

Present: Kath Mands (Chair), Ron Neave (Vice-Chair), Kenneth Brannan, Vicki Cutler, Denis Brown and Gordon Edwards (via Video Conference from Item 20/05/11 and for item 20/05/7)

In Attendance: Barry Moore (CE), Marjorie Sloan (CSD) and Roz Clark (CSO).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

20/05/1 Apologies Gavin High, Paul Hocking, Rhona McLeod and Andrew Black

20/05/2 Declarations of Conflicting Interests

None

20/05/3 Minute of Committee Meeting 26 February 2020 and Tracker

The Chair presented the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2020. No amendments were proposed.

Approved. Proposed Kenneth, Seconded Ron

The Chair talked through the tracker giving an update on progress.

20/05/4 Matters Arising

The Chair presented the additional paper Committee had been given which was the Written Resolution dated 31 March 2020. As the March Committee Meeting had been cancelled due to the effects of Covid-19 the CSD had circulated the Budget for 2020/21 and 30 Year Financial Plan and then followed this up with a discussion with each Committee Member to clarify any points. The Management Committee had unanimously agreed to approve the Budget for 2020/21 and 30 Year Financial Plan together with the revised planned maintenance programme. These will be revised during the year to take account of the effects of Covid-19.

20/05/5 Minute of Audit Sub Committee Meeting 26 February 2020

The CSD presented the minutes of the Audit Sub Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2020. There were no matters arising.

Committee **noted** the Minute of the Audit Sub Committee meeting.

20/05/6 Chair's Actions/Decisions between meetings: Bad Debt Write-Off

The CE explained that due to the cancellation of the March Committee Meeting a Chair's Action had been required to authorise the Bad Debt Write-Offs, so that the write-offs could be incorporated with the 2019/20 accounts.

Committee **approved** the Bad Debt Write-Offs as agreed by Chair's Action.

20/05/7 Audit Committee Annual Report to Management Committee (presented when Gordon joined meeting)

The Audit Committee Chair presented the paper explaining that it had been discussed and agreed by the Audit Committee. He talked through the Appendix to the report and highlighted how useful the self-assessment checklist had been.

Committee **approved** the Audit Committee Annual Report to Management Committee

20/05/8 Confidential Report: Bank Signatories

Committee discussed banking arrangements the detailed minute of which provides confidential information on the operation of the Association's bank accounts.

20/05/9 Management Accounts

The CSD talked through the report highlighting that there was a surplus of £622k and an underspend against the budget of £799k. This was mostly due to the timing of drawing down the loan resulting in lower interest paid, and a reduction in revenue expenditure on the planned maintenance programme offset by the actuarial entries required for the pension scheme. The CSD highlighted the detail of other areas which had changed since the previous report, some of which were due to the impacts of Covid-19 including rental income, planned and cyclical maintenance and bad debts. The CSD reported that the covenants were being comfortably met and highlighted the reserves held. Committee **noted** the Management Accounts to 31 March 2020

20/05/10 Income Report April 2020

The CE talked through the report and explained that Committee would receive a monthly report, which would also be included within the Management Committee reports. The purpose of the monthly reports was to ensure Committee were fully apprised of the financial impact Covid-19 was having and the actions that were being taken to mitigate the effects. The CE reported that work on void properties would commence on 1 June 2020 with a view to letting properties from approximately 15 June 2020. The CE gave an update on the Finavon Street Development explaining that it was expected to be complete by July/August. He stressed that he continued to have robust communication with Robertson throughout lockdown.

Committee asked whether Robertson would be trying to seek additional costs for having to deal with the health and safety implications of Covid-19. The CE stated that both parties were still negotiating a reasonable solution and agreement as Robertson had failed to complete the development within their own timescale, which was a month prior to lockdown commencing. The CE also stressed that loss of rent would still be pursued, regardless of the current pandemic.

The CE talked through the issues relating to taking legal action for rent arrears following the implementation of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020. He stressed that the financial implications associated with Covid-19 are considerable, but he reassured Committee that the Association was financially sound and that all of the scenario planning and stress testing carried out last year, whilst it may not have covered a pandemic, would ensure that the Association remained a financially strong and viable organisation.

Committee **noted** the Income Report

{5.50pm Gordon Edward joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams}

20/05/11 Internal Management Plan Update

The CE presented and talked through the IMP Update, highlighting that the text shown in red related to the effects and impact of Covid-19.

