

Argyll Community Housing Association

Board of Management Meeting

Thursday 16th November 2023 - Hybrid

Minute

Present:

Cathy Grant (Chair)
 Jim Milne (Vice Chair)
 Mark Irvine (Secretary)
 Ian McIntyre (Chair of Audit Committee)
 Councillor Jan Brown
 Mike Brown
 Esther Hughes
 Pat McVey
 Bruce Marshall
 Cllr Alastair Redman
 Betty Rhodick

Not in attendance

In Attendance:

Bruce West, Director of Finance & IT
 Colette Benham, Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services
 Fiona Campbell, Director of Assets & Sustainability
 Sandra McLeod, Director of Customer Experience
 Lesley Lindsay, PA to Board of Management (minute)

		To be actioned by 14/12/23
1.	Apologies Dan Hughes.	
2.	Minute of Previous Meeting – 5th October 2023 The Board of Management APPROVED the minute as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by: Mark Irvine Seconded by: Ian McIntyre	
3.	Matters Arising Page 2 – Item 2 – Tenant Satisfaction Feedback – <i>the Director of Customer Experience to develop an action plan and bring to a future meeting along with the full report.</i> To be covered under Item 12.	

	<p>Page 4 – Item 7 – Acquisition funding – <i>the Chief Executive to provide Bruce Marshall with further information.</i> Action outstanding</p> <p>Page 10 – Item 11 – Landlord Report – <i>the Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services to obtain different photos of the external insulation works or provide an explanation of the works carried out.</i> Action complete.</p> <p>Page 13 – Item 20 – the Director of Assets & Sustainability to look at ways to combine all ACHA properties into one map. The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised the action was being worked on.</p> <p>Page 14 – Item 23 – Salary Sacrifice Schemes – <i>the Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services to circulate the report considered by the Remuneration Committee and provide an update to the November Board meeting.</i> The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised the report considered by the Remuneration Committee had been circulated to Board members on 6th October 2023. Update report to be covered under Item 22.</p>	
4.	<p>Correspondence None</p>	
5.	<p>Minute of Audit Committee for Ratification The Chair of the Audit Committee provided a summary of the minute of the Audit Committee meeting held on 2nd August 2023.</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management RATIFIED the minute.</p>	
6.	<p>Declarations of Interest None</p>	
7.	<p>Chief Executive's Presentation The Director of Customer Experience delivered a presentation on behalf of the Chief Executive covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eton Avenue • Acquisitions/Buy Backs • Vanguard Update • Drumfork Court Project – Ukrainian Refugees • Rent Consultation • Salary Sacrifice • SHR Update • Transformation Programme • Dalintober • CIH Scottish Housing Awards 2023 • TIS National Excellence Awards 2023 <p>The Vice Chair asked if there were sufficient customers to fill the properties at Drumfork Court. The Director of Customer Experience advised the</p>	

