

## Abronhill Housing Association

Hybrid Meeting of the Management Committee held on Thursday 1 December 2022  
17:30hrs

### Minutes

<b>Present:</b>	C Burns	I Smith	G Watson (Remotely)
	D Brown		
<b>In Attendance:</b>	S Macintyre	A Bell (minutes)	A Moore
	N Aderinto (Quinn Internal Audit )		

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies had been received from R Russell, W Noon, A Peden, J Kelly and A Smith</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>3.1 Minutes of Management Committee (held on 27 October 2022)</b></p> <p>There were amendments required; D Brown was not in fact in attendance having tendered apologies and G Watson was in attendance in person not remotely.</p> <p>Given the above changes acceptance of the minutes, which had been circulated in advance, was proposed as a true record of the meeting of 27 October 2022 by G Watson and seconded by I Smith.</p> <p><b>3.2 Actions/Decision List from Meeting held on 27 October 2022</b></p> <p>C Burns asked about update on the 75 affordable homes included in the Cumbernauld Growth Area Forrest Road Site. S Macintyre reported that despite earlier undertakings and the Associations membership of the Scottish Housing Investment Program indications were that the allocation would be provided by North Lanarkshire Council directly. The Council are keen to increase their provision in Cumbernauld directly.</p> <p>S McIntyre reported that R&amp;J have agreed to fund the Dolly Parton Library. D brown remarked that she had seen an impressive community Christmas decoration collaboration in Oak Road and was suggesting we could look at funding assistance for them or</p>	

	<p>other community groups. There followed a discussion of the “Warm Bank” initiative at the church. C Burns suggested we plan something for next year and S Macintyre suggested a supply of selection boxes could be bought and tenants with children could attend the office to collect them.</p> <p>G Watson asked about Cash for Kids and S Macintyre suggested their approach has changed now and Hillhead Housing Association is no longer receiving funds for direct distribution. The organisation seems to be favouring directly funding charities and groups.</p> <p>S Macintyre discussed changing approval of the Asset Management strategy back to March from December as per the audit report findings ( Item 10.1).</p>	
4.	<p><b>4.1 Matters Arising</b></p> <p>Glasgow West of Scotland Forum fee changes only modest effect of around £40 for Abronhill HA.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety and Cyber Security</b></p> <p>No report.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p><b>6.1 Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH) Monthly Report</b></p> <p>C Burns relayed attending a training course on wage negotiations which was an overview but one he found useful.</p> <p>EVH correspondence focused on their Cost of Living Support Grant scheme which was for £2500 grants. Due to the likely huge demand, finite number available and short time to claim S McIntyre passed on he considered there were other grant applications possible with better chances of success, which were being explored.</p> <p><b>6.2 Glasgow &amp; West of Scotland Forum (GWSF) Monthly Update</b></p> <p>There was a section relating to sponsorship arrangements coming to an end and the suspension of the Scottish Governments “Super Sponsor” scheme.</p> <p>D Brown asked about the situation regarding Ukrainian refugee housing referrals or requests. S Macintyre reported back that we had housed a refugee family but that the allocation was from a direct application from the family rather than a referral.</p>	

	<p>At this point Abronhill has not had any approaches made by North Lanarkshire or seen a mass of applications from the client group.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Regulatory, Notifiable Events &amp; Governance Matters</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Committee Appraisal Report (for information)</b></p> <p>S Macintyre asked for observations on the 6 recommendations and then led onto the Learning &amp; Development Plan developed in accordance with the 6<sup>th</sup> Appraisal recommendations.</p> <p>It was decided that the Strategy Day in February could be used to revisit the “Vision &amp; Values”.</p> <p>Training in legal responsibilities as trustee and committee members will be provided in February.</p> <p>The discussion required concerning keeping u to date with stakeholder views and priorities is suggested for January to coincide with preliminary returns from the Tenants Survey which is underway.</p> <p>Refresher training in finance and treasury management for February. FMD will b invited to attend the Strategy day and are able to do a session showing the financial implications of changing assumptions on your financial modelling for example different rent increases and inflation effects.</p> <p>For succession planning it was suggested to get a feel for committee opinions before the AGM in February to see who is thinking of leaving and wo is interested in being an office bearer.</p> <p><b>7.2 Organisational Learning &amp; Development Plan</b></p> <p>The learning &amp; development Plan was distributed.</p> <p>There followed a brief discussion with a view to spreading awareness of current and new topics in the sector. The Committee’s attention was drawn to the impacts around the recent death of a child in England caused or at least contributed to by mould growth in the family home and the landlords failing to deal with it.</p> <p>Committee were told of additions to our website information intended to equip tenants with the knowledge to prevent or mitigate mould growth and condensation meters obtained to hand out to tenants in need.</p>	

8.	<p><b>Strategy/Development</b></p> <p><b>8.1 Development Report</b></p> <p>Aspen Place Report informs that efforts continue to try to secure appropriate warranties and efforts continue with Clyde Valley and the builders. At this time two warranties remain outstanding.</p> <p>Strategy Day The Strategy Day is slated for February. Last years topic was Values &amp; Vision so this year it was proposed to be “Do our finances enable us to meet our objectives?”.</p> <p>Dolly Parton Imagination Library R&amp;J the Association’s main contractor has agreed to fund the initiative.</p> <p>Cost of Living Community Anchor fund For the SFHA Fuel Support Fund application was set to made on day of meeting but they announced that funding was now closed! It is however intended to carry on with community anchor funding application in the hope that we can give out vouchers. It was noted that though we wanted to help we wouldn’t be able to fund this from our own resources.</p> <p>Mention was made that we were trying to clarify the household compositions of our tenants families but C Burns pointed out that we should not overlook the single people. D Brown expanded on that mentioning a lot of work was needed to help the “in work poor” as this was an often forgotten and growing group.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p><b>9.1 Pay Award (Ballot Information attached)</b></p> <p>The EVH ballot is closed and 87% in favour of the proposal of [REDACTED]</p> <p>The Union is still consulting its members on the proposal.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Finance &amp; Audit</b></p> <p><b>10.1 Planned Maintenance Internal Audit</b></p> <p>As N. Aderinto from Quinn Internal Audit and A. Moore were there to participate solely in this item C. Burns asked the meeting to discuss this item first.</p>	

N Aderinto reported that the audit was not raising serious concerns and practices being followed were good. There were five recommendations going forward but none of these were in the Priority 1 category indicating lack or deficiency in a fundamental control.

