

Minutes of the Meeting with Management Committee held on **Tuesday** **25 January 2022 at 5.30pm** via Zoom / in person at CentrePoint

**Minutes**

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| **Present:** | David Cooper, Vice Chair (DC) | Heather Laing, Secretary (HL) | Craig Callan, Treasurer (CC) |
| Elizabeth Cooper (EC) | Patryk Topolski (PT) | Blanche McGinn (BMcG) |
| Przemk Jozwik (PJ) | Fiona Shearer (FS) |  |
| **In Attendance** | Cathy Brien, Director (CB) | Paul Lennon, Depute Director (PL) | Elaine Hyslop, Housing Manager (EH) |
| Richard Bolton, Community Development Officer (RB) | Paul Murphy, Corporate Services Officer (PM) |  |

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|  | **Agenda Item** | **Action** |
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| **1.** | **Apologies**  Apologies were **NOTED** for Victoria Cowie and Eddie Dallas. | **PM to update register.** |
| **Chairs Remarks**  DC welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished Victoria and Eddie a speedy recovery from illness. |  |
| **2.** | **Declarations of Interest**  None |  |
| **3.** | **3.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 14 December 2021**  Proposed **Craig Callan**  Seconded **Heather Laing** |  |
| **4.** | **4.1 Matters Arising**  CB advised that EH would provide an update on the rent focus group meeting 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 reducing Covid restrictions. CB advised committee that additional staff can return to the office from Monday. Therefore we are going to reintroduce reception staff to the centre. Additionally we will look at ways in which more staff could return to the office on a more permanent basis, eg housing staff being in the office each day. It was also confirmed that the co-op would await further advice from the SG and EVH on hybrid working. It was noted customer service levels were still high through covid times and going forward, tenants will be at the heart of any future service reshaping.  Committee **APPROVED** this approach. |  |
| **5.2 Coronavirus Health & Safety Policy**  PM explained the purpose of the policy on helping to ensure staff and committee’s safety.  Committee **APPROVED** the policy. | **PM to update policy register** |
| **6.** | **Correspondence** |  |
| **6.1 Tenant Health and Safety Assurance Survey**  PL advised committee that the Scottish Housing Regulator had asked the Co-op to complete a survey on Tenant Health and Safety Assurance. The survey had been completed by CB, EH, PM and Alex on behalf of the Co-op and had been returned to the Regulator. Discussion on each point of the survey took place with committee being assured of the co-op’s position at each question.  The correspondence was **NOTED** and discussed by committee. |  |
| **6.2 SHR Appointment**  PL confirmed that Helen Shaw had replaced Ian Brennan as Director of Regulation. Ms Shawis currently an Assistant Director with the Regulator.  The committee **NOTED** the correspondence. |  |
| **6.3 EVH (Employers in Voluntary Housing) CHAS (Children’s Hospices Across Scotland) Donation** **Acknowledgement**  PL advised that the Children’s Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) had written to the Co-op to thank the organisation for donating £75.  The committee **NOTED** the correspondence. |  |
| **7.** | **Governance** |  |
| **7.1 Ethical Conduct and Notifiable Events**  CB advised committee that there were no notifiable events.  CB added that the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) had been in contact since the last meeting. As part of their annual risk assessment on RSLs they were checking that minutes were on public display for the last 3 approved committee meetings. While looking at the minutes, they considered that there was an issue regarding low attendance (June, August and October meetings) and those in attendance when important decisions (like approving the annual assurance statement) were being taken.  They asked for comment on how GPHC would assure themselves on this matter.  All in attendance noted the SHR contact and agreed that while Covid played a part in attendance being lower, there were genuine reasons for meetings that were low in numbers. Also noting that there was an increase since November when we purchased the new Poly Bar system which meant those who were not always keen to connect from home could come back to the office and meet in person. This was clearly an area that had results in the last few months. Going forward, committee agreed that they would also be keen on one or two new members to take the total to 15 and that would also increase chances of higher participation.  PL added that the subject of professionals from housing being on committee had been discussed at a recent committee meeting and that contact would be made with some professionals wanting to self-develop by joining a governing body or choosing an alternative one to where they were previously. This was accepted by committee.  