

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

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

Present: J Jamieson (Chair)
L Scott
C Taylor
S Niven
Peter O'Connell
G Jackson
Cllr S MacDonald

In Attendance: S Macintyre, Director
C McKiernan, Depute Director / Housing Manager
S Tait, Head of Development & Property Services
M White, Head of Corporate Services
L McDonald, Finance Assistant
K Tait, Finance & Corporate Services Assistant
F MacDonald, FMD Financial Services (Agenda Item 5(i))
P Long, FMD Financial Services (Agenda Items 4(iii) and 5)
A Kennedy, The Knowledge Partnership (Agenda Item 4(iii))

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from W Hassan, D Wilson, A McPhee, K McIntyre and R Smith. L Scott advised that C Taylor would be joining the meeting later.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, DEFERRED ITEMS AND MEMBERSHIP OF SUB COMMITTEES

Staff members declared an interest in Agenda Item 4(ii).
M White requested that members who had not yet done so complete and return the declaration of interest forms recently sent.

There were no deferred items.

As not all Committee were present at the meeting, it was agreed that M White email all members to ask if they wished to join the current sub committees. P O'Connell enquired as to when these sub committees met and M White advised they normally would be quarterly and that the Management Team were considering developing a schedule.

It was agreed to take Agenda Item 5(ii) then Agenda Item 4(iii) before the rest of the items.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Management Committee Meeting 6 October 2021

S Macintyre advised that SHARE have arranged for an equalities training event to take place next year. S Macintyre added that he will ask SHARE about the possibilities of organising an in-house event but if this is not possible it may be beneficial for Committee members to attend this event.

Committee noted that the Appraisal report had been pushed back to December's meeting as all Committee appraisals had not been received.

These minutes were approved by Cllr J Jamieson and seconded by C Taylor

4(i) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Scottish Housing Regulator

Committee noted that the Associations Assurance Statement was submitted to the Regulator on 29 October 2021.

Corona Virus

Committee also noted that staff continue to work on a hybrid basis of working from home and working from the Association's office. As infection rates in the area are still high in the community the office will remain closed and only be available to tenants for pre-arranged appointments.

Strategic planning

S Macintyre advised that as requested by Committee at a previous meeting an informal meeting of the Management Committee has been arranged to take place at the Broadcroft hotel on 10 November 2021.

Pension Salary Sacrifice Scheme.

Committee noted that a staff briefing session on the pension salary sacrifice scheme took place on Wednesday 3 November 2021.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Association's three yearly large scale tenant satisfaction survey had just concluded. Committee noted that this was carried out by the Knowledge Partnership. Alan Kennedy from the Partnership was in attendance at the meeting and presented a summary on the findings of the survey which was contained in the report that was included in the meeting's papers.

Estates Co-ordinator Post

S Macintyre advised that due to ill health, the recently appointed officer has decided to resign from the post. Therefore, the post is now being readvertised the closing date for applications is Friday 19 November 2021.

Committee noted the contents of the Directors report.

(ii) EVH Pay Award April 2022

S Macintyre advised Committee that the Association received a letter from EVH regarding the EVH pay award in 2022. The Association has been advised that as the October CPI inflation rate looks like it will be above the cap of 2.5% this automatically triggers a renegotiation of the pay award for April 2022. EVH has therefore issued all of its Members with 4 scenarios for comment.

Following discussion between Committee Members it was agreed that the Association ask EVH to go with Option 4 which is to hold off starting negotiations so it can take account of what inflation levels may look like over the next few months and especially as we get closer to April 2022.

(iii) Tenant Survey Summary Report

As previously noted in the Director's report Alan Kennedy from the Knowledge partnership was in attendance at the meeting and gave a presentation on the results of the tenant satisfaction survey which was carried out by the knowledge partnership.

Committee noted the contents of the presentation and report.

5. FINANCE REPORTS

(i) RBS Side Letter to Loan Agreement – LIBOR to SONIA Transition

Committee referred to the previously distributed report and associated paperwork relating to the RBS amendment to the Association's Facility Agreement as a consequence of the Transition from Libor to Sonia.

