

Minutes of Meeting of the Management Committee of Orkney Housing Association Limited held remotely via Zoom on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 10.30am

Present: Fiona Lettice (Chair), Wendy Baikie, Philip Cook, Dave Dawson, Linda Forbes, John Rodwell, Jason Taylor, Bill Wallace, John White and Roella Wilson

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

PART 1 – STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

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

Dave Dawson declared an interest in Item I1.

1.3 Minutes of the Management Committee meeting 25 November 2020

The Minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were proposed by Bill Wallace and seconded by John White. The Minutes to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

1.4 Matters Arising & Deferred Items (Paper No MC/20/65)

1.4.1 Minutes 25.11.21: Item G3, Staffing Update – Following discussion, and a service update, members agreed to the recruitment of a temporary Housing Services Officer for an initial 6 months.

1.4.2 Treasury Management Update: The FM updated members on the position regarding the Charities Aid Foundation account and the drawdown and investment of loan funds which had been placed through the deposit platform.

1.5 Future Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 03 February, 10.30am - Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee
Wednesday 17 February, 10.30am - Performance & Resources Sub Committee
Wednesday 24 February, 10.30am - MC Workshop (*Apols: JT and DD*)
Wednesday 10 March, 10.30am - Health & Safety Working Party
Wednesday 31 March, 10.30am - Management Committee

PART 2 – STRATEGY

S1 Revised Business Plan (Paper No MC/20/66)

- S1.1 The CE presented the paper which updated members on progress with the Business Plan. A successful Strategy Day had been held in December and the key points from that will be incorporated into an updated Plan.
- S1.2 Members noted the update and that the updated Plan will be presented on 31 March.

PART 3 – GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

G1 SHR Self-Assessment Update (Paper No MC/20/67)

- G1.1 The HCG presented the paper and explained that a consultative draft “*Collecting equality information: Guidance for Scottish social landlords*” had been issued. An update will be provided to members at the next meeting.
- G1.2 Members then:
- a) Agreed that no material changes are required to the AAS since its submission;
 - b) Noted that no Notifiable Events have occurred or been reported to the SHR since the last meeting;
 - c) Noted there are no amendments to the list of Governance Related Policies;
 - d) Noted the additions to the Evidence Bank in relation to Regulatory Requirements, Regulatory Standards & COVID-19 as detailed in the Paper.

G2 Annual Committee Meeting Schedule (Paper No MC/20/68)

- G2.1 The HCG reported that, following consultation with members regarding availability, the consensus was to continue holding meetings on Wednesday mornings. A revised Timetable had been prepared suggesting a few changes so as to enable as many members as possible to attend meetings.
- G2.2 The FM said that approval of the Annual Accounts might require a special meeting but this will be confirmed following a meeting he has with the auditor next week.
- G2.3 Members then agreed the revised schedule of meeting dates for 2021/22 as in Attachment 1 to the paper.

G3 P&R Chair’s Report (Paper No MC/20/69)

- G3.1 A member remarked on the excellent work done by the Housing Team on rent arrears during these challenging times; their hard work was much appreciated.

G3.2 Members noted the update and record of decisions from the Performance & Resources Sub-committee meeting.

G4 Policy & Reviews (Paper No MC/20/70)

G4.1 Members:

- a) Noted the update re outstanding policy reviews as detailed in Section 1 of the paper; and
- b) Approved the minor change to the Treasury Management Policy as detailed in Section 2 of the paper.

G5 Resolutions & Applications for Membership (Paper No MC/20/71)

G5.1 Members approved the resolution in respect of a shared ownership disposal and noted the two cancelled memberships.

PART 4 – PERFORMANCE

P1 Welfare Reform Update (Paper No MC/20/72)

P1.1 The HHCS presented the paper and gave members a brief summary of the Association's current situation, as well as National Progress/updates.

P1.2 A member enquired about Item 9 in the attachment (Discretionary Housing Payment) which referred to one bedroom properties and the ongoing consideration in development briefs. The member could not recall previous discussion on building flatted one-bed properties. The DPM said this referred to a proposed Design & Build project in Kirkwall by a local contractor and had formed part of the Scottish Housing Investment Plan (SHIP). The HHCS confirmed there was a high demand for one bed properties in Kirkwall. The DPM said he had plans for this proposed development and would send these out to members for information.

