

SKYLIGHT BOARD MEETING**Tuesday 06 May 2025****16.30****SHG Boardroom, Cornerstone, 2 Edward Street****PRESENT / IN-ATTENDANCE:****Trustees (Present):**

- Nicola Firth
- Marie Gilluley (Chair)
- Kathryn Hanna (via MS Teams)
- Tessa Wiley

Officers (In-attendance)

- Samantha Donigan, Head of Assurance (Item 03 & 04)
- Anne-Marie Heil, Director of Customer Services (Lead Officer)
- Laura Jennings, HR Business Partner (Item 5 only)
- Jonny Kelly, Governance Officer (minute-taker)
- John Kennedy, Assistant Director of Finance
- Di Laming, Assistant Director of People and OD (Item 5 only)
- Amanda Ward, Head of Inclusion

01	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Action
	<p>Apologies were received from Rachel Cossey (Governance Manager), Andy Kippax (Strategic Housing Lead), and Priti Butler (Board Member).</p> <p>The Chair welcomed back Kathryn Hanna after a leave of absence.</p> <p>The Chair provided an update on the appraisal process. The Board discussed changes emerging to the ways of working on the Board and agreed that a dedicated meeting should be scheduled via Microsoft Teams to explore these in further detail.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	JKEL
02a/ 02b	MINUTES FROM MEETING 03 FEBRUARY 2025 AND ACTION MONITOR FROM MEETING 03 FEBRUARY 2025	
	<p>The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.</p> <p>Progress with the action monitor was noted.</p> <p>An update was requested regarding the lease for the Furniture Station. The Director of Customer Services confirmed that SKYlight is continuing to work with the family who inherited the property. The team are currently reviewing the operational requirements and current working arrangements in order to make a decision on future leasing arrangements.</p>	
03	SKYLIGHT QUARTER FOUR 2024-25 RISK Report (ASSURANCE)	

AUTHOR: Jonny Kelly
LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF:

DATE: 06/05/2025
CHAIR APPROVED DRAFT:

	<p>The Head of Assurance introduced the report, which provided an overview of SKylight's Risk Register for 2024/25 and a broader assurance update, including progress against the Internal Audit Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that no instances of fraud had been reported during the quarter.</p> <p>The Board enquired about the planned mock regulation inspection. The Head of Assurance confirmed this is scheduled to take place at the end of May and into June. An update will be provided at the Board Away Day in July.</p> <p>The Board discussed recent political developments following the local elections. The Head of Assurance confirmed that this is a fallow year in Stockport, with leadership changes in both Labour and Liberal Democrat groups. However, there are currently no new concerns impacting SHG or SKylight.</p> <p>In response to questions on lobbying processes, the Head of Assurance explained that SHG's Chief Executive, Helen McHale, leads lobbying efforts. Efforts are ongoing to raise awareness among other officers to escalate relevant issues through appropriate channels at Stockport Council.</p>	
	RESOLVED: The SKylight Board took assurance from the contents of the report.	
04	GOVERNANCE REPORT (DECISION)	
	<p>The Head of Assurance presented the report seeking Board approval for adoption of the NHF Code of Governance, providing assurance of compliance and updates on wider governance matters.</p> <p>The Board sought assurance that the introduction of remuneration for Independent Board Members would not adversely impact services to customers. The Director of Customer Services confirmed that the remuneration was proportionate to members' responsibilities and time commitments and clarified that service delivery would not be affected.</p> <p>The Board discussed the self-assessment against the NHF Code, particularly its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) components. Members noted that much of the compliance evidence related to staffing profiles. They emphasised the importance of continuing to collect and report EDI data relevant to service delivery. The Director of Customer Services assured the Board that work is ongoing to enhance data collection and reporting mechanisms in this area.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The SKylight Board approved the adoption of the NHF Code of Governance (2020) and took assurance of SHG and SKylight's compliance with the NHF Code of Governance demonstrated by the 2024/25 self-assessment of compliance with the Code.</p> <p>The SKylight Board also noted the updates relating to the Law Commission consultation on Community Benefit Societies and remuneration respectively.</p>	
05	PEOPLE & OD UPDATE (PRESENTATION)	

AUTHOR: Jonny Kelly

DATE: 06/05/2025

LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF:

CHAIR APPROVED DRAFT:

