

AHBRA 46th Board Meeting Minutes

Date	8 September 2025
Venue	Hybrid – AHBRA Offices and online via Zoom
Time	09.00
Chaired by	Eddie Lewis (EL)
Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oonagh Breen (OB)• Jillian Mahon (JMN)• Geraldine Hynes (GH)• John McCarthy (JMcCY)• Seamus Neely (SN)
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fergal O’Leary (FOL) – Chief Executive• Paula Nyland (PN) – Head of Regulation (Registration and Assessment)• Leona McMahon (LMcM) – Head of Legal• Antonia Smyth (AS) – Head of Regulation (Regulatory Oversight and Communications)• Tom Rogers (TR) – Governance and Compliance Leader in capacity as Board Secretary• Jenny Murphy (JM) – Senior Regulatory Manager (Registration and Assessment) partial attendance for item 5
Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Michael Cameron (MC)

1. Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal agenda for the meeting, the Board met without the Executive present. The Board confirmed the successful completion of the CEO’s probationary period and agreed unanimously to affirm the appointment.

The Board approved and affirmed the probation period of the CEO and confirmed the appointment.

a. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

The Chair noted apologies had been received from Michael Cameron (MC).

One member advised that he has been engaged by the Local Government Management Agency to co-ordinate the preparation of a Business Case to evidence Staff Requirements in Local Authorities in the delivery of Social and Affordable housing. It was noted that this work does not apply to AHBs and therefore no conflict arises. Members confirmed that they had no declarations of interest to make in relation to any items on the agenda.

b. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Board meeting held on 23 June 2025, as approved at the meeting on 21 July, were distributed in advance to the Members and presented as the first set to be published. The Board made note of a minor typographical error to be corrected prior to publication. It was noted that, in accordance with the agreed procedure, minutes are to be published on a quarterly basis in arrears.

The Board resolved that, further to its earlier decision to publish minutes, these will be published on a quarterly basis in arrears.

The Chair presented the draft minutes of the Board meeting of 21 July 2025 for approval. Subject to minor typographical amendments, the Board approved the minutes of 21 July 2025.

The Board also discussed the status of action items arising from the meeting of 21 July 2025 and approved the updated list.

The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting of 21 July 2025.

2. CEO Report

The CEO report was distributed in advance to the members and tabled at the meeting. Members noted progress made in relation to **Staffing** and **recruitment** as well as plans in relation to **Learning and Development**.

An update was also provided to members on the status of the **assessment programme**, with particular emphasis on actions proposed and taken for non-compliant AHBs.

Members were informed that the new **Communications** team has allowed for the implementation of a more strategic approach to planning and delivering communications and education activities.

Members also considered an update on the **IT project**. A Request for Information (RFI) has been circulated to service providers which will provide clarity on the likely level of expenditure required to implement the IT system requirements identified previously.

Finally, members were provided with an update to **data sharing** developments as considered at a recent Legal and Regulation Committee meeting. The members were informed that another regulator has commenced its process to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with AHBRA but the length of time to complete the MoU is uncertain.

Members discussed the categories of data sharing agreements relevant to different public bodies, funders and agencies together with the likely timescales to conclude such agreements. Members noted that significant work has been undertaken in this area, and considered that it is now important to prioritise the allocation of resources on those data-sharing arrangements that are critical to AHBRA's regulatory processes.

3. Investigation

a. Update on Monitoring

An update was provided regarding the continuing oversight and engagement with an Approved Housing Body (AHB) following a concluded investigation. It was noted that there has been ongoing engagement with a third-party service provider contracted by AHBRA to oversee improvements. Progress had been observed in compiling an asset and liability register, which will now be subject to verification testing.

A query arose on whether the priority items outlined to the AHB will be completed according to the deadlines stipulated. The progress made to date on the priority items was noted, but also that resource constraints may affect the pace of progress and the eventual outcomes remain uncertain.

Members discussed the implications of continued non-compliance with regulatory requirements. It was noted that AHBRA should demonstrate that all avenues have been explored and exhausted before any regulatory enforcement action is taken.

b. Regulatory Options and Implications

The Board noted a discussion paper circulated in advance and presented by LMCM on enforcement under the Housing (Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies) Act 2019. The paper addressed the escalation pathway for regulatory intervention, Board reserved powers and delegations, and legal and governance arrangements. The Board also noted the legal advice note circulated in relation to Section 58 of the Act and the procedural process.

