

Minutes of Meeting of the Management Committee of Orkney Housing Association Limited held via Zoom on Wednesday 22 February 2023 at 10.30am

Present: Fiona Lettice (Chair), Philip Cook, Brian Kynoch, Bill Wallace, John White and Roella Wilson

In attendance: Craig Spence (Chief Executive – CE)
Anne Fletcher (Depute Chief Executive – DCE)
Paul Scott (Director of Operations – DO)
Ruth Glover (Finance Manager – FM)
Mhairi Hughes (Secretary / Head of Corporate Governance – HCG)
Richard Flett (Development & Properties Manager – DPM)
Connie Shearer (Minute Taker)

PART 1 – STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Bruce Pilkington and John Rodwell.

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 Management Committee meeting held 25 January 2023

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

1.4 Matters Arising & Deferred Items (Verbal update)

- 1.4.1
- 1) The CE informed members that he had been contacted by The Orcadian regarding the garden and grounds maintenance situation (given the public interest on social media sites). He had a detailed discussion with the newspaper on the issue, with an article due to appear in The Orcadian this week.
 - 2) The DPM was pleased to inform members that, following discussions with the contractor and designer, an agreement had been reached for required remedial works at Pickaquoy Loan linked to the gable end repair to be carried out as soon as possible.

1.5 Future Meeting / Training Dates:

Wednesday 08 March, 10.30am - Health & Safety Working Party

Wednesday 29 March, 10.30am - Management Committee

Thursday 4 May, 12.00-18.00pm – Highlands & Islands Housing Association Seminar for MC members, Inverness

Regarding the 4 May Seminar in Inverness, the CE said that preliminary arrangements have been made for travel/accommodation for 1 leadership team member and 2-3 Committee members to attend. The Chair said she would attend and encouraged members to consider this as well.

PART 2 – STRATEGY

S1 Rent Consultation Results (Paper No MC/22/83)

S3.1 The DO introduced the paper, detailing the background leading up to the recommendation to hold a one-year consultation with tenants and sharing owners for 2023/24. Three options were consulted on, with residents being notified through a variety of means. A summary analysis of responses was presented which showed that 82% were in favour of a below-inflation increase for 2023/24. In addition to questions on rent and occupancy charges, tenants in selected areas were asked about opting in or out of the garden maintenance service, with the majority so far choosing to opt in (communication is ongoing with tenants).

S3.2 Members discussed the responses, noting the overall response rate of 20% which the DO explained was consistent with our previous consultations and is typical of what is seen across the sector and with our peers.

There were a number of comments around mould/damp and the DO said that staff will be contacting those tenants to offer help and advice. However, by opting for 7.5% this meant the Association would be able to continue with heating replacements thus improving energy efficiency and reducing heating costs.

The CE pointed out that the SHR had requested they be updated once the final decision had been made.

S3.3 Following review of the responses from tenants and sharing owners and discussion, members:

- Agreed to the proposed rent and occupancy charge increase of 7.5% for 2023/24;
- Noted that the increase will take effect from 1 April 2023 for all tenants and sharing owners; and
- Instructed the CE to update the SHR on MC decision.

PART 3 – GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

None

PART 4 – PERFORMANCE

None

PART 5 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

D1 Walliwall Phase 8 (Paper No MC/22/84)

- D1.1 The DPM presented the paper which sought authority to proceed with Walliwall Phase 8 development. Finance for the 8 NSSE properties would come from the revolving credit facility previously agreed with OIC, together with a grant from the Scottish Government who would retain a 20% 'Golden Share' of each property. It is proposed that Orkney Builders (Contractors) Ltd undertake the Design & Build as part of their ongoing development at Walliwall.
- D1.2 Following discussion, members:
- a) noted the position of the Walliwall Phase 8 project;
 - b) granted authority to the Development & Properties Manager (or the Chief Executive in his absence) to accept the tender submitted by Orkney Builders (Contractors) Ltd for 8 NSSE units at Walliwall Phase 8 and sign all relevant associated documentation; and
 - c) granted authority to the Development & Properties Manager (or the Chief Executive in his absence) to accept the offer of AHSP funding from the Scottish Government for the Walliwall Phase 8 project.

PART 6 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

I1 Annual Service Charge Review (Paper No MC/22/85)

- I1.1 The FM presented the paper which outlined the services equalisation account position for 2022/23 and the proposed charges for 2023/24.
- I1.2 Members noted there was still a lot of work to be done on service charge setting and also:
- a) that the projected services equalisation position at 31 March 2023 is a credit balance of £37,045, which will be carried forward and used to offset the differences anticipated grounds contracts;
 - b) the proposed approach to service charge setting for 2023/24; and
 - c) that the shared ownership annual management fee is to remain frozen at its current annual charge of £340.08 per property.

Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.10am.

Signed:

Date:

Chair