

LINTHOUSE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
Approved Minute of a meeting held at
1 Cressy Street, Glasgow and Via Teams
On **Tuesday 05 September 2023** at **6.00pm**

PRESENT

Alec Leishman, AL (Chair)
David McGeoch, DM
Sheila McGeoch, SM
Frank Murphy, FM
Collette Ness, CN
Heike Bley, HB
Graham Gillespie (Teams)

IN ATTENDANCE

Irene C. McFarlane, IM (Chief Executive Officer - CEO)
Bryan McMahon, BM (Director of Property Services)
Elaine McDermott, EM (Housing Manager)
Alison Greig, AG (Corporate Services Manager)
Fettes McDonald, FMD (FMD Financial Services) (Teams)

CO-OPTees

Paul Phin, PP
William Pritchard, WP
Carrie McCafferty, CM
Funmi Fajemiseye, FF

1. APOLOGIES

- 1.1 AL welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that there had been a slight delay hard copies of papers being issued which ES had followed up as soon as aware. He informed members he had, based on the explanation provided by ES, was sympathetic to the situation.
- 1.2 Apologies were submitted by Mary Ray, Susan Brown and Marc-Andre Schmitz.
- 1.3 During preparation of the Governance Report an issue was noted by staff that as C Rush is related to a member of staff, she is unable to sit on the Committee, advice is being sought from TC Young in view of LHA Rules.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest expressed from the members attending.

3. DECLARATIONS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR & NOTIFIABLE EVENTS

- 3.1 All those present at the meeting confirmed that there were no breaches of ethical behaviour that they were aware of.
- 3.2 IM confirmed that there had been no notifiable events since the previous committee meeting.

4. UNAPPROVED MINUTE OF MEETING HELD 01 AUGUST 2023

- 4.1 SM referred to 9.2 and suggests replacing 'man' on lines 4 and 6 with 'person'. PP also noted that at 10.2 line 4, replace 'Chair was' with 'Chair is'.
- 4.2 SM asked why names were missing at item 12.6 AG explained that the copy provided was a template to let Committee see what the letter looked like and that AL has the final copy with names included.
- 4.3 Subject to the proposed changes, FM proposed the minute as accurate and PP seconded.
- 4.4 Committee **APPROVED** Minute of 01 August 2023 subject to grammar changes.

5. UNAPPROVED AASC MEETING HELD 15 AUGUST 2023

- 5.1 AL invited Chair of meeting to highlight any issues raised at the meeting. DM confirmed that there was nothing to add as minute was an accurate reflection of the meeting.
- 5.2 FMD noted an error at 6.1 and that it should be 'compliant' instead of 'compliment'.
- 5.3 AL asked GG if he had reviewed the minute as he was absent from the meeting and if there was anything to comment on. GG confirmed he was satisfied with the content.
- 5.3 Committee **NOTED** the unapproved minute of the AASC meeting held 15 August 2023.

6. MATTERS ARISING, ACTION POINT REGISTER

- 6.1 AG advised Committee that under action 10.3, a letter had been sent to Bank of Scotland and that a standard complaint acknowledgement had been received from them with a more detailed response to follow. AL advised Committee that he has signed the letter drafted by AG and it was very well worded and should leave them in no doubt about LHA's unhappiness at the situation. AG to circulate the letter to members and action to remain open until full response received.
- 6.2 IM followed with an update on the connected action at 10.4, confirmed that an email had been sent to Chris Stephens, local MP, providing information about an outreach unit in Cambuslang which may be a suitable alternative for Govan if the campaign to keep the bank open is unsuccessful. Committee **AGREED** to close 10.4.
- 6.3 Committee **NOTED** the Action Point Register.

7. REVIEW OF STATUTORY ACCOUNTS 2022/23

- 7.1 FMD provided a quick overview of the report confirming that the Statutory Accounts and Auditor Report had been reviewed at the Audit and Assurance Subcommittee meeting of 15 August 2023 and that no concerns were noted, the auditor report did not contain any concerns that would have to be brought to the Management Committee and that there were no material weaknesses. FMD confirmed that as the financial consultant he was happy that the figures were accurate and confirmed that it had been a good discussion at the AASC meeting. FMD reminded the committee that they are being asked to approve the statutory accounts and sign off the management letter.
- 7.2 AL opened for questions, none were submitted. GG confirmed that while he had not attended the meeting of 15 August 2023, he had reviewed the statutory accounts in his capacity as AASC chair and was comfortable with what was provided.
- 7.3 Management Committee **APPROVED** the Statutory Accounts for 2023/23.
- 7.4 FMD moved onto the signing of the Management Letter which is the suggested response to the Auditor Report. Committee **APPROVED** the Management Letter to be signed by the Chair.
- 7.5 FMD then provided an overview of the Letter of Representation which provides detail on how the audit went and that there is nothing contentious within the letter.
- 7.6 PP raised an issue with the opening on the letter as he did not find the term 'Dears Sirs' as very inclusive. After some discussion on political correctness GG reminded members that this was a letter from French Duncan and any changes would have to come from them as opposed to the Management Committee. AL suggested that as there is no issue with the content of the letter it is approved as is and FMD draws French Duncans attention to wording of letter titles.
- 7.7 Committee **APPROVED** Letter of Representation.

8. QUARTERLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30 JUNE 2023

- 8.1 FMD presented the report, advising that the quarterly accounts had been reviewed at the previous AASC meeting and noted that as these are the first quarter accounts it is fairly early in the year for issues. FMD confirmed that the accounts show an [REDACTED] and the main reason for the difference is contained within the report. FMD advised there was nothing of concern at this point, that cash is fine and there are no concerns with the covenants, although it should be noted that covenants are only tested at the year end.

This item is confidential as it is commercially sensitive, and publication would harm commercial interest.

- 8.2 AL opened for questions. IM noted that there is mention of a separate void repair report. FMD advised that this appears to be left over from a previous report and should be deleted.

8.3 GG asked about number 3.3 on covenants which states that there are no concerns then goes on to state that 'capitalisation of Homemaster costs and prepayment of insurance charges for the year would remedy position' this suggest that there is a concern that requires to be remedied. FMD advised that the covenant targets are 110% and the figure in the quarterly accounts is 97%, which would be a breach if this was the time of formal testing, however it is not, and the information provided about Homemaster cost capitalisation and insurance prepayments would be the explanation provided to satisfy this.

8.4 Committee **APPROVED** Quarterly Management Accounts to 30 June 2023.

FMD left the meeting at 18:30.

9. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT TEAM REPORT

9.1 EM presented the report, advising it had been split into three sections and will focus on each one in turn starting with the first report requesting to pursue sequestration of an owner who LHA provide factoring services to.

9.2 SM asked what the effect of sequestration would be for an individual. EM advised that it is an owner/occupier who owes a large debt to the Association for factoring services and LHA are looking to pursue court proceedings to recover the monies owed. IM advised that sequestration is the current term for bankruptcy and if granted gives the potential to use any assets owned by the person to pay off their debts, however there is no guarantee that such action would pay the debt owed to LHA as it will depend on other debts owed and how they are ranked i.e. debts owed to government and council rank higher than standard financial debt. IM confirmed that there is possibility that the person could lose their home and a letter will be sent to the debtor by TC Young advising of action and consequences of ignoring this.

9.3 IM confirmed that all attempts to resolve the debt had been attempted, including an offer to buy the property as part of the current acquisitions which would have allowed the person to stay in their home, however the debtor has not cooperated with any of the attempts.

9.4 IM noted that while such action is extreme and involves a high level of cost it is necessary to show that LHA are willing to follow all avenues available to recover money owed.

9.5 AL noted that in all his years on the committee, this was the first request to take such action which should show how it is treated as a last resort. After some further discussion on the sequestration process IM suggested that it may be more suitable to include a 14-day response time in the letter being issued by TC Young on 06 September if approval is given tonight.

9.6 BP asked if it was known whether the person involved had any learning difficulties or mental health issues. EM confirmed that there were no issues known to LHA staff and that part of the process includes contacting Health and Social Care Partnership to find this out and in this case, there were no links into any support services.

- 9.7 Committee **APPROVED** Request to Pursue Sequestration with the inclusion of a 14-day response before going to court.
- 9.8 EM then moved onto the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) report, noting that this had been requested back in May, following the ARC report, to determine whether a strategy was necessary to deal with ASB issues. EM appreciated that there was a lot of information within the report and advised Committee that there were a lot of changes underway within the Housing Team to support ASB work and that the team feel they are equipped to deal with the issues reported.
- 9.9 AL thanked EM for the report and advised that he found it quite illuminating, providing a better understanding of what is going on in the area and would like to see ASB becoming a regular standing report for the Management Committee.
- 9.10 SM raised the category of listing and level of seriousness as she noticed that dog fouling/attack was listed as low-level seriousness however she felt that dog attack should be higher given the impact it can have. EM noted that there were no dog attacks reported under this policy and if one did occur it would be a police matter and will probably include other organisations and therefore should be a higher category. AL proposed splitting dog fouling/attack into two separate categories and moving dog attack up category 2. Committee **AGREED** to split the dog fouling/attack into two and move dog attack to category 2.
- 9.11 FM commended the report, noting that it provides members with a better idea of what Housing Officers are faced with. EM advised that while it is not contained in the report it should be highlighted that there are no complaints relating to youth disorder in the area. Other local RSLs do have an issue with youth disorder and the team continues to work with them in the event of any spillover into Linthouse.
- 9.12 PP noted that there are only two complaints for drug use and given the reputation of Govan this is very encouraging. EM advised it is more likely to relate to the sale of drugs and that police would have been involved. AL asked if staff had a good relationship with the local police, EM confirmed they had and meet regularly on number of matters including training.
- 9.13 Committee **NOTED** that ASB report and **AGREED** that it should be a six-monthly report.
- 9.14 EM moved onto the wider Role report, advising that it was for noting only and happy to take any questions from committee.
- 9.15 SM asked about the family events, particularly the Easter Event, and if hosting such events puts people off who do not hold the same religious beliefs. IM advised that both the Easter and Christmas events are well attend and she has been really pleased by the diversity of the attendees, showing that such events can be multicultural and that no one is put off as it is more about the fun than religion. EM also confirmed that the events encourage diversity by providing

cultural options such as halal food and the feedback received is always excellent.

- 9.16 IM provided an update on the progress on moving the Community Larder to the vacant property at 1133 Govan Road. IM advised that two funding bids to help retrofit the space had been unsuccessful and given the level of work required and costs involved staff have had to consider other options. IM confirmed that the former LUV Café is due to become available with the keys being handed back in a few days and that while there will be some work to resolve flooding damage, the setup of this space makes it a more suitable option for the Larder and is asking Committee to approve this.
- 9.17 Committee **APPROVED** making the former LUV Café available for the Community Larder.
- 9.18 CN advised the Committee that the Larder relies on volunteers and moving to a dedicated site will allow for an increase in hours and she encourages any member with time to volunteer. AL noted the hard work of CN and CM on the Community Larder and invited thanks from the members on this.
- 9.19 IM informed the Committee that the Energy Advisor project has done very well and in partnership with GEL has brought £256,000.00 into the area over a two-year period and the team will continue to work together to provide this essential service.
- 9.20 Committee **NOTED** the Wider Role report.

EM left the meeting at 18:56

10. PROPERTY SERVICES UPDATE

- 10.1 BM presented the report advising that there were a couple of recommendations for approval, starting with the phase 4 window and stonework repair. BM advised that he is asking for CCG to be appointed as contractor for phase 4 based on the costs provided and that while there are still some details to finalise with CCG, the timing of meetings requires approval to be sought tonight and he expects all outstanding matters to fall into place.
- 10.2 BM also advised that he is seeking retrospective appoint of Reids as phase 4 cost consultants. It had been anticipated that Reids would become part of an LHA contractor framework however this did not happen in time for phase 4 and a back option from the framework fell through and resulted in increased costs. As Reids were still contracted to the phase 3 project and were happy to carry out work until framework was up and running it was felt this was the best value for money.
- 10.3 Committee **APPROVED** appoint of CCG to phase 4 window and sandstone repair and retrospectively **APPROVED** Reids Ltd as phase 4 cost consultants.
- 10.4 BM moved onto the mid-year procurement review, noting that the procurement strategy had been presented to Committee earlier in the year and the information provided is an update on the current position. BM confirmed that

there were no concerns with current contracts and noticed an error in the report where 'Elder Park boiler' should instead be 'Elder House boiler'.

- 10.5 AL opened for questions. PP asked about TV maintenance and whose TVs it was that were being maintained. BM explained that it relates to communal aerial systems in properties such as the multi-storey flats and tenements.
- 10.6 BM moved onto the EICR update, advising members that he is seeking approval to allow for the option of forced access to be used for more problematic properties. BM confirmed that such action would be a last resort when all other attempts have been unsuccessful as it is resource intensive and, in his opinion, has potential to open LHA to unnecessary claims, although he has sought advice from TC Young who have confirmed that such an option is available due to the Tenancy Agreement and could follow the same procedures as Gas Servicing.
- 10.7 AL asked if the Association already had this power. BM confirmed that gas servicing is a statutory requirement given legal basis for forced access, however, electrical testing is only a regulatory requirement and does not have the same legal back-up.
- 10.8 GG asked about the figures provided and how many of the outstanding properties are a result of no access rather than a lack of capacity to carry out. BM confirmed all outstanding properties are due to no access and that all have had at least two visits to the properties. GG asked if action approved how confident was BM that the team could get the number down to a comfortable figure before the year end. BM confirmed he thinks the number could be significantly reduced has have the inhouse resources and contractors available, it is only the access that is the sticking point and where possible the team are trying their best to align the testing with other work i.e. if the property comes under phase 4, is due a gas service or a repair is requested which should also help.
- 10.9 GG followed up his questions by asking if something were to happen in the property as a result of an electrical what would be LHA's liability if we have not forced access. BM advised this is not a scenario that had yet been proposed and he would seek opinion from both TC Young and insurers.
- 10.10 SM asked for the wording to be corrected for it to read as 'forced' instead of 'force'.
- 10.11 PP asked what responsibility LHA had for private landlords who are provided with factoring services. BM confirmed the Association did not have any responsibility for private landlords or owners.
- 10.12 AL asked GG what number he would be more comfortable with as a target. GG noted that LHA is in no way the highest in the sector on this issue and while he would like it to be zero, he is aware of the challenges being faced. GG asked for a further report before the year end to show the number, how many access attempts and potential for forced access. BM advised that every report includes an EICR update and will look to provide more detail in the next.

- 10.13 IM suggested a series of articles in upcoming newsletters and include an incentive whereby everyone who has an EICR complete in 2023/24 is entered into a raffle for £100 gift card.
- 10.14 AL opened the suggestion to a vote. Committee voted five to four in favour of offering a prize draw for all completed EICRS.
- 10.15 Committee **APPROVED** use of forced access for EICR.
- 10.16 BM then provided an update on the recruitment of estate caretakers and advised it would be necessary to look into the purchase or lease of a second vehicle for the team. Committee **APPROVED** purchase/lease of second vehicle.

11. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT & DRAFT ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2023

- 11.1 AG presented the report, advising that it is an annual report brought to the Committee prior to each Annual General Meeting (AGM) with the first section providing the usual rules extract and noted that AGM notifications had been issued with the aim of any nominations, including co-optees choosing to stand for election, being returned by 07 September.
- 11.3 AL took the opportunity to ask the co-optees present at the meeting if they intended to stand for election at the AGM. All four co-optees present confirmed they would be standing for election.
- 11.4 AG advised that the rules require one third of the committee, not including the co-optees, to stand down at each AGM. FM and SM have confirmed that they will be standing down and not seeking re-election. MAS will also stand down and will seek re-election. AG confirmed that if no further nominations are received this will result in three vacancies on the committee.
- 11.5 AG confirmed that the current draft of the Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) had been reviewed by AASC at their meeting of 15 August 2023. No changes were made however there may be one or two tweaks required depending on what information comes from the Regulator. This will be signed off by the Chair when approved by the Committee. Statutory Annual Accounts will be signed off by AL, IM and DM.
- 11.6 AG advised still to arrange a date for meeting with GG and DM to test the ASCRIP to provide additional assurance that LHA are doing everything required.
- 11.7 Under 3.5 of the report PP pointed out that his name was spelt incorrectly, and HB confirmed the same. AG noted these to be changed.
- 11.8 Management Committee **NOTED** the report.

12. AOCB

- 12.1 AL noted that while his following comments relate to the governance Report he was raising them under AOCB. AL expressed his gratitude to the co-optees for choosing to stand for election and while he was sorry to see FM and SM to go, he understood it was the right time for them and assured that should they wish to return to the committee they would be welcomed back.
- 12.2 Committee expressed their thanks to SM and FM for their time on the committee.
- 12.3 AL confirmed that the committee conversations had been completed and that AG will contact everyone individually regarding training requests.
- 12.3 AL also confirmed that as required by the rules he will be standing down as Chair, although intends to return to the position when time allows. It was noted that while the rules were unclear on how long this should be IM and GG thought 12 months was standard practice. AG to confirm this with TC Young.
- 12.4 AL asked for meeting schedule for to be adhered to – IM explained that Executive Team and Alison Greig will be proposing a change to the Governance Schedule.
- 12.5 BM asked to add two staff members to the HARP Payment system which is the Glasgow City Council online system for grant funding. Committee **APPROVED** addition of Morven Gourlay- Property Estates Officer and Debbie Martin – Property Asset Officer to HARP.

Dates of next meeting

Management Committee Meeting – Tuesday 24 October 2023 at 6pm
Audit & Assurance Sub-Committee – Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 6pm
Staffing Sub-Committee Meeting – Tuesday 03 October 2023 at 6pm
Policy Working Group – Tuesday 17 October 2023 at 6pm

Meeting Closed at 20:20pm.

Chair – Alec Leishman