

MID ARGYLL & KINTYRE AREA COMMITTEE MEETING Thursday, 16th December 2010 at 11.00am The Royal Hotel, Ardrishaig

Attendees

Sandra MacKenzie, Tenant (SMacK)
John Muir, Tenant (JM)
Susan Paterson (SP)

Staff in Attendance

Yvonne Litster, Regional Manager – Housing & Neighbourhood Services (YL)

Matthew MacAulay, Regeneration Manager (MMacA)

Jenna Shaw, Admin Officer (JS)

Not in Attendance

Carole Ann Sheilds, Tenant Valerie St Helene, Tenant

		Action
1.	Apologies Lochiel Cushnie, Linda Haig and Councillor Donnie MacMillan. An Area Committee meeting was due to be held on Wednesday 1 st December 2010, however, due to the adverse weather conditions a decision was made to reschedule the meeting. YL advised there would not be sufficient members attending today's meeting and would therefore not be quorate. However, in terms of ACHA's Governance, the meeting could still go ahead with agreement that delegated authority for any decisions at the meeting would be given to the Chair. Decisions made would be presented to the Area Committee at the next meeting for ratification. Sandra MacKenzie welcomed Matthew MacAulay, Regeneration Manager, to the meeting.	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting – 6 th October 2010	
	The minutes from 6 th October 2010, were agreed as an accurate record. These were proposed by John Muir and seconded by Sandra MacKenzie.	
3.	Matters Arising	
	JM previously questioned the length of time between having properties painted to being on the schedule again. YL advised ACHA are aiming to	

provide a 5-year cycle but this could extend to 6 years depending on budgets.

At the last meeting held on 6th October, JM advised a suggestion had been made by tenants at the Fire Safety meetings to mount a fire blanket to all kitchens in sheltered housing properties. YL confirmed there is no requirement for ACHA to supply and mount fire blankets to all sheltered housing properties.

SMacK previously enquired if all elderly tenants had been contacted in terms of the Welfare Rights service. YL received confirmation that all elderly tenants, excluding sheltered housing schemes, were consulted at the time of writing the report.

Concerns on the standard and frequency of the grass cutting within the Kintyre area highlighted by C. Shields has been investigated by the area team and no significant concerns were raised.

4. Conflicts of Interest to Declare

Members were asked to declare any personal or commercial interest in any business being conducted at the meeting. Members confirmed there were no conflicts of interest to declare.

5. Correspondence

SMacK provided members with a summary of the recent Community Action Fund applications that were approved by ACHA's Senior Management Team:

Name of Group: Dalintober & Millknowe Tenants & Residents

Association

Value of Donation Requested: £300.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: To provide free hot dogs and juice at bonfire.

Name of Group: Campbeltown Trading Association

Value of Donation Requested: £300.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: Christmas street lights.

Name of Group: Kintyre Youth Cafe Value of Donation Requested: £300.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: The Cafe being developed will be in Campbeltown (to fill an identified gap) and it will offer a safe, fun, educational environment for young people and the wider community to enjoy affordable food and drink and take part in activities, including volunteering. Part of the project will be to train young people in the NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) group in catering/hospitality skills to move them on into employment locally. The project will also offer

support to young people through partnership working and signposting/referrals.

Name of Group: Kintyre Environmental Group Value of Donation Requested: £300.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: To purchase organic vegetable and herb seeds, vegetable, herb and soft fruit plants, compost and accessories necessary to provide ongoing basic elements to continue providing the teaching and experience to sow, grow, maintain and harvest vegetables and herbs to all community visitors to our garden. We use the harvested produce to offer to our local community through local outlets (farmers market, garden sales and cafe) as well as encouraging volunteers to harvest and cook produce.

Name of Group: Kintyre Cultural Forum Value of Donation Requested: £300.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: The donation will be used towards a bi-monthly cultural/arts newsletter serving the Kintyre community and wider afield. The newsletter acts not only as a 'What's on' guide, but also updates the community on the development of a cultural/arts centre in Campbeltown, and informs the community of information relevant to them. The newsletter is provided free and online to encourage the maximum participation.

Name of Group: Ardrishaig Community Trust

Donation Requested: A computer donated by ACHA that is no longer required for the Association's use. This will be utilised in the Trust Office.

Outcome: Successful

SP enquired how to make an application for a computer. YL advised a Community Action Fund application would need to be completed and returned to ACHA for consideration. JS agreed to forward a copy of an application to SP.

