

Minutes of the Meeting with Management Committee held on **Tuesday** **01 March 2022 at 5.30pm** via Zoom / in person at CentrePoint

**Minutes**

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| **Present:** | Victoria Cowie, Chair (VC) | David Cooper, Vice Chair (DC) | Craig Callan, Treasurer (CC) |
| Elizabeth Cooper (EC) | Patryk Topolski (PT) | Blanche McGinn (BMcG) |
| Przemk Jozwik (PJ) | Eddie Dallas (ED) |  |
| **In Attendance** | Cathy Brien, Director (CB) | Paul Lennon, Depute Director (PL) | Elaine Hyslop, Housing Manager (EH) |
| Richard Bolton, Community Development Officer (RB) | Abira Sarwar, Finance Officer (AS) | Paul Murphy, Corporate Services Officer (PM) |

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|  | **Agenda Item** | **Action** |
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| **1.** | **Apologies**  Apologies were **NOTED** for Heather Laing and Anne Gilmour. | **PM to update register.** |
| **Chairs Remarks**  VC welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Abira Sarwar who was attending as a staff observer and had recently joined the Co-op to help oversee the Finance function. |  |
| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest**  None |  |
| **3.** | **3.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 25 January 2022**  Proposed **Elizabeth Cooper**  Seconded **David Cooper** |  |
| **4.** | **4.1 Matters Arising**  CB advised that PL would provide an update on the landscaping contract later in the agenda. |  |
| **5.** | **Health & Safety** |  |
| **5.1 Scottish Government Guidance** **on Covid**  CB reflected on the announcement by the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon regarding removing many of the Covid restrictions. CB advised committee that we would work within the remaining guidance and continue implementing the measures currently in operation. The co-op had also surveyed tenants on our way forward with the office and hopefully we will analyse that information soon. |  |
| **6.** | **Correspondence** |  |
| **6.1 EVH Pay Negotiations**  PL advised committee that discussions on the pay award for April 2022 are in progress between EVH and the Union.  The correspondence was **NOTED** and discussed by committee. |  |
| **7.** | **Governance** |  |
| **7.1 Ethical Conduct and Notifiable Events**  CB advised committee that there were no notifiable events. |  |
| **7.2 Payments, Benefits & Entitlements**  None |  |
| **7.3 Membership Report**  PM advised committee that no new applications for membership had been received since the last management committee meeting. No other update required discussing. |  |
|  | **7.4 SHR Covid response on Rent Arrears**  PL advised committee that the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) had produced a report recently that rent arrears had increased across the sector. The aggregate rent arrears have risen to 6.53% of rent due. PL added that social landlords can experience fluctuations in the level of arrears during the year, and it is not unusual for a peak in arrears around Christmas.  PL added however this was the highest level of arrears since the Regulator started collecting monthly and quarterly returns from social landlords in April 2020. He also discussed Garrion arrears levels and what work was ongoing to help reduce arrears at the co-op.  The correspondence was **NOTED** and discussed by committee. |  |
|  | **7.5 Covid quarterly return to SHR 31 12 2021**  PL advised that the level of gross rent arrears for the Co-op represented a good performance against the total annual rent due of over a million pounds. The gross rent arrears percentage is 4.92% which compares favourably to the sector average of 6.53%. PL added that the percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty (%) is 0.06%. Cashflow at the co-op remained healthy while investment was steady and in line with Covid protocol. |  |
|  | **7.6 New Committee Member Drive**  PL advised that as discussed at our last management committee meeting we are looking to recruit more committee members as well as approaching housing professionals who might be interested in joining.  PL asked committee to promote the opportunity to tenants and local residents in the area who have something to offer the Co-op. PL stressed that it was an opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and make a difference in the community. | **PL/PM to approach potential candidates for governing body role.** |
| **8.** | **Strategy** |  |
| **8.1 CentrePoint** |  |
