

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Minutes of Management Committee meeting
Online Video Conference Meeting
20 October 2021

Present: J Anderson
E Campbell
E McNie
R Murray
M Richards
F Wallace
S Young

Staff: M Torrance
E Mathershaw
K Urbanowicz
M Thompson
M Binnie

GOVERNANCE / MINUTES ETC

1. APOLOGIES

K Menzies
S Robertson
F Speirs
W Baxter (staff)

2. COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE

It was noted M Hesketh retired from the management committee at the AGM.

3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Calendar was issued with the usual pattern of dates and main business. There was discussion on days/time of meetings' and we may look at holding some meetings throughout the year in the evening.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

The Secretary provided details of the nominations for election.

The following nominations were received.

Chair – F Wallace

Nominated by: S Robertson

Seconded by: M Richards

Vice Chair – J Anderson

Nominated by: S Robertson

Seconded by: M Richards

Secretary – M Torrance

Nominated by: S Robertson

Seconded by: M Richards

Treasurer – S Robertson

Nominated by: M Richards

Seconded by: F Wallace

There being no other nominations all were duly elected and F Wallace took the Chair.

5. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

Members considered appointments to representative bodies and the following were agreed.

- EVH – F Wallace. Substitute rep to be M Richards. Two can attend the monthly EVH management committee meetings.
- SFHA – F Wallace

SHARE – there is no standing representative.

If there is interest from members in becoming active in the running of SHARE we can check to see if SHARE have any vacancies for anyone wishing to be put forward as a candidate. Main contact for SHARE AGM is F Wallace.

TIS – there is no representative of the organisation. M Richards is a member of the TIS committee through an independent election.

Committee members agreed to the above.

6. GOVERNANCE ITEMS

Adoption of Standing Orders

The Standing Orders have been updated to incorporate the updated SFHA Model Officers Job Descriptions and to reflect the new rules.

Agree to remove public relations officer as a post going forward.

Put in new officer roles as per model / a couple were optional.

There is the option to exclude the chair from chairing sub committee's and for being chair on more than one sub committee. Practice has been to exclude the Chair from being a member of the audit sub committee but not for being a member or chair of any other sub committee. It was agreed to continue with this practice.

There is the option that if a committee member has been chair they cannot serve again as chair. Agreed not to adopt this option and stay with the 5 year rule.

Taken out secretary role and put directly into staff role.

There was discussion on the option of Vice chair being invited to stand for election. It was felt to be a bit of a redundant point as this option is generally open so not adopted.

M Torrance will update the Standing Orders to reflect the discussion and will complete the rule change process. The Standing Orders can be adopted at the next meeting from when the rule change becomes effective. The existing Standing Orders continue to the next meeting.

Note - J Anderson joined the meeting

Sub Committee Members

There were no changes proposed therefore sub committee membership is to remain as is.

Housing Management & Investment Sub Committee

S Robertson
F Wallace
J Anderson
M Richards

Finance & General Purposes Sub Committee

F Wallace
S Robertson
E Campbell
F Speirs
M Richards
R Murray

Audit Sub Committee

E Campbell
S Robertson
M Richards
K Menzies

R Murray

Health & Safety Committee

F Wallace
S Robertson
J Anderson
M Richards
E Campbell

All sub committees to appoint chair at first meeting and review remit and feedback any changes.

Whistleblowing Appeals Officer

This was discussed and audit sub committee. This would be a nominated person on the committee who would oversee an appeal and would not be someone who is an officer. ***L McNie volunteered and committee agreed the appointment.***

Attendance Register

To note

Members Paper

Approve new member and the use of the seal was approved.

Register of Interest

All members have carried out annual check of entries.

PBE

It was noted there is no allocation at this point in time it is only an application for housing for a staff member's relative. Will do through delegated authority if property comes up and report that staff member has not been involved in process.

Code of Conduct

All members have signed code of conduct.

Notifiable Event

No new notifiable events

Decision Register

No new decisions to report

Re-adoption of Health & Safety Policy

It was noted that this is the standard EVH policy as set out in the EVH H&S manual and requires adoption annually. ***It was agreed to readopt.***

FOI / EIR / SAR Quarterly Report

Report issued for information

As part of governance report going forward will include if any whistleblowing items.

6a. Minutes of Previous Meeting 15 September 2021

There were no amendments to the minutes.

Proposed: J Anderson

Seconded: S Young

Minutes Approved.

6b. Matters Arising

It was confirmed that the relevant returns were made as noted on the minutes.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

7a. PHA Route Map Progress

There was discussion on possible hybrid working and it was noted proposal to set up a formal co-hort of staff working from office from the end of November.

A survey will be issued to tenants along with the winter newsletter on service delivery to shape forward service delivery.

7b. KPIs

The management team provided commentary to the KPI report presented.

Additional points to note:

TMG has been sold to McGills and there is work ongoing on the novation agreement of the contract from TMG over to McGills. Appropriate legal advice has been taken and financial checks carried out.

Noted that there is a lot of capital work being carried out in void properties due to the condition of the property being left in at the end of tenancy.

ASB training will be held in November for all frontline staff.

A demo will be set up of an ASB app for early November and an invitation issued to HMI sub members.

8. FINANCE & GENERAL SUB COMMITTEE

8a. Finance & General Sub Committee

The last meeting was held on 14th October.

Draft minutes distributed for noting.

8b. Review of Schedule of Authorities

Not recommending any changes. Asking members to readopt.

Committee members agree to readopt the Schedule of Authorities.

8c. Equalities Report 2021

There are new regulatory requirements in relation to recording and monitoring equalities information and using this to influence service delivery. A human rights approach is also required to be demonstrated

SHR requires a statement as part of the AAS on how this will be implemented by April 2022.

A specialist consultant had been appointed to assist with this .A new policy has been drafted and will be put out for consultation and brought to the December meeting.

An updated equalities action plan has been produced looking at specific areas e.g. website audit re accessibility, office accessibility.

There was detailed discussion on the ensure the lawfulness of Data Collection. Data is to be collected across all 9 protected characteristics including special characteristics – 6 fall into this sensitive category.

There was debate around the issues of anonymous collection or capturing against individuals. Noted need to have a lawful reason for processing data.

The guidance does not set out the legal basis and organisations need to take their own advice. There is a planned discussion with the DPO, consultant and senior staff to determine the way forward and a recommendation will be provided to Committee.

8d. F&GP Performance Reports

Main elements of the reports were covered as part of KPI report.

Staffing Report - M Torrance provided an update to committee.

8e. Stock & Factoring Insurance Renewal

The Insurance cover is broken down into to 3 areas – tenant stock, factored stock and office.

M Thompson advised that following our Broker's valuation the recommendation is to change insurers for the office policy and retain the current insurers for the tenant and factored stock.

It was noted the tenant and factored portfolio cost has increased higher than budget but this is because of extra stock so would have come within budget if based on that stock level.

Committee members agreed to the recommendation.

8f. Public Holidays 2022/23

Committee members approved the public holidays and to retain the May public holiday.

9. HOUSING MANAGEMENT & INVESTMENT

9a. Housing Management & Investment

The last meeting was held on 18th October and focused on performance and the AAS.

9b. Arrears / Voids / Repairs

The report was covered as part of the KPI report.

9c. Eviction Reports

There were none for consideration.

9d. TP Action Plan Update

Noted that there is currently a supportive tenant scrutiny panel. Require to review how we consult with wider tenant group.

Some actions have been delayed due to covid restrictions.

The owners group have been meeting regularly and are reviewing the draft factoring policy.

9e. Afghan Refugee Scheme

It has been agreed with Falkirk Council to let 2 properties under the Home Office scheme. The Home Office will pay the void rent loss. Falkirk Council will provide intensive support to any refugees housed.

Additionally, Clackmannanshire Council have asked if the Association would consider letting 1 property in the next 12 months to the same scheme. Agreement has been given.

Both Clackmannanshire & Falkirk Councils potentially looking to lease properties for emergency housing. After a general discussion it was agreed that whilst supportive of both council's issues with the lack of temporary accommodation, The Association's preference would be to offer permanent accommodation in such a way as to free up existing temporary accommodation.

9f. Programme Report

K Urbanowicz provided commentary to the report.

10. COST PLAN / TENDER APPROVALS

10a. Painterwork 5 year Programme

K Urbanowicz provided commentary to the report.

There was discussion on the report.

The fully tendered offer submitted by Bell Decorating Group is recommended for acceptance.

Committee members approved the recommendation.

It was agreed to Suspend Standing Orders to continue the meeting

11. AUDIT COMMITTEE

11a. Audit Committee

The audit sub committee last met on 20th October.

11b. Internal Audit

There have been no internal audits carried out this financial year.

The Business Planning and Fraud audit is due this year and will be arranged after the business plan review.

The IT audit is due to be carried out this year and the Gas Safety audit is usually carried out in February.

The Governance audit will cover how the annual assurance Statement was produced.

11c. Q2 2021 Risk Reports

Reports were uploaded to meeting papers folder.

M Torrance showed the new and emerging risks on the risk register and the top risks narrative.

This was discussed and it was suggested adding the increase in utility costs to the emerging risk report.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY

12a. Health & Safety Update

Fire Risk Assessments - a sample has been done and W Baxter is working through them and pulling out priority recommendations.

Plan – we are currently recording on inspection form that fire doors are being checked on a regular basis. There was discussion on competent person checks on fire doors. J Anderson was thanked for her help on this.

M Richards has been booked on H&S courses.

12b. Healthy Working Lives

Need to gather evidence for Silver aware accreditation attainment.

13. REGULATORY ISSUES

13a. SHR – Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

All sub committees have been through the AAS in detail using the SFHA toolkit as a guide.

There are no “red flags” as to non compliance but some items for improvement have been identified

The draft assurance statement was put forward for approval.

The AAS is similar to last years’ but includes a section on equalities.

E Mathershaw also went through the draft AAS with The Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

Committee members agree to the draft AAS and to submit the AAS to the SHR.

14. POLICY ISSUES

14a. Policy Monitor

For info

14b. Drug and Alcohol Policy

There are no changes proposed.

Committee members agreed to readopt the policy.

14c. Smoking Policy Review

There are no changes proposed.

Committee members agreed to readopt the policy.

14d. Whistleblowing Policy Review

There are no changes proposed.

Committee members agree to readopt the policy.

14e. Rent Harmonisation Update

Arneil Johnston have commenced the exercise and are doing background work on rent affordability. A progress meeting is being held in November.

15. STRATEGY, POLICY & RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

15a. Grangemouth Housing Masterplan

Noted discussions on going. It has been highlighted to partners that any plans are consistent with the Association's business plan.

15b. Clackmannanshire Wellbeing Economy Anchor Partnership

M Torrance provided commentary to the paper and there was discussion on this.

Committee members agreed for the Association's membership and to formally support the action plan.

16. TRAINING / INFORMATION / ADVICE

16a. Annual Appraisal Report & Training Plans

All appraisals complete apart from one and some positive areas of training have been identified.

16b. Committee Induction / Stock Tour

This was discussed at recent sub committee meetings and we will look at the possibility of holding this at the end of November.

16c. Conference & Training Schedule

For info

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th November and will possibly be an evening meeting.

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| Signed: Chairperson | |
| Date: | |