

Argyll Community Housing Association

Board of Management Meeting

Thursday 3rd February 2022 at 10.00am in the Inveraray Inn, Inveraray

Minute

Present:

Roddy McCuish (Chair)
 Jim Milne (Vice Chair)
 Cathy Grant (Secretary)
 Ian McIntyre (Chair Audit Committee)
 Janice Gale
 Councillor Donnie MacMillan
 Bruce Marshall
 Councillor Mary-Jean Devon (via speaker phone)

Not in Attendance:

In Attendance:

Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive (via speaker phone)
 Kirsteen McGinn, Director of Property Services
 Bruce West, Director of Finance & IT
 Colette Benham, Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services
 Careen Hendry, Governance & Compliance Manager
 Lesley Lindsay, PA to Board of Management

The Chair introduced the new Board member in attendance: Janice Gale, Tenant member. The Board of Management welcomed Janice to the meeting. Janice provided details of her background.

The Chair advised new members Jacqueline Malcolm and Brian McNeillie had submitted their apologies for the meeting.

The Chair also introduced the new Governance & Compliance Manager, Careen Hendry. Careen provided the Board of Management with a brief background of her work history.

The Chair shared the sad news of Douglas Prophet's passing. He stated Douglas had been a Board member between 2013 until 2019 and remained an active member of the Your Voice Group until his passing. The Chair provided details of Douglas' funeral arrangements and gave condolences to Douglas' family.

1.	Apologies Esther Hughes, Brian McNeillie, Betty Rhodick, Jacqueline Malcolm, Councillor Iain Shonny Paterson, Cameron Grant Sonja Aitken leave of absence.	Actions to be completed by 17/03/22
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2.	<p>Minute of Previous Meeting – 9th December 2021 The Board of Management APPROVED the minute as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposed by: Bruce Marshall Seconded by: Ian McIntyre</p>	
3.	<p>Matters Arising Page 2 – Item 3 – <i>Chief Executive to include information relating to the Employee of the Season scheme in his Christmas message to tenants.</i> The Chief Executive advised the action point had been actioned.</p> <p>Page 2 – Item 3 – <i>Office Bearers to meet with Mr Gillies</i> The Chair advised the Office Bearers had been unable to meet with Mr Gillies and asked for approval to write to Mr Gillies inviting him to join the Mid Argyll & Kintyre Area Committee in the first instance. The Board of Management unanimously AGREED.</p> <p>Page 4 – Item 7 – <i>Chair to write to the Council Leader requesting a formal response regarding Dalintober.</i> The Chair advised he had received a response from the Council Leader and read the letter to the meeting. The Chair stated, with the Board's approval, he proposed writing to the Council Leader during the first week in March requesting a progress report. Bruce Marshall queried why the Council could not progress until March. The Board asked the Chair to write to the Council asking them to provide the reason why they could not progress until March.</p> <p>Page 16 – Item 29 – <i>Director of Property Services to look into option of using wool as insulation.</i> The Director of Property Services advised she had looked into the use of wool and advised it was an expensive option and suggested that was why it wasn't currently being used.</p>	<p>Roddy McCuish</p> <p>Roddy McCuish</p>
4.	<p>Correspondence Thank You Letter from New Start Oban The Board of Management NOTED the content of the letter of thanks.</p> <p>Leave of Absence Request Betty Rhodick had requested a 5 month Leave of Absence (end June 2022). The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the request.</p> <p>The Secretary thanked the Board for the beautiful flowers.</p>	
5.	<p>Declaration of Interest The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services stated the normal process for Item 8 would be that staff members would leave the meeting. The Chair advised the Chair of the Remuneration Committee would present the paper and asked the minute taker to remain in the meeting for the item and requested all other staff members leave the meeting.</p>	
6.	<p>Chief Executive Presentation The Chief Executive delivered a presentation covering:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid 19 Update • Update Issues • External and Partnership Issues <p>The Board of Management NOTED the contents of the presentation.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall stated he was happy the Association were not progressing with a new office at Eton Avenue. He asked whether ACHA would be taking over the whole Milton House building for office accommodation. The Chief Executive advised ACHA were in discussions with the Council on whether leasing or purchasing would be the favoured option and confirmed it was the Association's intention to either lease or purchase the whole building.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall stated he had heard on the news that the SNP were proposing to cut the bottom of class room doors to improve ventilation and asked whether ACHA would be doing the same in offices. The Chief Executive advised ACHA had risk assessments for all offices on numbers and ventilation. He added that sawing the bottom off of doors would create fire safety issues.</p> <p>The Vice Chair asked if there were figures available on the average claim made via the tenant support grant initiative. The Director of Property Services advised around 200 applications had been received. She advised that a full benefit assessment would be undertaken for each application to establish if additional benefits could be accessed. She stated it would take a while to work through all the applications. The Chair praised the Association for the work being done and stated he wouldn't be surprised if the number of applications received rose to 400. The Director of Property Services advised she would provide further information once she was in a position to do so.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee asked what Staff Circle was. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised it was the Association's new communications platform.</p> <p>The Chair stated he was delighted to see progress between ACHA and AHFA to build "One ACHA".</p> <p>The Chair asked if there had been any progress in relation to the Health & Social Care Partnership working. The Chief Executive stated back in 2019 it had been agreed to hold meetings to discuss partnership working but those meetings had not taken place. He stated it was his view the meetings may progress following the Council elections in May 2022.</p>	
7.	CONFIDENTIAL	
8.	CONFIDENTIAL	
9.	<p>AHFA Draft Budget 2022/23</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT advised his report summarised the proposed budget for AHFA for 2022/23. He further advised the report had been presented to the AHFA Board of Directors at their meeting held on 1st February 2022 and had received approval.</p>	

	<p>Chair took the meeting through the recommendations: To consider and approve the proposed AHFA budget for 2022/23.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the budget.</p>	
10.	<p>ACHA Draft Budget 2022/23 The Director of Finance & IT advised the draft budget had assumed a rent increase of 3.5% and took cognisance of the proposals from the Remuneration Committee.</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT advised there were a relatively small number of changes to the draft budget considered by the Board in December 2021</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT took the meeting through pages 10 and 11 of his report and asked for any questions.</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the ACHA budget for 2022/23.</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT advised there would be no further revisions required as a result of the decision taken around the rent increase and pay award.</p> <p>The Chief Executive stated a lot of work had been put into the budget to ensure the group could focus on the alignment with the strategic objectives. He stated there was real positivity within the budget and asked the Board to consider issuing a press release. The Board of Management unanimously AGREED a press release should be issued with the Chief Executive to take forward.</p>	
11.	<p>ACHA Management Accounts to 31 December 2021 The Director of Finance & IT advised the ACHA Management Accounts were normally submitted to the Board of Management for noting but a recommendation had been included in the December Management Accounts for consideration.</p> <p>He asked the Board of Management to consider a budget virement (as outlined within the body of his report). The Director of Finance & IT stated that the remainder of the Management Accounts were for noting.</p> <p>The Chair recommended approval of the proposal stating it would allow funds to be utilised effectively.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the virement and NOTED the Management Accounts.</p>	
12.	<p>Estate Management Action Plans – Cowal The Director of Property Services advised in the absence of the Area Committees, the Board of Management were being asked to consider and approve the Estate Management Action Plan contract as outlined in her report.</p>	

