

Management Committee Meeting

Monday, 24th April 2023 6:30 pm

Hybrid meeting held at the BOILER HOUSE at 146 Drip Road Stirling and Via Microsoft Teams | Management Committee

Attendees

<p>Present Ann Dickson John Jenkins Heather Arthur Andrea Finkel-Gates Priscilla Maramba Kenny Hutton Lynore MacLeod Alistair Hutton</p> <p>By Teams Lyndsay Moffat</p>	<p>In attendance Sharon Brady-Wardrope Angela Laley* Fettes McDonald</p> <p>Becky Ramage (minutes)*</p> <p>By Teams Shona MacLeod** Paul McNeil***</p>
<p>Apologies James Bryce Lynne Lavery Cllr Gerry McGarvey Mareta Greig</p>	<p>*Excluding item 12 **Items 1-7 only *** Item 9.6 only which was taken first on the agenda</p>

1 Chair's Statement

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

The Chair welcomed all committee and staff to the meeting. Ann Dickson (AD) advised we have a short video to watch on the Tenant Conference from 30th March. AD added that she attended Tenant Conference and Andrea Finkel-Gates (AFG) joined in afternoon. Everyone was very enthusiastic and enjoyed their day but it could have been better attended. The Chair also welcomed Paul McNeil from HRC to the meeting who would be providing a presentation on the Strategic Option Appraisal (item 9.6 on the agenda) which we would take first.

2 Apologies

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

James Bryce
Lynne Lavery
Cllr Gerry McGarvey
Mareta Greig

3 Declaration of Interest

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

None declared

4.1 Management Committee 27/03/2023 - Draft

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

These minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Ann Dickson (AD) added in a comment that on Page 11 Committee were promised a stock tour in April. Sharon Brady-Wardrope advised this will be arranged for July since there is no Management Committee meeting and it will tie in with Strategic Staff/committee day.

Decision: Minutes approved with stock tour to be arranged for July.

5 Matters Arising – Office Closure for Staff Training

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) presented this paper but advised this paper was by paper was by Mareta Greig (MG). The purpose of this report is to present to the Management Committee the proposal of an office closure for a full day staff training event.

SBW advised the training is an interactive session for all staff focussing on customer service, conflict management and best practice. We have seen a slight rise in complaints which relate to customer care standards and haven recently launched our new Customer Experience Policy we felt that staff would benefit from additional training. SBW also advised that this links in with our approach to improving our culture.

SBW added we are looking for a full day office closure on Wednesday 14th June.

AD added that this was very important training and supported the approach.

Decision: Approved

6.1 ARC 2022/23 Update - Verbal

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) provided a verbal update on this, hence no paper attached. SBW highlighted this is just to give committee info on our progress with our ARC and submission. Staff have been working hard on running reports/data cleansing as we had an early date from Scottish Housing Network (SHN) for validation.

SBW added there are some observations but nothing significant. Anticipate closing everything off tomorrow. First draft of full report will go to Audit & Risk sub committee on 2nd May. Early feedback we are doing well.

SBW advised staff have been heavily involved. Providing detailed screenshots, giving us a comfort of how we are getting the data. SBW added the Regulator didn't want us to go back any further than last year and it feels good to have the range of staff helping.

John Jenkins (JJ) asked if there is any opportunity to ask tenants to scrutinise. and if they have any comments. JJ suggested Tenants View Forum could consider. SBW added we have issued a lot to Egroup recently and may not get much feedback from them, as don't want to overload.. JJ recommended to put some thought into this for next year.

SBW added that we do want to expand our tenant scrutiny and would like Tenant View to consider. Angela Laley (AL) noted that this and said that training would be required and contextual information provided so that tenants can be aware of the information that is being

scrutinised. This can be included in the agenda for the Tenants View for so that they consider next year..

Decision: Committee noted the update and expressed their thanks to the staff for their hard work.

7.1 Final 30 year projections

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Fettes McDonald (FM) outlined this report. The purpose of this report is to present to Committee the financial information that has been used to inform our 202/23 Business Plan along with the key assumptions and sensitivity analysis to provide evidence of our robust financial position.

FM highlighted the main points in this report. Projections - outturns depends on consumptions, comparisons with other local Registered Social Landlord's (RSL) notes that Forth's rent levels for 21/22 are 4% below peers for 2 and 3 apartment properties rents. At the current time inflation has increased compared to recent years and the 23/24 rent rise of 5% is around 5% below inflation.

FM added that for major repairs and cyclical/reactive maintenance taking account of our knowledge of the stock, the Association is satisfied that costs can be contained within sums provided for in the financial model.

FM added that in relation to staffing costs there has been 2 added posts. FM noted that we have an ambitious programme for new builds. The Association has modelled no further new build activity after year 1 and an overall improvement to the year 30 cash position of £1.6m results. Project appraisals shall be undertaken for all projects in order to ensure a positive contribution can be achieved.

FM advised the association have a good healthy cash position. From their point of view figures are fine and Paul McNeil (HRC) who carried out the Strategic Option Appraisal is also happy with them. Forth is in a strong financial position, very healthy. No concerns.

FM added happy to take questions/queries/comments.

Kenny Hutton (KH) suggested that for a base for the business plan it would be good to see what actually happened after year 1 and year 2. SBW advised that the comparison of actual v projections are be provided in financial reports.

Decision: Committee noted the financial information provided and approved the 30 year Financial Projections.

Ann Dickson advised FM could leave the meeting if he wanted to but he has happy to stay until the end. Shona MacLeod left the meeting.

8.1 Policy Review - 8.1.1 Tenant Participation Policy - following consultation and 8.1.2 Corporate Donation and Sponsorship Policy

Purpose - For Approval

Note by Andrea Finkel-Gates

For ownership of all policies would it be more appropriate to include the person's job title rather than their name?

- **Reply by Angela Laley** - Yes - agreed on policy paper, this should be job title rather than name.

Minute by Becky Ramage

Angela Laley (AL) presented this report. The purpose of this report is to approve both the Tenant Participation Policy and the Corporate Donations & Sponsorship Policy.

AL advised following the paper to the Management Committee on 30th January 2023 when the approach to the review of the Tenant Participation policy was outlined and agreed, the Tenant Participation Policy was subsequently reviewed and then issued for consultation via various communication channels. This included the Egroup, website and a Tenants View event facilitated by TPAS. No amendments were requested by tenants and positive feedback was obtained including very clearly detailed and very straightforward.

No amendments were requested by Committee and on this basis, the next stage will be a detailed 3 year strategy to be presented to May's Committee meeting. At the recent Tenants Conference, the ways we engage with our tenants was discussed and feedback obtained. This will also be included in the strategy.

AL presented the second policy under review, Corporate Donations and Sponsorship Policy. This policy was previously reviewed by Management Committee in April 2020 and is therefore due to be reviewed in line with the 3 year cycle. AL added there are no material changes proposed to this Policy and it is not subject to tenant or staff consultation.

Decision: Committee approved both policies.

8.2 Business Plan 2022/23 End of Year Review

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope outlined this report. This report presents the update on the year 1 delivery plan activities outlined in our Business Plan and our Asset Management Strategy to show the progress we have achieved over the last 12 months and to seek approval for the removal of the completed items.

SBW advised there has been significant achievements through all business areas. There are some areas that are still progressing, and these will feature in our refreshed business plan for 2023. Progress has been detailed in the appendix however there are some key outstanding items. SBW also added some activities will become 'business as usual' and will continue to be progressed as part of our operational activities. For those activities that have not been completed these will be carried forward into the plans for 2023/24.

The Asset Management Strategy Year End Update shows the progress we have made on our priority activities within our asset management strategy. SBW highlighted there has been a significant amount of work done. The team have also progressed our stock condition surveys with over 60% now complete. The data from these surveys will be used to shape our asset investment over the coming years and will inform the refresh of our Asset Management Strategy in September 2023.

SBW invited any comments.

John Jenkins questioned the 1 month inductions plan in Appendix 8.2.1 (item 6.3) and advised EVH has a 12 month one to make sure you are covering everything. SBW advised the 1 month induction is more around health and safety. JJ suggested this should be re worded, SBW agreed.

JJ also added that in relation to Asset Management Strategy the Regulator provides new guidance and check list for governing bodies and staff.

AF-G also advised that the new guidance was available and SBW agreed that this would be part of the refresh of the AMS later in the year

Decision: Committee noted the achievements and approved the completion of the activities noted in the appendices.

8.3 Draft Business Plan 2023-2028 and Risk Register

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) presented this report. This report presents the 5 year Business Plan for 2023-28 and the associated Risk Register.

SBW advised that this was a refresh of the BP that was developed in depth last year. The objectives vision, values and culture remain however one additional objective has been added to promote our approach to the culture of the organisation which, is outlined in 2.3 of cover paper. Positive wellbeing experience. Some things worth highlighting that will be carried forward are Net Zero which Fettes McDonald and Paul McNeil mentioned and also adaptations which is something that came through at tenant conference and something we want to promote the adaptations without delay agenda.

SBW invited any questions/comments.

Andrea Finkel-Gates (AFG) added that she appreciated the appendices as makes it more readable, SBW highlighted that it flows better.

The chair asked if there were any comments before we approve business plan.

AFG asked if Decision Time has a resource library. SBW, yes Becky & Callum have had training session on it and we will get this up and running. The committee agreed that this would be useful.

Decision: The committee approved the Draft Business Plan 2023-28

9.1 SHR 2023 Engagement Plan

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) outlined this item. SBW stated this SHR Engagement Plan was shared via email to committee.

SBW advised based on submission of Annual Assurance Statement, Regulator said they would write the report in a positive language. Governance review table in appendix 1 of the Strategic Option Appraisal had a lot of the standards marked as "compliant" which is positive. SBW added there will be things we still need to work on.

Kenny Hutton (KH) highlighted quite a challenging time for development. SBW advised that we will need an extra couple of meetings for development sub committee to consider progress with Raploch structural cracking as things progress.

Decision: Committee noted the progress and approved.

9.2 Governance Improvement Plan

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) outlined this report with the purpose to update the Committee on the progress made on the actions within the Governance Improvement Plan 2022 and to outline the approach to developing a new Improvement Plan following the publication of the SHR Engagement Plan 2023 presented to the committee under 9.1 of this meeting. Also, to provide an update on the Governance Investigation Action Plan.

SBW advised this is to show movements in the period, we are proposing to close a further 6. There are 11 outstanding items which will now be incorporated into the 2023 Governance Improvement Plan, some others are linked.

SBW welcomed any questions. SBW noted to go for 90+ items to 11 is pretty good going for staff.

Decision: Committee approved the removal of the 6 actions listed and noted the

outstanding actions to be transferred onto a new 2023 action plan.

9.4 Notifiable Events

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Sharon Brady-Wardrope advised no paper, no changes, no new actions and no updates on the ones standing.

9.5 Registers

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Becky Ramage

Angela Laley (AL) outlined this report with the purpose to approve a report on Registers. The relevant Registers are then presented for signing to the Director and Chair or Secretary, at the last Management Committee meeting before the AGM in September.

AL advised this is just a short summary of registers to end of March 2023.

Decision: The committee noted and approved the contents of the report which are on overview of Registers for the period April 2022 to March 23.

9.6 Strategic Option Appraisal

Purpose - For Approval

This item was taken at the start of the meeting to allow the consultant to present the paper

Document - 9.6 Strategic Option Appraisal Report Final Draft V.docx

Page 33 Note by John Jenkins

While I appreciate the need for financial assumptions to be made, I would like to think that in future years the governing body would explore every avenue for potential savings in our operational costs, before agreeing above inflation increases in our tenants' rents. For example, are the present stock survey results providing us with potential room for manoeuvre?

1 Reply

- **Reply by Sharon Brady-Wardrope** - agree - all costs would be considered and efficiency savings to minimise rent increases

Document - 9.6.1 Strategic Option Appraisal Report - Appendix Governance Review.docx

Page 3 Note by John Jenkins

Internal audit comment. Needs to be on agenda for next Audit and Risk sub meeting?

1 Reply

- **Reply by Sharon Brady-Wardrope** - Agree - IA paper being prepared to cover all previous audit actions.

Minute by Becky Ramage

AD introduced Paul McNeill (PM) to the meeting and advised we are going to have a short presentation from PM around the Strategic Options Appraisal. PM advised he will give a quick run through of his presentation and is happy for any questions. PM is happy with quality of housing stock. Compared to other registered social landlords our housing stock is of high quality. PM also added the association demonstrates a positive cash flow.

AD thanked PM for the overview and invited questions from the MC. A discussion took place over the findings of the appraisal and the committee were satisfied with the recommendations.

AD noted the approach that was taken involving staff and MC from the outset was very much appreciated.

[Post meeting note - A copy of the presentation will be put into the resource library on DT]

Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) outlined this report. SBW highlighted that Paul McNeil and his team completed a thorough appraisal of our performance, our ways of working, what our tenants say about us, the standard of our stock and the surrounding environment. Our finances were scrutinised, SBW noted that committee received a paper on the long-term financial projections which show us to be in a very secure position. Patricia, one of Paul's colleagues, conducted a governance review which was very in depth. Patricia considered how the organisation's governing body operated and how well we conducted our business and how well we complied with the SHR regulatory standard. Patricia's findings were positive in that she established that Forth had good governance.

PM left the meeting.

Kenny Hutton asked to be reminded where we are with internal audit plan, SBW advised this will be going to Audit and Risk sub committee next week. KH asked if we have a timescale for the 295 units that are to be built over the next 5 years. SBW advised becoming a challenge trying to recruit and with pricing and that we will create a timeline to get something in place quick whether it is a permanent employee or interim arrangement.

SBW added that this report will get sent to the Regulator. If they have any concerns on options

appraisal then will be discussed next week during the meeting with SBW.

The committee expressed their thanks to the staff for their hard work.

Decision: Committee noted the final report on the Strategic Option Appraisal and have approved the recommendation to remain an independent organisation.

10.1 New Memberships - Verbal Update

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

Angela Laley (AL) provided a verbal update on this item. AL advised that there are 3 applications which have been emailed to Andrea Finkel-Gates (AFG) as Chair of the staffing sub committee. AL also added that all applicants all have a finance background.

AFG advise that she will appraise these applications. AL advised that interviews will be arranged as necessary with AFG, AD and one other. The applicants will come along as observers to the committee meeting in May and if applications approved will be at the June meeting as committee members. SBW added there had been a total of 5 interests, but only 3 applications at the moment.

11 Correspondence

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Becky Ramage

Angela Laley advised the EVH briefing was sent to the committee via email.

Angela Laley & Becky Ramage left the meeting.

12 Staffing Restructure Update - Confidential

Purpose - For Approval

Minute by Sharon Brady-Wardrope

This item was considered to be confidential business and only Forth Management Committee Members and Sharon Brady-Wardrope were present during the consideration of this item.

A separate confidential minute of the item was taken.

13 AOCB

Minute by Becky Ramage

There was no other business to be considered

14 Date of Next Meeting 22/05/2023

Minute by Becky Ramage

The date for next Management Committee meeting on the 22nd May 2023 was approved. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance this evening.