

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 6 May 2020 at 4pm via Zoom

Present:

C Taylor	L Scott
W Hassan	G Jackson
Cllr S McDonald	Cllr S Murray
D Wilson	S Niven

In Attendance:

- 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
- L Tait, Finance Assistant
- P Long, FMD

C Taylor began the meeting by informing Committee that Mary Docherty had requested a leave of absence and asked for Committee's approval. Committee subsequently agreed to a leave of absence for Mary Docherty

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr John Jamieson

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

There were no declarations or deferred items

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Management Committee Meeting – 4 March 2020

After reading over these minutes they were approved by Cllr S Macdonald and seconded by L Scott.

Office bearers meeting – 18 March 2020

After reading over these minutes they were approved by S Niven and seconded by L Scott.

Office bearers meeting – 26 March 2020

After reading over these minutes they were approved by S Niven and seconded by C Taylor.

Office bearers meeting – 8 April 2020

After reading over these minutes they were approved by S Niven and seconded by L Scott.

4(i) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Scottish Housing Regulator

S Macintyre informed Committee that the regulator has suspended its current regulatory oversight as it focuses its efforts on monitoring the impact of coronavirus on the sector.

Committee noted that as a result of the coronavirus all housing associations are now required to submit a brief monthly return. The first return is to be submitted by Thursday May 7th for the month of April.

S Macintyre advised that the regulator in order to support all housing associations it had deferred the submission dates for the ARC, Loan Portfolio, and 5 Year Financial Projections to 31 July 2020. The Regulator will also look at whether the submission of assurance statements be deferred or replaced with associations instead required to submit recovery plans.

S Macintyre added that the regulator has asked the Scottish Government to extend the deadline for the submission of annual accounts for up to 6 months.

2. Recovery Planning – Post Lockdown

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Association's Management team is now looking at how the Association can manage its recovery when new government guidelines allow the Association to re-instate staff in the office. It was noted that some sort of social distancing will need to be maintained for both staff and visitors for some time after it is safe to return to the office. This may mean some staff still working from home possibly on a phased basis.

3. Current Position

Committee noted that there are currently 3 staff who since April 1 have been furloughed. Committee were asked to approve a decision taken by the office bearers during their meeting on 29 April 2020 to extend the furloughed period an extra 4 weeks to 28 May 2020. Committee were also asked to approve topping up the furlough payments by 20%. Committee subsequently approved to extend the furloughing of staff to 28 May 2020 and to top up furlough payments by 20%.

It was noted that all other members are working from home with the exception of 3 members of staff who are still based at the office. It was also noted that the management team are holding weekly remote meetings as well as having regular meetings with members or their respective teams.

3.1 Housing Management

Rent Arrears

C McKiernan advised Committee that the Association had been contacted by tenants advising they were unable to pay rent in the month of April. C McKiernan added that rent arrears had increased by £29,000 from the end of March to the End of April, C McKiernan added that the Association should reclaim £20,000 as tenants have applied for Universal Credit due to the coronavirus.

Allocations & Voids

Committee noted that as a result of coronavirus the Association has suspended all lets. As a result of this 15 void properties are accruing a total loss of £6,000 per month. It was also noted that the Association are planning to set up a temporary furnished flat for emergency accommodation. The flat will be used to try help accommodate people who may be suffering from some sort of domestic abuse.

Tenancy Support and Advice

C McKiernan advised Committee that all housing management staff and welfare rights staff who are being supported by the corporate services staff are maintaining regular contact with tenants.

It was noted that the Association had secured additional cash support from the Scottish Government, this money will enable the Association to support vulnerable families and individuals in the area.

3.2 Property Services

Repairs Service

S Tait informed Committee that the Association is currently only able to provide an Emergency Repairs Service which seems to be working well, although it was advised that the Association expects to see a significant backlog of repairs to be carried out when guidelines allow it.

Gas Repairs & Servicing

S Tait advised Committee that the Association along with our contactor James Frew was able to reintroduce a restricted gas servicing programme. Committee noted that a total of 42 Gas Services had been completed in April. However 20 properties safety certificates had expired, 6 of these properties have now been serviced, 10 properties were refused access by tenants as a safety precaution and 4 properties were non responsive. S Tait added that although properties certificate will expire due to the coronavirus the Association is keeping record of all attempts to gain access to properties to try and conduct the gas service.

Ground Maintenance and Private Garden Grass Cutting

S Tait confirmed that Nurture has now started works within the area albeit on a scaled back basis to comply with social distancing and the Scottish Government guidelines.

Planned Works

S Tait advised Committee that all planned Maintenance including the Fencing Programme, Cyclical Painting Works and the Installation of Fire Safety Device's has been deferred to a later date. It was noted that due to Coronavirus the Association may not meet the 2021 deadline for complete installation.

Finance & Corporate Services

S Macintyre explained to Committee that due to the coronavirus the Association has been forced to embrace digital working quicker than planned. The Association is currently looking at upgrades to the phone system and also looking at options for the replacement of the Associations server.

4. Strategic Planning

Committee noted that due to the current situation in regards to the coronavirus work on the Association's longer term strategy has been put on hold.

5. Business Planning

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Associations Finance agents are still working on a review of the Association's Longer Term Financial plans and are hoping to complete this by June. S Macintyre advised Committee however that a key part of the completed version of the plan relates to the stock condition survey which have been put on hold and are yet to complete. It was noted that due to this the Association is working with incomplete data meaning that the report may need to include estimates for a proportion of our stock.

6. Audit Committee

Committee noted that a meeting of the Audit Committee would take place the week beginning 11 May 2020.

4(ii) Annual Compliance Checklist 2019/20

After reading over the report provided Committee noted the findings of the Annual Compliance Checklist 2019/20.

4(iii) Annual Fraud Return to the Management Committee

Committee noted that there were no fraud attempts during the year to 31 March 2020.

5. FINANCE REPORTS

Pat Long from FMD Financial Services was in attendance at the meeting to present the Management Accounts and Treasury Management report for the period to 31 March 2020.

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the period to 31 March 2020

P Long advised both our income and expenditure are lower than budgeted for the year and this is largely down to the postponement of the cycle path project, this has resulted in an operating surplus of over £1.27M.

Committee noted the figures in relation to interest receipts and payments. P Long highlighted the net surplus of £550,191.

Income & Expenditure from Lettings to 31 March 2020

P Long referred to the rental income and advised this was lower than budgeted due to the delays in relation to Braes O'Yetts and the rent off the shelf units.

Committee noted the void expenditure was higher than budgeted due to current tenants transferring into the new Braes O'Yetts development.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2020

P Long highlighted the figures relating to the current and non-current assets, he advised a larger balance than budgeted in cash due to both starting with a higher balance and a lower amount spent on capital expenditure.

The committee noted a total income from the shared equity units at Braes O'Yetts of £845,520, P Long advised this is higher than budgeted and suspects we will have to pay the excess of £23,520 to the Scottish Government.

Management Expenses to 31 March 2020

P Long referred to the management expenses highlighting an under-spend in staff costs due to the posts being filled later than budgeted. Committee noted a positive variance in relation to maintenance costs but were advised these figures may change as we receive invoices for work relating to the financial year 2019/20 at a later date.

Covenant Analysis

P Long referred to the covenant analysis as at 31 March 2020 and confirmed that the association is able to comply with all financial covenants with the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The Committee approved the Management Accounts to 31 March 2020 and noted that there would be a year end adjustment which would be the subject of a future finance report.

Treasury Management Report

The committee noted the outstanding loan amount with RBS of £13.934m.

P Long referred to the most recent valuation figures that was carried out in April 2019 for 802 properties, committee noted all details and were advised the 22 properties at Braes O'Yetts would be included in the next valuation.

P long highlighted the interest received from investments for the year was £3,849 and advised the Association's budgeted cash balance at 31 March 2021 per the budget for 2020/21 is £1.754m

The committee subsequently approved the Treasury Management Report for the year to 31st March 2020.

6. Housing Management Quarter 3 & 4 Performance Report

Committee were asked to note the contents of this report and were invited to ask any questions they may have on the contents of the report. C McKiernan advised that the Association will try it's best to resume lettings when the circumstances allow to. It was noted that when the Association does reintroduce lets that allocation visits might be changed and instead be a virtual walk through of a void for a tenant to view the property. Committee noted the contents of the report there were no further questions.

