

HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at 6.30 pm in the Association's offices at 2 Meiklehill Road

Present: C Taylor (Chairperson) L Scott
M Docherty S. Niven
Cllr J Jamieson Cllr S MacDonald
C. McKay-McCann

In Attendance: S Macintyre, Director
M. Escreet, Welfare Rights Officer
E. Sharkey, Housing Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from D. Wilson and Cllr S Murray.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DEFERRED ITEMS

There were no declarations of interest and no deferred items

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Special Management Committee Meeting held on 31 January 2018

The minutes of the meeting were approved. Proposed by L Scott and seconded by M Docherty.

Cllr Jamieson asked about information from E. Sharkey – this has been provided. Page 5 Para 4 should read £50 and not £5000

Management Committee held on 7 February 2018

The minutes of the meeting were approved. Proposed by Cllr Jamieson and seconded by L. Scott

S. Macintyre advised that the HR subcommittee meeting did not take place and has been rescheduled for 21 March 2018 at 11am.

S. Macintyre advised that he has not heard back from EDC legal team re draft wording of the Strathclyde Pension Scheme exit agreement. He asked the elected members to chase this up on our behalf. Cllrs Jamieson and MacDonald agreed.

Barratts have been contacted re street names and we are awaiting a response but it may be too late. S. McIntyre has not met with Nicola McAndrew, Community Planning Officer but will raise the issue of the establishment of a young person's fund. C. Taylor

asked if any Members wished to attend the Scottish Parliament for its next community engagement event, but no one expressed an interest.

S. Macintyre confirmed that Braes O'Yetts contract is not yet complete. There are outstanding issues with wording re collateral warranties. It is anticipated that the contract will be ready for the end of March. Cllr Jamieson asked about Barratts and possible additional guarantees on top of NHBC guarantee. S. Macintyre confirmed Barratts are not prepared to provide additional warranties.

S. Macintyre informed the committee that the Litter Pick had been cancelled due to bad weather and will be rescheduled. It was noted that the planting at Waverley Crescent did not go ahead either.

C. Taylor raised subject of the cycle project. A couple of letters have been received from residents at Banks Road who are not happy with the plans and feel they were not consulted. S Macintyre advised that M Savage has invited these residents to meet with her. It was noted that the use of the green space at Banks Rd seems to be the issue. It was noted that once the outcome of the new funding applications is known then there would be further community consultation at that stage. Cllr MacDonald pointed out that the area is often used as a hangout for young people and the cycle project might act as a deterrent to that which could be a positive for the residents. S Niven asked if they had been consulted before and S. Macintyre advised there was no specific meeting with this group of residents but they would have received planning notifications as part of the Planning Application process.

Arts Roots Fund. S. Macintyre advised this has been successful and that M. Savage has agreement with Hillhead Primary School that the children could design the sign and Sustrans will use that design to produce the sign.

C. Taylor asked if we have paid the £250 to CHAS. S Macintyre advised that an invoice has been requested from EVH but had not yet been received.

Policy Sub Committee held on 21 February 2018

Minutes of meeting approved. Proposed by L. Scott and seconded by C. Taylor

P3. Decoration Policy. Para 3 Should read 2 and not 23.

C. Taylor asked of there will be further information. S. Tait will provide an update in Property Services Report due to be presented at the May meeting of the Management Committee.

Health & Safety Sub Committee held on 14 February 2018

Minutes approved. M. Docherty proposed and L. Scott seconded.

Item 4 – S. Macintyre informed that it will be more cost effective to train a member of staff to be certified to carry out the Pat Testing.

S. Macintyre referred to the query as to whether in the event of major incident would staff be able to access the Employee Counselling service and he confirmed that this would be the case.

C. Taylor asked about whether the local pharmacy was aware that our office contained a de-fibrillator S. Macintyre confirmed that he would contact the Pharmacist as soon as possible.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Regulatory Framework

GWSF have produced a final response which they will submit to Regulator by 30 March 2018. It was suggested we could make a general statement in support of that response or S. Macintyre asked if Committee felt we should make an individual submission. A number of issues were discussed including concern over an apparent move away from local management to larger organisations, governance issues and transparency. S. Macintyre felt these issues were covered in the GWSF response which we had input to.

2. Regulatory Standards for Governance and Financial Management

S. Macintyre has completed Standards 1 and 2 but not in time for papers going out. It was agreed that he will provide a summary/action plan to a future meeting.

3. Health & Safety

The Policy Statement was approved and passed around for Members to sign.

4. Landlord Health & Safety

An implementation visit took place 2 weeks ago and S Macintyre reported that we have 12 months to work through the compliance manual. It was noted that much of it would be a case of formalising what we already do and making sure we document and evidence that we are complying with requirements of the manual. It was noted that this service is provided as part of our EVH membership.

5. Membership of Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum

S. Macintyre recommended we renew our membership of this body. Committee approved.

6. Tenancy Support Service

S Macintyre reported that the Tenders are due back on Friday 9 March 2018. The four Associations involved would be meeting to assess these tenders. If the group was unable not able to make a decision by 19 March, The Mungo Foundation has agreed to extend the contract in the interim.

