

**Minute of the Management Committee meeting
held on **Tuesday 25 February 2020** in the offices of
Blochairn Housing Association, 1 Blochairn Road, Glasgow**

Present: [REDACTED]

In Attendance: Michael Carberry (Director); Angela MacDonald** (Housing Services Officer); Danielle Murphy** (Housing Services Assistant); Carol Niven* (Finance Assistant); Matthew McDermott* (Wylie + Bisset, Finance Agent); Audrey Cowan*, Wylie + Bisset, Internal Auditors. (* Items 5 and 17). (**Items 5, 16 and 17).

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The meeting was chaired by [REDACTED].

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3) Adoption of the Previous Minute of **28 January 2020**

The minute of the previous meeting was adopted by [REDACTED] and seconded by [REDACTED]. (Post Meeting Note: Item 10, National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO): the question on whether spending time on this issue was worthwhile, was not asked by [REDACTED]).

4) Matters Arising from the Previous Minute of **26 November**

Previous Item 3 – Adoption of the Previous Minute. [REDACTED]

b) Previous Item 4(b) - IT Review. iPads were distributed

c) Previous Item 4(d) - New Close Doors. The Director advised that there is an ongoing dispute between the main contractor and sub contractor

d) Previous Item 4(e) – Committee Appraisal. The Director advised that the process should be completed next week and the report from EVH will follow

e) Previous Item 16(b) - Blochairn Place Buy Back. The Director advised that a [REDACTED] house will be purchased on [REDACTED] for the survey value of £[REDACTED]

5) Finance Reports

a) Rent Review 2020/2021

The Director advised that there had been no response to the rent review consultation in the newsletter and on Facebook. One comment, posted on Facebook, suggested that it was unfair that rent increases for bigger houses were more than for other houses. An automatic message responds to posts asking people to contact the office directly. There was no further contact. After discussion the Committee approved the proposed 3.7% increase

b) Budget 2020/2021

The Finance Agent presented the papers issued with the agenda. He highlighted variances from last year. He advised that £[REDACTED] had been allowed for 'buy backs'; one in [REDACTED] (£[REDACTED]) and, possibly, [REDACTED] (£[REDACTED]) later in the year. The cash position allows for these to be bought without bank loans, but this will

continue to be monitored. Staff costs allow for a 5th member of staff and Planned Maintenance includes new bathrooms, dealing new fire safety regulations; replacing gutters, downpipes and fascia and new house doors. Repayments on the Unity Trust Bank loan will include capital, as well as interest, from January 2021. The Finance Agent confirmed that the banking covenants are being comfortably met. After discussion the Committee approved the proposed budget

6) Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

The Director advised that discussions are ongoing with EVH on the role and grade for a 5th member of staff. This has been discussed with staff. The likely proposal is for a Corporate Services Officer, which many housing associations have within their structure. A proposal will be available by the next meeting

7) Staffing Sub Committee

The Director advised that the Sub Committee has not met since 14 January 2020.

8) Health & Safety

The Director advised that policies on Lone Working and Stress Management were out for staff consultation.

9) Scottish Government/Scottish Housing Regulator

a) Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

The Committee noted the paper issued with the agenda. The Director highlighted that it is proposed to appoint gas heating engineers, James Frew, to deal with the new fire safety requirement. The company has the capacity to deal with this and it can be co-ordinated with annual gas safety inspections. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This was approved by Committee. It is proposed to ballot Committee members on the most suitable time for a strategy/planning event. This was agreed. The external audit tender has been advertised in Scottish Housing News. There have been [REDACTED] enquiries so far.

b) Notifiable Events

[REDACTED]

10) Tenant Bonus Scheme

The monthly prize draw was made for February. Winners were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

11) National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO)

The Director advised that he had passed the 16 Significant Case Reviews to [REDACTED] to examine and to establish whether there are common themes. He has highlighted one extreme case where the offender will be released from prison in 2022. It was agreed that there should be a review of Blochairn's involvement with NASSO policy, examining the pros and cons of continuing to challenge government and council policy.

12) Royston Strategy Group

The Director advised that the next meeting will be on Friday 6 March.

13) Policy

The Committee noted the policy diary issued with the agenda and that review dates are flexible, depending on urgency and issues on the agenda. Most

policies are fit for purpose and need minimal changes on review. The Allocation Policy has been passed to the Association's solicitor for review.

14) Training

- a) The Committee agreed that feedback from events would begin with the SHARE conference
- b) The Committee noted details of the EVH one day event on Sunday 26 April

15) Items for Future Agendas

Committee members were reminded to advise the Chairperson or Director of issues they might want to discuss under future agendas.

16) Housing Services Reports

1) Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 – Allocations Policy Review.

This has been passed to the Association's solicitor to review. A contentious issue at every review is the subject of "local connection"/priority for residence, which has been part of Blochairn's policy for 25 years. Guidance is that these points cannot be awarded. However, previous legal advice has been that the legislation does not affect internal transfers

2) Local Letting Committee (Glasgow City Council Homelessness).

Blochairn has been asked to allocate 40% (8) lets in 2020/2021 to 'Section 5 Referrals' (Homeless applicants applying to the Council). This is calculated lets over the last 3 years. During discussion and it was noted that lets over the last 3 years have been higher than usual. The quality of referrals has always been an issue, with many applicants' information being inaccurate and many not actually wanting to live in Blochairn/Royston. It was agreed that the Council be advised that the Association does not agree to the proposed 40% figure and that situation will continue to be monitored

3) BRS Technology.

The Committee noted the pilot project to test a sensor that will monitor air quality to predict condensation and mould. Several tenants have agreed to take part in the pilot

4) Tenant Ref: [REDACTED].

The Committee noted the details of this case, which calls to court 24 March. The Association is seeking an eviction decree

5) Tenant Ref: [REDACTED].

This case was Sisted on 18 September. There have been no issues since

6) Tenant Ref: [REDACTED].

This tenant is [REDACTED]. Staff are liaising with the solicitor and family regarding tenancy and the rent is being paid. Staff will visit the tenant [REDACTED] and offer support. It is not likely that an eviction decree would be granted should the Association seek one

7) Support Staff.

It was agreed that the Association would contribute its share of costs to continue the project until funding is secured

8) Debt Write Off. It was agreed that debt should be written off in case references [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] and in two 'non-tenant' cases

9) Statistics. The Committee noted the statistics issued with the agenda and details of satisfaction surveys. It was agreed that staff should follow up on the comment about window locks

17) Internal Audit

Audrey Cowan presented the proposed 3-year internal audit plan. It was noted that years 2 and 3 would be reviewed as the audit progresses and that alternative issues can be substituted. After discussion the plan was approved.

18) Any Other Competent Business

a) Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)

The Committee noted the report on housing associations' use of social media and other forms of communication

b) St Mungo's Primary School

The Committee considered a request for a donation to a school trip to Italy. It was decided that this could not be approved because the policy is that donations will only be considered where there is a clear local connection to either Blochairn or to Royston

END