

Minutes of a Meeting of the Management Committee of Orkney Housing Association Limited held on Wednesday 29 May 2019 at 10.30am in the Association's office.

Present: John Rodwell (Chair), Wendy Baikie, Philip Cook, Linda Forbes (via Skype), Fiona Lettice, Jason Taylor, Bill Wallace and Roella Wilson.

In attendance: Craig Spence (Chief Executive - CE)
Sandy Dennison (Finance Manager - FM)
Anne Fletcher (Director of Finance & Asset Management - DFAM)
Mhairi Hughes (Head of Corporate Governance - HCG)
Paul Scott (Head of Housing & Customer Services - HHCS)
Connie Shearer (Minute Taker)

The Chair gave a particular welcome to Jason Taylor and Roella Wilson who were attending their first meeting as members and everyone introduced themselves.

PART 1 – STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Dave Dawson, Elaine Grieve, John Stockan and Richard Flett.

1.2 Declarations of (a) interest and (b) hospitality given/received in last 12 months for any items on the agenda.

There were no declarations of interest.

1.3 Minutes of the Management Committee meetings held on 27 March 2019

The Minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were proposed by Philip Cook and seconded by Linda Forbes.

The Minutes were later signed by the Chair.

1.4 Matters Arising & Deferred Items (Paper No MC/19/01)

1.1, Electric Vehicles: The CE said a series of open days were being planned to take place at the end of July. Further information will follow once arrangements have been finalised.

1.3, 2019/20 Budget: There was one typo – the date in the final sentence should read “11 April” not “27 March”.

1.5 Future Meeting Dates:

Friday 14 June, 11am-3pm – Joint OHAL/OIC Seminar at OIC Chambers
Wednesday 10 July at 10.30am – Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee
Wednesday 31 July at 10.30am – Management Committee
Wednesday 28 August, 12.00-4.30pm – Summer Engagement Tour
Friday 30 August, 10am-4pm – Tenant Day (drop in event at St Magnus Centre)

PART 2 – STRATEGY

S1 5 Year Financial Projections (Paper No MC/19/02)

- S1.1 The FM said these figures were originally based on the long term projections in the Business Plan agreed in March but had been updated since. The latest disclosure from The Pension Trust was not included as it was unavailable when the paper was written. He pointed out that the Ratios in Attachment 2 were all consistent and improving.
- S1.2 In response to a query about 'Other Activities', the FM explained that this related to miscellaneous income which is not part of the Association's core business.
- S1.3 The Chair acknowledged that finances can sometimes be complicated and difficult to understand but the Association has able and competent staff to deal with this.
- S1.4 Members then approved the 5 Year Financial Projections at Attachment 1 and authorised the Director of Finance and Asset Management to make the submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator on their behalf.

S2 Engagement Event (Paper No MC/19/03)

- S2.1 Members agreed that the format for the event had proved successful over the past 5 years and, as there had been a number of changes with members, a return to the first year's Agenda, visiting estates in Stromness, would be a good idea. A member wondered about being able to look around OIC properties – the CE said that Wilf Weir of OIC had suggested something similar so this may be possible some time.
- S2.2 Members then:
- a) confirmed their availability for 28 August; and
 - b) agreed the programme as listed at 4.2 in the paper for the Summer Engagement event.

PART 3 – GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

G1 Approval of Annual Return on the Charter 2018-19 (Paper No MC/19/04)

- G1.1 The Chair said the amount of detail provided in the paper and attachment reflected the considerable work undertaken of staff and the ARC must now be approved by Management Committee (MC) before submission.
- G1.2 The HCG said the paper was prepared jointly with the HHCS and a lot of work had taken place regarding the Technical Guidance interpretation. There will be changes next year with much of the detail going into the background portal, although the ESSH will stay as a separate part. At the staff planning meeting this morning, positive highlights were mentioned to staff; particularly 2.4c regarding tenant satisfaction with the standards and quality of their homes when moving in, which was due to the hard work of the Building & Repairs Officer and the Tradesman Team. The team had received 126 compliments throughout the

year. Anti-Social Behaviour numbers had doubled but response times were still meeting the KPI and a lot of work was being undertaken on this by staff.

