

## HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 @ 11.00 am

Howie Pavillion Rosneath

#### Present:

Michael Brown (MB) - Tenant  
 Stephen Allcroft (SAL) – Tenant  
 Sandra Glazsher (SG) – Tenant  
 Sonja Aitken (SA) – Independent  
 Daniel Kelly (DK) – Independent  
 Cameron Grant (CG) – Tenant  
 Douglas Prophet (DP) - Tenant

#### Staff Members Present:

Yvonne Lister, Regional Manager, Housing & Neighbourhood Services (YL)  
 David Rae, Local Manager HNS (DR)  
 Wendy Nicholson, Administration Officer (WN)

1.	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies:</b> Councillor Morton	Action
	<b>Election of Chair of Helensburgh &amp; Lomond Area Committee</b> MB advised members that due to his recent election as Chair of the Board of Management he is required to relinquish his position as Chair of the Area Committee. MB thanked members and staff for their support over his time as Chair. Members thanked MB for his contribution as Chair and YL thanked MB for the time, effort and commitment that he had put into his role as Chair and wished him well on his new appointment. YL advised in terms of the Scheme of Delegated Authority the Area Committee were required to elect a new Chair. The process was then outlined to members. Only one nomination was received and this was from CG. As there were no other nominations received CG was duly elected.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting: 12.09.13</b> Page 7 – should read “principle” not principal. Proposed: Stephen Allcroft      Seconded: Sandra Glazsher	

3.	<b>Matters Arising:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Page 2/3 – Darleith Road Garages, MB confirmed that the garages had now been demolished and work had commenced on site for car parking facilities.</li> <li>• Page 2 – SA confirmed that all the new doors were now completed in Garrawy Road and SA had only heard positive comments in terms of the contractor and workmanship.</li> </ul>	
4.	<b>Conflicts of Interest to Declare</b>  No conflicts of interest were declared by members.	
5.	<b>Correspondence:</b>  YL advised that a tenant nomination had been received to fill a casual vacancy within the committee and requested this be heard under Agenda Item 16 this was agreed.	
6.	<b>Tenants Newsletter: Frequency of Articles</b>  A paper was circulated in the Agenda packs requesting members to consider if they wished two articles in the Tenants Newsletter twice yearly or reduce this to once per year in light of the fact the Tenants Newsletter is being reduced from a quarterly circulation to twice yearly.  A unanimous decision to keep our contribution to twice yearly was reached with the following observations being raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CG felt this would keep our committee in the public eye and hopefully encourage membership.</li> <li>• DP felt it would allow tenants to actually read about what the committee achieve and it may encourage membership and interest.</li> <li>• SAL also agreed tenants should be kept updated of what work is being carried out by the Committee.</li> <li>• MB felt keeping our profile as high as possible was important to establishing as strong a membership as possible.</li> </ul>	
7.	<b>Regional Managers Report presented by Y Litster</b>  Key Points discussed being:  <b>Investment and Regeneration</b>  <u><b>Kitchen/Bathroom programme - Contractor – Carillion</b></u> There are no installs at the moment. <u><b>Window and door programme - Contractor - SIDEY</b></u> The window and door programme is ongoing. . <u><b>Heating and Rewire, programme - Carillion</b></u> Programme is ongoing .	

<p><b><u>Roofing and Roughcasting Morrison and Spottiswood</u></b>  Programme is now Complete.</p> <p>Q: CG asked if this was just completed for the moment.  A: YL confirmed that there would be further contracts.</p> <p><b><u>Garage Lock Up Strategy</u></b>  <b><u>Darleith Road</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contract has started</li> <li>• Week late in starting due to illegally parked vehicles</li> <li>• Demolition works went as planned</li> <li>• Area will be re-surfaced due to condition of concrete bases</li> <li>• This will affect completion date – likely now end November.</li> </ul> <p>Q: CG asked if white lines would be drawn in the car parking area at Darleith Road.  A: YL stated this would be unlikely, however, would have this confirmed.</p> <p><b><u>Proposed New Office</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility study completed for proposed ACHA office at Stuckleckie Road</li> <li>• Proposal for staff at James Street and Sinclair Street to occupy new office</li> <li>• Tender returns due by 20<sup>th</sup> November</li> <li>• Costs to be established</li> <li>• Proposed completion would be end 2014</li> </ul> <p>SAL made an observation that this may reduce our footfall significantly.  YL advised that the footfall had already reduced significantly following the removal of cash collection.</p> <p><b><u>Proposed Housing Development – Hood Court</u></b>  YL attended the Planning hearing in September with colleagues from ACHA where a panel of local Councillors considered the planning application following 33 objections to the proposal. The Councillors found in ACHA's favour and planning consent was received subject to ACHA obtaining Road construction consent.  The funding is in place and we are now awaiting the outcome of the roads construction consent.  It is anticipated we will be on site in January.  In terms of the Contractor who will be appointed – as the contract has not yet been accepted we cannot provide any further details at this stage.</p> <p><b><u>Policy Development</u></b>  <b><u>Repairs Policy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved by Board of Management at October meeting.</li> <li>• Awareness Sessions will take place over coming weeks</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Home Argyll Policy Review</u></b></p>	<p>YL</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved by Board of Management at October meeting.</li> <li>• All 5 Partners have now approved the Policy</li> <li>• Live date: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Scottish Social Housing Charter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities</li> <li>• Work ongoing to ensure we meet the 16 Charter Outcomes</li> <li>• Working Group set up to ensure compliance</li> <li>• Scottish Housing Regulator met with relevant staff last month to review our progress</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction – Tenders are currently being looked at</li> <li>• Tenant Scrutiny – Flyers issued to all ACHA Households</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Welfare Reform</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants affected by the Bedroom Tax sits at 466 (29<sup>th</sup> October)</li> <li>• Close working with Local Authority to secure Discretionary Housing Payments for ACHA tenants</li> <li>• Amendments made to Allocations &amp; Arrears policy to try to mitigate against the effects of the Bedroom tax</li> <li>• HOME Argyll “Incentive” Scheme – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scheme went live on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013</li> <li>• Award of £500 to assist tenants moving to a smaller home</li> <li>• Small fund – will only be available to first 16 who apply</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><u>Argyll Homes For All (AHFA)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 months into the parent/subsidiary and reports back on service delivery are generally good</li> <li>• AHFA ‘s new IT system now in place</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>Policies Due to be Reviewed 2014</b></p> <p>Members were previously given a paper requesting they consider which, if any, policies they wish to review in 2014.</p> <p>Members confirmed there was no policies under review that they wished to be consulted on during 2014. However, it was agreed that the list would be included within the information pack for the January meeting to allow members a further chance to consider this.</p> <p>SA highlighted that some policies stated “approval not required”.</p> <p>YL confirmed these should have been removed from the list prior to circulation.</p>	WN
9.	<p><b>7 Year Estate Management Programme:</b></p> <p>Fencing Project, Rhu: DR explained that urgent fencing was now required for a property</p>	

which backed onto a burn and for safety reasons this had to be carried out as soon as possible.

DR advised that a further quote had since been sought which reduced the figure from £3243.20 to £3111.80 for the fencing in Rhu.

A debate ensued with members as to the overall cost of the works. DK felt that this sum of money for a chain link fence was excessive. CG and MB agreed and asked why the quote was for like for like fencing when perhaps alternative fencing could be considered.

It was subsequently agreed that DR would seek costs for alternative fencing as a matter of urgency. He would then liaise with the Chair & Vice Chair, who have been delegated authority to decide on the fencing to be installed prior to the next meeting. The decision will be ratified at the January meeting.

YL also advised members of the following:

- Estate Management Action Plan (EMAP) report Agenda Item 9c included within the agenda packs was presented to the Senior Management Team on 24<sup>th</sup> October. This represented the views of the Helensburgh & Lomond Area Committee and the Mid Argyll & Kintyre Area Committee. A long discussion took place about whether or not there should be a method put in place for a separate procedure for EMAP's.
- Since then our Chief Executive has spoken to John Forbes (Managing Director, AFHA) and Mike Brown (Chair of ACHA's Board)
- The AHFA budget has been agreed with ACHA and has been signed off on the basis of an agreed schedule of rates
- The income from EMAP's is in AHFA's projected income stream as per the commitments previously agreed with ACHA in terms of AHFA's business case.
- The delivery of the repairs service has been agreed between ACHA and AHFA based on the pricing contained within the SOR
- Area Committees cannot therefore request other tenders or costs for work which legitimately will be carried out by AHFA as per the contract between the 2 parties.
- Should the Area Committee wish the Board to consider the matter of the **contract** between AFHA and ACHA then they should bring this to the attention of the Board in future years.
- AHFA was set up to deliver ACHA's repairs requirements and has a contract to do so. This includes EMAP works.

Members agreed we should invite a member of AHFA along to a future meeting.

10.	<p><b>Judging Employee of the Season (Summer)</b></p> <p>6 nominations were received for the Summer Employee of the Season Award. Following the judging Jenna Shaw, Admin Officer, Mid Argyll/Kintyre was awarded the title of Summer Employee of the Season.</p> <p>The Area Committee noted the high standard of nominations and felt each one was a worthy winner.</p> <p>The Committee Members felt the new judging regime was much improved.</p> <p>They have requested that if possible, Jenna Shaw is invited to their next meeting to be personally congratulated on her award.</p>	YL
11.	<p><b>Community Action Fund Applications:</b></p> <p>No applications received for this meeting.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Membership Strategy</b></p> <p>The AGM survey was discussed and Members agreed that no information was really gained. The profile of Membership was discussed. Members agreed to take no further action. SA queried the stock figures for the Kirmichael area as it was felt this was particularly low. WN to report back to the next meeting.</p> <p>SA left the meeting at 1.35pm.</p> <p>Members agreed to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACHA Reception areas should ensure they have posters and leaflets in a prominent position advertising membership.</li> <li>• Continue to keep a high profile in the Tenants newsletter.</li> </ul>	WN
13.	<p><b>Tenants &amp; Residents Association Strategy</b></p> <p>It was agreed that Cardross Tenants &amp; Residents Association would contact the other TRA's in the Helensburgh/Lomond area advising that they currently have a member of the Community Council sitting on their panel and maybe they would wish to adopt this approach as it allows closer liaison with their Community Councils.</p>	CG
14.	<p><b>Agenda Items for the next meeting 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014</b></p> <p>Items were discussed and agreed.</p>	
15.	<p><b>Guest Speaker</b></p> <p>Nick Pollard, Director of Finance &amp; IT gave a presentation on his department's progress in terms of the Strategic Plan.</p>	

Objective 1

*“Achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015 and addressing housing need in Argyll & Bute, through development”*

Progress to date

- We have considered the Carduus funding model
- We have secured the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) style Strategic Housing Fund (SHF) loan fund from Argyll and Bute Council (ABC) amounting to £3 million outwith our loan agreement
- We have Board approval to commence a negotiation with Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) to revisit the loan terms to enable more funding beyond 2018 for a 10 year development plan
- We have support from our Treasury advisors in these negotiations
- We have instructed the security valuer to undertake a piece of work to support the longer term plans

Objective 2

*“Providing quality customer care and equality across all our services”*

Progress to date

- IT efficiency working group has been established
- IT efficiency working group has reported to Senior Management Team (SMT) in October
- IT Strategy to be reported to Board of Management in December.

Objective 3

*“Developing the Financial strength and capacity to meet current and future objectives”*

Progress to date

- No new funding streams identified
- We have considered the development of a revised business plan with a 10 year development strategy
- 5 Year planning not taken forward as yet
- Rent harmonisation working group has met to discuss parameters for consideration

Objective 4

*“Deliver progressive and sustainable business performance and service delivery”*

Progress to date

- F&IT has made limited progress in reviewing its policies at this time due to other resource constraints

Q: CG asked if any consideration or actions had been taken in light of the independence vote coming for Scotland which could have funding implications for the Association.

