

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

Present:







Mrs C. Boyle	Chairperson	In person	Elected Member
Mr J. Hillhouse	Vice Chairperson/ Treasurer	In person	Elected Member
Mr P. Shiach	Secretary	In person	Elected Member
Ms D. Smith		In person	Elected Member
Mr J. O'Donnell		In person	Elected Member
Mrs L. Breeze		Online	Elected Member

In Attendance:

Mrs L. Lees		In person	Chief Executive
Mr J. Farrell		In person	Head of Housing Services
Mr J. Devlin		Online	Housing Services Manager
Mrs S. Farrell		Online	Communications Officer

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Mooney and Cllr Docherty. 

It was noted that a quorum was present to enable the meeting to go ahead.

2. Chairperson's Remarks

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. Declaration of Interest

A declaration of interested was noted at Item 14. Factoring Management Fee Review 2022/23.

4. Business Carried Over from Last Meeting

There was no business carried over.

5. Management Committee External Training/Conference Feedback (if applicable)

There was no training undertaken or conferences attended.

6. Secretary's Report (Decision/Approval Required)

The Secretary provided the following report:

a) Correspondence

- It was noted a letter to the Management Committee had been received regarding the rent increase and will be discussed under Item 11

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FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
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ACTION

- A reminder was received regarding the annual SHARE conference, to be held at the Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld, over 11/12 March
- b) Share Membership Applications (if applicable) (Decision/Approval Required)**

No Share Membership applications were received.

c) MC Membership Applications (1) (Decision/Approval Required)

The Management Committee noted an application had been received from shareholder, Ms Hislop, who had attended as an observer a few times since the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Management Committee unanimously approved the application. The Chief Executive confirmed Ms Hislop would fill a casual vacancy until the AGM.

The Chief Executive intimated that Mrs Brown had left the Management Committee verbally by stating she did not wish to remain on the Committee and returning her iPad. The Chief Executive confirmed that she would pass on a note of thanks to Mrs Brown from the Management Committee to thank her for her contribution during her time on the Committee. The Chief Executive confirmed she had attempted contact with 2 lapsed members, Mrs Daly and Mrs Tennant, with a view to encouraging them to say involved with the Management Committee but to no avail. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

d) Annual Declarations including H&S o/s

The Chief Executive confirmed that signatures were outstanding from Mrs Tennant, Mrs Daly and Mrs Breeze. Mrs Breeze indicated she would send on her electronic signature to the Chief Executive and approved its use for the annual declarations.

7. **Approval of Minutes & Actions Notes**

a) Management Committee – 14 Dec-21* (Decision/Approval Required)

There were no errors or omissions noted and the Minute was proposed by Mrs Boyle, seconded by Mr O'Donnell and unanimously approved by the Management Committee.

b) Housing Services Sub-Committee meeting – 25 Jan-22* (Decision/Approval Required)

There were no errors or omissions noted and the Minute was proposed by Ms Smith, seconded by Mr O'Donnell and unanimously approved by the Management Committee.

8. **Business Arising From Minutes**

The Chief Executive confirmed that there was one item of business arising from the minute to be discussed with Councillors so would therefore be carried over until the next meeting.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

9. **Ratification of all Minutes (Decision/Approval Required)**
Ratification of all Minutes was proposed by Ms Smith, seconded by Mr O'Donnell and unanimously approved by the Management Committee.
10. **Emergency decisions since last meeting (For information)**
The Chief Executive confirmed that this was a standing item and no emergency decisions were required since the last meeting.
11. **Rent Policy Review 2022/23* (Decision/Approval required)**
The Head of Housing Services directed the Management Committee to the above report circulated prior to the meeting and confirmed it was a firmed up version of the consultation copy approved for consultation in November and now included consultation results from tenants, sharing owners and Registered Tenants Organisations based on 3 options of 1.5%, 2.0% and 2.5%, each with different service provision.
- The Management Committee was directed to the 4 main principles to be applied to the Rent Policy, as detailed on page 4; fair, covers the Association's costs, affordable and comparable.
- The Head of Housing Services referred to the expanded timetable for the rent setting process on page 5 which included a more detailed breakdown of tasks and the staff member(s) responsible. It was noted this was included in the draft Policy presented in November following a recommendation for improvement identified during an audit. The Management Committee noted the process covers a lengthy 4 month period.
- The Head of Housing Services read over the consultation process, as detailed on page 6 and it was noted 109 responses had been received which represented a 9% response rate (2021: 8%) and that 76% of responders chose Option 1, a 1.5% increase.
- The Management Committee noted an increase in tenants stating their rent represented value for money at 87% (2021: 82%). The Head of Housing Services indicated that a rent increase at 0.7% (2021/22) and option for 1.5% (2022/23) went some way to demonstrating the Association's commitment to striving for value for money.
- The Management Committee was directed to the table on page 9 giving details of what some other Associations and the Council are preparing to do in relation to their rent increases. The Head of Housing Services stated it could be demonstrated that Option 1 (1.5%) compares favourably with these proposals.
- At 5. Viability & Affordability, where predicted deficits and surpluses were detailed, based on figures to 31 December 2021, the Management Committee noted that Option 1 (1.5%) was the first option where the figures showed a positive contribution and can therefore be assumed as viable. The Chief Executive wished it to be highlighted that in support of

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

tenants given the pandemic situation, all costs have been firmed up with sufficient contingency also built in to provide a 1.5% rent increase despite receiving higher than predicted procurement costs but it could be in future that row 6 of table 5A, Major Repairs, requires an increase from £950k pa and there was no guarantee that less than inflation rent increases would be sustainable going forward.

The Management Committee was directed to the table of comparable rent throughout the Council district and accompanying narrative on page 17 where it was demonstrated the Association's rents were comparable, with a £321.49 per month average rent, well within the national average of £388.44 and the lowest average rent in West Dunbartonshire.

The Head of Housing Services directed the Management Committee to the updated rent affordability comparisons generated for various household compositions and apartments sizes using the SFHA's Rent Affordability Tool, on pages 21-30. On the basis of the consultation results, the Head of Housing Services had added a rent increase of 1.5% to all properties and, whilst not required, Council Tax costs (Band B) were also added. The Management Committee noted that all property types were a pass (<30% of household income) and particularly the Graham Avenue, 2 apartment, single person illustration, the highest proportionate rent, passed at 25.9%. In addition, the Head of Housing Services highlighted the 'Comparison with 21/22 rent' graphs on each and how the dots representing the Association appeared to be the lowest or among the lowest rents in most comparisons.

The Head of Housing Services recommended adopting Option 1, 1.5%, for the financial year 2022/2023 and invited questions. The Secretary referred to correspondence received from a tenant addressed to the Management Committee. The Management Committee noted the contents of the lengthy letter regarding disputes over rent affordability and comparability and agreed to send a letter to the tenant outlining the above discussions and enclosing a copy of the rent comparison table on page 17 of the Rent Policy.

The Management Committee unanimously agreed the recommendation of a 1.5% rent increase for 2022/2023 and the adoption of the revised Rent Policy.

12. Service Charge Policy Review 2022/23* (Decision/Approval required)

The Head of Housing Services referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting.

The Management Committee noted that the draft, which had been agreed in principle in November 2021, had remained unchanged and demonstrated that no tenant would pay more than £14.97 per month for services they receive, practically unchanged from the previous year (2020/2021: £14.96) due to savings been made in landscaping costs

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

offsetting an increase in electricity costs. The Management Committee was satisfied the service charges represented value for money and unanimously approved the Policy as presented.

The Communications Officer and Housing Services Manager left the meeting at this point.

13. Staffing Report verbal update (Decision/Approval Required)

The Chief Executive updated the Management Committee regarding staffing matters and the following was agreed:

- Following an internal process, the post of Maintenance Officer was to be made permanent from 1st February to the existing Maintenance Assistant
- The vacant Maintenance Assistant post was currently being advertised externally
- [REDACTED], was [REDACTED] being covered by a temporary [REDACTED] Assistant procured from EVH and by increasing the hours of another part-time staff member. These temporary measures have previously been agreed up to 31st March 2022.
- A long-serving Housing Assistant retired from December 2021 and the Management Committee wished her all the best in her retirement.
- It was agreed that the structure be changed to incorporate 3 Housing Assistants and 2.5 Housing Officers, given the new stock units being released this year. A permanent Housing Assistant Post was to be advertised externally along with a temporary Housing Officer post (up to December 2023). An internal post for permanent Housing Officer post was to be advertised.
- The Head of Finance & Corporate Services Post is being advertised externally again in February [REDACTED]
- A long-serving member of staff within Finance had served her notice for retirement and it is likely that the post will be replaced by an Internal Accounts Assistant. This will be shared on the staff intranet site.

The Communications Officer and Housing Services Manager returned to the meeting at this point.

Mr Hillhouse left the meeting at this point.

14. Factoring Management Fee Review 2022/23* (Decision/Approval required)

The Chief Executive referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting and explained that this fee was applicable to all 75 owners in the full factoring service, where the Association has an interest in the block, for example, Bon Accord Square.

