

# HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

## Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 2 September 2020 at 5pm via Zoom

<b>Present:</b>	C Taylor Cllr S Murray S Niven G Jackson D Wilson	Cllr J Jamieson Cllr S McDonald W Hassan R Smith L Scott
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<b>In Attendance:</b>	S Macintyre, Director C McKiernan, Housing Manager / Depute Director S Tait, Head of Development & Property Services M White, Head of Corporate Services K Tait, Corporate Services Assistant P Long, FMD Financial Services
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### 1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received. M Docherty is on a continued leave of absence

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DEFERRED ITEMS AND ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

There were no declarations of interest or any deferred items.

### 3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

#### Management Committee Meeting – 5 August 2020

##### Page 4 item 3 – Current Position

C Taylor asked if the Management team had discussed any plans to reward staff for the hard work they have done throughout the covid-19 pandemic. M White advised that the Management team had met and agreed to reward staff with a thank you Friday allowing staff to finish up at 3pm on the last Friday of the month. M White added that this was well received by the Association's staff.

##### Page 4 item 5 – Strategic Planning

C Taylor asked if the Association had made any inquiries with contractors regarding a reduction of rates due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. S Tait advised that the Association has not made any contact with contractors regarding this yet but there has been discussions regarding whether or not to go forward with this.

## Page 5 item 5(ii) – AGM Report

M White notified Committee that all invitations and papers for this year's SGM & AGM had been sent out to all members. M White added that there was an error at the last meeting with regards to which Committee members were required to step down at the AGM. However the Committee were asked to note that this has been resolved and all members standing down have since informed the Association that they intend to stand for re-election.

## Page 6 item 6 – Performance Report Property Services

J Jamieson asked if there had been any update from CALA homes regarding the new development opportunity. S Macintyre advised that they were told from CALA homes the Association would receive an update on the progress of the development at some point in September however the Association is still to receive this update.

These Minutes were approved by S Niven and seconded by G Jackson.

### **4. Finance Report**

P Long of FMD Financial Services was in attendance to present Committee with the 5 Year Financial Projections for approval before being sent to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

#### Statement of Comprehensive Income.

P Long explained that turnover will increase each year as rents increase at a rate of 1% above inflation. P Long highlighted the turnover at the end of the year was £4,157,500 and explained that he expects that to increase as the years go on.

P Long added that operating costs will increase each year due to an increase in staff costs, overheads and maintenance works.

#### Statement of Financial Position

Committee noted that the costs of housing assets will only slightly increase due to no new housing developments being planned over the next 5 years. It was also noted that the depreciation of properties will continue to increase and the net cost of the Association's assets will be £22.4m at the end of the 5 year period.

P Long added that it is predicted that net rent arrears will increase over the 5 year period along with other receivables. It was noted that cash balances will fluctuate over the five years however it will decrease from just over £2m to £1.6m.

P Long explained that Loans that are due to be repaid after one year will increase at first due to additional drawdowns however the outstanding loan balance will begin to decrease as repayments are made.

#### Statement of Cashflow

Committee noted that the cashflow statement showed that the Association will continue to generate cash from its operating activities and will continue to invest in its properties.

P Long added that the Association will have sufficient cash to meet all of its expenditure requirements over the 5 years.

L Scott asked how it would affect the budget if rent increases were below inflation. P Long explained that this would mean the Association would produce less income and would reduce cash balances for the 5 years and beyond.

S Murray highlighted the Association's balances showing the Association currently in a strong financial position and asked if the Association could look to borrowing money and investing it in something that will benefit tenants such as community heating scheme? P Long explained that although the Association was currently in a strong position over the 5 year period however that may not be the case beyond. However he added the 30 year projections which the Association is currently working on will look at developments and investments within the Association over a longer time frame.

Committee subsequently approved the Association's 5 Year Financial Projections.

## **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 July by the submission deadline date of the 7<sup>th</sup> of August. He added that the Regulator has now published a 4 month analysis for all RSL's which is available for viewing.