Following a verbal report from F MacDonald, Committee agreed to give delegated signing authority to S Macintyre and J Jamieson.

(ii) Management Accounts to 30 September 2021

P Long presented Committee with the Association's Management accounts up to 30 September 2021 and the Committee were asked to note the contents of the report and approve the Management accounts.

Statement of Comprehensive income

Committee noted that the Association made an operating surplus of £640,000 in the period up to 30 September. This is more than the budgeted surplus of £441,000. P Long advised that this mainly due to lower maintenance costs. P Long added that Net interest payments would reduce the surplus by £332,000 to £308,00 for the year to

date which is again more than the budgeted figure of £100,000. Other comprehensive expenditure of £28,000 further reduces the net surplus to £280,000.

Committee noted that the forecast outturn to March 2022 shows that the Association's surplus will now be £378,000 compared to the budgeted figure of £370,000.

Statement of Financial Position

P Long advised that a total of £382,000 has been spent on housing capital works to 30 September 2021 with the net cost of the Association's housing assets currently sitting at £25M. P Long added that the net cost of other fixed assets sat at £988,000.

Committee noted that the Association's cash balances sat at £2.757M as of 30 September 2021 which is higher than the budgeted amount of £2.237M. P Long advised that this is due to a higher starting position along with a higher surplus offset by a larger capital expenditure. P Long added that the forecasted cash balance to 31 March 2022 will be £5.68M compared to the original budget of £5.49M.

P Long explained that the value of loans due after one year is sitting at just over £14M this includes the Scottish government loan of £680,000 and the pension liability amounts of £203,000. P Long added that deferred income sits at £12.36M

Committee noted the Association's net reserves to date amount to £1.742M.

Loans/Covenants

P Long advised that the Association is complying with all the financial covenants in its loan agreement with the Royal Bank of Scotland and added that the forecast outturn suggests that this will be the case at 31 March 2022.

P Long advised that the Association remains in a strong position financially and should be able to continue to meet all its expenditure requirements and comply with all financial covenants with the Royal Bank of Scotland.

After noting the contents of the Management accounts up to 30 September 2021 Committee subsequently approved the accounts.

S Macintyre advised that the Association has met with RBS and have requested formally that the Association is granted an extension to the Facility B availability period. This is set to be drawn by 21 December 2021 and due to be paid back by 2025. However due to uncertainty over newbuild costs and grant levels Committee are asked to give its approval for this 12-month extension period. S Macintyre advised that the Association will be charged £2000 for this extension by RBS. After discussion Committee subsequently approved this extension to the loan availability period.

6. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORTS

(i) Quarterly Performance to 30 September 2021

Property Services

S Tait presented Committee with the performance report for property services up to 30 September 2021.

Completion summary

S Tait advised that 100% of emergency repairs were completed on time at an average of 1H 16M to complete. Non-emergency repairs sat at 98.82% completed on time compared to a target of 95%.

S Tait informed Committee that there was currently 1 gas safety certificate still outstanding however this is due to the tenant currently experiencing some health issues and required to shield because of this.

Gas Safety

As reported, there is currently one property within the Associations stock which currently has an outstanding gas safety certificate which the Association hopes to have rectified this soon. All other 822 properties have a certified cp12 certificate. There are currently 8 properties where the gas supply is capped with these are being checked quarterly.

Major Adaptation Works

S Tait advised that applications for the building warrant and planning consents have been submitted for the major adaptation. S Tait added that further investigation work is being undertaken by a structural engineer following a drainage survey in order to determine the route of the existing drainage so it does not affect the proposed foundations.

Further updates will be provided at later meetings.

9 Redbrae Place

S Tait provided Committee with an update on the engineer's finding to why there has been a major failure in the floor at 9 Redbrae Place.

Committee noted that the engineers found that the fill material used below the slab is not fit for purpose causing the slabbing to crack.