On the subject of the annual assurance statement being approved in October, Davie Cooper confirmed this was a meeting he and Elizabeth missed at short notice but he also confirmed the assurance statement had been discussed on the day with Paul Lennon so that they were aware of what was being submitted this year.  Craig referred to those who were relatively new members and confirmed that before any decisions were taken, they feel they are as members given the background and issues about the topic before making a decision, similar to that on the night of the October meeting. PL also referred to induction training received recently by new members where the assurance statement had been covered. Committee felt assured that although the decision was taken to approve the AAS in front of a small group, others had been briefed before the meeting for their views and those on the night were fully aware of the decision taken and background.  Committee agreed however that this area would be given careful consideration going forward and asked that attendance be kept under review with important policies and documents only taken to meetings where there is a reasonable attendance, if possible. |  |
| **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 Annual Programme of Meetings**  CB advised committee that PM had worked on an annual programme for the committee meetings for the year ahead. The programme sets out the vast majority of the business going to committee in the year.  Committee **APPROVED** the annual programme of meetings. |  |
| **8.** | **Strategy** |  |
| **8.1 CentrePoint** |  |
| RB provided a presentation.  RB advised committee that we plan on applying for Investing in Community Funding 2023-26 (ICF). RB conveyed that it is expected that it will be very competitive and we will need to build the strongest possible funding application.  The ICF grant application need to address all four areas for action:   1. Tackling Poverty & Inequality, including Child Poverty 2. Developing and Sustaining Place Based Approaches 3. Community-led Regeneration 4. Ensuring a just transition to Net Zero  * Helping your community to take action on climate change as part of your project/service * Delivering your project in a climate-friendly way   The committee had a discussion on possible ideas for the funding application. The suggestions provided were primarily linked to food and fuel poverty.  HL citied the success of the meals project during the pandemic.  Committee **NOTED** the presentation from RB and it was also agreed for members to email Richard or the office if they could think of anything further to add to the large list of ideas already in place.  RB thanked Committee for their input.  Committee thanked RB for his report.  RB left the meeting. |  |
| **8.2 Business Plan (away day)**  CB advised that we are still in the process of arranging the Business Planning Day, adding that we want to ensure that we could safely meet in person without restrictions. |  |
| **9** | **Staffing** |  |
| Committee **APPROVED** the report on staffing. .    PL advised that he had interviewed agency candidates for the temporary finance position for a period of 3 months. One was successful at interview and will have have a few handover sessions with Kennedy to assist the succession. |  |
| **10.** | **Compliance** |  |
| **10.1 Risk Register**  CB advised committee that as a staff team we had updated the Risk Register. The register is populated by risks identified and the controls / actions in place to help mitigate each risk.  CB advised committee that at the Business Planning Day we would collectively discuss the risks the Co-op faces and how we reduce the level of risk. |  |
| **10.2 Training**  PL advised that unfortunately Stuart Eglinton had Covid recently so we will rearrange the training for staff and committee. Preference is for the training to take place in person or in a hybrid format. |  |
| **11.** | **Finance** |  |
| **11.1 Rent Review Consultation Feedback & 2022/23 Rent Increase – Including Feedback from Consultation Event held 18 Jan 2022**  EH advised committee that as they were aware the Rent Review Consultation documents had been sent to all tenants. All the feedback from the consultation has been collated and a consultation event was held recently. EH advised committee that from all the responses we had received there was no objection to the proposed 3.1% rent increase.  EH added that at the consultation event everyone who had attended felt that under the circumstances the proposed rent increase of 3.1% was reasonable, considering the current rate of inflation. Additionally we contacted the tenants who had provided apologies for the consultation event and everyone contacted had no objections to the proposed increase. Some proposals from other RSLs were discussed, including increases at 5% and 6% suggested.  Committee **APPROVED** the rent increase of 3.1% for 2022/2023. |  |