Committee asked for clarification on when Committee Appraisals would be carried out. The CE explained that the Governance Training Plan was central to successfully addressing the issues identified in the Regulatory Engagement Plan and therefore until this training was complete Appraisals would be delayed. He reported that Appraisals would be carried out by two external consultants, one for individual Member's Appraisals and one to undertake full Committee Appraisals.

Committee asked what the delay and cost implications may be due to the delay of the Charleston Development. The CE highlighted that the effects of Covid-19 had impacted on the entire Scottish Government target of 50,000 homes by 2021. The likelihood was that the planned 52 week Charleston Development was more realistically going to take in the region of 60-70 weeks for completion due to the added Health and Safety aspects which would be required, and hence there would be additional costs. The Scottish Government had already intimated that Housing Associations could claim 70% of the additional costs to alleviate some of the pressure. The CE confirmed that Bancon would return to site either during the first or second week in June.

Committee **noted** the progress detailed within the IMP Action Plan.

20/05/12 Procurement Quarterly Report

The CSD talked through the report. She highlighted the Bancon tender for the Charleston Development which had been accepted by Chair's Action which was agreed unanimously by all Committee members.

Committee **noted** the Procurement Quarterly Report

20/05/13 Confidential Report: Procurement – Open Space Maintenance Contract

The CE talked through the report and explained the rationale behind the decision to award the contract to Ground Control. He reported that he and the CSD would be reviewing the Scheme of Delegated Authorities as the current £500k limit was open to interpretation.

Committee **noted** that following a regulated procurement tender procedure the CE had approved the award of a three year fixed term contract to Ground Control at the costs reported.

20/05/14 Procurement Strategy Annual Report

The CSD talked through the report.

Committee asked whether post Covid-19 was it likely that there would be fewer contractors and therefore were costs likely to escalate as demand increased. The CE confirmed that it was likely that there would be fewer contractors particularly when the furloughing scheme ended. The cost implications would not only be felt due to Covid-19 but also Brexit, as costs for material, labour and plant may increase. All of these considerations would need to be included in scenario planning. The CE reassured Committee that Bancon have their own workforce and timber frame supplier and therefore the impact on the Charleston Development would be relatively low.

Committee **approved** the Procurement Strategy Annual Report

20/05/15 Complaints Annual Report

The CSD explained that the Association produced an Annual Report on Complaints which was submitted to the SPSO. To date this had not been reported to Committee but it was felt that it is essential to good governance and hence would be provided annually. The CSD highlighted that a number of complaints which were not resolved in the stipulated timeframe related to Robertson and the Finavon Street Development. The CSD stressed that Robertsons had not been responsive to resolving complaints and this resulted in lengthy delays. Committee asked whether Robertson's management were being asked to intervene and the CE confirmed that he had lengthy discussions with the Regional Director who assured him that they would respond to complaints in a timely manner.

Committee asked whether delays in repairs and snagging was having an effect on the return of properties to the Association. He explained that where it was a minor repair / snagging defect the Association would get the Reactive Repairs Contractor to carry out the work whilst ensuring that it did not impact on guarantees or warranties. As a number of these complaints had not been resolved at 31 March 2020, they would also affect performance in 2020/21.

The CSD also reported that a large number of complaints had been received relating to the previous grounds maintenance contractor, however she stressed that the contractor was responsive and that the complaints were dealt with, in general, within the stipulated timeframe.

Committee **noted** the Complaints Annual Report for 2019/20

20/05/16 Smoke Alarm and Heat Detector Installation Update

The CE talked through the report explaining that due to Covid-19 restrictions it was unlikely that the deadline of February 2021 would be met. He highlighted that the Scottish Government was being updated by the Scottish Housing Regulator to explain that the majority of RSL's would find difficulties in meeting the target date and it was hoped that this may be relaxed.

The CE confirmed to Committee that whilst properties may not have alarms or detectors that are interlinked they do have independent smoke alarms. He also highlighted that we will have two contractors carrying out the work in 2020/21, one for the Retirement Housing Complexes and another for all remaining properties, which would accelerate completion of the works programme.

Committee **noted** the Association's progress in respect of its statutory obligation to ensure that all our homes have interlinked smoke alarms and heat detectors installed by February 2021.

20/05/17 Dryburgh Gardens: Fire Safety and Prevention

The CE talked through the report highlighting the fire safety and prevention work which had already been carried out. He stressed that communal doors still needed to be reviewed, however he had details of a consultant expert who would assist the Association in this respect. A Member explained that there were a number of misconceptions relating to fire doors and therefore it was important that a full and proper investigation was carried out so that a plan could be put in place. The CE highlighted that compartmentation and prevention was the priority. The CE also commented that due to the significant cost implications sprinkler systems would only be installed if legislation required installation; reminding Members that Dryburgh Gardens is not a building which is wrapped in cladding, it is of solid construction with no cladding at all.

