

## HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

### Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2017 at 6.30 pm in the Association's offices at 2 Meiklehill Road

**Present:** C Taylor (chairperson) L Scott  
M Docherty R Smith  
S Niven Cllr J Jamieson

**In Attendance:** S Macintyre, Director  
E Sharkey, Housing Manager  
M Escreet, Welfare Rights Officer  
G Fitzpatrick, Finance & Corporate Services Assistant  
G Lauriston, Estates Officer

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr S MacDonald and Cllr S Murray, and it was noted that D Wilson was currently on leave of absence.

C Taylor introduced G Lauriston to Committee and advised that he was attending the meeting in an observing capacity as a recently recruited member of staff.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DEFERRED ITEMS

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

##### Management Committee Meeting held on 1 November 2017

##### Page 2, Item 4.4: Review of Auditors – Alexander Sloan & Co

S Niven enquired when the next Audit Committee meeting would take place and following discussion it was agreed that this would be arranged for Wednesday 13 December 2017 at 5.00pm.

##### Page 2, Item 5.5: Cycle Project

S Macintyre advised of various problems encountered with the progress of the funding application to Leader, including the recent request that the Association must now obtain signed "licences to occupy" agreements with all of the landowners before submission. It was noted that Sustrans were only able to provide funding until the end of June and that it would not be possible to acquire the licences before then. S Macintyre also advised that due to the Association's obvious disappointment he would

consider raising the matter with Leader's complaints panel. He agreed to present a more detailed report in the New Year.

#### Page 3, Item 4.3: Scottish Housing Regulator

It was noted this item would be discussed at Agenda Item 4.

#### Page 3, Item 4.7: Kirkintilloch Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – Nomination for Board Membership

M Docherty asked for congratulations to be passed on to M Escreet for being appointed to the Board of CAB as a representative of the Association.

#### Page 6, Item 6: Policy Review – IT Security Policy

S Macintyre advised that this item would be deferred to the February meeting.

#### Page 6, Item 7: Complaints

R Smith declared an interest in this item.

R Smith enquired as to the current position regarding the Newdyke Road parking situation given the Association's previous decision not to proceed any further given the outcome of the Feasibility Study. Discussion took place on the lack of parking spaces and the problem not being addressed. S Macintyre advised that the problem would be addressed only if the traffic order could be revoked. He also advised that he would speak to S Tait, Property Services Manager, to contact the team that run the Community Parking Wardens and he would also provide relevant information to tenants.

#### Page 7, Item 9.1: Eviction Cases No. 112 and 114

Committee enquired if the above two evictions had taken place. E Sharkey advised that only the eviction in relation to case 114 had taken place.

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

#### **Community Garden Sub Committee held on 27 October 2017**

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

## **4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **1. Scottish Housing Regulator**

#### Regulatory Standards in Governance and Financial Management – Self Assessment

S Macintyre informed Committee of the review being undertaken in relation to the regulation of Registered Social Landlords and their re-classification as public bodies by the Office of National Statistics. He also advised that the Housing Association was likely to be bound by the Freedom of Information Act in 2019 in the event that the

Scottish Parliament approves the current proposed amendments to the FOII legislation.

## **2. Governance Standards – Self Assessment**

S Macintyre informed Committee that the Association had been participating in road testing the self assessment tool which was now live for members of the Scottish Housing Network to use. This tool allows the Committee to assess whether it meets the standards in full, partially or not at all. S Macintyre advised that there are 6 standards of governance which have to be reviewed annually.

The outcomes from the self assessment exercise relating to Standard 1 were reviewed and agreed by the Committee. Following discussion of how to proceed it was agreed that S Macintyre would present the Standard 23 to the February meeting for assessment by the Committee. He also agreed to forward an email link to Committee.

## **3. Annual Performance Report for Tenants**

S Macintyre advised that the Annual Performance Report had been sent out this week. It included a feedback survey form for tenants to return. A feedback report would be provided at the February meeting of the Management Committee.

## **4. Scottish Waterways Trust – Canal side Activities**

S Macintyre advised that following very low attendance at the recent meeting of the Customer Care Working Group he agreed to arrange another event for this to be discussed.

## **5. Braes O'Yetts**

Committee noted that progress with regard to the legal agreement was ongoing and that the final agreement would be ready for approval and signing before the end of December 2017. Committee also noted that the final costs had been agreed and were within the terms of the Offer of Grant from Scottish Government.

## **6. Tenancy Support Service**

Committee noted that the contract with the Mungo Foundation had been repeatedly extended over the last few years in line with successful extensions of funding support from the Scottish Government. However support funding would cease on 31 March 2018. After reviewing the options and noting how invaluable the service has become the Committee agreed that the Association should continue to fund the service out of its own resources. Given the changes to the group of Association's involved the Committee gave approval for the Association to advertise for potential service providers. He advised that Arklet Housing Association and Antonine Housing Association have agreed to commit to a new service arrangement post April 2018 and that Partick Housing Association was very keen to join also but on a part time basis only.

Committee noted that with no grant funding in place the cost to the Association would be £40,000 per year and this would have to be factored into the budget for 2018/19. S

Macintyre and E Sharkey advised that they were happy with the service provided by the Mungo Foundation and confirmed that tenants rely on the service which is supporting over 60 tenants all of whom have significant social and financial issues.

