

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12th FEBRUARY 2025 AT 6.30PM
HYBRID MEETING**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Keith Kintrea (Chair)
Audrey Flannagan
Cheryl Miller
Elnimiery Khalifa
Barbara Robertson

IN ATTENDANCE: John Quinn, Director
Alison Kevan, Head of Corporate Services & HR (HCSHR)
Alan McDonald, Head of Development & Property Services (HDPS)
David Robb, Head of Finance & IT (HFIT)
Claire McGraw, Head of Tenancy Services
John Mulholland, Consultant
Liz Campbell, Minute Secretary

The agenda was revised to allow for a report on Merrylee to be included under AOCB. This is a confidential item for the Governing Body.

4) Introduction to Business Plan – John Mulholland

Agreement was given to move this item to the start of the agenda. John was introduced and thanked Committee for the invite and allowing this item to be heard first. John gave an overview of his extensive experience in the Housing sector and explained that this included time as a Director of various associations and as a Manager for Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

John confirmed that he had been engaged to provide support with the Association's Governance Review and Options Appraisal and to assist with updating the Business Plan. He had also offered to carry out a check on Landlord Safety. However, after meeting staff and reading the information provided to him, he does not feel a need to look at Health & Safety as this is an area that the Association is particularly strong in. John then stated that this is as strong as he has seen in Health & Safety. The proposal is to look at our self assurance process and give independent advice on that if it was felt that this would be useful.

John's proposed timeframe is to carry out work on the Governance Review, Update the Business Plan, including Options Appraisal and then provide an Assurance Report.

John stated that there is a good Business Plan in place and the Governance Review that took place in 2018 was also good. There was a lot of work done on Assurance last year, new measures are in place and good progress is being made.

There have been a couple of notifiable events and John offered to share the template he created for this with the Director.

John stated that from the information he has already seen that there are no issues with governance, and it is a matter of fine tuning it and making it easy to access the information if it is required. John proposed to look at Strategy & Leadership, Delivery & Execution, Scrutiny & Oversight and explained that the review being carried out in this way against the Regulatory Standards covers all areas of the Governance Framework.

Findings on Strategy & Leadership – John can see that comments made by SHR have been taken on board and the Association is exploring different structures for Committees and their meetings. A full report on each of the areas of Vision & Mission, Environmental Awareness, Culture, Values & Ethics, Corporate Strategy will be provided and linked to Regulatory Standards.

Structure and Organisational Design include the subsidiary of Govanhill Community Development Trust (GCDT). John met with all of the Senior Management Team today and is looking in particular at Skills, Decision Making, Documentation, Performance, Appraisal, Engagement and Accountability. He will also look at the Role of Senior Staff, Committee, Value for Money, Risk, Finance and Compliance.

Each of these will be tested against Governance Standards to chart outcomes and be the basis to form Action Plans. This will be discussed by Management Committee, Senior Management Team (SMT) who will take ownership of it and how it will be carried out.

All of this is to ensure that Committees have sufficient assurance to sign the Annual Assurance Statement.

The overall aim is to keep it simple, and that the Association is starting from a good place, and it will make the process quicker and easier

A comment was made that it was good to get feedback that our Health & Safety was the best John has seen and well done to staff for this. John replied that this was not a statement he makes lightly.

It was asked if this would be desk-based interviews. John replied that he had already met Senior Staff twice and he would like to meet with the Office Bearers and the Assurance Working Group. He would also be happy to meet with anyone else, including GCDT as SHR can look at the relationship between Board and subsidiary organisation.

It was asked what the timescale would be to complete Governance Review. John replied he is aiming for a draft to SMT in around two weeks and a draft to Management Committee the next time they meet. John stated he had sent a list of questions already and he know what he's looking for from those replies and so far, had found no red flags.

The Director stated John had a calendar of the meetings to co-ordinate this and John stated he can be flexible on dates. It was suggested report to SMT, meeting with Office Bearers in a month or so and then the report could be signed off at the Management Committee meeting on 16th April.

