

PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28th August 2023 AT 6.30PM

This meeting was a hybrid meeting via Teams

Present in office: Tina Russell, Sandra Loney & Elaine Templeton.

Present via Teams: Karen McMillan, Drew Mason, Emmanuel Dufegha (6:50pm), Neil McCall & Laura Clark

In Attendance in Office: Sandra Marshall, Kathleen McCutcheon, Lorna Colville, Craig Reid & Andrew Eaglesham

In Attendance via Teams: Alan Graham, Tracy Fraser & Steven Cunningham (7:30pm)

Guest – Steven Cunningham – Auditor from Alexander Sloan.

Observer - Lorna Ravell from EVH

1a) APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Michelle Hart & Mairi Maclean.

b) RECORD ON ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

none

2a) MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30/05/23

Minutes of meeting agreed. Proposed Sandra Loney and seconded by Drew Mason.

b) MATTERS ARISING

none

Board Noted.

It was agreed to amend the order of the Agenda as we were expecting staff members from Maryhill Development to attend. Item no.3 will be discussed later.

4) New KPI's 23/24

Chief Exec confirms there not much difference/ no significant changes. SMT agree.

Board Approved.

5) Hoarding and Self Neglect Policy

Advice and Projects Manager (APM) explained post covid there's been high cases of people struggling with hygiene which could lead to them losing their tenancy. APM

had researched other Housing Association and Local Authorities policy's to inform development.

It is recognised that Hoarding and Self Neglect is often a symptom of other physical and mental health issues and through delivering the policy we aim to help tenants to deal with the core issues. Our policy will use a clutter image scale which measures the extent of the issue and creates a pathway to assist by developing an Action Plan to work across.

Tenancy Support Officer will be delivering this policy, with the Housing Officer involved to deal with any enforcement action. These cases are time intensive and Action Plans will usually have a timescale of 6-12 months, it is hoped that this will reduce the workload of Housing Officers and provide greater support to tenants with complex vulnerabilities..

No Questions from the Board

Board Approved Policy.

Advice and Projects Manager left the meeting at 6:43.

6) Update on Landscape Contract

Chief Exec Left the room at 6:43 to check if anyone at the door.

Head of Housing advised we had obtained 3 quotes following tender via Iflair but unfortunately we were unable to proceed with a contractor due to issues with pricing. Advised we have put in place temporary arrangements with local contractor Paisley Landscape Service to cut grass 3 weekly until end of October. All those properties that have a front hedge will also receive one cut before end of October.

Chief Exec back in the room at 6:46.

HOH advised we are going to review our landscape contract needs and consult with tenants later this year before going out to tender for 24/25. Board member asked if we are considering a change to frequency of visits & what work we carry out, given that costs are showing to be greatly increased. HOH confirmed this will be part of the review.

HOH advised that HOAM & HOH looking to have temporary expansion of the estates team to assist with work to open spaces as they haven't received any cuts this year. Explained that we can get funding via Invest Renfrewshire between £8000-£11,000 per person for 12 months.

HOH asked the Board to consider a refund for those tenants and factored owners on our garden service as they have had a reduced service this year. The Board

discussed and agreed that although our charges have risen significantly for this year, a 50% reduction in charges for service users was fair.

HoF&IT noted that any reduction in charges would be funded from general rents income.

The Board approved;

- Continue with services of PLS for grass cutting service to end of October 2023
- Review service specification and procure new contractor for 2024/25 via Public Contracts Scotland (open procedure)
- Monitor actual costs for landscaping for 23/24
- Recruit 2 temporary staff for estates team via Invest Renfrewshire with partial funding

Emmanual Dufegha joined at 6:50pm.

Head of Housing leaves meeting at 6:58pm.

7) Asset Management Strategy Update

Head of Asset Management (HOAM) explained they have a 2-year action plan to be approved, there's a degree of uncertainty for the current period due to cost of living/inflation. Few issues as well with contractors terminating/ going into liquidation. We have some positive feedback from tenant safety consultant and are making good progress in the action plan noted in report.

