

# MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 25th June 2024 6:30 pm

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

## Attendees

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| <p><b>Present</b></p> <p>Ann Dickson (AD) – <i>Chair</i><br/>Kenny Hutton (KH) - <i>Joint Vice Chair (Acting Chair)</i><br/>Andrea Finkel-Gates (AFG) - <i>Joint Vice Chair</i></p> <p>Callum Wynd (CW)<br/>John Jenkins (JJ)<br/>Priscilla Maramba (PM)</p> <p>Andrea Mina (AM)**<br/>Hazel Robertson (HR)**<br/>Jillian Fearnside (JF)**<br/>Kerry Dawson (KD)**</p> <p><b>By Teams</b></p> <p>Lyndsay Moffat (LM)<br/>Abira Sarwar (AS)</p> | <p><b>In attendance</b></p> <p>Sharon Brady-Wardrope (SBW) - <i>Director</i></p> <p>Mareta Greig (MG) – <i>Head of Tenant Services</i><br/>Paul Fraser (PF)*** - <i>Senior Property Services Officer</i><br/>Samantha Buggy (SB) - <i>Head of Corporate Services</i><br/>Shona MacLeod (SM)*** - <i>Finance Officer</i><br/>William Boale (WB)*** - <i>Housing Manager</i></p> <p>Callum MacDougall (CM) - <b>Minutes</b></p> |
| <p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>James Bryce (JB)<br/>Elaine Rosie (ER)</p> <p>Cllr Gerry McGarvey (GM)</p>  | <p>*Comment made on Decision Time (DT)<br/>**Excluding Item 10.1 only<br/>***Excluded from Items 5.1.3 and end of 13</p>  |

## 1 Chair's Statement

Purpose - For Information

The Chair welcomed all Management Committee (MC) members, new members and staff to the meeting.

KH gave a special welcome back to AD, who had been on a special leave of absence due to

personal reasons but noted that we were all glad to have her back with us again. KH asked if the new members could re-introduce themselves for the benefit of AD.

Additionally, KH, still as acting Chair for this meeting, proposed that we take agenda item 10.1 (Committee Recruitment) before item 5 (Matters arising & referrals from sub committees) as this would allow our new members to participate in the meeting following the approval of agenda item 10.1. This was agreed by the rest of the MC.

## **2 Apologies**

Purpose - For Information

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James Bryce  
Elaine Rosie (New Member)

Gerry McGarvey

## **3 Declaration of Interest**

Purpose - For Information

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None.

## **4.1 Draft Minute of Management Committee - 28/05/2024**

Purpose - For Approval

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A number of minor 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 Unconfirmed Minute of Staffing Sub Committee - 18/06/2024 -DEFERRED**

Purpose - For Information

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Deferred.

## **4.3 Unconfirmed Confidential Minute of Staffing Sub Committee Meeting - 18/06/2024 - DEFERRED**

Purpose - For Information

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Deferred.

## **5.1.1 Referral from SSC - Item 8.1.1 Flexible Working Policy**

Purpose - For Approval

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*\*\*As agenda item 10.1 was taken and approved before this item 5.1.1 was discussed, the new committee members returned to the meeting at this point before further discussions took place.\*\**

As there were no other questions from the MC other than one correction noted on DT, the MC noted and approved the referral from the Staffing Sub Committee (SSC) regarding the Flexible working policy.

**Decision: Noted & Approved**

## **5.1.2 Referral from SSC - Item 8.1.2 Staff Recruitment Policy**

Purpose - For Approval

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As there were no other questions from the MC, the MC noted and approved the referral from the Staffing Sub Committee (SSC) regarding the Staff Recruitment Policy.

**Decision: Noted & Approved**

## **5.1.3 Referral from SSC - Item 6.3 Confidential Staff Structure Maintenance Update**

Purpose - For Approval

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*This item was considered confidential and Staff stepped out of the meeting at this point.*

SBW outlined this report to the Committee which had been considered and approved by the staffing sub committee.

The Committee gave approval of this Staff Structure Maintenance update.

**Decision: Approved**

## **6.1 Property Factors Registration - Verbal Update**

Purpose - For Information

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Staff re-entered the meeting at this point.

SBW presented this verbal update in SB's absence. SBW informed committee that the Property Factors Registration had been submitted and the required information had been provided.

