

Tollcross Housing Association Limited
Minute of the Management Committee Meeting
held on Monday 26th April 2021

Present:

Chris Elliot (Chair for meeting), Bill Dougan, Brian McNally, Theresa Findlay, Steve Fleming, Esther Skimins, Ellen Stewart, Ellen Garscadden, John McMorrow and Geraldine Connolly

In Attendance:

Clive Douglas, Chief Executive
Tom Hastings, Finance Director
Frank Donohoe, Technical Director
Marie Campbell, Corporate Services Officer (Minutes)

Anne Fitzsimons, Corporate Services Director
Fiona Mills, Housing Director

Item 1 Apologies. Leave of Absence and Declaration of Interest:

- 1.1. **Apologies:** Andrea Bell, Agnes Philips and Ian Smith
- 1.2. **Leave of Absence:** Committee approved leave of absence for a 3 month period for Gwen Wilson.
- 1.3. **Declaration of Interest:** None

Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meetings:

- 2.1 **Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 29th March 2021:**
 - i. **Matters Arising and Correction to Minute – Minute 12.3 – Notifiable Event** – Committee noted that the Scottish Housing Regulator has been updated and is satisfied with the Association’s proposals for committee succession planning, training and appraisal system for long serving members.
 - ii. **Approval of Minutes** – The Minute was approved by general consent.
 - iii. **Decisions taken between Meetings** – None.
- 2.2 **Minute of the Operations Sub Committee meeting held on 19th October 2020** – Noted.

Item 3 Membership Report to 30th April 2021 - Committee approved the application for membership in respect of Reference: 2021/1 with no cancellations during the period. The total membership at 30th April 2020 is 117. The seal was last used on 7th December 2020 to authorise a Share Certificate.

Item 4 Annual Review of Registers – Committee noted that the terms of the current Payments & Benefits Policy have been adhered to with regard to all transactions listed and the new model policy will be considered in due course. Committee noted and approved as follows:

- 4.1 the content of Appendix 1, outlining payments, benefits, gifts and hospitality in line with the Payments and Benefits Policy, during the year 20/21, which have been entered into the registers
- 4.2 the declaration of interest register is up to date.
- 4.3 no fraud/attempted fraud incidents occurred during the year 20/21.
- 4.4 there have been no incidents of bribery/attempted bribery reported during the year 20/21.
- 4.5 that all registers are available for inspection and that they will be signed by the Chief Executive and Chair/Secretary as soon as is practicable.

- Item 5 Health & Safety Update** – Committee noted the update and in particular that, subject to social distancing, staff are preparing to make a phased return to office working as of 10th May with the majority of staff back in by 31st May 2021.
- Item 6 Data Protection Update** – Committee noted the outline of changes relating to the Information Commissioner, Scottish Information Commissioner and Brexit, with policy changes to be brought back at a later date. It was further noted all requests for information have been handled in accordance with the Association’s Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policies and Procedures, with a report to be submitted to the Information Commissioner during May 2021.
- Item 7 Corporate Services Performance Report Quarter 4, Cumulative (2020/21) and proposed targets 21/22** – Committee noted the detailed report and that overall the Association continues to perform well. The following points were highlighted:
- 7.1 **Complaints** – Of the 22 Stage 1 and 5 Stage 2 complaints dealt with during the period, 5 of the Stage 1 complaints missed the target timescale, largely due to the change in working practices/delays in communication. In addition, the overall number of complaints is down significantly, for the same reasons outlined. It was noted, however, with the introduction of the new Complaints Policy, the refresher training provided, the return to normal working practices and the re-establishment of the process for reviewing complaints, numbers will increase. It was noted that the current software used to record complaints is no longer being supported and an alternative provider is being sought
 - 7.2 **Committee Attendance** - During the quarter an average attendance rate of 72% was achieved against a target of 80% and although below target, the figure has been increasing throughout the year as confidence builds in technology.
- Item 8 Maintenance Performance Report Quarter 4 and Cumulative (2020/21)** – Committee noted the detailed report and that overall, with the restricted services we are able to provide, the Association continues to perform well. The following points were highlighted:
- 8.1 **Gas Servicing** – Whilst 100% access was achieved during Quarter 4, during the year overall 74 access visits were missed, due to access issues resulting from the pandemic. All properties have now been serviced, with the Regulator having been kept informed throughout.
 - 8.2 **Adaptations** – 33 referrals were received during the year with 13 outstanding, due to the access difficulties associated with the pandemic.
 - 8.3 **Stock Condition** – The stock survey did not proceed and has still to be progressed, however, it was noted that the majority of the 155 voids were surveyed during the year.