The following points were highlighted:

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

- The fee is based on the estimated amount of staff time and projected and accurately apportioned direct costs to provide the service as detailed within the report
- Value for money was sought whilst ensuring tenants are not subsidising the service
- A 5% increase was proposed, increasing the management charge by £6 to £126 per annum (2021/2022: £120)
- The proposed increase is well within the Association's target to restrict increase to no more than inflation (December) + 1% (8.50%)

The Chief Executive invited questions. The Management Committee enquired as to when the insurance premium is charged and whether the fully factored owners require to take the insurance. The Chief Executive confirmed that they do require to take the insurance but that it is competitively priced and is charged out in June each year.

Based on the information provided within the report, the Management Committee unanimously agreed a Management Fee increase of 5% to £126.00 for 2022/2023.

Mr Hillhouse returned to the meeting at this point.

15. Draft CHA Budget 2021/22* (Decision/Approval required)

The Chief Executive referred the Management Committee to the above document, which had been circulated prior to the meeting and commented that all section heads and budget holders had worked collectively to bring a prudent budget whilst ensuring the needs of the Association are met. The Management Committee noted the costs presented were based on finalised costs to 31 December 2021 and estimated costs to 31 March 2022.

The Chief Executive highlighted the information contained in the Executive Summary and then referred the Management Committee to the **Management Expenses** on page 3 and the following was noted:

- Although **Management Expenses** had increased slightly, from c. £1.67m to £1.70m overall, this included all staffing requirements to manage 1,234 units
- At **Staff Remuneration**, c. £1.28m, all of the staffing requirements as indicated in the Staffing Report have been incorporated including an estimated salary increase of 2.5%, life cover, pension and pension deficit costs. It was noted the Pensions Trust had indicated the past service deficit will be payable beyond the predicted date of October 2022 and the Chief Executive will adjust all costs and plans accordingly
- At **Office Overheads** it was noted the main change was an increase in telephone costs (>c. £6k) due to more technology and iPad purchases which assists in meeting the aims of the Digital Strategy
- At **Post/Stationery/Printing** and **Committee training**, reductions in the budget could be accommodated due to savings on postage and

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

good value online training being undertaken and assists to offset areas that have increased in order to make a 1.5% rent increase work

- At **Appendix 2, Performance Reporting and Internal Targets**, which demonstrates ratios of costs and how the Association compares to peers, it can be demonstrated that the percentage income spent on overheads remains favourable at 8.7% (target: <10%)
- In the **Income & Expenditure Accounts**, total **Rental Income** of c. £4.5m is expected, incorporating the 1.5% increase and the additional rental income expected from the new units whilst taking account of voids and bad debts. Amortisation of grants at £600k was noted purely as an accounting term
- At **Expenditure** it was noted that **Property Maintenance** (routine/reactive repairs) had increased to £487k following a £475k spend in 2020/21. The Housing Services Manager had been through a detailed framework exercise of contractors that can be called upon in the hope of driving down both void times and costs
- At **Cyclical Maintenance** the Chief Executive was pleased that cyclical work had recommenced and numerous contracts were now on site including paintwork and electrical testing
- Spend on planned **Major Repairs** of c. £3.1m is expected in the year, with the majority in Radnor Park, which is fully backed by financial plans and life cycle costing. It was noted Appendix 1 provides a full analysis
- A **Total Expenditure** for the year of c. £4.4m was noted projected surplus for the year of c. £730k was noted, c. £620k of which would be transferred to the major repairs fund
- At the **Non-Housing Account** all other activities were noted such as development allowances, factoring and Centre81 and their expected deficit/surplus which is plumbed into long term financial plans and rent setting processes. It was noted the development allowances pertained to social work adaptations and not new build developments as allowances were no longer provided

The Chief Executive concluded by assuring the Management Committee of tangible fixed assets of £58.8m, c. £45m of which is unsecured and could be utilised in future for exploring refinancing options, and a healthy balance sheet backed by reserves.

The Chief Executive welcomed questions both at the time or any point going forward. There were none and the Management Committee unanimously agreed to the Draft CHA Budget 2022/2023.

16. Development Report* (For information)

The Chief Executive referred to the above report circulated just prior to the meeting. The Management Committee noted the detailed updates provided in relation to current and proposed developments, and particularly that the Association now has 3 developments on site. The Chief Executive provided additions/updates within the following items:

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

b) Queens's Quay Development (37 units)

Programme – The concern over the completion of surrounding access roads for emergency vehicles was highlighted as it may delay handover of completed units but all parties were working together to achieve the best outcome but potentially these units could come off site at the same time as the Linnvale development (Summer 2022).

