

RUTHERGLEN & CAMBUSLANG HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting
held on
Tuesday 22nd August 2023
at 5.45pm in the Association's Office**

Present:

Edward Harkins – Chair
Robert McLeary
Frances Cunningham
Gary Gow
Maryellen McKeown

In Attendance:

Elaine Lister

AGENDA ITEM 1.0 – APOLOGIES

Apologies noted: Karen McCartney, Natalie Kirk, Karen Kirk, Eveline Thompson

AGENDA ITEM 2.0 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AGENDA ITEM 3.0 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING : 20th June 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th June 2023 were noted as a true record.

Proposed : Maryellen McKeown

Seconded : Frances Cunningham

AGENDA ITEM 3.1 MATTERS ARISING

3.1.1 Strategy Planning Day Report (previous agenda item 3.0)

Members considered the updated Risk Register previously discussed and agreed it better reflected the current risks to the Association.

Members gave final approval for the Strategic Risk register and noted that it would be reviewed quarterly by the Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee with any recommended changes/additions being referred back to the full Management Committee for approval.

3.1.2 Development at New Road (previous agenda item 6.1.1)

Elaine advised that the option for developing the site for Mid-market rent was not going to be financially viable due to the reduced level of grants that would be available.

Committee noted the information on Mid-market Rents and that the costs to date on the New Road project were still to be provided by the developer and consultants.

3.1.3 Getting the Balance Right (previous agenda item 8.2)

Edward distributed a paper he had written on his thoughts and comments on the guidance.

3.1.4 Committee Appraisals (previous agenda item 8.4)

Elaine introduced Lorna Ravell from EVH who was observing the meeting as part of the Committee appraisal process she was carrying out on the Association's behalf.

It was noted that the target date for submission of the completed survey was 8th September 2023. It was also noted that a further survey would be issued to members for the 360-degree appraisal of the Chair.

EVH would submit a report on the collective appraisal before carrying out the individual meetings.

3.1.5 Loan Portfolio (previous agenda item 9.0)

Members noted that this had been submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on 21st June 2023, ahead of the deadline.

3.1.6 Engagement & Community Development Report (previous agenda item 11.0)

Members discussed the options for the Community Stakeholder Mapping exercise and the review of the Tenant Participation Strategy. It was agreed that engagement remained a priority for the Association but it was also recognised that, at this point in time, there were a number of competing and, arguably, more important priorities.

After discussion and the consideration of any potential risk for the Association, members agreed that the stakeholder mapping exercise should be temporarily put on hold. It was further agreed to postpone the proposed meeting with VASLAN and SLC Community Engagement team.

Edward advised that Healthy and Happy were still keen to work with the Association and were currently working on developing their own contacts within the groups that work in the area.

AGENDA ITEM 4.0 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING ; 18th July 2023

The minutes of the members only meeting held on 18th July 2023 were noted as a true record.

Proposed : Maryellen McKeown

Seconded : Robert McLeary

AGENDA ITEM 5.0 – DRAFT MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

5.1 Draft minutes of the Housing Management Sub-Committee meeting – 23rd June 2023

Committee noted the minutes. There were no matters arising or questions from members.

5.2 Draft Minutes of the Staffing Sub-Committee Meeting – 29th June 2023

Committee noted the minutes. There were no matters arising or questions from members.

AGENDA ITEM 6.0 – COMMITTEE DIGEST

6.1 Aspire Lets

There was a discussion on the long-standing methodology for setting the rent for the units and the resultant disparities. Elaine advised that she was arranging a meeting with the letting agency and the Association's solicitor to agree a format for the rents based on market value as well as a standard template lease, Heads of Terms etc.

Members noted that the unit had been let and that standardised process were developed for future lets.

6.2 Revised Calendar of Meetings

It was noted by members that, due to the amount of business that was coming up, there may have to be additional meetings of the Management Committee. There was a discussion on the option of combining the Housing Management and Maintenance Sub-Committee meeting and developing a Policy Working Group.

Members considered what the remit would be for the working group and the format for the joined sub-committee to ensure all the business was effectively and efficiently covered.

Edward proposed that membership of the working group was open so that members could attend when they were able and/or if they had a particular interest in the policies being considered.

It was agreed that;

- The Policy Working Group should be created as soon as possible.
- A minimum of 3 members had to be in attendance
- Policies would only be considered and recommendations made to the full Committee for approval
- The group would initially consider governance and corporate policies but may be expanded to look at HR policies if required
- Once all policies were updated/in place, the need for the group could be reconsidered

- A joint Housing Management/Maintenance Sub-Committee could be trialled beginning at the start of the next financial year

6.3 Review of the Regulatory Standards

Edward advised that he had submitted a response to the consultation document on a personal level but had circulated the draft to all members for feedback/comment beforehand.

Members noted the areas covered in the discussion paper and the response submitted by the Chair.

6.4 Staff 'Welfare Survey'

Members discussed the value of carrying out the survey at this time due to the potential forthcoming changes in the staffing structure etc.

Edward felt that it would be of more value to focus the survey on the future and where the staff saw the organisation going and growing.

Members agreed to postpone carrying out the survey for the foreseeable future and to the Staffing Sub-Committee considering when it would be best to carry it out and the questions that should be asked to achieve the objective of the exercise.