The audit recommendations were:

- The Association should have an Asset Management Strategy which is something which the regulator likes to see in place.
- A rolling sample stock condition survey should take place on an annual basis.
- A Formal Contracts Register (Extract from the existing Tenders Register would suffice) should be maintained.
- A detailed maintenance schedule should be maintained for each property to enable future planning.
- Management should continue to monitor performance and ensure that all that is possible is done to achieve SHQS standards.

S McIntyre reported that in line with the first recommendation an asset management strategy would be presented in March 2023.

There were no questions and A Moore and N Aderinto left the meeting at 17:42.

### **10.2 Risk Management – Updated Risk Register**

The last revision was in February 2021 so an update was overdue. The risk register has been updated in the light of the cost of living crisis along with energy costs.

There was some discussion on the rise of costs and the situation where some contractors have pulled out of contracts or demanded cost uplifts. There was also discussion of rising costs of borrowing. The issue of benefits migration to UC is another new risk factor with part of the mitigation being increases rent arrears attention and continuation of AFTAR.

Last time the Committee felt that it should be condensed so S Macintyre reduced the risks examined to better reflect the scale and impact on the Association.

There are two tables the first containing 14 hazards which have been scored. Where the risks are scored at 7 or higher they are included in the Risk Strategy Table. This reduces to seven and the Risk Strategy table categorises, explains the risk and outlines the strategy to be employed to deal with it.

The committee also discussed benefit migration further with D Brown specifically referring to the Glasgow experience where customers are appearing not to be receiving their letters relating to

	<p>HB migrating to Universal Credit. G Watson was asking about the server cloud backup and Cyber Essential accreditation.</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Operations</b></p> <p><b>11.1 Rent Increase Consultation Report</b></p> <p>S Macintyre started by emphasising it was a difficult time to plan as for the present there is a rent freeze in force. It is not entirely clear what the intentions of the Scottish Government are but through intense lobbying effort SFHA have apparently secured reassurance that the position will be clarified no later than 14<sup>th</sup> January. There is also hope that by 14<sup>th</sup> December they will be giving an indication as to what the prevailing views are.</p> <p>The big issue is the really high inflation figures with the October RPI rate at 14.2% and CPI at 11.1%. forecast is continuation at a high rate next year.</p> <p>FMD have provided forecasts of what a rent freeze means, what an increase of 5% would look like and an increase of 7%. All of those represent an effective income cut given the higher inflation level.</p> <p>The prediction is that at 5% planned maintenance needs to be cut back by over 50% but at 7% the program can continue with only some reductions.</p> <p>There followed a discussion where factors such as affordability, organisational viability and comparability were discussed. Against the backdrop of the increase being somewhat mitigated by the large percentage of customers having their rent and incomes paid by benefits which are slated to be increased by CPI.</p> <p>According to the SFHA Rent Setting &amp; Affordability Tool most groups apart from single person households on the minimum wage pass the affordability measure with a rent increase of 7%.</p> <p>There was further discussion prompted by G Watson of the possibility of an increase below CPI now followed by an undertaking to increase future rents by a further percentage level in mitigation, a so called clawback.</p> <p>This was discussed and decided against due to the uncertainty relating to income levels and inflation in the future. It was also decided to consult on a single percentage rather than two or more alternative levels.</p> <p>Based on the affordability and comparability measures and the impact on planned maintenance it was decided to consult on a</p>	

	<p>proposed 7% increase. It was pointed out that this while higher than usual was being driven by circumstances and was substantially less than RPI or CPI.</p> <p><b>11.2 AFTAR Report</b> S Macintyre reported that A Herson has attended the AFTAR project meeting and had been provided with a report detailing activity 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30 September.</p> <p>AFTAR reported that they had helped 101 Abronhill referee's with 200 issues generating a total client gain of just under fifty two thousand pounds. This for a cost of £4677 for the whole financial year.</p> <p>The digital inclusion aspect of the service helped 46 of our customers.</p> <p>The AFTAR Energy project is applying for continuation funding, over the period it helped 25 of our customers with 48 issues gaining them financial gains of £2300. Meantime it is operating with part time staffing and unable to take further referrals at present.</p> <p>As AFTAR Energy has reached capacity, there was some discussion about seeking alternative provision D Brown suggested GHEAT might operate outside the Glasgow City area since Cumbernauld has Glasgow postcodes.</p> <p>There is also a Scottish Government energy Advice Project.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Deferred Agenda Items</b></p> <p>There were no deferred agenda items to be discussed.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Any Other Competent Business</b></p> <p>C Burns suggested that the Strategy Day in February might be better suited to be held on a weekend due to committee work and other weekday commitments. There was a realisation that staff would need to be consulted on that issue as there was an opposite implication for them.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting: TBC (Hybrid meeting)</b></p> <p>Either last Thursday in January or First Thursday in February to be confirmed</p>	

**Signed as a true record by the Chairperson**

..... **Date** .....

**Copies of committee reports are available on request.**