

Abronhill Housing Association

Remote Meeting of the Management Committee held on Thursday 29 October 2020 via Zoom at 17:00hrs

Minutes

Present:	L Black	R Russell	I Smith
	C Burns	M McGuire	D Brown
	A Smith	W Noon	
In Attendance:	S Macintyre	J Daisley	A Moore
	C McKiernan	A Cameron, Quinn Internal Audit	P Long, FMD Finance
	J Mulholland, Mulholland Housing Consultancy		

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	Apologies An apology was received from P Broadwith.	
2.	Declarations of Interest There were no declaration of interests.	
3.	<p>3.1 Minutes of previous meeting (held on 24 September 2020)</p> <p>Acceptance of the minutes which had been circulated in advance was proposed as a true record of the meeting of 24 September 2020 by C Burns and seconded by W Noon.</p> <p>3.2 Decision List from Meeting held on 24 September 2020</p> <p>This was issued with the committee papers. S Macintyre advised that information regarding AFTAR services will be issued to tenants week commencing 2 November 2020.</p> <p>R Russell advised that P Broadwith had asked for date to be included at item 8. North Lanarkshire Council – Liaison.</p>	
4.	Matters Arising S Macintyre advised that the tender submissions for external audit services are due to be returned by 30 October 2020. S Macintyre will email committee members tomorrow with dates and times for a meeting	

	<p>to take place next week to discuss the tenders. No more than 3 committee members are required to form a panel. D Brown confirmed she would be interested in being part of the panel. Interviews are due to take place on 10 November 2020.</p> <p>P Broadwith advised S Macintyre that SHARE are holding a course called Questions you should be asking – Finance. P Broadwith has asked them to provide a cost to run the course for the whole committee.</p>	
5.	<p>Health & Safety and Cyber Security</p> <p>5.1 Corona Virus Update Report</p> <p>The report was issued with committee papers. R Russell advised that P Broadwith had asked about the policy for remote working. S Macintyre advised that he would look at a flexible working policy for staff. He advised that staff have been provided with work mobile phones and laptops and have been advised about a tax relief allowance for staff working from home. The office is being prepared for staff to return once restrictions allow. However, social distancing will be difficult in certain areas of the office. Currently one member of staff at a time is going into the office to carry out tasks that cannot be done from home.</p>	
6.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>6.1 Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum (GWSF)</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that the note of GWSF meeting with the Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning was enclosed for information only.</p> <p>6.2 Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)</p> <p>The October report was issued with the committee papers.</p>	
7.	<p>Governance</p> <p>7.1 Calendar of Meetings 20/21</p> <p>This was issued with the committee papers.</p> <p>7.2 Committee Member Privacy Notice</p> <p>The committee member privacy notice was included with the papers. J Daisley explained that the Association’s Data Protection Officer advised that this should be issued to all committee members as it explains how</p>	

	<p>we use their personal information. The privacy notice should be signed and returned.</p> <p>7.3 Membership Report</p> <p>J Daisley advised that a new membership application had been received from Mr Brownlee who is a resident in the Abronhill area and who has expressed an interest in joining the Management Committee. This was approved by committee.</p> <p>7.4 Learning & Development Plan</p> <p>A copy of the learning and development plan was included with the committee papers. S Macintyre advised that the dates have to be added to the document.</p>	
8.	<p>Strategy/Development</p> <p>8.1 Development Report</p> <p>J Mulholland discussed the report that that had been issued with the committee papers. J Mulholland advised that the site start date has been delayed until Jan 2021. J Mulholland advised that the Scottish Government had not been fully aware of the Association's involvement in the project but that is now being addressed. J Mulholland will work with Clyde Valley on the development in relation to the legal agreement and will speak to Fettes, FMD regarding the finance for the development. A Moore, Maintenance Officer will liaise with the Clerk of Works on an ongoing basis. J Mulholland advised that there is no risk to the Association as the Association will take ownership of the properties at the end of the contract at a fixed cost.</p> <p>R Russell expressed concern that the Scottish Government had not been fully aware of the Association's involvement as discussions have been ongoing for a long time. R Russell asked for clarification on the pre site start fees. J Mulholland explained that these costs will be rolled up into the contract cost with the Association. R Russell asked if we would be responsible for these costs if the Association decide not to purchase the properties at the end of the contract. J Mulholland advised that the Association would not be responsible. R Russell asked if the Association's Maintenance Officer, Andrew Moore would be allowed on site. J Mulholland advised this would be included in the agreement between Clyde Valley and Abronhill Housing Association. J Mulholland does not anticipate being on site as his is an advisory role. It was agreed to have a sub committee to look at the legal agreement and also the handover of the properties. R Russell asked why there was no sign at the site. J Mulholland will speak to John Duncan, Director of Regeneration at Clyde Valley.</p>	

	I Smith & A Smith left meeting to technical issues with their connection.	
9.	<p>Staffing</p> <p>9.1 EVH Pay Award 2021 Consultation</p> <p>Information was issued with the papers from EVH who are seeking views from full members on three potential scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer 1.25% • Offer 0.6% • No pay award <p>Once they have collated the views from members they will negotiate with the trade union before bringing back their proposal to members. S Macintyre advised that if CPI in October was 1.25% the pay award would be 1.75% CPI plus 0.5%.</p> <p>Following discussion where the committee discussed the Association's budgeted figure of 2% the committee agreed to go back to EVH with the offer of 1.75%.</p>	
10.	<p>Finance & Audit</p> <p>10.1 5 Management Accounts to 30 September 2020</p> <p>P Long presented the management accounts to 30 September 2020 which had been issued with the committee papers. The Statement of Comprehensive Income shows the Association made an operating surplus of £138k compared to the budgeted surplus of £65k which is mainly due to lower maintenance costs. Net interest payments and pension deficit payments reduce the net surplus to £118k.</p> <p>The income and expenditure analysis shows that the void loss has increased as more time is required to re let empty properties due to contractor restrictions and this is expected to continue.</p> <p>The Statement of Financial Position shows that the net cost of the Association's housing assets is £3.905m. Cash balances are higher than budgeted due to lower expenditure. The rent arrears continue to increase and are expected to increase further. Housing Staff are monitoring this closely. Reactive maintenance costs are now increasing as all reactive repairs are now being carried out.</p> <p>Pat Long confirmed that the Association continues to comply with all of the financial covenants with the Co-op bank. He noted that the Association will look at obtaining a new loan facility to repay the current loan with the Co-op bank and to fund the new development. New covenants will be negotiated with the new lender and further information will be presented to the committee.</p> <p>W Noon noted the strong cash position and asked about the delay in repairs. It was noted that Association intends to spend £190k in the next 6 months on gas connections, gas boilers and smoke, carbon monoxide</p>	

	<p>and heat detectors assuming that we are able to complete this work within any restrictions due to the Corona Virus.</p> <p>10.2 Internal Audit – Assurance Statement Audit Report</p> <p>A Cameron presented the annual assurance audit report. He advised that he had carried out an assessment and reviewed the Association’s files and had made 18 recommendations; but there were no material findings. He advised the committee that it can report full compliance within its Assurance Statement. A Cameron noted that any items in orange were his recommendations for internal purposes.</p> <p>10.3 Internal Audit – Assurance Statement Audit</p> <p>Discussed above.</p> <p>10.4 Assurance Statement Report</p> <p>S Macintyre has prepared a draft Annual Assurance Statement for the Committee to consider. It takes account of feedback from the Regulator last year and recent revised guidance for this year’s submission. It was noted that Assurance Statement is due to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by 30 November 2020.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to review the statement and asked that it be brought back to the November meeting to allow any final changes to be made before being agreed and submitted to the SHR.</p>	
<p>11. Operations</p>	<p>11.1 Quarterly Performance Maintenance Report</p> <p>A Moore presented the report which was issued with the committee papers. He highlighted that the average length of time to complete emergency repairs was 1hr 58 mins and non-emergency repairs were 9 days 3 hours which is higher than the Scottish Average for 2018/19 of 6.6 days. The figure is higher as several repairs were ordered pre lockdown but were not completed until quarter 2. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) are due to publish the figures for 2019/20 tomorrow and these can be used to benchmark performance going forward.</p> <p>It was noted that the amount spent on reactive repairs is lower than budgeted but that void costs are higher than expected due to an increased amount of voids in the reporting period. There have been 15 voids in the reporting period and A Moore confirmed that we currently have 6 void properties with keys due back for a further 3. Some of the properties were void prior to the lockdown, tenancies have been terminated during the lockdown and keys have been returned without notice given. Some of the void properties have been in poor condition.</p>	