Name of Group: Tarbert and Skipness Community Trust

Value of Donation Requested: £292.00

Outcome: Successful

Details of Application: The Big Green Tarbert Project aims to increase community wellbeing and reduce the carbon footprint of Tarbert and the surrounding area by offering advice and assistance to householders on energy saving measures and by promoting the eating of local food. The Big Green Tarbert Project has a 'Community Gardens' project, through which they have been offering workshops on food growing and, in order to encourage "growing your own", they would like to offer fruit bushes to ACHA tenants with advice and assistance to plant them.

JS

6. Chair's Report – Board of Management Meeting – 11th November 2010

SMacK reminded members all papers should be read in advance of the meeting.

SMacK provided an update from the Board of Management meeting held on 11th November 2010.

The Chief Executive's monthly update report covered the following :-

- 1. The proposed new Housing Bill is now nearing final stages. Key issues within the bill include
 - the abolition of the Right to Buy for new tenants- although there is some confusion regarding existing rights for tenants who transfer to other properties. It is estimated that this change will "save" around 18000 homes from being sold over the next 10 yrs.
 - There will be the creation of a new Scottish Housing Regulator
 - A charter for social housing will be introduced
 - Homeless applicants will have the right to access support from the local authority
- 2. Comprehensive spending review:-
 - The chancellor has published his proposals for 2011/12- 2014/14.
 - Aim for net welfare savings of £7 billion per year
 - Changes to welfare benefits including housing benefit which may impact on our tenants.
 - Changes to rules re job seekers allowance
 - 50% cut in affordable homes budget in England and Wales will have a knock on effect for Scotland.
- 3. The Scottish budget:-
 - Draft budget likely to be published 17th November.
 - SFHA etc are lobbying to protect the Housing Budget
- 4. Other issues:-
 - Oban new build properties opening held on 29th October
 - Argyll & Bute Council agree to contribute £800,00 through the

CHORD programme for Campbeltown Phase 2 new build.

The Board observed a one minute silence at 11am.

Other issues discussed/agreed by the Board of Management:-

- Dates for 2011 meeting were agreed
- ➤ Payment facilities will be extended from April 2011 to include all pay facilities. Consultation with tenants re future of office payments will take place next year. Allpay will provide an additional 120+ places for tenants to pay e.g. in post offices, Co-ops, other local shops etc.
- ➤ Carrillion was approved as contractor for Heating & rewire for Lomond and Bute and Cowal. British Gas was approved for Oban, Lorn and the Isles and Mid Argyll & Kintyre areas.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting held on 9th & 23rd September 2010, were circulated prior to the meeting.

JM enquired about ACHA's position in regards to office accommodation as referred to in page 3 of the minutes from 9th September 2010. YL advised several options were currently being investigated in various areas, however, no update has been provided to date.

In the interests of staff and members safety, the Board of Management meeting scheduled for 9th December 2010 was cancelled. Any items that could not be remitted to the next meeting would be reviewed by Office Bearers and homologated in January.

7. Regional Manager's Report

Windows & Doors (McLeods) – working to Year 3 of programme

 Quality of work remains good in both areas. Positive feedback has been received from tenants.

SP asked if the Association had obtained a schedule for the windows and doors programme. YL advised the schedule is expected to be available to area teams in February and will be in a position to advise tenants following receipt of this information. The information is based on the stock condition survey undertaken by Argyll & Bute Council prior to transfer along with ACHA's survey.

Heating & Rewiring - British Gas (New Heating) Ltd

- New Contractor appointed British Gas (New Heating) Ltd
- Work is due to commence January 2011
- Properties are currently being identified by staff for heating and rewire upgrades.

Kitchen & Bathrooms (Connaught/Lovell) - working to Year 3 of

programme

 Working in both Mid Argyll and Kintyre. Work has been to a fairly good standard with relatively few complaints received.

JM enquired if ACHA identified timescales with Lovell's management following the administration of Connaught. YL confirmed we are ahead of schedule with this programme.

SMacK enquired if the contract is due to be completed. YL advised there are still areas due to be completed, however, we are ahead of schedule in terms of this programme.

Roof & Roughcast -

 Pre—start meetings have taken place for the roof works at Bridge Terrace, Furnace; Lochgair Place, Tarbert & Union Place, Lochgilphead with work due to commence.

Site Supervisor -

- Lachie Wood, Site Supervisor for Mid Argyll & Kintyre has been successful in obtaining a full time permanent position as Property Services Officer for Mid Argyll
- The Board have been asked to approve funding for the post of Site Supervisor for a further year. If approved, the vacant post will be advertised.

