

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2019

AT 7PM IN 6 WESTBURN AVENUE, EDINBURGH



PRESENT: Sheila Bunt
Mo Connolly
Naomi MacKenzie
Peter Matthews
Kaydee Moyo
Jolly Oluka

IN ATTENDANCE: Brendan Fowler, Director
Lynne Bell, Finance Manager
Neil Munro, Property Services Manager
Julie Thynne, Corporate Services Officer
Simon Campbell, Observer
Amanda Miller, Observer

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Sheila Bunt welcomed all attendees to the meeting and extended a special welcome to Jolly Oluka, Simon Campbell and Amanda Miller.

Apologies were received from Milind Kolhatkar, Shulah Allan, Alan Gee, Mary MacRaid, Chuks Ododo and Catherine Louch.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2019

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 were proposed by Naomi MacKenzie, seconded by Mo Connolly and approved by all members present.

4. MATTERS ARISING REPORT

The Matters Arising report was noted.

5. REGISTER OF UNDERTAKINGS

Management Committee noted the Register of Undertakings.

6. POLICY REVIEW

The following policies were presented for consideration:

- COR17 Whistleblowing policy was presented with some minor updates.

- COR20 IT System Security policy was presented with some minor updates.
- COR21 IT System Use policy was presented with some minor updates.

Following a discussion it was agreed the COR20 IT System Security and COR21 IT System Use policies would be combined as one policy and presented for approval to the January meeting.

The Whistleblowing policy was proposed by Peter Matthews, seconded by Kaydee Moyo and approved by all members present.

7. MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT

The contents of the Management Team Report were noted and the following items were discussed:

7.1 ARCHIE Group

Brendan Fowler advised an approach had been made by another ARCHIE member to consider options for joint training for Committee. Following a discussion it was agreed it would be beneficial for Committee members to participate in adhoc training topics where required. This would not replace current arrangements for the residential training weekend. A volunteer Committee member could participate in a small group to discuss potential training topics. Committee members were asked to contact Julie Thynne if they were interested in joining the group.

7.2 Planned Maintenance

It was noted the shower programme was not a planned programme of works, however showers were installed where requested or at void stage. Showers had now been installed in around two thirds of all properties.

7.3 Arrears Management

Brendan Fowler advised discussions were ongoing with Civica to make further improvements to the Cx system which would provide more automated tasks to free up staff time to deal with arrears.

7.4 Finance System Upgrade

Lynne Bell advised the finance system upgrade had taken place and no significant issues were encountered.

7.5 Factoring Survey

Lynne Bell advised the survey had closed and 16 responses from a potential 39 had been received. The results would be collated for presentation at the next Committee meeting.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY REVIEW – PEOPLE CATEGORY

8.1 Inadequate Number of Management Committee Members

Brendan Fowler presented the report on the above risk. No changes were recommended.

8.2 Safety of Staff put at risk

Neil Munro presented the report on the above risk. No changes were recommended.

The Risk Management – People Category was proposed by Mo Connolly, seconded by Naomi MacKenzie and approved by all members present.

9. QUARTERLY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

Brendan Fowler provided an overview of complaints. He advised one complaint had been referred to the Ombudsman and they had upheld Prospect's decision. The case had been handled quickly by the Ombudsman and they had provided a positive comment on our handling of case. No themes were identified from the complaints handled in this quarter.

A query arose around the drop in the number of right first time repairs. Neil Munro advised it was a relatively small number of repairs, however he would investigate the issues and provide a summary in the matters arising report for the next meeting.

It was noted there was a strong demand for properties with an average of 150 bids per property. 55% of Prospect's lets were allocated to homeless.

It was noted the arrears had increased, however this was in line with expectations due to the roll out of Universal Credit and similar to the pattern experienced by other Housing Associations. Brendan Fowler advised our Welfare Rights Officer was fully occupied and work was ongoing with other ARCHIE members to develop a debt advice project. The Housing Management team were working with tenants to help individual situations.

