

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 1 November at 5.30pm

Present: J Jamieson (Chair)
S Niven
C Taylor
Cllr S Murray
K McIntyre
G Jackson
M Docherty
P O'Connell (Remote)
Cllr P Marshall (Remote)

In Attendance: S Macintyre, Director
C McKiernan, Head of Housing Management/Depute Director
S Tait, Head of Development & Property Services
L McDonald, Finance Officer
Marie-Claire Rafferty, C-URB
Elinor Taggart, C-URB

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were apologies from W Hassan and A McPhee. S Macintyre advised that W Hassan has asked for a leave of absence for 2 to 3 months due to work commitments. This was approved by Committee.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST/DEFERRED ITEMS**

C Taylor declared an interest in Agenda Item 4.1 with regards to the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum.

3. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

Management Committee meeting 04/10/2023

These Minutes were proposed by J Jamieson and seconded by C Taylor.

Audit Committee Meeting 11/10/2023

These Minutes were proposed by J Jamieson and seconded by M Docherty.

3.2 Action List

Committee noted the contents of the action list.

4. DIRECTORS REPORT

Scottish Housing Regulator

S Macintyre advised that the notifiable event the Association submitted to the Regulator regarding Gas Safety has now been closed following the submission of the internal audit report. S Macintyre added that following the approval of the September minutes a notifiable event has been submitted to the Regulator with regards to the retirement of the Director. It was noted that this will remain open until the recruitment process has been concluded.

Annual Assurance Statement 2023

S Macintyre informed Committee that following a meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 October 2023 it was agreed that the wording of the draft assurance statement did not need to change with regards to a section on tenant safety. Therefore, the statement was uploaded to the regulator's online portal on October 23rd. Copies were also uploaded to the Association's website and linked to our social media channels.

Reinforced Autoclave Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

S Macintyre advised that the Association received a letter from the Regulator asking all RSL's to provide information on any properties that may have RAAC within them by the 31st of October. S Macintyre added that given the short timescale the Association has been unable to provide the Regulator with a definitive response. S Macintyre has submitted the request back to the Regulator advising them that the Association will gather more information regarding this issue before providing a full update; however, he believes it is unlikely that the Association has any properties with RAAC in them.

Governance

S Macintyre informed Committee of the resignation of Lisa Scott from the Committee. S Macintyre added that this frees up a place on the Committee and this opportunity will be advertised.

Health and Safety

S Macintyre advised that there was a Health and Safety Sub-Committee meeting which took place prior to the Management Committee meeting. An update on this meeting will be provided at next month's Management Committee meeting.

Cyber Security/IT

S Macintyre explained to Committee that the Microsoft Licenses for Committee laptops are due to expire in early 2024. Maureen Cameron, Senior IT System Support Officer will circulate a survey to gauge use of committee laptops going forward.

Post of New Director

S Macintyre advised that the post of Director has now been advertised with the closing date for applicants being 14th November 2023 with interviews planned to take place on 8 December and 13 December 2023.

Christmas and New Year Arrangements

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Association's annual Staff and Committee Christmas Lunch is planned to take place on Friday the 15th of December at 1.30pm.

S Macintyre asked for Committee approval for the office to close on Friday the 22nd of December 2023 at 12.30pm and re-open on Thursday the 4th of January 2024. As with previous years Committee are asked to approve a paid day of leave for staff on the 29th of December 2023 with staff taking a day of their annual leave entitlement on the 28th of December 2023. Committee approved this.

Committee noted the contents of the Directors Report.

5. Finance Report

Management Accounts – 30 September 2023

L McDonald referred Committee to the Management Accounts to 30 September 2023 and advised these represented the second quarter of the year.

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period to 30 September 2023

L McDonald advised that the Association had an operating surplus of £552,000 at 30 September. L McDonald explained that this is higher than the budgeted surplus of £333,000 and is due to lower maintenance costs.

Committee noted that net interest payments of £397,000 reduced the surplus down to £155,000 for the year to date compared to a budget deficit of £31,000.