7. External Auditors – Tender Report

S Macintyre presented a Tender Report. It was noted that the panel interviewed 4 firms on 6 March 2018. The Panel recommends that we appoint Chiene & Tait based on price and quality of their submission. This will be for one year initially with possible four year extension. Committee approved this. S. Niven highlighted that the budget will need to be amended to allow for additional costs.

8. Email from OSCR

S Macintyre advised that he had enclosed the email from OCSR's Chief Executive in papers which was received in light of recent revelations about Oxfam. S Macintyre had forwarded to M. Davies at BTO who has confirmed that the Association would all necessary safeguarding arrangements in place. She has asked that we review our whistleblowing policy and that she will also consult with her employment law colleagues too in case there are any other issues. It was noted that M. Savage is currently developing our Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) policy for volunteers.

9. Our Power energy company.

S. Macintyre met with representative from this social enterprise company and referred to the Members pack that was included in the Committee Papers. He advised that if HHA becomes a member it gives us eligibility to sit on their Board and to vote. A condition of membership is that we offer void properties to Our Power as Energy Provider. It was noted that there would be a one off membership cost of £1 per unit.

S. Niven was aware of the company and was quite impressed but questioned the membership fee and suggested S. McIntyre look into that.

A representative from Our Power is attending next customer care meeting in March to talk to tenants.

S. Niven highlighted another issue to consider is that of installing smart meters and if there would be enough time during void period or would this extend our void losses? S Macintyre advised that this would be a concern if it lead to delays to our void turn around periods which we had worked hard at reducing over the last 2 to 32 years.

The known issue of asbestos backboards causing problems with installing smart meters was also raised and C. Taylor felt we are disadvantaging tenants if they are not able to access cheaper energy because of these backboards. S. Macintyre was asked to look into this issue further.

Cllr MacDonald also expressed concern about the 'exclusive contract' and felt this needed further investigation. S. Macintyre agreed that he would seek further information from Our Power and that we will seek references from other housing association members of Our Power.

A decision on this was therefore deferred until next meeting.

10. Employers in Voluntary Housing

The next EVH AGM meeting is on Sunday 8 April and M. Docherty, L. Scott, C. Taylor and C. McKay-McCann all indicated that they wished to attend.

Revised Budget

S. Macintyre referred to the report which was included within the Committee Papers.

Cllr Jamieson asked about provision for pension scheme exit and S. Macintyre clarified that it was the wording of the exit agreement that was to be agreed and there would be no financial payment due.

S Macintyre advised that the forthcoming HR sub committee meeting would include a further report on issue of pension contributions from staff and how these might be linked to any future increases in the Employer's contributions. It was noted that this would require formal staff consultation if it were to take place.

The Committee noted the other changes to the Final Budget and formally approved the budget for 2018/19.

5. HOUSING MANAGER'S REPORT

E Sharkey reported that rent arrears were up in December (4.16%) but back down in January (3.95%). No figures available for February yet due to bad weather and office closure. Former tenant arrears for HHA are up (1.83%) and proposals for write off will be submitted to June meeting.

Cllr MacDonald raised issue of neighbour complaints and confidentiality. The fact that there can be no outcome reported back to complaining tenant sometimes gives the impression that it has not been dealt with. E. Sharkey acknowledged the difficulties with this but in some cases it is not possible to give a full account due to the need to adhere to confidentiality policy.

Committee noted contents of report

M. Escreet gave a brief outline of recent changes to Universal Credit and explained how the Scottish Choices are now available for all claimants on UC.

6. POLICY REVIEWS

i) Allocations

E. Sharkey circulated abbreviated document simplifying details of points and categories.

C. Taylor asked if policy was on the website and E. Sharkey confirmed the abbreviated version will be.

Cllr MacDonald asked if changes are easily identified but it was felt there were too many amendments for this and it was best to look at policy as a fresh document.

C. Taylor asked if tenants are warned about the 'Bedroom Tax' if given a larger property than required. S. Sharkey confirmed this but pointed out that properties larger than required are not generally let anyway.

C. Taylor asked if nominations figures included homeless nominations and E. Sharkey confirmed this.

C. Taylor pointed out that the house sizes on page 5 of the policy were referred to in metres and feet and felt both were not necessary. This was agreed.

Cllr Macdonald praised the policy for taking account of mental health issues in the Health and Disability section rather than just physical disability which is how the old policy, still being used by EDC, awards points. He asked E. Sharkey to keep him up to date on how this is working out as it is an area of particular interest to him.

The new Allocations Policy was approved.

ii) Other Policies

Three other policies had been circulated at the meeting but members felt they did not have enough time to peruse these. The changes were highlighted and many were minor changes

Decant Policy was approved as there were very minor changes.

Tenants with Housekeeping Issues and Procedures Policy was also approved for that reason.

Mortgage to Rent Policy was deferred to be considered at the next meeting.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items of business

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4 April 2018 at 6.30pm

Minuted by: M. Escreet, Welfare Right Officer
19 March 2018

Chairperson's Signature:

Date: