

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 2 November at 5.30pm (Hybrid Meeting)

Present: J Jamieson (Chair)
C Taylor
S Niven
Cllr S Murray
A McPhee
P O'Connell
Cllr P Marshall

In Attendance: S Macintyre, Director
C McKiernan, Depute Director/Housing Manager
M White, Head of Finance and Corporate Services
S Tait, Head of Development & Property Services
P Long, FMD
O Gaffney, Share (Agenda Item 8)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from G Jackson, W Hassan, R Smith and W Hassan. It was noted that D Wilson was on continued leave of absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DEFERRED ITEMS

C Taylor declared an interest in Agenda Item 4.5 in relation to Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum's fee structure.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Management Committee Meeting 7 September 2022

Page 3: Item 4(i)

It was noted that reference to the increase in CPI rate should read "further throughout the year and into 2023" as opposed to 2024.

Subject to the above amendment. The minutes were approved by J Jamieson & seconded by C Taylor.

(3ii) Action List

Committee noted the contents of the Action List.

4(i) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assurance Statement

It was noted that the Assurance Statement had been approved at the Special Management Committee meeting on 26 October and that it included a clause relating to the potential impact of rent freezes on the Business Plan.

Rent Increase Consultation

It was noted that a paper on the consultation would be presented at the December Management Committee meeting.

Health & Safety

S Macintyre advised that in light of M McDonald's resignation as well as staff absences within the Property Services Team, a meeting of the Health & Safety Sub Committee had yet to be convened.

Committee Member Portal

S Macintyre advised that all laptops had been issued with the exception of L Scott and M Docherty. He asked that Committee contact M Cameron should there be any issues with accessing the portal. S Macintyre further advised that the December meeting would take place via Microsoft Teams for those members joining remotely, and that the papers would also be accessible from Teams.

Correspondence

Committee noted that the wage negotiations between EVH and UNITE were still ongoing.

S Macintyre referred to the consultation paper from Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum in relation to changes in their fee structure. Committee advised they were happy with the proposal and S Macintyre agreed to feed this back to the Forum.

New Build Sites at Fauldhead Road & Chryston Road – CALA Homes/McTaggart Construction

S Macintyre advised that CALA Homes were still in the process of going through the Section 75 conditions attached to the planning consent, and once they had been dealt with acquisition of the site and ground preparation works could be progressed. He highlighted that it had been hoped this would have commenced in October, however it would now be in the new year. He advised it was uncertain whether this would delay the anticipated site start in the Summer. It was noted that a further meeting would take

place with C~urb (Link HA, Development Advisors), following which a report would be presented to Committee for a final decision on whether the Association's involvement in the scheme is financially viable.

S Macintyre advised that site layouts and house types had now been received which would allow McTaggarts to start working out some indicative costs.

S Macintyre further advised that Scottish Government had been in touch today to ask whether the timeline was still the same as it had been 2 months ago, and it was noted this had been passed to C~urb for a response in this regard.

S Niven enquired as to whether there was any formal commitment to the scheme at this stage and S Macintyre confirmed that there was no commitment other than payment to C~urb for development advice.

Audit and Risk Management

S Macintyre advised that he hoped to convene a meeting of the Audit Committee towards the end of November, at which updates to the Risk Register would be presented.

Strategy Review

Committee agreed with the proposal to defer the Strategy Day until the New Year, and it was noted that Members were invited to offer ideas for themes and/or guest speakers.

Policy Meeting

It was noted that a Policy Meeting had been convened for Wednesday 16 November at 5.30pm, to which all Committee Members would be invited.

It was agreed to take Agenda Item 8 at this point ahead of the remaining items.

5. FINANCE REPORT: MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2022

P Long presented the Management Accounts for the period to 30 September 2022 and highlighted the summary page which detailed the Association's position at this point.

Statement of Comprehensive Income

P Long referred Committee to the Statement of Comprehensive Income and highlighted the turnover of just over £2.2M, which was slightly less than estimated. The operating costs of £1.6M were also noted which were again less than estimated, thus giving a surplus of £600,000.

P Long referred to the interest receipts of over £7000, advising that the Association had more money on deposit and that interest rates from these deposits were starting to increase again. He further advised however that interest rates were also increasing on the Association's variable rate loans.

Committee noted the other comprehensive income relating to payments towards the pension deficit at almost £29,000, were in line with the budget. He highlighted this would be the final payment and this had been confirmed by The Pensions Trust.

P Long referred to the detail behind the figures of the Statement of Comprehensive Income and highlighted most of the income received was fairly close to the budget with the only significant variance being in relation to Stage 3 Adaptations. He advised that grants had been claimed for these works but had not been received until October. Committee noted therefore that the next set of management accounts would show this as received.

Committee referred to the expenditure and P Long highlighted the overspend in management and maintenance costs and reactive maintenance and the underspend in planned maintenance works. He also referred to the variance relating to bad debts but highlighted that a write-off report was being presented at tonight's meeting.

P Long referred to the income and expenditure from other activities and explained some variances were due to timing issues, such as not all welfare rights income having been received. He also highlighted the receipt of additional wider role income via a grant from SFHA to provide assistance to tenants.

Committee noted the explanation in relation to interest rates on page 2a of the management accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

Committee noted the figures relating to net and current assets and capital and reserves with the total net assets totalling £2,420,654.

P Long referred to the analysis of these figures and highlighted the expenditure on capital projects, advising that environmental works were continuing with some spend having been carried over from last year. He advised that expenditure on new components were primarily boiler replacements.

Committee noted the bank account balances and associated rise in interest rates. They also noted the analysis in relation to debtors and creditors and rent arrears information.

Cashflow Statement

Committee noted the information within the cashflow statement and figures relating to investing and financing activities.

Management Expenses

Committee noted the expenditure and the analysis of any variances. P Long highlighted some of the larger variances. He advised that the higher admin costs related to cover for a long term staff sickness.

In relation to the higher insurance costs, P Long advised premiums had risen significantly, but this is the case for many associations.

He also highlighted the higher costs in professional fees, relating to payment to the Pensions Trust as well as a stock condition survey having been undertaken earlier in the year.

P Long referred to the variance in relation to landscaping costs and S Tait advised that invoices received from the previous contractor were currently being queried.

Committee noted the large underspend in major repairs and P Long explained some works would not be getting carried out this year.

Committee noted the ratio analysis and covenant analysis, and P Long confirmed the Association's compliance with the covenants.

P Long referred to the forecast outturn at 31 March 2023 and the information was duly noted along with the indication that all covenants would again be complied with.

6. HOUSING MANAGEMENT REPORT: WRITE OFFS

C McKiernan referred Committee to the above report which recommended balances for write offs in relation to former tenant arrears & sundry debts, and former tenant credits.

Committee noted that where a former tenant is traced following write off, the Association would still take the opportunity to recover the debt which would be written back on.

C McKiernan referred Committee to the proposed write offs and the associated reasons.

C Taylor enquired as to what the position would be should a Section 5 referral be received from someone who had unpaid arrears with the Association and C McKiernan advised that a repayment arrangement would be put in place to recover the debt.

Committee subsequently approved the write offs in the amount of £12,140.67 for former tenant arrears and sundry debts and £624.63 for former tenant credits.

7. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Property Services

S Tait referred to the key performance indicators highlighting percentages of repairs completed on time for emergency and non-emergency repairs.

Committee also noted that gas safety requirements had been met in this quarter and last quarter. S Tait highlighted the 5 properties last year where they had not been met, and it was noted this was due to Covid.

S Tait referred to tenant satisfaction and it was noted that 93.39% of tenants surveyed confirmed satisfaction with the repair service. S Tait highlighted that 2 responses indicated "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" and therefore could not be included in the satisfied percentage.

Committee noted the breakdown in repairs by category.

Under Gas Safety, S Tait highlighted the position at the end of this quarter, and it was noted that the 11 addresses where the gas supply has been capped continue to be monitored on a quarterly basis. Cllr Murray enquired as to whether tenants who have had their gas supply capped would be paying a standing charge, and S Tait advised this would be the case.

Major Adaptations

S Tait advised that the procurement process was continuing in relation to the particular property, and that he would keep Committee informed of progress.

General Adaptations

S Tait referred to P Long's previous discussion in this regard with relation to costs. He further highlighted however that all the allocated funding had been committed, with 3 adaptations currently on a waiting list. Committee noted that staff are working closely with EDC Occupational Therapy Department to priorities referrals. It was further noted that Scottish Government would be carrying out a spend review in January.

Landscape Maintenance Contract

It was noted that the current contract with Lawnbusters ended on 31 October and that a full procurement exercise would be undertaken.

Electrical Testing

Committee noted the information related to progress made with this programme.

Housing Management

Voids & Lettings

S Niven referred to the high number of voids in the first 2 quarters almost matching the total for the year in 2021/22 and enquired as whether there was a need for concern or was it just a case of normality resuming in voids and lettings. C McKiernan explained it was partly due to things returning to normal, with tenants who may have put off moving during the pandemic now doing so. She also advised that the Council had had a couple of newbuild sites which came off site earlier this year and a number of Association tenants were offered tenancies in them. C McKiernan advised the situation would continue to be monitored however the reasons for terminating gave no cause for concern.

