

Management Committee Meeting

Monday, 25th March 2024 6:30 pm

Hybrid meeting held at the BOILER HOUSE at 146 Drip Road Stirling and Via Microsoft Teams | Management Committee

Attendees

<p>Present</p> <p>Andrea Finkel-Gates (AFG) - <i>Joint Vice Chair</i></p> <p>Callum Wynd (CW)</p> <p>John Jenkins (JJ)</p> <p>By Teams</p> <p>Lyndsay Moffat (LM)</p>	<p>In attendance</p> <p>Sharon Brady-Wardrope*** (SBW) - <i>Director</i></p> <p>Fettes McDonald (FM)** – <i>Finance Agent</i></p> <p>Paul Fraser (PF)*** - <i>Senior Property Services Officer</i></p> <p>Samantha Buggy (SB)*** - <i>Head of Corporate Services</i></p> <p>Shona MacLeod (SM)** - <i>Finance Officer</i></p> <p>William Boale (WB)*** - <i>Housing Manager</i></p> <p>Callum MacDougall (CM)*** - Minutes</p>
<p>Apologies</p> <p>Ann Dickson (AD) – <i>Chair</i></p> <p>Abira Sarwar (AS)</p> <p>James Bryce (JB)</p> <p>Kenny Hutton (KH) - <i>Joint Vice Chair</i></p> <p>Priscilla Maramba (PM)</p> <p>Cllr Gerry McGarvey (GM)</p>	<p>*Comment made on Decision Time (DT)</p> <p>**Items 1 – 7.2 Only</p> <p>***Excluding Item 5.2 only</p>

Management Committee 25/03/2024

1 Chair's Statement

Purpose - For Information

In KH's absence, AFG Chaired the meeting which was agreed by all present committee members.

As acting Chair, AFG welcomed all the committee and staff to the meeting.

2 Apologies

Purpose - For Information

Ann Dickson
Abira Sarwar
James Bryce
Kenny Hutton
Priscila Maramba
Cllr Gerry McGarvey

3 Declaration of Interest

Purpose - For Information

Minute by Callum MacDougall

None.

4.1 Management Committee 26 February 2024 - Draft

Purpose - For Approval

A number of corrections to the minutes were noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the changes made from the notes by Committee members on DT, these minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Decision: Approved

4.2 Confidential Minute of Management Committee 26th February 2024 - Draft

Purpose - For Approval

There was no correction made by committee members to this minute on Decision Time (DT). This minute were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Decision: Approved

4.3 Unconfirmed Minute of Audit and Risk Sub Committee Meeting 12th February 2024 - Draft

Purpose - For Information

A number of corrections to the minutes were noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the changes made from the notes by Committee members on DT, these minutes were noted

Decision: Noted

4.4 Unconfirmed Minute of Staffing Sub Committee Meeting 18 March 2024 - Draft

Purpose - For Information

A number of corrections to the minutes were noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the changes made from the notes by Committee members on DT, these minutes were noted

Decision: Noted

5.1 Equalities Policy

Purpose - For Information

The MC noted the referral from the Staffing Sub Committee (SSC) regarding the newly approved Equalities Policy.

Decision: Noted

5.2 Employers Ballot (Confidential)

Purpose - For Approval

This agenda item was moved to the end of the meeting due to it being confidential. Just before this item was discussed, all staff left the meeting so that the MC members could discuss.

A separate confidential minute of this item will be taken and provided by the Chair

6.1 Allocations Paper – Cambusbarron Letting Plan & Refugee Allocations

Purpose - For Approval

WB presented this report to MC which outlined the draft Allocations Letting Plan for Cambusbarron and was for information only. Additionally presented was the Management Transfer for four properties as part of the Scottish Government's moving on and re-entry policy for Ukrainian Refugees, which required approval from MC.

*JJ asked if these demand figures are just from our Housing Lists, or do they reflect Stirling Council's (SC) list too. SBW explained that these are our figures but had previously checked with SC for duplication which will be done again nearer the time for a more accurate list.

*JJ asked if we could ensure that our own tenants, presently in properties too large for their needs, are given priority, particularly where they are paying full rent. This could provide an opportunity to alleviate financial hardship for our tenants and also free up a larger property. WB

noted that this is an area we analyse currently and will take into consideration when allocating through the Allocations Policy.

A number of comments were noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the changes made from the notes by Committee members on DT, this report was noted and approved by MC.

As there was no further comments or questions in relation to this item the MC gave approval to allocate 4 properties for Ukrainian Refugees.