P1.3 A member queried whether there may be a way for the Association to help others in the community through its 'Wider Role' and the sharing of information beyond our tenants. The HHCS responded that we work closely with OIC and share ideas, etc. Tenant Participation also provided an avenue for joint working. He pointed out that information is shared regularly on our Facebook page and website, and the recent Rooftops detailed a number of organisations which offer help and support.

P1.4 During discussions, several points were brought up which, it was agreed, should be brought back to a future meeting/ session:

- Development programme (challenges/solutions)
- SHIP
- Scottish Government regulatory requirements
- Demand for housing from traditional waiting lists / homeless routes

- Breakdown of age ranges requiring one bed flat
- Role of MC – ie, not to stray into operational issues

P1.5 Members then noted the content of the WR Mitigation Plan as detailed at Attachment 1 of the paper.

P2 Development Report (Paper No MC/20/73)

P2.1 The DPM was pleased to report that work was progressing at The Crafty and Kirk Park although there were still delays in getting building materials. Walliwall 6 should hopefully achieve planning approval soon which will enable negotiations for Tender Approval this financial year, with site acquisition by the end of March.

P2.2 The site at Evie has been delayed but he hoped to get design team quotes out shortly. Progress had stalled at Sunnybank, Stromness but the process should begin again soon. Plans for 15 one-bed flats in Kirkwall are progressing well and an application is due to be submitted before 1st March.

P2.3 Discussion took place regarding:

- Increased material costs and impact on budgets
- Fire suppression systems / fire alarms
- Insurance implications around sprinkler systems

P2.4 Regarding fire suppression systems and insurance, the CE said that Zurich will be at the RIHAF seminar next month should a member of Committee wish to attend.

P2.5 Following this discussion, members noted the current position with the development programme.

PART 5 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

D1 E-Papers (Paper No MC/20/74)

D1.1 The HCG explained that the COVID-19 pandemic forced the Association to act quickly to put in place measures for working remotely. This meant holding meetings on-line and relying on IT for sending/reading papers, etc. This has worked well and the Association has been looking at ways to enhance this way of working but also ensuring this was done in a safe, secure manner. Developing Sharepoint, or another secure platform, to enable sharing of papers, etc is being proposed as well as providing members with OHAL-owned electronic devices.

D1.2 Members discussed issues such as:

- Security of devices;
- Costs involved;

- Connection issues;
- Encryption or passwording of documents;
- Various platforms (MS Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc);
- Cloud based solutions.

D1.3 Following discussion members agreed:

- a) to continue sending papers via email – but to password the PDFs. Printed copies will be sent to those who request them until such time as this is no longer necessary.
- b) to continue using Zoom as a platform for Committee meetings. There **WILL**
- c) come a time in the future when we can meet again in person, but we would like members to retain the option of attending virtually if/when they wish.
- d) to continue development of Sharepoint or an alternative platform, to enable secure, remote access to members to enable them to access papers, minutes, key documents and the evidence bank.
- e) to delay for now discussing members IT/device needs.

D2 Commercial Property (Paper No MC/20/75)

Commercially sensitive information redacted.

PART 6 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

I1 Annual Lease Update (Paper No MC/20/76)

- I1.1 A member enquired whether the Association might consider adding to its portfolio of leased properties in the future. The CE said this could be a possibility but explained that there were a number of factors to take into consideration, particularly as the Association is a registered charity which involves restrictions. Our purpose is to provide affordable housing and services.
- I1.2 Members noted the content of this report.

I2 Annual Service Charge Review (Paper No MC/20/77)

- I2.1 The FM presented the paper and went over some of the figures in the attachment which showed projected service charges and related costs to 31.3.21.
- I2.2 Following brief discussion, members noted:
 - a) the projected services equalisation position at 31 March 2021; and
 - b) the proposed approach to service charge setting for 2021/22.

I3 Quarterly Write Offs (Paper No MC/20/64)

- I3.1 Following a brief update from the HHCS, members:

- a) Noted the current position for write offs as at the end of Q3 of 2020/21; and
- b) Noted the remainder of the paper.

Any Other Business

There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 1300 hrs.

Signed:

Date:

Chair