

HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Friday 4th November 2011 @ 11.00 am

in Kirkmichael Centre Helensburgh

Present:

Michael Brown (MB) - Tenant
 Bill McIntyre (BM) - Tenant
 Sonja Aitken (SA) – Independent
 Maisie Dunlay (MD) – Tenant
 Sandra Glazsher (SG) - Tenant
 George Douglas (GD) – Independent
 Councillor Kelly (CK) – Council Representative

Staff Members Present:

Yvonne Litster (YL)
 David Rae (DR)
 Wendy Nicholson (WN)

1.	Apologies: Joan Roy (JR) Christine Johnston (CJ)	Action
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting: 2nd September 2011 Proposed: Sonja Aitken (SA) Seconded: Maisie Dunlay (MD)	
3.	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes: 02.09.11 DK joined the meeting. MB advised members that he had accepted a late addition to the Agenda which will be dealt with under agenda item 10A: Land Disposals at Luss and Kilcreggan. However, he pointed out that there was no Standard Committee Report to provide background to each case, or a summary of the proposals. MB requested that all future requests are submitted in the correct standard reporting format, and where possible, submitted in time for issuing with the Agenda packs. On this occasion it was agreed that DR would give a verbal update. YL advised that on page 6 with reference to “light bulbs” installed	YL

	during the Investment Programme: This matter was still being investigated and YL would update members when information becomes available.	
4.	Conflicts of Interest to Declare No conflicts of interest were declared by members.	
5.	Correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Community Action Funds were agreed by the CEO as listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cardross, Colgrain & Craigendoran Senior Citizens Association received £185. ➤ “Christmas Lights for Helensburgh” received £300. ➤ Cove & Kilcreggan Youth Cafe received £300. ➤ Enable Helensburgh received £300. GD had previously contacted regarding his difficulty in attending Friday meetings, however, as GD was able to attend this meeting this will be fully discussed under agenda item 17. Enclosed in packs was a letter from G. Stead – if members wish to have expenses paid directly into their bank account the appropriate form must be completed and returned as instructed in the letter. <p>MB advised that he had been approached by Mr Allcroft of Cardross and that consideration be given by members to Mr Allcroft taking on a Casual Vacancy within the Lomond Committee.</p> <p>This was proposed by SA and Seconded by MB – WN will write out to Mr Allcroft advising him of the decision and providing future meetings dates.</p>	WN
6.	Independent Vacancies – Board of Management MB advised members that the Board of Management has x2 Independent Vacancies. Prior to these vacancies being advertised in the local press Independent Area Committee members are being asked if they would like to consider taking up one of these positions. If so, members are asked to speak with either YL or WN at the end of the meeting.	
7.	Board of Management Update presented by MB Board Minutes 11 th August and 8 th September previously circulated: The Chief executive gave a presentation which highlighted the following points:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Welfare Reform ❖ Housing Benefit Reform 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Borrowing powers for the Scottish Government ❖ The Scottish Housing Regulator's consultation ❖ The Association's application for charitable status ❖ Current ongoing economic stability ❖ The future use of the Council's Strategic Housing Fund ❖ Fuel Poverty ❖ Government grants coming in to the Association this year will be £14.2million <p>❖ Ongoing Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Heating and rewire programme has now restarted on Islay. ❖ Key performance indicators are progressing well. ❖ The Association's new builds at Campbeltown, Dunoon and Lochgoilhead are all progressing well. The properties at Lochgoilhead are due back in December. ❖ Publicising again Home Contents Insurance in the run up to Winter. ❖ ACHA's Good Neighbour Award made posthumously to Mrs Mary Sweeney. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Innovation and Investment Fund ❖ The Association's application relating to Scott Terrace in Dalmally has been accepted. ❖ The Association understands West Highland have been successful with respect to an application to building housing in Dunbeg and Ulva. ❖ Fyne Homes have had an application approved for the former Lochgilphead High School ❖ Dunbritton have had an application approved for the former Hermitage Academy site. ❖ Scottish Draft Budget Implications for Housing ❖ The Scottish Finance Minister John Swinney ❖ Announced the Scottish Government's draft plan for spending in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 to the Scottish Parliament ❖ The stated objective is that the Scottish Government will build 30,000 affordable homes during the life of the parliament. There is a commitment to deliver 5,000 council homes in the next 5 years. ❖ There is a commitment to publish a strategy for older people recognising demographic changes. ❖ Further commitments to the Energy Assistance Package and Universal Home Insulation Scheme. ❖ The National Housing Trust initiative under the Scottish Futures Trust has its funding of £4.7million frozen during the 3 year period. ❖ Use the Scottish Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA) to target sustainable investment in disadvantaged areas. ❖ Private sector housing renewal grants to local authorities will be £25.9 million next year against last year's figure of £21.5 million, an increase of 20%. ❖ The Warm Homes Fund supporting energy efficiency 	
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	<p>measures continues with commitments to deliver the £50million under that fund.</p> <p>OTHER MATTERS:-</p> <p>Area Specific Approach to Low Demand - Bute report approved. Board supported the approach of opening discussions with A & B Council to try to offer supported accommodation provision.</p> <p>Transfer of Factoring service to Housing and Neighbourhood Services – Approved.</p> <p>Mull Office Closure Consultation - Agreed – but press release not to be used unless there are press enquiries. Next Area Committee meeting to be held on Mull and open to public.</p> <p>Anti Social Behaviour Consultation – Noted, and policy will now go to Policy sub committee for approval.</p> <p>ACHA Repairs Service - Working group to be set up with Board members to ensure that they are clear on the proposal subject to final approval.</p> <p>Election of Finance & Audit Committee Chair - Al Reay elected.</p> <p>Housing and Regeneration budget figures are available on request by members to YL or WN.</p>	
8.	<p>Regional Managers Report – presented by YL</p> <p>Investment and Regeneration</p> <p><u>Kitchen & Bathrooms (Contractor – Carillion)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor yet to start. Awaiting property addresses and survey dates <p><u>Windows & Doors (Contractor – Sidey)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date to be arranged for surveys <p><u>Heating & Rewiring (Contractor – Carillion)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract on going. • Positive feedback regarding quality for gas and electric heating and rewires • Approx 15 Openings per week <p><u>Roof & Roughcast</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting start date for Columba Street <p>Garage Lock Up Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership Issues are still to be resolved by Argyll & Bute Council 	

- ACHA's Legal Advisors are pushing for a resolution
- demolition delayed until the conclusion on the legalities of ownership

(There is a Separate Agenda Item relating to "Title Issues")

General –

- Further demolitions / refurbishments and sales will be progressed before end of Financial year
- This will conclude the Approved Garage Strategy

Regeneration / More than Housing:

Play Park Mill Park, Cardross

- Some equipment may be replaced before end of this financial year.

Housing Management & Maintenance

- **Estate Management Policy** – Consultation Period ended 12th August.
- **Anti Social Policy** – due to be presented to Policy Sub Committee for Approval
- **Gypsy Traveller Strategy** – Consultation with the travelling community almost underway
- **Low Demand Strategy** – due to be presented to Board of Management for Approval.

Complaints Procedure Update:

54 complaints had been received between 1st April to 30th September 2011.

Stage 1- 33 complaints were resolved at Stage 1 during this reporting period, with 15 complaints progressing onto Stage 2.

Stage 2 – 3 new complaints skipped stage 1, starting the complaints process at stage 2.

5 complaints were resolved at Stage 2.
2 complaints are still open at Stage 2.

Stage 3 - 7 complaints progressed to Stage 3

Stage 4 – at the time of reporting no Stage 4 complaints have been received.

ALLPAY/Payment Collection:

YL advised that from 12th September, customers have been able to make debit and credit card payments at our Customer Service Centre using the Freephone Telephone Number and that payments can now be made in a number of ways including at the local office, online, by payment card and now by the Freephone

	<p>number.</p> <p>As these new payment methods have become available, the level of cash, cheque and postal order payments at local offices has reduced dramatically. ACHA has identified that the removal of payment facilities at local offices would result in financial savings for the Association as well as freeing up staff resources to prioritise general housing management and customer enquiries.</p> <p>ACHA now wishes to consider ending the payment facility option at local offices. This does not mean that local offices will close; they will still be open for customers to call in to discuss any query they have. However, payment facilities will not be available at the counters. Consultation is currently ongoing where all information and comments from tenants and customers will be collated and presented to ACHA's Board of Management who will then consider the views of those who have responded prior to making a final decision.</p> <p>For information, during the month of October there was a total of 2050 transactions made through paypoints, which totalled an income of just under £130,000.</p> <p>This has proved to be a very popular method of payment.</p> <p>MB commented that he feels it would be a mistake to withdraw the cash receipting service from the Area Offices, as although other options are available for payment, the social interaction with customers would be lost. MB also commented that there is a benefit to the local community as whole having cash receipting within area offices.</p> <p>Q: SA asked if there were many outlets within the Lomond Area for customers to make payments. A: YL advised that yes indeed, payment could be made at all local Post Offices and all outlets with the Pay Point logo which could be within or outwith the area. YL also advised that the footfall had dramatically reduced within local offices due to the introduction of the new Payment Card, one reason being that it allows payments to be made outwith normal office hours.</p> <p>Q: SA asked what the cost implications are if cash receipting was to remain within the local office. A: YL advised that this would be reissued to SA.</p>	YL
9.	<p>Contractor Performance</p> <p>YL advised that she had been requested to provide an update to members on Contractor Performance.</p> <p>The Heating and Rewire Contract was awarded to Carillion PLC on January 201. The first batch of install carried out was Gas heating only, the addresses for this batch were mainly in Cardross.</p>	

	<p>The Contractor at various meetings indicated that due to Building Warrant applications there would be delay in opening the rewire stream. Once warrants were issued the Contractor commissioned their Sub-Contractor to start immediately on site. The first batch of re-wires were carried out within the Kirkmichael Estate in Helensburgh. The sub-contractor are a company with large experience on re-wire projects for other RSLs including Glasgow Housing Association, however, they were unable to deliver to ACHAs high standards. It was quickly established that this also had an impact on ACHAs tenants property and comfort and in a few instances caused some distress to tenants. The main Contractor swiftly removed all operatives off site to minimise further problems. The Contractors Tenant Liaison Officer visited planned installs to reassure the tenants that there installs would proceed, however, there would be a delay to the programme due to the need to engage another sub-contractor.</p> <p>The Contractor and an ACHA representative have visited all properties where the tenants have disputed either damage to their property or have been subjected to abnormal conditions. The contractor where possible has offered different levels of compensation, where this has not been agreed insurers have been asked to intervene.</p> <p>The contract is now running smoothly with normal levels of complaints; the installation quality is good and hopefully will continue to remain so.</p> <p>Q: BM asked if the reason problems had occurred was due to the Contractor opening up too many houses at the one time. A: YL advised that, this was one of the problems as the contractor was leaving properties “open” for too long. However, this had now been rectified.</p> <p>YL also requested that if any member of the Committee was approached regarding Contractor Performance that they please contact the local area team at their earliest convenience and not wait until the next meeting. This allows any necessary action to be taken swiftly by the Area Team.</p> <p>Q: MB raised a concern that as YL had previously mentioned that the Investment Programme would be increasing would staff be able to properly supervise the programme. A: YL advised that the Investment Programme was a key priority to the Association and workloads for relevant staff were currently being reviewed to ensure the Programme of works was appropriately supervised. YL was asked if staff were trained to supervise this work. She confirmed that relevant staff were trained.</p>	
10.	Estate Management Action Plans: Presented by DR (previously circulated to all Members)	

	<p>Bollards @ Johnson Court Helensburgh:</p> <p>DR delivered his presentation on the above with the following being clarified before a decision was reached.</p> <p>Q: BM raised the issue of caravans being parked in the Johnson Court area, which obviously took up valuable parking space. A: DR advised that the Area Team are aware of this issue and actively pursue the removal of caravans when necessary.</p> <p>SA also advised that trailers are often left in the vicinity also.</p> <p>Q: MB asked if any owners in Johnson Court had shown an interest in the development of a car parking area. A: DR advised that out of the 9 owners involved, no one had responded to the consultation exercise.</p> <p>YL further concluded that if owners at a future date were interested in the development of a car parking area, and were willing to contribute to the costs, then this would be re-considered. However, at present there is a Health and Safety issue to address in the Johnson Court area.</p> <p>Approval was unanimously agreed to the Johnson Court proposal.</p> <p>Fencing Programme Various Addresses:</p> <p>DR delivered his presentation on the above.</p> <p>Q: BM asked how much money this would leave in the Estate Management Action Plan budget. A: DR advised that although he did not have an exact figure there would not be enough money for another project this financial year.</p> <p>YL advised that for future meetings spending on this budget would be a standard agenda item.</p> <p>Q: SG asked about the life span of the different types of fencing. A: DR advised that he would provide this information for the next meeting.</p> <p>Q: MB asked if tenants had been consulted on the fencing programme. A: DR responded that the proposals mainly came from tenant requests and also from the Land Issues Group and that all tenants had been contacted in this regard.</p> <p>Approval was unanimously agreed</p>	<p>YL</p> <p>DR</p>
10a	Land Disposal Queries	

	<p>YL advised members that the Board of Management had agreed that all future Land Disposal requests would be presented to the Area Committee for initial consideration prior to Board of Management making the final determination.</p> <p>YL also confirmed to Members that she would ensure MB's earlier comments regarding the way Land Disposals are presented to the Area Committee were taken on board.</p> <p>DR provided members with a verbal update:</p> <p>Land Disposal Query: Kilcreggan</p> <p>DR provided background to the request and members agreed on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If this land was to be sold, it should be sold in its entirety not just the Section highlighted as this could potentially lead to issues with access from either side of the land. Although it does not appear to be maintained at present, by selling the central piece on its own will prevent future maintenance and access. <p>Land Disposal Query: Luss</p> <p>DR provided background to the request. Prior to the Members providing a recommendation they requested the following additional information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many tenants do we have within this area? 2. Has there been any tenant consultation exercise carried out, if not, why not? 3. Would this have an impact on tenants residing in this area? <p>Members further requested that any Land Disposal Queries only be brought to the Lomond Area Committee if it has been established that ACHA own the land in question.</p>	
11.	<p>Title Issues: Darleith Road Cardross</p> <p>YL provided a summary of ACHA's position regarding the outstanding Title Issues and circulated a paper produced by N Pollard, Director of Finance & IT.</p> <p>MB requested that N Pollard be invited to our next meeting, and any questions relating to Title Issues could be taken then.</p>	YL
12.	<p>Tenants Panel Minutes</p> <p>MD left the meeting. Minutes 16th August and 20th September 2011 previously circulated</p> <p>MB advised Mr C Grant had been elected as Chair.</p>	

