

**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting – Thursday 25th March 2021
Held via Zoom with all attendees at 6.00pm**

Action

- Present:** Margaret McIntyre (MM), Alex Cameron (AC), Jonah Chireka (JC), Alison Devin (AD), Ruth McCluskey (RM), Surjit Singh Chowdhary (SC), Iain Dyer (ID), Munir Choudry (MC), Betty Macneill (BM), Bob Turnbull (BT),
- In attendance:** Patrick Mc Grath (PM), Donna Reilly (DR), Mandy Wright (MW), Norma Taylor (NT), Des Phee (DP), Jenna Stevenson (JS).
- Item 1:
Apologies** Apologies received from Shirley Robison.
- Item 3:
Conflicts of Interest** JC and BM raised possible conflicts of interest in relation to agenda 7 however these were not considered to represent conflict of interests by Management Committee
- Item 3:
Minutes of meeting
25.02.2021** **Minutes:**
No corrections raised in relation to the minutes of the meeting.
Minutes approved by Committee – proposed by MC and seconded by AD.
- Item 4:
Matters Arising
Schedule** BT enquired with regard to the Private Acquisitions report scheduled for the March 2021 meeting. PMcG advised that this had actually been presented at the February 2021, and the reason it remained on the Matters Arising report was that there was also to be a presentation to the SFARS Board in March 2021.
- Item 5:
Committee
Workplan** MMcI reminded Committee of Performance Management training scheduled for Tuesday 30 March.
BT enquired about Sub-Committee membership. McMcI advised that positions on Sub-Committee were finalised at the post AGM Management Committee meeting in October.
- Item 6:
Former
Tenant
Arrears Write
-Offs Policy** JS presented the revised Former Tenant Arrears policy to Committee and invited questions.
MC enquired around the implications of tenants abandoning a property owing rent arrears and whether the Association has effective conduits for tracing former tenants and whether the Association obtains or provides tenancy references?
JS advised that the Association's Estates team may take tenancy references from applicants particularly when they are leaving private rented sector accommodation.
MC remarked that taking a reference may act as a partial deterrent or have a positive impact on arrears.

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PMcG advised that tenancy references are obtained but increasingly and with an eye to increased focus in data protection many organisations are reticent to provide more than generic references that do not capture challenging aspects of the tenancy or information that may be disputed.

MMcI commented that previous addresses would be given as part of the housing application. JS advised that where rent or tenancy issues are known e.g. via Housing Options then the Association employ intervention actions or assistance, however it is not a realistic option to deny an offer of housing on account of rent history.

BT queried whether the period of Former Tenant arrears was to the end of March 2021. This was confirmed.

Former Tenant Arrears Policy was approved by Committee

Approved by: BMcN Seconded: RMcC

**Item 7:
SHA and
SFARS Group
Budget
2021/22**

MW presented the finalised Group Budget for 2021/22 for SHA and SFARS and set out key headlines to Committee:

- Amended budget from the draft budget presented in February 2021 shows an increase of £272K to the projected surplus of £826K to £1.098 million
- Capital expenditure budget of £10.9 million, a reduction of £2.3 million in the draft budget presented in February.
- SFARS annual budget approved by the SFARS Board on 4 March approved a revised uplift of 1.5% in the Mid-Market Rent charge and 2% in the Factoring Management Fee
- Revision to draft budget identified an error of £82,855 included in both the net income budget and the rechargeable income budget, corrected in the final budget
- Difference in overall surplus from the draft budget is £106,075 accounted for by the double counting error and the revised reductions in the Mid-Market Rent and Factoring Management Fee

MW also pointed to a £4.188 million decrease in the Capital Budget as works have been moved into the following year's budget. PMcG commented that Capital Budget is probably still overestimated as not every tenant included in the Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) major works programme will take the heating solution.

AC raised a question around cashflow and asked if it relatively straightforward to monitor drawdown of the loan facility? MW advised that cash position is monitored on a daily basis, drawdown of the Handelsbanken loan will depend on the Development programme and major works programmes which will drive the timing.

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AC also enquired if the Association had as previously discussed managed to formally agree a covenant waiver with Handlesbanken. MW confirmed that this had been agreed with Handlesbanken.