S Macintyre advised that he had taken advice from the Procurement Adviser at the Scottish Procurement Alliance who has agreed to assist the Association in taking this process forward. Committee subsequently gave approval for an advert to be placed before the end of the year to procure the new service in time for the beginning of April 2018.

## **5i) HOUSING MANAGER'S REPORT**

### **Key Performance Indicators**

#### **1.1 Current Tenant Arrears**

Committee referred to the previously distributed report and noted the decrease in arrears due in part to a slight improvement in the processing of Alternative Payment Arrangement at the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

#### **1.2 Former Tenant Arrears**

Committee referred to the EDC former tenant arrears and noted they continued to reduce, with the arrears figure at the end of October being £18,627.26.

#### **1.3 Voids & Lettings**

Committee noted that from April to October, 28 properties had become void and 32 had been let. Committee referred to the subsequent re-let information and noted that properties were being let much quicker.

#### **1.4 Anti-Social/Neighbour Complaints**

Committee noted there had been 16 neighbour complaints since 1 April 2017 which was a reduction from the same period in 2016 when the figure was 21. E Sharkey advised that the most prevalent cases related to noise issues which accounted for 11 of these.

## **2. Updates**

#### **2.1 Allocations**

Committee referred to the report and noted there were 535 applicants on the Housing List. E Sharkey advised that applications had been processed within an average time of 10.16 days against a target of 15 days.

Committee also noted that the current Allocations Policy developed with East Dunbartonshire Council and Antonine Housing Association has been under review and a final draft will be presented to Committee for approval in early spring 2018.

#### **2.2 Nominations**

Committee noted the figures contained within the report. E Sharkey advised that lets to EDC by the end of October stood at 36% and it was hoped the Association would reach the target of 45% by the end of March 2018.

### **2.3 Universal Credit**

Committee noted the figures contained within the report and recognised the impact of the arrears due to Universal Credit.

M Escreet summarised the problems with Universal Credit and highlighted the points below:-

- Live service been cancelled now.
- 7 days waiting – being abolished in February 2018
- Two week run on after April 2018 for housing benefit
- Direct to landlord – issues around this.
- Roll out of UC continues
- Local housing allowances
- Families with 3 or more children can't access UC system – need to claim legacy benefits.
- Landlord portal – larger councils and associations

The Committee thanked Moira for her report.

### **2.4 Rent Payment Methods**

Committee noted the figures contained within the report and noted that Universal Credit payments were increasing.

## **5ii) RENT INCREASE REPORT**

### **1. Introduction**

Committee referred to the figures contained within the report and E Sharkey highlighted that the Association's rent policy had been based on (RPI) + 1%, with two exceptions in 2012 & 2016 when rents had been set below this level, and that this principle had been adhered to in the intervening years.

It was noted that In December 2012, Committee had agreed to implement a rent harmonisation structure to bring rents for similar properties into line with each other and in order to achieve this, agreed that up to a further 1% could be added to those rents which were at the lower end for each property type.

### **2. Current Context**

2.1 Committee noted that the Scottish Housing Regulator's current view is that landlords should no longer increase rents by inflation + 1% as a matter of course and if required to do so, would be expected to demonstrate why.

2.2 Committee noted that new borrowing conditions and a revised Business Plan would permit the Association to set a rent increase over the next 3 years which is lower than RPI + 1%.

2.3 Committee noted the three issues being addressed by the rent harmonisation process.

### 3. Financial Considerations

Committee noted the figures contained within the report and noted the additional costs for 2018/19.

### 4. Comparability – weekly average rents per house size

Committee noted that the Association was fairly competitive for comparable properties and only EDC had lower rent levels.

### 5. Affordability

Committee noted that due to the reduced rent increases since 2013 for smaller homes, this imbalance had now been addressed.

### 6. Proposals for 2018/19

Committee noted that RPI was 4% in October 2017 and in the past would have indicated an increase of 5%. However it was proposed to limit the general rent increase to 3% and a further 1% for harmonisation with an average increase of 3.12%.

### 7. Tenant Consultation

Committee noted the 4 methods proposed to consult with tenants. C Taylor asked if the Council rents could be removed from the report. E Sharkey asked Committee to consider what the Association may wish to recommend. R Smith asked if a pie chart could show how the rent money is spent and how it is value for money.

Following further discussion E Sharkey advised that all information would be taken into consideration and would await feedback results from the Annual Rent Consultation and a summary of responses would be presented at the February Management Meeting.

## 6. **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Committee noted and approved the following membership applications:-

Rachael Stark  
5 Redbrae Rd  
Kirkintilloch

Mary Clive  
22 Kenilworth Road  
Kirkintilloch

Angela Gallagher  
10 Cleddans Road  
Kirkintilloch

Committee also noted staff are continuing to encourage residents to take up membership following the reduction in the number of shareholders following the AGM.

**7. AOB**

S Macintyre distributed the Keep Scotland Beautiful – Place Standard document and advised Committee that there might be potential for cycle path funding.

Committee agreed to donate £50 for the Monster Mash Christmas Party.

Committee agreed to donate £50 for the EDC Social Work for children Christmas Party in the Community Centre aged 0-11 years.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7 February 2018 at 6.30pm.

Minuted by: G Fitzpatrick, Finance & Corporate Services Assistant  
11 December 2017

Chairperson's Signature: .....

Date: .....