6.5 Committee Survey

Edward advised that he was collating responses to a survey of members on matters including the use of tablets, the Committee portal and views on remote meetings.

Members noted that the results of the survey would be fed into the annual appraisal process.

AGENDA ITEM 7.0 – AGM 2023

Members noted;

- The arrangements for the AGM
- The members that required to stand down in line with the Rules
- That 2 of the members had confirmed they intended to stand for re-election and that 1 member had indicated that she would be retiring

One of the members standing for re-election had more than 9 years' service and Committee unanimously agreed that the member remained an effective and proactive member of the Committee and therefore endorsed him standing.

Members also noted that statement from the Secretary that the requirements of Rules 62 – 67 have all been complied with.

AGENDA ITEM 8.0 – EXTERNAL AUDIT TENDER

Members expressed concern at the poor response to the tender exercise and the potential difficulties such responses could pose for the organisation in the future with regards ensuring value for money, high quality services etc.

It was noted that, on this occasion, the outcome was favourable in terms of costs and quality.

It was unanimously agreed to recommend to the membership at the AGM that Chiene and Tait be appointed as the Association's external auditor

AGENDA ITEM 9.0 – SUCCESSION PLANNING

Elaine explained the rationale behind developing the action plan and the key activities that had to be undertaken to ensure the Association continues to meet all of its statutory and legal requirements.

Edward noted that there were a number of big issues and competing priorities for the Committee coming up and voiced concern that these would put additional strains and demands on members' time. He proposed that the Policy Working group's remit could be expanded to include overseeing the implementation of the plan with the caveat that no decisions are made without the approval of the full Committee.

After discussion on the best way forward to ensure that all the business was effectively managed, members agreed to;

- Approve the action plan as presented
- The Director having delegated authority to appoint appropriate external advisers and consultants so long as the costs were within those outlined in the financial regulations
- The implementation of the plan would be overseen by the working group with recommendations being brought to the full Committee for consideration.

AGENDA ITEM 10.0 – DEVELOPMENT

Elaine presented the report, outlining the current challenges for the Association with regard embarking on new developments.

Members discussed the financial impact of the recent lower than inflation rent increases coupled with the increases in interest rates and building costs. It was also noted that the level of grants being made available were not increasing sufficiently to bridge the gap.

At the same time, members reiterated that building more affordable homes remained an aspiration for the Association and were keen to ensure that this remained part of the Association's business plan going forward.

It was however recognised that, unless there was a substantial, material change in the wider economic position (e.g. interest rates reduce) and/or the Association's

financial position (e.g. rents are increased), it was likely that starting a new development project would represent too high a risk for the Association.

Taking the points discussed into consideration, members agreed to putting a 'moratorium' on carrying out appraisals for developments in order to avoid incurring needless costs with the proviso that reviews of the financial position and the risk of undertaking development were carried out regularly by the Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 11.0 – DRAFT POLICIES

11.1 Draft Risk Management Policy

Edward confirmed that members had read the draft policy and invited questions and comments from members.

Elaine was asked to explain the scoring process and how the risk register would be reviewed to ensure that it reflected any changes to the scores. Elaine advised that, going forward, the Risk Register would be reviewed quarterly at the Finance, Audit and Risk Sub-Committee.

She also confirmed that, as part of the review any new risks would be considered.

Edward clarified that any changes made to the Risk register would be reported back to the full Committee for information and/or approval.

The draft Risk Management Policy was unanimously approved.

11.2 Draft Delegated Authority Policy

Edward confirmed that members had read the draft policy and invited questions and comments from members.

Edward commented that this policy and the attached schedule of delegated authority were key documents and expressed the view that, if approved, should be subject of a review early in the new year to ensure it reflected any changes to the staff structure in the light of any potential proposed changes.

Members unanimously approved the draft Delegated Authority Policy with a review to be carried out in the new year.

AGENDA ITEM 12.0 – CORRESPONDENCE

12.1 EVH Monthly Update

Robert and Edward advised that they received these directly from EVH.

12.2 GWSF Monthly Update

12.3 SHARE Training Brochure

AGENDA ITEM 13.0 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Letter to Retired Member

Elaine advised that no letter of thanks had been sent on the Association's behalf to Jean Stewart on her retirement from the Committee. It was confirmed however that she had been presented with a gift of vouchers.

13.2 Pensioner's Bus Run

Elaine reported that, after a few hiccups (including a touch of seasickness), the day out had been a great success with everyone giving very positive feedback.

13.3 Camera in Committee Meeting Room

Elaine advised that cameras had been purchased to facilitate remote meetings. The cameras would allow participants connecting remotely to be able to view the room and the other attendees. It had been tested and seemed to work well but would be piloted at a future date with volunteers from the Committee.

Robert reported that other Associations were going fully digital and all papers were being sent via email and meetings held remotely. Mary Ellen expressed concern at the Association taking this approach as she was not entirely comfortable conducting business online. Edward advised that part of the survey he was carrying out was to gauge individual member's abilities and/or training needs.

Robert stated that he recognised that hybrid ways of working for Committees were becoming increasingly important, especially when trying to attract new, younger members to join.

AGENDA ITEM 14.0 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 24th October 2023.

As there were no other items of business the meeting closed at 7.30pm.