

## **PAISLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

### **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 30 AUGUST 2021 AT 6.30PM**

**Due to the Corona Virus, we are unable to have face to face meetings. This meeting was a virtual meeting using 8x8 platform.**

Present: Jim Weir, Ian Johnstone, Eileen Graham (joined at 6.54), Sandra Loney, Mairi Maclean, Drew Mason, Karen McMillan, Michelle Hart and Saroj Bains (joined at 6.40)

In Attendance: Kathleen McCutcheon, Lorna Colville, Sandra Marshall.

Guest – Steven Cunningham, Partner Alexander Sloan.

#### **1a) APOLOGIES**

None

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

Item 14 Pension Update

#### **2a) MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28.06.2021**

Board member asked if the wording could be amended for the Role and Job description for Board item - from how this does not convey the perks of being a Board member - to how this does not convey the value of being a Board member

Proposed by Jim Weir and seconded by Karen McMillan, with agreed amendment.

#### **b) MATTERS ARISING**

None.

#### **3) ANNUAL AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Head of Finance and IT confirmed that this report showed what the Audit committee have been working on over the last year. It was noted the risks have been reviewed and we now have fewer red risks as some have been downgraded. Board member questioned if the delays in Fire control were due to lockdown. It was confirmed that the Scottish Government delayed the Fire Safety regulations for a year due to lockdown and our Technical department continue to work to achieve the revised date. It was noted we had previously combined our fire safety with our re-wiring contract and have had some no-access issues , so now implementing an alternative approach.

**Board Approved the report and the recommendations therein.**

#### **4) FINANCIAL STATEMENT 20/21**

Head of Finance and IT introduced Steven Cunningham from Alexander Sloan to present the Financial Statement for 20/21. Steven explained the figures in the Statement of Income and also the Statement of Financial Position. There were no questions about the Financial Statement.

Steven confirmed that we had a clean audit and that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the Association's affairs and has been properly prepared in accordance with legislation. He also explained that there were no weaknesses that required to be highlighted in the Management Letter this year.

Head of Finance and IT

- confirmed that the PSPS board had agreed to transfer PSPS profits to PHA at their last board meeting
- highlighted the changes in the financial statements compared to the management accounts for the same period.
- Highlighted the finalisation of the appointment of the auditor as noted in the financial statements , would be updated following the Board approval of Report NO 5 External Audit Tender

**Board noted and approved the recommendations within the report as noted below:**

- Approved the Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2021 and Board Statements there in.
- Delegated authority to the Secretary and two of the Board Members to sign the Financial Statements on behalf of the Board, via DocuSign
- Delegated authority to the Secretary and the Chair to sign the Letter of Representation
- Noted the Auditors' Management Letter and noted that no formal response was required by the Board, as no actions by PHA and the Board were raised in the Management Letter.
- Noted that the Online Audited Financial Statements Return for 2020/21 will be prepared in accordance with the Scottish Housing Regulator's policy document "Financial Viability of Registered Social Landlords: Information Requirements" and the approved Financial Statements.
- Delegated authority to the Head of Finance & IT to submit, on the Board's behalf, the Annual Online Accounts Return to the Regulator, along with the 3 attachments requested by SHR, by the deadline 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021
- Delegated authority to the Head of Finance & IT to submit the SHAPS annual financial viability return.

**Steven Cunningham left at 18.50**

## **5) EXTERNAL AUDIT TENDER**

The Head of Finance & IT and the Board Member on the External Audit Tender Evaluation Panel summarised the report.

The Board agreed with the proposal to approve the Audit Committee's recommendation to re-appointment Alexander Sloan for a period of 4 years. The reappointment of Alexander Sloan would be noted at the AGM.

**Board Approved the recommendation in the report.**

## **6) MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

Head of Finance and IT confirmed performance for the quarter was better than budgeted for. Board member thought this was a very positive report and everything was explained well.

Chief Exec also mentioned that there is an increasing problem of supply for building materials and price hikes due to a combination of Brexit and Covid. It was noted we may have to review our planned maintenance due to higher costs and this will be considered when reviewing the financial plans, later in the year.

**Board Approved.**

**Housing Manager joined at 6.53**

## **7) RENT ARREARS POLICY**

Housing Manager confirmed that there were no major changes to the policy, just amendments to Data Protection, delegated authority and funded projects currently in place. Housing manager also confirmed that we had not made any permanent policy changes due to Covid, as these would be temporary procedural changes. Housing Manager confirmed that we have not had a large increase in the numbers of people not paying rent as we have provided lots of help and assistance. Also advised that we may see an increase in hardship amongst our tenants in coming months as the UK Government is bringing to an end the extra allowance given to people in receipt of Universal Credit paid during the height of the pandemic. This will end in September. We will continue to work with our tenants affected by this to minimise impact on their ability to pay their rent.