Committee **noted** the fire safety and prevention work pertinent to Dryburgh Gardens

20/05/18 Committee Expenses Update

The CSD talked through the report.

Committee **approved** the Committee Expenses Update

20/05/19 Operational Performance Report

The CSD updated Committee on the Report. She explained that a report on the ARC Return would be brought to Committee in July as the date for submission had been delayed due to Covid-19.

Committee **noted** the Performance Report

20/05/20 Health & Safety Quarterly Report

The CE talked through the report. He highlighted that following February's meeting, at which Committee requested that the electrical safety inspection programme be accelerated, a meeting had taken place with the contractor to achieve this. However, Covid-19 restrictions have meant this can no longer be achieved and this will have an adverse impact on the programme.

The CE gave an update on gas servicing highlighting that he was attending weekly meetings to monitor performance and identify any properties which had passed the annual anniversary date. The

CE informed Members that 276 gas servicing checks had been carried out since 23 March 2020 (introduction of lockdown) and 4 properties had passed their annual anniversary date; all 4 were due to Covid-19 implications. The CE stressed that all of the 4 properties had the safety check carried out within a week of the expiry of the annual anniversary date.

Committee asked whether there were concerns relating to self-isolation. The CE explained that carefully and sensitively worded letters were being sent to the tenants to encourage them to allow entry. He stressed that he was receiving reports on each of the properties in question including details on the age of the boiler, maintenance records and frequency of callouts to ensure that any at risk properties were managed on a case by case basis.

Committee **noted** the Health and Safety Quarterly Report

20/05/21 Tenant Allowances Report

In the absence of the Housing Manager, the CE presented the Tenant Allowances Report highlighting that no compensation payments had been approved during Quarter 4 2019/20.

Committee **noted** the Tenant Allowance Report

20/05/22 Gifts and Hospitality Annual Report

The CE introduced and talked through the annual report on the value of gifts and hospitality given and received during the year.

Committee **noted** the Gifts and Hospitality Annual Report

20/05/23 Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Annual Report

The CE introduced and talked through the annual report highlighting the total number of staff and Committee members who had used contractors and suppliers during the year; emphasising that no individual had benefited from their role within the Association.

Committee **noted** the Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Annual Report

20/05/24-27 Corporate Governance Policy Review

(Whistleblowing, Bribery, Fraud, Bribery & Fraud Investigation Policies)

The CE talked through each of the Policies that had recently been reviewed highlighting the importance of each. A Member asked whether there would be any instance whereby an employee may be aware of another staff member's bad practice or misdemeanour and did not report it, if that individual could be disciplined. The CE stated that one employee cannot be disciplined for the bad practice or misdemeanour of another. It may also be difficult to prove that another person was aware of the bad practice or misdemeanour.

Committee **approved** the Whistleblowing, Bribery, Fraud, Bribery & Fraud Investigation Policies

20/05/28 Committee Training Plan

The CSO talked through the Training Plan explaining that due to the current situation attending all Conferences/Training Courses in person had been cancelled or delayed. A number of Committee had taken part in webinars. The CSO would continue to forward information on webinars which may be of interest to Committee. The CE highlighted that should Committee members be unable to access webinars at home they could attend the office where a computer would be made available for them.

Committee **noted** the Training Plan.

20/05/29 SHR Communication and Correspondence

20/05/30 AOB

ABERTAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Minutes of the Committee of Management Meeting

1. Committee asked whether the intention was to hold the AGM in September. The CE explained that the intention was to hold the AGM in September and this intention would be influenced by any guidance regarding Covid-19.
2. The CE explained that due to the number of reports and decisions which would need to be made prior to August 2020 a meeting would be scheduled for July 2020. Committee would be advised of the date but it was likely to be the Wednesday 8 July 2020.
3. The CE reiterated that Committee would receive an Income Report on a monthly basis and the next report would be sent to Members by Friday 5 June 2020.
4. The CE confirmed that he would be sending out a Strategic/Operational Report to Committee.
5. Committee asked how the Finavon Street Development still to be complete would be landscaped. The CE reported that it would be landscaped to create a grassed bank.
6. The Chair conveyed the sadness felt by all of Committee following the death of Helen Reeves. She reported that flowers and a card had been sent to Helen's sister on behalf of the Association.

Meeting closed at 19:00