<p>Association had been working closely with Argyll and Bute Council, who were confident there would be sufficient tenants for the properties.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall stated he had never been to see the properties at Drumfork Court but from photos and word of mouth he believed the properties had been in a poor state and questioned how they had been transformed in such a short space of time. The Director of Customer Experience advised the properties had been brought up to a good lettable standard following funding received from the Scottish Government. She added the external of the flats were not the most attractive but AHFA were carrying out some environmental work to improve the aesthetic. She stated the Ukrainian Refugee programme was a 3-year project but the long term future of the flats was unknown. She advised staff had been working tirelessly to ensure the flats were available to refugees as soon as possible. The Secretary stated the Community Centre at Drumfork Court was an excellent facility and would really help displaced families integrate enormously. The Chair of the Audit Committee stated Barnados had been in attendance at the TIS Conference and had explained that one of their initiatives was to allow furniture to move with tenants. The Director of Customer Experience advised if the tenants were to move out within one year, Argyll and Bute Council would replace the furniture but tenants would be eligible to take the furniture with them if they moved after the one year timeframe had elapsed.</p> <p>The Vice Chair asked if any formal feedback had been received from the Scottish Housing Regulator following their attendance at October's Board meeting. The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised no formal feedback had been received to date.</p> <p>The Vice Chair stated the launch of the transformation programme held on 15th November 2023 had been essential, positive and uplifting. The Director of Customer Experience advised from feedback she had received staff enjoyed the presentation and were pleased to be involved with the transformation programme which was a new experience for staff. The Chair added staff had been upbeat during the presentation. Pat McVey stated the presentation had been very positive and informative. He added it had helped him to understand the issues staff had.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall asked why the Association had stopped official openings. The Chair advised openings for new build properties had not stopped but there had not been an official opening for the new houses at Eton Avenue due to the specific needs of each of the families as explained by the Chief Executive at the October meeting.</p> <p>Mike Brown congratulated staff on the tremendous news on the void property turnarounds and asked why it had taken so long to get to that point. The Director of Customer Experience advised the right people had been involved in the process with front end staff being a huge part of the design and performance processes. Mike asked if the Association could learn from the Vanguard experience. The Director of Customer Experience advised the same process would be undertaken for repairs with staff from several departments, including AHFA.</p> <p>Pat McVey asked if the Association provided new tenants with information on local services. The Director of Customer Experience advised the Common Housing Register provided some, fairly basic information but front line staff</p>	
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	were looking into increasing the amount of information supplied at the beginning of the application process.	
8.	<p>Community Action Fund Applications</p> <p>1. Oban Festive Lights The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the award of £500.</p> <p>2. The Rockfield Centre The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the award of £432.</p>	
9.	<p>Property Disposal of 1 Dunallan House, Connel, Oban, PA37 1PH The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised the property was vacant and could not be let due to substantial external and internal investment required as highlighted at paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the report. She advised the estimated cost of the required works would likely be in excess of £230,000.</p> <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised financial evaluation had been undertaken and the Board were being asked to consider three options as set out in her report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do nothing 2. Undertake all necessary works 3. Dispose of the property <p>The Director of Asset & Sustainability took the meeting through the summary of each of the options and the costs associated.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the Association were in discussions with Argyll and Bute Council regarding potential use of the property for the Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP). The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised discussions had taken place but no decision had been received from Argyll and Bute Council. She further advised Argyll and Bute Council were due to consider a report in December. The Board were advised the overall decision would dependent upon grant funding from Argyll and Bute Council or the Scottish Government to upgrade the property.</p> <p>The Board of Management noted if the Council or partners did not wish to proceed, prior approval of the disposal would streamline the process.</p> <p>Mike Brown requested that any future disposal requests contain photographs as it made the decision making process easier.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the disposal of 1 Dunallan House, Connel on the proviso permission is obtained from Argyll and Bute Council to do so under the clawback agreement.</p> <p>The approval was also given with the caveat that Argyll and Bute Council did not wish to use the property for the HSCP.</p>	
10.	<p>Property Disposal of flats 1, 2 & 3 Thorncliff, Blairmore, Cowal, PA23 8TG The Director of Asset & Sustainability advised there were currently three vacant properties within a block of four. She advised the property outwith</p>	

	<p>ACHA's ownership was privately owned.</p> <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised discussions had taken place with the private owner but following prolonged negotiations, officers were of the view that disposal of the properties was the only option.</p> <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised discussions had taken place with Argyll & Bute Council on whether the properties could be utilised for the HSCP but the Council had advised they were not interested in the properties at Blairmore.</p> <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability took the meeting through the financial impacts for each of the options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do nothing 2. Undertake all necessary works 3. Dispose of the properties <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability took the meeting through the extent of the works required and condition of the property as outlined in section 3 of her report. She further advised there was no demand for the properties and Blairmore was a low demand area.</p> <p>The Secretary asked if there was any potential risk of legal recourse from the owner. The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised there was no legal recourse to ACHA as officers had tried to pursue the works with the owner. She stated the Association was at greater risk if nothing was done.</p> <p>Bruce Marshall stated the properties had deteriorated over a number of years but commented they were in a lovely area and it was his hope they could be refurbished. The Director of Assets & Sustainability agreed and stated it would be good if a developer were to buy the properties.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the disposal of the flats at 1, 2 and 3 Thorncliff, Blairmore, on the proviso that permission is obtained from Argyll and Bute Council to do so under the clawback agreement.</p>	
11.	Confidential	
12.	<p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results and Action Plan</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience advised her report and appendices provided a detailed analysis following the Annual Satisfaction Survey and the action plan developed in response to the feedback received.</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience advised she had been working with staff to address key areas for improvement. She added that many of the areas contained within her action plan were already being progressed.</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience stated, as discussed earlier in the meeting, a review of the repairs process would commence shortly.</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience stated she understood why the level of dissatisfaction within the Gypsy/Traveller sites had occurred and an action plan had been developed to address the areas of dissatisfaction. The Chair of the Audit Committee advised an interesting presentation had been</p>	