Committee approved the SHA Budget for 2021/22

Proposed: ID Seconded: JC

Committee also approved the SFARS Budget for 2021/22

Proposed: AC Seconded: MC

**Item 8:
Business
Continuity
Plan which
have an
expected
procurement**

PMcG introduced the revised Business Continuity Plan to Committee. PMcG explained that the Association had developed the Business Continuity Plan with external consultants, and the Association's internal auditors BDO had subsequently made a recommendation in relation to it. PMG further commented that key staff have access to the key information contained in the Business Continuity Plan in the event of critical circumstances via Admin Control. PMcG raised the idea of testing the strength of the Business Continuity Plan through the Audit Sub-Committee.

AC commented that the current COVID-19 situation is effectively the ultimate live test of this Plan and in the event of future Business Continuity events the Association would likely revert to the forms of working as put on place currently.

JC agreed with AC comments and stated how SHA's response to COVID-19 had been very good and effectively tested Business Continuity Planning. RMcC also agreed that the COVID-19 response had shown how things have worked well when office working has not been available.

ID commented that the outcomes of the next independent survey of tenants in relation to how continuity of service has been in response to COVID-19 would provide a further insight into the strength of Business Continuity arrangements.

Committee Approved the Business Continuity Plan

Proposed: ID Seconded: RMcC

**Item 9:
SHA
Procurement
Strategy
2021/22**

DR presented the SHA Procurement Strategy for 2021/22 and explained to Committee that the development of a Procurement Strategy was required by Section 15 of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 for organisations which have an expected procurement expenditure of £5 million or more for the forthcoming year.

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DR explained that the biggest procurement expenditure in relation to 2021/22 was the St. Andrew's Drive new build development phases 2 & 3.

Committee approved the SHA Procurement Strategy for 2021/22

Proposed: ID Seconded: JC

**Item 10: SHA
Complaints
Handling
Procedure**

DP presented the SHA Complaints Handling Procedure and explained this had been revised to reflect the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) revised model Complaints Handling Procedure for the RSL sector which represents the first review since the model was introduced in 2012. DP highlighted the main changes in the Procedure to Committee as:

- Reflecting updates Data Protection law throughout
- Introducing an obligation for RSL's to support staff who have been complained about through the process and to inform them of the outcome
- Introduction of a new 'Resolved' outcome determination for complaints where an amicable solution has been found, and
- An obligation for RSL's to develop and publish an Annual Complaints Report on its website.

MC asked about processes where staff complain about colleagues. It was clarified that this Complaints Handling Procedure is for the use of customers who wish to complain about the service that they receive. Staff would raise their concerns through other routes such as the Grievance or Whistleblowing policies. The provision for support for staff acknowledges that having a complaint made against you can be traumatic and extends the obligation to investigate the complaint to also provide support and meet our duty of care.

BT asks who determines if a complaint is serious or minor. DP explained that this had previously been included in a framework provided by the SPSO. Now it is really down to experience. Most serious complaints would be considered under stage two of the procedure which allows time for more detailed investigation. Committee approved the adoption of the revised Complaints Handling Procedure.

Proposed: BM Seconded: JC

**Item 11:
SHR
Engagement
Plan and
Regulatory
Status**

PMcG advised Committee that the SHR issues an Engagement Plan for each Registered Social Landlord. This was received on Tuesday of this week but marked Private and Confidential and not for circulation. It will be published on the SHR website on 31.03.2021 and a link will be sent to the Management Committee when it is published. There are no specific requirements noted in the

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Engagement Plan for SHA, so we are only required to continue with the usual returns to the regulator.

A copy of the Engagement Plan will be officially published by the SHR by the end of March and a copy will be distributed to Committee.

**Item 12:
Delegated
Authority
Policy**

MW introduced the Delegated Authority Policy Committee to Committee and commented that the policy remains almost entirely unchanged from the previous review with only a small amendment which removes reference to the Development Sub Committee and moves those responsibilities back to the Management Committee. PMcG explained to Committee that this represents the policy which states the Association's principles and position and not to be confused with the Scheme of Delegated Authority itself.

Committee approved the Delegated Authority Policy.

Proposed: MC Seconded: AD

**Item 13: SHA
Equality and
Diversity
Policy**

DP introduced the revised SHA Equality and Diversity Policy to Committee and explained that this represents a significant revision of the 2017 policy. The policy is in effect the SHA position statement. A more detailed Action Plan will follow in May/June 2021. DP highlighted the development of an Equalities Impact Assessment template for the Association at Appendix 2. DP explained that this will be incorporated into the policy review schedule and to new or revised services for identifying where equality barriers may exist and proposing mitigating actions address any issues.

MC asked how we detect equalities related issues early. DP explained that some are easier to spot than others. Impact Assessment aim to raise awareness of equalities and the impact of actions, service models and aim to highlight any adverse impacts. PMcG highlighted that there are a number of things that Committee can ask of staff, for example does reporting capture relevant information. Complaints will be reviewed with a view to equalities issues e.g. why are there different complaint rates in different neighbourhoods? Could this be an equalities issue? Overall, we need to develop a culture of questioning if we are actively looking at this.

DP noted the importance of consulting groups representing protected characteristics. The Action Plan will provide a lot more detail. PMcG suggested that this is an area that could be added to the next internal audit programme, after it has had a year or so to become established.

Committee approved the revised SHA Equality and Diversity Policy

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Proposed: MC Seconded: AD

**Item 14:
Director's
Report**

PMcG presented the Director's Report to Committee and advised that the majority of items within the report are for noting, with three items requiring Committee approval.

Living Rent – DP is currently dealing with Freedom of information request which are (indirectly) linked to the Living Rent Campaign. They have been actively canvassing and promoting their group in Pollokshields. PMcG has drafted a letter for tenants in Pollokshields explaining the increased costs and responsibilities that SHA is facing and the implications of freezing rent. Growing demands include the removal by Glasgow City Council of the free bulk uplift service and that work this has created for the concierge team. This in itself eradicates the rent increase.

SFHA Affiliation Fees – PMcG recommended continuing membership.

PM

Proposed: BM Seconded: AD

Business Planning – Committee Asked to note the date of the next session.

Zero Emission Social Housing Task Force – PMcG has been asked to join this group.

Queensland Court & Gardens Environmental Improvements – Committee are asked to approve the permanent designation of an area of land as a Parkland Zone. This will allow us to access further funding for the improvements.

Approved: RMcC & JC

Niddrie Road – This is a COP26 related project. In August 2020, the Management Committee approved a tender from CCG. At that time the plan was to have them onsite in October 2020. PMcG explained that SHA only received statutory approvals in the last 2 days so, instead they are going onsite at the end of this month. There have also been some changes to the programme, for example, four flats will now have Air Source Heat Pump heating systems installed and there have been other planning related changes.

This has all resulted in about £100K increase in costs. Glasgow City Council have said they will fund 50% of this.

Committee are asked to approve £57K to allow the project to get on site for April 2021 to meet a completion target for COP 26. DR will bring a full report to next month's Management Committee. She is still working on costs with the contactor, so they may reduce.

DR

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Proposed: BM Seconded: RMcC

Moss Heights Incident: PMcG outlined to Committee an incident at Moss Heights which resulted in the death of a dog at the hands of another dog and resultant neighbour disputes which required police involvement. One resident was a GCC Temporary Furnished Flat resident who has since been rehoused by GCC. PMcG advised Committee that this incident raised further issues around dogs in high rise properties.

AD commented that the incident had caused a lot of upset and reaction among the local community.

Staff Changes- PMcG is confident that the commitment to make changes within the existing staff budget is still achievable. It will take another couple of months to finalise the changes. Provision has been made in the budget for unfilled posts.

**Item 15:
Application
for
Membership**

One application for membership received:

Application Membership No. 371 [REDACTED].

Proposed : RMcC Seconded: MC

**Item 16:
Proposed use
of the seal**

The following was approved for proposed use of the seal:

Application Membership No. 371

**Item 17:
Use of the
seal**

No items for noting.

**Item 18:
Minutes of
Sub
Committees**

No items for noting.

**Item 19:
Relationship
with other
bodies**

No Items for noting

**Item 20:
Consents,
Disposals &
Acquisition**

No items for noting.

Item 21:

No items for noting

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**SHR
Guidance
Notes /
Notifiable
Events**

Item 22: No other items for discussion.
**Any other
competent
business**

Item 23: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 29th April 2021 At 6.00pm
**Date of next
meeting**