

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on **WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2018** at **6.30PM**  
at **Larkfield, 14 Lothian Road, Greenock, PA16 0PG**

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Present: Denis Flannery  
Aileen Hunter  
Sheralee McMillan  
David Wilson  
Suzanne Harris  
Adam Thompson  
Alison Akhtar  
Suzanne Gallagher  
Danny McMillan  
Henry Cooke  
Veronica Pollard

In attendance: Lynne Griffin  
Tom Mallatratt  
Tarndeeep Kaur

Stephanie McEwan (minutes)

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## **BUSINESS**

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Suzanne Harris, Sheralee McMillan and Denis Flannery declared an interest in Agenda Item 19.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Jim Canning.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting held on **WEDNESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2018** were approved subject with no amendments:

Moved: Suzanne Harris  
Seconded: Aileen Hunter

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2018**

#### **4.1 LINK GROUP BOARD – FEEDBACK**

LG advised that a new Chief Executive of the Link Group had been appointed and he would be visiting the different parts of the group to meeting with the senior members of staff and Boards in due course.

#### **4.2 INTERNAL AUDIT DRAFT REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS (2017/18)**

LG advised that the feedback regarding the Gas Servicing was accepted and the outstanding action would be removed from the final report.

#### **4.3 JOB EVALUATION REPORTS – closed item of business**

This item was considered as confidential business, and a separate confidential minute prepared.

#### **4.4 LINK PROPERTY SERVICES – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

The Committee agreed to carry this forward to its January meeting.

#### **4.5 STOCK CONDITION SURVEY REPORT 2018**

The findings of the report were discussed and incorporated within the draft budget and 30-year financial projections discussed under agenda item 19.

#### **4.6 REVIEW OF EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MONITORING 2017/18**

The Committee discussed the contents of the report. There were no significant identified from those reported in the previous year.

### **5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting held on **TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018** were approved, with no amendments:

Moved: Suzanne Gallagher

Seconded: Danny McMillan

### **6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

LG advised that we required an additional member for the Health and Safety Sub, and it was agreed that Aileen Hunter would take this on going forward.

### **7. INTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS 2018/19**

Larkfield were part of the new Link Group contract for Internal Audit Services.

The agreed audit areas due to be reviewed shortly were highlighted as: -

- Allocations & Lettings
- Reactive Repairs & Maintenance

Internal auditor would be on site carrying out our audit in early December 18 and a report with any recommendations would be issued to the Committee in January for consideration.

## **8. BOARD EXTRANET REPLACEMENT SITE UPDATE**

Currently a trial pilot was being set up with our preferred supplier and LG would advise the Committee of progress on this in due course.

## **9. HEALTH & SAFETY SUB COMMITTEE**

### **9.1 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**

LG advised that the H&S Sub Committee were investigating the potential to having a defibrillator for the Larkfield office and would feedback information to Committee in due course.

LG also advised that the staff were organising refresher Heart Start Training for Committee and staff for 2019.

### **9.2 HSE Enquiry**

LG advised that the Association recently received a telephone call from the HSE informing us that they had received a notification from a gas engineer in relation to a gas servicing inspection in an adjoining owner occupiers' property in a semi-detached property. A potential gas leak had been identified during this inspection.

The HSE has confirmed to the Association that following their initial discussion with us they are satisfied that their query has been clarified and there is no outstanding matter to be raised with the Association.

## **10. COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 2) 2018/19**

LG advised that completion timescales were all within target with 100% of front-line complaints responded to within SPSI timescale. No stage 2 complaints were received during this period with the most common type of complaint continuing to relate to the reactive repairs service.

## **11. KPI PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 2) 2018/19**

### **11.1 COVERING REPORT**

In Quarter 2, Larkfield Housing Association did not achieve its cumulative targets for the following KPIs:

- **Lettings (average re-let time-calendar days)**

Major improvements works were carried out within our void properties during the reporting period and the time taken to carry out this additional work has not been excluded from the overall re-let times Performance had improved for the second quarter of the year.

- **Percentage of tenancies sustained**

For the period reported, one tenancy failed and was taken back by the Association as abandoned as the new tenant failed to move in and occupy the property as their principle home, following their sign up.

- **Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as a percentage of rent due**

Rent arrears had increased for Quarter 2 due to an increase in broken payment arrangements and new tenants moving straight on to Universal Credit. We were currently implementing our new arrears policy, principles and automated process which we expect to deliver more effective working arrangements and to target our resources to where they are most needed.

- **Percentage of tenancy offers refused**

Of the 11 refusals recorded during the period, 7 of those were noted as no responses from applicants to offers made.

## **11.2 KPI TABLES**

The Committee noted the updated KPI performance figures.

## **12.0 SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS**

### **12.1 HOUSING & BEYOND**

It was noted that on 4 September 2018, the First Minister announced the Programme for Government for the next 12 months and, as part of that, the Scottish Government had committed to beginning work on a vision for how our homes and communities should look and feel in 2040 and the options and choices to get there.

