

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 4 November 2020 at 5pm via Zoom

Present:

C Taylor	S Niven
G Jackson	Cllr S MacDonald
L Scott	Cllr S Murray
Cllr J Jamieson	R Smith

In Attendance:

- S Macintyre, Director
- C McKiernan, Housing Manager / Depute Director
- S Tait, Head of Development & Property Services
- M White, Head of Corporate Services
- E Connell, Housing Assistant
- K Tait, Corporate Services Assistant
- P Long, FMD Financial Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from D Wilson and W Hassan. M Docherty is on a continued leave of absence

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND MEMBERSHIP OF SUB COMMITTEE

There were no declarations of interest.

C Taylor asked if anyone would be willing to volunteer for any of the Associations Sub-Committees. G Jackson volunteered to join the Health & Safety Sub-Committee.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Management Committee Meeting – 7 October 2020

Tenant Complaint

S MacDonald asked if the tenant had been notified of the relevant actions proposed at the last meeting, C McKiernan confirmed that they had been advised in writing by the Association's solicitors.

C McKiernan confirmed that following the last meeting a Notifiable Event had been submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on 16 October 2020. C McKiernan further noted that the internal auditor had concluded the investigation into the complaint and a written report had been provided to the Chair on 2 November 2020. The report confirms that the allegations have been investigated and found not to be supported and that no further action is recommended by the investigator. C Taylor confirmed that

she was satisfied with the content of the report and was pleased to note that the allegations were not substantiated.

C McKiernan advised that a further letter would be sent to the tenant advising them of the outcome of the investigation.

Cala Homes

J Jamieson asked if there had been any update regarding the CALA homes development. S Macintyre confirmed that a meeting between the Association and CALA is scheduled for Friday 6 December. It is expected that CALA will provide the Association with an update on the revised plans for the 2 development sites and an outline programme for the sites.

These Minutes were approved by L Scott and seconded by S Niven

Minutes of Audit Committee Meeting 14/10/20

These Minutes were approved by S Niven and seconded by L Scott.

4. Finance Report

P Long of FMD Financial Services was in attendance to present Committee with the management accounts to 30 September 2020.

P Long explained that the Association's turnover for the year to date was sitting at just over £2.1M, with the Association's operating costs for the year sitting at just over £1.4M. P Long advised that the Association had a surplus of £728k.

P Long informed Committee that the Association's rental income sat at £1.9m. However he highlighted the Association's void loss was sitting at £20k which is over budget and that this is mainly due to the coronavirus. He noted that it is harder to turnover properties as quickly we used to and added to this were a number of properties that were un-let during the first few months of lockdown.

P Long highlighted income and expenditure and highlighted that the Association has underspent in all areas such as management costs and admin costs.

Committee noted that the Association had £1.2M sitting in its various deposit accounts. The Committee noted that it has 2 accounts with Close Brothers with 1 account valued at £250k and the other valued at £750k. However P Long advised that the account valued at £250k matured on 19 October and the Association has withdrawn the deposit has reinvested £500k into a new account opened up with Nationwide Building Society. P Long advised that Nationwide has the top rating from all 3 credit rating agencies that the Association refers to. However he added that Close Brothers Bank are now only rated by 2 of those 3 agencies and have dropped to the second rating with 1 agency.

P Long referred the Committee to its treasury management policy which states that the Association should withdraw funding if 2 of the 3 agencies do not give a bank a top credit rating. However he highlighted that it may be worthwhile to look again at the Association's treasury management policy to allow the Association to continue to invest in these banks if it does not offer a rating from all 3 agencies.

It was agreed that FMD and staff would review the current Treasury Management Policy and bring a report with a revised form of wording back to the Management Committee for its meeting in December.

P Long advised that the Association fully expects rent arrears to increase over the next couple of months; this is due in part to the pandemic and but also traditionally Christmas is a time of year when arrears are likely to increase.

Committee noted that the Association had generated an additional £285k in cash throughout the year so far which is far more than expected.

P Long confirmed that the Association is currently compliant with the covenants set by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

Committee approved the Management Accounts to 30 September 2020.

5(i) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Scottish Housing Regulator

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Association had submitted its monthly return to the Regulator for the month of October by the submission deadline date of the 7th of November.

The Annual Assurance Statement is due to be submitted to the regulator by 30 November 2020. The Audit Committee had met on 14 October 2020 to review the draft and supporting evidence of assurance. It was noted that a final draft assurance statement is included in Agenda Item 5ii.

2. Current Position

Committee noted that there are still 3 members of staff working in the office maintaining the phones so that tenants can keep in contact with the Association. It was noted that it is looking ever more likely that the majority of staff will continue to work from home into the New Year and that all of the staff are aware of this.

Staff took part in a wellbeing session on Wednesday 4 November. The session was carried out by Heather Ballantine via SHARE and was received positively by the Association's staff members.

3 Housing Management

C McKiernan advised that this will be covered in Agenda Item 6 – Performance Report

3.1 Property Services

S Tait advised that this will be covered in Agenda Item 6 – Performance Report

4. Finance & Corporate Services

As stated in the Finance Report the Association has invested £500k into the Nationwide Building Society.

5. Strategic Planning

S Macintyre confirmed that work on the Associations Strategic Plan will commence and hopes to have a draft presentation ready for the December Management Committee.

S Macintyre advised that Community links had provided the Association with a report outlining the changes to the level of deprivation across the Hillhead area. A copy of the report had been included in the papers and S Macintyre advised that this may be a topic for discussion at a future meeting.