6ii. Lettings Plan 2020/21

C McKiernan introduced the lettings plan for the year 2020/21. She advised that this year's lettings plan will be similar to the lettings plan for the year 2019/20. It was noted that 45% of lets will go to EDC for Section 5 referrals or nominations, the other 55% of lets would be split with 40% of lets going to people on the housing list and 15% Hillhead tenants transferring. Committee subsequently approved the lettings plan for the year 2020/21.

7. Development Report

Committee were asked to note the contents of this report and were invited to ask any questions they may have on the contents of the report.

Braes O'Yetts

S Tait advised that the defect phase was close to coming to an end for the first units but advised that due to the coronavirus the clerk of works was not able to carry out any checks. S Tait added that the Association has been in contact with BTO regarding retention payments BTO have since advised that the payments can only be made when the making goods defect certificate has been issued.

CALA Homes

S Tait updated Committee on the CALA homes development at Fauldhead & Chryston Road. As previously noted a meeting had taken place between Ian Conway of CALA Homes and staff from the Association. At the time of the meeting the Association was advised that CALA had hoped to submit the planning application for the development by mid-May. Unfortunately shortly after this meeting the restrictions due to coronavirus came into effect. Due to this the Association has once again sought clarification from CALA Homes on how the coronavirus has affected there time line in relation to the planning application, the Association is still to hear back from CALA Homes on this matter.

S Niven asked if there was potential that CALA may change their site plans again due to the waterside social club shutting down. S Tait advised that there are talks ongoing to try and retain the social club to some extent, S Tait indicated that if this was not

possible then CALA have indicated they may look to include more units in the planning.

Committee noted the contents of this report there were no further questions.

7ii. Maintenance Report

Committee were asked to note the contents of this report and were invited to ask any questions they may have on the contents of the report.

Rodgers & Johnston

Committee noted that Rodgers and Johnston had won the Associations procurement and would be the Associations reactive maintenance contractors for another 3 years. It was noted that for the year 2019/20 Rodgers and Johnston had performed very well compared to the Scottish average for repair completion times.

James Frew

S Tait confirmed that James Frew had also performed well for the year 2019/20 and advised that all gas services for the year had been complete up to the end of March. S Tait advised there was an overspend for the year but did advise that this may have been due to the Association acquiring 60 voids over the year which means 60 additional services.

Gas Audits

S Tait confirmed that the Association had missed its target of 10% of properties to be audited. This was partly due to COVID restrictions.

Repairs Right First Time

Committee noted that the Association would report to the ARC is 95.28%

Landscape Maintenance

As previously noted Nurture have started work on open spaces and private gardens.

Stage 3 Medical Adaptations

S Tait advised Committee that the Association received £43,000 in grants from the Scottish Government for the year 2019/20. S Tait confirmed that the Association was unable to complete some work for the year. S Tait added that the Association has applied for this year and there is an option to apply for unused funds which we will look at.

EESH

S Tait explained that the Association has made good progress with the numbers of properties known to meet the EESH is 98.19%.

New Fire & Carbon Monoxide Detection Regulations

As previously stated the Association may struggle to upgrade all properties to the new safety standards by the deadline of February 2021 to coronavirus. Currently there are 370 properties that are now up to standards.

Committee noted the contents of this report there were no further questions.

C McKiernan put a suggestion forward to Committee. It was suggested that instead of the performance reports for Housing Management and Property Services taking place at different months that they instead be presented together at a meeting after the end of each quarter. Committee subsequently approved this.

8. Customer Care Policy

Committee were asked to read over this policy for approval and advise if there were any changes that needed to be made. After reading over this policy Committee subsequently approved the Customer Care Policy.

9. A.O.C.B

S Macintyre reminded Committee that within the current regulatory framework that Associations were required to adopt the revised model rules. The Regulator has indicated that they would take a favourable look on Associations that were unable to adopt these rules. S Macintyre has been in contact with BTO looking for a quote allowing BTO to do the work in the background and asked Committee for approval for BTO to do this work. Committee approved this.

There was no other Business.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Management Committee Meeting Wednesday 3 June 2020

Minutes prepared by; K. Tait, Corporate Services Assistant
15 May 2020

Chairperson's Signature:

Date:

Copies of the above reports are available on request.