



HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA COMMITTEE **MINUTES OF MEETING**

Thursday 3rd March @ 10.00 am
Lamont House, 9-19 Stuckleckie Road Helensburgh

Present:

Cameron Grant (CG) – Tenant
 Robert Beggs (RB) – Tenant
 Sonja Aitken (SA) – Independent
 Danny Kelly (DK) – Independent
 Stephen Allcroft (SAL) – Tenant
 Councillor Aileen Morton (CM) – Council Representative

Staff Members Present:

Yvonne Angus – Housing & Neighbourhood Services (YA)
 Wendy Nicholson, Administration Officer (WN)

Members of the Public

Jim Milne, Board of Management Chair (JM)
 Karen Isobel Carmichael

1.	Welcome & Apologies: CG welcomed members to the March meeting. Apologies: None Not in Attendance: Malcolm Campbell (MC)	Action
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising: Page 2 – Refugee Resettlement Programme: CG made a point to note that it was stated in the local press a man was arrested in Bute in relation to refugee`s within the Bute area. Page 6 – Tenant Satisfaction Survey SAL asked for update: YA advised this formed part of Regional Managers Presentation under agenda item 5. Page 2 – Policy Consultation YA confirmed the Restraint Policy is ready for comment by the Area Committee. Members will be provided with this policy at the end of the meeting and comments	

<p>should be emailed directly back to G Stead HRCS by 11th March 2016.</p> <p>YA also confirmed that the Customer Care Charter will be going out to consultation shortly but at present no formal date is available.</p>	All
<p>Page 8 – Community Action Funds – CG requested that members are shown the new community action fund application which goes live 1st April. WN will bring a copy to the next meeting.</p>	WN
<p>Page 08 – Community Action Funds – YA confirmed that the press article promoting this fund to charities was in the Helensburgh Advertiser on the 17th December 2015.</p>	
<p>Page 09 Item 11 - Land Disposal – SAL & CG advised that there were other area's in Park Grove, Cardross which members of the public may wish to buy if ACHA wished to advertise. YA to take forward with the Investment and Regeneration Team.</p>	YA
<p>Page 10 Item 14 – Debt Recovery - CG asked the question if ACHA were considering adding interest to rent arrears, CG had heard "talk" outwith the ACHA environment that this was being considered by Registered Social Landlords and wondered if this was something ACHA were currently considering. YA confirmed she had not heard of this and advised a change of this nature would have to go through the consultation process before any decision would be made.</p>	
<p>Page 09 – Garden in Bloom – YA stated that it had not been confirmed if Garden in Bloom would be advertised in the next tenants newsletter. However, as it had featured prominently last time round it was unlikely to be advertised.</p>	
<p>Page 09 Item 12 – “Your Voice” Scrutiny Panel WN apologised that this had not been added as an Agenda Item as requested. CG confirmed this would be heard under new Agenda Item 11A for the purpose of this meeting.</p>	
<p>Page 10 Item 15 – Ground Maintenance Contractor</p> <p>LH Director of Investment & Regeneration discussed this with our contractor, ISS, who advised they would not be prepared to offer us this service as part of the current contract. While on the face of it, it looked like a good idea it would present difficulties for them that might be in excess of any benefit.</p> <p>The Grounds Maintenance Contractor works for a wide range of clients throughout Argyll and their staff work to cutting schedules by area rather than by client. It would, therefore, be difficult for them to keep track of special client signage requirements in addition to the basic maintenance. Their staff members walk miles every day cutting grass and the placing and replacing signs on every grassed plot would simply add to their time and labour. In addition, they could not offer a consistent approach – in Kintyre and Islay the work is sub-contract to the Council.</p>	

	<p>If members wished to insist on this service, there would be an additional cost to the contract and members would have to consider if this was the best use of resource, over and above this there is no available budget that could be used for such an addition.</p> <p>ISS have however offered to get involved in an article for a tenant newsletter or if there was a small community benefit project that they could assist with. These might be useful ways of raising the profile of their services.</p> <p>YA asked for members comments to take back to our Investment Team.</p> <p>SAL asked that Cardross Tenants and Residents Association may wish to contact ISS in relation to works they are considering and requested that contact details be passed on. YA agreed to do this.</p> <p>DK – took on board comments made and can appreciate why adding ACHA signage to the ISS contract should not be done at an additional expense to the Association. However finds it frustrating that the good work that is carried out on behalf of ACHA is going unnoticed due to the assumption that Argyll and Bute Council cuts all grass within our local area.</p> <p>Members felt it would be a good idea for an article to be placed in the Newsletter highlighting the amount of grass ACHA cut throughout the area.</p> <p>SAL wondered if the Committee should consider asking for the support of the Board of Management to request signage from the grounds maintenance contract when the next round of tenders are due. The Minutes of meeting held on 14th January 2016 were proposed by: SAL and seconded by DK.</p>	YA
3.	<p>Conflicts of Interest to Declare</p> <p>CG declared an interest with the Scottish Housing Regulator..</p>	
4.	<p>Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CG read out the resignation of member Michael Brown which had been received by himself on the 26th February 2016. Members wished Mike well for the future. CG advised Argyll and Bute residents are being asked to participate in the Local Housing Strategy by completing an online survey. Members to note the closing date of the 31st March 2016. 	

