



## OBAN, LORN & THE ISLES AREA COMMITTEE

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**3pm**

**Menzies House, Oban**

### **Present**

Mr George Farquhar **Chair** (GF)

Mr Alister MacIntyre **Vice Chair** (AMI)

Mrs Lorraine Anne Drysdale (LD)

Mr Irvine Waugh (IW)

Ms Janet MacIntosh (JMI)

Iona MacPhail, Regional Manger (IMP)

Collette Benham – Director Human Resources & Corporate Services (CB)

Amanda MacKenzie – Area Administration Officer (AMK)

1.	<b>Apologies</b>  Councillor Roddy McCuish, Mr Andy Birnie	Action
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010</b>  Were approved as an accurate record. Proposed LAD, seconded AMI  <b>Matters Arising –</b> None	
3.	<b>Notes of Interest in any Matters Arising by Area Committee Members</b>  No conflict of interest	
4.	<b>Correspondence</b>  AMK advised there has been a Governing Manual update. Papers were	

	circulated for non-Board Members.	
5.	<p><b>Chairs Report</b></p> <p>GF advised of Board Update-</p> <p>CEO Presentation – Alastair briefed the Board on the recent meeting with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). Matters discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Progress with SHQS</li> <li>○ In house repairs team</li> <li>○ Development of Customer Service Centre</li> <li>○ Business plan</li> <li>○ ACHA contracts with the Scottish Govt</li> <li>○ The new regulatory regime following the introduction of the Housing Scotland Act 2010</li> <li>○ The social housing charter.</li> </ul> <p>Alastair also briefed the Board on the challenges faced for the future of our New Build programme in light of reduced funding being available</p> <p><u>FISH- welfare rights</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over one million pounds of additional income for ACHA tenants has been secured in less than one year.</li> </ul> <p><u>KPI reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Board member requested that additional numerical ( rather than percentage) information be provided within the KPI reports. Christine Johnston will develop this further.</li> </ul> <p><u>Ground Maintenance consultation results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board approved the changes to the Grounds maintenance contract for the coming year.</li> </ul> <p><u>Tenant Satisfaction Survey results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board approved an action plan to address the issues from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey.</li> </ul> <p><u>Care Commission Inspection report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Care commission carried out their regulatory inspection of our Sheltered Housing Service in January of this year. We are pleased to announce that ACHA have been graded as “very good” – a grade 5. ( the highest grade is “excellent” –grade 6)</li> </ul> <p><u>Revised conflict of interest , code of conduct and confidentiality guidance note</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The afore mentioned documents have been updated to help provide clarification to Board and Area Committee members on their responsibilities. A fuller discussion on the documents will take place at the Policy Committee.</li> </ul> <p>Date of next Board meeting:- 14<sup>th</sup> April</p>	
6.	<p><b>Tenants Panel Minutes</b></p> <p>Minutes noted, no comments</p>	

7.	<b>Health &amp; Safety Minutes</b>  Item 4 – Healthy Working Lives: CB further updated members with regards to ACHA working towards the Bronze Award. CB advised that ACHA are currently finalising action plans to have fruit supplied in offices for staff, although there are budget constraints. CB further advised that staff are participating in Fruity Friday, where there is a dress down day with staff wearing yellow and fruit being purchased to raise funds for charity.	
8.	<b>Rewiew &amp; Request of EMAP Projects</b>  EMAP proposal was submitted to members for OLI cups. Cups for Garden Competitions throughout various areas require engraving for the 2011 competition.  Oban in Bloom – competition carried out by Oban in Bloom for Oban only. Tenants are required to submit an entry form for ACHA's Tenants cup.  Dalmally – No entry form is required – all tenants are entered automatically – it was agreed that GF will accompany Alistair Cakebread for judging.  Salen and Bunessan, Isle of Mull and Islay – Alistair Cakebread carries out judging with local nominated person.  IMP advised proposal is for additional settlements to be included with prize giving linked into the Community such as Dalmally where the cup is presented at Dalmally Show. LAD will contact Appin Community Council to discuss proposal of presenting a cup at Appin Agricultural Show.  Members unanimously agreed proposals.	GF          LAD
9.	<b>Review of Key Performance Indicators</b>  IMP talked Members through the Year End Performance Figures. IMP advised page 2 contains the dense information which highlights numerous achievements throughout the year.  IMP highlighted the summary of performance comparisons for all areas: <b>Void Times –</b> Islay ranked first for Void times with an average void time of only 5 days. OLI average of 10 days with joint ranking of 2nd.  <b>Emergency Repairs On Target –</b> IMP advised that Islay's 96% is a significant improvement from last years figures. OLI 98.2%.  <b>Urgent Repairs On Target –</b> IMP advised that there is very little difference between each area and highlighted Islay's figures, advising again that this is a further significant	

	<p>improvement.</p> <p>IW advised there is a huge improvement with the installation of new windows to properties, but asked if the number of repairs are now escalating due to some issues with new kitchens and bathrooms. IMP advised that there are now a number of additional items to maintain, some old kitchens only had two units and have now been refitted with full kitchens. IMP advised warranty works are used for any faults with new kitchens etc. IMP advised that roof and roughcast are a real issue as the current programme can't support all the issues within Lorn and owners won't always agree to the works. AMI asked if grants were available for owners for the works, IMP advised that there is a private owner officer within the Council. JMI advised weather conditions play a huge part in the decay and further advised of an incident recently on Tiree, where all the bins toppled creating a huge mess. JMI advised Kevin Brown's employees were working on the roof of a nearby property and cleaned up everything without being asked – JMI advised she was very impressed. LAD advised of an issue at Kirkton which was a trip hazard, LAD advised it was reported on the Monday and fixed on the Thursday.</p> <p><b>Repairs Satisfaction –</b> IMP highlighted OLI's 97.8% and advised that although third, this is very high level of customer satisfaction and up by 2%. JMI advised that tenants are very happy in Tiree particularly with the speed in which repairs are carried out. IMP advised that there has been an improvement on last years figures for all repairs categories which are a result of a lot of good work by staff.</p> <p><b>Rent Arrears Percentage –</b> Islay ranked first with an excellent year end figure of 0.71%. OLI ranked third also with an excellent figure of 1.53% - both areas being well below the target of 2.5%</p> <p><b>Void Turnover –</b> IMP advised that the number of void properties returned is reducing annually and advised this is having a large impact on the waiting lists. IMP compared OLI's figures with Cowal who have also had reduced turnover by 17 properties. IMP further advised that Lomond who have a high level of voids normally, has dropped by 37 properties from last years figures. IMP advised that if the allocations process allowed more for the option of selecting transfer applicants for properties, this could maximise the list, turning one void property into three. IMP further advised that the current quota system of 25% of properties to transfers does not allow for this. JMI raised a property at Rudha Cottages which she believes to have been empty for a number of months. IMP advised she would look into and advise although she will be unable to discuss individual applications.</p>	IMP
10.	<p><b>Local Report</b></p> <p>IMP provided a presentation on the Local Report:</p>	

**Press Coverage –**

IMP showed members previous press coverage including an informative release advising readers about the reality of the housing crisis, with 3,500 families and single people on the waiting list for housing and cuts to grants available for building new properties. A further press release featured Irene Woodrow, Housing Officer in Islay where funds are not available to build new homes on land that is available. Shelter Scotland subsequently backed up calls for housing investment through their own press release. IMP advised that the Board and Alastair MacGregor are focusing on the wider political scene to be a strong voice throughout Argyll.

**Supporting People Cuts –**

Recent press release - IMP further advised that Rooftops who currently have 3, three bedroom flats and 2 one bed flats submitted a request to change one room into an office as they are paying a commercial rent for their current office accommodation. This request was refused due to change of use. IMP further advised that this would not have been the right message to convey in the current climate for demand of housing, where there are over 800 applicants on the waiting list for Lorn alone.

ACHA provided and maintain units, fridges and cookers in the rooftop flats which result in service charges. A request was submitted for a reduction in these charges which IMP refused and an appeal has now been submitted to Christine Johnston.

**Colonsay Terrace –**

Press release 'Volunteers tackle junk woodland in Soroba'. IMP advised that the area is alongside an infants playarea where there had been ongoing problems with people drinking. IMP showed further pictures of the area which showed the extent of the clearance.

**Playpark Upgrades –**

IMP detailed the upgrades to various playparks through OLI and advised each playpark is inspected weekly.

**Red Nose Day –**

IMP provided a picture of local staff participating in red nose day. Staff wore red and raised money for the charity.

**Soroba Recycling –**

IMP showed the recent press release with pictures of the new recycling bins which are on lockable coasters so they can be moved to different locations. Feedback received from residents in Soroba has been very positive.

**Contact Details –**

IMP advised the contact phone numbers for all offices have changed and are routed through a server in Lochgilphead – press releases were issued to all local papers. IMP advised that staff can phone customers back as calls are no longer charged at local rate. IMP advised the new system has

	<p>a number of benefits including the option to video conference from your desk, instant messaging and conference calls.</p> <p><b>Care Commission Inspection–</b> IMP advised of the recent Care Commission Inspection, where comments received included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⊙ Quality of Care and Support Very Good</li><li>⊙ Quality of Staffing Very Good”</li></ul> <p>IMP advised this was an excellent result and well done to all staff involved. IMP further advised that full copies of the report are available.</p> <p><b>Painting Programme –</b> Pictures were provided of properties that have been painted, including properties on Soroba Road – IMP advised the painting programme is very large.</p> <p><b>Housing Benefit Service Charge Backdate –</b> IMP advised that service charges for sheltered accommodation has finally been determined by Argyll &amp; Bute Council and resulted in £8433.14 being backdated to tenants in Lorn alone. IMP advised a number of tenants must have been in financial hardship during this time and it’s good to refund them money that they’ve paid.</p> <p><b>Fish Project –</b> IMP advised the Fish Project has now reached £1 million pounds in unclaimed benefits for tenants and received Government best practice recognition. Debt Advice is now available for tenants and staff are offering and making referrals where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Community Action Funds –</b> IMP advised the following groups have received funding through the Community Action Fund:</p> <table><tr><td>⊙ Oban Phoenix Cinema</td><td>£300</td></tr><tr><td>⊙ North West Mull Community Woodland Ltd</td><td>£300</td></tr><tr><td>⊙ Islay and Jura Dolphins</td><td>£300</td></tr><tr><td>⊙ Argyll Couple Counselling</td><td>£150</td></tr><tr><td>⊙ Friends of Oban Hospice Committee</td><td>£50</td></tr></table> <p>IMP further advised that if ACHA obtain Charitable Status, funds could only be made available to charities, although a subsidiary company could continue with donations.</p>	⊙ Oban Phoenix Cinema	£300	⊙ North West Mull Community Woodland Ltd	£300	⊙ Islay and Jura Dolphins	£300	⊙ Argyll Couple Counselling	£150	⊙ Friends of Oban Hospice Committee	£50	
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11.	<p><b>AGM Arrangements</b></p> <p>Members present agreed the date of the 2011 AGM will be Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of July at 2pm, held in Menzies House. AMK will arrange for Committee Members to be advised who should stand down.</p>	AMK										
12.	<p><b>Attendance at Local Shows</b></p> <p>A list of local shows was provided for Members present. IMP suggested</p>											

	<p>ACHA should continue with a presence at the Islay show as the whole community closes and to not be present would be to separate ourselves from the community.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the benefits of attending shows, particularly in areas that would require staff to work overtime, incurring additional costs to ACHA – IMP suggested a rolling programme. LAD advised she believed it would not be worthwhile attending Appin show which is primarily a farming event.</p> <p>Members present agreed that a presence should be at Islay and Salen shows which are both on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August. It was also agreed that there should be a presence at Dalmally show which is on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> of September – GF will attend and will make enquires for costs to inform AMK.</p>	GF
13.	<p><b>AOCB</b></p> <p><b>Chimney Sweeps –</b> IMP advised that 2 men are now employed with the In House Team through TUPE and will carry out the solid fuel contract. AMI asked if ACHA will be better off financially as a result of the changes – IMP replied that ACHA will have better control of jobs as well as having additional benefits such as the men will do additional works when not in the Solid Fuel schedules. IMP advised that extra disclosures are currently being sought to allow for accommodation in ACHA sheltered Housing guest rooms. IMP advised Lomond and Bute have been completed, the programme currently in Mid Argyll and Lorn.</p> <p><b>Summer Trip –</b> IMP advised that the Area Committee Members have now been to Mull, Tiree and North Lorn and suggested Islay as the 2011 tour. IMP further advised that members are making decisions on a number of topics where they may not be too familiar with areas, particularly as there is no representative on the Committee from Islay, and suggested a tour of Islay may be of great benefit.</p> <p>IMP further advised that we would be unable to arrange for a day trip, so the tour would involve an overnight stay in Islay. It was agreed that as a number of members were not present, AMK will look into provisionally making arrangements and include details in writing to members. It was agreed that Septembers meeting could be moved back to the end of August where it is hoped there will be slightly better weather – provisionally looking at Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup>.</p>	AMK
11.	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Members present agreed that a further meeting prior the the AGM to be</p>	

	held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> of July would ensure that the number of meetings held between AGM's would be correct. Therefore it was agreed that the next Area Committee meeting will be Friday the 1 <sup>st</sup> of July from 10am with the AGM being in the afternoon commencing at 2pm.	
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