

PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2019 AT 6.30 PM AT WELLMeadow Bowling Club, Argyle Street, Paisley

Present: Karen McMillan, Ian Johnstone, Sandra Loney, Jim Weir, Mairi Maclean, Scott Tsuro and Alison McKeown

In Attendance: Kathleen McCutcheon, Elaine Thomson, Lorna Gilroy, Lorna Colville, Sandra Marshall.

Observer: Michelle Hart & Lisa-Jane Dock

1. a) **APOLOGIES**

Apologies received from Saroj Bains & Eileen Graham. Special leave for Magda Pawlik and John Sweeney.

b) **RECORD OF ANY POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The CE had a declaration of interest taken under AOCB.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28th MAY 2019**

Board approved the minutes. Proposed by Jim Weir and seconded by Karen McMillan.

b) **MATTERS ARISING**

Item 11 – Housing Manager confirmed that the rent receipts figure which was input into the ARC had included our rents for leased property and this should not have been included. This has been rectified and re-input.

Item 15 – Chief Executive confirmed that we had one complaint which had an Equality issue, which was reported in the ARC

Board noted.

3. **NEW KPI TARGETS & QUARTERLY REPORTS**

Chief Executive confirmed that most of these figures are included in the ARC and other reports. The FLAIR benchmarking figures will be available for the first quarterly report. Housing Manager confirmed that there will not be a specific Universal Credit target. The Arrears as a % of gross rental income will include UC arrears. The Board will be updated on UC uptake and arrears in a report 1 year after implementation.

Board approved.

4. **OLIPHANT COURT UPDATE**

Technical Manager confirmed that we completed all the work on the contractors return visit on 14th June. Tenants are happy with the new panel as it is opaque and lets in more light.

Senior Clerk of Works was in attendance and someone from Building Control visited. Our extension for obtaining a completion certificate is due up on 30th June. While Building Control appear relaxed about this deadline, the Technical Manager is taking the prudent view that it is likely that the Certificate is not processed by that date. Consequently she will apply for a further month's extension to the end of July.

Board noted.

5. ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Technical Manager provided a brief update on action plans and highlighted the new actions from the Board away day. She noted that a full Asset Management review is due in 20/21 and emphasised its close links with the CE review of the Business Plan.

Board approved.

6. COMMUNITY BENEFITS YEAR END

Technical Manager provided details of the how the mechanism works and the range of Community Benefits we have received from the contractors within our framework. Three apprentices have been taken on for our Gas and Painting contracts. It was confirmed that any contract points awarded are purely for benefits to PHA, and not any other HA within the framework.

Board noted.

Technical Manager left the meeting 6.50.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2019

There was a very detailed discussion around the Treasury Management annual report. The Board approved the recommendations, but wanted to receive some further information about some of the banks we haven't dealt with before e.g. Charities Bank, CAF Bank and Shawbrooke Bank. There was further discussion around the fact that Bank of Scotland had closed the Neilston Road branch and we are potentially still investing a large some of money with them. A letter to be sent to Bank of Scotland from Finance Manager confirming our disappointment. It was also noted that there were several spelling errors within this report.

Board noted and approved the Report. In particular:

- **Approve delegated authority to the Finance Manager to invest as per the investment proposal.**
- **Approve the letter of compliance with the financial covenants for the Clydesdale Bank Loans, signed by the Chair, and including a copy of the 5 Year Financial Return and the makeup of the Committee following the AGM, will be submitted to the Clydesdale Bank, by 30 September 2019**
- **Note a Certificate from our auditors evidencing compliance with covenants will be submitted to the Royal Bank of Scotland, by 30 September 2019**
- **Approve the Finance Manager submitted the Loan Portfolio Annual Return to SHR in line with Appendix 1.**

- **Note a separate report will be presented in August for the private finance requirements for the developments.**
- **Approve the Finance Manager to open an current account with RBS for the purposes of funding Petty Cash**
- **Agree a letter noting our disappointment with the closure of the local branch be sent by the Finance Manager to the BoS**

8. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES 2019-2020 REVIEW

Chief Executive confirmed that this year we will be concentrating on the new Regulatory Framework. Next year, once we are settled into Assurance House we will have a major review of the Business Objectives. The 'Regeneration' category in the business objectives refer to Community regeneration from the last tenant satisfaction survey. A suggestion made for the Board /SMT away day – to discuss how to help / assist our older tenants.

Board approved.

9. RENT OPTIONS

Housing Manager provided details about the Rent Consultation option. After discussion the Board agreed that we did not want to go down the road of providing tenants with options for their rent.

With regard to rents for new developments the government has stipulated the benchmark rents that need to be applied. As these rents can be lower than our projected rents coming off site the benchmark rent and phasing to our existing rents is required. The Board recognised the need for development and following discussion agreed that if required new build should come off site at benchmark figure, but should then increase within a year or two to come into line with the rest of our properties.

Board approved.

10. BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES REPORT – MMR & LETTING AGENT

Housing Manger provided feedback on research into Mid Market Rents (MMR) and Letting Agents. The MMR findings show that MMR don't work in Paisley and that this would not be a viable business opportunity for Paisley HA.

The Letting Agent findings show that this works best in areas where there is high demand for limited supply of private rented properties. In Paisley there are a large number of private rented properties, with high turnover. There is also a lot of Letting Agents already in the area so competition in the market. The returns are low for the resources required to deliver the service and although attractive if you have a high number of factored owners who are private landlords, but we only have 287 owners in total. Based on these finding, becoming a Letting Agent would not be a viable option.

Board approved.

Finance Manager left the meeting 8.00pm.

11. **ANNUAL TENANCY SUSTAINMENT REPORT 18/19**

Housing Manager confirmed that re-lets last year were lower and that sustainment was up. There was some discussion on not all reasons for tenancies ending being in the Association's control. Most concerning reason is cannot afford to stay in rented accommodation and there had only been one. The Housing Manager highlighted the highest failure rate based on source of let were tenancies coming through Homelessness referrals and confirmed we have a small sustainment budget to assist new & existing tenants.

Board noted.

12. **TP STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 18/19 & ACTION PLAN 19/20**

Housing Manager confirmed that last year was spent focussing on Universal Credit. Next year we are looking to improve communication – know and understand how our tenants want to communicate. We are waiting for the outcomes of our tenant satisfaction survey this year.

Board noted and approved.

13. **INTERNAL AUDIT – REPORT ON PROCUREMENT OF INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES 2019-2022**

Chief Executive confirmed that our Internal Audit will go out to tender in early July It will be dealing with Governance and Treasury Management and possibly one other topic and will be over a 3 year period.

Board approved.

14. **ASSURANCE HOUSE UPDATE**

Chief Executive confirmed Clark Contracts will be on site starting on 2nd July 2019.

Board noted.

15. **CORRESPONDENCE, TRAINING AND FEEDBACK**

Correspondence

- EVH monthly update
- Mentoring e-mail
- SFHA quarterly magazine
- GWSF – looking for new board members – anyone interested contact Sandra M

Training / Events

- Succession Planning– Ian J, Jim W, Sandra L, Mairi Macl, Saroj B and Alison McK to attend.
- EVH Annual Conference – 22- 24th Nov early bird booking – Ian J and Sandra L

Feedback

FLAIR conference – positive feedback – sessions were very good

GWSF conference – very enjoyable for all. Workshops and speakers all very good.

SFHA conference – Chief Executive got a free ticket, as they are trying to encourage new members. SFHA have been told that we will re-visit membership Oct / Nov.

Board noted.

16. AOCB

- Suggestion for speaker for AGM – Duncan Clelland to provide update on the WET Project. The AGM will be held in Wellmeadow Bowling club.

Board approved.

A report on both E,P & B's was distributed.

- Board approved the offer of 2 different tenancies and 1 adaptation under the terms of our Entitlement, Payment and Benefits Policy

Board approved.

- Results of the second Assurance Survey for Board members were issued on the night. A bit of a learning curve for us when issuing surveys. Feedback is that it is more useful to have a comments section. Comment about use of abbreviations, we can work on right away. This survey will be used as a piece of evidence for our Assurance requirements.

17. DONM

We are having an extra meeting on Monday 29th July at 6.30pm in Wellmeadow Bowling club.

Meeting finished 20.50pm.