

Minutes of Meeting of the Management Committee of Orkney Housing Association Limited held in the Association's offices and via Zoom on Wednesday 27 July 2022 at 10.30am

Present: In person: Bill Wallace (Chair), Philip Cook and Roella Wilson
Remotely: Linda Forbes, John Rodwell and John White

In attendance: Craig Spence (Chief Executive – CE)
Paul Scott (Director of Operations - DO)
Richard Flett (Development & Property Manager – DPM)
Sandy Dennison (Finance Manager – FM)
Mhairi Hughes (Secretary / Head of Corporate Governance – HCG)
Connie Shearer (Minute Taker)

PART 1 – STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Dave Dawson, Fiona Lettice and Anne Fletcher (Depute Chief Executive).

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

There were none.

1.3 • Minutes of the Management Committee meeting, 25 May 2022

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

• Minutes of the Management Committee meeting, 21 June 2022

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

1.4 Matters Arising & Deferred Items (Paper No MC/22/22)

1.4.1 Care & Repair Services tender: the CE reported that there had been no further progress with the tender. We submitted a tender on 19 May and await the outcome. We continue to deliver the service, but the situation is frustrating for staff.

1.5 Future Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 10 August, 10.30am – Performance & Resources Sub Committee
Wednesday 17 August, 10.30am – Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee
Wednesday 31 August, 10.30am – Management Committee (Annual Accounts)

PART 2 – STRATEGY

S1 Lettings Plan 2022/23 (Paper No MC/22/23)

S1.1 The DO presented a comprehensive report, giving background information and statistics to enable members to agree a Lettings Plan for the remainder of 2022/23. An on-screen Powerpoint demonstration with visual charts was also presented containing local and national benchmarking information.

S1.2 Members had a constructive discussion, including:

- The importance of working in partnership in dealing with the significant rise in the housing list;
- 2012 Section 5 Protocol being outdated and needing replaced or abandoned;
- A need for all partners to look strategically over the next decade and what we need to do;
- A Joint Seminar involving OIC & SG agreed for later this year.

Following this discussion, Members:

- a) noted the Association's position as at 31.03.22 in terms of allocating void properties and the options that exist in section 4 of the paper around meeting the housing need and demand in Orkney; and
- b) agreed the allocation quota for 2022-23 as set out at 4.2 in the paper.

PART 3 – GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

G1 SHR Self-Assessment Update (Paper No MC/22/24)

G1.1 The HCG presented the paper, noting that work was in progress regarding RR13 relating to 'protected characteristics' and this will be brought back to a future meeting.

G1.2 Members noted the content of the report and:

- 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 Regulatory Requirements Evidence Bank additions and progress with regards to Regulatory Requirement 13 as detailed in Section 5 of the paper;
- e) Noted the Regulatory Standards Evidence Bank additions per Section 6 of the paper;
- f) Noted the updates to the COVID-19 Evidence Bank; and
- g) Noted the documents which have recently been updated/issued by the SFHA and SHR.

G2 AGM Arrangements and Pre-AGM Certification (Paper No MC/22/25)

G2.1 The HCG presented the paper which outlined the Member Elections and AGM arrangements.

G2.2 Following discussion, Members agreed to hold a hybrid AGM this year for AGM business only with invitations going out just to members.

G2.3 Regarding elections, as per the Rules, John Rodwell, John White and Dave Dawson were required to retire. John Rodwell and John White both agreed to go forward for re-election, but Dave Dawson indicated he would be stepping down from Committee.

G2.3 Following discussion, Members:

- a) Noted the AGM arrangements as set out in Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the paper;
- b) Members agreed with the suggestion at 1.7 of the paper, and noted that this will be added to the Membership Policy which will be presented to the next meeting;
- c) Confirmed they wish to progress with an in-person AGM which will consider the essential AGM business only;
- d) All present, apart from John White, indicated they expected to be able to attend;
- e) Agreed the formal notice at Attachment 1;
- f) Instructed staff to ensure that appointment of Auditors is carried out in accordance with sections 72-74 of our Rules;
- g) Noted the information provided at Section 4 of the paper in respect of Secretarial matters; and
- h) Noted the section on the registers as detailed in 5.1 of the paper and that they will be signed by the Chair at a later date.

G3 Staffing Update (Paper No MC/212/26)

G3.1 The HCG went over her report which covered recent vacancies and successful recruitment, together with progress on staff professional training and development qualifications.

G3.2 Members noted the contents of the paper.

G4 Policy & Reviews (Paper No MC/22/27)

G4.1 The CE detailed the minor changes to the Procurement Policy. He, and the DPM, addressed some queries from members with regards contractors and the CE agreed to do slight rewording for clarification at para 3.3.3 in the Policy.

G4.2 Members then:

- 1) noted progress with outstanding policy reviews as detailed in Section 1 of the paper; and
- 2) approved the Procurement Policy, with slight rewording as agreed.

G5 Resolutions, Applications for Membership & Committee Recruitment Update (Paper No MC/22/28)

- G5.2 The HCG went over the paper then Members:
- a) approved the resolution in respect of one shared ownership disposal;
 - b) approved three applications for membership; and
 - c) noted the remainder of the paper.

G6 Landlord Safety Manual (Paper No MC/22/29)

- G6.1 The DPM explained that the adoption of this Manual and Action Plan had been approved in March 2020 but the covid pandemic and staff resource had hampered progress with its implementation. However, all outstanding policies had been prepared for inclusion in the Manual, but it was noted that two additional policies are still required for septic tanks and LPG appliances.
- G6.2 A training needs analysis is to be prepared together with procedures and practices for its implementation. A training session with Members is planned for later in the year.
- G6.3 Members approved the 14 policies for inclusion in the Landlord Safety Manual and noted and approved the revised Action Plan for implementation.

PART 4 – PERFORMANCE

P1 Development Report (Paper No MC/22/30)

- P1.1 The DPM's report updated members on progress with current and proposed developments. Final Accounts for the schemes Kirk Park and The Crafty are being worked on with the contractors and will be presented to Management Committee once agreed.
- P1.2 The current situation regarding electricity connections at Walliwall 6 and 7 is a concern but the DPM was confident a resolution will be found. This issue did not affect the 6 properties at Yorston Drive, Stromness though, which are being taken on by Scottish Power, with handover expected in October.
- P1.3 Following discussion, Members noted the current position with the development programme.

PART 5 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

D1 Housing Benefit Ineligible Charges update (Paper No MC/22/31)

- D1.1 The DO presented the paper which explained the impact of OIC's decision to disqualify the Garden Maintenance proportion of the service charge as ineligible for Housing Benefit, although this has been paid in full since 1985 (37 years). This decision affects 177 Association tenants and has a substantial

financial impact for the current financial year. Informal conversation had been held with senior staff at OIC to have the decision overturned, but this proved to be unsuccessful. Grounds for challenge lay with individual tenants rather than the Association and we are currently supporting several tenants to appeal this decision.

D1.2 Members had a lengthy discussion around:

- Impact on budgets;
- Increasing the Tenancy Sustainment Fund;
- Impact on grass cutting contracts;
 - OHAL is in the minority of housing association that cut individual tenants gardens
 - Possibility of ceasing the service
- How the Association supports tenants in their appeals;
- This has been paid for 37 years so reasonable to expect it to carry on;
- Grass cutting is a condition of tenancy.

D1.3 Following this discussion, Members agreed with the proposed course of action as outlined at 3.3 in the paper.

PART 6 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

I1 TP Strategy Action Plan (Paper No MC/22/32)

I1.1 The DO's report updated Members on the current action plan for 2022-23. Several pre-arranged walkabouts are planned for the coming year as well as a customer Satisfaction Survey.

I1.2 The Residents Panel continue to meet, mainly digitally. The Association plans to modernise our Repairs Service and will engage with the Panel on proposed plans.

I1.3 Members noted the content of the report and the updates it provided on the current action plan.

Any Other Business

The CE asked Members for their views on the first in-person/hybrid meeting and all agreed it had gone well, bar a few sound issues, and would like future meetings done similarly, with a maximum of 10/12 persons in the meeting room.

A Member enquired about the summer engagement event and the CE said this would likely take place, with the new MC members, in late September / early October.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.47pm.

Signed:
Chair

Date: