

Argyll Community Housing Association

Board of Management Meeting

Thursday 15th September 2016 at 11.05am in the Ugadale, Machrihanish

Minute

Present:

Jim Milne (Chair)
Councillor Roddy McCuish (Secretary)
Douglas Prophet (Chair of Audit Committee)
Cameron Grant
Danny Kelly
Neil Mackay
Councillor Donnie MacMillan
Councillor Bruce Marshall
John Muir
Councillor Richard Trail

Not in Attendance:

Observers:

Cathy Duncan, Dalintober & Millknowe TRA

In Attendance:

Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive
Christine Johnston, Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services
Bruce West, Director of Finance & IT
Linda Haig, Director of Investment & Regeneration
Colette Benham, Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services
Gayle Stead, Governance & Compliance Manager
Lesley Lindsay, PA to Board of Management

The Board of Management returned from a two hour tour of Association properties in Campbeltown which included a visit to some of the long term void properties.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Cathy Duncan, Chair of the Dalintober & Millknowe Tenants & Residents Association to the meeting as an observer and thanked her for attending.

The Chair brought the Board's attention to the training schedule contained within the Information Pack. He advised there were two additional sessions scheduled to be held on 4th and 19th October 2016. He further advised the two sessions would be open to Board Members from all the Argyll and Bute Registered Social Landlords. The Board were advised the training session on 4th October was an Introduction to Housing Associations and Housing Association Finance which was aimed at new Board members but may be beneficial for existing Board members to attend.

1.	Apologies	
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	Stafford Day, Bob Munro, Lorraine-Anne Drysdale, Sandra Glazsher	
2.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 18th August 2016</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED the minute as an accurate record.</p> <p>Proposed by: Danny Kelly Seconded by: Cameron Grant</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Page 2 – Item 3 – the Chief Executive advised the disability car parking provision should be 5% of the available car parking spaces. He stated there was one disabled car parking space within the Dalriada car park which met the required standard. He further advised there were two disabled car parking bays in Colchester Square which could be used.</p> <p>Pages 3 & 4 – Item 6 – the Chair advised that Stafford Day and Colin Davidson would be invited to attend for lunch on 3rd November 2016</p> <p>Page 6 – Item 8 – the Chief Executive confirmed the meeting with Riverclyde Homes was being progressed</p> <p>Page 11 – Item 15 – the Chair confirmed the action points were being progressed.</p> <p>Page 18 – Item 31 – the Chair confirmed the action point had been carried out</p> <p>Page 19 – Item 31 – action point completed</p>	Lesley/ Jim
4.	<p>Conflict of Interest to Declare</p> <p>None</p>	
5.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>The Secretary advised he had received correspondence which would be dealt with under Item 20.</p>	
6.	<p>Statement by Secretary</p> <p>The Secretary confirmed Rules 68-72 had been followed.</p> <p>The Board of Management NOTED the Secretary's statement.</p>	
7.	<p>Chief Executive Presentation</p> <p>The Chief Executive gave a presentation covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Issues Update • External Updates <p>The Board of Management NOTED the contents of the presentation.</p> <p>Cameron Grant stated there was no Mosque on the Island of Bute and questioned whether ACHA could provide an empty property to allow the</p>	

	<p>refugees to carry out their prayers. The Chief Executive stated he had been advised that an Imam regularly visited the Island and that a prayer room was available to the refugees.</p> <p>John Muir asked for an update in relation to the lease/sale of the former Ardrishaig office. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised a deadline of 28th September 2016 had been set for confirmed offers to be received. She further advised she would report back to the Board of Management in November.</p> <p>Councillor Marshall stated he was delighted to hear the meeting with the Scottish Housing Regulator had gone well and had been productive. He asked for further clarification on the Benefit Cap. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services explained that benefits would be capped at a certain level. The Board were advised the benefit cap would affect larger families or those in privately rented accommodation. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services further advised that around 18 ACHA families would be affected, which included two of the refugee families. She stated that the refugee families were not yet ready to move into employment and as such enquiries were ongoing to establish whether the two families may be entitled to payments similar to discretionary housing payments. The Board of Management were advised the Association's Welfare Rights staff were working with the affected families to try to mitigate against the effects of the benefit cap. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services advised that of the 18 families affected, five had not engaged with the Welfare Rights staff.</p> <p>The Secretary asked for further clarification on Argyll and Bute Council's initiative to attract new residents to Argyll and Bute. The Chief Executive stated the Association would be required to engage with the Council to fully understand the ground rules. It was AGREED the Chief Executive would tie in with Council officials and report back to a future Board meeting.</p>	<p>Colette</p> <p>Alastair</p>
8.	<p>Frequency of Board Meetings</p> <p>The Chair stated he had reported on his thoughts but did not wish to put forward a recommendation and opened the discussion to Board members.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee stated he had originally proposed reverting to a 4 weekly cycle as the agendas had become too large to be accommodated within the 3 hour meeting timeframe resulting in the requirement to suspend the Standing Orders.</p> <p>The Secretary stated reverting to 4 weekly meetings would have an impact on staff time. The Chief Executive agreed and advised a 6 weekly cycle allowed officers more time to produce reports along with other priorities.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Trail stated he would favour a 6 weekly cycle with a reduction in the number of reports being considered by the Board.</p> <p>The Chair stated it was essential that Board members were prepared for meetings and raised questions in advance of the meeting. He further stated his personal view was to remain on the 6 weekly meeting cycle.</p>	

