

Management Committee Update

October 2018

Issue 11



Orkney Housing Association is governed by a voluntary Management Committee elected at our AGM in September each year. The Committee's role is to set and monitor our strategy and performance. Day to day operational management is carried out by the Leadership Team. Some of the Committee's main functions include: approving budgets, reviewing policies, diligent financial management, major decision making and organisational direction, and good governance to ensure statutory and regulatory requirements are met. Management Committee are keen to issue an update following each formal meeting (6 per year).



Committee Members presenting retiring staff member Liz Melvin with flowers. L to R: Bill Wallace, Elaine Grieve, Linda Forbes (on screen) John Rodwell, Liz Melvin, Wendy Baikie & Philip Cook

Points of interest from the meeting

There were a number of formalities to be carried out at this meeting following the AGM, namely:

Election of Committee & Sub Committee Chairs

- John Rodwell was elected Chair but stated it would be his last year as he is entering his fifth year as Chair
- Fiona Lettice – Vice Chair
- Philip Cook – Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee Chair
- Bill Wallace – Performance & Resources Sub-Committee Chair
- Staff member Mhairi Hughes was re-appointed as Company Secretary

Rent Review Consultation

A paper was presented to Members detailing the Association's suggested options, on which to consult residents. The options are to be the same as last year with variations on an RPI + increase. The report detailed the long term forecast for the development of new properties as well as maintenance of existing stock. Members agreed to proceed with the consultation stating their preference as an RPI + 1% increase (the same as last year). They also agreed that the management fee and insurance charge for sharing owners should remain frozen for the coming year. Feedback from the consultation will be presented to the December Committee meeting.

Business Plan Update

The Association produces a full Business Plan every three years in line with Guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator. We are currently working towards our 2016-2019 and delivering our Corporate Outcomes:

- A Great Place to Work
- Great Customer Service
- A Great Contribution to our Community & Society

Members were asked to approve the proposed timetable and processes for developing a Business Plan for 2019-2022. Members agreed the key dates and confirmed their availability to attend strategic planning workshops.

Members present on 3 October 2018

- Wendy Baikie
- Philip Cook
- Linda Forbes (via Skype)
- Elaine Grieve
- Fiona Lettice (via Skype)
- John Rodwell (Chair)
- Bill Wallace

Review of Factoring Charges and Sinking Funds

Members were asked to approve a gradual increase to sinking fund charges for sharing owners and owners to ensure that funds cover the costs of major maintenance in the future. The Association wishes to ensure that when the need arises for major works there are sufficient funds to cover these. These charges will then be reviewed annually.

Staffing Update

This month saw Liz Melvin retiring after nearly 26 years service. Her skills, knowledge and experience will be greatly missed by her colleagues. Paul Scott was successfully recruited as the new Head of Housing & Customer Services and joined the team on 1st October.

Mike Cooper, Care & Repair Manager, was presented with an award from the Association at our AGM, marking his 30 years service to Orkney Care & Repair. Mike is leading work looking at the future staffing model for Care & Repair.

Shannon Tait is our new Modern Apprentice and will begin her SVQ2 in October.

Aimee Leask & Leanne Omand have now started their SVQ3 modules.

Development Report

- Members received an update on the programme, with the completion of the landscaping at Sands Park Phase 2.
- 8 rented properties were handed over at Liberator Drive, Kirkwall with an additional 8 properties due for handover at the end of November.
- Properties at Junction Road were on target for handover at the start of October.
- Final project completion figures for Stenness Phase 2 were received, detailing additional works that were not included in the original budget which were funded by Association reserves.

Policy Reviews

- Rented Allocations Policy - an amendment was agreed for instances where the location of an applicants current home can have a significant detrimental impact of their health.
- Rent Setting Policy - added a definition of 'Affordability' as recommended by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Sabbatical Policy - members agreed to further consideration on adopting this policy.
- Standing Orders for Committee Business - Signing Legal documents, amendments were agreed following the retirement of Liz Melvin and recruitment of Paul Scott.
- Treasury Management Policy - had a small amendment to wording.

Land Lease at Brownstown Road, Stromness

Following discussion, Members agreed to extend the current license to occupy to the Stromness Community Garden Society for an additional 5 years to the original agreement which was due to expire in 2023.

Resolutions & Applications for Membership

Since the last meeting two applications for membership have been received which were approved by members. There were also four memberships cancelled at the request of the general members.

We are seeking new committee members who are looking to make a positive contribution in their community. If this sounds like you and you would like to find out more please contact Mhairi Hughes by email mhairi.hughes@ohal.org.uk or on **01856 875253 ext 201**.

Resident Panel Update

At the start of September the Resident Panel took part in an exchange visit to the Interested Tenants Group in Wick, where they were able to share ideas and suggestions as well as hear what each of the groups had been doing over the past year. Following this visit, Orkney tenants were invited to come along to a training session on rent setting, detailing the legal framework that the Association adheres to. Further sessions on tenant participation and how tenants are able to influence decisions made by their landlord are to be held in November. Contact Suzy Boardman, details below.



Anyone interested in getting involved with the Resident Panel or any other Association activities can contact **Suzy Boardman** on **01856 875253 ext 205** or suzy.boardman@ohal.org.uk

www.ohal.org.uk/tenants/get-involved