G1.3 There were a few changes to the ARC as presented, which had been detailed in an email sent to members on 27 May, but the return on the portal had been updated and was ready to be submitted following approval.

G1.4 Members had a few queries:

1. Validation inspection – have we ever had one? The HCG said that prior to the current regulatory regime we were inspected every 3 years with the last one in 2004. However, when the regime changed only those in medium/high engagement had a visit and OHAL has always been low engagement. The CE said that any variances in figures means we can get questions and we submit evidence to back that up.
2. 2.4C, good news about increased satisfaction but what happens with comments of dissatisfaction? The HHCS said only one dissatisfaction comment had been received in the year but the Housing Officer would take this up and discuss any issues with the tenant to see what can be done.
3. A member enquired as to the mechanism for getting our information to the Scottish Government, ie what is the connection between SHR and the wider picture? The CE explained this is fed to the SHR who use it to publish a landlord profile. Detailed information is used by SHR to form their view on how much engagement they need to do. We also submit data regarding housing lists which is used to consider development. However, this is not the main channel to the Scottish Government as it is the local authorities Strategic Housing Investment Plan which informs SG.
4. P50 - in relation to tenant satisfaction and quality of homes – there were 49 last year but 301 this year, why the increase? The HHCS explained that the Technical Guidance allows us to use different research tools and this year the data came from the settling in visits with new tenants.
5. P32, ethnic backgrounds – there appears to be a difference between the way people are identifying themselves. The HHCS said the section on existing tenants has been updated to as per the supplementary email to members following additional verification.
6. P35, % of tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision making process is good but the 'neither/nor satisfied' knocks that figure down. The CE said 305 people chose to answer and only 2% were dissatisfied. The Technical Guidance shows this is what we must do.
7. P18, C10.3 – number of applicants has increased by nearly 10% despite new development. How are we going to try and see those figures go in a positive direction? Is this the sort of thing to be flagged by the SHR? A member suggested that Philip Cook could ask this question when at the SFHA Annual Conference. Concern was expressed that waiting list numbers are rising despite the good work we are doing. The CE said that, in accordance with our Business Plan, we aim to build 20 new houses per annum. One property could help more than one person and we do think about things when looking forward and planning. However, this is a tricky area as a number of local private rents are currently leased to contractors but this may change in the near future and have a positive impact on our housing list.

G1.5 Members:

- a) Discussed and noted the content of the Paper and Return as at Attachment 1,

- including the subsequent amendments as emailed; and
- b) Authorised the Chief Executive to submit the whole Return as detailed at paragraph 2.1 of the paper, to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

G2 SHR Regulatory Framework Compliance Plan (Paper No MC/19/05)

- G2.1 The Chair said this was a very interesting paper which provides evidence of how MC receive assurance from Senior Staff and external bodies required for the Annual Assurance Statement.

The HCG explained she had pulled together the current position in terms of meeting both the Regulatory Requirements and Standards keeping it simple with colour coded keys. Members were pleased to note the high level of compliance which helps confirm our previous 'low engagement' status.

