

Orkney Housing Association is governed by a voluntary Management Committee elected at our AGM. 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 and services delivered by our excellent staff 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.

An update is issued following each formal Management Committee meeting (normally 6 per year).

Members present 7 October 2020

Via Zoom:

- Wendy Baikie
- Philip Cook
- Fiona Lettice
- Jason Taylor
- Bill Wallace
- John White
- Roella Wilson

Our Management Committee



Top: Fiona Lettice, Bill Wallace, Wendy Baikie, Philip Cook, Dave Dawson
Bottom: Linda Forbes, John Rodwell, Jason Taylor, Roella Wilson, John White

ELECTION & APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

At the first meeting following the AGM each year, we elect a Chair & Vice Chair.

- Fiona Lettice & Bill Wallace were re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair of the Management Committee.
- Linda Forbes was newly elected as Chair of the Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee.
- Bill Wallace was re-elected as Chair of the Performance & Resources Sub Committee.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

We submit this to the Scottish Housing Regulator to provide evidence of how the Association is run. Since the submission of their first AAS in October 2019, continuous assessment has been ensured by having this as a standing item on every agenda.

In light of the current pandemic, members noted that an entire section had been added to the evidence bank on this issue alone.

Members reviewed all the evidence and felt able to make an informed decision regarding the format and content of their 2020 AAS, which they approved. This set out that they felt the Association complied with the "Regulatory Standards" which will be posted on our website in due course.

Policy Reviews

- The Whistleblowing Policy was updated to reflect its continued effectiveness in light of the pandemic.
- The Treasury Management Policy was updated to include the management of a Charity Deposit Platform.

STRATEGY

2020/21 Business Planning Process

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 on the Association's operations and in line with guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator, members agreed to undertake a wholesale review of our Business Plan over the coming months — even though this was not scheduled to take place until 2022.

Annual Rent Review

Following last year's consultation with tenants, Committee Members agreed to a 2 year rent increase based on the September Retail Price Index (RPI) only. The RPI for September 2020 won't be known until later in October.

Members were appraised of the current rent arrears situation and how tenants in need of extra help during the current pandemic had been able to access financial assistance following the Association setting up a "Tenancy Support Fund".

Members will make a decision on 2021 rent levels following consideration of a full report on viability, comparability and affordability due to be presented to the November meeting.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Annual Financial Statements

Members approved the submission of the Annual Financial Statements as presented, to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Welfare Reform Update

Members were advised that Housing & Customer Services staff continue to closely monitor the local situation, and work with partner agencies to ensure tenants have the support required to maintain their tenancies.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- ⇒ The Crafty, Kirkwall: work has commenced on site with 12 rented properties due to complete in early 2022.
- ⇒ Kirk Park, Orphir: work has commenced on site with 8 rented properties due to complete in late 2021.
- ⇒ Walliwall Phase 6, Kirkwall: the Development Brief and Planning Application for 14 rented and 6 NSSE properties have been submitted.

Tenant Participation Strategy Review

A review had been planned to take place earlier in the year however the pandemic has prevented taking this forward. Members heard how staff will consult with tenants to review the current participation avenues and look at how these can be improved.

Sub Committee Reports

Members received regular assurance reports from recent meetings of the Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee and Performance & Resources Sub-Committee.

Care & Repair Annual Report

Members noted the detail of service provision throughout the year 2019/20 as presented, and approved the Annual Report.



As agreed by Management Committee, a special meeting of the Performance & Resources Sub-Committee was held in September where members scrutinised and approved the 5 Year Financial Projections Return, for onward submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Change it up and Zoom with us

As we have all seen, many of the things we were used to doing face to face have moved online due to COVID-19. We could be engaging with a much wider group of tenants by moving our participation activities online.

We would love to know if you are interested in joining a Zoom coffee and catch up. We would also like to know if there are any tenants that would need some help to get online to join in. If this sound like something you might be interested in, drop me an email: suzu.boardman@ohal.org.uk

