

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK**

<u>ACTION</u>			
	<b>Present:</b>		
	Mrs C. Boyle	Chairperson	In person Elected Member
	Ms D. Smith	Vice Chairperson	In person Elected Member
	Mr O'Donnell		In person Elected Member
	Mrs G. Daly		Online Elected Member
	██████████		██████████ ██████████
	Cllr S. Traynor		In person Co-opted Member
	Cllr G. Johal		Online Co-opted Member
	<b>In Attendance:</b>		
	Mrs L. Lees		In person Chief Executive
	Mr J. Farrell		Online Head of Housing Services
	Mrs S. Farrell		In person Customer & CS Manager
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	Apologies were received from ██████████, Mr J. Hillhouse, Mr P. Shiach, Miss T. Hislop, and Mrs K. Tennant. It was noted that both Mrs Breeze and Mrs Tennant had requested special leave of absence due to work commitments. It was noted a quorum was present to enable the meeting to go ahead.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Chairperson's Remarks</b>	The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for their attendance. It was noted that an additional item will be added under Item 14. Staffing Report regarding a review of the EVH grading guidelines.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>	There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Business Carried Over from Last Meeting</b>	There was no business carried over. The Chief Executive wished it to be minuted that of £20k of National Lottery funding there was £3.5k remaining for fuel vouchers and the Association had requested that this be converted into £100 food vouchers, which had been agreed. The Management Committee noted that in order to purchase and distribute these, this will, for a short and defined period, exceed the financial controls in place for petty cash levels. The Management Committee noted this control breach and the reasons as detailed.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Management Committee External Training/Conference Feedback (if applicable)</b>	The Customer & Corporate Services Manager confirmed that a number of Committee Members from other Associations had attended the recent joint training session (Governance) online. The Chief Executive confirmed that the following Tuesday's training was Health & Safety.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Secretary's Report (For information)</b>	The Chief Executive provided the following report in the Secretary's absence:	



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**10. Emergency decisions since last meeting**

There had been no emergency decisions required since the last meeting.

**11. Development Report - verbal update (For information)**

The Chief Executive stated that she had attended a planning meeting with West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) and the Scottish Government on 7 November. The Management Committee noted the progress of the two potential sites as follows:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**12. Rent Policy Review 2024/25\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Head of Housing Services referred to the report that had been circulated prior to the meeting and highlighted that this would provide the basis for consultation with tenants, sharing owners and Registered Tenants Organisation with the final Policy coming back for consideration in January.

The Head of Housing Services summarised the key points required by a Rent Policy on page 3 including:

- Affordability (to the tenant)
- Comparability (to other social landlords)
- Viability (of the Association)

At 1. Affordability, page 5, the Management Committee noted that 11 family compositions had been input into the SFHA rent affordability tool and there were no fails even with the Association’s highest rent (1 person in a 2 apartment at Queens Quay) which passed at under 30% (23.5%). This also included Band B Council Tax which to make all the scenarios more realistic and makes it as good an indicator as possible. The Head of Housing Services confirmed that even with a 5% simulation rent increase, it still passed at 24.7%, comfortably under the 30% threshold. It was noted that from the outset those on benefits were considered as a fail. The Head of Housing Services stated this exercise demonstrates the rents can be considered affordable.

The Head of Housing Services highlighted that 99% (89%: 2019) of those surveyed in 2022 in the large-scale tenant satisfaction survey stated they felt their rent offered good value for money.

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At 2. Comparability, page 7, the Management Committee noted that only 2022/23 figures were available and that, based on that, the Association had the second lowest average rent in the district at £335.10 and sat comfortably below the Scottish average of £400.36, with Loretto HA being the highest (£430.13) and only Trafalgar HA being lower (£329.94), but with far fewer larger properties.

The Head of Housing Services stated this table demonstrates the rents can be considered favourable.

At 3. Viability, page 8, the Head of Housing Services highlighted that the minimum rent increase required to make a surplus is 5% (£47,334) as 4% (£1,420) is not enough of a margin giving the uncertainty with some figures. It was therefore proposed that 5% would be Option 1, Option 2 would be 6% (£93,247) and Option 3 would be 7% (£139,160) with Options 2 and 3 offering over and above normal service delivery as per previous years' consultation and will be centred on tenancy sustainment support.

The Head of Housing Services stated this table demonstrates the rents can be considered viable.

The Management Committee noted that for context, the current average increase being considered by the Glasgow West of Scotland Forum (GWSF) benchmarking group is around 5.6% (20 RSLs) and the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) currently has an average of 6% (25 RSLs).

A considerable discussion and debate ensued on the proposed options and on reflection of the Viability table figures, the Management Committee wished to further trim the percentages for consultation as follows:

- Option 1: 4.6%
- Option 2: 5.6%
- Option 3: 6.6%

The Chief Executive and Head of Housing Services were both agreeable to the suggestion and felt it was palatable for tenants/sharing owners. The Management Committee also noted that the wide range of tenancy sustainment support currently being provided could continue at the 4.6%.

Given the information provided in the draft Policy, the Management Committee could be satisfied that the proposed rent increase consultation figures of between 4.6% and 6.6% demonstrated affordability, comparability and viability. The Chief Executive added that over the years Options 2 and 3 have become more popular.

The Management Committee unanimously agreed the Policy and options as agreed above for consultation.

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13. **Service Charge Policy Review – verbal update (For information)**  
 The Head of Housing Services stated that whilst normally a draft Policy would be presented, not enough invoices had been received to bring a meaningful Policy together at this time. The Management Committee noted that the hope is, as there will be a higher rent increase than in many previous years, that service charges can be frozen. The Head of Housing Services confirmed that ground maintenance services from April 2024 are currently out to tender. The Management Committee unanimously agreed to a statement for the consultation that the Association would endeavour to make every effort to ensure that there is no overall increase in service charges for 2024/2025. The draft policy, taking account of updated invoices will be presented at the January 2024 meeting.

The Head of Housing Services left the meeting at this point.

14. **Staffing Report (For information)**  
**a) EVH monthly report (Nov 23)\***  
 The Chief Executive referred to the above report which was circulated prior to the meeting and confirmed it was for information only. The Chief Executive highlighted that negotiations on the pay award for April 2024 were ongoing.

The Management Committee noted that the Finance & Corporate Services Manager would attend a presentation at EVH on 4 December to receive an award in recognition of 30 years’ service.

The Chief Executive informed the Management Committee that the revised EVH grading guidelines had recently been reviewed and the Chief Executive recommended that one staff member be awarded regrading on the following basis:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

The recommendation was unanimously approved by the Management Committee. The Chief Executive confirmed this would commence from 1 December.

15. **Policy Review – Code of Conduct for Staff\* (Decision/Approval Required)**  
 The Chief Executive referred to the above draft Policy circulated prior to the meeting which was overdue for its 3-yearly review and highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to reflect



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renewed guidance from EVH and to make the Policy more personable to staff by including “I” instead of “you” and adding in the Association’s core values.

The Chief Executive stated there was nothing which caused concern in the review and invited questions. There were none and the Policy review was unanimously agreed as presented by the Management Committee.

**16. Policy Review – Declaration of Interest\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above draft Policy circulated prior to the meeting which was overdue for its 3-yearly review and highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to add in the Policy purpose, to tighten up the Policy and Procedure to make it more robust and adding in a new section on Conduct at Meetings and Involvement in Decision Making. The Chief Executive particularly highlighted the Register of Interests and the extensive examples of Declaring and Managing Personal Interests now provided within Appendix A and encouraged members to declare any interests promptly. The Management Committee noted that all Governance Policies are reviewed by staff each March.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the Policy review was unanimously agreed as presented by the Management Committee.

