

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 5 October at 5.30pm (Hybrid Meeting)

Present: J Jamieson (Chair)
C Taylor
M Docherty
S Niven
K McIntyre
Cllr S Murray
L Scott
G Jackson
D Wilson (Item 1-5)

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
K Tait, Corporate Services Assistant
P Long, FMD

Before the meeting began S Macintyre invited the Committee to elect the office bearers of the Management Committee.

For the position of chair of the Committee J Jamieson was nominated by C Taylor this was seconded by M Docherty. J Jamieson was re-elected as chair.

For the position of vice chair of the Committee L Scott was nominated by C Taylor this was seconded by K McIntyre. L Scott was re-elected as vice chair.

For the position of Secretary M Docherty was nominated by L Scott this was seconded C Taylor. M Docherty was re-elected as Secretary.

For the position of Treasurer S Niven was nominated by L Scott this was seconded by C Taylor. S Niven was re-elected as Treasurer.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from W Hassan, A McPhee, Cllr P Marshall, R Smith, P O'Connell. M White advised that this is the 4th meeting in a row where A McPhee has submitted his apologies and has therefore submitted a leave of absence request and this was approved by the Committee.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & Deferred items

There were no declarations of interest or deferred items.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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These Minutes were approved by J Jamieson & seconded by Cllr S Murray.

Item 8: A.O.C.B. K McIntyre advised that as discussed, a meeting of the new sub-committee took place and discussed how the Association could support the community in tackling the cost of living crisis. K McIntyre also advised that following this meeting it was agreed to host a forum on the 24th October at 11am and that this will take place in the Association's office and will be attended by members of various organisations operating in the area.

(3ii) Action List

Committee noted the contents of the Action List.

4(i) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rent Freeze

S Macintyre and P Long of FMD provided an update on the current rent freeze proposals that are to be passed by the Scottish Parliament. It was noted that the proposal would be for a rent freeze until 31 March 2023, and that this could possibly be extended for a further two six month periods into 2023/24. S Macintyre explained that the Scottish Government introduced this Bill last month without consulting any of the housing association representative bodies and that it is very probable that the Bill will be passed in the next couple of days with little amendments.

S Macintyre highlighted the financial difficulty that the Association would face should this rent freeze be extended into the 2023/24 financial year. He explained how this would impact on this year's rent consultation with tenants that would normally take place at this time of the year. S Macintyre pointed out that in 2021 when the Association was consulting for the rental increase of 2022/23 the Association set its rents at the rate of CPI which at the time sat at 4.2% but by the time the rent increase came into effect the CPI rate was up to 7%. Since April, CPI rate has increased further and is now at 9.9% and is expected to rise further throughout year and into 2024. S Macintyre explained

that that any increase next year was always going to be difficult for tenants but that it had to be taken into account that the Association also suffers from inflation with increased rates in tendered contracts, increased rates in void works and also increases in staff costs, energy costs and other overheads.

P Long presented Committee with figures on the Association's 30-year business plan which laid out the financial impact of a 0% rent increase, a 5% rent increase or the Association's current agreed model of CPI + 1%. P Long highlighted that the impact on the Association's cash flows of a 0% rental increase from 2023/24 onwards. The Committee noted that as the rental income amounts to almost £4m a 0% rise in rents would mean the Association would suffer a loss of £400,000 next year and that this loss would be compounded over succeeding years. Although the Association does have reserves these would eventually run out in year 7 of the 30-year business plan and would be followed by years of accruing deficits that wouldn't recover until year 25.

In conclusion S Macintyre explained that should the Association be prevented from applying even a modest rental increase for the year 2023/24 it would have severe implications for the Association. He advised that whilst the Association's tenants may welcome this rental freeze, projects such as the planned maintenance upgrades to the kitchens and bathrooms of the Association's current housing stock would have to be postponed or even cancelled.

The Committee thanked P Long for his presentation and he left the meeting.

H&S Sub-Committee

S Macintyre that this meeting has been postponed with no new date set however the Association is working on this to get the meeting arranged.

Committee Member Portal

S Macintyre advised that the Association is ready to roll out the Committee Member portal project and Maureen is currently making contact with the Members to arrange for the collection and set up of their laptops.

5. Assurance Statement Report.

S Macintyre presented Committee members with the Assurance Statement Report. Committee were asked to note the contents of the report and approve the draft of the Assurance Statement.

S Macintyre advised that the Regulator is now highlighting the importance of the electrical safety inspections being carried out and S Macintyre has included a reference that the Association will aim to have these works carried out in the allotted timeframes with a similar approach to that we take to our annual gas servicing inspections. The

Statement also highlights the importance of the Association complying with human rights and equalities guidelines.

S Macintyre advised that the Committee may wish to meet again in the form of a Special Management Committee meeting to allow for the Association to obtain a better understanding of the rent situation before approving the Statement. He explained that the Committee need to have assurance that the Association is in good financial health and that the current uncertainty over next year's ability to set a rent does not offer this certainty.

The Committee agreed to meet on Wednesday 26 October at 5.30pm in order to consider further the Assurance Statement before approving it.

6.1 Policies

Interim Tenant Participation Strategy

C McKiernan presented Committee with the Interim Tenant Participation Strategy for approval. The strategy is a 12-month plan on how to get tenants and members of the public to engage with the Association and give their input on how to improve the community and help those in the area. C McKiernan advised that this strategy includes holding meetings of the customer care working group as well as restarting the tenant satisfaction surveys and arranging for the Association's Estates Co-ordinator who is mainly based out and about in the area to be more involved with the tenants. The Association will also look to continue the quarterly newsletter distribution along with the welfare rights newsletter.

C McKiernan added that there are also plans to improve the Association's tenant surveys to include questions about the satisfaction with the services delivered by the Property Services and Housing Management teams.

Following discussion Committee subsequently approved the Interim Tenant Participation Strategy.

Procurement Policy

S Tait presented Committee with an updated Procurement Policy and asked Committee to approve the policy. S Tait detailed the changes to the Policy which have been made to meet with the new regulations following the UK's withdrawal of the E.U. S Tait also highlighted an amendment which included a provision for emergency contract awards in the event a contract fails and a replacement Contractor needs to be appointed urgently, much like what happened with this year's Landscape Maintenance Contract.

Following some discussion Committee subsequently approved the Procurement Policy.

7. A.O.C.B

Offer of a Tenancy to a close relative of a Committee Member

C McKiernan advised that should a relative of a member of staff or a member of the Management Committee be under consideration for an offer of a tenancy the Committee is required to give its approval. This is in line with the Association's Payments & Benefits Policy.

A relative of a Committee member is currently being considered for a tenancy. C McKiernan confirmed that this offer is in line with the Association's Allocations Policy and has been double checked by another Member of the Management Team. Committee noted the details and confirmed that the offer of a tenancy be made.

Property Services Officer – M MacDonald

S Tait advised that M MacDonald has tendered his resignation from the Association following his appointment into a new role with another housing association. S Tait advised that his resignation had been accepted and wished him all the best in his new role.

S Tait confirmed that as this post is an essential one the Association will now seek to find a replacement with the vacancy being advertised on Wednesday 12 October. S Tait advised that with the timing of the application and interview process as well as the potential for a 4 week notice period to be given by the successful candidate, the Association would not expect to have a new start in place until January 2023.

The Committee noted the temporary arrangements that would be put in place within the Property Services Team for the intervening period.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Special Management Committee meeting 26/10/22 (via zoom)
Management Committee meeting 02/11/22

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

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.