

Minutes of a Meeting of the Management Committee of Orkney Housing Association Limited, held in the office and via Zoom on Wednesday, 02 October 2024 at 11.30am

Present: In person: Brian Kynoch, Suzanne Lawrence, Fiona Lettice, Ian McFedries, Bruce Pilkington, Mervyn Sandison, John White and Roella Wilson
Remotely: Kate Hayes and John Rodwell

In attendance: Craig Spence (Chief Executive – CE)
Mhairi Hughes (Interim Director of Corporate Services – IDCS)
Tracey Longworth (Director of Housing & Operations – DHO)
Dean Campbell (Building Services Manager – BSM)
Connie Shearer (Minute Taker)

The Secretary welcomed all to the meeting. With this being the first meeting since the AGM, she went through the process of electing the Chair and Vice-Chair.

PART 1 – STANDING ITEMS

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from Mary Ann Lewis.

1.2 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

1.2.1 The Secretary asked for nominations for Chair. Fiona Lettice nominated Brian Kynoch who confirmed he was willing to accept the nomination, this was seconded by Roella Wilson. There being no other nominations, Brian Kynoch was duly elected as Chair.

1.2.2 The Secretary asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Brian Kynoch nominated Fiona Lettice who confirmed she was willing to accept the nomination, this was seconded by Suzanne Lawrence. There being no other nominations, Fiona Lettice was duly elected as Vice- Chair.

The Secretary then handed over to the elected Chair, Brian who thanked Fiona for her 5 year term as Chair.

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

There were none.

1.4 Minutes of the Management Committee meeting held 28 August 2024

The Minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were proposed by John White and seconded by John Rodwell. The Minutes were later signed by the Chair.

1.5 Matters Arising & Deferred Items (Verbal)

1.5.1 The CE reported that the Annual Accounts had been presented at the AGM and subsequently submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator and lenders; and all Regulatory Returns had been completed.

1.6 Future Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 06 November, 10.30am – Health & Safety Working Party

Wednesday 13 November, 10.30am – Performance & Resources Sub Committee

Wednesday 20 November, 09.45am – Audit & Risk Management Sub Committee Training Session

Wednesday 27 November, 10.30am – Management Committee

Wednesday 04 December, TBC – Strategy/Planning Workshop with Christmas Lunch (Venue TBC)

PART 2 – STRATEGY

S1 Annual Business Plan Programme (Paper No MC/24/41)

S1.1 The CE presented the paper which set out the framework and proposals for a new 3-year Business Plan covering 2025-28, along with detailed appendices for 2025-26. He explained that this was informed by the SHR Business Planning Advisory Guidance. It detailed the key stages for Committee involvement between October 2024 to Management Committee final approval in March 2025. He also proposed a date change to the Risk Management Workshop from 19 February to 26 February.

S1.2 Members had a discussion around customer surveys (including applicants), bedsits and retirement accommodation, and the DHO said a review of the Allocations Policy could be an opportunity to incorporate these points.

S1.3 Members agreed that the work to support development of a new 3-year Business Plan and supporting detailed appendices for 2025-26 is progressed, and approve the process as set out in the paper, including the change of date for the Risk Management Workshop.

PART 3 – GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

G1 Sub Committee Membership and Election of Chairs (Paper No MC/24/42)

G1.1 Following discussion, sub-committee membership was confirmed as:

ARM

John White*

Kate Hayes

Bruce Pilkington

John Rodwell

Roella Wilson

*Chair

P&R

Roella Wilson*

Brian Kynoch

Suzanne Lawrence

Fiona Lettice

Mervyn Sandison

Ian McFedries

Staffing

Brian Kynoch

Fiona Lettice

Suzanne Lawrence

Health & Safety Working Party
Bruce Pilkington
Mary Ann Lewis
Roella Wilson

Joint Union/Management Sub-Committee
Suzanne Lawrence
Bruce Pilkington

John White confirmed he was willing to continue into the third year of his 3 year term, as ARM Chair. No election was therefore necessary.

Roella Wilson confirmed she was willing to continue into the second year of her 3 year term, as P&R Chair. No election was therefore necessary.