Painting

- Area teams have completed pre-painter repairs surveys and quotes have been received
- Pre-painter repair work is due to be issued

Close Painting

- Issues remain with Owner Occupiers participating in scheme
- Moving onto closes identified for painting in future years

JM stated he was surprised at Owner Occupiers not agreeing to works. YL advised that everyone has a shared responsibility and that this work would be rechargeable. Unless classed as an emergency repair, ACHA cannot undertake work without prior approval from Owner Occupiers. MMacA commented there have been a number of issues in terms of ACHA's proposals being carried out due to Owner Occupier agreement as this has affected several projects. This has been as a result of the content within title deeds following the sale of properties.

Phase 2 – Park Square

Matthew MacAulay, Regeneration Manager will provide members with a comprehensive update under Agenda Item 12.1

Millknowe Terrace

- Contractor John Brown (Strone) Ltd, Dunoon
- Work is progressing on site

MMacA advised contractors are on site and are 3 months into the programme. It has been identified there is an issue following a survey to determine the deterioration of the properties due to rot and therefore

could be slightly behind schedule due to the challenges of this revelation. A further constructor survey is due to be undertaken. MMacA confirmed a contingency element is always contained within contracts for unforeseen circumstances.

SP suggested recording issues and progress for historical purposes. MMacA confirmed photographic evidence would be taken at different stages throughout the project.

MMacA

Dalaruan Street

No update

Duncholgan

Road surface has been completed and ditches maintained.

YL commented this has made a significant difference for the residents at Duncholgan.

JM commented that due to the severe weather conditions this could impact on the newly tarred road.

Sheltered Housing

- Care Commission Inspection is scheduled for January 2011
- Self Assessment Questionnaire has been drafted and is due to be submitted by the end of the week
- Following the Self Assessment Questionnaire submission, inspectors will be on site in January. This is likely to include two Mid Argyll complexes but will be confirmed once known
- Sheltered housing tenants, relatives and carers are likely to be asked their views on ACHA's services and will be considered in the outcome

Allotment Policy & Procedure

- Area Committee members consulted
- Approved by Policy Sub Committee November 2011
- YL thanked Committee members who provided valuable comments
- Anticipated 8 allotments will be ready for let by February/March 2011

YL suggested a site visit is organised for the next meeting arranged in Campbeltown.

Should an open day be planned, Area Committee members would be involved in arrangements.

Development of Customer Service Centre

- In November, the Board approved the development of a Customer Service Centre (CSC)
- Telephone income collection service to be delivered from CSC from April 2011. The Centre is currently based in Sinclair Street, Helensburgh
- Allpay will be implemented from April 2011 this will allow for a further 120 plus locations for tenants and customers to pay, e.g. post offices, Co-ops and other local shops.
- Rent cards will cease with credit card style cards developed
- Consultation during 2011 will commence regarding future of rent

JS

collection at Area Offices

SP asked if ACHA provide an online payment service. YL confirmed ACHA went live with an online payment service in November 2010 which has proved advantageous for customers. A press release is due to be published. ACHA have also encouraged direct debit payments with promotion in the tenants newsletter and in area offices. Participants are entered into an annual prize draw to win a £100 voucher.

SMacK enquired as to the level of direct debit payments. JS advised these vary throughout all areas, however, Mid Argyll receive approximately £20,000 a month by direct debit with Kintyre just under £10,000. Direct debits have increased throughout the year for Mid Argyll & Kintyre.

Adverse Weather

- Leaflets being issued to tenants
- Posters displayed in offices
- Vulnerable tenants have been contacted by area teams
- Gritting of high priority areas has commenced. ACHA do not have sole responsibility or the resource to carry out gritting throughout all areas
- The In House Repairs Team staff have been proactive in assisting with gritting in some areas.

JM congratulated ACHA for their efforts during the severe weather conditions.

Promotion of Tenants Contents Insurance

- Leaflets highlighting potential damage & costs:
 - £67,000 worth of damage to 28 ACHA tenants homes last year
 - Only 4 had insurance to cover the loss of personal belongings
- Promotion of ACHA's insurance underway
 - Tenants asked if they have insurance when reporting repairs
 - Insurance Policy and information leaflets being issued
- ACHA offers a very competitive insurance policy for tenants for as little as 86p per week (57p per week for those over 60)

SMacK asked if ACHA can make it a requirement for all tenants to obtain insurance cover. YL advised it is the responsibility of tenants to ensure they have adequate cover, this is not a requirement of their lease, however, we strongly recommend tenants obtain contents insurance for their homes.