- G2.2 A member said it was an extremely thorough document. The small number of 'reds' mean the work required to ensure compliance is do-able within the timeframe.
- G2.3 In response to a query about 'protected characteristics of tenants', the HCG said that these are determined by the Equalities Act. We are required to gather this information but not submit it, merely hold it in case SHR wish to see it. A member felt that if there was no real purpose for this then we should not be collecting it; perhaps the SFHA could ask the SHR why they require this, given that we need a reason for doing so under GDPR.
- G2.4 The HCG said that, to comply with both the Regulatory Standards and forthcoming Freedom of Information requirements, we must publish our MC Minutes so these will be put on our website once they have been approved.
- G2.5 Members then:
- a) Noted the content of the SHR's Engagement Plan for OHAL for 2019-20;
 - b) Agreed to adopt the proposed agenda structure as detailed at Section 3.2 of the paper for future Management Committee agendas;
 - c) Noted that Leadership Team will provide references to the Regulatory Standards evidenced by each Policy being presented for review in the covering Policy Review Paper presented to each future meeting;
 - d) Noted progress with and target dates for Policy reviews required to address compliance with both the Regulatory Requirements and Standards as detailed in Section 4 of the paper;
 - e) Noted that data is being collated as required for the 2019-20 ARC;
 - f) Noted that Management Committee Minutes will be published on our website, effective from this meeting, once they have been approved, to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Standards (6.4 of the paper);
 - g) Noted progress with regards to Regulatory Requirements and agreed timescales as detailed in Attachment 2 and in Section 6 of the paper;
 - h) Noted progress with regards to Regulatory Standards and agreed timescales as detailed in Attachment 3 and in Section 7 of the paper; and
 - i) Noted the next steps as detailed in Section 8 of the paper.

G3 Approval of Loan Portfolio Submission (Paper No MC/19/06)

- G3.1 The FM explained this was an annual return and attachment 2 showed a summary of the loans. A member noticed that the vast majority of loans were provided by the Royal Bank of Scotland and wondered if there was a policy regarding who to use. The DFAM explained that there is a minimum of 3 lenders required for the tendering process and MC must approve commitment to borrowing facilities for capital purposes.
- G3.4 Members then approved the 2018/19 Loan Portfolio return and authorised the Director of Finance & Asset Management to submit the return to the Regulator on their behalf.

G4 Amendment to Bank Mandate (Paper No MC/19/07)

- G4.1 Members approved the addition of Paul Scott, HHCS, to the Association's principal bank mandate.

G5 Pensions Accounting Update (Paper No MC/19/08)

- G5.1 The FM explained that under new accounting procedures, the Defined Benefit (DB) pension liability was required to be included in the accounts. This was an accounting adjustment and did not affect the cash balance.
- G5.2 Members:
- a) Noted the implications of the new DB pension accounting treatment for the statutory accounts; and
 - b) Agreed that the Association's DB pension liability at 31 March 2018 and 2019 should include the estimate of Guaranteed Minimum Pension equalisation.

G6 Policy & Reviews (Paper No MC/19/09)

- G6.1 Anti Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy and Email, Internet & Social Media Acceptable Use Policy
References to the Computer Misuse Act were made to both as recommended by an internal audit review.
- G6.2 Membership Procedures
Amendments agreed.
- G6.3 Rented Allocations Policy – Highlighted Amendments
There was one typo in the paper: at 1.8.1, the second sentence should read "Such LLIs will meet" (ie, not 'LLPs').
Responding to a query, the HHCS confirmed that the comments in attachment 2 were typical of those usually received but did not highlight anything unexpected.
- G6.4 Resident Payment & Debt Policy
The HHCS said the changes required to this policy focused on prevention of arrears and debt and the change in title to *Prevention of Rent Arrears and Debt Collection Policy* reflected this. The objectives cover new and existing tenants

and service users, and enables staff to support tenants whilst also having a robust approach to arrears.

Responding to a query, the HHCS explained that a leaflet summarising the policy is to be produced, with input from the Residents Panel, and the full Policy made available on our website or via the office.

G6.5 Estate Management Policy

The HHCS explained these changes referred to estate inspection and tenant engagement. He proposes stopping the 2 estate visits a year and replacing this with one walkabout. However, Housing Officers having been given 'patches' which they will visit on a monthly basis to monitor the area and check on gardens, maintenance, etc. This should, hopefully, make staff more approachable and tenants can discuss any issues with their Housing Officer when they are out and about.

G6.6 Scheme of Delegations

Minor changes to this policy were required following on from the new structure in Housing & Customer Services.

G6.7 Entitlements, Payments & Benefits

The CE explained there was no changes required to this Policy and it would be moved to the regular 5-yearly cycle for review.

G6.8 Performance Management Policy

The CE said that minor amendments were required to reflect recent changes in the Regulatory Framework.