	<p>delivered at the TIS Conference in relation to Gypsy/Traveller sites practice in Lanarkshire and asked whether similar could be introduced to ACHA's sites. The Director of Assets & Sustainability confirmed the Association were already looking at similar schemes where funding had been provided. She advised a consultation exercise was being carried out and ACHA would apply for funding as soon as it became available.</p> <p>The Secretary commented the survey had produced good outcomes and he looked forward to further improvements in the coming year. He also commented it would be interesting to discover if newer technology assisted with addressing damp and mould issues.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee stated the two areas he would be focussing in on would be repairs affordability and factoring.</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience advised she would provide a further annual update.</p> <p>The Board of Management NOTED the outcome/findings of the survey of tenants and residents carried out by STAR during August and September 2023 and NOTED the action plan developed responding to feedback received to address and improve services.</p>	
13.	<p>ACHA Annual Complaint Handling report 2022/23</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management unanimously APPROVED the Annual Complaint Handling Report 2022/23 be published on the Association's website.</p>	Colette Benham
14.	<p>Decision Under Urgency for Ratification – Approval to Recruit</p> <p>The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised an email had been circulated to Board members on 9th October 2023 seeking approval to recruit a connected person.</p> <p>She further advised that 11 of the 12 Board members had confirmed their approval and as a result the offer of contract was made.</p> <p>The Board of Management unanimously RATIFIED the Decision Under Urgency.</p>	
15.	<p>KPI Scorecard</p> <p>The Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services advised engagement work with staff had shown lower satisfaction rates when compared to the previous consultation. She advised a further survey would be undertaken following completion of the transformation programme.</p> <p>The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised her department would be keeping a close eye on non-emergency repairs.</p> <p>The Director of Customer Experience advised staff would be conducting rent arrears visits outwith the usual office hours to assist tenants.</p> <p>There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the content of the KPI Scorecard and the exception updates provided by Directors.</p>	
16.	ACHA Management Accounts September 2023	

	There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the ACHA Management Accounts to 30 th September 2023.	
17.	AHFA Management Accounts September 2023 The Director of Finance & IT took the meeting through the key areas of his report. There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED the AHFA Management Accounts to 30 th September 2023.	
18.	Confidential	
19.	Confidential	
20.	Investment, Regeneration & Warm Homes Update The Director of Assets & Sustainability took the meeting through her report highlighting the key areas. Mike Brown stated there was a significant overspend showing against the Warm Homes budget line. The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised grant funding of around £450k was awaited which would off-set the overspend. The Board of Management NOTED progress of the Investment and Warm Homes programmes, NOTED that spend at the end of November 2023 was £4,771,216.99 against a budget of £6,704,000.00, NOTED progress of the current development programme, NOTED all proposed developments complied with acquisition and capital appraisal policies agreed by the Board of Management and NOTED progress towards appointing Housing Development Consultants.	
21.	Damp, Mould & Condensation Update The Director of Assets & Sustainability advised her report was to provide assurance to the Board of Management that the Association were robustly dealing with damp, mould and condensation. She took the meeting through her report covering; progress to date, customer communications, turning insight into action, specialist equipment and training, dampness, mould and condensation policy and next steps. The Chair of the Audit Committee advised Damp, Mould and Condensation had been raised during the TIS Conference and stated he had been heartened with ACHA's progress and congratulated all staff involved. The Board of Management NOTED progress in relation to Damp, Mould and Condensation, NOTED the proposals for the purchase of essential equipment and training and NOTED content of the action plan.	
22.	Confidential	
23.	Customer Involvement Strategy – Status Update There were no questions and the Board of Management NOTED progress made in relation to developing the Customer Involvement Strategy and NOTED the timeline for completion.	
24.	Cancelled Memberships The Board of Management NOTED the cancellation of one share membership. The Board of Management NOTED the membership total as at 6 th November 2023 of 179.	

25.	Confidential	
26.	<p>Cyber and Fraud Centre Secure Leaders</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit Committee advised he had attended a session run by the Cyber and Fraud Centre Scotland on 29th August 2023. He advised a copy of the presentation delivered at the event had been included in the Board pack. Mike Brown stated some universities had been victims of a cyber-security breach. The Board of Management AGREED cyber security was a huge risk to all and required to be addressed very seriously.</p>	
27.	<p>A.O.C.B.</p> <p>March 2024 Meeting</p> <p>The Chair advised the Board were required to agree the meeting format for the March meeting. Cllr Redman stated his preference was for hybrid meetings. The Board of Management unanimously AGREED the March 2024 meeting would be held virtually/hybrid.</p> <p>Policy Committee</p> <p>The Vice Chair stated the Policy Committee currently only had 3 members, which was the required number for a quorum. He asked if any Board members would like to volunteer to join the Policy Committee, he advised they met four times per year, with the next meeting scheduled to be held on Monday 20th November 2023. He advised the Board of the items due to be covered at the meeting to give a flavour of the content of meetings. He asked that if anyone wished to volunteer they should contact Careen Hendry.</p>	
28.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Thursday 14th December 2023, 10.00am – Hybrid</p>	