- Tenant Information Service (TIS) were currently advertising for 12 voluntary positions to assist with Tenants Scrutiny.
- CG advised that the Scottish Housing Regulator had announced a new and wide-ranging programme of national thematic inquiries. There would also be a consultation process on the tenants booklet and thematic enquiries. CG will be attending a meeting on the 20th March 2016 in this regard.
- CG advised Tenant Information Service (TIS) has advertised their Annual General Conference to be held in Glasgow on the 10th to 12th June 2016.

5. **Regional Managers Report – Presented by Yvonne Angus**

YA updated members on the following key issues:

Investment and Regeneration:

Investment Works Package	Estimated Target 2015/16	To end Jan 16
Windows/Doors	193	2
Kit/Bath	23	14
Heat/Re-wire	30	10
Roof/Roughcast	161	148
Totals	407	174

- Roofing & Roughcast Programme complete in Lomond for 2015/16
- Kitchen & Bathrooms continue to be picked up during Void Period
- Heating & Rewires continue to be picked up during Void Period
- Windows & Door Programme – Underspent 2015/16. This is primarily due to planning issues.

Proposed New Build Jutland Court Helensburgh: Update

- Proposed 16 units will form the new development for ACHA as part of a mixed tenure scheme that will include units for sale and private rent.
- Subject to Planning and Funding approvals site start date could be October 2016.
- Phase 2 Option is currently being explored

Q: SAL asked how many of the 16 properties would belong to ACHA, and would if ACHA become the Factor for the units that were sold.

A: YA advised she understood that all 16 would be for rental by ACHA. The proposal is at an early stage and as far as she was aware there had been no discussions about ACHA Factoring the private properties.

Q: CM noted the Jutland Court partnership working and asked if ACHA were involved with the discussions for the sites at Dobbies Garden Centre and Cardross Sawmill.

A: YA advised she was not aware but would speak to colleagues in the Regeneration Team and feedback to the next meeting. She explained that when a site is considered a full analysis of housing need and demand is undertaken.

YA

Multi Agency Meeting, Kirkmichael

- “Kirkmichael Voice” was enclosed in the Helensburgh Gazette –
 - delivered free to all households in Kirkmichael
 - Included articles contributed by many of the partners
 - ACHA’s article was entitled “Keeping Communities Safe and Secure”
- A partner walk round is planned for early April –
 - To discuss concerns with the community
 - Youth workers undertaking a questionnaire for young people
 - Public meeting planned for end April
- Public Reassurance Area model still being considered
- Community Gala day proposed for August

CM advised members there was potential for the Group to receive a large community budget. This budget has been applied for and it is anticipated to receive a positive outcome. If received this would allow for significant community projects to be considered in the area and also the potential for joint ventures with other interested parties. A wide community survey is currently being discussed to consult with local residents on future development.

CG – Point of interest to advise that if goal posts were being

considered that the netting would not be allowed to remain on a permanent basis due to health and safety issues.
CM advised that the pitch they currently have at the moment is kept locked at the present time.

Syrian Refugee resettlement programme

- Further 5 Syrian refugee families were rehoused by ACHA on 16th February
- Brings the total to 9 on Bute
- Further 6 families will be rehoused in Campbeltown in spring.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

- 2015/16 Factoring Survey now completed
 - Out of 248 attempted surveys, 74 surveys were completed
- ARC question:
 - Satisfied with Factoring service provided by ACHA
 - 2014/15 – 46%
 - 2015/16 – 69%
- 2015/16 Gypsy Traveller Survey just completed
- Results will be presented to Board of Management at March meeting

Rent Harmonisation & Re-structuring

- New Rent Structure introduced from 1st April 2016 – for all NEW tenants
- Phased in over 3 years for existing tenants
 - Average 1.6% increase on top of the normal rent increase over 3 years
- Additional income to ACHA of around £900k per annum

Background:

- ACHA inherited a range of different rent levels
- Proposal to harmonise rent levels, Based on size and type of property
- Rent re-structure also considered so that:
 - They compare favourably to other landlords
 - Be affordable to tenants
 - Improve ACHA's longer term financial planning
- All Tenants consulted during August 2015

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 328 responses received (6.6%) • Board agreed to rent re-structure September 2015 <p>Ending of the Right to Buy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants right to buy ends 31st July 2016 • ACHA are taking a Low key & reactive approach to this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Governments FAQ's to be made available • Setting up a helpline • Posting a notice on the website • Article for spring newsletter • Expect there could be a surge of late applications, prior to end July. <p>Welfare Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted a bid for funding for Welfare Rights Service for 2016/17 • If unsuccessful, Board approved the continuation of ACHA's Welfare Right Service for up to 3 years <p>Preparation for Annual Return on the Charter (ARC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validation Visit took place during February • 10 Indicators were validated by consultants • Recommendations are around data cleansing • Exercise of value to assist with 2015/16 ARC submission 	
6.	<p>Estate Action Management Plans (EMAP)</p> <p>YA went through the Budget previously issued to members in their packs and confirmed that 13 Howie Crescent has been committed and it is anticipated that this work will be completed by the 31st March 2016.</p> <p>Q: SAL asked what happened to the remaining £48.39 which was not spent in the Lomond budget.</p> <p>A: YA confirmed it will assist other area's that may require it.</p> <p>SA noted that it should read Ben Bouie Drive and not Road, WN to rectify.</p> <p>YA confirmed that before and after pictures of all the Estate Management Projects for 2015/16 would form part of the presentation which will be developed for the AGM in August 2016.</p>	WN
7.	Community Action Fund Applications	

YA confirmed that information requested from the Helensburgh Addiction RehabTeam had been received and the award of £500 had since been processed.

Members received the paperwork for x1 Application with the outcome as detailed below:

Route 81 Project Team

Members discussed the application and agreed to award the £489 requested.

Q: CM asked if we could tie in with the Helensburgh Advertiser and ensure that when this event is advertised we also further promote our Community Action Fund.

A: WN to liaise with the Advertiser in this regard and ensure a "comment" is approved for use in this regard.

Members discussed the surplus budget and whether Charities previously refused this financial year should be reconsidered or whether this money should be passed to other Area Committee's to spend in other areas.

A serious debate took place and members discussed at length what should happen to the remaining budget.

It was agreed that a vote should take place to decide the issue.

By show of hands members voted as follows:

1 Member refrained from voting due to a conflict of interest in the Charity that was previously refused but could now benefit from the decision being reconsidered.

1 Member voted against the proposal

1 Member abstained from the vote

3 Members voted the Charity previously refused a Community Action Fund now be awarded the full £500.

Therefore by show of hands WN would organise for the Charity to be contacted again and advised that the Committee had reconsidered the previous application and would now award the full £500 requested.

Members were also provided with a budget update for 2015/2016.

