

**WELLHOUSE HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD  
ON 30 October 2024 AT 6PM**

**1. Welcome, Sederunt & Apologies**

**Present:**

<b>Maureen Morris</b>	<b>Chair</b>
<b>Anna Dukova</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>David Gebbie</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Felix Lynn</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Lauren Herd</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Jane Heppenstall</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>

**In Attendance:**

<b>Martin Wilkie-McFarlane</b>	<b>Director (Secretary)</b>
<b>James Wilson</b>	<b>Housing and Customer Services Manager</b>
<b>Bruce West</b>	<b>Finance and Corporate Services Manager</b>
<b>Linda Logan</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
<b>John Stevenson</b>	<b>Service Improvement Officer (items 7 &amp; 8 only)</b>
<b>Diane Hendry</b>	<b>Observer</b>

**Apologies:**

<b>Gordon Kerr</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>
<b>Michelle Harrow</b>	<b>Committee Member</b>

The Chair welcomed Diane Hendry, the incoming Director, who would observe tonight's meeting.

**2. Jargon Buster**

Noted for information.

**3. Declarations of interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 28 August 2024**

Committee approved the minutes of the committee meeting of 28 August 2024 a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

**David Gebbie proposed and Lauren Herd seconded the minutes of 28 August 2024.**

**5. Matters arising and actions from the minutes report.**

There were no matters arising that were not covered in subsequent agenda items.

**6. Governance and schedule of committee meetings 24/25**

The Secretary asked and the Governance Officer confirmed that all declarations of interests and the signed code of conduct had been received from all members other than Michelle Harrow, who she would contact tomorrow.

The Secretary noted that he had not received nominations for the position of Chair. He asked if anyone was willing to stand. He confirmed that Maureen Morris, had submitted her resignation as Chair due to health reasons, which had been accepted.

David Gebbie sought clarification on whether there could be a temporary Chair. He considered that a local resident should hold the position of Chair. The Secretary confirmed this, he asked committee to note that applications were out to local members, however at this time they may not wish to take on the position of the Chair, given their inexperience. He reminded committee that it was their responsibility to elect a Chair.

He asked if anyone was willing put themselves forward as Vice-Chair. David Gebbie confirmed this.

**Resolution:**

**Lauren Herd proposed and Anna Dukova seconded that David Gebbie be elected as Vice-Chair.**

There were no elections for Chair. This item will be carried forward to the December meeting. The current Chair, Maureen Morris, kindly agreed to stay on as Chair at the December meeting.

It was confirmed that Lauren Herd would be Chair of the Staffing Committee and Gordon Kerr as continuing Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. All other members were confirmed. Committee were asked to discuss the election of Chair before the December meeting. It was acknowledged that Diane Hendry, incoming Director, would take up the position of Secretary when in post on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**Resolution:**

**Committee noted and agreed to the proposed meeting dates to November 2025.**

**Agreed that all other Governance arrangements would be agreed at the December meeting.**

**Action: The Governance Officer will schedule the proposed meeting dates via teams and inhouse and forward to the committee. Committee will consider and make proposals for the position Chair at the December meeting.**

## **7. Annual Assurance Statement**

John Stevenson, Service Improvement Officer, presented the Annual Assurance Statement to the committee for review, approval and submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator noting submission by 31 October 2024 by the Chair.

John asked committee to note a revised regulatory framework put in place in February 2024. The main focus at 4.4 was the Regulators focus on residents' safety which is highlighted in our assurance statement; item 4.5 provided the information that we are compliant. He confirmed that our assessment of RACC (Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) was not present. The toolkit to aid us in the completion of the Assurance Statement has been updated and our databank amended accordingly.

He stated that we are currently compliant, with some small areas of improvement. He sought committee approval to submit the Assurance Statement 2024 to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The Chair asked if there were queries for John. There were none. He invited committee members to review the assurance data bank. The Chair thanked John for all the work he done to complete the assurance data bank. John left the meeting at this time.

**Resolution:**

**Committee:**

**Approved submission of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2024.**

**Agreed that a committee member would review the evidence bank to ensure compliance before March 2025.**

The Director asked that his thanks be passed to John for his work.