L McDonald added that taking account of the variances and revised forecasts for the remainder of the year to the end of March 2024, the net surplus will sit at £235,000 compared to the budgeted surplus of £339,000 at March 2024.

Statement of Financial Position

Committee noted that a total of £25,000 had been spent on new component works up to 30 September 2023. With the net cost of housing assets sitting at £23.50m

The net cost of other fixed assets is £927,000.

L McDonald highlighted that cash balances at 30 September 2023 total £2.132m which is higher than the budgeted amount of £1.667m. P Long advised that this is due to a higher starting position at the start of the year along with a higher surplus to date.

It was explained to Committee that with these variances and revised forecasts for the remainder of the year suggest that the cash balances at March 2024 will be £2.073m compared to the budgeted amount of £2.076m.

Committee noted that long term creditors sit at £11.6m and include the Scottish Government loan of £680,000. L McDonald added that the pension fund valuation is reporting a deficit of £-69,000. Deferred income sat at £11.5m.

The Association's net assets sat at £2.780m at 30 September 2023.

Covenants

L McDonald referred to the covenant analysis as at 30 September 2023 and confirmed that the Association is able to comply with all the financial covenants with the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Committee subsequently approved the Management Accounts to 30 September 2023.

5.2 Procurement of External Auditors

S Macintyre advised that in accordance with the Association's Financial Regulations it is required to review external audit services every 5 years. Our current auditors, CT (formerly Chiene + Tait) were appointed 5 years ago. In addition, our Procurement Policy states that services will be subject to a procurement exercise. S Macintyre referred the Committee to the report which outlined why the procurement of external audit services is currently problematic across our sector. S Macintyre therefore asked Committee to discuss and come to an agreement on whether to issue a new tender for external auditors or to go straight to CT and seek a new negotiated 5-year agreement with them.

Following some discussion amongst members it was agreed that S Macintyre should enquire with CT about the possibility of a new appointment for a further period of 5 years and that he would report back to the Audit Committee which would make a final decision.

6. Development Report

S Macintyre introduced Elinor Taggart and Marie-Clare Rafferty from C-URB to present an update on the acquisition of the site at Fauldhead Road and also provide a pre-tender report. Committee were asked to take note of the points made and ask any questions they may have. C Taylor asked if there were any adaptations that could be made to the designs of the properties by the Association. Committee noted that the adaptations can be made but could only be minor adaptations such as access to storage areas and access to the gas heating system. S Niven asked if there was any possibility that the budget for the development could change before the agreement has been signed by the Association. It was noted that there is a slight possibility that the budget for the development may change, however it is most likely that the reason for a budget change would be met by additional grant and would not therefore impact on the amount of the private finance that would be required. P O'Connell asked if the budget has some contingency allowances within it. C-URB advised that this is not the case as the Scottish Government does not allow for this sum to be included, however the Contractor will have built in a contingency sum within the contract price. Following some further discussion regarding the general site design and energy efficiency levels within the newbuild the Committee approved the recommendation within the report to progress the design & build contract with McTaggart Construction.

7. Quarter 2 Performance Report

Property Services

S Tait advised that 100% of emergency repairs were completed on time in quarter 2 which is an improvement from quarter 1. He advised that 99.3% of non-emergency repairs were completed on time in quarter 2 and again this was an improvement from quarter 1.

The average time to complete emergency repairs in quarter 2 was 1 hour and 19 minutes. The average time to complete non-emergency repairs was 2.78 days.

All gas safety checks in the quarter were completed in the appropriate time scales. 100% of repairs were completed to a satisfactory level according to our tenant's satisfactory survey.

S Tait advised that the average void spend is considerably higher at this point of the year than it was last year. So far, the Association has had 17 voids and re-lets this year. S Tait added that the number of voids this year which has cost less than £1,000 sits at 1, whilst 4 voids have cost between £1,000 and £2,500. A further 5 voids have cost between £4,000 and £10,000 and another 4 voids have cost in excess of £10,000 each. This is a large increase compared to the void costs for last year when the average void cost was £2,800 compared to just over £5,000 per void for the current year.