	There were no questions and the Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the Estate Management Action Plan contract be awarded.	
13.	<p>Estate Management Action Plans – Rothesay</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised in the absence of the Area Committees, the Board of Management were being asked to consider and approve a number of Estate Management Action Plan contracts as outlined in her report.</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the Estate Management Action Plan contracts be awarded.</p>	
14.	<p>Play Park – Barrmor, Kilmartin</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised, ACHA, as owners of four properties, together with two private owners have responsibility for the maintenance, repair and renewal of the play area, with ACHA being responsible for 2/3rd share. The play area is utilised by children from the village and is not used exclusively by the owners of the six properties. The ground of the play park remains in the ownership of MacLeod Construction Ltd and the play equipment was installed by MacLeod Construction Ltd.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised currently no formal inspections were carried out of the equipment on site and the AHFA Grounds Maintenance Team had arrangements in place to cut the grass within and around the play area. The annual cost is estimated at £336, which equates to £56 per property per year based on eight cuts per annum.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services took the meeting through the recommendations contained within her report:</p> <p>1. To consider the options and provide recommendation:</p> <p>a) Option 1: ACHA continues with the current arrangement – grass cutting within and around the play area. No inspection of equipment. No contribution from others.</p> <p>b) Option 2: ACHA takes on full ownership and responsibility for the play equipment, inspection, insurance, maintenance and repair with no contribution from others.</p> <p>c) Option 3: ACHA to be appointed as Factor to manage all external spaces, including the Play Park ensuring that there is an appropriate inspection routine in place, together with insurance and repair and maintenance arrangements, with ACHA contributing our share of the cost, along with 2 private owners. Note that the Deed of Conditions sets out the process for appointing the Factor.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised the officer recommendation was Option 3 and the summary and costs were provided within the report.</p> <p>The Chair reminded the meeting that Councillor MacMillan had cut the first sod of the development.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised that if approved, a further report</p>	

	<p>would be brought back to the Board following the consultation process. She stated she hoped to be in a position to report back on the consultation in May 2022.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall stated the two current owners may be amenable but further down the line any new owner might not be. The Director of Property Services advised the condition had been written into the title deeds of the properties.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee stated there was a play park at Catalina Avenue and asked why there was not the same issue with that. The Chief Executive advised ACHA owned the play park at Catalina Avenue so had full responsibility.</p> <p>Janice Gale asked if ACHA had insurance for the play park. The Director of Property Services advised ACHA had overall insurance but would be required to name the park individually. The Director of Finance & IT advised that the equipment was not insured, insurance only covered public liability claims. He stated that because ACHA were not currently carrying out inspections at the play park in Kilmartin there was no basis to repudiate any claims received.</p> <p>Janice Gale asked what responsibility MacLeod Construction had. The Director of Property Services advised they had no responsibility for the play park as it had been written into the deeds of the 6 properties.</p> <p>Councillor MacMillan stated he had not received any representation in relation to the play park. The Director of Property Services advised no invoices had been issued to date.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED recommendation 3.</p>	
15.	<p>Your Voice Group - Outcome of Scrutiny Task on “The Development Programme: Delivering New Homes for ACHA Tenants”</p> <p>The Director of Property Services advised the Your Voice Group had spent six months scrutinising ACHA’s Development programme, to better understand the process that underpins the delivery of new homes. She further advised the exercise had suffered a hiatus as a result of the pandemic, resulting in some of the planned activities being cancelled. She stated that despite that formidable obstacle, the group had persevered and the scrutiny exercise had generated eighteen recommendations as contained within the report.</p> <p>The Board of Management noted that the recommendations would require ACHA to adopt a more co-operative and consultative engagement with tenants and members of the Your Voice Group which would require the development of a specific participation strategy and earlier planning.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services took the meeting through the cost of implementation and highlighted the risks attached. The Board noted that out of the 18 recommendations following the exercise, some could be taken forward but some could not.</p> <p>The Director of Property Services took the meeting through the</p>	

	<p>recommendations contained within her report:</p> <p>The Director of Property Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considers the recommendations made by the Your Voice Group. 2. Provides a report to the Board of Management outlining the Your Voice Group recommendations. 3. Provides a report to the Your Voice Group, confirming what recommendations have been accepted along with reasons against any recommendations that are rejected. <p>The Chair stated the most important action was recommendation 3.</p> <p>The Chief Executive stated a lot of work had been done but queried recommendation 14 as he was of the view that was already carried out. The Director of Property Services advised settling in visits were undertaken for all new tenants but the tenant information pack requires to be reviewed.</p> <p>The Chief Executive stated he would prefer staff to focus on what is not done rather than what they already do.</p> <p>The Vice Chair agreed it was a massive piece of work but recommendation 3 could only be considered if recommendations 1 and 2 were approved.</p> <p>The Chair asked for any further questions before moving to the recommendations.</p> <p>There were no further comments and the Board of Management unanimously APPROVED recommendations 1, 2 and 3 contained within the report.</p>	
16.	CONFIDENTIAL	
17.	CONFIDENTIAL	
18.	<p>High Street & Russell Street, Rothesay</p> <p>The Director of Property Services took the meeting through her report and advised it was the Association's intention to carry out significant works to properties at High Street and Russell Street, Rothesay to reconfigure and improve the outlook, reputation and demand of the properties.</p> <p>She advised that in order to enable the works to be carried out in the 2022/23 financial year the Board of Management were being asked to approve the removal of the nine current voids and any future void properties of the 18 ACHA flats within the blocks, from the letting pool.</p> <p>The Chair stated it was a positive project making the void properties more attractive but noted while the works were being carried out the properties would remain on the void list.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall commented from the photos included within the report the finished result looked wonderful.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee stated the significant works would assist greatly in being able to allocate the properties.</p>	

	The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED that allocations to the void properties be put on hold pending significant works in the 2022/23 financial year.	
19.	CONFIDENTIAL	
20.	<p>McCracken Court Sheltered Housing Complex – Approval to consult on Future Service Delivery</p> <p>The Director of Property Services took the meeting through her report and requested approval to progress consultation with tenants at the McCracken Court Sheltered Housing complex with regard to the future methods of service delivery.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED progression with a tenant consultation on the future service delivery at McCracken Court.</p>	
21.	<p>Community Action Fund Applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26th (Sandbank) Argyll Scout Group The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the award of £500. • Argyll & Bute Citizens Advice Bureau The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the award of £500. 	
22.	<p>EVH Membership Renewal</p> <p>The Chair stated EVH provided a marvellous service and recommended approving membership renewal at the cost of £5,123.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED membership renewal.</p>	
23.	<p>Employee of the Season – Autumn Robert McKay & Christine Cameron</p> <p>The Chair stated he wish to recommend not making the award. He stated that while what Robert and Christine had done had been very admirable they would have been expected to carry out within their normal duties.</p> <p>Councillor Devon asked who submits nominations. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised that other staff, line managers and tenants could nominate a staff member for the initiative. Councillor Devon stated it was her view it should be tenants recommending staff for an award.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously AGREED not to make the award to Robert MacKay and Christine Cameron.</p> <p>The Chair asked that a review of the Employee of the Season/Year be undertaken to improve the process. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised a review had been carried out in 2020 but stated she would be happy to review it again. The Chair stated many staff members went above and beyond on a daily basis and the process needed to be improved along with greater involvement. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised the new communication platform should be beneficial in increasing involvement.</p>	

	<p>The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services stated each of the Employee of the Season winners would normally be put forward for Employee of the Year, which was due for consideration at the March Board meeting. She asked if the Board wished Employee of the Year to be presented to them in March. The Board of Management advised they wished the whole scheme to be put on hold until a review is carried out.</p> <p>The Chief Executive stated the Terms of Reference should be considered and a clearer benchmark set.</p> <p>It was agreed the Chief Executive and Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services would review and bring a paper back to the Board of Management.</p> <p>The Board of Management confirmed the Director of Human Resources & Corporate Service should make staff aware the scheme was on hold as a result of a decision taken by the Board.</p>	<p>Alastair MacGregor & Colette Benham</p> <p>Colette Benham</p>
24.	CONFIDENTIAL	
25.	<p>AHFA Management Accounts to 31 December 2022</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT took the meeting through the Management Accounts.</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the AHFA Management Accounts to 31 December 2021.</p>	
26.	<p>Regeneration Update</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the content of the Regeneration update.</p>	
27.	<p>Investment Update</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the content of the Investment update.</p>	
28.	<p>Duty of Care</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the content of the Duty of Care report.</p>	
29.	<p>Conference Attendance</p> <p>ACHA Group Board members NOTED the opportunities for members to attend outside events to further their knowledge and to represent the ACHA Group.</p> <p>The Vice Share advised the SHARE conference had moved to a virtual event and while it was his view £350 was excessive for a 2-day zoom conference funds were available within the budget for any Board member wishing to attend.</p> <p>The Vice Chair highlighted the Rural Housing Scotland Conference, being held on Friday 25th February 2022, which was a free event. He stated one of the topics related to the remote rural and Island housing action plan and suggested may be of interest to ACHA following the decision taken in</p>	

