

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 6 June 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Association's offices at 2 Meiklehill Road

Present:

C Taylor (Chairperson)	L Scott
S Niven	Cllr S MacDonald
Cllr S Murray	Cllr J Jamieson
M Docherty	R Smith
C McKay-McCann	

In Attendance:

- S Macintyre, Director
- M White, Corporate Services Manager
- E Sharkey, Housing Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from D Wilson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DEFERRED ITEMS

Cllrs MacDonald and Murray declared an interest in Agenda Item 4.2, and L Scott declared an interest in Agenda Item 7.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Management Committee Meeting held on 2 May 2018

Page 4: Item 5(i) - Landscape Maintenance Contract

Cllr Jamieson enquired about the condition of the area at Waverley Gardens. S Macintyre advised that following the lack of volunteer interest, the Association's Landscape Contractors had been requested to provide a quotation for the work. He agreed to raise this with S Tait.

Page 6: Item 5(ii).2 – Braes O'Yetts

S Macintyre advised that no further update had been received in relation to the acquisition of the additional 2 units.

Page 7: Item 5(ii).3 – Estate Based Regeneration Strategy

S Macintyre advised that a pilot exercise would be undertaken within the stock, and the work would continue thereafter on a phased basis.

Page 8: Item 5(ii).4 - Cycle Project

S Macintyre confirmed that the Association had received funding approval from Sustrans, and that a decision from Leader would be announced in August. He also confirmed that all licences to occupy had been received.

Page 8: Item 5(ii).4 – Canal Swing Bridge

There followed some discussion on the issues surrounding the road closure to enable the painting of the bridge to take place. S Macintyre advised that L Sneddon would again be raising the matter with Scottish Waterways.

The minutes were approved by L Scott and seconded by S Niven.

Office Bearers Meeting held on 23 May 2018

The minutes were approved by M Docherty and seconded by L Scott. The Committee ratified the approval of the Data Protection Policy, Privacy Statement and the amended Welfare Rights Policy to make it compliant with GDPR.

Health & Safety Sub Committee Meeting held on 30 May 2018

The minutes were approved by C Taylor and seconded by L Scott.

Office Bearers Meeting held on 30 May 2018

The minutes were approved by C Taylor and seconded by S Niven.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Committee Strategy Day / Business Planning and Staffing Review

S Macintyre referred Committee to the previous discussions on holding a Business Planning review event in the Autumn. He highlighted the proposal to also review the current staffing structure given it had been in place in more or less its current form since 2009.

There followed some discussion and Committee agreed that the Association's operating environment had changed significantly and would continue to do so as time went on. Committee further noted the Association would be going through a period of growth with an additional 30+ units in 2019/20 as well as the potential for further development opportunities on the horizon.

Following some further discussion, Committee agreed that a review of the current staff structure be undertaken. It was noted that S Macintyre would prepare a brief for the procurement and appointment of suitably qualified consultants to carry out both the staffing and business planning reviews.

S Macintyre agreed to present a more detailed report to the August Management Committee.

2. Development Opportunities

S Macintyre highlighted that, following discussions and comments at the May Management Committee meeting, further talks had taken place with East Dunbartonshire Council in relation to 2 sites contained within the SHIP but, as yet, no Registered Social Landlord named as preferred partner.

Committee noted these sites were located at Fauldhead and Chryston Road within Kirkintilloch and that the preferred developer, Cala, had submitted a Proposal or Application Notice for each site to the Council, ahead of formal planning application.

S Macintyre confirmed that he would be attending an introductory meeting with Cala's Development Manager on Monday 11 June along with G Sherriff in order to discuss a potential partnership at these sites.

S Macintyre highlighted the further site at Bearsden Golf Club also due to be developed by Cala where there will be a requirement for 10 social rented houses to be provided. There followed some discussion amongst Committee on the geographical location of this site. Some concern was raised in relation to service to tenants and it being perhaps too far from the Association's immediate area of operation. However some points were raised in relation to opportunities for further growth for the Association and that we should remain open minded about these matters.

Following discussion, Committee agreed that further information be obtained at the meeting on Monday in relation to timeframes etc.

3. Committee Member Appraisals and Committee Effectiveness Review

S Macintyre confirmed that he would present the committee appraisal report and review at the special meeting in June.

4. Abronhill Housing Association - Part-time Director Services

S Macintyre highlighted that Abronhill Housing Association in Cumbernauld had been in contact to enquire about the possibility of providing part time Director Services for a period of time during its organisational review.

It was noted that as the current provider of Director Services was retiring, the Association wishes to consider how to meet this gap in the short term.

Committee agreed that S Macintyre should attend a meeting with Abronhill's Committee along with Claire Taylor on Thursday 7 June to gain further information. S Macintyre advised that he anticipated it would likely involve him providing services one half day per week and agreed to report back at the next Committee Meeting.