## **8. Policy Review Report**

The Notifiable Events Policy/Protocol, Disciplinary Policy for less than 2 years and the Succession Policy were presented for approval. John Stevenson presented the main amendments to the notifiable events policy as highlighted at point 4.1. There were no amendments to the Disciplinary Policy for less than two years' service or the succession planning policy.

Committee noted the amendments and approved the Notifiable Events Policy/Protocol, Disciplinary Policy for less than two years' service and the succession policy.

### **Resolution:**

**Committee approved the Notifiable Events Policy/Protocol, Disciplinary Policy for less than two years' service and the succession policy.**

**The aforementioned policies were proposed by David Gebbie and seconded by Jane Heppenstall.**

John Stevenson left the meeting at this time.

## **9. Business Plan update and delivery plans**

The Director presented the report to update the committee on the second annual update on the approved 22-25, 3 year business plan. He noted that the report provided an overview of the business planning process and framework.

He asked committee to note the delivery targets has highlighted at appendix 1 of the report, with a red, amber and green rating. He was happy to report that there were no red ratings. He stated that those areas with an amber rating were areas of work still in progress and were not areas that he not been achieved as such and were progressing as we would hope to see. He considered that the business planning process should be 5 years rather than 3 and encouraged the committee to discuss this further when the new Director is in post. He asked the committee if they had any questions or comments in relation to the attached summary update.

Jane Heppenstall asked if when moving forward consideration would be given to the equalities data and brought back to committee for consideration. The Director confirmed that a joint review had been undertaken with Blairtummock HA, where a consultant had reviewed all of our policies in relation to equalities, diversity and human rights. He noted that as reported in the Annual Assurance Statement we would be focusing on how we could apply equalities impact assessments and would be reported to the committee at a later date.

### **Resolution:**

### **Committee;**

**Noted the summary report;  
Instructed the SMT to bring a further year end review of the delivery plans in Spring 2025 to close off this business plan and introduce the next one.**

## 10 Management Accounts to 30 September 2024

The Finance Manager presented the report to provide committee with a comparison of the budget and the actual financial position to 30 September 2024. He advised the Statement of Comprehensive Income showed a budgeted surplus for the period of £192,443, however the actual results for the period show a surplus of £286,066.

He noted an overall favourable variance of £93,623 arising from:

Operational activities – favourable variance of £132,659  
Net interest and other activities – adverse variance of £39,036

### **Income and Expenditure:**

He advised that the grant income in relation to the stage 3 adaptations would be a bit less than budget largely due to budget cuts from the Scottish Government. There was an underspend of £35,297 in salaries against budget mainly due to sick pay costs and allowance for handover/acting up in relation to director/new director. Overheads had an overspend of £111,989 against budget and included development costs for the year to date. Repairs and Maintenance were under budget. He asked committee to note that the bad debts provision was significantly under budget at the moment, with £20,000 in the budget for the full year, which is around 0.5% of our rental income and our long term planning assumptions were allowing 1.5%, which may result in the budget coming under pressure

He noted that the Net Interest Rate reduction by the Bank of England in August would reduce our interest costs by around £5,000. He discussed the difficult administrative processes for putting our surpluses in notice deposit accounts

There were no covenant compliance issues.

### **Resolution:**

**Committee approved the management account to 30 September 2024, which was proposed by Anna Dukova and seconded by Jane Heppenstall.**

## 11 Value for money report 22/23 and proposed policy changes

The Finance Manager presented the report to highlight to committee our value for money position for 22-23. He noted timing issues in relation to performance indicator information in the ARC return which becomes available in September whereas the financial information that comes from RSL accounts is not nationally available until December. He advised that he did not want to leave reporting to the committee early next year. He asked the committee to consider their perspective on value for money and how this is reported. He considered that value for money was not a single thing but is about a journey of doing this better in terms of satisfaction, performance and cost. On that basis he considered that the committee should not look at micro level tasks such as how much it costs to process an invoice but rather that the value elements need to have as much importance as the cost element. He encouraged us to be curious and identify how we compare ourselves with other organisations and exploration on areas where we can learn and improve. He asked committee to note section 5.3 which lays out the proposed changes to the value for money policy that would be reflected in the revised value for money and if approved would be brought back to the January committee meeting for consideration.

The Director thanked the Finance Manager for all his work on value for money and taking the proposed forward.

