

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Minutes of Management Committee meeting
Online Video Conference Meeting
10 February 2021

Present: 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

J Anderson
E McNie
S Robertson (SLA)
F Speirs

2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

No changes

3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

No changes

4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

The decision register has been updated to note the approval of RBS re-stated loan agreement through Resolution Rule 55.

The monthly Covid return for January was submitted to the SHR.

4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 20 January 2020

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: E Campbell
Seconded: K Menzies

Minutes Approved

4b. Matters Arising

Information on the Association's decision for the rent increase for 2021/22 was posted on our Facebook page. The letters to tenants will be issued before the end of the month and a press release will be released alongside this.

All other matters covered under agenda.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5a. PHA Route Map Progress

The current lockdown restrictions have been extended.

We continue to carry out essential services only acting in accordance with the guidance with staff continuing to work from home. We have also ensured that staff attending the office for duties are only for those that cannot be carried out from home.

A service update letter was issued to all tenants and factoring owners mid January. We continue to update our website and Facebook page.

There are no contracts on site apart from external works such as Painterwork and Open Space Maintenance.

Estate inspections are only being carried out on a priority basis.

5b. Treasury Management Strategy

P Milne advised that treasury management will need to be looked at in detail as part of the budget and business plan review.

Amendments to loan agreement was approved and the credit facility was extended to Dec 2021.

Covenant – up by an additional £250k of expenditure this year. This has opened the door for more covenant relaxations.

Libor rate is changing to SONIA rate which is just a different way of working out interest rates.

5c. Management Accounts and Covenant Compliance Reports for the period to 31 December 2020

P Milne provided an overview of the reports.

There was discussion on the underspend for the year and it was noted that once we know exactly how much we are down because of Covid impact we will go back to the bank when we have figures in place to look at relaxing the covenant for future years.

Committee members approve the management accounts for Q3.

5d. Development Update

Ongoing discussions on potential developments.

Post contract issues with the Alva development are making progress.

5e. JRW Repairs

W Baxter advised that negotiations have started with the contractor following discussion with committee members at the January meeting.

A 10% increase in the JRW rates was discussed with the contractor.

This is tied into performance and the contractor is fully aware of this.

Performance will be measured tightly over the first 6 months and will be reported to committee on monthly basis then we will start negotiations on next year subject to lockdown restrictions being lifted to allow non-essential works to progress.

Committee members agreed to accept the proposed increase and arrangements.

W Baxter will formally accept the proposal through the Quantity Surveyor.

5f. Rule Review

As previously discussed M Torrance advised that there is a requirement to update to the new 2020 model. We are currently using the 2013 version updated to 2015 model rules. The decision was taken to delay the SGM in the expectation that this could be held at a venue.

A SGM will need to be held to review and approve the new model rules. This will need to be done online if there is no prospect of a face to face event.

Committee members approve for M Torrance to progress the rule review and organise a virtual SGM .

5g. Internal Management Plan – Strategy Review

The away days were planned for April last year to review the IMP but were cancelled due to covid.

M Torrance asked committee members how they would like to carry out the review this year online. There was discussion on this and it was agreed to M Torrance to look at each session required and then members will decide who would be best to attend each session.

5h. EVH Salary Ballot

Staff declared an interest and left the meeting.

Members agreed support the JNC recommendation. Staff re-joined the meeting.

M Torrance will return the ballot paper to EVH.

6. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES

6a. Finance & General Purposes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 12th December were previously issued.

6b. Pensions Update

P Milne confirmed the meeting with Gordon Birrell from Chiene & Tait will be on 17th February at 10.30am. As well as the pensions working group, all management committee members are invited to attend.

7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT

7a. Housing Management & Investment

The last meeting was held on the 19th January and the draft minutes have been circulated.

7b. Arrears/Voids/Repairs

E Mathershaw went through the report.