Committee noted that staff are currently working on a draft assurance statement, and is also reviewing the Association's ongoing compliance with the standards of governance and financial management. It is planned to present a detailed report to Committee in October 2020.

### **2. Recovery Planning – Post Lockdown**

S Macintyre advised Committee that there has been no change made by the Scottish Government regarding the opening of non-essential offices therefore was unable to provide Committee with an estimated date of re-opening the Association's office.

S McDonald asked if the office remaining closed was having any negative effects to the Association's welfare rights service and if so if there was any way this could be changed? C McKiernan explained that she has been in contact with both Moira and Morag regarding this issue, however they have advised her that they feel they are still able to do their jobs up to the same standard speaking over the phone with tenants just as much as they would face to face.

### **3. 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 also noted that M McDonald (Property Services Officer) has been present around the estate supervising the ongoing environmental improvement works.

#### **3.1 Housing Management**

C McKiernan informed Committee that rent arrears at the end of August sat at £191,000 an increase of £1,000 from the end of July.

C McKiernan added that the volume of allocations and voids within the Association continues to increase and the Housing Management team are considering how best to provide administrative support as the Association's waiting list is paper based and held within the office.

Committee noted that staff are continuing to support tenants and their families in these tough times and are providing financial support to families with school aged children.

#### **3.2 Property Services**

S Tait highlighted the average time of completions for jobs carried out by both Rodgers and Johnston and James Frew. It noted that Emergency Repairs are taking an average time of 1 hour and 32 minutes to complete and that routine jobs are taking an average time of 4 days to complete. S Tait advised that these averages both achieve the Association's target for repair completion timescales.

S Tait updated Committee on the Association's gas servicing programme. He explained that there were still currently 4 properties with out-of-date gas safety certificates. However 3 of the 4 tenants had appointments booked in the next couple of days with 1 tenant still not allowing access to their property due to Covid fears. S Tait added that the Property Services team will continue to ensure that any missed services or delayed services are carried out as soon as possible.

### **4. Finance & Corporate Services**

S Macintyre advised that the Association was looking to invest £500,000 of the Association's cash reserves. In line with the Association's Treasury Management Policy the Association has considered investing these funds with another of our approved investing organisation; these organisations include Nationwide, Santander, Close Brothers and RBS.

S Macintyre explained to Committee that after inquiring with Santander they informed the Association that they are unwilling to open accounts to new customers leaving Nationwide as the only other option. S Macintyre advised that the Association will therefore seek to open an account with Nationwide.

## **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 November Management Committee.

## **6. Cycle Path**

S Macintyre provided Committee with an update on the Association's plans to build a cycle path in the Hillhead area. Committee were reminded that earlier in the year the planning consent for the cycle path was no longer valid due to necessary changes to the route and a need for more neighbour notifications to be issued. Despite this, Committee agreed to submit a new planning application subject to the new planning requirements.

The Association submitted the new planning application to East Dunbartonshire Council in March 2020. East Dunbartonshire Council came back to the Association's appointed architect with a number of requirements that would need to be addressed before the planning application would be considered any further. On top of these requirements, EDC's Streetscene Technical Support team have also objected to the planning application in its current form and have asked that alternative designs and mitigation measures are agreed to.

S Macintyre recommended to Committee that due to the requirements and obligations being placed on the project that the Association ends any further development work on this project. S McDonald expressed his disappointment in the difficulties the Association has faced with the development of the cycle path and would like to see the development carried out. S McDonald advised that he would get in contact with colleagues at East Dunbartonshire Council to see if there could be some other way to restart the project and was supported by S Murray and J Jamieson. However in the meantime it was agreed that the Association would end its pursuit of this development in its current form.

### **5(ii) Benchmarking Report 1 April to 30 June**

S Macintyre presented Committee with the benchmarking report for Q1 of the year 2020/21.

