

RUTHERGLEN & CAMBUSLANG HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting
held on
Tuesday 19th March 2024
at 5.45pm in the Association's Office**

Present:

Frances Cunningham
Robert McLeary
Natalie Kirk
Karen McCartney
Gary Gow
Mary Ellen McKeown
James Ross
Karen Kirk

In Attendance:

Elaine Lister - Director
Jim Kerr – Assistant Director

Observer:

Heather Ross

AGENDA ITEM 1.0 – APOLOGIES

Dougie Gold – Gold Consultancy

Frances welcomed Heather Ross and explained that Heather was at the meeting as an observer as she had applied to join the Management Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 2.0 – DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Frances, Elaine and Jim declared an interest in agenda item 8.1 – Pay Negotiations.

AGENDA ITEM 3.0 – NOTIFIABLE EVENTS

There have been no Notifiable Events.

AGENDA ITEM 4.0 – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 20th February 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th February 2024 were noted as a true record.

Proposed: Natalie Kirk

Seconded: Karen McCartney

Agenda Item 4.1 - Matters Arising (previous agenda item 4.1.1)

4.1.1 Aspire Lets

Members noted that the arrears for the unit had been cleared in full.

Jim advised members that he had met with DM Hall regarding standardising the leases for the business centre and the rent for the units. In particular, it was noted that a strategy was being looked at for bringing the existing rents up to market value.

There was a discussion around the potential impact on long standing businesses within the centre and concerns about the relationship with the tenants. It was noted that many of the original leases had reached the end of the initial term of the lease and therefore an appropriate time for a review.

Committee noted that Jim would be carrying out an 'audit' of the leases to identify which had expired. Jim would also arrange a review of the rents and the template lease in liaison with DM Hall.

4.1.2 Planning/Strategy Day (previous agenda item 11.5)

Members agreed that the date for the Planning Day would be Saturday 20th April and advised that they wished it to be in a nearby venue.

Members discussed the agenda for the day and stated that they wished it to focus on the governance structure and how to make it work more effectively for the Committee as a whole. There was also discussion about some training on roles and responsibilities of Committee members.

Members requested for a facilitator on the day to allow full engagement of the senior staff. Robert proposed asking Angela Spence who had facilitated previous planning days and had worked with the Association so knew members and the approach of members to planning etc.

Frances noted that Angela had worked well with the Committee on the previous planning days and felt she helped members get a lot out of the day.

Members agreed that Jim/Elaine would arrange;

- A venue and transport
- A draft agenda
- A facilitator, preferably Angela Spence

4.1.3 Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum Affiliation (previous agenda item 11.7)

Committee noted that the Association's affiliation had been renewed for 2024/2025

4.1.4 SHARE Membership Renewal (previous agenda item 11.8)

Committee noted that the Association's membership had been renewed for 2024/2025

4.1.5 Participation, Engagement & Consultation Review (previous agenda item 8.0)

Elaine referred to the previous discussions regarding the Association's need to strengthen its approach to customer engagement, including consultation and levels of participation. At the meeting members had approved obtaining costs and

proposals from research companies to carry out a survey on the needs, expectations and priorities of services users.

However, on reflection, she noted that a lot of the information on what tenants want from the Association was identified as part of the satisfaction survey carried out at the start of 2023. This information would be a good basis to start developing the strategy.

Members discussed the best approach to developing the Association's strategy going forward. There was a recognition that the current staff compliment did not necessarily have the skills to take this work forward and, given the importance for the Association, it may be something that required specialists in customer engagement. There was a discussion around the type of provisions available to support the development of a robust strategy and the option of a temporary post for a Customer Engagement or Community Development Officer. Taking into the costs of recruitment, salary etc, it was agreed that the Tenants Information Service (TIS) and Tenants Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) could be approached in the first instance to see what services they could offer.

Members requested that Jim contacted both TIS and TPAS to discuss what type of service could be provided to support the Association develop a robust strategy for developing meaningful engagement with service users.

AGENDA ITEM 5.0 – DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

5.1 Minutes of the Housing Management Sub-Committee Meeting –27th February 2024

Committee noted the draft minutes and that these would be presented for approval at the next meeting of the Housing Management Sub-Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 6.0 – ASSET MANAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE

Dougie presented his report on the progress with the review and referred to the review plan. In particular he highlighted the work that was being done with regards procurement and the Repairs and Maintenance and Voids Framework that was being developed jointly with West Whitlawburn and East Kilbride housing associations.

He also referred to the procurement of the cyclical works and, particularly, the gas servicing which he was proposing to have as a 5-star service as this would save money, make the process much more electronically systems based and reduce the staff resources required.

Both activities would provide much better value for money for the Association.

Discussions took place regarding the impact on the smaller contractors that the Association had a long-standing relationship with. Dougie explained that the way the contracts would be offered would not preclude the smaller contractors from tendering

and, in fact, because of the size, may not be of interest to some of the larger, multi-trade companies.

Dougie further highlighted the importance of having comprehensive, up-to-date stock conditions survey in order to shape and influence the planned maintenance programme and business planning processes. The brief and invitation to tender was drafted and would be issued as soon as the final information was received from Integrator Plus which is the Association's planning system.

Members asked about progress with the Tenant and Resident Safety Review and Dougie advised that the maintenance staff were taking the validation exercise forward. However, he did have concerns about the level of resources that could be dedicated to this work in the medium term.