<p>The gas service contract is due to be tendered in April 2021 and as noted previously this is being jointly procured with Hillhead HA.</p> <p>It was noted that the gas servicing audits are currently on hold.</p> <p>A Moore also highlighted that the percentage of repairs completed right first time has reduced due to repairs being ordered prior to lockdown but not completed until July but the average number of repairs per property has reduced. No pre or post inspections were completed in Quarter 2. Letters have been issued to 90 properties that require an electrical inspection and the Association aims to complete this work by 31 March 2021. Two stage 3 medical adaptations have been completed. No tenant's satisfaction letters were issued during Quarter 2.</p> <p>Item 14. Fire, Heat Alarm & Carbon Monoxide Detection Contract The Association aims to restart this contract by 1 November 2020. However, we are aware the Scottish Government is considering delaying the installation deadline to February 2022. R Russell asked if this has been confirmed.</p> <p>Item 15. Thermaflow boiler replacement A Moore advised that the Association has 34 properties that currently have a thermaflow electric boiler installed in their property. These systems are very expensive to run and the reliability of the systems are of increasing concern and costly to maintain and repair. The costs are based on all 34 properties being upgraded. R Russell asked if all tenants involved have expressed an interest in having the systems upgraded. A Moore will contact tenants and it was agreed to have the gas connections fitted as the properties could be upgraded once void. After some further discussion the Committee agreed to the recommendation to proceed with boiler replacement programme and associated gas connection costs.</p> <p>11.2 Quarterly Performance Housing Management Report</p> <p>C McKiernan discussed the report that was issued with the committee papers. It was noted that 46% of the current rent arrears at the end of September were due to technical arrears; this is money that is due to be paid on the tenant's behalf by North Lanarkshire Council in the case of Housing Benefit or DWP in the case of Universal Credit. It was noted that the Association is due to receive 2 housing benefit payments in November which will reduce the technical arrears and Universal Credit are changing how their payments are made. The report noted that the furlough scheme is coming to an end and legal action restrictions make pursuing arrears more difficult. It is however anticipated that by the end of the next quarter the Association should have a clearer arrears position. C McKiernan confirmed that Universal Credit claimants can ask for the rent element to be paid direct to their Landlord or we can request this if a tenant is in significant rent arrears.</p>	
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	<p>There were a total of 9 lets up to the 30 September 2020.</p> <p>There was 1 anti-social complaint received in the quarter which was resolved within target timescales.</p> <p>The Association is looking to increase the number of applicants on the waiting list and will be promoting its list via website and Facebook.</p>	
12.	<p>Deferred Agenda Items</p> <p>No items were deferred.</p>	
13.	<p>Any Other Competent Business</p> <p>S Macintyre advised that M2 who provide IT support will provide a proposal on the committee being more digitally connected which will be brought to a future meeting.</p>	
14.	<p>Date of Next Meeting:</p> <p>Thursday 26 November 2020 at 5pm via Zoom</p>	

Signed as a true record by the Chairperson

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Copies of committee reports are available on request.