**Resolution:****Committee;**

**Noted the value for money report for 22 – 23;**

**Noted the proposed key changes and approach to measurement and reporting on value for money;**

**Noted that the revised value for money policy, along with reporting and measurement arrangement would be brought to the January committee meeting.**

**12. Rent arrears update**

The Housing Manager asked committee to note the significant improvement in rent collection from the same period last year. He noted that as 30 September 2024 as a percentage the total rent due was 101.99% which is a reduction of 0.6% from the last reporting period of 102.59%. He highlighted that Gross Rent Arrears had reduced by £14,602.72 and a reduction of current tenant arrears reducing by £16,361.82. He advised that since completion of the report the £7,614 arrears on leased properties had been received back, which now stands at £765.00, a significant improvement performance at the end of August of £17,164.39. Former tenant arrears had increased by £276.23, which was disappointing. A pro-forma/procedure form had been created to introduce a procedure to recovering former arrears and was attached as an appendix for information. He asked committee to note and thanked David Wall, John Stevenson and Laura Reilly for their continued partnership working and the excellent results received.

He stated that sadly 1 court action had resulted in an eviction. There are currently 16 cases in the court system and may continue to increase as we pursue arrears.

Committee and Director asked that their thanks be passed to James and the housing team for their hard work in the recovering rent arrears.

Committee noted the rent arrears.

**13. Tender Report**

The Director presented the report on behalf of the Maintenance Manager. He noted that as reported over recent years the various issues with balconies in the housing stock and methods used to stop water ingress. A tender process had been agreed by the committee. Two companies were invited to tender the work and the tender report was attached at appendix 1 for consideration.

He asked committee to consider the tender return and approve the expenditure of £26,736.50 + VAT.

Felix Lynn queried if a fire risk assessment had been carried out on the aforementioned balconies. The Director confirmed that a full assessment had been carried out by Reid Associates a couple of years ago. Felix stated that it would be useful to read the report.

**Resolution:**

**Committee approved the expenditure of £26,736.50 +VAT and that the tender be awarded to AKP Scotland.**

**Felix Lynn proposed and Lauren Herd seconded the expenditure and that the tender be awarded to AKP Scotland.**

#### **14. Board Effect Renewal.**

The Governance Officer reported, provided background information and asked committee to note the 3 year proposal received for contract renewal with Diligent our BoardEffect provider. She advised that the proposal was to keep the same pricing as last year with a 3% increase in 25 and 26 rather than the proposed increase of 8% for this year alone, which would result in a cost saving of just over £1,000 for the period. The contract is due for renewal on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024

##### **Resolution**

**Committee considered the proposal from Diligent and approved renewal of the contract for a further 3 years and that the Chair sign for return.**

**David Gebbie proposed and Lauren Herd seconded renewal of the Diligent contract for a further 3 years.**

#### **15. Operational update**

##### **Director:**

The Director present under separate cover.

##### **Housing & Customer Services Manager**

###### **Team Building Event feedback.**

The Housing Manager informed committee that the evaluation and feedback from the team building event held on 11 October 2024 had been excellent and considered to be a useful exercise. He advised that committee had agreed a budget of £1,500 however the final bill was below this estimate at £550.50 and would be taken from the training budget or staffing underspend.

The staff team had asked that their thanks be passed to the management committee for agreeing to the event and considered that it was a worthwhile day.

###### **Tenant Consultation Event**

He advised that following feedback from the recent AGM, a community consultation event had been arranged for 7 November 2024 at 6pm. The event was advertised in the newsletter and a news article posted to our website.

He provided an update on financial gains as achieved by the Income Advice Officer.

##### **Maintenance Manager**

The Housing Manager reported on behalf of the Maintenance Manager in his absence. He asked committee note that refresher training had been arranged for the Estate Wardens for the PA1 and PA6 courses in Livingston on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024

ECIRs were progressing well, there had been 14 forced access up until 4 October 2024 to carry out ECIRs and had been attended by both housing and maintenance staff.

##### **Community Activities**

Committee noted the update on community activities.

## **16. AOCB**

The Chair thanked both the Housing Manager and Governance Officer for their swift action in arranging the consultation event and ensuring that it was in the newsletter.

**Meeting closed. Next meeting – 4 December 2024 at 6pm.**