

**Minute of the Management Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 22 February 2022
in the office of Blochairn Housing Association
and by Zoom Conference***

Present:

[REDACTED]

In Attendance:

Michael Carberry (Director); Angela MacDonald (Housing Services Officer); Patricia Davidson (Corporate Services Officer)

(* attended by Zoom)

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is on Leave of Absence until her work shift pattern changes. [REDACTED] has moved jobs and requires a Leave of Absence until June. This was agreed.

2) Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3) Adoption of the Previous Minute of 25 January 2022

The minute of the previous meeting was adopted by [REDACTED] and seconded by [REDACTED].

4) Matters Arising from the Previous Minute of 25 January 2022

a) Previous Item 17(b) – Rechargeable Repairs

A request has been received to discuss policy and practice on rechargeable repairs. This is included at item 15(b)

5) Finance

[REDACTED] has been on Sick Leave since 5 November. It is not known when [REDACTED] will return to work. Other staff are covering some of the [REDACTED] work and support is being provided by NG Homes' staff

b) Management Accounts

The Finance Agent is on Paternity Leave. He had prepared the Management Accounts to 31 December, enclosed with the agenda. He had no concerns and confirmed that Bank Covenants are being met. The Director highlighted some of the variances from the Budget

c) Budget 2022/2023

The Finance Agent will present the Budget at the next meeting, including a rent increase of 4%, as agreed at the last meeting. Tenant consultation was through the newsletter and on Facebook. There were no comments received

d) Buy Backs

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Since 2019, the Association had bought seven houses, at a cost of £[REDACTED]. A summary is available on Committee iPads.

There was an extensive discussion on using cash for Buy Backs. There had been previous discussion on setting a lower limit of cash held. The Finance Agent had suggested £[REDACTED]. Currently, approximately £1m cash is held. The Association's strategy is to be risk averse. In recent times, there had been no safe, risk free investment for surplus cash that would deliver a reasonable return. It was agreed that this should be discussed further.

It was agreed that it was healthy to have an extensive, robust discussion on these issues. A 'bite size' training session on finance will be brought forward in the training programme

6) Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

a) Salaries 2022/2023

Negotiations are ongoing between EVH and Unite

7) Health, Safety & Human Resources Sub Committee

- a) The Sub Committee will meet within the next few weeks
- b) The office reopened to the public on 14 February

8) Scottish Government/Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

a) Annual Assurance Statement (AAS)

There has been no change since the previous meeting

9) Tenant Bonus Scheme

January Winners were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. February Winners were [REDACTED] & [REDACTED].

10) National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO)

- 1) **NASSO Awareness Group (NAG).** The Committee noted details of the meeting on 27 January. There are nine members of the NAG
- 2) **Freedom of Information.** The Committee noted details of FOI requests to
 - Police – statistics by Postcode
 - Health & Social Care Partnership – Block Profiling and Section 5 Referrals
 - Wheatley Group (GHA) – Block Profiling
- 3) **Block Profiling**
Letters had still to be prepared to MSP's, SFHA, the Scottish Housing Regulator asking for their views

11) Royston Strategy Group

- The Committee noted details of the meeting on 28 January
- Governor of Barlinnie attended to discuss HMP Glasgow, to be located in Germiston
 - Councillor Allan Casey is working on plans to create an outdoor gym at Glenconner Park
 - Rosemount Development Trust is working on the development strategy for Royston Road/Provanhill Street
 - The proposed housing development at the Millburn Centre remains stalled

- 12) Internal Audit**
Internal Audits for 'Corporate Governance & Risk Management' and 'Long-Term Maintenance Planning' are now scheduled for October 2022.
- 13) Policy**
- a) **Allocations Policy**
The Director advised that an Equalities Impact Assessment is being prepared for the revised allocations policy
 - b) **Strategy ('Away Day) Meeting**
No date has been set for the strategy day
- 14) Training**
- a) **Training Programme**
The CSO presented a draft programme of 'bite sized' training events. It is hoped that these can be incorporated into the agenda, beginning with finance
 - b) **Code of Conduct**
The CSO presented the SFHA Code of Conduct for Committee Members
- 15) Items for Future Agendas**
- a) Committee members were reminded to advise the Chairperson or Director of issues they might want to discuss under future agendas
 - b) **Rechargeable Repairs**
 1. Rechargeable repairs policy and procedure had been requested as an item for discussion
 2. The Director opened the discussion by advising that managing rechargeable repairs is notoriously difficult. Subjective judgement is often required. What is, or is not, a recharge is often disputed, irrespective of policy or tenancy agreements
 2. Policy is: 'The Association will charge Tenants for the cost of carrying out repairs which are due to the neglect, carelessness or abuse of property and for repairs needed because of problems caused by the Tenant's own equipment or fittings. If property or fittings are damaged because of a criminal act by someone not connected to the Tenant the Association may ask the Tenant to get a Crime Reference Number from the Police'
 3. The Housing Services Assistant deals with administration. If possible, the Tenant will be asked to agree to pay for the repair before it is ordered. Alternatively, the Tenant will be advised in writing, as soon as possible, that the repair is rechargeable. The Tenant will normally be given the option of paying by instalment
 4. Tenants who are unhappy about a recharge can follow the Complaints Procedure. The Housing Services Officer can use discretion and not charge for the repair if the amount is less than £100. Amounts over £100 will be referred to the Management Committee.'
 5. The Tenant Handbook states: 'You might be recharged for repairs to put the property back to its original condition; because of an accident; because of carelessness, negligence, misuse or abuse or because of forced entry to the house'
 6. Accidental damage would normally be covered by Household Contents Insurance. Many tenants do not have insurance
 7. In recent years, procedures have become more relaxed. Tenants have not been asked to confirm, in writing, that they will pay the recharge. In many cases, such as, losing keys, there is an urgency and staff react quickly
 8. Tenants can pay by small instalments. Generally, this means that the situation is uncomplicated and uncontentious

9. Recent cases, involving accidental damage to bathroom fittings, resulted in dispute and formal complaint
10. The cost of repair was reasonable, considering the tradesman has to inspect the job, source and collect materials, then return to complete the job. There is also a 'Mark-up' on the cost of materials
11. However, tenants are often surprised by the cost. They might think they can source a replacement much cheaper, if given that option
12. If the tenant is given time to make enquiries, they might realise that it's not straightforward
13. Staff are now treating some rechargeable repairs with less urgency to allow a 'cooling off' period, unless the tenant expressly accepts that the repair is rechargeable
14. Some issues are urgent, e.g. losing keys
15. Committee were asked to consider these issues and whether procedures are adequate
16. In particular, should a different approach be taken to repairs needed due to a genuine accident?

There was a lengthy discussion. Various scenarios were considered. The difficulty in assessing and distinguishing between 'genuine' and 'false' reports and requests was recognised. Discretion must be used. Staff emphasised that rechargeable repairs are not a common occurrence.

It was agreed that

- The Housing Services Officer can use discretion for repairs estimated to be up to £100
- The Director can use discretion for repairs estimated to be up to £250
- A report will be prepared showing rechargeable repairs for 2021/2022

16) Any Other Competent Business

There was no other business discussed.

END