Housing Manager was asked about evictions being suspended but explained that evictions can still be carried out if required although we do not currently have any tenants at this stage. The serving of Notice of Proceedings to raise court action currently requires 6 months notice to tenants rather than the normal 1 months notice. This is temporary legislation put in place by the Scottish Government due to the pandemic.

**Board Approved.**

**Housing Manager left at 7.07**

### **8) QUARTERLY SHR REPORT**

Unfortunately this was missed from both portal and posted pack. This will be available on the portal tomorrow. Chief Exec confirmed that there was no issues highlighted on the report.

**Board Noted**

### **9) ORCHARD STREET**

There was lots of discussion around Orchard Street regarding the potential costs of the project and the number of owners still not engaging. There is a meeting next week with the Council which Chief Exec will attend and confirm our position. This is a critical stage of this development.

**Board Approved:**

**-To extend the Longstop Agreement to September 2022.**

**-To give a clear message to Scottish Government and Renfrewshire Council that unless acquisition can be completed in this timescale we will execute the arrangements of the Longstop.**

### **10) PLANS FOR RESUMPTION**

Chief Exec confirmed that there was a staff meeting scheduled for tomorrow. We have lots of new rules for the new building, health & safety and Covid. These will change if we have any circuit breaker lockdowns. Most staff to work in the office one day per week. We are being a bit more cautious than other HA's in FLAIR. We will have social distancing, ventilation and hygiene all an important part of daily routines now. We do not intent to open to the public now. We are taking small steps and building up confidence with all staff.

**Board Approved.**

### **11) CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD**

New code of conduct for Board members approved. Sandra M to send out agreement forms and updated declaration forms for all Board members to complete before the next meeting.

**Board Approved.**

### **12) OUTCOME OF BOARD APPRAISALS**

Chief Exec confirmed that this was the first time we had used EVH for Board appraisals and asked the Board how they went. Overall the Board were happy, in

particular with the individual appraisals. The process was the same as when PHA had completed them the last few years. Chief Exec said it was not too expensive and did save a lot of PHA time and maybe could consider EVH doing them every 3 years.

**Board Approved.**

**Head of Technical joined the at 19.42**

### **13) ASSURANCE HOUSE**

Head of Technical went into more detail about the source of the water ingress issue at Assurance House which links to both its particular design and generally the design of office buildings dating back to the 70's and 80's.

Since extensive internal work has been completed, we will be resolving this matter solely by work to the exterior. Head of Technical provided details about our options for this work. Board member questioned how this could have actually happened in the first place and PHA not know about it. Chief Exec said that we were initially told that the water penetration was from the roof and we have a specialist roof warranty. But in hindsight given the number of consultants looking at this, it should have been picked up. However it was noted that additional planning and building warrant would have been required to do any work along with the refit and would have caused a lengthy delay. It was also noted that the original refit architect no longer works for the practice. The Head of Technical is liaising with ASSIST architects who will be coming along to the September meeting to do a presentation.

There was a discussion about how we will use the office. Chief Exec confirmed that we will continue to look at Assurance House as some sort of community facility – to rent out corporate space which should generate income for us at some point.

**Board Approved.**

**Head of Technical left at 20.15**

### **14) PENSION UPDATE**

Chief Exec confirmed as noted in the report that all staff have now signed their change of contract letter– effective from 1<sup>st</sup> November.

Head of Finance and IT will now contact the Pension Trust:

- Of the move to 4X Salary life cover, before the 31/8/21 deadline, to commence from 1/10/21. Board delegate to the Head of Finance & IT to sign all relevant paperwork on behalf of the Board.
- To set up the Tiered DC Pension options effective from 1/11/21.

Head of Finance and IT will now confirm to all staff the change.

The Chief Exec will advise Unite Union.

**Board Noted and Approved the report.**

**15) AOCB**

Chief Exec confirmed that we have had 3 resignations.

Eileen Graham (who has agreed to continue until the AGM - many thanks), Lisa-Jane Dock & Beth Arthur

Chief Exec has confirmed that this is potentially worrying as we will only have 8 board members left. A proper report will be on next months Agenda. It was confirmed where we have been advertising and a board member suggested advertising in the Glasgow Herald as well as Paisley Daily Express. Also mentioned to advertise on facebook too.

Lorna Gilroy had sent in a thank-you card to the board for her retirement gift.

Also mentioned that invites for the AGM will be posted out this week.

**Board Noted**

**DONM**

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021

**MEETING ENDS 8.35pm**