

**ARGYLL COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 10.30am, Argyll Hotel, Inveraray

**Minute**

**Present:**

Michael Brown (Chair)  
Jim Milne (Vice chair)  
Cllr Roddy McCuish (Secretary)  
Lorraine Anne Drysdale (Finance and Audit Chair)  
Margaret MacGregor  
Douglas Prophet  
Cameron Grant  
Archie Blair  
Sandra MacKenzie  
Stafford Day  
Graham Kames  
Danny Kelly  
Kate Winton

**Not in Attendance**

**In Attendance:**

Linda Haig, Director of Investment & Regeneration  
Nick Pollard, Director of Finance & IT  
Christine Johnston, Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services  
Colette Benham, Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services  
Gayle Stead, Governance & Compliance Manager

**Presentation of Award by Healthy Working Lives**

Marina MacArthur, HR and Training Manager, addressed the meeting and introduced Steve Bell and Angela Coll from Healthy Working Lives. ACHA achieved a bronze award in 2010 and now working on obtaining the silver award. As part of the process ACHA's HR and Training Management Marina MacArthur provided a case study on how ACHA managed staff chronic illness cases. Steve Bell introduced the Board of Management to the European Network for Health Promotion ethos and the process undertaken to obtain. Following submission, ACHA's case study was one of the case studies chosen to place on the European website in addition to Tunnock's and John Lewis Partnership.

	Marina MacArthur, Steve Bell and Angela Coll left the meeting	
1.	<b>Apologies</b> Alastair MacGregor, Chief Executive; Karen Carmichael; Cllr Donnie MacMillan; Cllr Bruce Marshall; Cllr Sandy Taylor and Cllr Richard Trail.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014</b> Minute agreed as an accurate account of the meeting with the following minor amendments;  Page11, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Para – `hoems` requires to be changed to `homes` Page 17, item 17 – `complains` to be amended to `complaints`  Proposed : Margaret MacGregor Seconded: Kate Winton	
3.	<b>Matters Arising</b> Michael Brown reported that he had spoken with Bill McIntyre (ex-chair) who has confirmed that he would join the Board of Management for lunch at their 8th May meeting and Norman Beaton will be invited to join the Board of Management for lunch at their June meeting.  Land Disposal Strategy – Linda Haig, Director of Investment and Regeneration reported that ACHA was not currently a registered rural housing body. The Board of Management provided approval for obtaining registration.  Relief Land – Linda Haig reported that her staff team had met with representative owners of Relief Land and a decision has been made to take legal advice on the proposal made by the Board of Management. The Council has indicated that they will call a meeting of all owners. Further updates will be provided in due course. Jim Milne enquired whether the project was time limited. Linda Haig responded that there are options to undertake over a long time period i.e. 2-3 years in the future. Cllr Roddy McCuish raised a concern that there may be implications if one of the partners falls by the wayside. Linda Haig outlined the legal arrangement and contract responsibilities stipulated to try to mitigate risk.  The Cost of Governance paper will now be presented at a future Board meeting.	LL
4.	<b>Minutes of Finance &amp; Audit Committee for Ratification –12<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (attached)</b>	

	Noted	
5.	<b>Conflict of Interest to Declare</b> None	
6.	<b>Correspondence</b> <b>Request for Authorised Absence</b> Michael Brown outlined the request received from Karen Carmichael asking for a leave of absence the next 2 meetings Board of Management meetings. The request was <b>Approved</b> by the Board of Management.  A `Thank you` letter has been received from Marri Malloy for the attention of all Board members.	
7.	<b>New Membership Applications and Total Number of Current Members (attached)</b>  Christine Johnston, Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services provided an updated to the Board of Management on the current number of members (282 members).  The Board of Management agreed that if there are no new members within the reporting month the membership total does not require to be reported.	LL
8.	<b>Chief Executive's Presentation</b> Christine Johnston presented the Chief Executive presentation-  Ongoing issues ; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of year end activities being completed</li> <li>• Strategic Plan final draft, SMT April, Board May</li> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Chief Executive staff roadshows now completed</li> <li>• 6 of the Association's 7 new builds are on site</li> <li>• Inveraray to be on site in May</li> <li>• Meeting with Historic Scotland arranged for the 16<sup>th</sup> April to advise of feasibility study findings regarding Rockfield project</li> <li>• 2014/15 budget plan now issued to departments</li> <li>• Chief Executive and Regional Manager met with Ardchattan Community Council to outline the Association's lettings plans for Bonawe</li> <li>• Chief Executive and Regional Manager attended public meeting in Connel to brief the community on the Association's housing plans for the village</li> <li>• Regional Manager and Director of Investment and</li> </ul>	

	<p>Regeneration attended a community meeting on Tìree with the Council and Health Board to discuss the future for elderly housing and support on the island</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive and Director of Finance and IT met with our legal advisors and Tolsons to evaluate refinancing strategy for discussion with Lloyds TSB</li> </ul> <p><b>Bedroom Tax</b></p> <p>Analysis as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 501 identified tenants</li> <li>• 149 with no arrears</li> <li>• 260, including the 149 above, have arrears less than £65, one week's rent</li> <li>• 72 have arrears in excess of £250, which is a month's rent</li> <li>• 429 have arrears less than £250</li> <li>• The weekly change in arrears is up £11,792.29. The total arrears value is £65,290.33. This is not a benefit week</li> </ul> <p><b>Media Engagement</b></p> <p>Press releases issued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 102 new build houses 2014/2015</li> <li>• Appointment of Association Secretary</li> <li>• Re-opening of Strachur Playpark</li> <li>• ACHA's 2014/15 Budget</li> </ul> <p>Stories covered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonawe new build housing to help save Ardchattan Primary School</li> <li>• ACHA tenant convicted of drug dealing gives up tenancy</li> </ul> <p><b>Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EESH was formally launched by the Scottish Government at the end of March 2014</li> <li>• Association currently analysing the information provided with a view to preparing a report for the SMT in May and the Board in June</li> <li>• The Scottish Housing Regulator has also published technical guidance</li> <li>• The Scottish Housing Regulator will monitor and report on social landlords' compliance with EESH</li> <li>• This will be done on an annual basis from 2015/16</li> <li>• Housing Minister, Margaret Burgess, plans to visit our Travelling Persons site at Dunchologan on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014</li> <li>• Our first Charter return requires to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator in May 2014</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Association's Stuckleckie Road office development in Helensburgh is due to be on site at the end of April</li> <li>• Relief Land residents have been advised of the Board's decision and will revert to us following further internal discussions.</li> </ul> <p>Other issues;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margaret Burgess visiting Dunchologan Travelling Person Site;</li> <li>• ARC statistics being analysed currently prior to submission;</li> <li>• Stuckleckie office due on site late 2014;</li> </ul> <p>Margaret asked whether the Dunchologan Travelling Person Site was well used and Christine Johnston responded that the occupants are a transient client group and occupancy can change but the site was mainly well occupied.</p> <p>Douglas Prophet asked whether there was a minimum or a maximum time for people occupying Travelling Person Sites and Christine Johnston responded that there was no time limit.</p> <p>Danny Kelly enquired whether the Hood Court development in Helensburgh would be onsite. Linda Haig reported that it went on site at the end of March.</p> <p>Stafford Day enquired whether there was a quota for the number of children attending a school which would result in keeping a school open. Cllr Roddy McCuish responded that there is no minimum number.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Webinar Subscription (attached)</b></p> <p>Michael Brown outlined the webinar process whereby members could log onto their own computer and undertake training via a web link.</p> <p>Jim Milne explained that `Webinar` stood for `Web Seminar` and outlined his experience of the pilots he undertook. The process undertaken was to log on, view the slides and listen to the presenter and other attendees. Two Webinars were attended and the successes and failures were reported. The subscription before the Board was to commit to the webinar training for the period of 1 year at a cost of £250 which would assist members in training.</p> <p>Kate Winton reported her experiences when attending sessions and the ease of use within the home environment.</p>	

	<p>Cameron Grant queried whether the discounted cost of £250 would still apply bearing in mind the target date had passed. Colette Benham confirmed that she had enquired and the discount would still be extended to us.</p> <p>Archie Blair enquired whether the webinar training was specifically for ACHA and Michael Brown responded that was open to anyone and not just specifically to us.</p> <p>Cllr Roddy McCuish positively reported that the Webinar training option would be much easier for members to use and reduce time travelling to attend training.</p> <p>Colette Benham, Director of HR and Corporate Services and Lesley Lindsay, P.A. to the Board of Management, will be responsible for co-ordinating members logging into the webinar sessions.</p> <p>The Board of Management agreed to sign-up for webinar training through BDA at a cost of £250.</p>	LL/CB
10.	<p><b>SPSO Determination</b></p> <p>Colette Benham presented the Board of Management with correspondence received from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman reporting on a complaint received against ACHA and reported that the complaint had not been upheld by the SPSO.</p>	
10.1	<p><b>Review of Governing Body Members Expenses Policy</b></p> <p>Colette Benham reported that a Board of Management member had enquired whether funds could be given to members for printing at home. Colette Benham reported that stationery could be obtained from ACHA offices for use and any other stationery expenses would be repaid, as with other expenses, if receipts were provided.</p>	
10.2	<p><b>Early Retirement Request</b></p> <p>Cllr Roddy McCuish stated that the employees name and details were not required to be included within the report.</p> <p>Douglas Prophet asked whether the post would be retained and Colette Benham responded that AHFA would recruit to the post but the new employee would not be on a protected salary and therefore a cost saving would be evident.</p>	

	<p>Douglas Prophet asked for further detail as to the post situation and Colette Benham reported on the restructure and amendment to individual posts and explained the business case for the proposal.</p> <p>Cameron Grant asked what the costs would be for training a new staff member to fill the post. Colette Benham responded that there was currently a temporary staff member within AHFA who was already trained.</p> <p>The Board of Management undertook a vote on the proposal whereby 11 members were in agreement and 1 member disagreed.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Monthly Investment Programme Update</b></p> <p>Linda Haig, Director of Investment and Regeneration reported that there were currently no problems with any of the contracts currently live and provided an update on current contracts. At the year end the department was on track to meet the estimated targets and outcomes. The Investment Programme was budgeted to spend £16.4m of works in 2013/14. In addition to the works spend, there was an additional 8% fees and VAT included in the budget.</p> <p>The Programme is delivered through the main Kitchen and Bathroom, Windows and Doors and Heating and Rewire Contracts and a selection of Roof, Roughcast and Refurbishment contracts and the Energy Efficiency Upgrades contract.</p> <p>At the November meeting, it was agreed that the Roof and Roughcast budget would be re-profiled for the period 2013 to 2020. The report has been adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>At the January meeting, the Roof and Roughcast programme and budget was adjusted to reflect owner issues and ECO grant delays.</p>	
11.1	<p><b>Development Opportunity at Rockfield School, Oban</b></p> <p>Linda Haig reported that the Association's new build development programme was currently on-site at Glenshellach, Connel, Bonawe, Bowmore, Hood Court and will shortly be starting at Tarbert and Inveraray.</p> <p>Within Argyll and Bute Council's proposed Strategic Local Programme for the period 2015 to 2018 is the former Rockfield</p>	

	<p>Primary School, Oban. A feasibility option appraisal has been carried out by the Council to explore redevelopment options. This process has not been concluded and we await the Council finally signing off on the report and finalise their scoring of the Options Appraisal Matrix. A joint ACHA/ Council meeting will be held shortly with Historic Scotland to update them on the report. The Council are expected to formally consider a report by May 2014 at the earliest. The proposal within the final report when concluded is for the demolition of the existing primary school and new build of 37 units with an adult care focus.</p> <p>The first recommendation is that we require to agree a procurement route. The estimated development cost exceeds £5million and is in excess of the OJEU threshold and will therefore require to be advertised following consent being provided by the Council.</p> <p>The proposed split appointment of a design team is required to obtain planning consent and novation to the successful design &amp; build contractor is expected to be below the services threshold of £172k.</p> <p>Linda Haig reported that the second recommendation is to ask the Council to underwrite the planning application stage through the Strategic Housing Fund.</p> <p>Michael Brown concerned that there is exposure for ACHA and enquired whether the Council would be willing to underwrite the project and asked whether we could make it conditional to share the risk. Linda Haig responded that she will present that recommendation to the Council for consideration.</p> <p>Cllr Roddy McCuish asked how much we would be asking the Council to provide financially. Linda Haig reported and estimated amount of £50,000 to £100,000.</p> <p>Cllr Roddy McCuish requested that a strong case should be made to Historic Scotland and raised a concern about asking for a conditional assistance also.</p> <p>Archie Blair asked whether this was a typical type of project that ACHA would progress based on the risk and circumstances. Linda Haig responded that it wasn't a typical project and was slightly higher risk of not progressing and abortive cost of around £100,000.</p>	
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	<p>Cameron Grant queried whether £100,000 for abortive costs was not an excessive amount to lose and Linda Haig reported that it was a substantial amount of money and re-confirmed that this was one of the reasons we were planning to discuss the situation with the Council.</p> <p>Danny Kelly surprised at the emphasis on risk and doesn't see why there should be such a risk concern in relation to planning consent and sees the risk being in relation to Historic Scotland and not due to the Council. Does not consider that the involvement of MSP's should be required based on our proposals.</p> <p>Archie Blair the report shows that the site has a negative value and thinks it's reasonable to ask the Council to assist with the exposure.</p> <p>Stafford Day wished for clarification on the actual role and power of Historic Scotland which was provided by Linda Haig.</p> <p>The Board of Management <b>Agreed</b> that a proposal be presented to the Council that a conditional 50/50 split is agreed in relation to abortive costs.</p>	
12.	<p><b>IT Efficiencies</b></p> <p>Nick Pollard, Director of Finance and IT presented the IT Efficiencies report to the Board of Management and outlined issues with current systems and software.</p> <p>Proposal to use IT more within the organisation to improve effectiveness and efficiency and reduce manual function and reduce error. Dramatic reduction required in the utilisation of paper. A Document Management system is a necessary requirement.</p> <p>Customer service and website use to be developed to allow greater interaction and allow tenants to update or amend information when changes occur.</p> <p>Nine short term recommendations presented:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop the use of existing modules within Capita e.g. Property Assets, Property Attributes, Warranty info held, legal action info held;</li> <li>2. Review Internal processes e.g. Invoice processing, data collection;</li> </ol>	

