

PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 20th FEBRUARY 2023 AT
6.30PM**

This meeting was a hybrid meeting via Teams

Present in office: Karen McMillan, Ian Johnstone and Elaine Templeton

Present via Teams: Drew Mason, Michelle Hart, Saroj Bains, Neil McCall, Tina Russell and Sandra Loney (joined at 6.40)

In Attendance in Office: Kathleen McCutcheon, Lesley Forsyth, and Sandra Marshall

In Attendance via Teams: Lorna Colville, Tracy Fraser & Craig Reid

1a) APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Jim Weir and Laura Clark. Mairi Maclean is on special leave.

b) RECORD ON ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

2a) MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 23.1.23

Minutes of meeting agreed. Proposed Karen McMillan and seconded by Elaine Templeton.

b) MATTERS ARISING

- item 6 - CE confirmed that she and Head of Asset Management will be meeting with the architect this week to discuss Assurance House

-item 7 – CE updated board that we are hoping to settle the 2 purchased properties during the 1st week in March

3) CONSULTATION RENT & SERVICE CHARGE REPORT 2023/24

Head of Housing updated the Board advising;

The results of our consultation and details of the feedback we received. Head of Housing explained we had found many of the tenants responding were quite insistent in their views that affordability was an issue due to the cost of living issues as they are. We also received a number of responses citing reasons that planned

maintenance not planned for their properties over the next year or that works had not been undertaken in last couple of years.

Details of what the other FLAIR Associations rent increases are – they range from 3% to 6%.

CE confirmed that we are doing all we can to mitigate against the cost of living crisis and have just gained further funding of £25,000 to directly help tenants in crisis.

The Board discussed at length their views on setting the rent increase, noting they had to take into account the needs of the tenants and the viability of the business to deliver its services and investment in our properties.

A discussion was had as to whether the Board could reduce the % increase from 6% and a vote was subsequently taken to decide whether the rent increase will be 6% or 5.5%

4 board members voted for 6% increase.

4 board members voted for 5.5% increase.

As there was a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote and decision was for 5.5% increase.

Board approved a rent increase of 5.5%

CE advised the Board that she appreciated that this was a difficult decision and thanked everyone for their input and honesty.

Head of Housing also advised the Board they may wish to review the common heating charges in October 2023, when the gas contract is renewed as the charges being set for 23/24 are estimated and we are unsure if pricing might have improved further by then. The Board agreed to this.

Head of Housing advised that 23/24 will be year 8 of 10 for our rent harmonisation programme for properties still under our standard rent. It was recommended that we move properties onto the standard rent when they become void. Head of Housing explained that it would mean that any new tenants will pay the standard rent from the beginning of their tenancy and then only be subject to any standard rent increase annually.

Board approved.

Head of Housing advised the Board that with the current temporary legislation in place against rent increases only ending from 26th February 2023, we cannot issue our rent increase notification letters until 26th February. We sought legal advice on this. The position is that all letters could be hand delivered on 27th February to ensure delivery for 28th February or we can send 1st class on Sunday 26th allowing 2 days for Royal Mail to process and deliver. CE explained we deemed it to be low risk sending by post in this way. Head of Housing advised there was no anticipated

Royal Mail strikes in the coming week however, if this changed we would not send by post but would hand deliver on 27th February. There were no questions regarding this. The Board agreed to this.

The Board also approved the proposals for

- Service Charges
- Our 1 garage rent
- Our leased properties service charges
- Our Shared Owners rents

Head of Housing agreed to contact a board member direct about query regarding close cleaning.

Head of Housing left the meeting at 19.10

4) CONSULTATION REPORT FOR PLANNED & CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE 2023 /24

Head of Asset Management updated the Board with the results of the consultation and details of the feedback. Most comments around the bathroom and kitchen contracts and all who responded have been spoken to individually.

Going forward we will communicate updates to cyclical programme more regularly via social media, e-mail or text.

Head of Asset Management confirmed that we are expecting this to be another challenging year with the bathroom contracts as we expect our costs to increase too.

Board Approved the draft planned maintenance programme without amendment.

5) MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS Q3 TO DEC 22

Head of Finance and IT confirmed there was an additional surplus mainly due to the postponed environmental works this year, reduced depreciation due to delayed capital spend and some saving in budgeted cyclical spend for servicing assumed for the new developments not required this year. All the saving variances are noted in the report.

It particular it was noted that there will be a review of the environmental works during 23/24 and why this is considered necessary prior to recommencing any spend.

There were other questions on the management accounts.

Board approved the Quarterly Management Accounts to December 22.

Head of Finance and IT left 19.25

6) TENANT SAFETY REPORT

Head of Asset Management confirmed this was a quarterly report and that we have engaged with an asbestos consultants and a fire safety consultant.

We will have to do some asbestos surveys during 23/24 and see what action comes out of these. Any removals would incur significant costs, but we will have to see what the results say. This will be ongoing during 23/24.

Fire safety surveys have been completed at Oliphant Court and our office survey was completed 20th Feb 2023. There are some actions to be taken at Oliphant court and we are working with the risk assessors to prioritise these.

We expect to see significant progress on both of these areas during 23/24. There were no questions from the Board.

Board Noted.

Head of Asset Management left 19.30

7) EQUALITY DATA FOR TENANTS

CE informed the Board that we have now completed all our equality surveys with everyone required by the regulator. We have noticed that there is a higher proportion of tenants with a disability or mental health problems. The CE and the CSO have been attending Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion training. CE also confirmed that we have had equalities internal audit last week and expect the results to be with us by the March Board meeting.

Board Approved.

8) AOCB

CSO asked if anyone has not completed their H & S responsibilities form / e-mail, to please do so as soon as possible.

Board Noted

9) DONM

Next meeting 27.3.2023

Meeting finished 20.30