C McKiernan referred to the properties let during Quarter 2 and highlighted that the target of 45% of lets to EDC had not been met, however this was being monitored. She advised she had a meeting with EDC Homeless Team Leader tomorrow.

C McKiernan referred Committee to the previous agreement to provide EDC with units for use as temporary homeless accommodation and confirmed that 2 leases were now in place.

Committee noted the relet times during the period was on target and C McKiernan advised this was due to the work of both Property Services and Housing Management Staff in turning around properties and identifying the allocations timeously.

There followed some discussion on the definition of a “reasonable” period for a property to be relet following a death. It was noted that the Committee had agreed in November 2021 that this be a maximum of 28 days. C McKiernan asked that Committee consider whether they wished to retain this as a “reasonable” period or reduce it to 21 or 14 days. Following discussion Committee agreed to keep the period at 28 days, however it was noted that this was a maximum period, and staff would still endeavour to have the keys returned earlier.

Rent Arrears

Committee referred to the rent arrears information, noting the continuing downward trend. S Macintyre highlighted that the figure of 2.59% at the end of Quarter 2 was the lowest level since the Association was set up, and Committee asked that staff be thanked for their work in this regard.

C McKiernan referred to the grants received and advised that the National Lottery had been in contact inviting the Association to bid for another fund, and she agreed to keep Committee updated on this and any further funding opportunities.

Committee referred to the former tenant arrears information and noted this would be reduced following tonight’s write off approval.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Committee noted that 11 cases had been reported in the quarter, all of which were resolved and closed within timescales. Cllr Marshall enquired as to whether any of these cases had resulted in eviction and C McKiernan advised they had not. She further advised the last eviction carried out by the Association was in May 2019, and that in the last 12 months only one notice of proceedings had been issued for anti-social behaviour.

Welfare Rights

C McKiernan highlighted the financial gain of £84,912.46 to Hillhead tenants in Quarter 2, and it was agreed this was a remarkable achievement by the welfare rights and income maximisation staff.

Corporate Services

Complaints

M White apologised for Q2 complaints not being included in the report and advised this would be presented along with Q3 report in February 2023.

Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

Committee noted that no FOI or EIR requests had been received within the quarter.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – Subject Access Requests

Committee noted no Subject Access Requests had been received within the quarter.

Data Breaches

Committee noted there had been no data breaches within the quarter.

7.1 EQUALITIES ACTION PLAN

C McKiernan referred Committee to the above action plan and the progress being made across all areas. She advised that further opportunities for training in this area would continue to be explored for staff and committee. M White advised that evaluations for the recent training on Unconscious Bias attended by C Taylor and W Hassan had been issued.

8. COMMITTEE APPRAISAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION

O Gaffney presented the Committee Appraisal Report and talked through the findings from the appraisal process.

She highlighted the recommendations and learning and development plan which were duly noted by Committee.

In conclusion, O Gaffney advised that the appraisal process had indicated the Management Committee worked well as a team and had the knowledge and skills required to lead the Association.

9. VALUE FOR MONEY STATEMENT

S Macintyre referred Committee to the above statement for 2021/22 and also to the summary of the Landlord Report carried out on the Association's performance by Scotland's Housing Network.

S Macintyre advised that following Committee approval he would make the Value for Money Statement available on the Association's website. S Niven advised that he agreed this Statement was important, as was the sharing of this with tenants. He suggested however that some of the terminology used may not be widely familiar to tenants. It was agreed that the next Customer Care Working Group meeting could look at this further.

S Niven also referred to the comparison with the Association's peer group and highlighted that it showed a slightly negative position in relation to others in the group. It was noted this was largely due to the timing of when associations are undertaking their tenant surveys.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Christmas and New Year

S Macintyre advised of the proposal to close the office on 23 December at 12 noon, with it re-opening on Thursday 5 January 2023. He advised that as in previous years this would mean staff using one day from their leave entitlement on 29 December and a paid day's leave being granted for 30 December. Committee approved this proposal.

2. Christmas Lunch

S Macintyre asked if Committee were happy for staff to organise a joint Committee and Staff lunch during week commencing 12 December in one of the local hotels. This was agreed.

3. Forms

M White advised that she was seeking completion of the annual declaration of interest forms, code of conduct and close relative information. She advised that once all are received, she would ask J Jamieson to sign the Association's Registers.

M White also asked that Committee return the IT Policy agreement forms issued by M Cameron as soon as possible.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Policy Meeting 16/11/22

Minutes prepared by M White, Head of Corporate Services

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.