

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting of Rutherglen and Cambuslang Housing Association held by Video Conference on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Present**

Robert McLeary (Chair)  
Frances Cunningham  
Karen McCartney  
Nora Dillon  
Christine McPhail  
Gary Gow  
Geraldine Baird

**Present**

Dave Anderson

**Item One-Apologies**

Apologies noted: Jean Gow, Eveline Thompson, Edward Harkins, Maryellen McKeown and Jean Stewart.

**Item Two: Minutes of Previous Meeting: 3rd March 2020**

Minutes of Previous meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 were noted as true record.

Proposed: Karen McCartney

Seconded: Frances Cunningham

**Item Three: Matters Arising/Committee Digest**

**Pensions**

Noted that the form of authority had been sent to TPT and the new contribution arrangements would be in place from the 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Draft Budget**

The Director noted that this would be reviewed in the light of the effect of Covid-19

**Future Options Appraisal**

Directors recruitment on the agenda

**Item Four: Governance During Lockdown**

Committee considered the paper that had been circulated and agreed to the following recommendations;

1. That the Committee focuses on the business-critical issues i.e. ensure service delivery to tenants and customers is maintained as best as possible, safeguard staff, meet legal

and regulatory requirements, honour contractual obligations and meet covenant terms with lenders and that policy work is put on hold.

2. Sub-committees are suspended for the months of May and June. Committee agreed that the performance reports to sub-committees would be considered by the full committee.
3. The preference for the format of meetings would be by video conferencing but methods of including those committee not able to access this facility would be pursued e.g. joining by phone.

#### **Item Five: Service Update and SHR Return**

Committee discussed the service delivery arrangements contained within the paper. The director was asked about the furlough arrangements and he confirmed that three staff members were furloughed at the moment and 2 would be rotated on a 3 weekly basis but one, the concierge, was permanently furloughed as the office was closed. He also noted that Jim was over 70 and should be self isolating in any event. It was noted that the decision to top up the 20% of salary of furloughed staff had not been ratified by committee and, although committee would not necessarily have refused this, it should have been a committee decision. The Director acknowledged this and explained that timescales were tight at the time and no meetings were scheduled and he had followed the EVH recommendation as had the majority of RSL's. It was agreed that any future changes to the payment arrangements for furloughed staff would be discussed by committee.

Committee asked if furloughed staff were able to carry out any voluntary work. The Director noted that the regulations barred them for doing any work for the Association and that we could not be seen to be putting pressure on them to do this. Noted that other RSL's that were doing additional voluntary work had the capacity e.g. furloughed direct labour staff and transport to do this. Our furloughed staff could, however carry out voluntary work in their own communities as they were not necessarily resident in Rutherglen. Committee noted that there were other local providers and the Association is signposting tenants to these.

Committee enquired about the level of telephone contact with tenants. The Director reported there was a high level of contact from tenants and that staff were dealing with a large number of calls, particularly with regards to rent and benefits and this was also followed up by welfare enquiries and advice/signposting to other services. Committee asked if it was possible to get statistics of the kind of calls that were being dealt with – the Director agreed to investigate this for the next meeting.

It was noted that there had been an increase in reports of anti-social behaviour during lockdown, particularly in areas where there was shared outdoor areas e.g. back courts. The

Director noted that we were in the process of preparing a newsletter and that advice on anti-social behaviour would be included. It was agreed that examples of the various types of anti-social behaviour would be included and the contact details of agencies that could help e.g. community police, the Councils anti-social noise hotline etc..

Committee discussed the figures that had been included in the monthly return to the Regulator. It was noted that the rent arrears were holding steady and were below the target of 3.5% at 3.47%. It was agreed however that it was early days to assess the impact of Coronavirus on rent arrears. It was noted that the percentage of income from housing benefit/universal credit was lower than historically and compared to other RSL's (48%). Committee agreed that, although this was a good thing in the sense that more of our tenants were working it did leave us more vulnerable in the current climate where tenants may be made unemployed and there were delays/gaps in benefits kicking in.

Committee noted that we were only carrying out emergency and some urgent repairs at the moment. If staff had to attend tenants homes to inspect repairs a strict safety procedure was followed. Committee enquired about situations where tenants refused entry and the repair required was posing a danger to the tenant/public. The Director noted that staff would call the police in cases of danger to the public e.g. a broken window that may fall into the street.

Committee noted that gas servicing was up to date for the month of May and that arrangements were being made for those due in June. Noted that as the Association had a policy of arranging these two months in advance of the due date and this was not an issue at the moment. Committee noted that factored owners in tenement properties should be reminded that this service was available to them.

#### **Item Six: Directors Recruitment**

Some discussion took place regarding the preferred method of carrying out the recruitment exercise. It was noted that the original timescale had allowed for the post to be advertised at the beginning of May although there was some padding in the process which concluded with an appointment by the end of August. Committee noted that EVH had carried out successful recruitment elsewhere using video interviews but this was in a situation where the process had already started. It was agreed that this was not ideal and we should avoid this if possible. The Director noted that he was willing to continue working until the end of September which would cover the AGM if this was held. Committee therefore agreed that the start of the process could be delayed until the end of June, if it was not possible to carry out a 'normal' recruitment process by that time then the video route would be pursued.

### **Item Seven: AOCB**

Committee asked about some of the community support activities that the Association could get involved in/promote. The Director noted that it was difficult to do this with the office closed and staff following Government guidelines to stay at home. There were other agencies such as Healthy'n'Happy and LEAP continuing to carry out work in the community using their existing framework. The Director agreed to contact them to find out what services were available and the Association would signpost tenants and advertise these in our forthcoming newsletter. The Director also agreed to contact Camglen Radio to arrange a slot advertising the ongoing services of the Association as a locally based community led organisation.

### **Item Eight: Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that a meeting would be held in June after the monthly return statistics to the Regulator were available – most likely to be week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> June.