

CASSILTOUN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT
HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.00 PM IN CASTLEMILK STABLES, 59
MACHRIE ROAD/ZOOM**

Present: George Kelly Anne M Stuart MBE
Evelyn Ferguson Julie McNeil (Zoom)
Fay Mitchell Gayle Fitzpatrick (Zoom)
Barbara Dusik (Zoom) Jennifer McInnes (Zoom)
Ryan Davidson Chris O'Brien (Zoom)

In Attendance: Clair Malpas Chief Executive Officer
Paula Brownlie Head of Corporate, HR & Finance

1a. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, SEDERUNT & APOLOGIES

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting. There is no fire drill tonight and reminded Board Members of the evacuation procedures.

Apologies were received from Teresa McGowan. *Redacted as contains sensitive information.*

1b. QUORUM

As per the Association's Rules, the Quorum for the Board of Management Meeting stands at 4 members. Today's meeting is therefore quorate.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST (PERMANENT REGISTER)

Agenda Item 7 – Rent Options Consultation Report. George Kelly, Anna Stuart MBE and Barbara Dusik declared an interest.

3a. MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 24TH OCTOBER 2023

The Chairperson asked all board members present at today's meeting if they had received their papers on time and if they had read and understood the papers.

All board members confirmed that they had received their papers on time and that they had read and understood the papers.

The minute of meeting held on 24th October 2023 where noted and approved on the motion of Anna Stuart MBE and seconded by Faye Mitchell.

3b. MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 24TH OCTOBER 2023

None.

3c. ACTION LIST FROM MEETING HELD ON 24TH OCTOBER 2023

	Details	Person Responsible	Status
Actions from meeting held on 29th March 2023			
1.	<i>Redacted as contains sensitive information.</i>		<i>Redacted as contains sensitive information.</i>
Actions from meeting held on 21st June 2023			
2.	<p>Stables Heating Project</p> <p>To utilise the Link Framework for the appointment of M+E Engineer and QS Services having successfully used this framework before and in order to keep the expenditure 'within the sector'.</p> <p><i>Redacted as contains sensitive information.</i></p> <p>Board give delegated authority to the CEO to select the respective consultancy firms for M+E and QS Services from the Link Group Framework.</p> <p>That the Board give delegated authority to the CEO to seek external funding to assist with the cost of the project and to engage with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) over the planned investment, as necessary.</p>	<p>Development Consultant</p> <p>Development Consultant</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>CEO</p>	<p>Complete – contractor appointed via Link Framework</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Actions from meeting held on 24th October 2023			
3.	Revised SWOT and PEST to be presented to the Board in November	CEO	Agenda Item 8 – 28/11/1023
4.	Annual Report and Tenant's Report Card – CSO to email a virtual copy of the report to the Board of Management members,	CSO	Complete
5.	<p>Paths for All funding for lighting in the woodland – Delegated authority to CEO to select and appoint successful contractor.</p> <p>CSO to update Delegated Authority register.</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>CSO</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Complete</p>
6.	<p>HomeMaster – Delegated Authority to CEO to approve a maximum of 5 days post "go live" training for staff team.</p> <p>CSO to update Delegated Authority Register.</p>	<p>CEO</p> <p>CSO</p>	<p>Complete</p>

7.	<i>Redacted as contains commercially sensitive information.</i>	CEO	<i>Redacted as contains commercially sensitive information.</i>
8.	Apportionment Rules – <i>Redacted as contains sensitive information.</i> CSO to update Delegated Authority Register.	CEO CSO	Ongoing Complete
9.	Quarterly Return to the Information Commissioner for Q2 – CSO to upload the Q2 figures to the portal.	CSO	Complete
10.	Share Membership – Share membership database to be updated and certificate issued to new member.	CSO	Complete
11.	<i>Redacted as contains sensitive information.</i>	CSO	Complete

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

9th November 2023: Attended the Staffing Sub Committee Meeting. A number of approvals were given which are highlighted under agenda item 17.