13.	Health and Safety Minutes – no Minutes circulated MB advised that he had been appointed as a representative on the Health & Safety Committee.	
14.	Key Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Void Relet Times (Not Low Demand) – Target 31 days – September 8 days • Void Relet Times (Stock Low Demand) – Target 49 days – September 27 days • Current Tenant Arrears – Target 2.50% - September 1.55% • Repairs Emergency –Target 100% - September 100% • Repairs Urgent – Target 96% - September 100% • Repairs Routine – Target 96% - September 100% • Qualifying Repairs – Target 100% - September 100% • Void Repairs – Target 100% - September 100% • Repairs Satisfaction – Target 95% - September 95.3% (7 out of 143 unsatisfied) • Post Inspections – Target 20% - September 17% • Allocation to Homelessness – Target 50% - September 17% (1 let) • *Allocation to Waiting List – Target 67% - September 25% (4 lets) • *Allocation to Transfer List – Target 17% - September 19% (1 let) <p>YL commented that Performance remains high in the Helensburgh & Lomond area team.</p>	
15	FISH – Welfare Rights Project – Update YL advised that since the last report in September the project has dealt with an additional 75 ACHA tenants and generated or protected an additional £175k in annualised income. This takes the total number of ACHA tenants engaging with the service to 1,187 with an overall gain of just over £1.7 million. Including the partner associations these figures rise to just under 1,400 tenants and a financial gain of just short £2.1 million.	
16	FISH – Debt Advice Pilot Project - Update YL advised that from 1 st April to 30 th September 2011 ABCAB (Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau) received 72 referrals to the pilot project. These referrals came from FISH Welfare Rights officers and ACHA staff.	
17	Area Committee Meetings 2012 Members had previously requested information on the availability of venues throughout the Helensburgh & Lomond area for 2012,	

	<p>with a view to holding meetings in different settlements. Discussions took place and the following meeting schedule was agreed:</p> <p>Friday 13th January 2012 Kirkmichael Centre @ 11 am</p> <p>Thursday 1st March 2012 Howie Pavillion Rosneath @ 11am</p> <p>Thursday 3rd May 2012 Cardross Community Flat @ 11 am</p> <p>Thursday 5th July 2012 Braeholm Helensburgh (AGM will Also be held on this date).</p> <p>Thurs 6th September 2012 Gibson Hall Garelochhead @ 11am</p> <p>Thurs 1st November 2012 to be confirmed.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would obtain costs and availability for the Helensburgh Library, Helensburgh Fire Station and Victoria Halls for Members to consider for meeting on Thursday 1st November 2012.</p> <p>Members requested that meeting dates are advertised in advance and the public invited to attend. Consideration will be given to a question and answer session.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding future Agenda items and members asked that the Directors and the Chief Executive be invited to a meeting during 2012, to provide a report on their key priorities for the coming year.</p> <p>It was requested that N Pollard attend the January meeting to discuss Rent consultation.</p> <p>GD left the meeting.</p>	<p>WN</p> <p>YL</p> <p>YL</p>
18	<p>Customer Visits to ACHA Offices Survey</p> <p>YL discussed the Office Survey paper and advised that during this period 26 responses were received by the Lomond Area Team.</p> <p>MB and CK then went onto make the Draw. The winner of the £25 gift voucher was K Gairns of Kirkmichael Helensburgh.</p>	<p>WN</p>
19	<p>A.O.C.B.</p> <p>GD asked for the following to be raised under AOCB: He noted that Dunbritton Housing Association were advertising an Open Day in Balloch and asked if ACHA were considering such events.</p> <p>YL advised that due to the very poor attendance at our Customer Involvement Day which was held after our AGM in 2010, it was agreed that it would be more beneficial for ACHA to attend local open days within the area. This year ACHA had a stall at the Helensburgh and Lomond Highland Games.</p>	

	<p>BM advised that as Chair of the Board of Management, he recently attended a charity event hosted by Dunbritton Housing Association where money was raised for Cancer Research.</p> <p>CK advised members that tarring was currently underway in the Rosneath area, including Argyle Road and Broom Road where roads were in a particularly poor state.</p>	
20	<p>Date and Time of next Meeting</p> <p>Friday 13th January 2012 @ 11 am in the Kirkmichael Centre.</p>	