

# **PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

Minutes of Management Committee meeting

Hybrid Meeting

20 August 2025

Present: A Anderson  
E Campbell  
S Gilbert  
J Hughson  
B Lees (online)  
D McLean (online)  
L McNally (online)

Staff: M Torrance  
M Thompson  
M Binnie

In attendance: Chris Docherty, RSM UK (online)  
Calum Alexander, RSM UK (online)

## **GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

J Anderson  
K Menzies  
J O'Meara  
M Richards  
E Mathershaw (staff)  
W Baxter (staff)

### **2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE**

J Hughson was formally welcomed as a member the management committee filling a casual vacancy.

The lenders have been notified of the change to the management committee and the SHR portal will be updated.

### **3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

No changes

#### **4. GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

##### **Membership Changes**

There was one membership cancellation for noting (details on membership paper). The member is deceased and condolences were noted. The member was an original founding member of the Association and her contribution over the years was noted.

*Note – D McLean joined the meeting.*

**Payment, Benefit, Entitlement** – full details noted on register. ***Committee members approved a decoration allowance and heating install for staff member.***

**Annual Registers Report** – committee members noted the report

##### **4a. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16 July 2025**

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: S Gilbert

Seconded: E Campbell

***Minutes Approved.***

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

All covered in agenda.

Noted Audit sub committee had signed off contingency plan.

*Standing Orders suspended*

#### **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

##### **5b. External Audit Tender**

The current term with RSM UK Audit completes with the 2024/25 audit which has just concluded.

A procurement exercise was undertaken and two tenders were returned.

The audit sub committee delegated S Gilbert and E Campbell to undertake the scoring exercise and quality interviews were held.

M Torrance took members through the tender report. The tender process had been supported by a consultant QS.

There was discussion on ensuring the independence of the auditor and steps taken by Audit Committee were noted. RSM have been external auditor for a number of years, however the audit partner is rotated. The current RSM partner has worked on this contract for 5 years and would be required to be rotated after 10 years in accordance with RSM policy.

***Committee members approve the acceptance of the tender from RSM UK Audit LLP.***

M Torrance thanked S Gilbert and E Campbell for their work during the tendering process.

The tendering firms will be notified of the outcome by the QS and the appointment of the auditors will be made at the AGM.

**5c. Treasury Management – Refinance and Treasury Management Strategy Review**

M Thompson advised that the strategy has been reviewed and figures have been updated as financial assumptions have changed.

M Thompson provided an update on the refinance exercise. Good progress is being made with both lenders.

We may need to arrange a meeting to sign off any loan agreements before the next scheduled meeting.

**5d. AGM / Management Committee Succession**

A Anderson is intending on stepping down as Chair after the AGM.

Members aware of this and arrangements in hand for succession in officer posts.

All committee appraisals are complete apart from two members due to personal issues.

**6. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE**

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

The last meeting was 29<sup>th</sup> May and draft minutes were previously issued.

**6b. Management Accounts Q1 2025/26**

M Thompon advised that this year the budget is presented in line with predictions of income and expenditure rather than the linear fashion of previous years division into 4 equal quarters.

M Thompson took members through the report.

There is a surplus for the period.

The reactive maintenance costs are under budget.

All covenants are compliant.

The management accounts were sent to our lenders within the required timeframe.

***Committee members approve the management accounts.***

*Note – C Docherty & C Alexander from RSM joined the meeting*

**5a. Annual Financial Statements 2024/25 and Audit Findings Report**

M Thompson welcomed C Docherty and C Alexander from RSM to the meeting present the annual accounts.

C Alexander advised that the audit was a clean report.

C Alexander took members through the statement of income, statement of financial position and statement of cashflows from the annual accounts.

There has been strong performance, with turnover increasing due to an increase in stock and operating expenditure has dropped.

Interest receivable has increased. The surplus is strong.

Housing properties have increased and investment in stock increased.

Cash position has decreased due to the transfers to assets capitalised.

Cash generated from operating activities and represents investment in stock.

C Docherty advised that a lot of work has been performed on re-financing and they are happy that the exercise is at an advanced stage of progression. Therefore, he was happy to sign off as part of assessment of going concern.

C Alexander advised that the management letter was discussed in detail at the audit sub committee.

There was a minor control recommendation which is now complete.

This was around the accrual of invoices and the timing of them at the year end. A new process is now in place to ensure clarity.

C Docherty thanked M Thompson and staff involved for their work on the audit. M Thompson thanked RSM.

*Note – C Docherty & C Alexander left the meeting*

**6c. Pensions Update**

An update was provided to members on the current situation with the staff pension consultation.

There was discussion on updating the pension issue within the risk register.

**6d. Director Appraisal Summary Report**

Committee members noted the report.

**6e. Equalities Policy**

M Torrance advised that the policy is due for review and has been updated to reflect legislative changes along with sector specific guidance as noted in the report.

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

**7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT**

**7a. Housing Management & Investment**

The last meeting was on 20<sup>th</sup> May and the draft minutes were previously circulated.

**7b. Housing Managers Report**

M Torrance advised that the figures in the report are all positive except relet days which are proving sticky to reduce. We have asked the internal auditor to do a review of the voids process.

**7c. Programme Report**

W Baxter has emailed committee members points from the report in advance of the meeting.

It is anticipated the Westquarter development will be ready for handover within the next 2-3 weeks.