G6.9 Members approved the:

- a) addition of para 3.7 to the Anti Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy as detailed at Section 2 of the paper;
- b) addition of Section 3. Legislation to the Email, Internet & Social Media Acceptable Use Policy as detailed in Section 2 of the paper;
- c) amendments to the Membership Procedure as detailed in Attachment 1;
- d) amendments to the Rented Allocations Policy as detailed in Attachment 2, and noted the results of the recent rent consultation and comments by respondents as detailed in Attachment 3;
- e) amendments to the former Resident Payment & Debt Policy, now titled *Prevention of Rent Arrears and Debt Collection Policy*, as detailed in Attachment 4;
- f) amendments to the Estate Management Policy as detailed in Attachment 5;
- g) amendments to the Scheme of Delegations Policy as detailed in Section 7 of the paper;
- h) retention of the Entitlements, Payments & Benefits Policy as worded and move it to the regular 5-yearly cycle for review; and
- i) amendments to the Performance Management Policy as detailed in Attachment 6.

G7 **Development Governance** (Paper No MC/19/10)

G7.1 The Chair said this report, giving assurance on our compliance, was welcome following the SHR national document published in 2017, *Development of*

Affordable Housing in Scotland, A thematic enquiry. The DFAM explained the background to this document and said the 10 Positive Practice Principles had identified OHAL good practice which would feed into the Annual Assurance Statement for the SHR.

G7.2 A member said the report was very good and well laid out. Many housing associations have ceased building but OHAL had kept developing and maintained their expertise. Referring to P8 (involving key stakeholders, tenants, etc), the member enquired how we involved tenants. The DFAM explained that feedback from tenants was received during the rent setting process. Also, comments from the New Homes Survey are taken on board and fed into New Build Design Briefs.

G7.3 Members reviewed how we currently achieve the 10 Positive Practice Principles in relation to development activities. No further Positive Practice was suggested in response to the questions raised in the Thematic Enquiry into Development of Affordable Housing in Scotland document.

G8 Resolutions & Applications for Membership (Paper No MC/19/11)

G8.1 Members approved one application for general membership.

G9 Report from Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee (Paper No MC/19/12)

G9.1 Members noted the update and record of decisions from the Audit and Risk Management Sub-committee.

G10 Report from Performance & Resources Sub-Committee (Paper No MC/19/13)

G10.1 Members noted the update and record of decisions from the Performance & Resources Sub-committee.

G11 Annual Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee Report (Paper No MC/19/14)

G11.1 Members noted the assurances provided to them by the Annual Report from the Audit & Risk Management Sub-committee.

G12 Annual Performance & Resources Sub-Committee Report (Paper No MC/19/15)

G12.1 Members noted the Annual Report from the Performance & Resources Sub-committee and the assurances it provides.

G13 Annual Governance Report (Paper No MC/19/16)

G13.1 Members noted the contents of the report and that there was one typo: Fiona Lettice's name was misspelt.

G14 Health & Safety Working Party Report (Paper No MC/19/17)

- G14.1 The HCG explained that Health & Safety was a Management Committee responsibility and she was pleased to be in a position to bring this paper for approval. She is due to meet with the H&S consultant this week so can discuss any issues with him. The next H&S Working Party meeting has been moved to the following week to avoid a clash with another event, by which time most of these things will have been done.
- G14.2 Section 2.1, Fire Safety
A member asked for clarification of where the assembly point was in the event of a fire. The HCG explained the fire evacuation procedure, highlighted the signs and information on each fire door, and said she would add this to the MC induction process.
- G14.3 Section 3.21 Adverse Weather Conditions
The decision to come into work during adverse weather is to be agreed between the staff member and their line manager. This is not really an issue and some staff have the facility to work from home.
- G14.4 Section 3.11, Vehicles
Members discussed the position with hands free/ Bluetooth devices and approved the section in the policy.
- G14.5 Members then:
- a) Authorised the Chair to sign both the Health & Safety Policy Statement and Section 1.5: Responsibilities: Management Committee as detailed in Attachments 1 & 2;
 - b) Approved amendments to the Health & Safety Control Manual as per Attachment 3 and detailed in Section 2.2 of the paper; and
 - c) Noted the remainder of the Paper.