	<p>A: NP advised that the Senior Management Team were watching any developments closely and all relevant documentation currently available, at this time, has been received awaiting definitive decision making. Many important decisions can only be answered when the result of the vote is known. NP advised that the risks to social housing is the uncertainty of not knowing, for example, will interest rates remain the same, will we have a different currency and if so how will any debt be converted, will we still be exempt by HMRC through corporation tax, what will the VAT rate be, with a rapidly ageing population pensions will also have to be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Q: SAL asked what “resilience” in IT had been put in place with the approach of winter months and the potential of adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>A: NP advised that unfortunately with the wireless connections on our Islands there was nothing that we can do, however, we do have an IT strategy in hardware and cyber risk which looks at ways to improve communications and how we move forward.</p> <p>Q: MB asked if NP had any further information on the rent harmonisation group.</p> <p>A: NP advised this group was in its very early stages it will look at how rents are calculated and what methods should be used in the future. NP advised that ACHA had received complaints in the past stating the rent figures for properties of the same type,size etc can have a varying rent figure. It was noted however that the assumption is that rent figures would in fact be lowered when this may not actually be the case. A full consultation exercise would take place before any decision making process and the system would need to be easy to understand and administer also.</p> <p>On discussion of the Financial Reporting Standards and the changes that will be made to our presentation of information and also of the financial words that we currently use SA asked if a Fact Sheet would be provided showing what is currently used and what the change will be.</p> <p>A: NP agreed this was a good idea, however, presentations will be taken to the Finance and Audit Committee and also the Board of Management keeping everyone informed of progress and how we are moving forward to the 2015 deadline.</p> <p>NP updated members on the Rent Increase process which is currently underway with SMT discussions late November for Board approval on 5<sup>th</sup> December for the consultation exercise. If approval is granted then consultation will take place over December for the Finance &amp; Audit Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014.</p> <p>The business plan at the moment would indicate RPI plus 1.75% however, many things have to be taken into account before this can be agreed.</p> <p>NP also updated members on a conference which he recently attended where he gave a presentation for the Regulator on the</p>	
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	<p>Finance Sector. This highlighted the issue of Welfare Reform, and where the Discretionary Housing Payment is contributing to keeping arrears level lower than expected. However as these payments are only available for one year and will be discontinued at the same time Universal Credit is implemented we have to consider what this could potentially mean for ACHA this also relates to our own Welfare Rights project and its way forward.</p> <p>All members agreed that NP had given a very comprehensive presentation which everyone learned from. YL/WN to look at the possibility of NP returning to the committee early next year.</p>	WN/YL
16.	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p><b>Nomination to Area Committee:</b> YL advised a nomination to the Area Committee had been received from Mr Malcolm Campbell and the nomination form was circulated to all members for consideration. Members agreed to accept Mr Campbell onto the Committee and confirmed he would be filling a casual vacancy. Mr Campbell will remain as a casual member until the AGM where he will be able to put himself forward to be nominated as a tenant member. YL to contact Mr Campbell direct in this regard.</p> <p><b>Scheme of Delegated Authority:</b> YL advised that at ACHA's Strategic Planning day on 31<sup>st</sup> October the Board carried out an exercise to ascertain if any Board items could be delegated to the Area Committee's. Following this exercise the Board determined that there were no items that could be delegated. However it was noted that 19 items were already delegated to Area Committee's and the Board queried why they did not appear on the Area Committee Agenda's. It was explained that some items would not routinely be on the Agenda, but it was agreed that Area Committee's should have another look at the "Scheme of Delegated Authority" (SDA) to see if Agenda's were or could be built around the SDA. Members agreed for the January meeting we have an Agenda item to discuss the SDA in more detail, and a copy of the SDA will be included in the information pack.</p> <p><b>KPI's</b> Q: MB asked when we started reporting the low demand figure for all areas. A: YL confirmed that this had been included in the information pack since the September meeting.</p> <p><b>Rosneath Development Trust:</b> Q: DK asked if ACHA had been involved in any</p>	YL

	<p>meetings/discussions with the Rosneath Development Trust with regards to sheltered housing.</p> <p>A: YL confirmed she had attended a meeting in this regard sometime ago.</p> <p><b>Investment Programme:</b></p> <p>Q: SG asked if the heating and rewire programme had been completed for the Garelochhead area.</p> <p>A: YL confirmed that all properties had to meet the SHQS standard by 2015 and that the Investment Programme would continue.</p>	
17.	<p><b>Date and Time of next Meeting</b></p> <p>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at 11am in the Kirkmichael Centre Townhead Road Helensburgh.</p>	
	<p><b>Public Question &amp; Answer Session</b></p> <p>There were no members of the Public in Attendance at this meeting.</p>	