14th November 2023: Chair attended the second training session run by Clydebank Housing Association. This was facilitated via zoom. This session was on Good Governance practices and was facilitated by Angela Spence. Angela is a trainer at SHARE and she had approx 20 slides to get through in the hour and a half allocated for her presentation. This was a vast amount of work which sadly left no time for interaction, debate or questions. Angela explained how governance affected every aspect of the business and emphasised the importance of having a good governance culture within an RSL. Angela put forward her presentation really well, however I think there was too much information given for one session.

Smaller chunks with dialogue and questions would have been more enjoyable and those present would have had time to take in what had been discussed. Having gone through so much Governance training and issues over the years it was made clear to me that our Governance Culture at Cassiltoun is well embedded and enshrined into our everyday activities and Cassiltoun stands at the top of the sector when it comes to Good Governance.

20th November 2023: The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson attended both the Health and Safety Sub Committee and the Landlord Health and Safety Sub Committee. Both Committees have a quorate of three attendees. As only the two members were present the agenda items were noted and no decisions made.

The Board noted the contents of the Chairperson's report.

5. **CEO 6 MONTH REVIEW**

The Chair presented the CEO's 6 month review. The Board noted the contents of the CEO's 6 month review.

6. **STAFF REPORT – TECHNICAL TEAM**

Redacted as contains sensitive information.

7. **RENT OPTIONS CONSULTATION REPORT**

The Chief Executive Officer presented the above report previously circulated with the agenda.

As the Board are aware, in order to meet our Regulatory requirements and to ensure that tenants are consulted and involved with decisions that relate to the immediate and long-term business plan, the Association will be undertaking a consultation with tenants on the proposed rent increase from 1 April 2024. Like previous years, we have contracted with *Redacted as contains commercially sensitive information.* to deliver the consultation as this provides a good rate of return, provides analysis and is independent. The Rent Setting Policy, approved in November 2021 refers to ensuring rent setting is in accordance with long term projections as well as medium term forecasts.

‘The Association sets its annual rental increase relative to inflation in accordance with its medium and long-term budgetary forecasts as detailed within the five-yearly and thirty-yearly projections contained within the Group Business Plan.’

Like last year the Association and the sector is faced with the added complexity of sustained high levels of inflation in the economy coupled with costs in the business/sector rising by more than headline inflation.

It is accepted by the Scottish Housing Regulator that this continues to be a very challenging set of circumstances for all Housing Associations where rent increases need to be aligned with business need coupled with the requirement to ensure that rent remains affordable.

The Chief Executive intimated that she had attended a briefing session that was ran by Paul McNeil, Financial Consultant. He intimated that Boards’ need to be mindful of business needs rather than what feels right.

As the Board are aware, our starting point is our Business Plan which is CPI + 1%. CPI is currently 4.6% which equates to a rent increase of 5.6%. The other option is CPI + 2%.

Our Business Plan relies on rent going up by 1% above inflation but other costs in the Association not going up any more than inflation. There are costs within the Business Plan which we can control but there are other costs that will go up more than inflation.

We need to look at affordability. Affordability is defined as:

‘The extent to which something is affordable, as measured by its cost relative to the amount that the purchaser is able to pay’.

Shelter defines affordable housing as ‘no more than 35% of your household income after tax and benefits’.

The Association uses the SFHA/Housemark tool to look at proposed rent increases. Cassiltoun use the Association’s average rent for property size and the living wage as an income measure for those of working age.

A rent of less than 25% of income is the ideal and is deemed affordable, a rent of 25-35% is still affordable but at higher levels is on the margins of affordability. Above 35% is unaffordable. Looking at affordability levels, all of Cassiltoun's properties fall within what is deemed to be affordable. The 'least' affordable property is Cassiltoun's rent levels for a 2 apartment home (lived in by 1 person), as this is edging towards the mid-point of what is deemed affordable.

The Association has 113 two apartment properties which is 10% of our stock. When considering rent increases in the future the Board will need to keep in their mind the impact of increases on the affordability of the Associations 2 apartment properties. Over the course of next year, we can carry out an analysis of our 2 apartment properties to determine the rent level for next year.

