

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.

We send out an update like this after each formal Management Committee meeting (normally 6 per year).

Members present 02 October 2024

- Kate Hayes
- Brian Kynoch
- Suzanne Lawrence
- Fiona Lettice
- Ian McFedries
- Bruce Pilkington
- John Rodwell
- Mervyn Sandison
- John White
- Roella Wilson

ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

At the first meeting following the AGM each year, we elect a Chair and Vice Chair: This year marked the end of Fiona Lettice's 5 year tenure as Chair so, accordingly to our Rules, a new Chair was required.



Chair: Brian Kynoch



Vice-Chair: Fiona Lettice

- ◇ Brian Kynoch was elected as Chair and Fiona Lettice as Vice Chair of the Management Committee.
- ◇ John White remains Chair of Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee.
- ◇ Roella Wilson remains Chair of the Performance & Resources Sub Committee.

Membership of OHAL's 4 sub-committees and 2 working parties were also agreed. Mhairi Hughes continues in the role of Company Secretary.

We were pleased to welcome new Committee Member, Ian McFedries, and look forward to working with him.

Annual BP Programme

The current 3-year Business Plan covers 2022-25 and members were presented with proposals for developing a new Plan covering 2025-28.



This will involve a number of key stages/meetings from October through to final approval of the Plan in March 2025.

The prevailing economic situation, together with rent affordability, cost of living crisis, uncertainty over household costs and development funding are issues that will play an important part in developing the new Business Plan.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

This is the means by which our Management Committee provide assurance to the Scottish Housing Regulator on the Association's performance. Continuous assessment has been ensured by having this as a standing item on every agenda.

Members reviewed all the evidence and felt able to make an informed decision regarding the format and content of their 2024 AAS, which they approved. This sets out that they felt the Association complied with the "Regulatory Requirements & Standards", and will be posted on our website in due course.

Cost of Living

The report highlighted the continued impact the cost-of-living crisis is having on tenants. OHAL staff continue to engage, both locally and nationally, with support organisations which augments the support offered by our staff and allows access into funding streams.

Members noted that rent arrears were under our Key Performance Indicator of 4.5% but former tenant arrears had increased. OHAL's approach to former tenant arrears will be reviewed, compared with our peers, and will seek best practice examples to continue delivering good performance.

The Association continues to access funding via Housing Association Charitable Trust's (HACT) Fuel Fund. Staff apply for vouchers that can be used to top up a resident's prepayment meter to assist with fuel costs.

As done in previous years, staff will be undertaking Winter Support Calls contacting tenants to offer bespoke help and advice.

OHAL are receiving a visit from Ofgem, the energy regulator in October and will ensure that the difficulties being experienced by our tenants are highlighted.

Tenant Participation Strategy

Members received an update on the current action plan for 2024/25. Drop in Sessions will be hosted across the winter months to promote our energy support services. Several pre-arranged walkabouts are planned for the coming year as well as a Customer Satisfaction Survey. We will continue to explore ways to increase our digital engagement methods.

The Residents Panel continue to meet on a regular basis, and it is hoped a 'Tenants Day' event, in conjunction with OIC, can take place next year.



DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

- ⇒ Walliwall Phase 8, Kirkwall: following issues with the power supply, the 8 NSSE are approaching their amended completion deadline of 11 October.
- ⇒ Walliwall Phase 9, Kirkwall: grant funding has been received and work is underway to provide 9 properties for rented stock with an expected completion of March 2025.
- ⇒ Yorston Drive, Stromness: This development is complete, with several sold for low cost home ownership and the final 3 properties being transferred to OIC.