	<p>relation to housing on Ulva. The Chair stated it may be an ideal opportunity for the Association to showcase. The Chief Executive advised he would be attending the conference.</p> <p>The Chair reminded Board members of the requirement to feedback to the Board on any conferences attended.</p> <p>The Chief Executive stated he would take responsibility for feedback from the Rural Housing Scotland Conference.</p>	Alastair MacGregor
30.	<p>Cancelled Members</p> <p>The Board of Management NOTED the cancellation of two memberships.</p> <p>The Board of Management NOTED the membership total of 250 as at 24th January 2022.</p>	
31.	<p>ACHA Risk Register</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress against the ACHA Risk Register during December 2021.</p>	
32.	<p>AHFA Risk Register</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress against the AHFA Risk Register during December 2021.</p>	
33.	<p>Legionella Management and Control action plan progress; December 2021</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress.</p>	
34.	<p>Asbestos Management and Control action plan progress; December 2021</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress.</p>	
35.	<p>Notifiable Events</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the Notifiable Events contained within the report submitted since the previous update.</p>	
36.	<p>Board Approval Register</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress against the recommendations agreed for implementation by the Board.</p>	
37.	<p>A.O.C.B.</p> <p>Audit Committee Recruitment</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee delivered the following statement on the recruitment of additional members for the Audit Committee:</p> <p><i>“Today’s Audit committee had to be rescheduled as it would not have been quorate. This exercise has prompted that a message be given to the Board – “The Audit Committee is The committee to be on, even if it’s not the place you can be seen”.</i></p> <p><i>I’ve found that it’s not until you join a committee that you are able to get to know how an organisation functions/works. I do believe by just attending the board meetings you are in danger of just rubber stamping and ticking boxes the motions put on the table before you. Much can be ‘gobberly-gok’ at times. A language strange to you full of acronyms designed to protect its</i></p>	

	<p><i>body/profession it would seem. Surely that's not what you joined the board for: You want your voice heard; ideas considered!</i></p> <p><i>The Audit Committee is the backbone to governance for me, it will take you to all parts of the organisation's structure - in time - with the help of the Auditors, Finance & Information Technology, and Human Resources directorates. It will provide you with the knowledge in time.</i></p> <p><i>Our newly appointed Auditors Wylie & Bisset who incidentally have a local office in Oban soon to become a city – I hope with its two Cathedrals - have volunteered to hold a training session virtually why not join us and find out more?</i></p> <p><i>Remember you must be a Board Member to join "The Audit Committee" and so I'll leave you with this question, "Why are you not on the Audit Committee?" The Committee needs at least two recruits who would like to join me and the team Chair?"</i></p> <p>The Chair stated the Chair of the Audit Committee had given a good advert for the Audit Committee which he fully endorsed. The Chair of the Audit Committee advised the Association's internal auditors, Wylie & Bisset, would be happy to deliver training to anyone interested.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee asked that his statement be issued by email to all Board members not in attendance.</p> <p>The Director of Finance & IT advised if any Board member wished to attend a couple of Audit Committee meetings by way of a taster they would be most welcome to attend. He advised the next Audit Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 9.30am via Skype.</p> <p>Janice Gale and Cathy Grant advised they would be interested in receiving further information.</p> <p>Janice and Cathy to be invited to attend the next Audit Committee meeting.</p> <p>Retirement – Janet Dickie, Regulation Manager</p> <p>The Chief Executive advised he had updated the Office Bearers that Janet Dickie, the Association's Regulation Manager, would be retiring on 25th February 2022. It was AGREED a letter of thanks be issued to Janet Dickie. The Chief Executive and Secretary to liaise on drafting the letter.</p>	<p>Lesley Lindsay</p> <p>Lesley Lindsay</p> <p>Alastair MacGregor/ Cathy Grant</p>
38.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Thursday 17th March 2022 at 10.00am via Skype</p>	