PART 4 - PERFORMANCE

P1 Authority for Evictions (Paper No MC/19/18)

- P1.1 The HHCS explained that, as well as rent arrears, non-occupation of a property was also a case for eviction.
- P1.2 Members agreed to give authority to enforce the Decree of Eviction in the case detailed in Para 2.1 of the paper.

P2 2018/19 Business Plan & Risk Management Report (Paper No MC/19/19)

- P2.1 Members noted the contents of this paper which provided assurance of effective management of organisational performance and risks during 2018/19.

P3 Complaints & Compliments Report (Paper No MC/19/20)

P3.1 A member asked if there had been many complaints regarding garden and grounds maintenance this year. The HHCS said there had been a small surge at the beginning of the season which was to be expected. Contractors had been contacted and the situation improved but this will continue to be monitored closely.

P3.3 Members noted the contents of this report.

P4 New Homes Satisfaction Survey Report (Paper No MC/19/21)

P4.1 The Chair said this was a very positive report. The DFAM said the New Homes Survey form is going to be re-vamped to bring it more in line with Scottish Housing Network Guidance.

P4.2 Members noted the contents of this report.

P5 Contractors & Consultants Annual Review (Paper No MC/19/22)

P5.1 A member declared an interest as they use one of the companies on the lists. This was noted and is already on the individual's Register of Interests.

P5.2 Members then:

- a) noted the annual performance figures for our Maintenance Contractors in Attachment 1;
- b) noted that any Member with an interest in any of the companies on any of lists given in Attachments 1, 2, 3 and 4 must declare so in the Register of Interests in accordance with the Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy;
- c) approved the List of Maintenance Contractors given in Attachment 2;
- d) approved the List of Development Contractors given in Attachment 3; and
- e) approved the List of Development Consultants given in Attachment 4.

PART 5 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

D1 2019 Staff Survey (Presentation)

D1.1 The CE gave a presentation on the results of the recent Staff Survey.

The Chair said the results were reassuring and it was good to know that 100% of staff were proud to work for the Association.

Members found the presentation very interesting and reassuring and the overall results were very satisfying.

D2 Committee Training Plan 2019/20 (Paper No MC/19/23)

D2.1 The Chair advised he thought it would be useful to have refreshers as detailed in the proposed plan.

D2. Members:

- noted progress, budget assumptions and actual costs with regard to the 2018/19 Training Plan; and
- agreed the Training Plan for 2019/20 as detailed in Attachment 2 including suggested delivery methods and timescales, taking account of budgetary allowances made.

PART 6 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

I1 Development Update Report (Paper No MC/19/24)

I1.1 The Chair highlighted an area of concern which would have implications for our development programme. The CE explained the position regarding Scottish Water and the effect this could have on the imminent development at The Crafty and future development at Corse West. He said the matter will have to be put onto the Risk Register.

Scottish Government have a development meeting coming up soon and the CE said he would ensure they are made aware of the problem.

I1.2 Members noted the current position with the development programme, projects on-site and shadow projects.

Any Other Urgent Business

- a) The Chair said he had been reviewing members' individual training records and was very impressed by how much time members devoted to training, highlighting one member even spent 6 hours attending an Energy Workshop whilst in Brussels, at no cost to the Association!
- b) The CE informed members that there would likely be a piece in this week's Orcadian regarding disabled housing in Orkney and the background to this.
- c) The CE was pleased to announce that we have been shortlisted for Housing Association of the Year at the Scottish Homes Awards. The DFAM, one of our Modern Apprentices and a committee member will attend the Awards ceremony.
- d) The CE said the Leadership Team had met with OIC's Head of Human Resources to discuss flexitime working. A draft policy will come to MC for consideration following staff consultation.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 1320hrs.

Signed:

Date:

Chair