

**GOVANHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2021 AT 6.30PM
ONLINE MEETING**

PRESENT: John McLardie (Chair)
Keith Kintrea
Elizabeth Klein
Iain Doherty
James White
Jen Cassells
Wilma Logan

IN ATTENDANCE: John Quinn, Director
Shannon Watson, Head of Finance & IT
Alison Kevan, Head of Corporate Services & HR
Alan McDonald, Head of Development & Property Services
Liz Campbell, Minute Secretary



1.Apologies

Annie Macfarlane, Mujeeb Ur- Rehman and Barbara Robertson

2.Declarations of Interest

Keith Kintrea declared an interest in item 11 – mural request as Keith is Chairperson of GCDT.

3.. Minutes of the Management Committee meetings held on 20th October 2021

The minutes were proposed by Wilma Logan and seconded by Elizabeth Klein

Matters Arising – Illegal Occupation – the family have been rehoused. Due to language barrier, it has been difficult to get Universal Credit application completed for them and a face-to-face appointment has been arranged to help them complete this application.

Head of Tenancy Services – Claire McGraw has been offered this post and the Association looks forward to welcoming her in January. She is currently an Acting Director in another Association and is looking forward to joining Govanhill.

Meetings – As we continue to ease out of Covid restrictions it is hoped that, guidance permitting, smaller meetings can take place face to face in December. The Boardroom is being set up to facilitate hybrid meetings in January. Head of Corporate Services & HR asked that members complete the survey that was sent to them to allow further discussion can take place around attending meetings in the Boardroom.

Work has also been taking place on the telephone systems so that we can continue to open those up further.

4. South West Govanhill (SWG) Property Acquisition & Repair Programme

A full project report will be made at Development Sub- Committee in January. Points to note just now are:

The novation of McGills Scotland to McGills FM is now complete.

There have been some concerns over progress of contracts. Five out of seven common repairs contracts are on site. It is anticipated that three contracts should complete at the end of February but the original date for completion was 3rd December.

There was an issue with their roofing sub-contractor, but a new contractor is in place. Two roofs have been completed and two are in progress.

The Architect will look at works on 3rd December and those not completed could trigger penalty clauses in the contract.

MR4 has had additional labour put into it and half the flats should be handed back to the Association by Christmas. A review is taking place on a time extension to the contract due to additional works being required.

MR5 & 97 Garturk Street are being surveyed.

In previous contracts EPC C was asked for but this is being upgraded to EPC B.

42 Garturk Street – some works have been completed but additional rot works, and stonework has been identified. Glasgow City Council (GCC) have been approached regarding grant funding.

29 Annette Street – this is on site. It is hoped the external works can be completed by Christmas.

Five surveys for common repairs are taking place soon.

Acquisitions - 4 acquisitions have been made and there were 4 compulsory purchase orders carried over from end of the financial year so 8 acquisitions in total.

It was asked if the change from EPC C to EPC B was related to item 5 and the correction to ARC data. It was reported that this was not the case, and it was related to Energy Efficiency Standard Scottish Housing (EESH) 2 standards.

5. Correction to ARC Data

Indicator C9

Indicator 6

The Scottish Housing regulator (SHR) contacted the Association seeking the rechecking and confirmation that the SHQ compliance figure as of 31st March 2021 was correct. It is believed that several other Associations were also asked the same.

The basis for this was that SHR thought some Association's had overlooked the update to the Scottish Government's Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) guidance affecting Element 35 EESH.

Brown & Wallace were used for reports for this, but Head of Development & Property Services has gone through the detail and cross references each property. This will now be done in house rather than through a consultant.

Discussion took place and it was stated that SHQS & EESH should match, and it appeared that there was now a good process in place to ensure that it did. It was also stated that the energy performance in our stock was not very good, so it did need to be looked at it seriously.

It was also discussed that the added complication that decarbonisation of heating will lead to tighter restrictions. The high density of housing could be well placed for district heating system, but poor insulation is also a factor to be considered. Enerfit system has meant some flats have reduced heating consumption by 90% but costs were approximately £115k per flat. This is higher than the value of some flats.

In our MR5 project and at 97 Westmoreland Street were referred to as a good example and it was suggested that the Architects could be asked to make a presentation.

The challenge is to find an affordable solution and build that into budgets and cash flow. It is an exciting time but also challenging.

No other questions were raised.

The content of the reports was noted, and the actions being taken to manage SHQS internally was also noted.

6. Equalities Action Plan

Draft Equalities Action Plan 2021-23

It was reported that this draft action plan was updated based on the guidance received from Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and commissioned by SHR.

From January the new Head of Tenancy Services will work with the Head of CS/HR on this. Equalities reporting will be part of Head of Tenancy Services remit.

Our information advisor has been asked to assist with this piece of work and they have asked some questions of SHR. SHR has replied and this is reflected in appendix 2 on page 23. Some assumptions have been made on customer types and protected characteristics and the information advisor has been asked to look at this to ensure assumptions made have been reasonable and in line with guidance.

Appendix 1 lists the details of the action plan that is in place,

Page 6 may be changed by Head of Tenancy Services, but it could be an initial starting point.

It will also need to be clarified how we record the information asked for and to ensure that only those who need to see the information have access to it.

Discussion took place and it was stated that there were no surprises in the issues raised and it was felt that the actions we should follow were standard anti discriminatory practice. It was also mentioned that some people may question why these questions were being asked and may be reluctant to answer them.

Approval was given to accept this as a draft equalities plan and for discussion to continue with advisors.

7. Information Requests Report – April to September 2021

This is usual quarterly report on information management.

Section 2 shows details of April to Sept 2021 and gives comparison to the previous two years information.

Section 3 gives more details on each complaint and the lessons learned.

3.4 One complaint related to an allegation of bias due to the complainant's race. Although the matter could have been dealt with faster than it was there was no evidence that race was a factor. This has to be included in report to SHR at the end of the year.

Pages 4, 5 and 6 of the report give information on other requests that have been received.

There were no comments or questions raised and the contents of the report were noted.

8. Christmas Payment of Staff Salaries

Salaries are due to be paid on the 25th of each month. It was asked if approval could be given for December salary to be paid early.

Following a discussion Committee approved the Head of Finance & IT, along with the senior Management Team, can set at date annually in December for early payment of the December salaries.

9. Share Membership Update – September 2020 to September 2021

Around the time for the AGM each year an exercise is undertaken to verify details held on share membership.

In the last year 21 members have cancelled their membership, for a variety of reasons.

Current membership stands at 293 members.

Discussion took place around the number of members and how this could be promoted. It was reported that Housing Officers discuss this when new tenants sign up and that the information sessions that were ran by Tenant Participation Officer had also proved successful in encouraging new members.

A member sought information on whether or not 293 members was a 'good' number and discussion took place on whether or not some sort of membership drive was needed. It was also stated that some larger Associations appear to have fewer members than Govanhill.

Head of Corporate Services & HR will seek evidence of membership numbers across other Associations and provide a comparison and a breakdown of our members and report back.

10. Early Repayment of Loans

F&GP Sub Committee gave approval for this matter to be brought to Management Committee.

The legal documents have been received from Bank of Scotland and Nationwide for the transition of loans from LIBOR to SONIA.

There are 7 loans with Nationwide which require 7 legal agreements to be signed. They have indicated that the references made to English Law in the agreements cannot be altered.

Bank of Scotland are owed £176k and hold £1,670k of property as security for this. Nationwide are owed £265k and hold £7,510k of secured property.

By repaying the loans early it will save money in legal fees and release a large amount of secured assets.

A comment was made that the loan value to security value made this an easy decision to take.

Approval was given for the early repayment of these loans.

11. Mural Request

Proposed Site Reports

The buildings that have been identified as possible sites for a new mural to be painted onto are owned or part owned by the Association.