With a 6.6% increase in April 2023 Cassiltoun was in the upper level of increases with 16 landlords in Glasgow implementing rent increases greater than Cassiltoun and 45 landlords implementing rent increases lower than Cassiltoun. Comparisons on rent increases need to be considered in relation to the level of rents in the local area. Details were contained within the report.

The report highlighted cost pressures in our business. In a challenging period, over the past 5 years, the Association has taken small steps to reduce costs where it can. This has included freezing or reducing some budgets and has included: not returning to staff uniforms, bringing some of our publication design in house, reducing the size of some of our publications (newsletters and annual report), not replacing the server, encouraging staff to look for free or low cost courses, reducing the Association's contribution to community development/regeneration project costs, reducing overtime and looking at our staffing compliment when someone leaves the organisation.

Our current Business Plan was developed on a basis of rent increases of CPI plus 1% for 5 years then reducing to CPI only, (2023 – 2028). Due to the high levels of CPI last Autumn the Board took the view to implement a 6.6% increase in April 2023 which was significantly lower than inflation. The Board also froze the investment programme for 2 years (2023- 2025). The Business Plan has been 'reset' with increases of CPI plus 1% running for the period 2024 – 2029. If internal inflation levels continue to run higher than headline inflation this period may need to be extended. At the recent Business planning day on 6th October 2023, FMD produced figures for sensitivity analysis which included the implications of no real rent increases (inflation only). The graph in the report highlighted that by Year 9 of the Business Plan the Association has tipped into a negative cash position.

The impact of a 5.6% and 6.6% increase to the Associations income was outlined in the report. The difference is approx £50k.

Our consultation with tenants will take place in December 2023. Following the formal consultation exercise with tenants in December 2023, the Board will receive a report on the outcome at its meeting in January 2024 and be asked to make its decision. This will allow sufficient time for rent increases to be communicated to tenants and relevant benefit authorities.

Consultation options to be considered:-

- As per current business plan – CPI plus 1% (5.6%)
- CPI plus 2% (6.6%)
- CPI plus 2% (6.6%) with the extra income generated ringfenced for estate improvements or community investment
- Consult on another figure that the Board determines

Each board member were asked for their views on the above rent consultation options. All Board Members agreed that we should give our tenants two options. It was also agreed that if we are considering ringfencing monies for estate improvements and community investment that we should be specific with what to allow for our tenants to see the tangible outcomes.

Julie McNeil intimated that we should also be giving our tenants comparative costs as part of the consultation exercise (component parts) to demonstrate the rise in costs.

After discussion, the Board unanimously approved to consult with our tenants on the undernoted rent increase options:-

***As per current business plan – CPI plus 1% (5.6%)
CPI plus 2% (6.6%) with the extra income generated ringfenced for estate improvements or community investment***

8. **SWOT/PEST**

The Chief Executive Officer presented the above updated SWOT/PEST documents previously circulated with the agenda.

As the Board are aware, at the Board/Staff Business Planning Day on 6th October 2023 we reviewed the SWOT/PEST documents of the Business Plan.

The Board noted and approved the revised SWOT/PEST documents which will form part of the Business Plan.

Ryan Davidson enquired if there was an Action Plan to take forward the changes in the SWOT and PEST documents. The Chief Executive Officer explained that both documents will form part of Senior Staff SMART Plans as well as Service Plans for each department.

9. **STRATEGIC/OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES 2024/25**

The Chief Executive Officer presented the above updated strategic and operational objectives 2024/25 previously circulated with the agenda which have been updated and approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

After discussion, the Board noted and approved the revised Strategic/Operational Objectives for 2024/25.

10. **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

10a. **DAMP AND MOULD PROCEDURE:** The Chief Executive Officer presented the Damp and Mould procedure (new). The procedure covers the four main categories of dampness ie

Penetrating Dampness
Defective Plumbing
Rising Damp
Condensation and Mould Growth

The biggest change is how the Association deals with Damp and Mould. The Association needs to be proactive. Damp and Mould cases have always been dealt with as a repair. The

key now is in regard to follow up actions as detailed in page 8 of the Procedure. Details will be kept in a Damp and Mould register which will be presented quarterly to the Regeneration/Operations Sub Committee.

The Chief Executive Officer highlighted the number of damp and mould cases received from 1st April 2023 - October 2023.

26 Cases of condensation damp – mix of treatments by the Association’s Handy Team or damp and mould specialist appointed via City Building.

14 Cases of traumatic damp caused by leaks. Mix of treatments by City Building or damp and mould specialists. Or handled via insurance claims.

The Association has clear procedures in place on how the Association will handle enquires about damp and mould. Our new IT system (Homemaster) will support greater management of ongoing issues or trends. Damp and Mould training has been provided to all Technical Team members. There will be an ongoing review of how we manage cases which are brought to our attention. We will continue to raise awareness with residents and encourage them to report issues to the Association.

Julie McNeil indicated that when the Association is installing new heating systems that it is fitted to assist with heating and not about saving money.

After discussion, the Board approved the Damp and Mould Procedure.

10b. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY: The Head of Corporate, HR & Finance presented the Freedom of Information policy (revised). ***After discussion, the Board approved the revised Freedom of Information Policy.***

10c. ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2004: The Head of Corporate, HR & Finance presented the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations (revised). ***After discussion, the Board approved the revised Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.***

10d. SUCCESSION POLICY: The Head of Corporate, HR & Finance presented the new Succession Policy. ***After discussion, the Board approved the revised Succession Policy.***

11. BOARD OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING DATES

The Head of Corporate, HR & Finance presented the Training Dates for 2024 and asked the Board to note the dates in their diaries. It was also noted that all training will be carried out by external consultants and all board members were encouraged to attend.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

EVH Monthly Report – October 2023: The EVH Monthly Report for October 2023 was circulated to the Board for their information.

GWSF Monthly Report – October 2023: The GWSF Monthly Report for October 2023 was circulated to the Board for their information.

New GWSF pilot scheme - Support Panel for HAs facing difficulties: GWSF has set up a volunteer panel of people from member Associations who’d be willing to offer support to any

other member Association facing difficulties. Information about the Panel was circulated to the Board for their information.

13. **APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

The Board considered 3 membership applications as outlined by the Head of Corporate, HR & Finance.

The Board noted the eligibility of the applications had been checked.

The Board noted and approved for the members to be added to the Share Membership Register and that the Share Certificates would be issued.

14. **USE OF SEAL**

One

15. **ENTITLEMENT, BENEFIT AND PAYMENTS**

The Board noted the Entitlement, Benefit and Payments register as at November 2023.

16. **NOTIFIABLE EVENTS**

Redacted as contains sensitive information.

17. **SUBSIDIARY & SUB-COMMITTEE DECISIONS MADE BETWEEN 25TH OCTOBER 2023 – 28TH NOVEMBER 2023**

Chief Executive presented the above report that had been previously circulated with the papers. ***The Board of Management unanimously approved the Subsidiary & Sub-Committee decisions made between 25th October 2023 – 28th November 2023.***

18. **A.O.C.B**

Redacted as contains sensitive information.

CIH Website: CIH have developed a website regarding showcasing housing. A number of our staff have been involved in developing this website. The link had been previously distributed to the Board for their information.

Housing Minister & Lord Provost visit to Castlemilk: A local artist who is part of the Art Class painted a picture of a tenement building. The Vice Chairperson suggested giving the Housing Minister and Lord Provost a print of the picture. ***After discussion, the Board approved to donate £50 to the artist charity “Super Heroes”.***

Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Women Conference: Faye Mitchell attended this conference. Sally Henry was a presenter and worked for an organisation called “Roots Out”. This organisation sign posted ladies to benefit agencies, housing, how to complete forms, carry out their laundry, safe place and a place to use electrical.

19. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 31st January 2024 at 6.00pm

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 7.26 pm

Signature:

Chair of Board of Management

Date: