

GOVANHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 20th OCTOBER 2021 AT 6.30PM
ONLINE MEETING

PRESENT: Keith Kintrea (Acting Chair)
Elizabeth Klein
Iain Doherty
Wilma Logan
James White

IN ATTENDANCE: John Quinn, Director
Shannon Watson, Head of Finance & IT (“HF”)
Alison Kevan, Head of Corporate Services & HR
Alan McDonald, Head of Development & Property Services
Liz Campbell, Minute Secretary

1.Apologies

Annie Macfarlane, John McLardie, Jen Cassells, Barbara Robertson, Mujeeb Ur-Rehman and Ghazala Hakeem.

2.Declarations of Interest

None

3.. Minutes of the Management Committee meetings held on 25th August 2021 and 29th September 2021

Both sets of minutes were proposed by Wilma Logan and seconded by Elizabeth Klein

Matters Arising – Annie Macfarlane was elected Chairperson at the previous meeting but has informed Office Bearers that she requires to take a leave of absence for the next two months. Best Wishes from members were sent to Annie. Usually, the Vice Chair would take the meeting, but his apologies have also been noted so Keith Kintrea led this meeting.

4. Annual Assurance Statement 2021/22

App1 Governance & Financial Management Regulations

App2 Charter Standards & Regulations

App3 ARC Performance Report

App4 Assurance Development Action Plan

App5 Equalities Annual report 2021/21

App6 Annual Assurance Statement

The Annual Assurance Statement is an annual submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The evidence is available in the minutes of the various meeting and the documents are collated in this report to give assurance on the governance, finance, health & safety standards and how the organisation operates and provides services to customers. Comparisons are made with other similar Associations to benchmark the data. The reports are to give assurance to members but also to make them aware of potential risks and help form the basis of an action plan.

Some things in the action plan have progressed well this year and others are still being worked on. The Asset Plan is progressing well, and the tenant portal is also making good progress. Work is being done to improve re-let times and reduce void periods. Covid had a significant impact on both. The Equalities process is a large piece of work that will arise soon and be undertaken by the new Head of Tenancy Services when they are appointed along with the Head of CSHR. Guidance has recently been received from SHR about what they wish to see in this area and we will require to adapt our processes accordingly where needed. Energy efficiency and fire regulations are areas of work for the Development team.

GCDT has had financial stability this year due to the grant funding received but they must decide what will be the priorities next year and the funding available may impact on the services provided. There are important decisions to be made around commercial properties and that will be incorporated into the Business Plan.

Thanks were given for the overview, and it was stated that there were no concerns with the contents as they had already been discussed at various meetings.

Approval was given to submit the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

As this meeting was chaired by Keith Kintrea it will be him who is asked to sign the statement.

5. Covid Update – For Information

As restrictions are eased, advice has mostly moved from Scottish Government back to Health & Safety Executive and their guidance is followed to minimise risk to staff and tenants. The default position remains to work from home but now staff are slowly returning to work in the office on a phased and gradual basis.

It is recognised that some people in the community have found it harder than other communities to access services. Customers have been able to attend the office on an

appointment basis only. The community hall has had interview booths installed and this is working well for both staff and customers. It was noted that without these interview booths in the community hall there would have been no face-to-face meetings with tenants, and it would have been extremely difficult to re-let properties. Some other Associations have been completely closed to customers and are only now starting to open to face-to-face appointments, so the Association has been at the leading edge of adapting to the pandemic.

It is hoped to build on that, and it could perhaps be used for smaller in person committee meetings. The capacity of the Boardroom has been assessed and a further work will take place on that on Friday. It may be that hybrid meetings can take place, with some members present in the Boardroom and some remotely accessing it. The IT team have been very helpful and have bought a projector and screen to allow hybrid meetings to take place. A couple of staff members will use them in a test meeting. It was also noted that a system of priority for attending meetings in person would need to be worked out.

A question was raised if HVAC air conditioning and heating system for the office had been investigated. It was reported that we are currently undertaking a survey of the office in line with HSE requirements. A meeting will take place with the Health & Safety Officer next week, but it may be that a ventilation consultant is asked for assistance with this. Re office windows being open, it was reported that the advice from Health & Safety Executive (HSE) is to relax uniform standards to allow staff to layer up in cold weather. Staff have been issued with fingerless gloves and have fleeces to wear too.

Discussion took place about using a hotel or alternative venue for Management Committee Meetings. The view, however, was that it was a lesser risk to work with a building that you were familiar with and using the Association's standards of safety and work. There is no guarantee that an external company would be of the same standard and it could be very difficult to see and assess their risk assessments. **It was asked that if members had not already completed their survey form that they do so as soon as possible and submit it to Head of Corporate Services & HR so that an assessment regarding in person meetings and individual risk can be completed.**

It was stated that the quality of discussion has improved since the Association had its first virtual meetings but that meetings have not been so well attended. Some members stated that their preference would be to meet face to face again. It was suggested that due to the number of members attending it may be possible to hold some of the smaller sub-committee meetings in person. It was suggested that Tenancy Services meeting in December may be able to be held as a face-to-face meeting.

It is hoped that as restriction ease the capacity of the Boardroom could gradually increase. This may also be the case for the space in the community hall that is not taken up by interview booths or using the 2nd floor staff room.

Before the pandemic tentative discussions had taken place about reconfiguring the existing meeting rooms and the ground floor area and this will be further considered.

A question was asked about using Microsoft Teams instead of Pow Wow Now and it was suggested that may be able to use it while Chair is on leave as she had been unable to access it at all.

Thanks were noted to Head of Corporate Services & HR and Health & Safety Officer for the work being done on progressing with these matters.

6. Loan Conversion from LIBOR to SONIA/Fixing Some Loans

- 6.1 Allia & C&C Commentary on Draft Barclays Bank Amendment Agreement**
- 6.2 Draft Barclays Amendment Agreement including TC Young review notes**
- 6.3 Draft Barclays Extract Minute**
- 6.4 Draft Barclays Officers Certificate**

The Association has a number of loans linked to LIBOR; the use of this rate of interest will be discontinued on 31st December 2021 and SONIA will be used instead. Only Barclays Bank have provided a draft of their amendment agreement so far. This is a very complex document and so has been reviewed by the HF, TC Young for legal and Allia C&C for treasury management advice.

Bank of Scotland and Nationwide have still to forward their amendment agreements.

Approval was given to use TC Young & Allia for advice, as appropriate and for the HF to finalise the legal documentation required by the three banks and for the Secretary to sign it once it has been fully agreed.

At the FG&P meeting it was agreed that £6.5m of variable rate borrowing with Barclays is converted to fixed rate borrowing instead. It was asked if Committee Members wished an email to confirm approval before this was finalised. This was felt unnecessary, and the **HF was given approval to proceed with the conversion of these loans to fixed rate borrowing.**

7. Minutes of Sub-Committees – For Information

- Audit & Risk meeting held on 11th August 2021
- Development meeting held on 12th August 2021
- F&GP meeting held on 18th August 2021
- GCDT meeting held on 25th August 2021
- Special Development meeting held on 26th August 2021
- Housing Services meeting held on 26th August 202

The contents of the reports were noted.

8. Reports from Other Organisations – For Information
Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)
Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)
SHARE

These are circulated as they become available.

9. Documents for Formal Execution

None

10. Correspondence – For Information

None

11. A.O.C.B

Living Rent Article on Social Media

SHR has confirmed that it is not a notifiable event, and they are happy with how the matter has been dealt with.

Illegal Occupation

A household have claimed that they were given keys and tenancy agreement to a property by a private landlord. The landlord did not own the property and had had let it under false pretences. There were 11 people occupying the property. The property is in poor condition.

They have refused to present themselves as homeless and staff are working on supporting them with the housing application process. Proof of status and the completed application form are required by the end of this week. Welfare Rights staff are also supporting the family.

The case called at court and the Sherriff awarded a decree for the Association to recover the property. The extract of the decree has not yet been received. If the family continue to co-operate the decree will not be enforced. It is hoped that they can be moved from the property amicably in the next couple of weeks.

Diploma In Housing

A member of staff has expressed an interest in completing this course. It is a mixture of online and in person learning. This request is supported by the line manager, and it is felt it will be beneficial to the staff member and the Association.

The cost of the course is £3,000. If the staff member leaves the Association within 1 year of completing the course, they will be required to repay the course fees in full.

All members supported the application for funding for the course and wished the member of staff well with their studies.

AGM Raffle –

The raffle for those who had attended the AGM was drawn at random. The winners were:

1 st Prize	Ben Liddle	£50 Asda Voucher
2 nd Prize	Gus Campbell	£25 Asda Voucher
3 rd Prize	Marion Nisbett	£25 Asda Voucher

Members were thanked for their attendance and Officers thanked for their extensive papers.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17th November 2021 at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.40pm