Staffing update for Asset Management, Duncan McKnight is the new Asset Manager who will be working alongside Craig. Victoria Blair has now been made permanent in her role of Asset Administrator. HOAM happy with depth of section.

No questions.

Board Approved.

8) Tenant Safety Report

HOAM explained that there's two outstanding tenant safety categories:

Asbestos Management & Fire Safety.

Asbestos Management - HOAM working alongside health and safety consultant, they noted that properties built pre 1999 most likely have Asbestos. They'll have asbestos surveys carried out, making sure the questions are up to date. From there they'll have a management plan and continue work with health and safety consultant.

Steven Cunningham Joined Meeting at 7:06pm.

Fire Safety – HOAM explained it's particularly good to have fire safety for tenemental stock. They've spoke with the Fire Safety consultant and will have training for the Fire Risk Assessment. 4 people from Asset Management will be attending on a biannual basis. It is an accredited course which is also good for staff training.

Further work with Health and Safety consultant, HOAM please with outcome. As we are now members of Social Housing Safety Network Scotland, we now have access to good support and RSL's training. The 1st year is free after that it'll be a yearly cost of £700. Training seminar for Health and Safety in Glasgow this year. Will help us get ahead of the curve.

No Questions.

Board Noted.

9) ANNUAL AUDIT COMMITEE REPORT

Head of Finance and IT (HOFIT) had summarised the report. It was noted the audit report has been approved by the Audit Committee. The main points were to focus on are the development in departmental risks; Quinn's will continue as Internal Auditors for an additional year and to retender for the IA service starting from 24/25. Quinn are happy to extend at current price/contract arrangements. Quinns internal audit plan for 23/24 is to carry out ARC validation and audit Welfare Rights services. Later this year the HOFIT will undertake a tender of internal audit service for 3 years commencing 2024.

Board Approved.

10) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 22/23 (Including Annual Online Accounts Return and SHAPS annual financial return.

Head of Finance and IT introduced Steven Cunningham, from Alexander Sloan to present the Financial Statement for 22/23. Steven highlighted the key figures within the Financial Statement. Steven confirmed they were able to provide a clean audit report and, in their opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Association's affairs and has been properly prepared in accordance with legislation. No further questions from board. The HoF&IT noted the Management letter has been amended following further discussion with the auditors to remove the point regarding how monies received from Allpay in early April but received by Allpay pre year end should be accounted for. It was highlighted theses fund were received after the final rent period. It was noted this point has instead been added to the letter of representation .

It was also noted that the SHAPS annual financial viability return has been delayed and will not be available till September.

Board approved the report and in particular:

- Approved the Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2023 and Board Statements there in.
- The Board delegated authority to the Secretary and two of the Board Members (Karen McMillan and Elaine Templeton) and to sign the Financial Statements on behalf of the Board, via Docusign
- The Board delegated authority to the same 2 Board Members to sign the amended Letter of Representation
- The Auditors' Management Letter notes no actions are requested by the Auditor, there for no response is required by the Board
- The Online Audited Financial Statements Return for 2022/23 will be prepared in accordance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's policy document "Financial Viability of Registered Social Landlords: Information Requirements" and the approved Financial Statements.
- The Board delegated authority to the Head of Finance & IT to submit, on the Board's behalf, the Annual Online Accounts Return to the Regulator, along with the 3 attachments requested by SHR, following the AGM but by the deadline 30th September 2023.
- The Board delegated authority to the Head of Finance & IT to submit, on the Board's behalf, the SHAPS annual financial viability return when available.

Steven Cunningham left the meeting at 7:26.

11) Management Accounts Q1

Head of Finance and IT went over the management accounts to June 2023 and the projected outturn to the year end. The increase in the surplus was noted for the quarter . It was also noted the projected overspend to the year end spend did not take account of general savings also likely during the year. Main spend is in day to day repairs which is £70,000 over for the quarter due in part to contractor's hourly rates going up. This is being looked at in more details by Asset Management. It was noted despite the projected overspend, loan covenant would still be met.