The Board discussed the importance of the ongoing preparatory work. It was noted that no enforcement decisions were made, and any future proposals regarding escalation or cancellation would be considered formally by the Board, based on evidence and legal advice.

4. Legal Update

An update was provided on the legislative review process. Members were informed that AHBRA's legislative review working group had met twice since the last Board meeting and were updated on its progress. The group also met with a Board Member to discuss the regulatory benchmarking review in greater detail.

Members noted the letter received from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) confirming the statutory review process under section 4 of the Act has commenced and AHBRA will be consulted as part of this process. A report on the statutory review is due before the Minister of Housing by February 2026, and any legislative amendments will be considered thereafter. It was noted that the working group is aiming to have an initial meeting with the DHLGH in the coming weeks to discuss the Department's approach to the review and to consider how AHBRA can contribute as a key stakeholder.

A query arose as to what extent individual AHBs will be consulted as part of the review process. Members discussed including a notification on the legislative review process

as part of the Annual Monitoring Programme to be circulated to all AHBs in January 2026. The Chair proposed that feedback should be requested from the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH).

Members further discussed broad improvements and policy changes that may be considered in the legislative review, noting that the scope and timing of these matters will be guided by the Department as the process progresses.

5. Regulatory Update

The Board received an update on the Cancellation Programme in relation to section 57 where an AHB requests to cancel registration and section 59 where an AHB ceases to exist.

It was noted that various Local Authorities had positively engaged with AHBRA as part of the cancellation process.

The discussion in relation to Section 59 focused on the challenges associated with verifying that an unincorporated association ceases to exist. A query arose on the process of notification between AHBRA and the Charities Regulator in relation to charitable assets where an AHB is intending to dissolve. It was agreed that AHBRA would consider this further with the objective of ensuring consistent sharing of data in line with the existing MoU.

6. Finance and Corporate Services Update

An update report on 2025 financial estimates and 2026 budget was distributed in advance to the members and tabled at the meeting. Members were informed that an overall underspend of €60k is forecast to the end of the 2025 financial year, primarily due to phasing of recruitment. It was noted however that this is subject to a number of current procurement processes. This surplus includes a number of priority projects as detailed in the report.

It was confirmed to the meeting that the proposed reallocation between payroll and non-payroll budgets has been communicated to the DHLGH and it was proposed to

write to the DHLGH again after the present meeting to formally request the transfer of payroll and non-payroll budgets.

Members were informed that budget 2026 approval is not expected until quarter four of 2025. It was confirmed that any underspend in 2025 would not impact the 2026 budget as the majority of the increase year on year relates to a full year of 38 staff (an increase of 8) and the additional headcount in the Workforce Plan for 2026. The Board noted the finance and corporate services update with approval.

7. Governance Update

a. Quarterly Report from LRC Chair

The Chair of the LRC provided an update to members on the work of the LRC in the quarter. The LRC Chairperson's report was noted and approved by the Board.

b. Code of Conduct Policy Review

A review of AHBRA's Code of Conduct with proposed tracked changes was distributed in advance to the members and tabled at the meeting. Members were informed that the tracked changes proposed were as a result of feedback received from staff engagement. The Board unanimously approved the revised Code of Conduct as presented.

c. Review of Board Member Leaving Procedure

Changes to the Board member leaving and induction procedures were presented to the Board, together with an update to the Board Secretary communications procedures to reflect the Board decision to publish Board minutes from June 2025.

After discussing the Leaving Procedure, it was agreed that the reference to 'Designated Director' would be amended to 'Board Member' for consistency with AHBRA's Conflict of Interest Policy.

d. Review of Board Member Induction Procedure

The procedure was noted and a discussion was held in relation to its operation in practice.

e. Board Secretary Procedures

Proposed procedures were presented for review. Members discussed the lead time for the circulation of board papers, noting that the papers had previously been distributed three working days in advance of meetings. Following consideration, it was agreed that the circulation period be extended to four working days.

8. Risk Management

The highest risks in the corporate risk register were distributed in advance to the members and tabled at the meeting. Members noted the risks and considered the mitigating measures in place.

9. AOB

The date of the next meeting is set at 20 October 2025 at 09.00.

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed (11.17).

Signed:



26.01.2026.

Eddie Lewis
Chairperson

Date: