

**GOVANHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 26th JANUARY 2022 AT 6.30PM
ONLINE MEETING**

PRESENT: John McLardie (Acting Chair)
Annie Macfarlane
Elizabeth Klein
Keith Kintrea
Iain Doherty
Mujeeb Ur-Rehman
Wilma Logan
James White
Audrey Flannagan
Cheryl Miller
Ghazala Hakeem

IN ATTENDANCE: John Quinn, Director
Shannon Watson, Head of Finance & IT
Alison Kevan, Head of Corporate Services & HR
Alan McDonald, Head of Development & Property Services
Claire McGraw, Head of Tenancy Services
Liz Campbell, Minute Secretary

1. Apologies

Jen Cassells and Barbara Robertson

Annie Macfarlane has just returned after a break from committee duties and John McLardie had agreed to chair this meeting.

A warm welcome was extended to the new co-opted members, Audrey Flannagan and Cheryl Miller.

James White wished to join the meeting briefly to inform everyone that he has resigned from the Board. All members gave James their very best wishes and James left the meeting at 6.40pm.

Round table introductions were made, and Audrey and Cheryl introduced themselves to members.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Minutes of the Management Committee meetings held on 17th December 2021

Correction – On page 3 in the 4th paragraph it should say that we have £6m available in to draw down, not £4m.

The minutes were proposed by Keith Kintrea and seconded by Elizabeth Klein.

Matters Arising

Staffing Issues

The redundancy consultation with the group of 5 staff has started. Head of Corporate Services & HR has had a couple of meetings with the [REDACTED]

Before the consultation process began the [REDACTED] contract was for 4 days per week. It is a substantive post within the Association.

It is proposed following SMT discussion on what is needed for the post that the redundancy consultation process is suspended at present on the basis that a 3 day per week post at least (already in GHA budgets and a substantive post) is required and that a paper is brought to be considered by the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Sub Committee in February to decide whether a 3 or 4 day a week post is offered as a suitable alternative to redundancy from the Trust half of the post.

It was stated that it was logical for this to be considered by F&GP and it would be helpful if the rationale for the post was included in the paper.

Committee agreed to proposal and Director to meet with [REDACTED], advise of decision and work up paper for Feb FGP meeting to agree whether 3 or 4 day a week post is to be offered from 1 April 2022.

Rent Increases – A comment was made that the recent rent increase decision made by Govanhill Housing Association was not listed in information circulated by Glasgow West of Scotland Forum. In future years we will submit the rent increase information to GWSF.

4. Conversion of Variable Rate Loans to Fixed Rate

When the initial discussion started with Barclays about fixing loan the Bank of England Base Rate was 0.1%, but rose to 3.2% in August and then 5.1% in December 2021.

There is £6.4m of lending to be fixed. This is Loans 1, 4 and 5.

The loan interest rate documents set out the early repayment details and the fixing rate that has been agreed.

Approval was requested for Allia C&C to provide external treasury management advice on the call with Barclays on Friday. The rate may change slightly on Friday, but it is not expected that there will be a massive difference from the rates quoted.

Discussion took place and it was reported that the Treasury Management Policy does not prescribe the percentage of loans that should be fixed rated. It was stated that it would be advantageous to fix some lending at a fixed rate when the trend appeared to be of increasing rates.

CAF Bank and Charity Bank do not offer the ability to convert their loans to fixed rates.

Head of Finance & IT was thanked for taking steps to secure some loans at a fixed rate.

As Chair of this meeting John McLardie was asked for permission for his electronic signature to be used on the signing of the draft extract minute required by Barclays Bank. Approval was given for this to be used.

5. Rent Consultation – Current Results

So far 121 responses have been received, this equates to a response rate of 5%. There have also been many spoiled papers received. Some papers had both boxes ticked so it was not clear what the preferred option was. Staff will attempt to contact these tenants to try and clarify what their preference was.

It was asked if CX feedback had been used to text and could that be an option. **Head of Tenancy Services will investigate this and will take that forward if it is an option.**

It was reported that it was not a surprise that the lowest increase rate was the most favoured response.

6. 200 Butterbiggins Road Cladding

This is a newbuild property and has 4 or 5 different external finishes. One of these is an aluminium composite material that is similar to the cladding that was used in Grenfell flats. The property is not totally clad in this material.

When the property was completed, it was fully compliant with all the building regulations that were in place.

All the documents that are held by the Association and the Architect have been checked and it has not been possible to get details of the exact specifications of the material.

The next step would be carrying out further investigations on site, but a consultant will need to be appointed to do this. It is proposed that the Riach partnership be approached regarding this.

It was asked how long would this take? It is proposed to have an initial discussion with Riach Partnership as they have been very helpful so far and an update brought to the Development & Property Services meeting in February.

It was also asked how this issue was identified and it was reported that the Scottish Government had sent out a survey on all properties over 18m after the Grenfell fire. There is also a fire risk assessment template in place, and this is reviewed every 3 years.

It was reported that tenants fire safety advice had been given to tenants in December. The Fire Master at Polmadie has also agreed that if there ever was a call out to this property an additional fire engine would be deployed.

It was also reported that there are heavy suppressant systems in place in the building already and that there are lots of control measures already in place. The panels in question are inspected on a monthly basis.

It was asked if the insurance company and tenants were aware of this issue? It was reported that the insurance company was aware of the issue.

It is hoped to have meetings with the tenants in the next 6/8 weeks.

7. Information Requests Report – April to December 2021

This report gives details of all information requests received to 31st December 2021.

Item 2.7 should read as 0.16%

It was asked if a stage 1 complaint was one that was received in writing or had been a verbal complaint to a member of staff. It was reported that stage 1 complaints were less serious and could usually be rectified quickly.

It was asked if verbal complaints were also logged. It was confirmed that they were.

It was asked if a complaint had not been resolved and moved to stage 2 would that mean it was logged again. It was reported that it was logged at stage 1 and stage 2 and that a multiple complaint would be logged multiple times. This was in line with guidance issued by Scottish Housing regulator (SHR).

The contents of the report were noted.

8. Minutes of Sub-Committees

F&GP meeting held on 10th November 2021

Audit & Risk meeting held on 1st December 2021 – Not quorate

Development & Property Services meeting held on 8th December 2021

Tenancy Services meeting held on 9th December 2021 – Not Quorate

The minutes of these meetings were noted.

9. Reports from Other Organisations – For Information

Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

There were around 70 members at the last Management Committee meeting. The Executive Committee meets tomorrow.

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

Info is circulated by Nicki. There was a Board meeting last week but Annie had IT issues and was unable to join the meeting.

SHARE

None

10. Documents for Formal Execution

None

11. Correspondence – For Information

Tenant Assurance Survey - this was submitted to SHR today – this was on time. It is an online document so there is no paper copy available.

Landlord Health & Safety Welfare Policy – James White’s details should be removed from page 7 of this.

Claire McGraw’s name has been added to the document.

It was asked that an email be sent to Nicki, in lieu of a signature, to confirm members are happy with the policy statement.

12. A.O.C.B

None

Elizabeth Klein left the meeting at 7.30pm and Jim Harvey joined the meeting.

13. Business Planning Session with Jim Harvey

It was stated that this discussion was the first step in updating this year's business plan.

The following points from the report were highlighted:

- Where do members see the Association going over the next 3 to 4 years?
- Members were asked to look at the Vision Statement Can it be brought up to date or improved? Should it remain as it is?
- External factors should also be considered.
 - Covid & Business Recovery
 - The Economy
 - Political Priorities
 - Climate Change

Members then separated into two groups. One group were looking at service delivery and finance and the other on asset management and regeneration and both groups were to consider value for money.

The following points were made when both groups were brought back together.

- Value means different things – not just about money
- There is already a severe squeeze on resources in the sector
- Procurement rewards could bring the greatest benefit with the least impact on tenants
- There needs to be caution not to overextend the Association
- Environmental Issues such as bulk costs were a drain on Association resources
- Consideration should be given to things that tenants want
- It was agreed the vision statement should be looked at – **Jim Harvey will prepare a selection to choose from**
- It should be highlighted what Association should & can do - there are other agencies who also have responsibilities in the area
- Details of what can't be done if rent doesn't increase should be explained to tenants
- Procurement and the approach to it should be reviewed
- There is no solution to energy efficiency in a tenement building
- Tenant services are about the wider neighbourhood
- There are a lot of people in a small area – Govanhill has always been complex
- The area is like an eco-system – it doesn't take much to change the balance

Jim was thanked for his work on the Business Plan, and it was noted that a lot of important issues had been raised. The changes in the Senior Management Team (SMT) are also an

important time to think about what we do and how we do it. It is an important year for the Association and further discussions are required.

It is a good opportunity for SMT and the Committee to work together.

This is the last meeting for the Head of Finance & IT. Shannon was thanked for a job very well done in her time at Govanhill Housing Association. She always brought clear, concise, and sound information to be discussed. Very best wishes for the future were given to Shannon by each member of the Management Committee.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2nd March 2021

The meeting closed at 8.37pm