| **11.2 Management Accounts to 31 December 2021**  PL advised that Kennedy had produced the Management Accounts to 31 December 2021.  PL advised that the total turnover for the period ending 31st December is £933,119. The majority of our income is from the core activity of letting houses for social rents.  In the first 9 months the income from social rent accounted for 85% of our turnover. The remainder was from CentrePoint community facility, sale of services through our staff sharing arrangement and grants.  Covid restrictions continue to impact the income generated from CentrePoint Community facility, with the space previously occupied by Partners in Play remaining vacant. We are exploring opportunities to market this office space to other charities particularly social enterprises so the main objective of the centre will continue to be for community use. Overall, the income from the community centre is in line with budget though be it at £10k/qtr less than pre-pandemic levels.  As a result of the various charges we have concluded the period with a surplus of £102,620 after depreciation costs. In view of the current climate this is a very strong position to finish Q3 on.  The management accounts were:  Proposed **David Copper**  Seconded **Elizabeth Copper** |  |
| **11.3 Draft Budget 2022/23**  PL advised that the budget is around 95% complete, however the wage increase for staff has not been set yet via the negotiations between EVH (Employers in Voluntary Housing) and the unions. Therefore until this figure is agreed the budget cannot be finalised. Inflation rising is also a factor and it is important to run various scenarios when drafting the budget.  **ITEM DEFFERED** |  |
|  | **11.4 Working from home**  PL advised committee that the organisation had paid employees a working from home allowance as recommended by the Government, staff were paid £6 per week to go towards their additional costs of working from home for example: gas, electricity, printing and phone calls.  PL confirmed to committee that the allowance is due to end in March 2022. This was accepted by management committee.  The committee **AGREED** to continue the payment to staff until the end of March 2022. |  |
| **12.** | **Operations** |  |
| **12.1 Housing Management Performance Report** |  |
| EH advised committee that the average turnaround of calendar days with voids have decreased (improved) from 8.7 days at same quarter last year to 3.3 days this year. This being due the allocation of voids last year impacted by Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.  The loss in monetary terms is £468.47 which is 0.04% of our annual rental income.  This compares extremely well to the Scottish landlord average re-let turnaround time of 56.30 days (including local authorities)  Sixteen (16) offers of tenancy were made and 2 were refused which results in 13% of tenancy offers being refused.  EH added that close monitoring of the void performance, current and former arrears cases will continue.  This will be managed by early intervention with current arrears cases providing advice and support to help tenants sustain their tenancy while maximising the income to the Co-operative.  Tenants will be kept well informed of any financial assistance that becomes available to them and will be displayed/advertised on our website, within our newsletters or when housing staff are liaising with tenants. In addition we will continue to signpost tenants to the AFTAR project to obtain assistance with financial inclusion and money advice.  All staff and committee will be kept abreast of any changes with welfare reform and legislation and any necessary training updates will be arranged for staff/committee when required.    Committee **NOTED** the report and passed on their thanks to Elaine and the team. |  |
| **12.2 Maintenance Performance Report** |  |
| CB advised committee that in the third quarter we are continuing to see a level of normality within our repairs service. Restrictions were reintroduced in December, however we were still able to carry out internal repairs to our properties.   * Total number of emergency jobs for this period was 53 compared to 54 in 2020-21. * Average time to complete an emergency repair for this period was 2.4 hours compared to 3.1 hours in 2020-21. * One job failed our timescales within this period compared to no jobs failing in the same period from 2020-21. * Total number of non-emergency repairs for the period was 140. The total for the same period in 2020-21 was 134. * Average time to complete non-emergency repairs was 2.9 days compared to 2.6 days for the same period in 2020-21. * Number of jobs failed our timescales in this period, compared to 2 jobs failing in 2020-21.   In the period we had a 100% completion record in gas servicing.  Committee **NOTED** the report and passed on their thanks to Alex and the maintenance team.  **Landscaping**  PL commenced a discussion and provided a report on the service.. The outcome of which was that the committee decided that they would like the andscaping contract re-tendered. | **Landscaping contract to be re-tendered.** |
| **13.** | **Any Other Competent Business** |  |
| CB advised committee that with regards to the Castlehill Road site our lawyer is working with North Lanarkshire’s legal team and it is hoped that it will be settled by the end of March this year.  DC 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 |  | |  |  | |  |  | | |