

Agenda 2.1

PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27th JANUARY 2025 AT 6.30PM

This meeting was a hybrid meeting via Teams.

Present in office: Elaine Templeton, Ian Johnstone, Emmanuel Dufegha

Present via Teams: Tina Russell & Michelle Hart (joined 19.52)

In Attendance in Office: Fiona McTaggart, Lorna Colville, Craig Reid, Tracy Fraser & Sandra Marshall

Present via Teams: Alan Graham

Observer: Clare Hayes

Meeting started at 6.45 as these were issues with traffic.

Chair is on holiday so Elaine Templeton agreed to chair the meeting.

Elaine welcomed back Michelle Hart as a board member.

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Karen McMillan and Mairi Maclean

2.0 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25.11.24

Minutes of meeting agreed. Proposed by Elaine Templeton, seconded by Tina Russell.

Board Approved.

3.1 MATTERS ARISING

None

4.0 – ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

4.1 DRAFT RENT & SERVICE CHARGE REPORT

Head of Housing explained the 2 options proposed for consultation. 4.5% being the minimum required to provide our services. 5% gives us a very slight buffer towards our planned maintenance programme.

HOH explained that we as we all know prices have risen across the board in the last few years. We want to demonstrate to our tenants that its not simply do you agree with our proposed increase but explain the increase options we are looking at and

the choice is actually an increase to provide our minimum service or to enhance the minimum. Question from board – What do we send out to tenants. Board were then shown a draft of a detailed booklet that we will issue with the consultation. This explains details of our planned maintenance programme, services we have provided to tenants, along with information explaining that the extra 0.5% between the 4.5% and 5% options would raise an extra £34,500 per year. The booklet will also detail how much we have spent and intend to spend on items such as kitchens, bathrooms and other planned maintenance costs, this is to give tenants the picture of how much these items cost.

The booklet will also contain details of how our rents compare with the private sector rents locally and advise that within FLAIR we are one of the lower increases this year.

Service charges are mainly staying the same for garden and close cleaning services as they are a 2 year contract.. There is an increase in bulk service charge as this is widely used. We will be looking at ways to economise on this throughout 2025. It is mainly staff who report the bulk when they are out and about and we are charged for each pickup – we are looking at how to improve this. Service charges for individual developments at High Calside will see slight variance on service charges for items such as lift maintenance.

HOH reminded board of the amendment to charges for properties with our common heating approved at the November 2024 meeting with 4 Person 3apt and 4apt flats to be split further based on apartment size from 28th March 2025. This will result in a slight change to all the properties to ensure a fairer split of the total costs we incur, the charge increasing for some sizes and reducing for the 3 apt 4 person flats. Overall, there will be no increase in the total Fuel Charge Service Charge Income

HOH also asked that the Board note that the increase to the service charge for Oliphant Court will reflect the final percentage rent increase i.e. will be either 4.5% or 5% depending on the outcome of the consultation.

Acting chair confirmed with each board member individually whether they agreed with both the rent and service charge consultation recommendations.

Board Approved the 2 options for rent consultation and agreed the proposed service charges

Head of Housing and Advice & Projects Manager left the meeting 18.56

Board member commented that the new format of reports made them much easier to read.

4.2 DRAFT PLANNED & CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

Head of Assets & Developments explained that App A showed the breakdown of planned spend over the next 5 years but consultation will just be for Year 1 (25/26) only.

Despite a slight easing, there continues to be challenges in delivering the planned maintenance projects due to volatile costs and contractor labour issues and availability. An example of this is the proposed window replacement costs have gone up by 65% since last year.

The new Net Zero standards have still not been formally announced yet; they were due in December. Board member questioned when we thought we would receive them. Latest information we have is from the SFHA, more likely to be start of next financial year, but not guaranteed.

We have been continuing with our back court Environmental projects for 24/25 and hope to bring to the board some updated photos once complete. Early feedback from residents has been positive as we look to address refuse, vermin and amenity space issue.

Board member questioned how we selected properties for the Net Zero pilot. We looked at the terraced stock as we hopefully will be able to do a deep retro-fit and this would allow us to see what we can do. An architect guided us with the selection process and that this would be a good trial. Solar panels or underfloor heating. No case studies have been done as waiting for the standards to be announced. We are in discussions with other RSL's with similar stock about joint procurement. We are also hoping to have an opportunity to apply for funding if this becomes available.

Board member questioned the bin storage as, if tenant on ground floor, it is not a pleasant outlook. HoAD confirmed we are looking at other options with the bin shelters. It was mentioned that the council may even be looking at street bins instead of individual ones. Board member also suggested to get mixer taps which would assist with energy efficiency. CE confirmed that all these small things do add up, but we really need guidance on the big stuff as the costs are huge. Paisley HA is looking to be a pilot for this.

Board Approved the consultation for Year 1 of the Planned and Cyclical Maintenance programme.

Head of Assets and Development left at 7.11pm.

4.3 DRAFT 5 YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

Head of Finance & IT confirmed that we have assumed 4.5% rent increase in the draft financial plan. To afford this Board were advised we have had to be quite brutal with some of our spending. The planned & capital maintenance budgets have been

cut by £2m with windows being delayed and won't be able to complete the whole bin projects beyond the current 24/25 project , as the environment budget also had to be reduced.

There was some discussion around the Scottish Living wage and how this affects the whole of the EVH salary Scale. HoF&IT confirmed that salaries were now our 3rd largest sensitivity. It was confirmed that we would definitely need funding for the Net Zero programme. Board member questioned how we decided on what to delay within the cuts. Windows were chosen as no windows were failing. They are all double glazed units which were due for replacement, but nothing actually wrong with them at the moment.

HoF&IT confirmed that we use CPI Housing as the basis of our inflation shorter term. Assuming 2% medium term.

The Board noted the draft 5 Year Financial Plan.

HoF&IT then asked the Board to consider section 8 of the report and the proposed financial timetable for 25/26. In particular that it would start earlier to allow more time to consider options internally and for the rent consultation (and rent notification) process, with the final agreement on rent and service charge increases and planned maintenance taking place in the January. It was noted this would require us to start the financial planning process earlier next year as noted in the report.

The Board raised concern with the rent consultation starting in December.

It was noted the Board may prefer to move the November meeting to mid-November or we could look to bring the plan forward to allow for the Rent Consultation, Draft 5 year Planned Maintenance, and the Draft 5 Year Financial Plan to be presented to the October meeting.

It was agreed to consider the best timing of the rent & service charge consultation further and then agree the final revised planning timetable.

Question from Board member about repair inflations and how we get this figure? It was noted we have assumed repair inflation would be 1% higher than the standard inflation.

Frameworks – for Kitchens, it was noted we used the Scottish Procurement Alliance, but it still incorporated the full mini tender exercise. It was also noted we use local contractors at the moment for reactive repairs but looking to incorporate the Dynamic Purchasing Repairs framework currently used by other Flair members. It was noted we used the |FLAIR Framework for planned maintenance for 9 years but there are a lot of other suitable frameworks out there now which we also use.

Board Approved the 5-year Financial Plan and to spread the financial planning process over the longer timescale next year. Final decision on the rent consultation period to be agreed.

4.4 H & S ANNUAL RESPONSIBILITIES SHEET

CSO confirmed that the Board have to sign the Annual Responsibilities document. Those in the office can do so tonight. Other will get it sent by e-mail and to be returned to Sandra asap.

Board Approved.

4.5 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD

CSO confirmed that there was minor changes to the wording of the 7 principles. Board members should remember that this policy also applies to any social media usage. Board members should also endeavour to see the 'big' picture rather than an individual circumstance. Explanation of minor breaches and how to resolve these, by an informal approach and conversation was provided. Major breaches would require a more formal approach and the new code of conduct provides detailed information of how to deal with major breaches.

Board Approved the updated Code of Conduct for Board.

4.6 POLICIES FOR APPROVAL

- Board Composition, Recruitment & Induction Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Succession Planning for Board and Staff

Board Approved all the updated Polices

4.7 PSPS MINUTES 12.8.24

No further questions about the minutes.

Board Noted.

4.8 H & S REPORT

CE confirmed there were no issues and that we are continuing with staff training.

Board Approved.

4.9 NEW MEMBERSHIP

CSO confirmed we have a new member Clare Hayes, looking to join our board.

Board Approved the new member.

5.0 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

NONE

6.0 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

6.1 – POLICIES APPROVED BY BOARD

This is in conjunction with the updated policies for approval at item 4.6

Board Noted

6.2 – RESIGNATION OF NEIL MCCALL

Neil McCall has resigned due to having a new job which means extensive travel, so unable to commit to the board meetings. At his exit interview he said how refreshing it was to be on a Board that is not solely looking at how to make lots of money.

6.3 SPECIAL LEAVE REQUEST MAIRI MACLEAN

Mairi Maclean looking for Special leave for Jan and Feb. Back for the March board meeting. Special leave granted.

Board Approved

7.0 AOCB

a) Clare Hayes approved to become a Board Member. Clare is also going to join the Audit & Risk Committee. Meeting potentially 5.30 pm on 24th February 2025.

Board Approved

b) PSPS – due to resignation of Neil McCall, we are no longer quorate for PSPS. There are only 3 meetings a year and we can be flexible as to what time of day/evening they are scheduled for. Lorna C to speak to Emmanuel.

c) Further training on the Calendar of Events. These have been arranged after requests from board members at their appraisals. This also includes First Aid awareness training which was requested by the board after their own H & S training. CSO confirmed what the topics were and gave out an updated form to those at the meeting. Others will be e-mailed the form tomorrow.

d) GWSF – there is a special 50th anniversary event to celebrate the first registered community based housing association. Anyone wishing to attend – let me know. Numbers are limited.

e) Raffle for wine and chocs received at xmas completed.

8.0 Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting will be 17th February 2025

Meeting ended at 8.00pm