It was noted that since we have been unable to carry out settling in visits with new tenants due to covid, Knowledge Partnership will carry out email and phone surveys. The survey will be more structured and focus on the

seven ARC indicator questions. Our Allocations policy is due for review and the feedback from the surveys will be useful as part of the review.

There was discussion on the impact the current covid restrictions have on decrees. It was noted that under normal circumstances around half of cases would have been brought to a conclusion by now and not allowed to get to the stage they are at.

7c. Eviction Reports

None

7d. Programme Report

W Baxter advised that there are no major changes from last month's report. All contracts are still on hold apart from external works such as Painterwork and Open Space Maintenance.

The Painterwork and Electrical work frameworks have both been extended to March 2022 in line with PCS and OJUE rules due to covid 19 (unforeseen circumstances) with notices issued advising all of this.

BBOOMs – we have met our target of purchasing 5 this financial year with an opportunity for a further one subject to S/G approval.

It was clarified that the mid cycle gutter clean is carried out every 3 years as part of the 6 year planned maintenance and painterwork cycle.

8. COST PLAN / TENDERS

8a. None

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE

9a. Audit Committee

The last meeting was held on the 9th February and the draft minutes have been circulated. The Internal Auditor was in attendance at the meeting.

Tenant Participation audit was satisfactory. Out of four objectives, two were marked good and two satisfactory. Some things in action plan we have not been able to do because of covid. The auditors used the Scottish Government's Tenant Participation checklist as a baseline. There were no recommendations because there is an action plan in place.

KPI Audit - the audit was carried out and no issues were raised on site. We await the draft report.

Gas Audit – W Baxter advised that he had the first meeting with the Internal Auditor to discuss setting up the evidence folder and has a further meeting on Friday.

The management team are to review the follow up to recommendations from audits.

External Audit – a meeting is being held tomorrow to discuss the planning process and the auditors aim to be on site mid July to carry out the audit.

9b. Internal Audit

As above.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

10a. Health & Safety Update

A meeting was due in February. M Torrance and W Baxter will issued a proposed date for the next meeting.

ACS acting on behalf of EVH are due to carry out an audit of the office health and safety – a date has to be re-arranged.

Work is ongoing updating risk assessments.

The health & wellbeing project has started with the consultant employed talking to all staff.

The recording of office inspections electronically is working well.

W Baxter will present an update on a contractor safety matter at the next H&S sub committee meeting. This does not relate to tenant safety.

10b. Healthy Working Lives

M Torrance advised that she has received an email from the Healthy Working Lives team advising that assessments have been postponed for 6 months into the summer.

11. REGULATORY ISSUES

11a. None at this time

12. POLICY ISSUES

12a. Policy Monitor

It was noted that the policy monitor will be updated for the next meeting.

12b. Draft Risk Management Policy

The feedback was for some visual representation on risk levels . M Torrance presented an extract from the risk register showing a visual key and committee members agreed the format looks good. This will be incorporated into the draft and reissued for approval.

12c. Draft Management Committee Training & Development Policy

M Torrance advised that there are a couple of minor changes to make the policy around practical issues. These were highlighted and the following agreed

- No requirement for management committee approval for training course attendance . M Torrance or P Milne can approve in line with policy and if budget available.
- If a committee member wishes to take part in a formal qualification that will still come to management committee for approval.

Committee members approve the Management Committee Training & Development Policy.

13 STRATEGY, POLICY, RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan

Discussions are ongoing.

14 TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

14a. Annual Appraisal Report & Training Plans

F Wallace to arrange with F Speirs to carry out appraisal.

14b. Committee Training Feedback report

The feedback from those who attended the Office 365 training is that they just need practice using it.

14c. Conference & Training Schedule

To note

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Connecting Scotland Project – the hardware is due to be delivered.

Kickstart Programme – ongoing, await feedback from the DWP on the grant application.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday 10th March 2021. However if there is no urgent business to be dealt with this meeting will be cancelled and we will just have the budget meeting on 24th March.

Signed: Chairperson	
Date:	