

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Minutes of Management Committee meeting
Online Video Conference Meeting
9 February 2022

Present: E Campbell
E McNie
M Richards
F Wallace
S Young

Staff: M Torrance
E Mathershaw
K Urbanowicz
M Binnie

GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC

1. APOLOGIES

J Anderson
K Menzies
R Murray (SLA)
F Speirs
W Baxter (staff)
M Thompson (staff)

2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

No changes

3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

No changes

4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

Membership Cancellation

In accordance with the Association's Rules there was 1 membership considered for cancellation (details noted on membership paper). Condolences were noted that the member was deceased.

Membership cancellation noted/approved.

Total number of members – 130

Condolences were noted for Cllr Pat McCafferty who recently passed away. Pat had been part of the management committee at the start and a good supporter of the Association.

Standing Orders – M Torrance advised the new rules have been loaded to the FCA site and we await a response. Until we have had an official response we continue under the current rules and Standing Orders.

4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 19 January 2022

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: E Campbell

Seconded: S Young

Minutes Approved.

4b. Matters Arising

Covered in agenda

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5a. PHA Route Map Progress

M Torrance advised that following a recent staff survey, the result on future working arrangements is that staff would favour hybrid working.

Service – repairs response times were reinstated. The Repairs Quality Standards Officer is making good progress in monitoring any outstanding work and there has been a steady progress.

5b. KPI 3rd Qtr Report 2021/22

E Mathershaw provided commentary on some of the key Housing Management KPIs.

- Repairs – overall positive - not too concerned about completing ARC indicators on basis of what we are reporting on. Noted that Repair “right first time” does not take into account covid.
- Finance – it was noted the average cost of voids and the average cost of repairs are increasing.
- ASB, Estates & Sustainability – figures look positive but we are not seeing improved performance in terms of our rolling reality check survey. As we develop the estates policy this will be under close scrutiny bearing in mind H&S plays a big part.
- Rents – performance as expected and maintaining a steady course. It was noted we are seeing severe distress in some tenants in terms of

living costs, not just for rent but for fuel and food. We can refer tenants for an energy voucher but this is dependent on the funding available at the time. We have been contacted by Falkirk Council for the Fairer Scotland scheme which offers cash help to vulnerable households. We can also make applications for the tenant grant fund but there are processes to follow for this. M Torrance suggested we need a mini strategy on what schemes there are available and what we can be using and supporting.

- Average relet days – reducing
- Section 5 referrals – 100% success

M Torrance provided commentary to the Governance KPIs.

- The full complaints report is included within the F&GP quarterly report. There has been an improvement in terms of response by target timescale.
- Sickness – figure goes beyond 3rd qtr. There are no long term sick leave issues currently.

K Urbanowicz provided commentary to the Programme & Regeneration KPIs.

Medical Adaptations

- There has been an issue with the contractor's blacksmith availability which has had an impact on work.
- We are on track with spending however there is a delay in tenant being assessed by Occupational Therapists. We have no requirements for additional funding.

M Torrance attends the Falkirk Strategic Partnership meetings and will look for update on the assessment of adaptations.

6. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE

6a. Finance & General Sub Committee

The management accounts are currently being prepared.

6b. Bank Signatory Resolution

The Allied Irish Bank require a "Treasury Services Application Form" to be completed to add Margaret Thompson to the list of authorised signatories. This is in line with the Schedule of Authorised Signatories.

Committee members are asked to agree to the resolution noted on the paper.

Committee members agreed to the resolution as per the submitted paper.

6c. F&GP Quarterly Reports Q3 2021/22

Noted covered under KPIs. Noted learning report.

7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT

7a. Housing Management & Investment

The last meeting was held on 7th December 2021 and the draft minutes were previously circulated.

7b. Arrears / Voids / Repairs

E Mathershaw provided commentary to the report. Most of the figures are covered in the KPIs.

Current Tenant Arrears - 3.74% at the end of Quarter 3. This has decreased to 3.67% in January.

Arrears Cases - 4 cases live at decree stage

NHS Forth Valley have asked about accommodation for overseas staff. We will have advised we would look to accommodate through 'key worker process' as identified in our allocations policy.

7c. Eviction Reports

There were none for consideration.

7d. Programme Report

K Urbanowicz provided commentary to the report.

- Electrical works including FCMD – up to date with current legislation with the exception of Balfour Court. There is a fire alarm system here. Balfour Court has a linked system where the fire control panel is linked to Stirling Council. We are currently seeking specialist advice and will review in consultation with the tenants. The Associations achievement was noted in having all properties meeting the current legislation by the due date.
- Painterwork pre-planned maintenance – ongoing – noted change to specification to include fire retardant paint in closes.
- Central Heating Boilers & Sanitaryware – ongoing
- HAG 3 Medical Adaptations – progressing
- BBOOMs – 2 acquired to date. There are challenges faced with the current market as properties are being sold for more than the value. Falkirk Council has asked the Scottish Government to increase grant levels. We would need to make a business case to support this.