Decision: Approved

The MC also noted the lettings plan for Cambusbarron is in line with our allocation policy.

Decision: Noted

6.2 Net Zero Modelling

Purpose - For Information

PF presented this report to MC which outlined the outcome of the energy efficiency modelling exercise to give context to the investment required to achieve higher efficiency standard for our stock.

*AFG highlighted that landlords who are already running air source heat pumps have stated that the maintenance costs are significantly higher too. Do these quotes also include the fabric work that would be needed to each property to ensure that the tenants using an air source heat pump would not be sent deeper into fuel poverty due to the increased costs associated with using them in less than ideal conditions e.g. the fabric of the home and required behaviour change from the tenants. SBW explained that given the age and construction type of our properties there is no significant requirement for fabric improvements i.e. external wall insulation. Loft top up already done. The only additional item could be triple glazing which would be done as planned and would attract an additional cost.

AFG noted that it is positive to see that we are discussing all this information right now even though we don't need to act on it right away. Always helpful to keep this on our radar and continue discussions before we have to action any significant changes.

CW asked if there is any available funding or grants for this just now. PF explained that currently there is none but a lot of that is in relation to the air source heat pumps but this might change later in the future.

SBW mentioned that SM and FM have done sensitivity checks in relation to this to try and get an idea of the future costs. It is very costly overall. SBW explained that the feedback we are getting back from tenants is that they are not overly keen on having air source heat pumps. The feelings on this are very mixed and we really need to make sure that we are helping our tenants as much as possible, helping them save money on fuel rather than increasing the pressures that follow the ongoing issues of fuel poverty.

SBW noted that there is still further analysis to be done on this which will be costly again.

In relation to district heating, JJ highlighted the importance of the geographic context of our stock, in providing potential economies of scale. Noting that we need to think about the major areas affected by this. SBW added that in regard to matters or issues relating to certain areas, for example the Raploch, the local authority has priority over these things like heating etc.

AFG informed committee and staff that Fife's Council have investigated into the Methil Hydrogen Heating Project which could be another option. SBW noted this and said we can source further information relating to this and feed back to committee at a later date along with information regarding the Database System.

The MC noted this report on the outcome of the energy efficiency modelling exercise and the investment required to achieve higher efficiency standard for our stock.

Decision: Noted

7.1 30-year Budget

Purpose - For Approval

SM presented this report to the MC which outlined the Final 30 Year Financial Projections.

FM also noted several points, some of which included inflation prices, rent information, planned maintenance costs, new builds and future projects costs along with the level of debt we will have and how much income we can pull in as well. All of which can be found within the covering paper.

JJ asked if we could confirm the relation to projections with Robertson's. SM explained that all costs are contained within the report and appendix 7.1(1) but not income in relation to this specific criterion.

The MC approved the Final 30 Year Financial Projections.

Decision: Noted

7.2 Insurance Renewal - Verbal Update

Purpose - For Information

SM provided the MC with a verbal update on this item regarding the insurance renewal.

The main point noted by SM was that after looking into the renewal of the insurance, there was an 87% increase in cost now at 64%. Stock valuation was set as an average previously but now is an accurate reflection of property size. Claim history has also been looked into.

SBW explained that we have 3 quotes in, one quote is three times more expensive than current cost and the other two which are also higher are giving a set price and not negotiating on it. They are commanding their own rates now.

AFG asked if we could go back to what was our current insurer but SBW explained that they have pulled out, so they are no longer an option.

SBW also advised that there was an £8000 increase if we choose a 1 year instead of 3 but there could be case of premiums going down in market and we are locked in and did go for the 3 years there was potential for increase to hold at 2.5% in year 2 and 3 if Forth's claims were less than 40% of cost.

JJ asked if there was an option to link up with the other RSL's in the Strathfor Alliance to help

with prices. SBW replied that this could be an option but from briefly looking into it already it doesn't have the desired impact we would hope for in regard to the price overall. The excess has been raised to 1K now also which isn't helping matters.

SBW added that she had met with Sally Thomas (ST) from Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and had a conversation about this topic and ST had also noted that this issue is happening across all sectors and is becoming a huge priority across the board too.

CW asked if we have discussed this topic with other Registered Social Landlord's (RSL) to help us gain an idea as to what others are opting for in a similar situation. SBW explained that we haven't approached other RSL's quite yet but we will look to do so.

AFG inquired when the insurance is due and SBW said it was due by the 1st of April.