No questions.

Board Approved the Quarterly Management Accounts

12) Equality Data Collection – Annual Report

Chief Exec explained they're trying to improve a few things. Training in place for Staff and Board on 12 September 2023. Staff will sign to say they have read and understood the Policy. We need to ensure that we do an Equality Impact Assessment for any new process. Other RSL's are struggling with anonymous data. We have collated all the required information, but we are still unsure what we actually can do with it as it is all anonymised

Action plan to improve on data collected, board approve action plan for tenants and applicants. There's an increase in mental health issues for applicants/tenants. Meeting with RC and regulator to find out characteristic and ways to support those with mental health issues. We hold a register for those who've agreed to note health on the register. Action Plan Approved.

Board Noted Report.

13) Election and AGM

Cooperate Services Officer noted that the AGM meeting is on 14th September 2023 at 6:30pm. CSO asked who could attend meeting either in office or hybrid.

5 board members will come to the office , 2 will attend virtually. 1 not sure if they can attend.

14) Secretary Report

Secretary Report is done and everything has been signed off.

Board Approved.

15) Equality and Diversity Policy

Model Policy from EVH. Chief Exec has updated policy with comments from EVH/Auditor. It's a straightforward policy.

No questions.

Board Approved.

16) Annual Self Assessment for Assurance

Chief Exec explained Assurance process was successful. We have ARC validation in September 2023 with internal auditor. We have revamped the tenant engagement strategy and will be sending out tenant consultation survey. Tenant bulletin will also be going out in September, any feedback will be incorporated into assurance statement. We're collecting data to improve Tenant Safety and Equalities and Human Rights, nothing significant. Will revisit Business Continuity Plan and schedule into 24/25. Key Challenge is inflation and 3rd parties we deal with.

Board Approved.

17) Pre-Assurance Statement

Report is a draft letter. Our main focus should be Equalities and Human Rights & Tenant Safety but that could change in October 2023. Chief Exec retiring next year, may need to be in statement but will double check. Final Version will be in October.

Board Approved.

18) FLAIR Sharing Services

Chief Exec explained there's a meeting with FLAIR at the end of September. there's a small cost implication for services. Barrhead will be leading the meeting. Meeting will include a lot of media and digital marketing. We will receive a finalised brief at the end of September. Our Factoring and Development Officer will be getting more involved with development.

Board Approved.

19) Audit Sub Minutes Aug 22.

Head of Finance and IT noted some meetings were not quorate due to various illnesses.

Board Noted.

20) PSPS Minutes – Feb 23.

Board Noted.

21) Entitlements Payments and Benefits notification

A. Staff member from Estates Team has retired and received a long service award of £184 from the association.

B. Staff members son working for Estates Management team via Invest Renfrewshire on a 12 month contract.

Board Approved.

3) Tender Report on Orchard Street



Board Approved

21) AOCB

1. GWOSF Panel – Few bits and pieces to sort out. Panel will consist of Chief Execs for Organisations that are struggling or going to regulation before it reaches regulatory engagement. A list of people has been created to offer quick peer support in any area of work whether it's Asset management, Finance, Housing Management or IT. Chief Exec. has put herself forward for peer support position with GWOSF. Will do it during work hours and will monitor to see how it goes.

Board Approved.

2. Saroj Bains is Resigning. Michelle Hart has asked for 6 months special leave. Audit Sub are now short of 1 person, will try to resolve before next meeting in November.

Board Approved.

3. 64 Espedair Streer – wanted to let property but its not very accessible for most due to no ramps at entrance or disability toilets. Looking for approval to sell building.

Board Approved.

Equality Training confirmation 12th September for board.

5:30 slot: Sandra Loney & Emmanuel Dufegha

10 – 12:30 slot: Tina Russell

Still to confirm times for Ian Johnstone and Mairi Maclean.

23. DONM

AGM meeting 14th September 2023.

Board Meeting 30th October 2023.

Meeting ended 8:21