

RUTHERGLEN & CAMBUSLANG HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Management Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 20th June 2023 at 5.45pm in the Association's Office

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Elaine Lister – Director
Angela Spence – Ideal Outcomes
(to agenda item 3)
Joe Dewar – JWD Asset Services
(to agenda item 6)

The Chair requested a 'members only' session prior to the start of the formal agenda. Elaine, Angela and Joe left the meeting until called back by Edward.

AGENDA ITEM 1.0 – APOLOGIES

There were no apologies noted

AGENDA ITEM 2.0 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

AGENDA ITEM 3.0 – STRATEGY PLANNING DAY REPORT

Edward welcomed Angela Spence to the meeting and explained that Angela had acted as facilitator at the Management Committee & Senior Staff Business Planning Day.

Angela gave a brief overview of the topics that had been discussed on the day and what had been identified as working well and what hadn't worked so well over the last 12 months.

She reported back on the discussions on the 4 strategic objectives that had been set at the last planning day and noted that it had been agreed that all four were still relevant to the Association but that there had been changes to the Delivery Plan to better reflect priorities and realistic timescales.

In summary Angela recommended that;

- Committee approved the revised Delivery Plan
- Actions are prioritised and a lead officer assigned to each

- Committee monitors progress made with the Delivery Plan with outcomes and updates reported quarterly
- Actions and objectives are carried forward into the appraisals of the senior managers

Members accepted the recommendations made.

At the Planning Day the Strategic Risk Register had been reviewed in light of changing economic, social and employment environments that had taken place since the register had last been fully reviewed. The review also took into consideration the six risk factors being focused on by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

In reviewing the current Risk Register, Angela highlighted a number of key points for committee to consider, discuss and make decisions on;

Tenant & Resident Safety Compliance – link to strategic objective 4

Angela explained that this had become a key focus for the Regulator and that non-compliance was a major risk for the Association. She noted that the Association had been pre-emptive and was currently undergoing a review of the level of compliance with requirements.

Members agreed to include “Failure to comply with landlords health and safety requirements” and agreed to score this as a key risk

Failure to retain existing, experienced Committee members and/or failure to recruit new members – link to strategic objective 3

It was accepted that this remained a key risk for the Association and, potentially, could mean it fails to meet regulatory standards due to the relatively high percentage of very long standing members.

It was agreed to increase the level of risk of not recruiting new members but to maintain the ‘medium’ risk score for failure to retain members.

Rents become unaffordable – link to strategic objective 4

Members agreed this remains a risk for the Association in the light of increasing costs and uncertain inflation rates

Inability to retain and/or recruit quality, experienced staff – link to strategic objective 3

Committee discussed the current difficulties experienced across the sector in recruiting staff for all positions and grades. As a result, members recognised the risk of losing the current very experienced staff, especially the senior managers who had worked with the Association for a number of years.

It was agreed to increase the risk score for both aspects to medium

Undertaking development puts viability of RCHA at risk – link to strategic objective 1

Members had a discussion on how the changing economic climate had impacted on the Association's ability to continue to build new housing, taking into account grant levels, rising costs of materials and labour and the uncertainty around inflation rates.

Members agreed that this should be included in the Strategic Risk Register with a medium risk score

Failure to consult and engage with tenants – link to strategic objective 2

Angela noted that in the current register, the risk was "lack of meaningful customer engagement" and questioned if that truly reflected the risk to the Association. She pointed out that 'engagement' is not a regulatory requirement and that the risk would be not complying with the legal duty to consult.

After discussion, members agreed that the risk should be reworded to reflect that the risk was "failure to consult and engage with tenants". It was further agreed that the scoring should be revised down to medium.

Angela recommended that members give consideration to the risk "failure to prevent homelessness". After discussion it was agreed that although this may be a risk it scored low and would, therefore, be monitored by the senior management team.

Angela further advised that, at the Planning Day, there had been discussion on the potential risk from the impact of artificial intelligence but after discussion members felt this was not a sufficient risk at this time.

It was agreed that Angela would re-draft the Risk register to reflect the decisions made by members. It was also agreed that;

- the Strategic Risk Register should only contain those medium and high risks
- low risk would be delegated to the senior management team for monitoring
- after final approval by the Management Committee, the Risk Register would be reviewed by the Finance, Audit & risk Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis

Edward thanked Angela for her presentation and her contribution to the discussions.

Angela left the meeting

AGENDA ITEM 4.0 – TENANT & RESIDENT SAFETY REVIEW

Edward welcomed Joe Dewar to the meeting.

Joe gave a brief outline of his background and experience working in RSLs. He also gave a summary of why he had been asked to carry out the review and highlighted the focus the Scottish Housing Regulator was placing on the issue, referring to a number of articles and publications on the subject.

He explained that he had reviewed the current policies and systems and advised that the current 'handbook' of maintenance policies was not sufficiently robust. He also advised that the reports to Committee were not always sufficient to allow informed decisions.