3. Store data on Capita rather than on spreadsheets e.g. asbestos, gas and solid fuel cyclical maintenance;
4. External promotion on the use of emailing and texting;
5. Enhance current website to allow for more online Processing;
6. Promote use of lync meetings;
7. Develop use of letter production from Capita;
8. Introduce electronic production of invoices for service Charges;
9. Improve the availability of Arcgis and management of Data;

The following tasks would require to be built into the IT Strategy and programmed for development over the next 1-5 years:

1. Document Management System;
2. Planned Maintenance/Asset Management;
3. Direct Debit Module;
4. Using sub accounts for recharges on Capita;
5. Mobile working for all staff e.g. arrears management, stock condition, SHQS info;
6. Use of Sharepoint or similar for social Media and Intranet;
7. Implementation of Customer Services Management module on Capita;
8. Implementation of ASB Module on Capita;
9. Implementation of Contact Point on Capita;
10. Implementation of Worktray on Capita

After a short discussion on Governing Body training, Kate Winton asked that training be provided for governing body members and Nick Pollard responded that a training package would be provided.

Archie Blair noted that there was no cost provision within the report for staff training and Colette Benham responded that any staff IT training would be absorbed within the staff training budget.

Stafford Day queried why capita were planning to withdraw support and commented that he wasn't sure why that would be and asked whether supplied equipment would only be used solely for Board business?

Nick Pollard responded that support was being withdrawn for specific software and not in total and confirmed that hardware

	<p>provided for use would be governed by the Group`s Acceptable Use Policy.</p> <p>Margaret MacGregor asked if ACHA would be providing Board members with broadband and Michael Brown responded that members would require to have a personal broadband connection to obtain access.</p> <p>Jim Milne enquired whether an additional staffing resource was required and Nick Pollard reported that there was currently a strain on resources within the IT department.</p> <p>Archie Blair commented that some organisations do not allow the use of Wi-Fi due to security and Nick Pollard reported that the organisation continually monitors and manages security.</p> <p>Cllr Roddy McCuish asked that an option report be presented to the Board of Management identifying our priorities, targets and resource requirement.</p> <p>IT questionnaire to be recirculated to board Members for completion.</p> <p>The Board of Management <b>Agreed</b> the recommendations and requested a further report setting priorities, targets and resources required.</p>	<p>NP</p> <p>NP</p>
13.	<p><b>A.O.C.B.</b></p> <p>Douglas Prophet highlighted that the article on the website re Gardens in Bloom only mentions Mid Argyll and Kintyre.</p> <p>Cameron Grant commented that the current website format was hostile and an unfriendly website. Colette Benham responded that she has been asked by the Senior Management Team to approach a consultant to request assistance in relation to website development.</p> <p>Kate Winton reported that people who are being refused bank loans are being provided with loans from Tesco.</p> <p>Kate Winton asked that lighting systems being installed should be reviewed as a result of the number of bulbs failing.</p> <p>Sandra MacKenzie reported that there was a misprint within the Board info pack in relation to the date of the next MAK Area committee meeting.</p>	

	Jim Milne asked members to highlight the conferences they wish to attend to Lesley Lindsay, P.A. to the Board of Management and attendance will be balanced against budget. A list of conferences for the year will be issued shortly for consideration.	
14.	<b>Date &amp; Time of Next Meeting</b> Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2014, 10.30 am at the Argyll Hotel, Inveraray.	