| RB advised committee that he has been consulting with the local community, staff members and board members regarding possible projects and ideas that we may wish to consider for an Investing in Communities Fund (ICF) application or other funding.  RB advised that he had grouped the ideas into themes and would evaluate them and work out what ideas had the most potential to deliver the biggest outcomes.  RB advised committee that we have received confirmation of an in principle grant offer (submitted & managed by FHC, covering both communities).  RB added that the cookery group was going well and the gardening group starts back soon.  RB provided an update on the vacant office space in CentrePoint.  CB asked committee if they were happy to use an external marketing company to attract a client to the space.  Committee **APPROVED** the request to use an external marketing company  RB advised committee that we had applied for Cash for kids via their basic essentials winter grant. We have summited an application to support 67 children and young people.  RB was asked what the criteria is for children to qualify for a voucher from cash for kids.  RB advised that he had written to all tenants who had children and met the qualifying requirements and asked if they were happy for an application to be written on their behalf.  RB also asked whether we just applied for our tenants or residents in the area.  RB advised that we just applied for our tenants as we only have the qualifying information for them.  RB advised that we are currently running a participatory budgeting project.  RB encouraged anyone who had still to vote to do so.  PL asked for a volunteer from the committee for an interview panel for the post of community development assistant.  DC volunteered.  PL & RB thanked DC.  Committee thanked RB for his report.  RB left the meeting. |  |
| **8.2** **New Build Project Gowkthrapple Regeneration**  CB advised committee that the masterplan to transform Gowkthrapple had been formally agreed by North Lanarkshire Councillors. The plan will deliver new homes, retail, additional open spaces and play facilities. CB added that an improved transport infrastructure is also part of the masterplan, with hopes of creating a new, attractive and well-connected neighbourhood.  CB added that it is exciting to see this level of investment in the local community.  Committee **AGREED** to the recommendations in the report on Gowkthrapple. |  |
| **8.3 Business Plan (away day)**  CB advised committee that the Business Planning Day would take place on Friday the 29th of April. Arneil Johnston will be attending on the day and will facilitate a discussion on the Co-op’s future direction. They will work with committee to assist in identifying the risks and challenges the Co-op will face in the short, medium and long term.  CB urged committee members to make a special effort to attend. |  |
|  | **8.4** **Repairs & Maintenance Policy**  PL advised Committee that this was a really important policy for the Co-op, previously issued and previously discussed with members. Also confirming it was an update to the current policy and advised of the main changes.  PL added that if any members of the committee would like any further reassurance, our maintenance officer Alex Gemmell would be happy to assist.  The policy was:  Proposed **Victoria Cowie**  Seconded **David Copper**  The policy was **APPROVED** |  |
|  | **8.5 Sustainability Policy**  PL advised committee of the aims of the policy.  The policy was:  Proposed **Elizabeth Copper**  Seconded **Blanche McGinn**  The policy was **APPROVED** |  |
|  | **8.6** **Electrical Safety Policy**  Item Deferred |  |
|  | **8.7 Gas Management (Maintenance) Policy**  Item Deferred |  |
| **9.** | **Staffing** |  |
| PL updated committee on the finance role and the current arrangements in place. |  |
| **10.** | **Compliance** |  |
| PL advised that we had sent the Co-op’s covenant compliance to our bank and the relationship manager was happy with what we had sent him. PL added that the covenant compliance is to confirm the organisation is not in breach of the any of the four covenants we have with the bank, the conditions we have to fulfil. |  |
| **11.** | **Finance** |  |
| **11.1 Former Tenant Arrears and Former Tenant Pre Payments – Write Off Report 2021/22**  EH provided a report on write offs and discussed further with committee. It was recommended that the co-op writes off some former arrears and credits. EH explained the complete process.  Committee **APPROVED** the write off | **EH to organise write offs on system** |
| **12.** | **Operations** |  |
| **12.1 Landscaping and Close Cleaning Tenders**  PL advised committee as approved at the last management committee meeting we are going out to tender for landscaping and close cleaning services. PL added that we would work closely with our procurement advisor Iain Thomson in drafting the tenders and overseeing the process. |  |
| **13.** | **Any Other Competent Business** |  |
| EH advised committee that we have an opportunity to discuss in detail the options for the removal of bulk household waste to assist in dealing with the problem of fly tipping. Committee were invited to review the options and decide on the best way forward based on the information contained within the report.  The committee felt the level of service provided currently was of a good standard.  After lots of discussion the committee decided to continue with the current arrangement in place. This was mainly due to increased costs associated with choosing a different method of service delivery.  VC thanked the committee and staff for attending the meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home. |  |
| **14.** | **Date of Next Meeting** |  |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | Management Committee Meeting: 5.30pm Tuesday 29 March 2022 |  | |  |  | |  |  | | |