

## PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minutes of Management Committee meeting

Online Video Conference Meeting

8 June 2022

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

Staff: M Torrance  
E Mathershaw  
W Baxter  
M Thompson  
M Binnie

### GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC

#### 1. APOLOGIES

J Anderson  
K Menzies  
R Murray (SLA)

#### 2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

No changes

#### 3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

No changes

#### 4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

Adoption of Standing Orders - The FCA have approved the rule change, therefore the process is now complete and the standing orders can now be adopted. OSCR have been notified of the rule change and a notifiable event logged with the SHR.

***Committee members unanimously agree to adopt the standing orders.***

R Murray continues on SLA but hopes to return soon. Rosie has been provided with an update on business progress.

Notifiable Events – there have been two logged recently – the rule change and the notice from McGill to end contract.

#### **4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 30 March 2022**

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: E Campbell

Seconded: M Richards

#### ***Minutes Approved.***

M Torrance made a donation request of £500 to the HoME project which supports our tenants. The service is provided through LinkLiving. This £500.00 contribution is to be funded through the Scottish Procurement Alliance rebate. ***Committee members agree to donation.***

#### **4b. Matters Arising**

Covered in agenda

*Standard Orders suspended to deal with agenda item 6b and 6c due to other commitments by F&I Manager.*

#### **6b. Management Accounts Q4 2021/22**

M Thompson advised that the management accounts are done but notes to be completed.

*Note - S Young joined the meeting.*

The management accounts and financial position had been discussed in detail at the last F& GP sub committee.

The fourth quarter surplus will increase as £712k to be capitalised in the final accounts.

The reason for higher variance than what was projected is due to works not being done as a result of covid.

Rental income of 5 BBOOMS – still have a variance of £2.8k.

Void loss – lower than expected.

Sundry income – covers owner occupier charges and income from Falkirk Council for modern apprentices – received against costs – show as separate from salaries.

Management Costs – lower than budget.

Programme costs – slightly higher than expected part of due to catch up on works due to covid and increase in costs.

Interest rates continue to be low.

Staffing costs – noted underspend.

*Note – F Spiers joined the meeting.*

Office costs – down due to staff not working in the office.

High costs in telecommunications due to remote working.

Administration – audit fees higher than usual due to staff changes.

Repairs and maintenance – lower than budgeted due to Covid restrictions, and shortages of tradespeople and materials.

Treasury Update – we will be reviewing our treasury management strategy and it was noted new SFHA guidance had been produced.

The F&GP sub committee had approved the accounts.

***Committee members note F&GP approval of Q4 management accounts and agree of approval.***

#### **6c SHR Loan Portfolio Return**

M Thompson went through the return and explained the relevant sections

***Committee members approve the Loan Portfolio return for submission to SHR.***

*Note – M Thompson left the meeting.*

### **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **5a. PHA Route Map Progress**

Although covid restrictions lifted there is still community transmission. The office will be opening to the public from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June on reduced opening hours – Monday and Friday all day and Wednesday mornings.

There will be a drop in welcome back event on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June between 11am-1pm.

A letter will be issued to tenants and factoring owners this week advising them of the changes and our website and facebook page will be updated.

We are not reinstating cash collections at this time for a variety of reasons however this is subject to review.

Staff will no longer be required to wear masks around the office. Visitors can wear masks if they wish to do so and staff will wear masks if this makes visitors more comfortable.

We will arrange a planned fire evacuation with staff back working in the office.

Staff continue to operate between home working and the office meantime.

## **5b JRW Contract**

Members had been alerted to developments around the JRW contract and W Baxter referred to the paper issued. He provided an update and advised that we have received 30 days' notice from our contractor ,McGill, to end the JRW repairs contract.

Our back up contractor has been pulling out of the market so they are not an option to use. W Baxter has been tracking developments in the market.

We have had discussions with an alternative contractor, Everwarm who are keen to provide the service. Everwarm are actively recruiting as they are experiencing the same labour issues as most contractors at the moment.

We have sought specialist advice from our consultant Quantity Surveyor on the procurement options for appointment of an alternative contractor to ensure we are following the regulations. This advice has been provided to members.

Rates – Labour rates only. Material/Plant rates plus uplift. The QS report details the rates.

Senior staff are seeking approval to appoint Everwarm to March 2024 because it can take the contractor a few months to get up and running and the advice from our QS is not to go out to procure the now due to current market conditions.

This does not affect our gas contract as that is an alternative contractor.

We will be issuing a letter to tenants and factoring owners to advise them of this change.

S Young noted that from his experience there is a real issue with contracts at this time with price on the increase and not being able to get a contractor at short notice.

S Young agrees to the extension of the alternative contractor as it can be justified and is a sensible approach.

A repairs team has been formed to support the transition and work closely with tenants affected and the team will have a direct dial line to ensure access to them.

A reconciliation of outstanding works is ongoing and there is discussion with the outgoing and incoming contractor on the handover of works. Checking completions reported from 1<sup>st</sup> April to check job done and all ok.

Repairs response times require to be suspended.

Medical adaptations – looking at alternative contractors to deliver.

A notifiable event was logged with the SHR who closed this but asked to updated.

Management Committee is asked to consider this report and approve the appointment of Everwarm for the period from June 2022 to 31 March 2024 on the basis of the contract set out at Appendix B. ***Committee members approved the appointment of Everwarm.***

## **5c Succession Planning**

The Succession Plan had been updated after consideration by the F&GP using updated SFHA guidance.