It was also noted that over the next 12 months, the government plans to engage extensively with local government, businesses, the third sector, home owners, tenants and others to do this. As part of that process, Scottish Government would be engaging with housing stakeholders over the autumn to identify some themes and outline options to explore further, as seeking views on what might be part of a vision for 2040.

LG advised that all the local HA's had been invited to a meeting, with representatives from the Scottish Government and IC housing strategy team to discuss issues arising from the discussion paper. An internal meeting was also being held for the SMG members within Link, to formulate a group response.

### **12.2 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

The Committee noted the main points from the covering report. LG advised that Link were proposing to prepare a group wide consultation response.

Committee members would pass any comments back to LG to be incorporated into the group response.

**13. EVH SALARY CONSULTATION 2018**

EVH had carried out a recent consultation exercise with all employers, looking at length of future pay deals and inflationary indicators to be used going forward for cost of living awards.

**14. LARKFIELD ANNUAL STRATEGY DAY**

LG suggested that this year the Committee might want to look at setting some time aside to look at the new Governance framework and main issues from this for the Association.

The Committee agreed that they would like to look at a fuller facilitated strategy day on a Saturday, including the staff some time in February 2019. LG would look at potential dates to take this forward.

**15. SIX MONTHLY REVIEW OF INTERNAL MANAGEMENT PLAN & RISK REGISTER**

The Committee noted the 6 monthly progress reports. It was highlighted that the number one risk identified within the Risk Register continued to be in relation to continuing Welfare Reform and the complexities involved in the implementation of Universal Credit.

**16. QUARTERLY ACCOUNTS TO 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018**

Overall the accounts showed a surplus of £2,868 more than budget, with positive income and expenditure variances.

The accounts also showed that the Association met the financial covenants set by RBS, as detailed in the report.

Overall, income was £12,771 higher than the budget of £939,342 for the year to date. Rental income was in line with budget, as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and Void loss £8,952 higher than the budgeted figure.

Overall, reactive maintenance expenditure was over budget by £34,715. The major repair programme was underway, with £76,760, spent as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Management and Office costs were £17,272 under budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and loan interest is in line with budget, as at the end of the period.

**17. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

Overall the accounts showed a surplus of £4,309 more than budget, with positive income and expenditure variances. The accounts also showed that the Association met the financial covenants set by RBS, as detailed in the report.

Overall, income was £12,552 higher than the budget of £1,095,900 for the year to date. Rental income was in line with budget, as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and void loss, £9,315 higher than the budgeted figure.

Deferred income of £21,599 was released as part of the HEEPS Energy Efficiency Works, and funding received from the Big Lottery to fund improvements to the Larkfield community garden.

Overall, Reactive Maintenance expenditure was over budget by £38,923.

The major repair programme was underway, with £90,270, spent as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018.

Bad debt expenses of £401 had been incurred as at the end of the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018.

Management and office costs were £20,365 under budget as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018

Loan interest was in line with budget, as at the end of the period.

## **18. BOARD EFFECTIVENESS ANNUAL REVIEW**

### **18.1 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL CONSULTANT**

The Committee unanimously approved the recommendation to appoint an external consultant to take this forward.

### **18.2 E-LEARNING PACKAGE**

The Committee unanimously approved to proceed with the proposed E-learning package.

### **18.3 INTRODUCTION TO HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS TRAINING FOR MEMBERS**

The Committee agreed that these sessions should be arranged for either a Tuesday or Wednesday night for members.

## **19. DRAFT BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS & PROPOSED RENT INCREASE FOR CONSULTATION 2019/20**

The Committee discussed the draft budget assumptions and potential rent increase for 2019/20. It was noted that the CPI figure for October was 2.2%.

The Committee agreed to go out to consult to tenants in December this year with a potential increase of 2%. It was noted that Larkfield continued to be faced with higher than Scottish average rent levels for our larger properties.

LG would feedback the response from the consultation at the next meeting.

## **20. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES 17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018**

The Committee unanimously approved the following recommendations:

- Updated Contractors/Consultant list
- Cases 2-4 to be written off as bad debt, totalling £2,546.21 for rent and £456.00 for recharges
- New Anti-Social Behaviour Policy & Property Maintenance Policy.

## **21. POLICY REVIEWS**

### **21.1 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS**

The Committee agreed to carry this item forward to the next meeting.

### **21.2 STANDING ORDERS**

The Committee agreed to carry this item forward to next meeting.

### **21.3 ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Committee agreed to carry this item forward to next meeting.

## **22. PROPOSED CYCLE OF MEETINGS**

The Committee unanimously approved to change the Board of Management meeting from 6.30pm to 6.00pm.

Housing Management & maintenance Sub Committee will continue to start at 6.30pm.

Dates and times for the meeting cycle for 2019 would be approved at the January meeting.

## **23. CHRISTMAS OFFICE CLOSURE 2018/19**

The Committee approved the recommendation for the Larkfield office to be closed between Christmas and New Year on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> and Monday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. Staff would be required to use 2 days of their annual leave to cover the two days absence.

## **24. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

LG advised that she would speak to Jim Canning to seek his wishes with regards to a retiral event.

## **25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9:10pm