AM asked how many properties we factor on. SBW explained that we submitted 277 properties overall and that it is now 55 properties we factor.

As there were no further questions at this point offered by committee members, the committee noted this verbal report provided by SBW.

**Decision: Noted**

## **6.2 MyForth - Verbal Update**

Purpose - For Information

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MG provided this verbal update regarding MyForth. MG explained that we are currently stress testing this system again to make sure that everything is in order and performing to the level/standard we require before we fully commence the roll out of visits to all tenants. The information taken at the visit is all in digital form and anything requiring further attention from staff can be identified easily via the system. MG added that we intend on having this up and running fully in July.

AM asked what MyForth is, which MG explained is our Tenant Portal, provided by Housing Online which allows all our tenants to pay rent, raise a repair, provide feedback etc.

SBW noted that everything for tenants is going to be integrated online using this platform. KD added that this is also something Stirling Council (SC) are in the process of implementing for their tenants as it very beneficial for them and is a positive tool for communicating between each other as landlord and tenant.

As there were no further questions at this point offered by committee members, the committee noted this verbal report provided by MG.

**Decision: Noted**

## **7.1 Loan Portfolio - SHR Submission**

Purpose - For Approval

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SM presented this report to MC which outlined details of the Association's loan portfolio at 31st of March 2024 and to receive approval for submission of the return to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

AS asked how many properties do we have in total? SM highlighted that we have 929 properties that we rent on. AS if this figure of 929 should be the figure getting used across all reports when we talk about the number of properties we have as she noticed that in other reports the figure changes. SBW explained that when it comes to certain reports, we have to indicate why we use a particular figure and why it is different from the overall figure of 929. SBW added that for future reports, we will make sure that this is easily indicated to help clarify as to why a particular figure was used.

KH asked why roughly 22% of the debt is on a fixed rate basis. SM noted this question and explained that this would be fed back to Fettes McDonald as he would be able to provide an answer on this. SBW added that there will be an opportunity to review the fixed rates. Previously we had looked at fixed-rate deals but at that time nothing seemed suitable and was a reason why we didn't opt for that option. Overall, it is very difficult to predict what type of rate would suit best but it is something that will continuously get reviewed.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was two minor corrections noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the changes made, the Loan Portfolio and SHR Submission was approved.

**POST MEETING NOTE:** In response to KH's question regarding why roughly 22% of the debt is on a fixed rate basis. The follow up response was, the fixed rates are for the Bank of Scotland Loan starting in 2017 for 10 years – the reason for fixed would have been due to preferential rates. It has been suggested that fixing up to 50% would help reduce the risk in increasing interest rates of variable agreements however decisions around fixed versus variable is taken at the time of the loan agreement. When the terms are up for review the option will be considered at that time.

**Decision: Approved**

## 8.1 Policy Reviews

Purpose - For Approval

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MG outlined this report on Policies that were for review or as a result of legislative change. MG gave a brief explanation on the policies that were due for approval and why (named within the report), additionally noting that the Draft Domestic Abuse Policy was only for consideration at the time, as we are still waiting on the Scottish Government (SG) to provide a further definition of Domestic Abuse.

JF indicated that earlier in the week she had attended a training session with Jim Bauld, TC Young, and it had been mentioned that the SG had in fact come up with this final definition as to what is domestic abuse. JF noted the definition was in the draft policy, and MG advised there is a further update to this due.

AFG and KH noted one change to the Allocations Policy and felt the wording of the seven year age gap wasn't clear. MG agreed to rephrase this and approval was given subject to this change.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

### 8.1.1 Committee Code of Conduct Policy

Purpose - For Approval

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SB presented this policy and noted that there were no material changes and that a section has been added to Openness on dealing with information which includes disclosure of information, social networking and public Statement.

There were no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

The Code of Conduct Policy was approved.

**Decision: Approved**

## 8.1.2 Amendments to Pet Policy

Purpose - For Approval

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MG presented this policy which was presented ahead of its 3 year review to take account of the changes in legislation surrounding the XL Bully type dogs in Scotland.

