

Orkney Housing Association is governed by a voluntary Management Committee elected at our AGM. The Committee's role is to set strategy and monitor our 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 26 May 2021

Via Zoom:

- Wendy Baikie
- Dave Dawson
- Linda Forbes
- Fiona Lettice
- John White
- Roella Wilson

Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) 2020-21

The "Annual Return on the Charter" is submitted each year to the Scottish Housing Regulator to monitor the performance of us and other landlords across the whole of Scotland. The Regulator publishes this information to allow tenants and anyone else who is interested an easy way to compare landlord performance.

Members noted that, although some figures were slightly down on the previous year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were a number of 'good news' results, some of the most notable being:

- The average time taken to complete emergency repairs has reduced from 2.06 hrs to 1.84 hrs.
- The average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs increased by 5.29 days, attributable to the pandemic.
- There was an increase of only 1.32 days to re-let properties (average of 8.11 days), of which there were 53 during the year.
- In part, due to the hard work of our Housing & Customer Services staff targeting and supporting tenants, the gross rent arrears reduced from 5.08% as at 31 March 2020 to 3.9% as at 31 March 2021.
- We increased rents by only 1.1% this year, against 2.4% last year – our lowest percentage increase in the last 10 years.

Complaints & Compliments Report

The number of complaints received in 2020/21 reduced by one from the previous year (71 to 70). 94.3% were responded to within Scottish Public Services Ombudsman timescales. 46% (32) were about the garden and grounds service, 66% were upheld.

We were pleased to receive 114 unsolicited compliments and expressions of appreciation for services provided.



Business Plan & Risk Management Report

Members received a report providing assurance of effective management of organisational performance and risks during 2020/21 and noted 10 out of 15 action in the Operational Plan had been completed, 4 partially completed and one carried forward.

Health & Safety Working Party Report

Members received a report from the recent meeting which detailed

updates to the Health & Safety Control Manual; progress on recommendations from the Audit of Health & Safety Management System; monthly housekeeping & safety inspections; accident reports; and risk assessments.

Welfare Reform Update

Members noted the current position with the Welfare Reform Mitigation Plan. They were pleased to note the excellent rent arrear management performance and the bespoke support being offered to tenants.

Governance

Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) Self-Assessment Update

At each meeting, we review how we stand against the SHR Regulatory Framework. Members examined the update and were assured that we comply, agreeing that no material changes were required to be made to the Annual Assurance Statement since its submission. They noted that no Notifiable Events have been reported to the SHR, noted amendments to the list of Governance related policies, and noted the Evidence Bank additions and updates, particularly in relation to Equalities and COVID-19.

Approval of New Rules

The main reason for updating our rules is to allow general meetings to be held remotely (via Zoom). A report setting out the benefits in adopting new Rules, which comply with the SHR Regulatory Framework for Registered Social Landlords, was presented to members. The report detailed the benefits and risks associated with the proposed changes, which include:

- *To prohibit the appointment of related Committee Members.*
- *To allow payment to Committee Members (if members were to choose to do so in the future)*
- *To allow virtual attendance at General meetings.*

It was agreed to hold a Special General Meeting in June to seek members' approval of the new Rules.

Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee Report

This Report updated members on the latest meeting, attended virtually by both the external and internal auditors. They received the Audit Planning Memo, noting the items which will be the focus of the external audit procedures. The Internal Audit review of Anti Social Behaviour resulted in 5 recommendations. Members received the 2021/22 Internal Audit Plan and the 2021/22 Workplan.

Annual Reports

- Annual Governance Report: This report details the attendance of our voluntary committee members which sat at 85% for the year ending March 2021. Members averaged 22 hours of training for the year which far exceeds the target of 12 hours. The committee member expenses budget was underspent due to the COVID-19 pandemic but it was hoped in-person meetings and events can resume during the next year.

In accordance with the Entitlements, Payments & Benefits Policy and Procedures, Register of Interest Forms were completed and returned by all members.

The report also contained General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) statistics which are required to be reported annually.

- Audit & Risk Management Sub-Committee - This report summarised the work of the Sub-Committee during the year and provided assurances to Management Committee that the systems of internal controls at OHAL were effective and supported good governance.
- Performance & Resources Sub-Committee - This summary report highlighted the work of the Sub-Committee over the year and informed members that OHAL was in a sound financial position.

Policy Reviews

The following were reviewed and approved:

- Complaints Handling Procedure
- Data Protection & Privacy Policy
- Committee Code of Conduct
- Supporting Guidance to the Code of Conduct for Committee Members
- Protocol on Dealing with an Alleged Breach of the Committee Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Scheme of Delegations
- Entitlements, Payments & Benefits Policy
- Tenant Participation Strategy

Contractors & Consultants Annual Review

Members noted annual performance figures for OHAL's Maintenance Contractors and approved lists of maintenance contractors and development contractors and consultants.

Development

Members noted that good progress is being made on developments:

- ◇ The Crafty, Kirkwall: the 12 units proposed for this site are expected to be completed in Jan 2022.
- ◇ Kirk Park, Orphir: work on the 8 units had been delayed due to cold weather but are on course for completion in Oct 2021.
- ◇ Walliwall, Kirkwall: a Design & Build contract with Orkney Builders (Contractors) Ltd has been agreed for 20 units, with another 8 in a new adjacent scheme.