

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Minutes of Management Committee meeting
Hybrid Meeting
17 January 2024

Present: A Anderson
S Gilbert
K Menzies (online)
R Murray (online)
C Munro
E McNie
M Richards

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

GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC

1. APOLOGIES

J Anderson (SLA)
E Campbell (SLA)
M Hesketh
B Lees
F Wallace

2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

No changes

3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

February meeting will be on Wednesday 7th February at agreed time 11.00am.

4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

Attendance Register – J Anderson had requested a special leave of absence prior to the meeting and this was approved by the Chair subject to homologation. Committee members approved.

Payment, Benefit & Entitlement – for noting only – housing application received from committee member relative.

Notifiable Event – previous case has been closed by SHR

4a. Minutes of Previous Meetings

13th December 2023

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: S Gilbert

Seconded: L McNie

Minutes Approved.

10th January 2024

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: S Gilbert

Seconded: A Anderson

4b. Matters Arising

All covered in agenda.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5a. Development Programme

Pre-Acquisition & Pre-Tender Risk Assessment – Westquarter, Falkirk

The paper had been issued to members in advance to consider. This was procuded wit the assistance of Curb.

C~urb Property Development (C~urb is Link Group's development arm) will be appointed to act as development agent for Paragon Housing Association.

This project differs from the Association's usual approach to development in that Paragon HA will be the developer, with development services being provided by C~urb and 100% of the units on the site being in the ownership on the Association.

The development will deliver 17 new build units for social rent comprising 9 flats and 8 terrace houses. (17 units – 5 houses, 12 flats)

Paragon will pay for the development as it progresses until complete. To cover the risk additional retention money will be kept.

The final HAG level has still to be determined. There has been discussion with Scottish Government and Falkirk Council on the impact of Scottish Government budgets and the response was to move on with the site .

It was noted there will be no issues with the demand for the properties. There is a nomination agreement in place with Falkirk Council and nomination arrangements have still to be discussed.

Building regulations were discussed and the plan was passed by building control prior to 1 December 2023 therefore gas boilers will be installed in the properties.

The developer Glenesk Homes are a comparably new developer. They do have some experience in social housing development. Positive references have been received and due diligence has been done by Curb.

The structural engineer was satisfied with the mining assessment however further consultation and investigation will be carried out as standard practice.

There was discussion on the new drainage system to be installed.

There was discussion on the risks involved in the development.

Committee members approved the proposal to acquire and develop the site at Westquarter.

5b. Rent Increase Consultation Update

The rent consultation and survey has been issued to tenants.

Information is available on our website and a promo video on facebook. Knowledge Partnership will carry out telephone surveys. The rent focus group will be on Monday 22nd January.

Discussions are ongoing with the RBS on covenant relaxation.

6. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE

6a. Finance & General Sub Committee

The last meeting was held on 14th August 2023.

7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT

7a. Housing Management & Investment

The last meeting was held on 4th December and the minutes have been circulated.

The next meeting is on Monday 5th February.

7b. Arrears / Voids / Repairs

E Mathershaw provided commentary to the report.

Current Tenant Arrears – figures are high but stable. It was noted UC is paid in arrears so when payments are received this lower arrears figures.

Former tenant arrears – reducing

The funding we have received has enabled us to take a more proactive approach offering help to tenants.

We received good feedback from tenants at Balfour Court saying the curtains they got have made a difference. The session was led by the Energy Adviser.

Energy Action Scotland (EAS) has asked for an article for their newsletter on how we have used their funding.

Average re-let days – we have had fewer vacancies than previous year. This has resulted in affecting the average relet days as longer relet days earlier in the year are pushing up the average.

Reactive repairs – figures are being reviewed and full reports will be issued to the HM&I sub committee for the February meeting.

7c. Programme Report

W Baxter advised there was no change to the report from the previous month.

Expenditure report is being updated.

Gas Servicing – up to date

EICRs – updating figures as the SHR have asked for an update.

BBOOMs – purchased 5 properties

8. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS

8a. Kitchen and Sanitaryware Framework

W Baxter provided commentary to the tender report and there was discussion on the report.

Committee members approve the appointment of Everwarm through a Framework tender.

All of the kitchens planned won't be installed before the year end therefore we will look at what kitchens we can install and possibly accelerate installing boilers replacements to maximise the capital spend .

8b. Photocopier Tender

M Binnie advised the tender report will be presented at the next meeting.

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE

9a. Audit Committee

The last meeting was held on 13th October 2023.

9b. Internal Audit

M Torrance advised that the Internal Audit tender scoring is to be completed.

10. HEALTH & SAFETY

10a. H&S Workplace Committee

There were some errors noted on the draft minutes of the meetings. S Gilbert not S Gibson, 10.30am not pm and E Mathershaw did not attend the stock meeting. These errors will be updated in the draft minutes for being considered at the next H&S meetings.

We have received the H&S manual updates today. The updates will be presented at the next H&S meeting.

The H&S handbook is almost complete.

10b. H&S Stock Sub Committee

Noted progress and W Baxter had taken members through gas auditors report.

10c. STEPS Group Update

We continue to be involved in Public Health Scotland's working group on Mentally Healthy Workplaces.

The Samaritans has offered training for staff to help them deal with people in crisis. This is being pursued.

11. REGULATORY ISSUES

11a. Scottish Government Report – Cost of Living Protection Act 2022

Scottish Government status report had been circulated for information.

11b. Scottish Government Consultation – Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS)

The SHNZS is the new ESSH2 and beyond.

The consultation is running to March and we will feedback through SFHA.

There was discussion on possibly having a session for committee members on this topic.

TIS Landlord Member Forum on the Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS) Consultation – Wednesday 21st February. There is a session in the morning for tenants and an afternoon session for staff. Details will be circulated and if anyone wants to attend to let Corporate Services know to ensure booking made.

12. POLICY ISSUES

The policy monitor will be updated for the next meeting.

13. STRATEGY, POLICY & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

13a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan

M Torrance advised she attended a recent meeting.

13b. Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Economy Anchor Partnership

There have been no recent meetings. W Baxter is part of the Fair work Charter working group.

14. TRAINING / INFORMATION

14a. Training Plans

Following consideration of feedback We propose to arrange in-house sessions on:

- preparing management accounts
- SHARE e-learning
- Sharepoint

EVH is holding a session on Making Sense of Finance for Governing Body Members which A Anderson is attending.

It was suggested checking if Energy Action Scotland has any training for committee members to attend on energy.

In April the proposal is to hold our IMP / Strategy session for committee and staff.

14b. Conference & Training Schedule

To note

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th February 2024 at 11.00am.

Signed: Chairperson	
Date:	