Robert noted that the plan included training for the staff and felt that this would be a critical element of a successful implementation of the asset management strategy.

Committee noted the report and the progress made as shown on the plan. Members asked Dougie to provide ongoing report of the progress being made.

Frances thanked Dougie for his attendance and report.
Dougie left the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 7.0 – NEW AND REVIEWED POLICIES

Elaine explained that a number of policies had been issued to all members of the Management Committee in December with the intention that these would be considered, in the first instance, by the policy working group. However, for a variety of reason the working group had been unable to meet and the policies therefore required consideration and approval.

The policies presented for consideration were;

- Complaint Handling Policy
- Management Committee Expenses Policy
- Serious Complaints Against the Director Policy
- Interpretation & Translation Policy
- Customer Engagement Policy
- Acquisitions & Disposals Policy
- Committee Recruitment & Succession Policy
- Staff Uniform Policy

Members discussed the proposed policies at length, particularly those that were being presented as, in effect, new policies (Complaints Handling, Management Expenses, Serious Complaints Against the Director, Interpretation & Translation).

Elaine confirmed that there had been staff training on complaints but that it was still an area that staff seemed to be unsure of and, as such, she was concerned that there were "expressions of dissatisfaction" that were not being recorded as they were just seen as comments. Further training from an external trainer was therefore

being arranged to support staff understand when a complaint should be recorded as a complaint on the system. Jim also advised that refresher in-house training on the IT systems and processes for recording complaints would be given.

Members had a discussion on the issues with recruiting new members onto the Management Committee. It had previously been the wish of the Committee to, as far as possible, get new members from the Association's own tenant base and local residents. However members agreed that, in order to attract a wider pool of potential members, the recruitment advert etc should be published in housing publications, local newspapers etc.

Elaine reminded members that the Chair's position had to be filled for the next five years and, if possible, a Vice-Chair elected. Members agreed to consider this at the Planning Day following the training on the roles and responsibilities.

Frances asked for clarification with regards the Acquisitions & Disposals Policy as to the position with advising the Regulator and paying back any applicable grants to funders if the Association disposed of any property. Jim advised that he would clarify the position with regards any recent disposals as requested by Frances.

Members approved the following policies;

- Complaint Handling Policy
- Management Committee Expenses Policy
- Serious Complaints Against the Director Policy
- Interpretation & Translation Policy
- Customer Engagement Policy
- Acquisitions & Disposals Policy
- Committee Recruitment & Succession Policy

They further agreed to withdraw the Uniform Policy for the time being but approved staff being issued with outdoor jackets with the Association's logo so that staff were identifiable when out of the office.

AGENDA ITEM 8.0 – COMMITTEE DIGEST

8.1 EVH Pay Negotiations

Robert explained that he was on the EVH Board and gave some background to the negotiations between EVH and UNITE the Union.

After discussion, members unanimously agreed to vote to accept the proposed increase to salaries and instructed Elaine to respond to the ballot on their behalf.

8.2 Annual Assurance Evidence Bank

Committee noted that Angela Spence was doing some follow-up work in light of the new regulatory framework.

8.3 Internal Audit Tender

Jim advised that there had been a delay in uploading the tender on to the Public Contracts Portal but that it now been done and tenders were due to be returned by 17th April. Thereafter the assessment for price and quality would be carried out jointly with Clydesdale HA to identify the preferred company.

Committee noted.

8.4 Flexible Working Request

After confirming that the application complied with legislation and the Association's policy, members approved the flexible working request, to be reviewed by the Director in six months to ensure the business needs of the Association were still being met.

8.5 Recruitment to Management Committee

Due to the conflict of interests Heather Ross, Observer, was asked to leave the meeting. Jim Kerr accompanied her.

Elaine advised that Heather Ross had applied to join the Management Committee. It was noted that Heather was a tenant of the Association had had become a member in October 2023.

As Heather could not be elected until the next AGM, members considered if she should be asked to join as an appointee or as a co-optee.

Members unanimously agreed to invite Heather Ross to join the Management Committee as a co-optee until the next AGM when she could stand for election.

Heather and Jim rejoined the meeting.

On behalf of the Management Committee, Frances formally invited Heather to join the Committee as a co-optee, explaining that she could stand for election at the next AGM.

Heather thanked the members for their consideration and accepted the invitation.

AGENDA ITEM 9.0 – COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Members had an informal discussion regarding the need to recruit more members and what skills and knowledge would be helpful to bring on board. Given the focus on tenant safety it was felt that someone with some assent management background would be useful.

Members also discussed the current governance structure and if reducing the number of meetings would help attract new members. It was agreed that this would

be discussed further at the Planning Day with an option being to amalgamate the Maintenance and Housing Management Subs with the Management Committee meeting, thereby reducing the meetings to one per month other than those months when there was a Finance, Audit & Risk Sub.

There were no other items for Committee discussion at that time.

AGENDA ITEM 10.0 – CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted the items of correspondence.

AGENDA ITEM 11.0 – AOCB

Elaine advised that the Regulator had issued a draft of the Association's Engagement Plan. The plan was based on the Regulator's assessment of the Association which, in turn, was based on key documents previously approved by the Committee (for example, the ERC Return, Annual Assurance Statement, Financial returns etc).

Elaine stressed the plan was a draft only and was, at this stage, confidential until published by the Regulator.

Members considered the plan and agreed that it required no amendments or comments

15.0 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 23rd April 2024.

As there were no other items of business the meeting closed at 7.15pm.