**17. Policy Review – Notifiable Events\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above draft Policy circulated prior to the meeting which was overdue for its 3-yearly review and highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to make the Policy more robust, to reflect current practice, such as the Management Committee meetings having a standing agenda item on notifiable events, and to expand the Equalities section to create an Equalities and Human Rights section.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the Policy review was unanimously agreed as presented by the Management Committee.

**18. Policy Review – Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above draft Policy circulated prior to the meeting which was due for its 3-yearly review and this had been carried out by the Head of Housing Services and herself. It was highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to enhance the structure of the Policy and to expand the Equalities section to create an Equality and Human Rights section.

The Chief Executive confirmed that staff training would take place on the agreed Policy and invited questions. There were none and the Policy

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review was unanimously agreed as presented by the Management Committee.

**19. Policy Review – Equality and Diversity\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above draft Policy circulated prior to the meeting which was due for its 3-yearly review and highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to provide more detail on the protected characteristics, provide more information on Relevant Legislation and Regulatory Framework and to clarify further areas of discrimination which will have a zero-tolerance approach.

The Management Committee noted the Association was awaiting updated guidance from the Regulator which, when received, may require to be incorporated into the Policy.

The Management Committee requested that it be clarified whether the word 'and' should be used in the statement "Black minority ethnic people" on page 5. The Chief Executive will check this and will also add in prospective tenants, following feedback. The Chief Executive stated she was keen to promote opportunities on the Management Committee to the BME/BAME community.

The Chief Executive confirmed the importance of doing as much as we can in the area of equality and diversity and that promotion is constantly progressed. It was noted the Association advertise in each Positive Action in Housing (PAiH) Annual Report, have had a 3-year PATH placement and hosted a PATH event in June. The Customer & Corporate Services Manager informed the Management Committee that there were 9 housing related leaflets in 10 different languages on the Association's website.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the Policy review was unanimously agreed as presented by the Management Committee.

**20. Annual Review of Standing Orders & Delegated Authorities\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above document circulated prior to the meeting which was due for its review and highlighted that tracked changes were in red, with the main changes being to tighten up wording and in particular the change to the name of the Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-Committee.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the document view was unanimously approved as presented by the Management Committee.

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**21. Customer Consultation/Communications Report\* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Customer & Corporate Services Manager referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting, welcomed any suggestions for improvement or questions, and the following was highlighted:

- At 2., the continuing positive working relationship with Radnor Park Multis Tenants and Residents Association including their recent Halloween Party success, the forthcoming Christmas Lunch on 5<sup>th</sup> December and the heritage project progress
- At 4., the wide range of event activity including cosy afternoons recommencing and the first owners' event. At World Kindness Day it was noted a fund of £2,350 had been achieved, with 50% being provided to West Dunbartonshire Foodshare for their Christmas Toy Appeal 2023
- Significant attendance at others' events such as West College Scotland, community council and local residents group meetings
- The successful Scottish Government Visit to Centre81 on 9 November
- At 4. Events - Volunteering/Community Benefits, the significant Anglian community benefits and their potential impact
- At 5., the wide range of publication/design helping to ensure our tenants and other customers feel informed about the Association's services and decisions, including the new Annual Complaints Performance report

The report was noted by the Management Committee.

**22. Focus on Governance/Risk  
a) Notifiable Events Register\* (For information)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting and highlighted that there were no open cases, with nothing ongoing or outstanding. The Management Committee noted that the day before, all Annual Assurance Statements had been published by the Regulator and it was stated they will assess the Statements as part of its annual risk assessment and publish the outcomes by the end of March 2024.

**23. Intranet**

The Chief Executive reminded the Management Committee to regularly visit the Intranet, which should be easily accessible from the iPads, particularly the health and wellbeing section which is regularly updated.

**24. Signing of Minutes**

The Chief Executive had noted that the use of electronic signatures is ongoing.



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**25. Date and Time of Next Meeting/Training Session**

Per the schedule. It was noted that on 12<sup>th</sup> December this would be followed by a Christmas meal for the members.

Meeting closed.

Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED .....

PROPOSED .....

SECONDED .....

**LL/SF**

\* Indicates report issued with agenda