The MC gave approval for the Director to have authority on the final decision for the insurance renewal on advisement that all avenues are exhausted before a conclusive choice is made.

Decision: Approved

~ At this point in the meeting, SM and FM were both thanked for their involvement in the meeting and then left. ~

8.1 Business Plan 2023/24 End of Year Review

Purpose - For Approval

SBW presented this paper which was to inform MC of the final year update on progress with our Business Delivery Plan for 2023/24. This report shows the progress on the business objectives and notes the update given on the work still to be achieved that will be carried into our delivery plan for 2024/25.

*AFG asked in relation to the termination of our factoring service for Castlevale, will this have an impact on our revenue. SBW explained that it is approximately £87 per year times three. We will also have a small reduction in the rental points for the tenant. However, the loss of income is offset by the reduction in costs for services such as landscaping and close cleaning.

WB noted that the Annual Tenant Visits is starting its testing phase now and explained briefly how this will work in the coming weeks. JJ asked if we will be tested out on a specific area first to see how it runs rather than just random tests which WB explained that we will use a close proximity area for the initial testing before then rolling it out to the rest of the areas and tenants.

The MC gave approval on the progress given in the year end update on the Delivery Plan.

Decision: Approved

8.2 Business Plan 2024/25 - Deferred

Purpose - For Approval

Deferred to allow discussion on year end update for delivery plan and for a summary document to be published for tenants.

8.3 Business Continuity Policy - Deferred

9.1 Director Report - Deferred

Purpose - For Information

No significant items to update therefore paper deferred to next meeting.

9.2 Notifiable Events

Purpose - For Approval

SBW outlined this report which was to update the Management Committee on current notifiable events and to inform the committee of any new notifiable events to comply with our obligations with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

SBW noted that there have been no new notifiable events in the period since 26th February 2024. Only an update on the current notifiable event that is the Structural Cracking at Raploch Site 8/9 which outlined in detail within this report.

SBW explained that we are exploring contractual options should we reach a position where Robertson Partnership Homes (RPH) believe they can proceed without our structural engineer's approval and we believe they cannot. A more detailed update will be provided to the Development Sub Committee (DSC) on the 16th of April 2024.

JJ asked what the view of the other parties is in regard to this. SBW said that everyone is aligned with ourselves and that we are the current driving force now behind this.

AFG asked whether this would affect us regarding the number of units we requested which SBW highlighted that currently, we have less effected units than Places for People or RPH but Ewan MacDonald will put a table together to show this which will go to the DSC first before then being referred to the MC to get sight of.

The MC approved the update on the current notifiable event that is the Structural Cracking at Raploch Site 8/9.

Decision: Approved

9.3 Scottish Housing Regulator Engagement Plan April 2024

Purpose - For Information

This agenda item is the updated Engagement plan which is due to be published on the 2nd of

April 2024 which includes the requirement to provide our Development Programme by the 31st of October 2024 which is additional to the plan previously issued in February 2024.

The MC noted this paper.

Decision: Noted

10.1 New Memberships/ Committee Recruitment – Update

Purpose - For Information

SB outlined this report which was to update MC on the recent recruitment exercise to appoint new committee members and the associated membership applications.

SB informed MC that as of the 18th of March 2024, we have received 10 notes of interest, 6 of whom have had/ due to have informal catch up with Director, and to date, 4 have already submitted applications. To proceed with the applications, the next step is to hold interviews which will be held by the Audit & Risk Sub Committee (ARSC) Chair and two committee members. SB noted that we would look to start the interviews week commencing 8th of April 2024 but will confirm available dates with AFG.

SBW briefly discussed the list of candidates, complementing the range of skills they all offer.

CW suggested encouraging the scrutiny panel to come along to one of the MC meetings as observers which SBW noted and said this is something we can look into and utilise.

*JJ asked if we can ask for feedback from the new members. Perhaps at the end of the induction, after 6 months and after 12 months. All with a view to improving and refining the process in future. SBW agreed with this and noted that this is something we plan on doing.

The MC noted the recent recruitment exercise to appoint new committee members and the associated membership applications.

Decision: Noted

11 Correspondence

Purpose - For Information

None.

12 Health & Safety - Deferred

Purpose - For Information

No H&S Issues to report.

Next quarterly report due in May 2024

13 AOCB

None.

14 Date of Next Meeting - 28th of May 2024

The date for the next Management Committee meeting on Tuesday the 28th of May 2024 was approved. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance this evening.