number of unpleasant comments directed at Blacon Adventure Playground (the Adventure Playground) staff, which were unacceptable. He complimented the staff for the professional way in which they had dealt with this. After discussion it was agreed that appropriate signage should be placed at both the Adventure Playground and the Parade Enterprise Centre (the Enterprise Centre) highlighting that such behaviour was unacceptable and would not be tolerated.

*Paul Knight agreed to source signage for the Enterprise Centre and the Adventure Playground to state that any abuse against its staff on these sites would not be tolerated.*

1. **Blacon Neighbourhood Alliance**

The Chairman advised that Paul Knight had recently received a letter from the Interim Chair of the Blacon Neighbourhood Alliance stating “we are seeking to express an interest in returning the responsibility for the provision of the Blacon Adventure Playground back into the hands of the community”. They further stated “It is the concern of the local community, and responding to the financial concerns and available information, that the Adventure Playground is at risk of becoming unsustainable, in need of substantial investment and the Blacon community may face the potential loss of the facility at some future date.”

The Board discussed the contents of the letter and a response was agreed setting out the position regarding Avenue Services’ ownership and responsibility for running the Adventure Playground, and confirming that the site is not at risk of becoming unsustainable, nor are there any plans or likelihood of it being closed.

*The Chairman agreed to finalise and send a response to the Interim Chair of Blacon Neighbourhood Alliance on behalf of the Board.*

**06/03/23 AVENUE SERVICES PERFORMANCE**

Paul Knight provided an update on Avenue Services performance for the third quarter of 2022/2023 and confirmed that there were no operational indicators outside of the target tolerance set.

Two compliments had been received, one relating to the estate walkabout support provided by the cleaning and caretaking team and one from a Chester University placement at the Adventure Playground.

Income generation at the Adventure Playground had exceeded the quarterly target, aided by receipt of some external funding that was secured and used to support the most vulnerable children and families in Blacon.

Two grass cuts had been completed for the quarter with a total of 13 cuts during 2022, exceeding standards set out in the Service Level Agreement with the Council.

**07/03/23 BUSINESS INITIATIVES UPDATE**

Paul Knight provided an update on the Winter Programme 2022 and the Carbon Neutral Project at the Adventure Playground.

**Winter Activities**

Winter activities included the Christmas Fair held at the Enterprise Centre on 19 November 2022 and the annual Blacon Christmas Lights Switch on 8 December 2022 at Western Avenue and the Enterprise Centre. The lights were switched on by Sheila Little, in her capacity as the Deputy Lord Mayor of Chester.

The Adventure Playground staff organised a children’s Christmas party on

17 December 2022 with over 90 children attending and included entertainment, Christmas food, a small gift and free entry to a prize draw. Additional sessions took place for the younger children to meet Father Christmas and receive a gift.

The Westminster Foundation provided funding to support food provision over the Christmas school holidays and the Easter 2023 school holidays.

**Carbon Neutral Project at the Blacon Adventure Playground**

Following planning approval by the Council, a shipping container for the bike project had been delivered to the site in December 2022. Staff and contractors fitted out the container during January 2023 and it was hoped to have the new bike project open by March 2023. It was suggested that corporate volunteers be considered to paint the exterior of the container. Work had also started on the expansion of the allotment space, encouraging local children to get involved in planting seeds and watching fruit and vegetables grow.

**08/03/23 DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2023/2024**

Paul Knight presented the draft Neighbourhood Plan for 2023/2024.

**Gus Cairns declared an interest as a member of Blacon Autism Group.**

**Sheila Little declared an interest as a Trustee of Blacon Beacon.**

The Board agreed in light of the pre-election period from the 23 March to 4 May 2023, that a decision on the Neighbourhood Plan should be postponed until after the election and no payments would be made. This was with the exception of internal projects which were time sensitive and therefore approved.

*All applicants to be advised accordingly.*

**09/03/23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 22 June 2023**