5. Land Purchase Request – Whitehill Crescent

S Macintyre highlighted that a request had been received from an owner occupier who is interested in purchasing land in front of and adjacent to his property, which is in the Associations ownership. He referred Committee to the Ordnance Survey national grid reference drawing attached to the report which showed the area of land in question.

S Macintyre confirmed the owner was willing to pay all costs associated with the enquiry, whether or not the sale of the land is finalised.

There followed some discussion on what the owner was intending to use the land for, and S Macintyre advised he did not know the reason, but was possibly in relation to increasing provision of parking space.

Committee gave in principal agreement for S Macintyre to arrange for the valuation and also to confirm valid title on the land.

6. SHARE AGM

It was noted that L Scott and C Taylor would be attending this event on 14 June at 5.30 pm.

S Macintyre also highlighted that EVH were hosting an anniversary event on 28 September. L Scott and C Taylor advised they were interested in attending, and S Macintyre advised that any other members wishing to attend should let him know.

7. Our Power

S Macintyre confirmed that training had taken place this afternoon with staff. He agreed to find out when the service would be going live, and advised that an article would be included within the newsletter.

8. Tenancy Support Service - Simon Community Scotland

S Macintyre confirmed that he and E Sharkey had met with the Service Manager this morning, and that an officer had been identified to cover the period of H Montgomery's maternity leave.

S Macintyre also advised that the Simon Community had offered to attend any future tenant events the Association may hold. It was noted that they had agreed to attend the Annual General Meeting in September.

It was noted that Our Power would also be attending the Annual General Meeting, and S Macintyre advised that the Association would book a room within the Community Centre this year.

4i) Internal Management Plan: Review of Section 4 and 5 PEST and SWOT Analysis and Business Objectives for 2018/2019

S Macintyre referred to Sections 4 and 5 of the Internal Management Plan and the details of the PEST and SWOT Analysis were noted. Committee noted that more detailed discussion on these areas would be carried out at the Committee Strategy Day.

Committee also noted Section 6 of the Internal Management Plan detailing the final set of business objectives for the year.

Committee subsequently approved the inclusion of the above revised sections of the Association's Internal Management Plan 2018/19.

4ii) Benchmarking Report 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2018

Committee referred to the latest report covering the above period and noted the results within each area.

It was noted that the staff absence figure had increased substantially since the last quarter. M White explained that as the Association had a relatively small staff compliment, any longer term absence impacted on the figure. She confirmed there was no cause for concern in this area.

4iii) Annual Compliance Checklist Q1

S Macintyre referred Committee to the above checklist report and the tasks completed for Quarter 1 were duly noted. It was further noted these had all been completed within the appropriate time period.

5. ANNUAL RETURNS TO SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

i) Annual Return for the Charter (ARC)

Committee referred to the above return and noted that it had been approved by the Office Bearers on 30 May, and subsequently submitted to the Regulator and to Scottish Housing Network.

S Macintyre highlighted the appendix to the report which summarised the Association's performance over the previous 4 years, the content of which was duly noted by Committee.

Committee noted that the only area with worsening performance was rent arrears, and agreed this had to some extent been expected as a result of welfare reform issues.

R Smith enquired as to the decrease in tenancy sustainment figures, and E Sharkey explained that the Return requires reasons for non sustainment to include circumstances where the tenant has died or had to go into care. She confirmed that there was no cause for concern with tenancy sustainment.

ii) EESSH (Energy Efficiency in Scottish Social Housing)

Committee referred to the above return and noted this had also been approved by the Office Bearers on 30 May 2018 and submitted to the Regulator and Scottish Housing Network.

S Macintyre highlighted that the number of Association properties now known to be meeting the EESSH was 78.3%, and it was noted that work is ongoing in order to identify the total number of properties meeting the standard. Committee noted that staff were confident all properties would be compliant by 2020, if not before.

Committee also noted that the Scottish Government and TIS/TPAS were hosting a series of free consultation events on the post 2020 EESSH standards or EESSH2. S Macintyre highlighted that the Glasgow event was being held on 14 June at Glenoaks Housing Association should anyone wish to attend.

C Taylor and L Scott indicated their interest in attending, and S Macintyre agreed to find out the time of the event, as it was on the same date as SHARE's AGM.

Approval of both the Annual Return on the Charter and EESSH Return was subsequently ratified by the Management Committee.

6. HOUSING MANAGEMENT REPORT

(i) Housing Management Performance & Activity Report

Committee referred to the above report providing statistical information for the year to 31 March 2018.

Rent and Arrears

Committee noted the details relating to arrears for current tenants, as well as the comparison of current tenant arrears by Universal Credit tenants and non Universal Credit tenants. E Sharkey explained the background to the arrears contributable to tenants on Universal Credit, and the difficulties encountered.

