

**PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

Minutes of Management Committee meeting

Online Video Conference Meeting

9 June 2021

Present: J Anderson  
E Campbell  
M Hesketh  
K Menzies  
R Murray  
M Richards  
F Wallace  
S Young

Staff: M Torrance  
P Milne  
E Mathershaw  
W Baxter  
M Binnie

**GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC**

**1. APOLOGIES**

E McNie  
S Robertson (SLA)  
F Speirs

**2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE**

E Campbell has requested to join the H&S committee. ***Committee members agreed.***

**3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

No changes

**4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

**Membership Application**

There was one membership application considered for approval (details noted on the membership paper).

***The membership was approved. The use of the seal was approved by the Management Committee.***

## **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 – 140*

**Register of Interests** – It was formally noted that M Richards is no longer the Secretary of the Falkirk District Credit Union.

*Note – M Hesketh joined the meeting.*

**Payment Benefits & Entitlements** – For noting only a housing application received from a staff member relative. No offer is being made at this time. The details will be shared with the Chair for noting.

**Code of Conduct** – none

**Notifiable events** – none

**Rule 55 Decision Report** – report updated with agreement to extend the business plan submission date to RBS.

**GDPR/FOI/SAR** – a quarterly report will be provided to committee members going forward.

**SHR Monthly Covid** – the return is now to be submitted quarterly with additional information requested.

#### **4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 24 March 2021**

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: M Richards

Seconded: J Anderson

### ***Minutes Approved***

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

The H&S committee reviewed a proposal for committee to have a group health and wellbeing session with Seamus Corry and had agreed to have a joint session then with the option for one to one support.

Modern Apprentices – M Torrance explained the background of the contract with Falkirk Council's Employment & Training Unit. M Torrance asked committee for Paragon to fund 6 months of the one year programme for one of the positions. ***Committee members agreed.***

## **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

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

Staff continue to work from home with some exceptions. All Risk Assessments and method statements are in place. Continue to discuss home working and returning to the office with staff and reviewing guidance.

M Torrance will attend a EVH session on the new world of work.

W Baxter advised that the majority of contractors are on site and all risk assessments are done. There are no issues with gas servicing.

W Baxter advised that in relation to the JRW contract we are currently working on covid-30 days targets and there is a backlog of about 100 repairs related to covid. A meeting is being held with the contractor tomorrow to discuss and look at reinstating target times from the end of June subject to contractor clearing the backlog.

### **5b. Business Plan**

P Milne went through presentation.

Business plan had to comply with the current covenants.

Discussion continue with bank on relaxation of covenant and business plan will need to be redone.

There was discussion on the levels of risk involved and the underlying assumptions.

***Committee members approved the business plan for submission to lenders.***

### **5c. Development Update**

Discussions ongoing and verbal update provided to committee. No committed projects at this time.

### **5d. Rule Review**

The provision in legislation amended last year which allowed a virtual AGM stood until the end of March 2021 and has not been renewed as far as we

are aware. M Torrance awaits feedback from our solicitor for clarification on this.

If the provision is not extended we are unable to hold a virtual SGM for the rule review before the AGM in September and the rules have to be updated in order to allow a virtual AGM to be held.

Suggested the SGM is held before the AGM on the same day.

A rule review paper will be brought to the July committee meeting for consideration.

**5e. Internal Management Plan – Strategy Review**

The plan is to hold online sessions week commencing 23rd August or 30<sup>th</sup> August.

The likely format and topics to be covered at the session were discussed.

It was noted SHARE has an online session coming up on Succession Planning. Details to be circulated to members.

M Hesketh is standing down at the AGM and will not be seeking re-election.

**5f. Equalities Action Plan Update**

New guidance was issued by SFHA which includes details of what information should be collected and what it should be used for in order to meet regulatory requirement. The guidance was circulated.

M Torrance is discussing with Link and Falkirk Council on holding a joint training session with a specialist trainer with expert knowledge of the guidance

A meeting is planned with specialist consultant to take forward up date of Equalities Policy/ Action Plan.

**6. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES**

**6a. Finance & General Purposes**

The last meeting was held on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and the draft minutes were circulated.

**6b. Pensions Update**

P Milne attended an EVH Salary Sacrifice session.

P Milne will follow up on pension consultation in July.

**7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT**

**7a. Housing Management & Investment**

The last meeting was held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

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

Arrears figures positive, lowest level of tenants in arrears for last 18 months.

Section 5 referrals resulted in offer and acceptance of two tenancies.

The F&GP sub committee met the newly Repair Quality Standards Officer by way of introduction.

**7c. Eviction Reports**

None

**7d. Programme Report**

W Baxter advised the report was covered in detail at the HM&I sub committee meeting the day prior to the meeting. There were no further questions

**8. COST PLAN / TENDERS**

**8a. None**

**9. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**9a. Audit Committee**

The last meeting was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and the draft minutes were circulated.