Grounds Maintenance Consultation

- Tenants & Owners written to early November advising of proposed changes to Ground Maintenance for 2011
- Initial letter unclear that this was a consultation process
- Further letter issued this week advising following:
 - ACHA not necessarily the sole owner of many of the areas of land
 - Some currently maintained areas are the responsibility of tenants under their tenancy agreement

- Making it clear that this is a consultation exercise and comments/views welcome prior to decisions being taken
- The Proposed changes are aimed at ensuring there is a consistency of services
- There are a number of ways in which tenants and owners can provide comments on the proposals by:
 - Contacting their local office direct
 - Ask for a home visit
 - Complete the tear off slip attached to the letter
 - Email comments to GMConsultation@acha.co.uk
 - Complete the Grounds Maintenance Consultation survey at www.acha.co.uk
- The consultation period has been extended until 14th January 2011. SP requested clarification on the aim of the exercise. YL explained that ACHA do not solely own some areas and therefore the current grounds maintenance service is paid by tenants' rents. Where we are not the majority owner, we are proposing reducing or ceasing this service.

SP asked if we would be inviting owners to join a payment scheme. YL advised the ownership is unclear and will have to await confirmation from title deeds. Until confirmed, the consultation will propose reducing/ceasing services. YL commented staff within the factoring section are working extremely hard to identify land ownership.

JM raised concerns in regards to the appearance of areas should we cease services from certain areas. YL invited comments from members to the proposals and advised plans were available within area offices for viewing.

ALL

Board of Management Development Action Plan

- Development Plan approved at November Board meeting
- Actions for Chair of Area Committees:
 - Establish Working Group to review relationship between Board and Area Committees
 - Invite Area Committee members to attend and observe Board meetings. YL encouraged members to attend but advised this would be on an observatory capacity as members could not partake in the meeting.
 - What works and what doesn't work and any changes required. Members to pass comments to YL or JS.

ALL

Strategic Planning Days 2011 -

- Area Committee members are invited to attend 3rd March 2011
- The format of the day will be agreed by the Board and thereafter members will be advised in writing with the agenda.

YL advised the aim of the strategic planning days is to focus on organisational priorities.

SMacK commented only 1 Area Committee member attended the strategic planning days in 2010 with high running costs to be covered by the Association.

More Than Housing Play Areas

- It was previously reported the play park at High Bank Park, Lochgilphead was scheduled for an upgrade. Also included for an upgrade is the play park at Millers Park, Saddell.
- Specification will ask for the design Team to consider:
 - up to 12year olds
 - Accessibility and use for disabilities will be recommended
 - Bench seat or picnic table recommended

SP asked if the accessibility for disabled not be a requirement for the upgrade. YL advised the specification states 'accessibility and use for disabilities be accommodated where possible'.

MMacA confirmed tenders have been returned with work due to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Housing Bill

• No update as covered in Chair's report (agenda item 6)

8. Estate Management Action Plans

YL explained to members the area team were due to provide further information relating to the Estate Management Action Plan for the property at Smith Drive, Campbeltown presented on 6th October 2010. YL apologised on behalf of the area team as this information was not provided in time for the meeting and would therefore have to be carried forward to the next meeting.

9. Review of Key Performance Indicators

The exception report for the period April 2010 – end October 2010 was circulated prior to the meeting.

YL discussed the key areas of the report. It was noted 15 targets had been met, with 5 objectives not met. However, YL advised void repairs (Kintyre) was outwith target due to 1 job causing significant impact. The further 4 objectives not meeting target are a rolling target and it is envisaged the annual target will be met by the end of the year. Staff continue to maintain a high performance standard in both Mid Argyll & Kintyre.

The bi-monthly FISH Welfare Rights Project update report was circulated prior to the meeting. At the time of writing the report, since becoming operational in March 2010, ACHA along with two partner associations have dealt with 624 tenants with a gain of over £660,000.

10. Tenants Panel Minutes (17th August and 19th October 2010)

The minutes from the Tenants Panel meeting held on 17th August and 19th October 2010, were circulated prior to the meeting. No issues