Committee noted that all 825 properties within the Association have a valid gas safety certificate with 11 properties currently with a capped supply.

A major adaptation is due to be complete in the immediate future with £85,520 being allocated for these works. The Association has been allocated £45,000 for general adaptations in the year 2023/24.

There are no properties that were due for an electrical inspection in quarter 2.

The Association continues to monitor any cases of dampness or mould within the Association. A total of 34 units have been inspected in Q1 & Q2, however it is anticipated that the number of properties that require an inspection will increase as the colder months set in.

Housing Management

C McKiernan advised that there were 8 properties let in quarter 2. Of these 8 lets 2 are leases, one to East Dunbartonshire Council for temporary accommodation and one has been let to Crossreach who are supporting a vulnerable young adult. C McKiernan reported that our understanding is that the tenancy is going very well. The average re-let times was 22 days for quarter 2 and there were no refusals in the quarter.

There was a slight increase in arrears from the previous quarter rising from 2.37% in Q1 rising to 2.53% in Q2. As a total arrears have risen from £101,301.45 in Q1 to £108,013.22 in Q2.

There were 9 anti-social behaviour complaints submitted to the Association within Quarter 2; however these were all resolved within our agreed timescales.

The Association's welfare rights team gained a total of £83,691.81 in additional income for Hillhead tenants in Q2.

Finance and Corporate Services

In Quarter 2 the Association received 4 Stage 1 Complaints and no stage 2 Complaints. 3 of these complaints related to Housing Quality & Maintenance and the other complaint was due to Customer/Landlord Relationship matter. All of these complaints were resolved in the appropriate timescales and none were upheld.

The Association received 1 Freedom of Information Request in Q2 which was responded to in full within the appropriate timescales. No Environmental Information Regulation requests were received.

There were no subject access requests received in the quarter. There were also no data breaches recorded.

7.2. Strategic Plan

S Macintyre presented Committee with an update on the progress of the strategic plan. S Macintyre advised that some minor amendments had been made to the wording within the strategic plan. S Macintyre added that staff are recommending that the Association consider holding a community event in June 2025 to commemorate the Associations 21st Birthday and a budget line would therefore need to be included in the budgets in 2024/25 and 2025/26. A tenant survey will be due to take place next year in mid-2024 and a budget line will also need to be included for this. Committee noted the contents of this report and agreed to include budget sums for the items mentioned.

8. East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees

C McKiernan advised that the Association has been approached by East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees enquiring if there are any properties available to enable them to help house refugees. C McKiernan advised that the Project has approached the Association in the past and the Association has assisted with accommodation. C McKiernan advised East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees that should the Committee approve this request then the property they would receive would be a 2-bedroom 4 in a block, which they have said would be acceptable. Committee were asked to read over the request before discussing whether to approve or refuse the request. Following some discussion Committee subsequently approved this request and C McKiernan agreed to advise the group accordingly.

8.1 Cost of Living Survey

C McKiernan presented Committee with the results of a cost-of-living survey that the Association conducted amongst its tenants. The Association contacted all tenants that had a contact number or email registered with the Association and had received 145 responses. The questions asked ranged from what affected tenants the most i.e. energy costs, food costs or rent costs and if it has affected their health, physically or mentally. The survey was also used to gauge which tenants used our services or if they even knew about them. The Association will now carry out a further survey open to all tenants on their views about investment priorities, service quality and costs, before reporting back to the Management Committee. The results of both surveys will be taken into consideration as part of our forthcoming rent consultation for 2024/25. Committee noted the contents of this report.

9. Policy Review

Right To Compensation Policy

Committee were presented with the Right to Compensation Policy for review. S Tait advised that no changes have been made to the policy and Committee were asked to read over the policy before giving its approval. Committee subsequently approved the Right to Compensation Policy.

10. A.O.C.B

There was no other Business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6 December 2023

Minutes prepared by K Tait, Corporate Services Assistant

Date: 06 November 2023

Chairpersons Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.