It was noted that F Wallace would be fifth year as Chair in 2022/23 ie after the AGM if re-elected. This will be considered as part of succession planning.

A short term action is to recruit new committee members and action plan is included in the Succession Plan

We have advertised through third sector interfaces and have recently joined Stirling Voluntary Enterprise (SVE) which represents the third sector and supports volunteering

RSM have a student governance programme and this might be an opportunity to recruit and contact has been made on this. The intention is also to write to colleges and universities and look at advertising on Good Moves. An advert will be placed with SFHA.

As regards the senior officer role it was noted that if the officer intends to move on an options appraisal would be required. The Succession Plan uses the SFHA guidance to set out what is required. In advance of any requirement to do a formal options appraisal the aim is do a supported group session so that members are aware of the requirements of such as an exercise.

Committee members appraisals are being arranged.

**5d. Internal Management Plan**

Noted the work done on line and that a session being held with staff around poverty and sustainability and members to update this area of work given current economic conditions. Members were invited along if they are available. Aim is for July adoption of the plan.

**5e. KPI Review Quarter 4 2021-22**

These are same figures submitted via the ARC and the F&GP sub committee had reviewed these in detail. The Management Team provided brief commentary to the KPIs.

Tenant Grant Fund – have had 2 in Falkirk where we had an offer but conditions apply e.g. supply bank statement and agree to suspend court proceedings. No success with Stirling or Clackmannanshire areas.

**6. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE**

**6a. Finance & General Sub Committee**

The last meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and draft minutes distributed.

**6d. Quarterly Reports Q4 2021-22, Q1 2022-23 draft to date**

Reports for noting – had been considered at 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022 F&GP.

**7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT**

**7a. Housing Management & Investment**

The last meeting was held in March.

There are several policies and procedures going through review process.

**7b. Arrears / Voids / Repairs**

E Mathershaw advised that figures covered in KPIs and therefore did not intend to go through the report in detail.

Arrears level is staying on same trend and report includes 2 months of Figures.

**7c. Eviction Reports**

There were none for consideration.

## **7d. Programme Report**

W Baxter provided commentary to the report.

There are several contracts ongoing. Other contracts looking at framework agreements will come later in the year.

Gas Report – all up to date.

Medical Adaptations – we have accepted the Scottish Government's offer of £69k. We have already committed £19k.

BBOOMs – there is an opportunity to look at this programme in Stirling.

Currently looking at a possible development site in Bo'ness.

## **8. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS**

None

## **9. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

### **9a. Audit Committee**

The last meeting was held in March.

### **9b. Internal Audit**

We await two outstanding reports for the Governance and IT audits.

The 2022/23 programme has still to be finalised but the following areas under consideration by Audit Committee

- Gas – this is done annually
- Rolling programme on ARC indicators each year to ensure ongoing consideration of compliance
- Reactive maintenance given current situation re JRW contract

### **9c. Risk Report Quarter 4 2021/22**

The report has been updated and includes narrative on high risks and comments on current

## **10. HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **10a. Health & Safety Update**

The last meeting was held in November 2021.

*Correction – the last meeting was held in March 2022.*

A meeting will be arranged.

*Note – E Campbell left the meeting.*

**10b. Stock Health & Safety Sub Committee**

As above

**10c. Healthy Working Lives**

As above

**11. REGULATORY ISSUES**

**11a. ARC 2021-22**

The ARC was approved by the F&GP sub committee on 25<sup>th</sup> May. In accordance with SHR requirements the full report must be submitted to the next management committee meeting.

Committee members noted the ARC submitted.

**11b. Five Year Financial Projection Return 2022-23**

Committee members noted the submitted return.

**12. POLICY ISSUES**

**12a. Policy Monitor**

To note

**12b. Arrears Policy Review**

The review is ongoing and the updated policy will be brought to a future meeting for approval.

**12c. Senior Officer Remuneration Policy**

The policy is based on the EVH standard policy but is due for review.

The F&GP sub committee has reviewed the policy.

M Torrance declared an interest and left the meeting.

Committee members had reviewed the policy and there were no questions or comments.

***Committee members approved the policy.***



M Torrance returned to the meeting.

F Wallace advised M Torrance that the policy was approved.

### **13. STRATEGY, POLICY & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan**

The next meeting is due to be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> June.

The Association are actively involved in the action plan and have updated the group on work being undertaken on the business plan.

Refugee families - 2 families are currently housed in the Falkirk Council area and one in Clackmannanshire. Currently in discussion with Falkirk Council at the possibility of one or two more units being made available for Ukraine refugees which will probably be let through our allocations policy.

Have had discussions with the NHS about key worker housing for nurses employed from overseas who had been offered temporary housing and are now looking for permanent accommodation – these applicants will be covered under our key worker housing in our allocations policy.

#### **13b. Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Economy Anchor Partnership**

No meetings recently.

### **14. TRAINING / INFORMATION / ADVICE**

#### **14a. Annual Appraisal Report & Training Plans**

M Torrance will look at organising a group session on Covenants / Business Planning.

SHARE Succession Planning session on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 5.30 – 7.30pm (online) - agreed individuals can attend if they wish and should let M Binnie know.

#### **14b. Conference & Training Schedule**

To note

### **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Time TBC.

<b>Signed: Chairperson</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	