E Sharkey referred to the information in relation to former tenant arrears and highlighted that the value of EDC arrears had continued to fall for most of the year but had levelled off since December.

Committee noted the information regarding legal action taken and E Sharkey highlighted that the number of evictions carried out had reduced from 7 in 2016/17 to 3 in 2017/18.

Voids & Lets

E Sharkey referred to the information regarding voids, rent loss and lettings performance. She highlighted that the number of days taken to let properties had reduced overall, and that the higher number in January was a consequence of the Christmas and New Year office closure.

Committee noted the reasons for refusal of informal offers of relets and C McKay-McCann referred to 39 being due to changes in circumstances or wrong details on the system. E Sharkey advised this mainly related to housing list applicants who do not manage to update the Association as circumstances change. She confirmed that housing list reviews took place periodically, the latest one having just been undertaken.

Committee also referred to the reasons for refusals of formal offers and noted that 89% of formal offers had been accepted in the year, compared with 92% in 2016/17.

L Scott highlighted that the total number of refusals was showing as 6, however the individual reasons totalled 5. E Sharkey agreed to check this.

E Sharkey referred to the information regarding reasons for ending tenancies, and it was noted that the death of a tenant was the predominant reason, followed by transfer on medical grounds.

Committee noted the details of arrears for lock up garages.

Right to Buy

E Sharkey referred to the information on right to buy and confirmed that this would be the final report as there were no remaining sales yet to be concluded. It was noted that 14 sales had been concluded during 2017/18.

Neighbour Complaints

Committee noted the information in relation to neighbour complaints, as well as the breakdown in types of complaint and how they were resolved. E Sharkey highlighted the reduction in the number of complaints from 46 the previous year to 25 in 2017/18. She suggested this may be attributable to the active presence and support from the current Community Police Officer.

(ii) Housing List, Nominations, Demand, Lets & Lettings Plan Targets

Housing List

E Sharkey referred to the report and it was noted that since the Association reverting to its own Housing List in July 2016, more detailed information could now be provided. E Sharkey also confirmed that the new Allocations Policy would be implemented over the period June to September which would enable the Association to address needs not previously recognised.

Nominations

E Sharkey referred to the decision by Committee in May 2017, agreeing to EDC proposals that 45% of all housing becoming available should be offered for Nominations. She highlighted that as at 31 March 2018, 35.42% of all properties becoming vacant were let to EDC nominations with a further 2% of lets for EDC temporary accommodation.

Committee noted that the recommendation was to increase the target to 50% for 2018/19 in order to address this shortfall, and there followed discussion on this issue.

E Sharkey explained some reasons as to why the target had not been made, including refusals and lack of properties not becoming available. She explained the nomination process and also referred to the initial agreement made in 2007 in this respect.

Following further discussion, Committee agreed that for now the nominations target should remain at 45%, and that the issue be looked at further at the next Housing Management focussed meeting with a view to reviewing the process/target.

Lets During 2017/18; & Proposed Lettings Plan with Targets for Lets during 2018/19

Committee noted the information in relation to demand and lets by application source, ethnic origin, disability and household type/age group. The proposed targets for 2018/19 were also noted and agreed.

(iii)Former Tenant Arrears Write-Off

E Sharkey referred to the sums proposed for write offs and highlighted these were generally former tenant arrears which had been deemed uncollectable, however credit balances were also included which referred to where the tenants had died or moved away with no contact address.

There followed some discussion on the credit balances and it was noted that although these are affectedly written off, the money was still there should they be claimed by the tenant or next of kin.

Committee subsequently approved the Association's former tenant arrears/credits write off in the amount of £2,633.06 and the EDC former tenant arrears/credits for write off in the amount of £337.98.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

L Scott left the meeting at this point.

Eviction Case No. 118

Committee referred to the information and notes surrounding the above case and noted that the tenant had been in his tenancy since September 2016 and in arrears since December 2016. It was further noted that it was believed the tenant was no longer living at the address.

E Sharkey highlighted that a Decree for Eviction was granted on 25 April but was not received from the Court until 1 June. It was noted that the current arrears stood at £3,563.71.

Following some discussion, Committee gave approval to evict.

There followed some discussion on the information given to Committee on eviction cases and while it was noted the process can vary throughout associations, Committee agreed they would still wish to receive the same level of information. However it was noted that in future it may be preferable to detail age groups as opposed to actual ages of tenants, and merely a statement of whether they have dependant children.

L Scott rejoined the meeting at this point.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

S Macintyre advised that a special meeting of the Management Committee would be convened for 27 June 2018 in order to approve the regulatory financial returns.

Minuted by: M White, Corporate Services Manager
7 June 2018

Chairperson's Signature:

Date: