

PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26 APRIL 2021 AT 6.30PM

Due to the Corona Virus, we are unable to have face to face meetings. This meeting was a virtual meeting using 8x8 platform.

Present: Jim Weir, Ian Johnstone, Karen McMillan, Eileen Graham, Saroj Bains, Michelle Hart, Sandra Loney, Beth Arthur and Mairi Maclean.

In Attendance: Lorna Gilroy, Elaine Thomson and Sandra Marshall.

Observer:- Drew Mason

1a) APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Scott Tsuru and Kathleen McCutcheon. Lisa-Jane Dock is on special leave.

b) RECORD ON ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

2a) MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29.3.2021

Corporate Services Officer explained that the Abandonment Policy review should have been confirmed as Approved and not Noted, which was on the minutes. This will be amended before getting the Chair to sign them.

Proposed by Jim Weir seconded by Eileen Graham

b) MATTERS ARISING

None.

3) ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Head of Technical confirmed that this was an annual report which has new actions added after the Board away day, but due to Covid there was no away day last year. Head of Technical provided brief descriptions of outstanding items and confirmed, for Appendix 2 on planned work, that both Head of Technical and Head of Finance look annually at our draft 10 year programme as part of the budget process. It was confirmed that we hope to get a stock condition survey done this year. Covid permitting, we will soon be back on site for planned works to start the programme catch up.

Board Approved.

It was agreed that an item from AOCB could be discussed at this time.

AOCB

Head of Technical explained that the Board get an annual report about the iFLAIR Joint Collaborative Framework. The QS, who is the administrator, is looking to see if anyone would want a quick 15 min presentation providing an overview of the Framework.

4 board members are interested - Saroj, Michele, Mairi and Ian. Sandra M to organise a time and date.

There was a question about whether there were any changes after Brexit and Head of Technical confirmed that there was not, as the Scottish Government adopted all the EU rules.

Board Noted.

Head of Technical left the meeting at 18.47

4) UNIVERSAL CREDIT REPORT

Head of Housing explained that Universal Credit (UC) brought a significant change to rent collection as tenant in receipt of UC were responsible for making the payment and as this posed a risk to PHA from inception, it was agreed to have a report every 6 months providing the Board with an update. Now 2 years done the line, the staff team dealing with managing rent accounts have worked very hard and are managing tenants accounts in receipt of UC well. Due to this and as there has been very little change in the last 6 months figures the Head of Housing feels this report could be brought to the Board annually.

Head of Housing reminded the Board that arrears, which will include UC payments, will be reported to the Board in the KPI reports. There has been as expected a move from Housing Benefit to UC due tenants having changes in circumstance and this has increased during the pandemic. We have quite a large % of tenants on Managed Payments which mean that the housing costs of their UC payment can be paid direct to us. (Column 4 on the table in the report). the technical arrears reflect payments which are expected in but not yet received and this has increased.

There was some discussion regarding the two cases which presented challenges. After supporting the tenants through successful appeals the tenants received their payments directly. One of these tenants subsequently abandoned their property and we were left with a £5k debts, which is now being pursued through our former tenant arrears process.

Board Noted and approved report can now be produced annually.

5) SECURE RENTS REVIEW

Head of Housing explained that secure rents require being re-registered every 3 years. We have to seek approval from the Rent Registration Officer as to what we will charge. This only affects 2 properties in our stock.

Board Approved rent submission to the Rent registration Officer.

6) PETS POLICY

Head of Housing confirmed undertaking research to review this policy and advised that it did not require any major changes but only required to be updated. We have made one change removing written permission being required for assistance pets. PHA will still need to be informed of these pets for health and safety purposes and tenants will still be expected to manage their pets behaviour in the same way as other tenants who have been granted permission for a pet.

There was a question about whether there had been more complaints about dogs since Covid. Head of Housing said there had not been a rise in numbers, but there have been no garden services or inspections. As these restrictions have been eased, we would expect to see more estate management issues raised. Details of the new policy and what permission is required will go onto our website.

Board Approved.

7) RENT SETTING POLICY

Head of Housing confirmed this policy was brought in at the start of the rent harmonisation programme and reminded the Board of what this was. As we are in the 6th year of the 10 year rent harmonisation we would not want to change the policy until this is complete. The Policy has therefore had a general update and with one addition which has been to add a property type- bungalow as we did not have this in our original structure, but some bungalow properties are due to be completed this year. The bungalow property has been added to have the same points value as an end terraced or semi detached property.

Board Approved.

8) MEMBERSHIP

One new membership for Drew Mason, who will also be joining our Board. Corporate Services Officer will arrange to get the certificate signed by 3 board members.

Board Approved

9) NOTIFIABLE EVENT – RETIREMENT OF HEAD OF HOUSING

As previously mentioned, Head of Housing is going to retire at the end of May 2021. This is a Notifiable Event and we will inform the regulator by Friday 30th April 2021.

Board Noted.

10) ANNUAL PLANNING SYSTEM

This update provides the Board with details of the annual tasks that are due to be completed. Head of Housing confirmed that her retirement has been taken into account and several tasks have been delegated to others in the organisation.

Board Approved.

11) UPDATE ON CORONAVIRUS

This report was completed before the easing of some restrictions. Due to the easing of some restrictions, staff are now able to go out and about more. It was noted that the Essential Business tasks list was not included, but will be provided next month.

Board Noted.

12) UPDATE ON ASSURANCE HOUSE / 64 ESPEDAIR STREET

Corporate Services Officer confirmed that we are due to move out of 64 Espedair Street on Friday 30th April. The checks on the new tenant are all okay. Staff will start to use AH as their base from beginning of May. Notification of the change of address details will be sent out on 7th May. There was a question about whether we found out where the water penetration was coming from yet. Corporate Services Officer was not aware that we had and will get the Chief Exec. to provide further update next month.

Board Noted.

13) AOCB

- Chief Exec has requested 10 days unpaid leave this year. This was approved by the HR sub at their last meeting. These days are to be taken throughout the year rather than all together.

Board Approved.

- GWSF are planning the Summer Regeneration conference- Friday 4th June. – Let CSO know if you wish to attend.
- EVH are running a zoom session on how salary sacrifice works – Tuesday 11th May. Let CSO know if you wish to attend.

Board Noted.

One Board member has not received her papers – CSO to check address details.

14) DONM

Next Board meeting will be on Monday 24TH May 2021.