

Abrons Hill Housing Association

Remote Meeting of the Management Committee held on Thursday 26 November 2020 via Zoom at 17:00hrs

Minutes

Present:	L Black	R Russell	I Smith
	C Burns	M McGuire	D Brown
	A Smith	W Noon	P Broadwith
In Attendance:	S Macintyre	J Daisley	

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>There were no apologies.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declaration of interests.</p>	
3.	<p>3.1 Minutes of previous meeting (held on 29 October 2020)</p> <p>The following items were raised from the minutes of the meeting on 29 October 2020:</p> <p>Item 4 Matters Arising - It was R Russell who advised S Macintyre about the SHARE training course on behalf of P Broadwith.</p> <p>Item 7.2 Committee Member Privacy Notice – typo at bottom of page 2 should be as it not as is.</p> <p>Item 7.3 Membership Report – for clarification it was the membership of the Association that was approved by committee.</p> <p>Item 8.1 Development Report – Sub committee to look at legal agreement. Draft legal agreement to be presented at January 2021 meeting. This has to be added to the actions list.</p> <p>Item 11 Quarterly Performance Maintenance Report – C Burns advised that he would be interested in taking part in the tender panel for the gas service contract.</p> <p>Acceptance of the minutes which had been circulated in advance was proposed as a true record of the meeting of 29 October 2020 by C Burns and seconded by W Noon.</p>	

	<p>3.2 Decision List from Meeting held on 29 October 2020</p> <p>The Home Working Policy will be discussed under item 9.1.</p> <p>The Committee Membership Policy has been deferred until the December meeting.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>S Macintyre asked if the committee could let J Daisley know their preferred date for the SHARE Questions you should be asking Finance training if they haven't already responded to the email.</p> <p>The learning and development plan will be updated and brought to the December committee meeting and committee training will be discussed.</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that the Scottish Government have confirmed that deadline for the Fire, Heat Alarm & Carbon Monoxide Detection contract has been extended until February 2022.</p>	
5.	<p>Health & Safety and Cyber Security</p> <p>5.1 Corona Virus Update Report</p> <p>The report was issued with committee papers. S Macintyre advised that there was a slight reduction in the net arrears in October. The Association is due to receive two housing benefit payments in November which will further reduce the arrears.</p> <p>The tier 4 lockdown guidance states that only essential repairs will be carried out at this time. All repairs should still be reported to the Association any repairs that are not essential will be logged and then reported to our contractor once the restrictions are lifted. Our gas contractor Saltire will continue to attend all repairs as this is an essential service. R Russell asked if there would be an uplift in costs to the Association. S Macintyre advised that there has been no indication of an increase in costs. P Broadwith asked if our statistics will be affected by some repairs not being carried out. S Macintyre advised that yes this could affect our statistics.</p> <p>S Macintyre and J Daisley are working on the annual report to tenants which will be distributed next month.</p>	
6.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>6.1 Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum (GWSF)</p> <p>A copy of GWSF Scottish Election Manifesto was included with the committee papers. P Broadwith commented that it was important that</p>	

	<p>the manifesto included - Maintaining the diversity of the housing association sector and the development of very large housing associations absorbing increasing numbers of formerly independent housing association should be actively discouraged.</p> <p>R Russell asked for clarification on page 2 third paragraph regarding the equity loan scheme. S Macintyre confirmed that the scheme allows home owner to apply for a loan to carry out communal repairs.</p> <p>R Russell asked about item 3 Channelling funding through community anchor organisations. He asked if the Association would be able to apply for funding for local community projects. S Macintyre will make enquiries and speak to the AFTAR project and Forgewood & Garrion Housing to ask what funding is available. R Russell asked if we could buy in services from Hillhead Housing Association. D Brown advised that she will look into what funding might be available and feed back to S Macintyre. This will then be brought back to the committee.</p> <p>GWSF are holding an open meeting on 10 December and R Russell advised that he would like to attend. S Macintyre will pass on his details to the GWSF.</p> <p>6.2 Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that the joint negotiating committee are meeting tonight to discuss the pay award for April 2021. The proposal is for a pay freeze this year with a decent award next year. A ballot for members with a formal proposal will then take place.</p>	
7.	<p>Governance</p> <p>7.1 Assurance Statement Report</p> <p>A copy of the report was included with the committee papers for the committee to consider and approve the assurance statement report that is due to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by 30 November 2020. This was approved by committee and will be signed by P Broadwith.</p> <p>7.2 Assurance Statement Audit Report Action Plan</p> <p>The action plan was issued with the committee papers. P Broadwith asked the following questions:- Why the minutes of the committee meetings had not been uploaded timeously to the Association's website. S Macintyre advised that this had been an oversight and had now been rectified.</p>	