Community Activities/Support – It was confirmed the Head of Housing Services had been in touch with the community liaison at the Wheatley Group to begin to plan the community events.

c) Former St. Cuthbert's Church – Linnvale (24 units)

The Chief Executive informed the Management Committee that the closes will have a brick finish internally which could reduce scuffing and associated marks found at Cart Street.

The Management Committee was updated regarding recent resident concerns relating to the site, such as double parking and road quality and noted the Chief Executive is monitoring the situation alongside the Clerk of Works' weekly updates but that in the interim, an additional weekly road sweep had been organised.

The Management Committee was pleased to note a site visit is expected to be accommodated in April.

d) Clydebank Bowling Green development – Design and Build (Update)

The Chief Executive was delighted that the Scottish Government funding for this project had now been agreed [REDACTED] and the above development was in a position to be progressed quickly. The Management Committee noted that the development allowed the bowling club to invest in the remaining facilities and had been given the full support of Sportscotland.

The Chief Executive confirmed a 'soft start' on site was imminent with site signage being erected in the coming week.

e) Other Development Opportunities

There was no update from the previous meeting.

f) Development Risk – the Chief Executive confirmed there were no concerns with the contracts register, no overspends to propose and no changes to the risk register.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the report was noted.

Mrs Breeze left the meeting at this point.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION


17. **Cart Street – verbal update (For information)** 

[REDACTED]

18. **Maintenance Report* (Decision/Approval Required)**

The Chief Executive referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting, prepared by the Housing Services Manager and herself, with regards to moving forward Radnor Park Windows and Doors major repair contract.

It was noted the report was to pre-empt a tender report which will shortly be issued to the members and will contain a number of points which the Housing Services Manger felt prudent to raise in advance of a decision being required on the report.

The detailed discussion points were raised and discussed at length and the following was noted: 

- Confirmation was awaited that the [REDACTED] cost quoted by [REDACTED] for the window programme only remains accurate as the reduced acceptance period had expired. [REDACTED]
- Grave concern was expressed over both the fluctuation clause and a stipulation for a 75% up-front payment. The fluctuation clause would provide financial uncertainty and the up-front payment would prove too huge risk for the Association and tenants rent money and, in any event, would require a great deal of financial movement behind the scenes to release funds. Such an upfront payment was unusual given the length of the contract was several years long and could also hinder performance management throughout the contract

The following was agreed:

- Revised cost and conditions will be awaited. If they remain similar, the Management Committee unanimously agreed that fluctuating costs and a 75% up-front payment was not acceptable to the Association. A return could be made to the original contractor, [REDACTED], for a cost for the window programme only
- The Association remain keen to progress this much needed work

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

The Management Committee will await the tender report.

19. Reports for Quarter to 31 Dec 2021* (For information)

a) Complaints (will be reported in Feb meeting)

The Communications Officer confirmed that this report would be provided to the February meeting.

b) Compliments*

The Communications Officer referred to the above report which was circulated prior to the meeting and was delighted to confirm that 40 no. compliments had been received in the quarter. The Communications Officer confirmed that all compliments are passed on to the wide range of relevant staff and contractors noted within the report.

The Communications Officer invited questions. There were none and the report was noted.

**20. Customer Consultation/Communications Update*
(Decision/Approval Required)**

The Communications Officer referred to the above report, circulated prior to the meeting and stated that there were still many more updates to provide, which will be included in the next report, however, the following was highlighted:

- At 1. Current/Future Consultation & Feedback that the review of the Customer Care Policy was due in April and this would be a great opportunity to reflect the changes in customer care over the last 3 years and also include new technological methods used during the pandemic. Also the healthy number of tenants engaging with the Association with 215 consultation responses received plus an additional 109 from rent setting, up from last year
- At 2. Radnor Park Multis Tenant & Residents Association (RPMTRA) the Communications Officer recommended that the Management Committee accept RPMTRA as a Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 as detailed within the report. The Management Committee unanimously approved their re-registration as a RTO and it was noted this would last for a period of 3 years. The recent good partnership working with the group and meeting schedule for the year was noted
- At 4. Events, several events were discussed such as World Kindness Day and Special Occasion, where a bouquet was provided to another tenant on the occasion of their 100th birthday
- At 5. Publications/Design, many of the recent range of communications were listed including press releases which generated lots of online interest and the new Fire Safety Leaflet for Radnor Park which was recently developed and widely distributed

The Communications Officer invited questions. There were none and the report was noted by the Management Committee.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