Both the external and internal auditors were present at the last meeting.

Cyber security has been added to the audit meetings as a standing agenda item.

The external auditors start their audit planning the end of this week and the main audit is on site from 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

**9b. Risk Report Q4 2020-21**

The report was circulated and noted

**9c. Internal Audit**

The Performance Management and KPI audit and the Gas Servicing audit were both graded good and there were no priority recommendations.

The Budgeting and Fraud Management audit has to be rescheduled.

The forward internal audit programme will be reviewed.

**10. HEALTH & SAFETY**

**10a. Health & Safety Update**

The last meeting was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021. The minutes of previous meetings of 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> June were circulated.

**10b. H&S Manual Audit & Action Plan**

The H&S manual audit was carried out remotely.

M Torrance noted some of the points raised during the audit.

- The report noted that there was a good level of compliance and some recommendations for improvements were included in the report
- Not all staff and committee had signed the responsibilities page due to home working therefore it was suggested to do remotely and accept an email as signature – this has now been completed.
- Add ladder check into monthly inspection.
- Asbestos Policy – work by the appointed consultant had been held up on updating the policy due to Covid so the updated document was not available before audit . The updated policy now in place
- Lone Working Risk Assessment – this was reviewed with staff at February 2020 training before the office closed for lockdown and documentation requires to be updated

Amenity housing – The legal position has been checked as to what is required in relation to inspections and this complex is not legally classed as sheltered. The Risk Assessment has been updated and an action plan is in place. The Estates team have developed an electronic form to complete weekly and to ensure include the fire doors are specifically included. There was discussion on the level of competency for checking fire doors. ACS are updating Fire Risk Assessments during August and W Baxter will have a discussion with them on this.

The H&S committee are going to look at a remit for a specific Stock H&S sub committee and will bring forward proposals on this.

**10c. Healthy Working Lives**

No update

**11. REGULATORY ISSUES**

**11a. ARC Submission**

The ARC was approved at the F&GP sub committee on the 27<sup>th</sup> 2021 May and submitted to the SHR by the due date. The members undertook a comparison of year on year performance.

A full copy of the ARC was provided to all committee members.

**11b. SHR Board Membership**

Information circulated for anyone interested.

**12. POLICY ISSUES**

**12a. Policy Monitor**

Noted

**12b. Draft Risk Management & Internal Audit Strategy Policy**

Following previous discussion with a matrix is now included within the policy. M Torrance had also taken advice from the internal auditor.

***Committee members approved the Risk Management & Internal Audit Strategy Policy.***

**12c. Draft Asbestos Management Policy**

ACS have reviewed the policy and were satisfied with what was in place with regards to asbestos management and the policy was updated. The policy statement was considered and it was noted that documentation on the complete scheme of management was included in the information papers.

***Committee members approved the Asbestos Management Policy.***

**12d. Draft Factoring Policy**

E Mathershaw provided information on this and noted that the committee are only being asked to approve the draft for consultation at this stage.

The level of engagement with owners in recent months has been positive and a group meets monthly. The number of owners engaged compared to number of factored owners is a small percentage. A survey was carried out in January and got a very low response.

Recommendation – engage consultant to do a survey with owners.

In the report it outlines the context for the review. The revised Factors code of conduct should have been reviewed in 2019 but the Scottish Government only published the revisions in January 2021. The main changes are minor and were outlined in the paper.

The Code of Conduct required that if making any substantial changes to the written statement of service then owners must be given a copy and also when an owner changes a copy has to be given to the new owner within 4 weeks.

The policy has been reviewed against the code of conduct and the Housing Manager is satisfied nothing in it that conflicts with this.

Need to adopt code of conduct by the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

There is a need to engage and consult with owners on a number of different aspects of the policy.

The three recommendations for consideration are:

1. adopt code of conduct for implementation by 16<sup>th</sup> August
2. adopt draft for consultation
3. committee to approve engagement of consultants to undertake an annual survey

***Committee members approved the above three recommendations.***

***Standing orders suspended – committee members agreed***

## **12e. Rent Harmonisation Exercise**

E Mathershaw advised HM&I sub committee were updated at their meeting yesterday on this subject.

E Mathershaw wanted to make members aware this is progressing as previously agreed and have advertised a Quick Quote via Public Contracts Scotland for consultants to carry out the work and quotes are due back Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June. Volunteers will be required to sit on the panel.



**13 STRATEGY, POLICY, RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS**

**13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan**

Noted discussions are ongoing. Working on an action plan.

*Note – S Young left the meeting.*

**14 TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**

**14a. Annual Appraisal Programme**

Dates to be agreed for appraisals to be carried out.

**14b. Committee Training Feedback report**

An internal feedback form is issued to member following training attended and members are asked to complete the form. The latest feedback report was noted.

**14c. Conference & Training Schedule**

No dates arranged for future conferences.

SHARE training brochure circulated.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 1.30pm.

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