

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on **WEDNESDAY 10TH MARCH 2021** at **6.00PM** via **MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Present: Aileen Hunter
William Rice
Ashley Brown
Alison McManus
David Wilson
Kelly-Ann Doherty

In attendance: Lynne Griffin
Alan Semple (Link Group)

Stephanie McEwan (minutes)

BUSINESS

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Aileen Hunter declared an interest in Agenda Item 14.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mareta Greig and Allison Ahktar.

3. DRAFT ACCOUNTS TO 31ST JANUARY 2021

Overall, the surplus was £140,410 ahead of the budgeted surplus of £302,603. This was due to the underspend in the major repairs budget and lower office and team overheads, impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions.

Rental income was in line with budget, with a variance of 0.5% compared to budget.

Void loss was higher than the budget figure. The main driver for the higher void loss was the Covid19 restrictions, which had resulted in delays and backlogs in the completion of void repairs and the suspension of .allocations during Q1.

Reactive maintenance was under budget by £44,435. Cyclical repairs costs were £4,622 higher than budget, driven by the landscaping costs and major repairs costs of £119,520 was £204,980 less than the budgeted figure. The Major repairs programme had been delayed due to Covid19 restrictions throughout the year, resulting in lower spend in the year, to date.

Bad debts written off and provided for is £11,458 lower than budget due to write offs to be assessed in quarter 4.

Management and Office costs of £93,183 were £62,254 under budget as at 31 January 2021 due to the Covid19 restrictions, 40% lower than the budget figure. Finance expenditure was £33,304 compared to a budget of £42,710. Loan interest was lower than budgeted due the Link Group loan interest being based on a 3-Month Libor variable rate and the 3-month Libor variable interest rate being historically low at the time the interest was due.

Overall expenditure was £149,975 lower than budgeted expenditure of £1,338,286, largely due to the Covid19 restrictions and suspension of major repairs works.

4. INSURANCE CONTRACT/TENDER RENEWAL 2021

It was noted that we were required to go through an annual renewal process for the appointment of our insurers, across the Link Group. The commencement period for the current broker contract was January 2019, for a 5- year period and this means that the 5- year end date will be January 2024. The insurers are under an annual renewal process with the cover period running from April each year.

The insurance premium for 2021/2022 will be provided by Bruce Stevenson Insurance Brokers (BSIB). This premium covers the period 28th April 2021 – 27th April 2022.

5. ANNUAL DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORMS 2021

Members noted that they would be required to complete their annual Declaration of Interest forms towards the end of the current financial year.

Members should expect to receive an electronic communication on this, in the coming weeks.

6. FINAL BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS AND 30 YEAR FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

L Griffin advised that the Association had submitted their response on the EVH wage ballot proposal and confirmation had now been received that the proposal had been approved by the EVH employer members. For 2021/22 an 0.8% increase to all salaries would be applied as from 1st April 2021.

7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH JANUARY 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on WEDNESDAY 20TH JANUARY 2021 were approved subject to the following amendments:

Mareta Greig to be added to the list of attendees for the above meeting.

Moved: Aileen Hunter

Seconded: Mareta Greig

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH JANUARY 2021

8.1 COMMITTEE ACTION REGISTER

Members confirmed that they were happy for the Area Manager to pass on their personal e-mail addresses to SHARE for use/access to their on-line e-learning training package.

It was also noted that a nomination for the Link Group Board and/or the Link Conveners Group was still outstanding. The Area Manager would discuss this with Larkfield's Chair.

9. KPI PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 3) 2021/22

Members noted the following –

Average number of days to complete non-emergency repairs

Completion times for reactive external gutter clearances continued to have a detrimental impact on the average response time to complete non-emergency repairs. This work was currently sub-contracted out by Link Property and we were currently discussing how best to approach this work to improve performance going forward.

Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year

Total re-let times during the quarter continued to be impacted adversely due to lock down restrictions and the Covid-19 related backlog of repairs and some additional internal void procedural delays to support remote working arrangements.

Total rent loss due to properties being empty

The increase in total rent loss due to void properties was due to the average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year.