21. Centre81 and Wider Role Report* (For information)

The Chief Executive referred to the Centre81 Co-ordinator's report on the above circulated prior to the meeting and highlighted the following:

- An extension for the Investing in Communities Fund (ICF) for 2022/2023 was applied for and the outcome is awaited
- The Association continues to support the Centre81 Steering Group who provide homework club and youth clubs from the Centre
- Gym81 remains open but with restricted numbers
- Spring/Summer events will be planned shortly. The Chief Executive had contacted the Kilt Walk as they normally pass by the Centre, with a hope of linking in with them on the day, but the route has changed this year. The Management Committee noted that the Association is still hopeful to participate in some way
- Another £2k has been secured from the Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme from Cycling UK providing bike repairs of up to £50 each

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the report was noted by the Management Committee.

22. Health and Safety including compliance report – January 2022* (For information)

The Housing Services Manager's referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting, which confirmed that the Association is compliant in all 6 key areas of Employer and Landlord Health and Safety.

The Chief Executive stated that following the recent completion of a Scottish Housing Regulator survey, it had been realised that rather than one Repairs & Maintenance Policy, encompassing all elements of the service, it would be more robust and comprehensive to bring the Policies separately and this would be arranged by the Housing Services Manager.

It was noted from the report that procedures are being following to force access to the remaining 71 properties regarding smoke, carbon monoxide and heat detectors as required by law.

Mr Hillhouse commended the Housing Services Manager on the quality of the report.

The Housing Services Manager invited questions. There were none and the report was noted by the Management Committee.

23. Expenses Report – December 2021* (Decision/Approval Required)

The Chief Executive referred to the above report, circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that overtime had again been provided for a staff member to complete the update of Written Statements following new legislation and that it was approximately 40% complete. Following review, the Management Committee unanimously approved the

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01
FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL
AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

expenses as submitted and the Chairperson agreed that her digital signature should be utilised and recorded in the signature register.

24. GDPR Action Plan Update* (For information)

The Chief Executive referred to the ICT and Compliance Officer's report circulated prior to the meeting for information and highlighted that actions in white were ongoing and that the action plan was a working document. The Management Committee noted that as the clearing of the CHP EOT files is now complete, it should be marked in green going forward and that the cleansing of Factoring files is progressing well but is ongoing.

The Chief Executive invited questions. There were none and the report was noted by the Management Committee.

25. Freedom of Information Return - Quarter 3 of 2021/22 (Oct to Dec 2021)*

The Chief Executive referred the Management Committee to the above report from the ICT and Compliance Officer circulated prior to the meeting and noted that no FOI requests were received in the quarter to 31 December. The Management Committee noted the Return was provided on schedule to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

26. Focus on Governance/Risk

a) Self-Assurance Action Plan 2021–Jan Update

The Management Committee noted that there was no update to provide at the moment, following the Assurance Statement submission in October.

b) Notifiable Events Register*

The Chief Executive referred to the above report circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted the report had been updated to shown open cases at the beginning



The Management Committee was directed to potential Notifiable Event no. 14 [REDACTED] and both the Chief Executive and Head of Housing Services discussed the issues/actions as detailed which had culminated in the Association alerting the Regulator to the situation given it could bring the Association into disrepute or raise public or stakeholder concern about the Association or the social housing sector. It was noted that the Association was working with Police Scotland and advice had also been sought from solicitor TC Young. [REDACTED]

The Management Committee, in acknowledgment of the support of the Scottish Housing Regulator in submitting the situation as a Notifiable Event and in light of the potential reputational damage, unanimously approved the submission of Notifiable Event no. 14 to the Regulator. The Chief Executive confirmed this would be actioned.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 01 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.00 P.M. IN PERSON AT 77-83 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 1BL AND VIA A VIDEO CONFERENCING LINK

ACTION

27. MC Annual Training Information (distributed at meeting)

a) MC Training Evaluation 2021/22

The Chief Executive distributed the training needs assessment forms and asked that Management Committee complete these so that an updated training plan could be drafted.

28. Intranet

The Chief Executive reminded the Management Committee to regularly visit the internal Intranet, which includes news, meeting papers, updated Policies and Procedures and particularly a health and wellbeing tab.

29. Signing of Minutes

The Chief Executive had noted in the Action Note from 30 November that the use of electronic signatures is being explored and is ongoing.

30. Date and Time of Next Meeting/Training Session

Per the schedule.

Meeting closed.

Checked by: LL 18.02.2022

Date: _____

APPROVED

PROPOSED

SECONDED

LL/SF

* Indicates report issued with agenda