WN

	RB arrived during this agenda item at 11am, however, was present for the debate and was able to be part of the members vote.	
8.	<p>Key Performance Indicators (KPI) Report</p> <p>SAL thanked staff for producing the detailed Key Performance Indicators report.</p> <p>Q: CM asked in relation to page 28/29 Low Demand Area`s what the issues were and this was showing almost a year where a properties x2 had remained void.</p> <p>A: YA confirmed that Investment works along with substantial remedial works were required to one of the properties the other was due to the number of refusals made on the property.</p> <p>Q: SAL asked in relation to page 5/6 would we not expect our contractor to have their own cherry picker as jobs were out of target due to the contractor not being able to hire one.</p> <p>A: YA advised she would pass these comments to the Contract Administrator and feedback for the next meeting. CG advised AHFA are carrying out a costing exercise to establish the value of purchasing a cherry picker as opposed to hiring one when needed.</p> <p>Q: RB asked in relation to page 6 – IT systems not same in capita what does this mean?</p> <p>A: YA explained there are sometimes interface issues which result in the information from one IT system not updating another IT system. She explained that an Operative updates his handheld device when he completes a job, and this information should transfer to ACHA's IT system. However, there are occasions when the IT system fails to update. She confirmed that ACHA run housekeeping reports to ensure we catch any incidents like this.</p>	
9.	<p>Contents of Tenants Newsletter – Spring 2016</p> <p>Members unanimously agreed to use the article presented by RB for this edition of the Tenants newsletter.</p> <p>As the article was too large for the newsletter YA agreed to edit it.</p>	
10.	<p>Agenda Items for meeting May 2016</p> <p>Members agreed to the Agenda items previously issued with the following additions:</p> <p>“Your Voice” Tenants Scrutiny Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 Policy Reviews: Repairs and Maintenance Policy (to be discussed at May meeting) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group recruitment and Selection Policy • Accessible Housing Policy • Complaints Handling Procedure Information Leaflet • Debt Management Policy <p>CM requested that we produce a document showing the last 3 years of community action funds awarded by each area. YA confirmed this was a good idea and agreed this would form part of the next meeting.</p>	WN
11.	<p>Presentation on updated Tenant Satisfaction Results</p> <p>YA updated members on Tenants Satisfaction results which included the following key issues.</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 Tenant Satisfaction Survey was carried out “in-house” • Staff received training on conducting the survey • Surveys were weighted based on housing stock within each area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – (weighting is the process carried out to overcome the problem of bias in the results) • 1625 tenants contacted to achieve participation rate of 440 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Spoke to 704 tenants (264 who were contacted refused to take part) • Contextual information was provided to tenants, prior to asking them the ARC question • Participating tenants entered into prize draw • Satisfaction has increased on every ARC question <p>Q: SAL is the Scottish average stated for 2015/16 obtained from the 2014/15 report.</p> <p>Q: YA confirmed that it was the 2014/15 figure and further benchmarking will take place when updated Scottish Averages are received.</p> <p>YA confirmed that the abbreviation HNS is referring to Housing and Neighbourhood Services.</p> <p>Q: SA - are we looking into why the figure was low for Indicator 10</p> <p>A: YA advised that staff recorded comments from tenants during the survey and these will be fully analysed and included in the Action Plan.</p>	
11A	<p>“Your Voice” Tenant Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>SAL provided members with an update of progress on the “Your</p>	

	<p>Voice” Group detailing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last meeting allowed the Group to finalise their work on the Void Reletting Process. This will now be presented to the Senior Management Team on the 17th March and the Board of Management on the 31st March where all their recommendations will be noted and discussed. • Meeting scheduled for 8th March 2016 whereby YA and Director of Housing & Neighbourhood Services will be attendance. The Director will be delivering a presentation on ACHA`s current communications strategy which will be the next project for the Group. • Once this task is completed the Scrutiny Panel will consider their next project, which is likely to be the Repairs and Maintenance Policy. 	
12.	<p>Chairs Update</p> <p>CG advised members that he attended the Dynamic Earth Centre in Edinburgh in relation to the Charter.</p> <p>CG advised that himself and another member of the regional network were to produce a presentation on registered Tenants and Residents associations detailing how they operate and their role within the community.</p> <p>Members to note the Annual General meeting for the Regional Network is scheduled for Tuesday 8th March 2016 in Glasgow.</p>	
13.	<p>AOCB</p> <p>Q: SA asked in relation to the Board Minutes contained within the Information packs, dated 21.01.16 enquired as to the reference made under Welfare Rights for funding in the “same operating area”</p> <p>A: YA confirmed that the Welfare Service will remain the same in all areas whether funding is approved or not. If grant funding is successful ACHA will meet the costs to ensure the Helensburgh & Lomond area is covered by the service.</p> <p>CG commented that at the Charter event he attended a short video was taken which has product placement as CG is seen holding an ACHA pen.</p>	
14	<p>Date of time of next meeting</p>	

	Thursday 12 th May 10am Lamont House 9-19 Stuckleckie Road Helensburgh.	
15.	Public Question & Answer Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM made note that some tenants did not wish to participate in the tenant satisfaction survey. JM commented on the options available to tenants in terms of responding to the ARC questions, particularly the “neither satisfied or dissatisfied” answer. He felt it was unfortunate that this option was available to tenants and it would be more helpful if tenants were asked whether they were satisfied or whether they were dissatisfied. By eliminating the “neither satisfied or dissatisfied” answer it would have the potential to change the percentages significantly. • YA advised that all Landlords must ask the question in exactly the same way, and provide tenants with the range of multiple choice answers provided by the SHR. This allowed for accurate benchmarking. • CG advised that the SHR were looking into how the questions were worded as they are due to change the ARC questions next year. • JM asked if every social landlord was required to have their data validated. • YA confirmed that most do as this allows landlords to have their data validated by independent consultants and ensures accurate data recording. ACHA had been doing this for the last 3 years and although there was a cost involved it proved to be a worthwhile exercise and gives the Association confidence in the ARC return submitted each year. 	