	<p>After further discussion, the decision on the frequency of meetings was put to the vote: 8 votes were received to remain on a 6 weekly meeting cycle 2 votes were received to revert to a 4 weekly meeting cycle No abstentions</p> <p>The Board of Management AGREED to remain on a 6 weekly meeting cycle with the caveat that Office Bearers should look at the Board agenda to review the number of items requiring Board consideration.</p>	Office Bearers
9.	<p>Draft Landlord Report The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated the Association was required to produce an annual Landlord Report based on information from the ARC submission. She further advised the Association were required to consult with service users on the content of the report. The Board were advised consultation had been carried out with Your Voice, Argyll Tenants Panel, the Tenant Consultation Register, Area Committees and the two Registered Tenant Organisations.</p> <p>Following the consultation process, two additional areas were included in the report; Gypsy/Travellers and Factoring.</p> <p>The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services advised she had received a note of typographical errors from the Vice Chair which would be amended.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Trail asked for the error on Page 7 (top box, right hand side) last word should read 'days' not 'hours'.</p> <p>Cameron Grant stated it was a comfortable read but suggested replacing the photo of the Chair on Page 3. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services advised she had a selection of photos and she would discuss with the Chair which picture should be used.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee advised he was impressed by the report. The Secretary congratulated staff on the content and layout.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Trail requested that the percentage figures be rounded to 2 figures as opposed to 4. The Board of Management AGREED the amendment.</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED the narrative and layout of the 2015/17 Landlord Report The Board of Management APPROVED the publication of the report on the Association's website no later than 27th October 2016 The Board of Management APPROVED the report being available in local libraries The Board of Management APPROVED a copy of the report be made available to the general public on request</p> <p>In addition, the Board of Management requested that contact be made with</p>	<p>Christine</p> <p>Christine</p> <p>Christine</p> <p>Christine</p>

	Argyll & Bute Council to ask if the Association's Landlord Report could be made available on their website. The Chair advised that following a response from the Council, he would feedback to the Chairs of the other Argyll RSLs.	Jim
10.	<p>Standing Orders</p> <p>The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised that following the recent rule amendments the Standing Orders required to be amended to be in sync with the rules. She further advised that most of the amendments were as a result of recommendations from North Star.</p> <p>The Board were asked to consider the amendments recommended by North Star and an additional change to 14.4, details of which were contained within the summary.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Trail stated he would be happy to agree the amendment to 14.4 as it provided additional flexibility, both the Chair of the Audit Committee and the Secretary agreed.</p> <p>The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services confirmed she had received a note of typographical errors from the Vice Chair which would be rectified.</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED the recommended amendments contained within the report as a result of the independent governance review.</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED the amendment to 14.4 which would now read: 'The Secretary is automatically a member of each standing sub-committee'</p>	Colette
11.	<p>Group Communication and Feedback Strategy</p> <p>The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated the review had been undertaken to combine two very similar strategies; Communication Strategy and Customer Contact and Feedback Strategy. She further advised that combining the two strategies would be easier for service users and staff members.</p> <p>The Board were advised that consultation had taken place with the Tenants Consultation Register, Tenants Panel, Area Committees, Your Voice Scrutiny Group, Registered Tenant Organisations and staff and comments and feedback had been incorporated where possible.</p> <p>Page 4 – Section 3 – the Chair suggested re-ordering the bullet points to have how our customers communicate with us first. The Board of Management AGREED.</p> <p>Page 6 – Section 4.3.1 – amend term 'Governing Body' to Board of Management and Area Committees.</p> <p>Amend all references to 'service user' to 'customer/service user'</p> <p>The Secretary stated it was vital that communications from customers are</p>	<p>Christine</p> <p>Christine</p> <p>Christine</p>

