

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minutes of Management Committee meeting

Hybrid Meeting

8 November 2023

Present: A Anderson
J Anderson (online)
E Campbell
S Gilbert
B Lees (online)
R Murray (online)
M Richards
F Wallace

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

GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC

1. APOLOGIES

M Hesketh
E McNie
K Menzies
C Munro

2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

The SHR portal has been updated with recent changes discussed at the last meeting. Lenders will be notified.

3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

The updated calendar has been circulated.

4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

Attendance register – to note

Membership Changes – none

Entitlements, Payments & Benefits - none

Register of Interests – M Richards advised he is no longer the Secretary of Grangemouth Community Council but it still a member.

Code of Conduct – all forms have been returned.

Notifiable Events - none

4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 18 October 2023

Spelling correction noted to surname on page 3.

There were no other amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: J Anderson

Seconded: F Wallace

Minutes Approved.

4b. Matters Arising

All covered in agenda.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5a. Mid Finance Review Year Review / Q2 Management Accounts

M Thompson presented the mid-year review.

There has been some minor changes to the paper circulated and the updated paper has been uploaded. The changes do not affect the bottom line.

Reactive maintenance – work ongoing on to review allocation of spend and capitalisation. Noted voids costs are running high.

There was discussion on poverty and the impact on people's living conditions which has an impact on the condition of properties.

Decorating costs are high and alternatives being considered.

Budgets being monitored on ongoing basis.

The covenants are compliant.

The Treasury Management Strategy is currently being reviewed.

The bank is willing to relax the Income & Expenditure covenant.

RBS loan comes to term in 2025 and Treasury Management Strategy will reflect this.

Uncertainty around issue EESH2 of not knowing exactly what it will cover and when the target will be makes it difficult to plan with certainty.

6. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE

6a. Finance & General Sub Committee

The draft minutes of the last meeting held on 14th August have been issued.

6b. Q2 F&GP Performance Reports

M Torrance provided an update on the current establishment report.

A confidential item was discussed and a paper will be brought to management committee on the matter soon.

Pensions – M Thompson is attending the EVH SHAPS session for senior staff next week. F Wallace and A Anderson will attend the EVH SHAPS Governing Body members session.

7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT

7a. Housing Management & Investment

The last meeting was held on 9th October and an update was provided at the last meeting.

7b. Arrears / Voids / Repairs

E Mathershaw provided commentary to the report and noted additional information to the reports had been uploaded.

Main points to note from report:

- Arrears figures include some universal credit payments from the previous month.
- Good progress is being made reducing average relet days.
- Good performance when letting to statutory homeless households and all section 5 referrals received have converted to tenancies.
- ASB cases – 1 category A case has been closed.
- Repair satisfaction is improving.

7c. Programme Report

W Baxter provided a verbal update.

- Painterwork – the tender cost has come in well above the budget provision, therefore further analysis is being done. Plan to table at December 2024 meeting for consideration
- Pre-planned maintenance – surveys have been done and currently preparing document for pricing.
- Electrical works carried over from previous year (rewiring in Denny flats) -13 properties still to do where there have been access issues.
- Legionella – communal storage tank inspections and works planned to be completed this financial year.
- Roofing – 4 properties in Eastmains estate in Menstrie have been completed.
- Kitchen/sanitaryware – unlikely to get major spend in this year therefore investment programme being reviewed.
- Open Space Maintenance – ongoing and going well

5 properties acquired to date through the BBOOM scheme in Falkirk. Clacks Council will support our bid for the scheme in the Clacks area.

Commissioner Street development is ongoing. Planned completion late 2024 at this point.

Insurance Claim Report – to note

Medical Adaptations – Just over £4k budget left out of the £57k grant awarded. Waiting list in place for medical adaptations and these are prioritised.

Gas Servicing – up to date and no failures.

RAAC – we have no record or knowledge of RAAC being in our properties. A desktop check has been done and onsite visit to check one property type. A further sample check will be carried out during the stock condition surveys due 2024.

EICR – ongoing. Appointed an M&E auditor to manage some of the queries, look at smoothing out programme and audit 10% of the EICRs.

Note – J Anderson left the meeting.

8. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS

None

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE

9a. Audit Committee

The last meeting was held on 13th October and the draft minutes were previously circulated.

9b. Internal Audit

Tenders have been received and quality scoring is to be completed.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

10a. H&S Workplace Committee

The last meeting was held on the 8th August and the draft minutes were previously circulated.

10b. H&S Stock Sub Committee

The last meeting was held on the 8th August and the draft minutes were previously circulated.

The tenant H&S handbook is currently with the printers to be finalised.

10c. STEPS Group Update

The group recently met and had guests attend the meeting from the NHS HWL team, our wellbeing consultant and some staff from Glenoaks HA who are beginning their wellbeing programme.

At the meeting our Wellbeing Directory was launched.

We will look to run the Keepwell assessments with staff again.

Menopause in the workplace – staff have attended some sessions on this topic and we will look to hold a menopause café at work.

Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Government have a project looking at Mentally Flourishing Workplaces and Paragon are part of the working group reviewing the framework

M Richards on behalf of the committee passed on his thanks to staff for the STEPS event last week including lunch.

11. REGULATORY ISSUES

11a. SHR – Future of Regulation Consultation

E Mathershaw attended the TIS annual conference and there was a session on this consultation exercise.

The draft was circulated to members and a response will be considered at the December meeting for submission by 15th December.

SFHA had submitted a sector view.

12. POLICY ISSUES

12a. Policy Monitor

We will need to review Hybrid/flexible working and will explore getting advice from Flexibility Works.

12b. Review of Abandoned House Policy

The policy is due for review and there are no proposed changes.

Committee members approved the Abandoned House policy.

12c. Rent Harmonisation

We are currently working out the detailed points of what the rent setting policy will be.

We will need to reconcile the recommendation from our consultant and the feedback from tenants.

There was discussion on tenant feedback.

Consultation with tenants on timeframe implementation.

Currently service charges only apply to new build properties.

In the past a 4% premium has been applied to rent where properties have had new first time central heating installed.

Currently we have no charges that would not be covered by housing benefit.

Feedback from tenants is that the size of a property, type of property and if the property has a garden is what tenants think is important when setting rent levels

We currently have a few properties with rents of around £600pm
And several properties around £500pm. The LHA for a 2 bed house is £115.17p/w.

There is a need to consider how any transitions and ensure effective implementation of rent harmonisation. This will be considered as part of rent increase process as move towards a new rent setting system.

13. STRATEGY, POLICY & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan

Meeting date with partners being set up

13b. Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Economy Anchor Partnership

M Torrance is attending a meeting this week.

14. TRAINING / INFORMATION

14a. Annual Appraisal Report & Training Plans

A training needs analysis will be done for new members.

Part of the training plan from the appraisals completed is for financial training therefore a session will be arranged for M Thompson to take members through how a set of management accounts are prepared.

SHARE will be launching a new online e-learning portal at the end of this year.

S Gilbert can do the online session Housing Associations in a Nutshell.

14b. Conference & Training Schedule

To note

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A Anderson thanked everyone for a productive meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th December 2023. The time will be confirmed.

Signed: Chairperson	
Date:	