There are three possible sites that have been identified:

- 20/22 South Annandale Street
- 97 Westmoreland Street
- 14 Hollybrook Street

Discussion took place around each site and the responses that had already been received by residents in each.

It was stated that the idea of a mural to brighten up an area was a good one, but it was understood the difficulties in implementing it.

South Annandale Street was dismissed from consideration as it was a recent building and had a high-quality gable end. It was felt inappropriate to be painting on a reasonable new building.

It was asked if residents would have a choice in what the mural was? It was reported that this would be the next step.

It was stated that GCDT would want to deliver a successful project that brightened up the area and that the idea was fully supported but the difficulties in delivering it were also recognised.

It was then stated that it could be a matter of personal taste and that it could be seen as public art being forced upon the residents living there. Some good points were also made about people's privacy and the mural attraction attention to them.

It was agreed that Hollybrook Street would be the preferred option from the ones given.

It was also agreed that the decision on the mural should be remitted to the Development Sub-Committee.

12. Minutes of Sub-Committees

GCDT meeting held on 6th October 2021

The contents of the minutes were noted.

13. Reports from Other Organisations – For Information

Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

The first meeting of the Executive Committee has taken place and the minutes will be circulated when they become available.

Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)

Information has been circulated.

SHARE

SHARE is currently looking for a new Director and it is a busy time for them.

14. Documents for Formal Execution

None

15. Correspondence – For Information

Refuse - a letter was written to elected members regarding the impact of ongoing bin strike in Glasgow and the recent changes to GCC refuse collections.

It was stated that concerns regarding this should be directed to Glasgow City Council, not Govanhill Housing Association, and that the Association agrees with the concerns of tenants and the back court areas are of particular concern.

16. A.O.C.B

Staff Training – A request has been received from a member of the Finance Team who wishes to undertake Association Accounting technician qualifications. The cost for this course is approximately £2,000 plus the cost of exams, and there is a possibility a discounted rate may be available. It is felt that this would benefit both the member of staff and the Association.

Approval was given for this course to be funded and that the staff member concerned be asked to sign to confirm that if they leave within one year of completing the course, they will be asked to repay the cost of the training.

Microsoft Pricing – The Association was previously informed that it was not entitled to charitable rate pricing on Microsoft 365. The Association is paying the charitable rates on a month-to-month basis until they are forced onto a new contract. However, it has been rumoured that other Associations have received penalties and been asked to backdate costs for a period of 14 months. If this was to happen to the Association, it could incur costs in the region of £30k.

Vodafone are working with the Association to save money on telecom priorities and are currently Microsoft Partners can offer the Government Framework Prices to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Discussion took place about the different kinds of licences and the difference between E2 and E3 licences.

It was agreed that Head of Finance and IT should go back to Vodafone to get a firm pricing quote from them. This will be brought to the December Management Committee meeting but if a decision is required before then the decision can be remitted to Office Bearers.

127-129 Albert Road – GCC have agreed to fund 100% of the acquisition costs and 50% of the repair costs. This could potentially be renovated into 2 x 2 bed units and 2 x 3 bed units and would be large flats.

Upgrading works required may include rewiring, kitchens, and bathrooms.

Head of Development & Property Services will discuss finance with Head of Finance & IT.

Agreement in principle was given to proceed to the offer stage.

New Committee Members – meetings were held with 3 potential new committee members. All of them had taken part in the course with the Tenant Participation Officer & Head of CS/HR and she was thanked for her work in this. One person had not completed all the sessions and it was suggested that they be offered some additional support so that they were fully aware of what is involved in being a committee member.

Discussion took place on each of the applicants and that they all had a strong desire to be involved in their local community and showed a great interest in the area.

There are opportunities for each of these people to stand for election at the next AGM. Until then they could be invited to join as co-opted members.

It was agreed that 2 members who had completed the sessions with the Tenant Participation Officer be invited to join as co-opted members.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING -

Special Management Committee to be held on 15th December 2021 (to discuss rent consultation).

Management Committee Meeting 19th January 2022 at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 8.35pm