There were no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was no corrections made by committee members to this item on Decision Time (DT). The committee approved the amendments to the Pet Policy

**Decision: Approved**

## 8.1.3 Draft Domestic Abuse Policy

Purpose - For Information

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MG presented this draft policy for information at this time. MG advised that this is a new policy and it is due to the proposals outlined within the draft Housing (Scotland) Bill. The requirement is that every Registered Social Landlord will have a Domestic Abuse Policy in place. We await final guidance from the Scottish Government after which we will bring back the final policy for approval.

There were no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was no corrections made by committee members to this item on Decision Time (DT). The committee noted the Draft Domestic Abuse Policy

**Decision: Noted**

## 8.1.4 Amendment to Rent Arrears Policy

Purpose - For Approval

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MG presented this policy that has been amended to take into account the changes in the draft Housing (Scotland) Bill.

There were no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was no corrections made by committee members to this item on Decision Time (DT). The committee approved the amendments to the Rent Arrears Policy

**Decision: Approved**

## 8.1.5 Amendment to Allocations Policy

Purpose - For Approval

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MG presented this policy that has been amended to take into account the changes in the draft

Housing (Scotland) Bil, also opportunity to clarify the wording relating to change of circumstances and the age gap for children when considering the number of bedrooms required.

\*AFG asked if the additional bedroom applies for the age gap for 3, 4, etc. children, which was confirmed to be the case.

There were no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

The amendments to the Allocations Policy were approved.

**Decision: Approved**

## **8.2 Abandoned & Estate Management**

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The Abandoned & Estate Management Policy is deferred to the August 2024 Meeting

## **8.3 ARC Data Correction 2022/23**

Purpose - For Approval

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MG presented this report to MC which outlined the corrections to indicators 26, 27 & 18 in relation to the ARC submission for 2022/23.

MG noted that the restated figures only show a difference in the rent due to be collected amounts in all three indicators. MG highlighted that it seems the SHR technical guidance has been interpreted by us and SDM in the same way. We have asked for this to be fed back to the SHR via SHN and the working groups for the proposed changes to the ARC, to ensure the guidance is as clear as possible in the future.

\*AS asked this report is for our 2023/24 submission or prior year. If it is 2022/23 does this mean, we are resubmitting a year later. SBW explained that this is for 2022/23 and is last year's submission.

MG highlighted that the guidance from the regulator is not the clearest on this and that the IT software company provide these reports to other RSLs... SBW added that no ARC submission will not flag up some corrections that will need to be made. Every year we are constantly improving on this and how we present/ deliver the exact information required of us.

SM added that the original issue previously was the cash payments element which we managed to resolve after identifying.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

The corrections to indicators 26, 27 & 18 in relation to the ARC submission for 2022/23 was approved.

**Decision: Approved**

## **8.4 Stage 3 Adaptation Funding Request**

Purpose - For Information

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PF presented this report to MC which outlined the current position of the adaptation programme for 2024/25 and reviewal of the RSL Adaptations Letter.

PF explained that following on from the 2023/24 adaptation programme and the adoption of the 'Adaptation without Delay' guidance, FHA will have to determine the scope in which the adaptation programme will proceed. Tenants have informed us that having adaptations carried out on their property was a priority for them. FHA are committed to ensuring that we meet tenants' accessibility needs to promote independent living within their own homes.

PF added that with the delay in the application open date for 2024/25, we are still awaiting confirmation of the full funding grant award for the adaptation programme for year 2024/25. We must reclaim the funding which was self-funded last year but be mindful of the reduction of funding which the Scottish Government and Housing and Regeneration Programmes (HARP) are making available to RSLs.

\*AFG asked if we need to stress test our budgets to see the impact of allowing for self-funded adaptations in the future. MG noted this and informed committee that this will be something we will consider when budget setting for the coming year.

HR asked if our new build program incorporates disabled access showers when looking at how we can accommodate tenants needs. SBW explained that yes, we do. There was a minor issue, noted at the newbuilds in Cambusbarron as the showers had a slight step into them but this was identified early as potentially being an issue for the tenants and was removed to allow easier access.

KH asked if there is a Forth Valley Health Forum that we could be a part of. SBW highlighted that there is most likely a forum we could join but currently we are not a part of any.

MG added that Adaptations is currently a sector wide issue. Based on the discussion had at the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) conference recently, we have technically started ahead of other RSLs with the changes to our policies and self-referral scheme. JJ highlighted that is very important for us as an RSL to inform our tenants of what we are doing and why. MG advised that the ATVs would highlight any further need.