A comment was made that it may be useful to meet the Office Bearers when the report was three quarters completed to get a sense of the recommendations, but they would take John's advice on that timescale.

The Chair thanked John and stated he is looking forward to seeing his work.

John Mulholland left the meeting at 6.51pm

1) Apologies Ian Doherty, Gary Paton, Ghazala Hakeem and Mujeeb Ur-Rehman

Leave of Absence

[REDACTED]

2) Declarations of Interest

Barbara Robertson, Audrey Flannagan and Elnimiery Khalifa are tenants of the Association and all declared at interest in item number 5 – Proposed Rent Increase.

3) Minutes of Management Committee held on 11th December 2024

The following corrections were requested:

Page 3 paragraph 3 – should be by an external investigator – typo

Page 6 paragraph 1 Healthy & Safety should read Health & Safety

Page 7 paragraph 3 VA should be VAT – typo

Update from Minutes

HDPS reported that a pre contract meeting had been held with Greenerleaf, the new pest control contractor. There are no TUPE issues, and it is hoped the contract will begin in early March 2025.

Page 8 – Property Sustainability Strategy – HDPS is working on this until a staff member returns from absence on a phased return basis on 10th March 2025.

With the above changes taken into consideration the minutes were proposed by Cheryl Miller and Seconded by Audrey Flannagan.

5) Rent Increase

HTS reported that the purpose of this paper is to update Committee on the recent consultation process and to seek approval for the proposed rent and service charge increase.

The recommendations are set out in section 2 of the paper and these are:

- A rent increase of 2.7% for all tenants of the Association from 1st April 2025. This includes the tenants with lease/occupancy agreements and tenants in supported accommodation.
- The three HA commercial tenants would have an increase in line with GCT increase.
- The remaining commercial tenants increase will be approved by Govanhill Community Development Trust (GCDT)
- A service charge increase of 2.7% across all services

A robust rent consultation took place during December and January. There was a tension between maintaining services for our customers and in the face of rising costs and ensuring that rents remain affordable.

Table 1 shows the costs to tenants in various apartment sizes with a CPI+1% increase.

Table 2 gives information on previous years increases.

Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum (GWWSF) conducted a survey of proposed increases. The lowest was 1.7% and the highest was 7% and table 4 showed how our 2024/25 rents compared with other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

It was reported that the anticipated spend in the next seven years for kitchens and bathrooms would be £37.8m. Money is required for this investment and also for the day-to-day spending. HTS had met with HFIT and both are comfortable with the proposed increase of 2.7%.

There were 2500 letters sent to tenants and four drop-in sessions were also held. There was an increase in tenants attending these sessions and that was encouraging. The session on 23rd January 2025 at Merrylee Office had no attendees.

Table 5 gives a breakdown of the responses received and table 6 shows the response to the question "Do you think that the rent you pay is good value for money?" 63% felt that their rent did represent good value for money.

Table 7 asked “Are you happy with the level of information and consultation you receive over proposed rent increases?” 72% were happy with the level of information and consultation.

HTS stated that the proposed increase of 2.7% is lower than other RSLs but they are comfortable and confident in recommending this.

The SFHA model of affordability was tested, and it is thought our rents are still affordable. It was stated that 59% of responses in the Tenant Satisfaction Survey said they found their rent very or fairly easy to afford. 88% of tenants think their rent offers good value for money.

A comment was made that this was a very clear report and presentation. It was observed that in the yes/no column that a no response was not opposing the increase. The member was very comfortable with the proposal and response and wished to note thanks to the staff who ensured the good response that was received.

It was asked that if the mean is used in the analysis that the median is also used so higher and lower values can also be seen.

Approval was given for an increase in the following categories:

- **A rent increase of 2.7% for all tenants of the Association from 1st April 2025. This includes the three commercial tenants, tenants with lease/occupancy agreements and tenants in supported accommodation.**
- **The remaining commercial tenants increase will be approved by Govanhill Community Development Trust (GCDT)**
- **A service charge increase of 2.7% across all services**
- **Service charges to be included with rent from 1st April 2025 (except for service charges for “ok each day” alarms, lifts and white goods.**

It was reported that the increase in services charges is being worked on, so they are added to the rent charges. Some service charges will stand.

6) Banking Update

It was reported that Barclays had provided assurance that the outage at the end of January was a system issue and not a targeted cyber-attack.

Loan Covenant – Barclays confirmed that the deadline of 12th March was an achievable deadline for them. The absolute deadline for the Association is 31st March 2025. There may be documents to sign at this time.

Budgets - The draft budgets show high borrowing will be requested over the next six or seven years. HFIT has been working with HTS and the Asset Team and are investigation possible different sources for this borrowing. This could include Bonds where only interest

is paid and then the lump sum is due when the Bond matures. More information will follow in a paper at a future meeting.

It was stated that Sharia compliant finance could be an inclusive gesture in our community, but it also needs to work commercially.

It was reported that Office Bearers had received some details on this but there were no further questions from other members.

It was asked if budgets would be approved in early March and options considered in more detail then.

It was reported that this would be the case and a minute from a full committee meeting may be required for the Barclays covenant variation. It was noted that further borrowing proposals would be discussed at the Finance & general Purposes (F&GP) Sub committee meeting.

A comment was made that the covenant variation process had taken a long time. It was reported that it was raised with Barclays in December 2023. Barclays offer fixed interest borrowing and this agreement ends in September 2025, so it may be possible to refinance with less restrictive covenants. What funding is required will be looked at throughout the year.

It was asked if there would be a timescale for this. It was reported that this would be brought to April meeting.

7) Equalities Report

Equalities & Human Rights Policy

Equalities Action Plan

These are both draft policies. A comment was made that this was early work in progress.

HTS stated that they would not normally share a policy at this early stage but there is a big shift from existing policies. We recently became members of the Housing Diversity Network and will be working with them to look deeper into this policy and action plan to ensure we are covering everything that is required. The policy will be brought to the Management Committee meeting in April 2025 for consideration.

A comment was made that point 3.3 that cultural origin is a subgroup of ethnic origin, and this would then cover people who had been displaced.

A comment was made that the aims of the Association were not clear, but an excellent job had been done trying to cover all bases. It is however felt there is too much information and there is a lot of repetition in the draft. It is too much to expect all staff to understand all

of this policy and act on it. It needs to be more focused and sharper. The member offered to send their suggestions to HTS. HTS stated they took this on board and welcomed all suggestions.

One member asked if they could see the previous policy to see the background. It was stated that it was previously the Equalities Act, but we have now extended that. HTS stated they will try cover the main points and make them clearer and get information from people who specialise in this field.

Thanks were given to HTS for taking on this large piece of work.

8) Procurement

Multi- Trade Refurbishment Contractors Framework

This report seeks Management Committee's approval to appoint six contractors onto our new Multi Trade Refurbishment Framework after competitive tender and quality evaluations have been completed.

This Framework is for works up to £500k and is for an initial term of five years with the opportunity to extend it for a further two years. To ensure that the successful bidders have a genuine opportunity to win works, the framework has been limited to six places.

It was asked if this was to allow more flexibility and quick responses. It was reported that prices for works would be requested first.

A question was asked about a failure score of 3% on one of the contractor's assessments. Is there a chance this score could decrease as it is higher than others and above average and was this a concern? It was reported that this shows awareness of the risk in the tender process and that is still an unlikely failure. The average is 0.57% and we would also need to see if they come forward and win the contract.