	<p>The Guide to information on the website is to be made available without a password being required. J Daisley advised she was aware that the link to the Guide to Information needs to be updated and this will be carried out.</p> <p>Item 4.2 The Appraisal of the Director has not yet taken place. It was deferred due to the corona virus. This has to be scheduled.</p> <p>Some of the recommendations have a completion date of December 2021 this should read December 2020.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Strategy/Development</p> <p>8.1 Development Report</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that the start date of the project had been brought forward to November. The Scottish Government had asked Housing Association's to bring forward projects in order to maximise grant spend this financial year. This will mean an earlier handover of the properties next year.</p> <p>J Mulholland will present a draft legal agreement to the committee in January which will include handover procedures. This will be presented to the full committee.</p> <p>W Noon commented that the timing of documents being presented to the committee is important to ensure that they have enough time to consider/challenge these. A timeline of the project would be helpful.</p> <p>R Russell had previously asked if the Association's Maintenance Officer would be allowed access to the site and this is to be included in the legal agreement. R Russell has asked if the legal agreement could also include a committee member being allowed access to the site as an observer.</p> <p>R Russell also advised that he had a query regarding a door opening on the plans for the site and he had previously asked if we could have a square metre cost of the development. S Macintyre will forward this onto Clyde Valley's Development Director, John Duncan.</p> <p>R Russell asked if a project plan could be provided for the sub-committee to gauge the progress of the works.</p> <p>S Macintyre confirmed that J Mulholland has been appointed as the Association's Development Advisor for the project.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Staffing</p> <p>9.1 Draft Flexible & Homeworking Policy</p> <p>A model policy was issued with the papers for consideration before consultation with staff. The committee discussed a number of points:</p> <p>R Russell asked if the Association used flexi time for staff. S Macintyre advised that staff work a TOIL (time off in lieu) system as there must be 2 members of staff in the office at any time. This has currently been suspended due to staff working at home.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers not getting a personal service which includes face to face contact, office visits and meetings. • Is the Association legally required to have an office? S Macintyre advised that the Association must have a registered office. • A physical office is required for customers to visit to speak to staff and to sign for tenancies. • The office has 2 private interview rooms. These are also used by the local Credit Union and the AFTAR project. • The control of keys for void properties as these should not be taken home by staff. • The mental well-being of staff would need to be considered. • Cost savings to the Association in not having a physical office. <p>P Broadwith advised that the model policy should be updated in relation to the Technical Support section to say that the Association is responsible for ensuring that the necessary firewall and anti-virus software is installed on remote computers.</p> <p>S Macintyre will discuss the policy with staff and will report back to committee at a future meeting.</p> <p>9.2 Staffing Report</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that F Stuart is due to return to work on 25 January 2021 following her maternity and annual leave. A Bell will continue full time until the 1 February 2021 to allow time for a handover to take place and will then revert to back to his job sharing role with F Stuart. F Stuart will be provided with the necessary equipment to enable her to work from home.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Finance & Audit</p> <p>10.1 Refinancing Report</p> <p>S Macintyre discussed the report and asked the committee to consider and approve a proposal for seeking potential lenders to replace the Association's present lender, The Co-op Bank and enable access to development finance and pay off the remaining loan with the Co-op Bank who have confirmed that they do not wish to offer any new loans. Any new lender will wish to have sight of a current valuation and also a set of 30 year financial projections. This will require the 30 year life-cycle costed programme to be updated. The Association has instructed Thomson Cost Consultants to carry this out.</p> <p>A timeline for the refinancing process is included in the report and also a list of approved lending institutions. Loan covenants will need to be considered as some lenders take account of component repairs in their covenant calculations which can make the covenant more difficult to</p>	

	<p>achieve. W Noon asked if FMD can provide as much detail in relation to the differences between the covenants to assist the committee in making its decision.</p> <p>This was approved by committee.</p> <p>10.2 External Audit Tender Report</p> <p>S Macintyre discussed the external audit tender report. The tender panel comprised of S Macintyre, P Long, FMD, D Brown and C Burns. Eleven expressions of interest were received and six tenders were received. Two firms were discounted at the first stage and four were invited to attend a remote interview with the panel on 17 November. The tender panel scored the submissions in line with the tender specification on a 60/40 quality price ratio and the panel recommends that the committee appoint Chiene & Tait as the Associations external auditor from 1 April 2021. This was approved by committee.</p> <p>D Brown and C Burns both commented that in their opinion the Association will have a good working relationship with Chiene & Tait.</p>	
11.	<p>Operations</p> <p>11.1 Christmas & New Year holiday arrangement</p> <p>The committee agreed to the office closing at 12:30 on Thursday 24 December and re-opening at 9am on Wednesday 6 January 2021. Staff will take 2 annual days leave on Wednesday 30 and Thursday 31 January 2021.</p>	
12.	<p>Deferred Agenda Items</p> <p>No items were deferred.</p>	
13.	<p>Any Other Competent Business</p> <p>R Russell asked S Macintyre to look into alternative arrangements for the annual staff and committee Christmas Lunch which won't be possible this year.</p>	
14.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 17 December 2020 at 5pm via Zoom</p>	

Signed as a true record by the Chairperson

..... **Date**

Copies of committee reports are available on request.