

**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting held on 28 October 2019
At 7 p.m. in Kildean Business and Enterprise Hub, 146 Drip Road, Stirling**

Present:

Linda Mason
Gordon Mason
Colleen Sharp
Priscilla Maramba

Robert Buchanan
James Bryce
John Paterson

Pat Heneghan
Cllr Jim Thomson
John Fyfe

In Attendance:

Grahame Cairns Daradjeet Jagpal Harman Jagpal Margaret Glencross

Gordon Mason welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1 Apologies

Ann Dickson

2 Declaration of Interest

2.1 Chairs Statement

The Chair asked if there were any Management Committee Members who wished to declare any interest specifically in the business of the meeting.

2.2 Declaration of Interest from Committee Members

None.

3 Minutes of Management Committee Meeting held on 23rd September 2019

LM asked for clarification regarding office closure on the first Wednesday of each month and whether this would be further reviewed after the initial three months and it was confirmed that it would be on going.

The minutes were then proposed for adoption by James Bryce and seconded by Colleen Sharp.

4 Matters Arising

No matters arising.

5 Director's Report

Grahame Cairns presented this report.

5.1 EVH Monthly Report

Grahame congratulated Linda Mason on reaching the final of the Helen McGregor Award where the finalist will be chosen at the Annual Conference in November.

5.3 Finance Update

Nationwide Building Society have been awarded the recent loan tender.

Scottish Housing Associations' Pension Scheme – (SHAPS)

An update has been issued regarding this and Grahame suggested that this could be included in committee training for next year as it would be particularly useful for new members. Gordon emphasised that this would be positive and helpful – EVH would come out for this and explain how the current situation with pensions came about – he also stated that it is the duty of committee members to understand the pension process – if anyone has questions at the moment please contact Grahame or Gordon.

5.4 Recruitment

Grahame confirmed the start date and name of the successful candidate.

Development – Grahame advised that we are still in the process of references – this job is a specialised job and therefore only attracted three applicants – Grahame advised that as soon as he was in a position to advise who has been offered the job he will let people know. It is hoped that the new person will be in place before Anne retires in December.

6 Housing Management Report July to September

As Nicola Stobie is currently on Annual Leave this report was presented by Grahame Cairns

5.1 Application processing

Grahame explained how we annually review housing applications and that at the moment we currently have 1017 on the waiting list.

5.2 Voids and Lettings

We are currently seeing a trend of work needing to be carried out on void properties. John Paterson asked if there was any reason for such a trend and Grahame advised that sometimes we cannot get access to properties. Linda Mason asked about gaining access to properties. Grahame highlighted a recent case where the outgoing tenant changed the inspection times on 3 occasions and unfortunately no inspection was completed until the property was vacant and required considerable work to be done to meet our minimum standards for relet.

Cllr Thomson asked how many offers a person can refuse before they are suspended from the housing list. Grahame advised that it was currently three but during his time with Forth this has never happened.

5.5 New Tenancy Visits

Grahame advised the purpose of these visits were to ensure tenants had settled into their new home.

5.6 Tenancy Sustainment

Linda Mason enquired if the person who had been served the abandonment notice in the new tenancy visit report was the same person as mentioned in tenancy sustainment and was advised that it was not.

6.1 Complaints Monitoring

Colleen Sharp asked about monitoring of noise and if there was a 24-hour noise monitoring team available at Stirling Council. Cllr Thomson advised that there is no longer a 24-Hour Monitoring Team in place. Grahame advised that the police do have Safer Community Policing. The cost to Forth providing potential 24-hour noise monitoring would have to be justified. Gordon Mason stated that we would always ask tenants to contact police if noise is excessive. Pat Heneghan advised that he has had personal experience of being part of a 24-hour noise team but it would be easier for tenants to contact police with regard to excessive noise – police do have the power to confiscate equipment if it is causing too much noise.

8.0 Rent Arrears

Grahame advised that we are currently seeing an increase in Universal Credit arrears – although the arrear may potentially be at a time when they were working. Grahame advised that Tracy Doran Income Maximisation Officer continues to have problems with DWP regarding Universal Credit.

7 Policy Reviews

7.1 Freedom of Information Policies

Daradjeet advised committee that the policies were based on training previously provided at Stirling Court Hotel at the Management Committee Away Day.

Daradjeet advised that the section on fees was mostly based on staff time involved in gathering the information.

Cllr Thomson asked if there were recommendations for keeping records and Daradjeet advised that this had been in a previous GDPR policy which had been approved by committee. Daradjeet also advised that staff should be strict in what they keep.

Daradjeet also advised that most requests for information will be directed to the website, on occasions confidential items may have to be redacted.

The Records Management Policy

Daradjeet commented on the fact that when staff had been asked for information staff had pulled together the information in an efficient manner.

Committee agreed to adopt the revised suite of Freedom of Information related Policies.

Daradjeet and Harman left the meeting at this point.

7.2 Pet Policy

Grahame advised that after being reviewed by various groups there was no changes to this policy.

Committee agreed to retain the existing Pets Policy.

7.3 Standing Orders

Grahame updated the Committee in the proposed changes and the reasons for them. A minor change was suggested and agreed regarding the composition on the Audit Sub Committee.

Gordon pointed out to committee that standing orders work along Rules of the Association.

Committee agreed to adopt the revised Standing Orders Procedures.

7.4 Rechargeable Repairs Policy

Grahame advised that this policy had been amended and that there was more clarity in the revised policy regarding the appeals procedure and remove confusion with the Complaints Policy.

Committee agreed to adopt the revised Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

8 Business Plan Half Year Review

5.3 Performance Targets Review

It was agreed that the AGM to be quorate should be the wording.

Void repairs – it may be that by the end of the year the target could require to be amended.

Risk Assessment scores

Grahame apologised that the score column was incorrect.

9 Internal Audit Annual Assurance Statement

Committee considered the full internal audit report and the draft action plan from the audit.

Grahame advised that the Association was compliant but that there is always room for improvement.

Cllr Jim Thomson asked about further tenant involvement and Grahame explained that we are always looking for opportunities to further involve tenants and we are holding our first evening meeting soon for tenants to come along on 13th November and let their views be known.

Grahame asked if committee would prefer the attendance summary to be included each month with committee papers and it was agreed to do so. Gordon reminded

committee that if they missed three meetings in a row and know they are likely to miss a fourth they should request special leave of absence.

Grahame advised that with regard to Finance/Treasury Management training, he has already had discussion with Elisha, and this will be delivered to committee next year.

Grahame further advised that whilst being pleased that the Internal Audit found the Association compliant the Action Plan highlighted work to be done. Linda Mason commented that it saves anyone from being complacent.

Committee agreed to approve the Action Plan from the Internal Audit and agreed the Annual assurance Statement should be signed and uploaded to the SHR portal. This information will also be uploaded to Forth's website.

10 Correspondence

None.

11 Training & Events

12.1 Training Events Schedule

Committee were reminded to contact Margaret Glencross for any training requirements.

12 Membership Applications

No membership applications received.

13 Health & Safety

Nothing to report.

14 AOCB

Stirling Observer Front Page Article

Last week Stirling Observer headlines were regarding a Forth Tenant claiming she had a sub standard property with dampness and mould. Grahame advised that the property had been visited several times and that there was insufficient ventilation in the property due to the tenant not opening windows and having washing hung around the property to try to dry it off and will not use the external drying facilities. There is no rising damp issue in the property as it is a first floor property.

Linda Mason stated that she could understand the reluctance of people opening windows as they think heat escapes, but it is a matter of making tenants aware of what causes condensation.

John Fyfe asked if there had been any signs of damp, or had it been purely condensation and lack of ventilation causing the problem. Grahame confirmed the latter.

Patrick Heneghan stated that we have learned a lesson from this and that he was reassured that more information would be provided to tenants that experience condensation issues. Pat stated that we do have the right to reply to publicity and Gordon Mason stated this may not always be possible however, as staff have revisited, it was agreed not to write to the Press at this time.

Grahame will keep the Committee up to date with this matter.

Halloween haunted Night

Linda Mason stated that this would take place on Thursday around 7 pm after the committee training had taken place. Family members are also invited to attend and the cost per person is £3 with money going to CHAS (Children's Hospital Association Scotland).

Cllr Jim Thomson apologised that he had to leave meeting at this point.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 25th November

Gordon thanked everyone for attending and wished them a safe journey home.