It was asked if this could be constantly reviewed. It was reported that it would not always be number one on the list who was awarded the contract. [REDACTED]

Approval was given to add the following contractors to be placed on the Multi Trade Refurbishment Framework for an initial five-year term:

Contract Building Services (Scotland)Ltd

Ogilvie Construction Ltd

Morris & Spottiswood Ltd

MP Group UK Ltd

City Gate Construction (Scotland) Ltd

CCG (Scotland) Ltd

Maintenance Services Reactive Voids

The current contract with Mears expires on 31st March 2025. There were twenty-one notes of interest and exacting requirements were put in place. This included being able to use Capita Interface. The robustness of their IT system was also critical in the tender process.

A comment was made that there were only two bidders for this contract. It was reported that Reid Associates had evaluated the tenders, and the market process have increased and there has been tightening in the existing contract e.g. emergency repair response time has been changed from four hours to three hours among other improvements.

Costs are in sync with Consumer Price Index including Owner occupier Housing Costs CIPH have been used. There are community benefits such as apprenticeships and work placements for schools included in the contract.

Discussion took place about the tracking of where the Mears operative was, and the portal is similar to Amazon to tell tenants when to expect the operative to attend. It was reported appointments are in three time slots and there are emergency repair cover 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Approval was given to appoint Mears Ltd to the Maintenance Services, Reactive and Voids Contract for an initial term of five years, with extensions annually for a further five years, subject to the satisfactory performance of the contact and agreement between both parties.

Gas Service & Install Contract

It was reported that the contractor has a satisfaction rate of 97.9% from surveys that were carried out. There have been no drops in the statistics for Gas Safety checks.

Through negotiations the contractor has agreed to hold their contract rates at the same levels as their last increase in April 2023 with an uplift of CPIH plus one in years two, three and four of the contract.

The contract provides three dedicated engineers for Govanhill & Merrylee areas who know our tenants and our stock.

Approval was given for City Technical Services (UK) Ltd to be appointed to provide gas Service & Maintenance Contract from April 2025 for an initial period of four years with a possible two extensions after that period.

9) Notifiable Events

200 Butterbiggins Road

2 Investigations

A further investigation and report has been carried out by Buro Happold Fire Engineering (BH) and they gave some options of what could be done. Of these options the installation of a fire suppression system (sprinklers) and we see this as the most reasonable and practical option. This is being discussed with engineers and Building Control. A message was left for Building Control yesterday to follow this up.

It was asked when this has been passed to Building Control. It was reported that this was done on the 24th January 2025. It was suggested that if this continues to drag on Councillors could be asked for support to move it along.

It was reported that properties have been set aside in case tenants have to be decanted but need information from Building Control before talking to the tenants.

It was reported that fire regulations are changing and by installing a sprinkler system we may be ahead of the curve.

Contractors will require two days' notice to restart works on site.

CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION

The other investigation is regarding a breach of the Code of Conduct and a Complaint that has been made.

It was reported that it is hoped that the investigation into the Code of Conduct should be concluded soon and the last couple of people are being interviewed this week.

The complaint is moving quicker and may be resolved first. There is still one person to be interviewed.

A comment was made that this can only progress at the pace people are available and it is hoped for a conclusion soon.

[REDACTED]

It was asked if the complainant had received the information that they had requested. It was reported the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information had been provided and they had received this around a week ago.

10) Submission of Returns – Standing Item

This is a standard agenda item and there was nothing to report on this occasion.

11) Health & Safety – Standing Item

Landlord Safety Report was discussed at Operations Sub-committee on 5th February 2025

This report was presented at Operations Sub Committee meeting held last week and was approved by them. If anyone who was not at that meeting wishes a copy of the report, they can request to see it.

The update was noted.

12) SHARE In Person Training for Management Committee

At the Management Committee meeting on 11th December 2024 there was a discussion around training that stemmed from Committee Member Appraisals. SHARE have come back with a potential programme of training that are spread throughout the year.

It is proposed that each session takes place in the Boardroom and would last 1 to 1.5 hours. Tea, coffee and sandwiches will be provided.

There were no further comments or questions and thanks given for the organisation of this.

Nicki will circulate a poll of dates and the type of training being held on each date.

13) Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings

Draft AGM Minutes of meeting held on 19th September 2024

The draft minutes were noted and will be approved at the next AGM.

Minutes of Operations Meeting held on 20th November 2024

It was suggested that a couple of areas could be highlighted and possibly some names redacted. It was reported that the Chair of each Sub Committee would be asked to highlight main issues from the meeting, but Chair of Operations Sub Committee was not in attendance tonight to do so.

14) Report Back from Other Organisations

Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

None

Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)

GWSF have asked for views on a report on how best Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) should demonstrate that it is meeting its duty to take account of “community interests” in the exercising of its functions.

Discussion took place on this, and it was suggested this was a reaction to action taken in other Associations. Consensus was reached that members were happy to support what was being proposed in letter from GWSF.

SHARE

None

15) Documents for Formal Execution

Share Membership Application

The Share membership application made by [REDACTED] was approved.

16) Correspondence

To be heard at the end of the meeting

17) A.O.C.B

Merrylee Report

This report is to update Management Committee following discussion at the meeting on 23rd October and concerns raised by one member who felt the area had been neglected by the Housing Association and generally residents were unhappy.

Following that meeting a lot of actions have been put in place and these are listed in the paper. The concerns were taken seriously and pages 2 and 3 of the report give further information on the concerns that were raised.

A walkabout took place with the Management Committee member and HTS on 5th November 2024 of the full Merrylee area. The main issues that came to light were close painting, bins being kept in closes and moss in backcourt areas. The following actions were taken:

- HTS and Health & Safety Officer carried out a site visit to look at fire safety and bin management. Bins in open stairways are below the concrete floor of the flat or stairway above. This should allow a minimum of one hour fire protection to the flats above. There are no issues of anti-social behaviour within these areas, bins areas are tidy.
- An inspection of the areas where bins are being kept in closes will take place by Scottish Fire & Rescue on 21st February for further reassurance.
- Bulk uplift contract is in place with a contractor and bins/waste collection is organised by Glasgow City Council.
- Our environmental contractor is working in the area to tackle the moss in the backcourts.

- HTS and HDPS met with Lowther Homes who factor the area on 7th November.
- Other action points are listed in the paper
- A new plaque will be fitted advertising the office opening hours.
- There have been no patterns of people going into the office at Merrylee to complain about the issues raised.

Page 5 of the report gives information from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out in 2024.

The information in the paper is to give assurance to the Management Committee that the allegations made were taken seriously but the opposite has been found in information from residents.

It was asked if it was made sure that the survey wasn't the same random people selected. It was reported that it was a representative sample used not a random sample. It was also reported that the survey was carried out by an external consultant.

It was reported that a Factoring Survey was undertaken, and the same percentage of owners were surveyed as elsewhere so an accurate and robust sample was taken.

A question was asked about the moss and was it a sea of green. It was reported that on the walkabout the backcourts were dull, and it was wet so couldn't tell but what was seen was not a huge area of concern.

It was reported that when the moss was removed it uncovered trip hazards, and some stones and slabs may need to be re-laid. This could raise more complaints from owners who will be charged for this work.

Thanks were given for a thorough report, and members were satisfied that the issues raised do not represent negligence in the neighbourhood.

HCSHR will ask the investigator if they wish a copy of this report.

The Chair stated that this report confirms there are no system issues and the issues that were noted on the walkabout have been dealt with appropriately, professionally and timeously by staff.

Committee are assured the issues have been dealt with and thanks given to HDPS and HTS on their work in dealing with this.

18) Correspondence

Correspondence has been received from EVH regarding salary increases for staff. Staff were excused from the meeting at this point.

Staff left the meeting at 8.10pm while a private discussion was undertaken by Committee on this matter. Chair of Committee relayed the decision made to the Director of the Association.

Committee approved the proposal received from EVH regarding salary increase for staff.

19) Date of Next Meeting

16th April 2025 at 6.30pm