	<p>The HR Business Partner and the Assistant Director of People and OD delivered an update covering HR activity over the past six months.</p> <p>The Board queried whether disciplinary cases were concentrated in specific service areas. The Director of Customer Services noted that a number originated from Carecall, which is undergoing a cultural transformation.</p> <p>The Board sought assurance regarding staff mental health. While current figures remain low, members emphasised that even a single case is significant. The Assistant Director of People and OD outlined a range of initiatives in place to support mental wellbeing. The Director of Customer Services noted the nature and roles within SKylight's services can attract employees with lived experience and vulnerabilities. She also highlighted the implications of 24-hour services like Carecall, and how they can impact mental health.</p> <p>The Board discussed the recent Supreme Court decision affecting transgender individuals. They enquired whether any staff members identified as trans. The Assistant Director of People and OD confirmed that no individuals had disclosed as such, but a supportive statement had been shared internally, reiterating SHG's inclusive stance under the 'BeYou' framework.</p> <p>It was noted that some staff members are currently on fixed-term contracts. The Board requested the percentage of fixed-term roles versus permanent roles, which the HR Business Partner agreed to provide. The Director of Customer Services explained that fixed-term contracts often arise from specific funding streams, such as external funding, apprenticeships and maternity cover. External funding is frequently extended which then impacts on employment rights.</p> <p>The Board discussed SKylight's approach to apprenticeships. The HR Business Partner confirmed efforts are made to retain apprentices where possible, though it is not always feasible.</p> <p>The Board expressed concern regarding a 46% staff turnover rate. The Director of Customer Services clarified that many roles are entry-level, leading to internal or external progression. While the figure is high, there has also been significant movement within Carecall following the changes that have been implemented in the last year, this has particularly impacted this year's figure. The turnover is not yet a significant concern unless it becomes a trend over multiple years.</p>	LJ
	RESOLVED: The SKylight Board noted and commented on the presentation.	
06	SKYLIGHT 2024/25 YEAR END STATUTORY ACCOUNTS (DECISION)	

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	<p>The Assistant Director of Finance presented the draft year-end statutory accounts for SKylight.</p> <p>The Board praised the Annual Report for effectively demonstrating the breadth and impact of SKylight's work, particularly the authenticity and strength of the included case studies.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The SKylight Board noted and commented on the draft Financial Statements including Directors' reports and Reserves Policy for SKylight. The Board noted that they will subsequently be requested to approve these later in the summer, following completion of the external audit.</p>	
07	SKYLIGHT PROGRESS & FINANCE UPDATE REPORT (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Director of Customer Services provided an overview of SKylight's progress and financial performance up to the end of Quarter 4 2024/25.</p> <p>The Board asked about the current refugee population in Stockport. It was confirmed that most Ukrainian refugees have now been appropriately housed or placed with host families, with current hotel placements largely comprising individuals from other nationalities.</p> <p>It was noted that spending on hotels is expected to almost double over the next year. The Director of Customer Services confirmed that other Greater Manchester boroughs are experiencing similar cost pressures.</p> <p>The Board questioned whether SHG could increase the provision of temporary accommodation in-house. The Director of Customer Services explained that while SHG utilises existing stock where possible, increasing capacity indefinitely could create a cycle of demand that cannot be fully resolved.</p> <p>The Board was informed that the family owning the Furniture Station have offered a lease. SKylight has yet to determine whether the premises meet its long-term needs. In the interim, it is likely a short-term renewal will be agreed while alternatives are explored.</p> <p>The Board queried whether further returns could be achieved on SKylight's financial reserves. The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that current arrangements already maximise interest income under existing conditions.</p>	
	<p>RESOLVED: The SKylight Board noted and discussed the progress and financial position to date.</p>	
09	SHG REPORTS FROM PREVIOUS QUARTER (ASSURANCE)	
	<p>The Governance Officer noted the various reports from SHG Board and its committees, that have been uploaded to TeamEngine in the last quarter, which have implications for SKylight and may be of interest for SKylight Board Members.</p>	
10	FORWARD PLAN (INFORMATION)	

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	<p>The Governance Officer introduced the forward plan of the expected business for 2025-26.</p> <p>The Governance Officer presented the upcoming Board business for the remainder of the year and reminded members of the SHG Board Away Day on 7th July 2025.</p>	
11	REVIEW OF THE MEETING	
	<p>The Board requested an update on the impact of sector professionalisation. The Director of Customer Services confirmed that most SKylight roles are not core housing posts and therefore unlikely to require new qualifications. Any positions falling into a grey area will be reviewed. Assurance was provided that budgetary provision exists if needed.</p> <p>The Board enquired about extending staff training opportunities to Board members, citing data literacy as a relevant topic. The Governance Officer confirmed this will be explored.</p>	JKEL

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