Homelessness, of properties available (and where there was demand from homeless people) to let what % went to homeless applicants.

The Association received five Section 5 Referrals during the reporting period, however we were unable to comply with the requests due to the size of void properties available at the time and low turnover of stock. The Association had, however, leased two void properties during the year for use of temporary homeless accommodation, and not included in the KPI data.

10. REPLACEMENT BOARD EXTRANET SITE

L Griffin highlighted to members that the new portal "Decision Time" is a cloud-based solution and is accessible through an internet browser. This means that members will still be able to access the portal until such times as the new devices and Larkfield e-mail addresses are issued. The proposal is for members to be set up with a new "Decision Time" account, and with new email addresses so that use of the portal can begin and when the time comes to be set up with a new iPad and e-mail address, the new account would be simply would over to that address. The log-in details would simply change to reflect the new email address.

Members also noted that they should receive an e-mail invitation and link details for online training for the new portal.

11. HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE SUB COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2021

The Committee noted the draft Housing Management & Maintenance Minutes from the meeting on 5th February 2021. There were no items for approval.

12. APPROVAL OF DRAFT INTERNAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

- (a) Draft Internal Management Plan (IMP) 2021-2026
- (b) Appendix 1 – 30 Year Financial Projections
- (c) Appendix 2 - Sensitivity Analysis
- (d) Appendix 3 – Risk Register

The Committee discussed the draft IMP document for the period, 2021-2026 and appended 30-year financial projections, sensitivity analysis and updated Risk Register.

It was agreed that the Area Manager would review the section around current performance, in line with our performance tolerances and re-asses those areas where we were doing okay or could do better. The IMP document and Action Plan for 2021/22 would be brought back to the Committee in May for final approval.

13. LARKFIELD STRATEGY DAY 2021

Members agreed for this to be revisited in June when Covid restrictions were eased.

14. PROPOSED OWNER MAINTENANCE CHARGE FOR 2021

The Committee discussed the proposed charge and agreed that the common maintenance charge for the year ended 31 March 2021 would be as detailed in the report, with the addition of any additional charges to be invoiced between now and the end of March 2021.

15. WIDER ROLE BUDGET ALLOCATION

The Committee unanimously approved the proposed project budget allocation for 2021/22 as detailed in the report. Regarding the pilot Link Living project it was highlighted that access to the Scottish Community Mediation Service might provide a valuable linkage to the project outcomes.

16. STAFFING MATTER

The Committee noted this report and that the temporary, part-time, Project Admin Assistant post had been accounted for within the staffing budget for 2021/22.

17. BAD DEBT WRITE OFFS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Committee unanimously approved to write off Cases 3-17 as bad debt.

18. POLICY REVIEWS

(a) FACTORING POLICY

The Committee unanimously agreed to adopt the revised Link Factoring policy.

(b) ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Committee unanimously agree to adopt the revised Link Asbestos Management Policy.

(c) GAS SAFETY POLICY

The Committee unanimously agreed to adopt the updated Link Gas Safety Policy. The references to section posts and roles and responsibilities would be changed to suit local arrangements.

19. ASSURANCE STATEMENT FRAMEWORK & TIMETABLE FOR 2021

Members noted that The AAS is a key part of the SHR's Regulatory Framework and Link Group Board will require to submit its third statement, on behalf of the four RSLs, by the end of October 2021. The proposed timetable/framework for 2021 was approved.

20. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Association's internal auditor had assessed the controls in place in relation to Larkfield's reactive repairs and maintenance procedures and welfare reform measures, within Larkfield. The report confirms that the auditor has gained a assurance that, in general, Larkfield Housing Association's reactive repairs and maintenance procedures and welfare reform controls have been well designed and operating effectively.

The Committee noted this and approved the report and its recommendations.

21. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The Committee unanimously approved a special leave of absence for Danny McMillan for an initial period of six months.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Post Meeting Note: Meeting re-arranged for WEDNESDAY 19TH MAY 2021 at 6.00PM via MICROSOFT TEAMS.

The meeting closed at 7.30PM