6. Committee appraisals

S Macintyre provided Committee with an update on the Committee Appraisals. S Macintyre advised Committee that Olwyn Gaffney has completed the appraisal process. S Macintyre advised Committee Members to ensure they log any training that they take part in within their individual learning statements.

5(ii) Assurance Statement

S Macintyre presented Committee with the Final Draft Assurance Statement for approval which had previously been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 14 October 2020.

Committee formally approved the Assurance Statement and agreed for it to be signed by the Chair before submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

5(iii) Cyclical Painter & Small Works procurement

S Tait advised that the Association had advertised for 2 small procurement jobs. Both jobs were advertised in line with the Association's procurement policy. Based on the expected value of the contracts they were advertised via the Public Contracts Scotland quick quotes module.

Painting works

The cyclical painting works will take place over 60 properties and will include the painting of windows, doors, soffits and fascia. At the same time any necessary repairs will be completed to rusted areas of galvanised fencing, gutters will also be cleaned. The Association will also repair/replace any mastic seals at doors and window frames etc.

The Association received 6 tenders from contractors and were passed to Thomson Cost Consultants for review and checking. After review it is the intention of the Association to appoint Wilson Decorators. These works are expected to commence at the start of November and last up to around 8 weeks.

Small Works at 168 Hillhead Road

S Tait explained that the property at 168 Hillhead has been void long term due to a severe structural defect of the ground floor slab.

S Tait explained that the works required are of a major repair and an entire new reinforced concrete re-cast to form a new floor.

There were 4 tenders received from contractors for this tender. These were received and sent to Thomson Cost Consultant for reviewing and checking.

After review it is the Association's intention to appoint Graham Construction to carry out these works. Graham Construction submitted a tender of £52,608.00 exclusive of VAT. This is slightly higher than the projected works cost of £50,000.00 shown in the 2020/21 budget.

The award of both contracts was duly noted and approved by the Committee.

6 Performance Report

Maintenance

S Tait presented Committee with the maintenance performance statistics for quarter 2 of the year 2020/21. Committee noted that 100% of emergency repairs in quarter 2 were completed on time with an average repair time of 1 hour 26 minutes. It was also noted that 97.17% of non-emergency repairs were completed on time with an average completion time of 3.12 days.

S Tait advised that the Association only received 5 repairs satisfaction surveys in quarter 2 with all 5 that were received saying they were satisfied with the repairs service.

Housing Management

C McKiernan presented Committee with the Housing Management performance statistics for quarter 2 of the year 2020/21. C McKiernan advised that the Association had seen an increase in lets in Q2 with 14 properties being let along with a new tenancy starting via a mutual exchange.

Committee noted that there had been a reduction in re-let times in Q2 however the average relet time is still over the Association's target mainly due to properties lying empty during the start of lockdown.

C McKiernan explained that there had been an increase in refusals, a total of 4 refusals were recorded in Q2 however 3 of these refusals were from the same property.

Committee noted that the current tenant arrears in Q2 sat at 4.53% a reduction from Q1 when current tenant arrears sat at 5.16%. C McKiernan explained that this mainly due to a change in the way Universal Credit is paid to the Association and that this will see a reduction in the level of debt the Association carries for tenants who are UC claimants.

As advised in the finance report it is expected that the Association will see an increase in rent arrears over the coming months due to the effects of Covid-19 and the Christmas period.

C McKiernan informed Committee that there had been 4 anti-social complaints in Q2 with all of the complaints being completed within the target timescales.

7. Tenancy Support

Chairs Fund

S Macintyre presented a draft application form for the Association's Chairs Fund and asked Committee for approval to advertise it to the public.

After reading over the application Committee subsequently approved for it to be advertised.

Cash for Kids

S Macintyre informed Committee that every year the Association's welfare rights service has applied for individual grants from the Cash for Kids Christmas Appeal. Each grant is worth £25 per child for a low income family with around £1500 per year being awarded to the Association. Unfortunately due to the effects of covid-19 Cash for Kids do not have the funds required to provide the grants and are unlikely to for future years.

S Macintyre advised that the Association is due to sell a small piece of land and proposed that the money received from the sale be used by the Association to replace the cash for kids grants in 2020 and help families who have come to rely on the grants in the past. It is proposed that a single child family receive a £25 grant and any families with 2 or more children receive a grant of £50. It was noted that the sale of land would result in a cash receipt of £3000.

Following discussion the Committee subsequently approved the Association's Christmas grant scheme.

8. Policy Review

M White presented 2 updated policies for approval. These policies were the Performance Management Policy and the Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Performance Management Policy

M White advised there had been a couple of amendments made to the Performance Management Policy. Committee subsequently approved the Performance Management Policy

Recruitment & Selection Policy

M White advised there had been a couple of amendments made to the Recruitment & Selection Policy. Committee subsequently approved the Recruitment & Selection Policy.

9. A.O.C.B

S Macintyre advised that Betty Borland (Housing Officer) will be retiring at the end of December 2020. S Macintyre advised that there will be a report included in next month's meeting covering the arrangements for Betty's retirement.

S Niven asked if there was an update that could be given in regards to the proposal from EVH for next year's pay award. S Macintyre advised that EVH had provided 3 options for its Members to choose and asked Committee if they had any suggestions or if they would like to ask EVH negotiate on the behalf of the Association. It was agreed that the 3 options provided by EVH were fair and that the Association would inform EVH to negotiate on behalf of the Association.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Management Committee Meeting Wednesday 2 December 2020

Minutes prepared by; K. Tait, Corporate Services Assistant
17/11/2020

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.