S Tait advised that based on similar work carried out on Hillhead Road 2 years ago that the estimated work costs for this repair would be around £40k. The next stage of this repair is to now carry out a procurement exercise via public contract Scotland.

Landscape Maintenance Contract

Committee were informed that the Association is seeking to commence the procurement for a new contractor for the Association's landscape maintenance service following the completion of the latest contract. Committee were asked to give its approval for staff to start the procurement process.

Following some discussion Committee agreed to start the procurement process.

Housing Management

Voids and Letting

Committee noted the void performance and the impact of tenancies ending because of a death. They discussed the current difficulties that families and next of kin are facing when a loved one dies and the additional delays in registering deaths, organising funerals and clearing properties. Committee agreed that we would continue to seek the return of keys as soon as possible to minimise void loss to the Association, but where delays are unavoidable, they defined “a reasonable time taken to clear the house following a tenant’s death” as **4 weeks**. This decision is with immediate effect and will be reviewed after one year, i.e., in November 2022.

Committee also noted that the Association had 3 refusals in this quarter which equates to a refusal rate of 25% on offers made in the quarter and brings the yearly figure to 15%.

Rent Arrears

C McKiernan advised that the current tenant arrears has dropped again in Q2 from Q1. She reported that current rent arrears sit at 3.09% or £118,394 compared to 3.18% or £121,722 at the end of June 2021.

The Committee noted that the amount of former tenant arrears sat at £41,179 at the end of September 2021.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Committee noted that the Association received 13 Anti-social complaints in Q2. It noted that 12 of these complaints have since been resolved with 1 complaint still ongoing.

Finance and Corporate Services

Complaints

M White informed Committee that the Association received 10 Complaints in Q2, 9 of which were stage 1 complaints and the other was a stage 2 complaint. 3 of the stage 1 complaints were upheld. M White added that 80% of the complaints were responded to within the appropriate timescales.

FOI/EIR Requests

Committee noted that the Association received no requests in Q2.

GDPR – Subject access requests

Committee also noted that no requests were received in Q2.

(ii) Value for Money Statement

S Macintyre presented Committee with the draft value for money statement and asked for Committee to note the contents and give its approval on the statement. S

Macintyre advised that there is no requirement by the regulator for the Association to have a Value for Money Statement however it is something the Association is willing to do to allow the Association's tenant to have an understanding of the way the Association works.

Following some discussion Committee gave its approval to the Value for Money Statement this will now be uploaded to the Associations website for the public to view.

7. POLICY REVIEWS

(i) Fraud Policy

Committee were presented with the Fraud policy which is due for review. Committee were asked to read over the policy note its contents and approve the reviewed policy.

After reading over the Policy Committee subsequently approved the Fraud Policy.

8. EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE WELCOMES REFUGEES REQUEST

C McKiernan explained to Committee that the Association has been approached by an organisation called East Dunbartonshire Welcomes Refugees (EDWR) looking to work with the Association to house a refugee family.

C McKiernan added that she held discussions with a representative of EDWR Liz MacDonald regarding the Associations stock and turnover. Following these discussions, we advised EDWR that a 2-bedroom property would be the most realistic option to house the refugees in the timescales indicated by EDWR. EDWR have indicated to us that they would be more than happy to accept this offer should their project receive approval.

Committee were asked to approve for the Association to offer EDWR a 2-bedroom property should the project move further. After some discussion Committee gave its approval to offer EDWR a property.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

S Macintyre advised that there is potential for new funding that may be available to the Association through a new Scottish Government funding stream that is managed by third sector partners which in the case of East Dunbartonshire is East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action (EDVA) S Macintyre added that he will look into this and provide Committee with a more detailed update at a later meeting.

Committee were also asked to approve an authorised day of leave for staff over Christmas and New Year. This would see the Association be closed on the 30th and 31st of December this year with staff asked to use 1 day's leave and Committee providing the other day off. Committee subsequently approved this.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 1 December 2021

Minutes prepared by K. Tait, Finance & Corporate Services Assistant

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.