He presented the report and the proposed action plan for ensuring compliance and the target deadlines for presentation to the Maintenance Sub for recommendation to the full Management Committee.

Robert asked if the policies would include a review date and Joe confirmed that the reviews would be on a 3-year cycle although any policy could be reviewed within this period if required by law, regulation or good practice.

Referring to the format and content of the report, he advised that these could be changed to meet the needs of Committee members.

Members discussed the reasons behind the increase of focus on tenant and resident safety and recognised that this was an area that was coming under more scrutiny not only from the regulator but also residents. They acknowledged that the review was important to demonstrate that the Association placed the appropriate level of priority on tenants' safety and to, ultimately, to ensure that it was fully compliant.

After considering the draft action plan and proposed timescales, Committee approved the report and the plan. It was noted that future reports, policies etc would be presented to the Maintenance Sub for consideration and recommendation to the Management Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 5.0 – DRAFT DAMP & MOULD POLICY

Joe explained that the policy being presented was mainly to allow members to consider the content and format and that it would be presented to the next Maintenance Sub for consideration. If agreed, it would then be recommended to the next Management Committee for approval.

Members confirmed that they were happy with format and content and this should be the template for other policies relating to tenants and residents safety.

Edward thanked Joe for his presentation and attendance at the meeting.

Joe left the meeting

AGENDA ITEM 6 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING : 23RD MAY 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd May 2023 were noted as a true record.

Proposed : Robert McLeary

Seconded : Natalie Kirk

AGENDA ITEM 6.1 – MATTERS ARISING

6.1 Development at New Road (previous agenda item 5.1.1)

Elaine gave an update on the discussions with the Association's agents regarding the project not being a financially viable one. She advised that a breakdown of all costs incurred by the Association to date had been requested and that a meeting had been arranged to identify what the next steps were with regards notifying the developer, SLC, Scottish Government etc.

Edward asked if the project could be developed for mid-market rents.

Elaine to get more information on developing mid-market rents, grants available etc

Elaine advised that the Bingo Hall site had been looked at by both the previous Maintenance Manager and Tom Martin and both had agreed that, due to the size and shape of the site, it was not a feasible site for social rented housing.

6.2 Appraisal of Director (previous agenda item 5.3.3)

Members noted that this was ongoing

6.3 Staffing Sub-Committee Minutes (previous agenda item 6.3)

Committee noted that these would be reviewed, amended as required and presented for approval at the next Staffing Sub-committee

AGENDA ITEM 7.0 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 Draft Minutes of Maintenance Sub-Committee Meeting – 30th May 2023

Committee noted that these would be presented to the next Maintenance Sub meeting

AGENDA ITEM 8.0 – COMMITTEE DIGEST

8.1 Committee Development Register Jan 2023 – July 2023

Committee noted the attendance of members at conferences

8.2 SFHA Guidance Notes – Getting the Balance Right

Members agreed to;

- an in-house training session on the guidance and the strategic and operational responsibilities of staff and committee members at a future meeting
- a review of the remits for management committee members and the schedule of Delegated Authority to reflect the guidance

Members asked for a copy of the guidance to be issued to every member at the next meeting.

8.3 Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Act 2022

Members noted the update

8.4 Committee Appraisals

Elaine outlined the options for conducting the appraisals and members considered the format and content of the process in order to get the most effective outcomes. Members felt the last appraisals carried out by SHARE had been overly onerous and ultimately unhelpful. It was felt that individual appraisals were a better approach and agreed to these being done by EVH.

Elaine to contact EVH and get costs for carrying out the appraisals

AGENDA ITEM 9.0 - LOAN PORTFOLIO RETURN

The returns were approved for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator

AGENDA ITEM 10.0 – COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

This agenda item was postponed due to time restrictions

AGENDA ITEM 11.0 – ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Elaine reported that she met with Stephen Connor from TIS who is to produce an outline proposal for supporting the Association's development of engagement and participation activities. He had also provided contact details for South Lanarkshire's Community Engagement Team.

Members noted;

- Elaine was to arrange a meeting with the Community Engagement Team
- The Association had sponsored the programme for Landemer Day and had made a contribution to Cambuslang's Summer Fest
- Fuel vouchers from the Energy Hardship Fund had been secured for 16 tenants before the fund closed
- Tablet lending project was ongoing in partnership with West of Scotland Housing Association
- Articles promoting the activities of HealthynHappy were included in the Association's newsletters

AGENDA ITEM 12.0 – CORRESPONDENCE

Members noted the monthly updates from EVH and GWSF

AGENDA ITEM 13.0 – AOCB

13.1 Edward advised that he had been in touch with Glasgow Caledonian University, South Lanarkshire College and City of Glasgow College regarding the possibility of students engaging with the Association, hopefully by joining the Committee.

Caledonian University had referred him to Work Placement & Career Development and he was pursuing this.

13.2 Item redacted due to personal and sensitive information

AGENDA ITEM 14.0 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 22nd August 2023.

As there were no other items of business the meeting closed at 7.40pm.