	<p>signposted to the correct member of staff as quickly as possible. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated she was aware of the frustrations caused if customers are misdirected. She confirmed she would ensure this was highlighted within the staff instructions.</p> <p>Subject to the above amendments, the Board of Management APPROVED the new Group Communications and Feedback Strategy.</p>	Christine
12.	<p>Outcome of additional Tenant Satisfaction Survey – Indicator 17</p> <p>The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services took the Board through her report and the recommendations contained therein:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A facility to allow tenants to email photographs relating to Estate Management be developed 2. The frequency of Estate Management inspections be reviewed to reflect the level of issues within individual estates 3. A dedicated 'Anti-Social Behaviour Hotline' be developed 4. Regular information in relation to major works provided via the newsletter and website 5. Information in relation to common ground maintenance responsibilities to be featured in newsletters <p>The Board were advised that in relation to recommendation number 3, if the hotline proved to be successful it was hoped to introduce a 24 hour hotline. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated the hotline would be trialled for a year or so to gauge its success. The Chair of the Audit Committee stated it was his view a 24 hour hotline be introduced as soon as possible. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated anti-social behaviour could be reported to the Police on a 24 hour basis. She further stated the Association wished to gauge the success of the hotline prior to allocating resources. The Board of Management NOTED the Association currently did not have sufficient resources to operate a 24 hour hotline. John Muir asked whether telephone calls could be recorded. He was advised that this facility could be developed. Councillor Bruce Marshall stated that Argyll and Bute Council operated ASBO Groups and asked if the Association attended. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services confirmed ACHA's attendance at the ASBO Groups. The Board were advised the Groups had been very successful and were led by Police Scotland. Cameron Grant suggested it may be worthwhile approaching Hanover to establish the possible cost of operating a 24 hour hotline. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated that Hanover staff would then need to contact an ACHA staff member and she reiterated the Association did not currently have the required resources. The Secretary stated he could not support sending staff out to carry out Police duties. The Chair of the Audit Committee stated that some tenants would not phone the Police for fear of repercussions. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services stated an anti-social hotline would be an additional facility for tenants which she hoped would be beneficial.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Trail stated it was his view the report was not required to be considered by the Board. He further stated there were no financial implications, no policy change required, no risk implications and only a</p>	

	<p>positive impact on social and equality issues. He stated he felt the recommendations should have been actioned by officers and an update provided as part of the Board Information Pack. The Chair stated he would take the suggestion on board as part of the ongoing debate regarding Board agenda items.</p> <p>The Secretary asked if the Association could remind Owner Occupiers of their responsibilities in relation to common ground maintenance. The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services reminded Board members that an exercise had been undertaken on titles to allow the Association to start to re-charge owners for their contribution to common ground maintenance but the titles had been very vague. She advised that a further title exercise may be undertaken again in the future to establish whether there was any way the Association could enforce owner contribution.</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED the recommendations contained within the report.</p>	
13.	<p>Monthly Investment Programme Update</p> <p>The Director of Investment & Regeneration advised the Board that in addition to her standard update, consideration was being sought to proceed with the communal secure door entry replacements to reduce the number of abeyances. The Board were reminded the budget for the works had already been approved.</p> <p>The Director of Investment & Regeneration advised that further legal advice had been sought in relation to the previous refusal by owners to allow the door entry systems to be installed where ACHA was in the majority in a shared block. The Board were advised that through the Tenant Management Scheme a ballot could be held which would allow the door entry systems to be installed even if there were refusals. The Director of Investment & Regeneration advised it would benefit 75 tenants but may bring a little complaint or negative publicity. The Chair of the Audit Committee stated it was fairly controversial using tenants' rents to carry out work for owners. The Secretary stated he took that point but further stated the improvements were required and would benefit a majority of tenants which was the Association's objective. The Board of Management AGREED to issue block ballots through the Tenant Management Scheme to allow the works to progress.</p> <p>Councillor Bruce Marshall asked for an update in relation to the flats at Ardenslate. The Director of Investment & Regeneration advised the District Valuer had carried out a survey and was preparing a report. She further advised a tender document had been prepared for the completion of works which she hoped would be issued by the end of the week. The Board were advised it was anticipated the Association would know the value and investment required by the end of September/beginning of October.</p>	
14.	<p>Islay New Build Names</p> <p>The Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services advised that due to tight timescales and school holidays, the Association had been unable to invite local school children to submit suggestions for the naming of the new build</p>	

	<p>site. She advised that the local community had been asked to complete a suggestion form at the Islay show held on 11th August 2016 or submit a suggestion online. No suggestions had been received online but seven suggestions had been received at the show. Following consideration by the Oban, Lorn & Isles Area Committee the proposal being put forward for consideration by the Board of Management is Ceol a Chuain, which translates as Ocean Music. The Board of Management were reminded that final approval would be required from Argyll and Bute Council and the Post Office.</p> <p>The Board of Management APPROVED Ceol a Chuain as the preferred name for phase 2 of the new build site at Bowmore.</p>	
Observers were asked to leave the meeting due to confidential items being discussed.		
15.	COFIDENTIAL ITEM	
16.	<p>Treasury Management Update The Board of Management NOTED the contents of the report and APPROVED the recommendation to take no action in terms of borrowing or fixing interest rates at the current time.</p>	
17.	<p>AHFA Business Plan Progress Report to 31/07/16 The Board of Management NOTED the contents of the report.</p>	
18.	<p>ACHA Management Accounts to 31/07/16 The Board of Management NOTED the contents of the report.</p>	
19.	<p>New Membership Applications The Board of Management APPROVED two new membership applications.</p>	
19.1	<p>Cancelled Memberships The Board of Management NOTED the cancellation of one membership.</p>	
20.	<p>AOCB Chief Executive Presentation The Chair stated the Board of Management had previously requested the Chief Executive include his presentation within the Board pack. He further stated that meant the information was not as up to date as it could be. The Chair recommended that the Chief Executive revert back to providing his presentation on the day of the meeting to ensure Board members received the most up to date information possible. The Board of Management APPROVED the recommendation put forward by the Chair.</p>	
21.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting Thursday 3rd November 2016 at 10.00am in the Inveraray Inn, Inveraray</p>	