G1.2 Company Secretary: It was unanimously agreed that the IDCS should continue as Secretary.

G1.3 EVH Representative: Roella Wilson and Bruce Pilkington agreed to be EVH representatives. The point of contact would remain the Company Secretary who can relay matters of importance.

G1.4 Members:

- a) Discussed and agreed membership of the ARM, P&R and SSC;
- b) agreed membership of H&SWP, Joint Union/Mgt Sub-Committee;
- c) elected Chairs of the ARM and P&R Sub-Committees, as required;
- d) agreed that the HCG should remain Company Secretary; and
- e) agreed who should hold the position of EVH Representative and Substitute.

G2 SHR Annual Assurance Statement (Paper No MC/24/43)

G2.1 The IDCS gave an overview of the contents of the paper which detailed all the assurances provided to members to enable them to be as informed as they can be, to make a reasoned decision on approving the Annual Assurance Statement. The full digital evidence bank in the dedicated, secure, members group in Microsoft Teams is kept updated and can be accessed by members whenever they wish.

G2.2 Following brief discussion, members:

- a) agreed that the information contained in the paper, attachments and evidence bank provided sufficient information and evidence to enable them to make an informed decision regarding the format and content of the Annual Assurance Statement; and
- b) authorised the Chair to sign the Annual Assurance Statement and the IDCS to submit it to the Scottish Housing Regulator on their behalf.

G3 Resolutions & Applications for Membership (Paper No MC/24/44 enclosed)

G3.1 Members approved the resolution in respect of one shared ownership disposal and noted the cancelled memberships.

PART 4 – PERFORMANCE

P1 Development Report (Paper No MC/23/45)

- P1.1 The BSM's paper updated members on the development programme. He was pleased to confirm the three vacant NSSE properties at Yorston Drive, Stromness are in the process of being sold.
- P1.2 No new information had been received regarding the Corse West (Soulisquoy) site, but a formal meeting is expected in due course, after which members will be updated.
- P1.3 He updated member on the Walliwall 8 site (for 8 NSSE units), completion dates for which are expected to be around October – November. Walliwall 9 is currently on programme with works well underway.
- P1.4 The BSM is exploring the availability of grant from the Scottish Government for 'Key-Worker' housing to purchase a former SO property to take into rented stock.
- P1.5 He asked members whether they found the total 'spend' figures useful or if he should omit the completed projects and just focus on live ones. Members thought the historic info was useful and should remain.
- P1.6 It was noted that in the Appendix, the figure for 'Project Spend to Date' had not been updated with the AHSP Funding Claimed figure – this will be updated for the next MC meeting.
- P1.7 Members noted the current position with the development programme.

PART 5 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

None

PART 6 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

I1 Cost of Living Report (Paper No MC/23/46)

- I1.1 The DHO presented the report which highlighted the continued impact the cost-of-living crisis is having on tenants. OHAL staff continue to engage, locally and nationally, with support organisations which augments the support offered by Association staff and allows access into funding streams.
- I1.2 Members noted that, although rent arrears was under the KPI of 4.5%, the increase in former tenant arrears was a required area of focus, although it was understood that this figure increased significantly following 2 recent evictions. The DHO is to review this and compare our approach with peers and seek best practice examples to continue delivering good performance.

- I1.3 The DHO said OHAL is hosting a visit from Ofgem and SFHA on 23 October and she will provide members with a Briefing Paper in advance.
- I1.4 Following discussion on the positive effect the Tenancy Sustainment Fund is having on our tenants, members noted the content of the paper

I2 Tenant Participation Strategy (Paper No MC/24/47)

- I2.1 The DHO presented the paper which provided an update on the current action plan for 2024/25. She went over the various sections in the plan, highlighting progress from last year, and detailing upcoming engagement plans.
- I2.2 Members discussed ways of increasing digital engagement methods, including WhatsApp; working constructively on TP with OIC; and using next year's 40th anniversary to engage more.
- I2.3 Members noted the content of the report and the updates it provides on current and previous annual action plans.

Any Other Competent Business

The CE suggested ways that the Association could be engaged in support for the 2025 Island Games. It was noted that he will be in touch with the Director for the Island Games 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1220hrs.

Signed:

Date:

Chair