#### **7d. Leasing Policy**

M Torrance advised that this policy is for when the Association needs to let a property to another organisation e.g. let to another HA for support.

Following the policy review there are some minor changes to the policy and these are noted in the report.

J O'Meara had emailed a comment to this paper with concern on the condition of the property being returned. It was noted that from experience any property being returned from another agency is unlikely to be returned in poor condition as the Association would be responsible for repairs. The incidences of leasing on this basis are very low.

The policy will be reviewed in 5 years or when there are relevant legislative changes.

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

#### **7e. Tenants Rights to Compensation**

M Torrance advised that there have been no changes to regulations.

Minor changes are proposed following review of the policy as noted on the Report and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel were made aware of the review.

The policy will be reviewed in 5 years or when there are relevant legislative changes.

***Committee members approved the Tenants Rights to Compensation policy.***

#### **7f. Tenants Payments Policy**

M Torrance advised that the offer of allowances is reviewed annually alongside the rent increase.

There are minor changes proposed as noted on the report.

***Committee members approved the Tenants Payments policy.***

#### **7g. BBOOM Policy**

Committee members recently approved a Rule 55 on BBOOM valuations relating to the use of approved valuers to the policy agreement.

This allows the Association to use an alternative valuer to the District Valuer if they are unable to undertake the valuations.

Following this approval the policy has been updated to reflect this.

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

**8. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS**

None

**9. AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**9a. Audit Committee**

The last meeting was on 7<sup>th</sup> August and the draft minutes have still to be issued

**9b. Annual Risk Review 2025/26 and Annual Fraud Review**

M Torrance advised that the annual risk review is carried out annually in August.

M Torrance took members through the presentation of the review and the top risks.

We ensure we include on our register the current SHR sectorial risks.

We will include the current pension consultation noting we know the risks and are taking appropriate advice.

A new risk specific assessment is done with any new development proposals.

The audit sub committee has reviewed the fraud risk assessment.

*Note – D Mc Lean left the meeting as per his notification of a prior appointment*

**9c. Q1 2025/26 Risk Report**

The summary report was uploaded for members.

**9d. Risk Management and Internal Audit Strategy**

Updated to reflect changes in relevant governance standard wording but approach set out is as per current approach.

***Committee members approve the risk management and internal audit strategy.***

## **9e. Whistleblowing Policy**

M Torrance advised that the policy has been updated in line with the EVH model policy.

M Torrance took members through a presentation noting the changes.

With changes to the committee we will need to appoint an appeals officer.

***Committee members approve the Whistleblowing policy and agree to appoint a new appeals officer after the AGM.***

## **10. HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **10a. H&S Workplace Committee**

The last meeting was held on 12<sup>th</sup> August and the draft minutes were circulated.

The assurance statement evidence was reviewed at the meeting and an updated report will be sent to sub committee members.

### **10b. H&S Stock Sub Committee**

The last meeting was held on 12<sup>th</sup> August and the draft minutes were circulated.

### **10c. Asbestos Management Policy**

M Torrance advised that specialists in the sector, ACS has reviewed the policy and only minor changes have been recommended e.g. Chief Executive to be updated to Director.

***Committee members approve the Asbestos Management policy.***

### **10d. Legionella Policy**

M Torrance advised that Enviroteam have reviewed the written scheme.

Job titles need to be updated in the policy and there is some training to be refreshed

A competency assessment must be carried out annually.

***Committee members approve the Legionella policy.***



#### **10e. STEPS Group Update**

Wellbeing week is 1-7 September and we are looking to arrange a session with staff and our Wellbeing consultant.

#### **11. REGULATORY ISSUES**

##### **11a. ARC Technical Guidance Update**

M Torrance advised that the SHR has had a change of lead officer and that an introduction meeting was held with the other members of the management team.

The SHR has issued new technical guidance for the ARC to include new H&S indicators in relation to damp, mould and condensation (DMC).

E Mathershaw is currently looking at creating reports for recording DMC.

We will have an internal audit on reviewing the methodology for collecting info on DMC.

#### **12. POLICY ISSUES**

##### **12a. Policy Monitor**

The policy monitor was noted and the management team are asked to update their comments.

The Membership policy will be put on agenda for AGM.

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

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

M Torrance advised that she has spoken to Falkirk Council regarding a potential site and possible funding available.

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

M Torrance advised that as part of the anchor partnership there have been discussion on potential employment initiative.

M Torrance advised that we have received funding from Octopus Energy to be able to employ an Energy Advisor. We are working with Falkirk Council's Employment & Training unit to recruit and they will provide support.

## **14. TRAINING / INFORMATION**

### **14a. Staff Training & Development Policy**

M Torrance advised that the policy is being updated to reflect the current EVH model policy.

Included in the policy will be a process for staff to follow if they are interested in undertaking a formal qualification. There will be a request form for staff to complete. Committee members are asked to approve to adopt this as a procedure – approved.

M Torrance will update the policy and bring to the next meeting for consideration.

### **14b. Training Plans / Appraisals**

Aa above

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

SFHA Finance Conference – M Thompson will be attending as she has received a free place due to being part of the working group reviewing the conference format. No other finance staff are able to attend. M Thompson asked committee members to let her know if they are interested in attending.

The Stock Tour will be held in October and we will be in touch regarding dates.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Provisional meeting – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September – meeting may not be required depending on business.

The AGM is on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September.

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