S Macintyre highlighted section 2.2 Scotland Housing Network. S Macintyre advised the Association will receive its annual performance analysis visit virtually on Wednesday 14 October at 2pm which will take place virtually.

Committee noted the contents of this report.

## **6 HR Report**

### **Recruitment – Systems Support Officer**

Committee noted that 4 applications were received for this post with 3 applicants being invited to interviews which took place in November 2019.

The post was offered to Maureen Cameron who accepted and commenced her role on 3 February 2020.

### **Housing Assistant**

Committee also noted that the recruitment for the post of Housing Assistant was recently conducted. The post has been advertised to cover the maternity leave period of Kelly Wallace and is on a fixed term contract of a minimum period of 9 Months.

Interviews for this post took place on 4 August 2020 via zoom. From the 9 applications received 6 candidates were invited to interview. Following the interview process the job was offered to Emily Connell who accepted the post and will commence her role on 1 September 2020. Emily will commence her role remotely and has received computer equipment along with a desk and chair from the Association.

### **Dorothy Semple, Office Cleaner**

M White informed Committee of the intention of Dorothy Semple to retire. Dorothy has been with the Association since 2004 and is a popular member of the staff team. However she has handed in her notice to the Association with her last day of employment being Monday 7 September 2020.

### **Furlough Update**

M White updated the Committee on the Association's furloughed staff. Committee were reminded that there was 3 members of staff placed on furlough on April 1 2020.

#### **Tom Brunton**

M White confirmed that Tom's furlough leave ended on Friday 10 July 2020, Tom returned to work on Wednesday 15 July.

#### **Dorothy Campbell**

Committee noted that Dorothy was placed on flexible furlough on 13 July. Dorothy now works 6 hours per week rather than her usual 10 hours per week. This arrangement is in place until 11 September where it will be reviewed as an update on non-essential offices is received.

#### **Dorothy Semple**

As previously stated Dorothy has handed in her notice and her last day will be on 7 September 2020 where her furlough will end.

### **Marie Savage, Property Services Officer**

M White reminded Committee that approval was given back in November 2019 for Marie's hours to remain at 28 Hours per week (Tuesday-Friday) which was an increase from her normal 21 Hours. This was due to workload in the department remaining high as well as Marie taking the lead on Wider Role Projects.

It was agreed that Marie hours would remain at 28 hours until 31 March 2020 where it would be reviewed. However due to Covid-19 this was not possible. It was therefore

recommended to Committee that Marie's current working arrangement of Working 28 Hours be extended to 31 March 2021.

Committee subsequently agreed to extend the agreement to 31 March 2020.

#### **6(ii) HR Report – Staff Absence**

M White presented the staff absence report to Committee. Committee noted that in quarter 1 for the year 2020/21 the percentage of total time lost was 0.2% this equates to a total of 2 days of absence in the quarter. This is an improvement from Q4 of the year 2019/20 where the percentage of total time lost was 1.3% a total of 16 days absence.

#### **7. Policy Review Report**

Committee were presented with two policies for approval; Whistleblowing Policy and the Openness & Confidentiality Policy.

##### Whistleblowing Policy

S Niven asked why there was no mention of Committee members being able to voice any concerns within this policy. S Macintyre explained that this is included in the Committee Code of Conduct. S Macintyre added however that he will look into if there should be something added to the policy referring to Committee members.

L Scott asked if the policy was correct in saying that the chair of the Audit Committee cannot be an Office Bearer. S Macintyre confirmed he would look into this and provide an update.

Committee agreed subject to clarification on the above 2 points Committee approved the Whistleblowing Policy and the Openness & Confidentiality Policy.

#### **8. A.O.C.B**

S Macintyre informed Committee that the next meetings first order of business would be to elect new office bearers for the Committee.

#### **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Management Committee Meeting Wednesday 7 October 2020

Minutes prepared by;      K. Tait, Corporate Services Assistant  
04/09/2020

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.