- 8.4 **EESSH** - 32 properties remain to be brought up to standard as soon as the tenants authorise access or the property becomes void. Of the £30k budget set aside, only £3.5k was spent.
- 8.5 **Energy Performance Certificates** – The 6 properties currently “E” rated are those where tenant agreement to proceed is awaited or the property becomes void, which will allow the SHQS/EESSH works to be undertaken.

Item 9 **Housing Services Performance Report Quarter 4 (2020/21)** – Committee noted the detailed report and that the Association overall continues to perform well. The following points highlighted:

- 9.1 **Tenancy Offers Refused** – A significant improvement was noted during Quarter 4 and throughout the year, with the cumulative figure at 31.11% -v- 46.95% for the previous year.
- 9.2 **Anti Social Behaviour** - Many estate management issues were not resolved throughout the year due to the pandemic, however, it is was noted that, subject to easing of restrictions, priority will be given to progress these types of issues during 2021/22.
- 9.3 **Tenancy Sustainment** – A significant improvement was noted during Quarter 4 and throughout the year, with 92.84% overall achieved, however, given that this may be due to the pandemic, the figure continues to be monitored.
- 9.4 **Rent Loss through Voids** – It was noted that cumulatively 1.07% of all rent was lost as a result of properties lying empty through lockdown, particularly sheltered properties, which has doubled since last year’s figure of 0.52%.
- 9.4 **Court Actions** – It was noted that as the country enters into the anticipated Tier 2 restrictions during May 2021, court actions can be processed to eviction.
- 9.5 **Homelessness** - 74% of the total lets in the year went to homelessness applicants which is significantly higher than previous years. However, in order to maintain balanced, sustainable communities, the Association is seeking to reduce this figure. Discussion ensued and whilst noting that Glasgow City Council are seeking a commitment to 60% of lets, it was agreed that representatives should attend the next Committee meeting in order to discuss the concerns raised and progress the matter to a collective agreement.

Item 10 **Eviction Reports:**

- 10.1 **Case Ref: 1 (2021/22)** - Committee noted the details of the case. In noting all actions taken to date, as per the Association’s policies, procedures and the solicitor’s confirmation of the granting of a decree on 24th March 2021, Committee approved, by general consent, that the decree should be enforced.

10.2 **Case Ref: 2 (2021/22)** - Committee noted the details of the case and in particular the date of tenancy start, the tenant profile and history. In noting all actions taken to date to prevent the case escalating, as per the Association's policies, procedures and the solicitor's confirmation of the granting of a decree on 24th March 2021, Committee approved, by general consent, that the decree should be enforced.

- Item 11** **Arrears Update** – Committee noted the report and in particular that whilst good progress was made during March 2021 to reduce the arrears by £26k, at the year end, the arrears figure was £215k, an increase of £43k since the start of the year. It was also noted that Universal Credit cases equate to 63% of arrears overall with the number increasing. Staff are proactively managing cases and assistance provided wherever possible.
- Item 12** **Financial Regulations** – Committee considered and approved the revised Financial Regulations.
- Item 13** **External Audit Tender** – In noting the tender process undertaken, Committee noted that Messrs Alexander Sloan were first placed for quality and price. Following discussion, Committee approved the appointment of Messrs Alexander Sloan as the Association's external auditors for a five year period from the year ended 31 March 2022.
- Item 14** **Financial impact of COVID-19** – Committee noted the detailed report and in particular the losses and gains incurred as a result of the pandemic. Overall, the position is positive with the Association's cash balance significantly higher than anticipated. Discussion ensued and given the financial uncertainty going forward, Committee were satisfied that the Association has taken all steps to ensure it is as best placed financially as possible going forward.
- Item 15** **Whisky Fungus** – Business confidential
- Item 16** **Services over £50,000 over 5 year period** – Committee considered the schedule and approved the timescales for the issue of the tender documents for the provision of legal services and for the cleaning of the Associations various premises.
- Item 17** **A.O.C.B.**
- 17.1 **Potential New Management Committee Member** – It was noted that a potential new member has been identified. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.
- Item 18** **Date & Time of Next Meeting:** 24th May 2021 @ 6pm (Online: MS Teams)