	raised.	
11.	Health & Safety Committee Minutes (17 th August 2010)	
	The minutes from the Health & Safety Committee meeting held on 17 th August 2010, were circulated prior to the meeting. No issues raised.	
12.	12.1 Presentation on Park Square, Campbeltown Regeneration	
	MMacA provided the Committee with a presentation in relation to the progress of phase 2 at Park Square, Campbeltown.	
	JM commented there is no visual difference between slate and concrete tiles and recommended costs could be minimised. MMacA explained there were various options in terms of finishes. CHORD want to make certain the appearance of the site is enhanced and have therefore contributed £800,000 to ensure this is achieved. The visual quality is important within this prominent location. However, the specification may be examined to align budgets.	
	SP questioned how cleaning would be managed within the development. YL advised service charges would be applied for common area cleaning, however, tenants would be responsible for their own cleaning.	
	SP suggested people with disabilities are able to view the properties prior to completing to ensure the buildings are adequate and suitable for their needs. YL confirmed specially adapted properties would be included in the development. Staff will identify disabled applicants with high needs early in the process to ensure the specification meets all required needs.	
	12.2 Naming of Park Square, Campbeltown YL advised the Board of Management agreed that they would seek recommendations from Area Committees on the naming of developments before making a decision.	
	Members were asked to consider ideas on how we would consult with the local community in regards to the naming of the new development at the former Park Square site. Previously, the Community Council of Ardrishaig was requested to submit	
	name ideas for the MacMillan Court development.	
	SP suggested liaising with Aileen McLellan, Town Centre Manager as she has worked on several projects to promote Campbeltown. YL agreed this would be considered.	
	JM suggested the naming of Park Square should be in recognition of a significant event or person that has contributed to the area at the time. The majority of members did not agree with this suggestion as it was believed this should be a community decision.	

All members agreed to involve the whole community on the names for the development.

YL advised further guidance will be issued with ideas considered by ACHA's Senior Management Team thereafter.

13. Garden In Bloom

The Garden In Bloom report was circulated prior to the meeting.

The key points included in the report:

- At the previous meeting it was recommended the closing date for applications be brought forward to end June 2011
- Area Committee members will judge shortlisted gardens
- 3 prizes will be awarded 1st £50 & engraved vase; 2nd £30, 3rd £20
- A further competition will be organised for children 16 years and under. The winner will receive a £25 voucher.
- Total cost from Estate Management Action Plan Budget will be approximately £150 per area.

All members approved the funding for this competition.

14. Digital UK Competition

To raise the awareness of the Digital Switchover, ACHA received a number of mascots from Digital UK. A small colouring in competition for children of our tenants was implemented in the area offices. Area Committee members were asked to judge the best application with the winner receiving a mascot. A total of 5 applications were received. It was agreed each nominee would receive a mascot.

15. Estate Management Action Plans – Future Funding

A report on the future funding of Estate Management Action Plans was circulated prior to the meeting. The report recommended that we reduce the Estate Management Fund for 2011/12.

At present, a percentage of the General Repairs & Maintenance budget is set aside each year to fund our Estate Management Action Plans.

It has been recommended approximately £75,000 be top sliced from the General Repairs & Maintenance budget. This will be split according to stock size across the areas.

In terms of Mid Argyll this would be estimated at £8,800 and Kintyre £12,500. This budget is to be approved by the Finance & Audit Committee.

Currently, we envisage the spend this year will be approximately £8,000 for Mid Argyll and £5,500 in Kintyre, both significant budgets illustrating an underspend (£9,000 underspend for Mid Argyll and £13,500 underspend in Kintyre).

	All members approved the proposal to reduce the Estate Management Action Fund for 2011/12.	
16.	Governance Training	
	Members were reminded Governance training would be carried out at the next Area Committee meeting. Members should ensure to bring their Governance manuals as these will be discussed.	
12.	AOCB	
	The recently published annual report has been issued to all tenants. JS to issue report to Independent members.	JS
	Following the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Board of Management, a list of current members were circulated to Area Committee members. SMacK reiterated this is not a public document and is for the use of Area Committee members only. Third parties requesting information should be directed to the registered office in Ardrishaig.	
	SMacK also reminded members that all business content, including Board of Management papers, should not be disclosed and was for the information of Area Committee members only.	
	YL advised members that the Area Committee AGM's will be required to be held earlier from 2011, with anticipated dates in June or July. This is due to the recent rule change that allows Independent members to stand as Chairperson. Therefore, all Chairs must be in place prior to the Board of Management AGM process beginning. In terms of the Mid Argyll & Kintyre Area Committee meetings, it has been further recommended that we alter our Committee meeting cycle to allow staff to present Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports in line with the proposed Board KPI timetable. Therefore, the Area Committee meetings would commence from March 2011 and remain bi-monthly, rather than bi-monthly from February. This will ensure the Area Committee receive the most up-to-date KPI information available in line with the information that is supplied to the Board of Management. All members approved the change of meeting cycle to align AGM and KPI processes.	
	JS to circulate updates from the Governing Body Manual. This includes the Schedule of Delegated Powers and Financial Regulations and the Association's Corporate/Strategic Plan 2010 – 2013. Members of the Board of Management will be issued updates from the PA to the Board of Management.	JS
	YL requested that all members read papers in advance of meetings and allow questions to be raised at the end of sessions.	ALL

1	3.	Date and Time of Next Meeting	
		JS to contact members with proposed meeting dates for 2011.	JS