JF asked how we manage self-referrals. MG explained that it starts with an initial visit from the tenant's Housing Officer, who would then fill out the self-referral with the tenant and have a discussion as to what the tenant's needs are based on the information provided by the tenant. As these are minor adaptations and we have adopted the 'Adaptation with Delay Guidance' we do not require OT involvement. JF asked how we decide what gets done as the staff are not trained OT's

SBW added that the conversation is always had with the tenants as to what they can manage and the work is based on simple adaptations – complex cases are always referred back to social work.

We have had a conversation about incorporating some particular adaptations into the planned maintenance work that is scheduled as we feel that this could help our adaptations with tenants.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

The current position of the adaptation programme for 2024/25 and reviewal of the RSL Adaptations Letter were noted.

**Decision: Noted**



## 9.1 Directors Report

Purpose - For Information

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No Report required at this meeting.

## 9.2 Notifiable Events

Purpose - For Information

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SBW presented this report to MC which outlined the current notifiable events and to inform the committee of new notifiable events to comply with our obligations with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

SBW noted that there are no new events in the period since the last committee meeting and that there are 3 open notifiable events and the summary details of the progress with these are given in Section 4 of the report. SBW highlighted that in relation to the structural cracking issue at Site 8 &9 Raploch we had received a letter of confirmation from Vibro Menard and that there are also outstanding requests for information which both our Structural Engineer and Places for People's engineer are agreed on.

SBW also added that there is no further update on the Claim for Damages under Employer Liability as we await relevant information to be provided by the claimant.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was no corrections noted on Decision Time (DT) by Committee members. These current notifiable events were noted.

**Decision: Noted**

## 10.1 Committee Recruitment

Purpose - For Approval

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***\*\*THIS ITEM WAS TAKEN BEFORE ITEM 5 IN THE MEETING\*\****

As this item was confidential to the new committee members, they were asked to leave the meeting at this point to allow for this item to be discussed.

SBW presented this report in SB's absence. The report presents to the committee the outcome of the recent recruitment process and presents for approval five new membership applications and the associated committee member appointments. There would be 3 Casual Members and 2 Co-opted Members appointed from the 5 new committee members which was allocated based on the return date of each new members application.

SBW noted that following approval from MC, this would increase our Committee of Management to 14 persons, which would leave space for 1 further co-opted member to join as the Association's rules allow for a Committee of Management to have a maximum of 15 persons. Ideally, we would be looking to make that a tenant member as we currently only have 1 tenant

member on board.

There was no further questions asked by MC members at this time.

There was one corrections noted on Decision Time (DT) and with the change made , the MC approved the five new membership applications and the associated committee member appointments.

**Decision: Approved**

## 11 Correspondence

Purpose - For Information

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None.

## 12 Health & Safety Issues

Purpose - For Information

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There is no Quarterly report due.

## 13 AOCB

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\*JJ asked if we have any dates penciled in yet for 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) arrangements. SB replied that the AGM is booked for 5th September. It will be in the evening but a venue is still to be confirmed.

AFG asked if we are connected with Share Learning Limited (known as SHARE) and do we know if there is any training available for Governing Bodies through this platform. SBW explained that we are using the SHARE platform but have not issued any training through this for the Governing Body. We are trialing this platform with staff first to gain an idea of how beneficial it can be for training and if successful then we will look to offer this to the MC members. In addition, it was noted that we also have Alison Smith who is our MC consultant and she will support the committee within their development learning and training.

KH asked if the new members will receive an induction now after being approved. SBW noted that the inductions will commence after MC appraisals have been finalised next week which will also be supported by Alison Smith.

JJ highlighted that our website could be doing with a refresh and slight update in some areas. SBW responded to say that the website is under review currently and all policies etc. will be getting a refreshed look to help anyone searching for our most up to date information.

This information was noted by the MC.

**Decision: Noted**

At this point SBW noted that there was a confidential item to be provided for AOCB. All staff were asked to leave the meeting at this point.

*\*CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE TAKEN\**

SBW updated the committee on this matter.

The Committee noted the information provided.

**Decision: Noted**

## **14 Date of Next Meeting - 27/08/2024**

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The date for the next Management Committee meeting on Tuesday the 27th of August 2024 was approved. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance this evening.