Brendan Fowler advised there was a greater focus from the Regulator on affordability and making sure properties were energy efficient. He advised the Budget/Business Plan working group had discussed this topic at their recent meeting and had looked at a rent affordability tool. There would be an opportunity to discuss this in greater detail at the next Strategy Day.

Lynne Bell advised the increased housing management and maintenance admin costs were due to a change in the allocation of costs as requested by the external auditors.

10. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LOAN

Lynne Bell provided an overview and advised the Scottish Government had offered an interest free loan to Housing Associations for the installation of smoke and heat detectors. She advised the work would not start until the loan had been agreed. It was noted the £240k loan was expected to cover most costs and had been incorporated into the financial projections for the 2020/21 budget.

The Scottish Government loan was proposed by Naomi MacKenzie, seconded by Mo Connolly and agreed by all members present.

11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Lynne Bell presented an update following the Treasury Management presentation in August. She advised six institutions had agreed to provide funding for development and appendix one of the report provided a summary of the funding available and costs.

Lynne Bell advised a short term 10-year loan would give the organisation greater flexibility to minimise borrowing. She recommended the 10-year proposals be considered in more detail and this information be presented to Committee in January for a decision to be made.

The recommendation to explore 10 year loan options was proposed by Peter Matthews, seconded by Naomi MacKenzie and approved by all members present.

12. DEVELOPMENTS

Neil Munro provided an update and advised the revised drawings for Kingsknowe had been reviewed by the Development Working Group. Minor changes would be made to these and planning should be submitted by 13 December 2019. He advised initial feedback from the

planners had been incorporated into the revised drawings. Staff had also been consulted on the revised plans and gave positive feedback.

The planning decision should be made around the end of February or beginning of March and work to start on site later in 2020. It was hoped the grant funding would be granted in the next financial year (2020/21).

Neil Munro advised the Woods centre had been demolished and the site was clear. Work was ongoing with solicitors and progress would be discussed with the Council at a meeting in early December.

13. QUARTERLY HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

Neil Munro provided an overview. The report was noted.

14. NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sheila Bunt thanked Simon Campbell and Amanda Miller for joining the meeting, they left at this point.

14.1 Co-optees

Brendan Fowler advised both Simon Campbell and Amanda Miller had observed the meeting tonight to consider joining Committee as co-opted members. He advised they had responded to the recent advert and both had a local connection and offered complementary skills as well as a background in housing. He advised there had been two other applicants who had been strong candidates and they have been invited to join as members and could then be nominated to join Committee at the AGM next year.

It was noted Prospect was a Tenant led organisation and the introduction of new Committee members should not dilute that. Brendan Fowler advised there were three co-optee places and one had been filled by a tenant. He advised staff actively encourage tenants to be involved and there was a development route through the tenant's forum.

The request for Simon Campbell and Amanda Miller to be co-opted to the Committee was proposed by Naomi MacKenzie, seconded by Peter Matthews and approved by all members present.

14.2 Committee Buddy Arrangements

Brendan Fowler advised there was a need to provide support to the new members to help with their induction period. Peter Matthews, Sheila Bunt and Naomi MacKenzie all volunteered to assist.

14.3 Video Conferencing

Brendan Fowler advised of the request to provide a video conferencing facility as an option for Committee member to attend meetings remotely. He advised the rules allowed for this situation and he anticipated it would be used in exceptional circumstances, not as a matter of course. He highlighted it could assist members in attending working group or other adhoc meetings. No concerns were raised over this suggestion.

14.4 Membership Application

Brendan Fowler advised he had received a membership application from Meg Deasley in Colinton. He advised the application had been emailed and the £1 fee would be paid in due course.

The membership application from Meg Deasley was proposed by Mo Connolly, seconded by Kaydee Moyo and approved by all members present, subject to payment of the £1 fee.

15. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

There were no reports for information.

16. AOCB

There were no other items for discussion. Sheila Bunt thanked all for their attendance.

17. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 29 January 2020 at 7pm.

Signed: 

Date: 29.1.2020