- Gas servicing – 2 failures due to tenant with covid – both reported accordingly.
- Insurance claim – insurers investigated a recent claim and found the association liable for costs. Due to the amount paid this may affect our policy. Our insurers class the association as low risk due to the amount of claims but we will review our stock and policy levels going forward.
- SHQS – we have had the opportunity to install a full Door Entry System in a close due to the current door being un-economical to repair.

7e. JRW Contract

E Mathershaw advised that the current reactive repairs contract with McGill is due to end at the end of March and we have the option to extend for a further one year period.

Given the current climate and the continuing impact of covid the management team are recommending the contract is extended for a further one year period to March 2023 during which time we will be undertaking a full tender process.

If committee agree in principle to extend a further year, the next step is for the Programme & Regeneration Manager through Ewing Somerville Partnership to negotiate a further year extension.

We will ensure the future procurement exercise we undertake will emphasis performance. The current economic climate indicates that costs will be higher than current.

K Urbanowicz noted that we would be in a better position to go to tender if it were not for covid etc. Extending the contract a further year will allow time to look at consultants and weighting and how we can procure it.

E Mathershaw advised that the Repairs Quality Standards Officer is carrying out real time monitoring of the contract and is in contact with the contractor daily. The RQSO will be invited to the next HMI sub committee meeting in March to make a presentation on his work.

Committee members agree to negotiate a further and final one year extension with the terms of the extension to be brought to the March 2022 meeting for approval.

8. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS

None

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE

9a. Audit Committee

A meeting date is being arranged.

We have received dates from the external auditor for the external audit programme and the Audit Plan will be reviewed.

9b. Internal Audit

M Torrance provide an update on internal audits:

- Gas Servicing - first meeting held
- IT – information provided to auditor and date arranged
- Fraud and Business Planning – to be carried next week
- Governance – scheduled for March

9c. Risk Report Quarter 3 2021/22

M Torrance advised that no new risks have been added but risks reviewed.

The impact on some risks e.g. fuel, cost of living have been reflected in the register. The levels of some risks have been increased.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

10a. Health & Safety Update

The meeting will be rescheduled due to member availability.

10b. Stock Health & Safety Sub Committee

It was noted SHR had issued a H&S Survey in relation to stock safety. The survey had been submitted and a spreadsheet has been produced to note the evidence for each response.

M Richards thanked staff on their immediate action taken in the event of a recent first at a property and praised the contractors for the work done quickly.

10c. Healthy Working Lives

M Torrance advised that funding for the programme will continue for another financial year.

Assessment for award – update action plans and continue to do activities

11. REGULATORY ISSUES

None

12. POLICY ISSUES

12a. Policy Monitor

To note

12b. Arrears Policy Review

E Mathershaw advised that this is a draft policy to be approved for consultation only at this stage.

A name change is proposed to Rent Arrears Prevention & Recovery policy the policy to place a greater emphasis on rent collection and prevention. Some aspects of the policy will be expanded.

S Young asked why part 9 was still included in the policy as it is not required due to the way decrees work. E Mathershaw confirm that this has been left in the draft policy pending confirmation that covid restrictions re length of time for notices and preventing evictions were being lifted. Also a question mark over whether or not homeless prevention legislation currently being consulted on may have an impact. However if things remain as are then this section will be removed from final draft.

Committee members agree to consult on the draft policy.

12c. Tenant Participation Strategy Review

E Mathershaw advised that due to the continuing presence of covid restrictions we are looking to extend the current strategy by one year with a view to consult on a new strategy during 2022/23.

Committee members approve the extension of the Tenant Participation Strategy for one year.

12d. Donations Policy

M Torrance advised that this policy sets out the criteria, requirements and circumstances under which a financial donation or good or services in kind may be made to another group or organisation in line with our rules.

Committee members approved the policy.

12e. General Data Protection Policy

M Binnie advised that this is a standard policy and has been updated by our Data Protection Officer to reflect Brexit and some sections updated to remove information that is included in other policies.

Committee members agree to adopt the policy.

12f. Data Retention Policy & Schedule

M Binnie advised that this is a standard policy and has been updated by our Data Protection officer to reflect Brexit. The retention schedule has also been updated.

Committee members agree to adopt the policy.

13. STRATEGY, POLICY & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan

This is ongoing.

The business plan review will allow us to model to look at plans.

13b. Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Economy Anchor Partnership

M Torrance attended a recent meeting.

Currently looking at how Paragon can help contribute to the local economy in Clackmannanshire.

14. TRAINING / INFORMATION / ADVICE

14a. Annual Appraisal Report & Training Plans

A summary of training attended is included on the conference & training schedule.

14b. Committee Induction / Stock Tour

A Friday was suggested as the best day to hold this and dates will be circulated to check availability.

14c. Conference & Training Schedule

To note

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Budget meeting will be held on Wednesday 30th March at 1.30pm.

Signed: Chairperson	
Date:	