

**LOCHABER HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
HELD BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON THURSDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT 6.00PM**

Present: May Tosh
Di Alexander
Jenni Hodgson
Andrew Carr (Chairperson)
Jacqui Wight
Moirira MacVicar
Cathy Osborn
Morag Cameron
Jacob Green

In attendance: Sean Doherty, Asset Manager
Margaret Moynihan, Chief Executive
Jenny MacKay, Customer Services Manager
George Doran, Finance Manager
Siobhan Toal, Customer Services Officer
Maureen Cameron, LCR Manager
Brian Pearson, Housing Services Coordinator
Iain MacLeod, LHAPS Manager
Fiona Sorley, CHT (Part Meeting)
Stuart Eglington, Training Consultant (Part Meeting)

Following on from a Board training session in September on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, it was agreed there would be a follow up session before the business of this meeting commenced. This session was facilitated by Stuart Eglington, Training Consultant with the focus of the discussion being the collection of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion data. A further report will come back to the Board at the December meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies have been received from John Cooney.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Declaration of Interest report was **approved**.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 25th August 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25th August 2022 were **approved**.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 25th August 2022

(i) Housing Needs Report Update- *This information has been deemed as commercially sensitive.*

(ii) Disposal

The Board **noted** that the property at 147 High Street was due to settle this week and a further update would come back to the Board meeting in December.

5. Minutes of Meeting held on 20th October 2022

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 20th October 2022 were **approved**.

6. Matters arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 20th October 2022

(i) Submission of Annual Assurance Statement

The Board **noted** that the Annual Assurance Statement was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

7. Regulatory Standards – demonstrating compliance

The Board **noted** the compliance with regulatory standards.

8. Rent policy

The Housing Services Co-Ordinator presented the policy and report to the Board in which they advised that minor amendments had been made to the rent policy to reflect changes.

The Board were informed that the rent consultation documents would be sent to the Your Voice group the following day then sent out to tenants the following week.

The Board considered and approved the amended policy and recommendations for the rent consultation. The Board also **approved** for further work to be carried out to review the values attached to new build properties.

9. Revised/New Policies

(i) Delegated Authority & amendments to financial regulations and Procedures

The Finance Manager presented the revised delegated authority policy which outlines the responsibilities for financial management.

The Board **approved** the policy and **noted** that the financial regulations and procedures would be updated to include the Finance Manager as a signatory in line with the other members of the Senior Management Team.

(ii) Sharing Ownership

The Board **approved** the Sharing Ownership policy.

(iii) Relationship Breakdown

The Board **noted** there had been no legislative changes and **approved** the policy.

(iv) Unauthorised Occupier

The Board **approved** the unauthorised Occupier policy.

(v) Service Charges Policy

The Board **approved** the Service Charges policy and **agreed** that the following amendments should be made to Appendix 1:

1. Wood pellet stoves servicing should only be included in Rent Core Service
2. Electrical Test should only be included in Rent Core Service

10. Development – Feasibility Costs etc.

Fiona Sorley, CHT presented the report to the Board in which they were advised that further to Scottish Government advice the CHT is reflecting on all their contracts and how they procure future developments. The CHT is now considering a different procurement route, moving away from a design and build contract. The new mechanism CHT are looking at is changing to a contract with novated consents meaning consents such as planning, building warrants, Road Construction etc. are all in place prior to going out to tender.

Should the Association agree this new mechanism it would mean that the Association bear the financial risks connected to these consents instead of the contractor and this would be initially funded through private finance which could if the project is approved be claimed back through HAG funding further into the development process. Should the project not proceed, however, these costs would be abortive.

The Board **discussed** the report in depth and **approved** the report in principle and **noted** that a further report would come back to the December Board meeting with more information and a breakdown of costs for each site to be considered.

11. Revised Highland Housing Register Policy

The Housing Services Co-Ordinator informed the Board that the Highland Housing Register Partnership Group recently consulted to revise the HHR policy.

The Board discussed the policy in depth in particular the section that discusses Local Letting Initiatives and the new change that has been included regarding Local Letting Initiatives requiring to be approved by the Partnership Group before it can be implemented.

The Board **approved** the policy although **agreed** that their concerns around the Local Letting Initiative voting should be taken back to the partnership group.

12. Audit & Governance Sub-Committee Recommendations

- (i)** The Board **approved** the Notifiable Events Policy and Whistle Blowing Policy.
- (ii)** The Board **approved** the Bad Debt Write-Offs.
- (iii)** The Board **approved** the LHA Quarterly Management accounts to 30/09/22.
- (iv)** The Board **approved** the risk register.
- (v)** The Board **noted** the Quarterly Management accounts to 30/09/22 for LHAPS (A) and LCR (B).
- (vi)** The Board **noted** the Covenant Report, Treasury Management quarterly and annual update.
- (vii)** The Board **noted** the Notifiable Event.
- (viii)** The Board **noted** the Highland Council Elected member – Co-Optee.

(ix) The Board **noted** the quarterly compliance return.

(x) The Board **noted** the additional IT Costs.

13. Maintenance and Estate Management Programme Update Quarter 2

The Asset Manager presented the quarterly report detailing the maintenance and estate management programme for quarter 2.

The Board **considered** and **noted** the quarterly report.

14. Health and Safety of Properties - Update

The Asset Manager presented the report to the Board which detailed our compliance with Health and Safety legislation for our properties.

The Board **considered** and **noted** the update and **agreed** that going forward gas inspections, fire risk assessments and the outcomes of the fire risk assessments should be included in this report.

15. Development

Fiona Sorley, CHT presented the development report to the Board with the focus being on the sites at Tigh Aran, Strontian, Mallaig and Rankin Crescent. The progress of each site was detailed.

The Board **discussed** and **noted** the update.

16. Authority to Evict Outcomes

The Board **noted** the Authority to Evict outcomes report.

17. Performance

The Board **noted** the performance reports in relation to Housing Management, Asset Management, Complaints, GDPR, FOI and Health & Safety.

18. SFHA Grant Funding update – verbal

The Housing Services Co-ordinator advised the Board that LHA were unsuccessful in their bid of funding from SFHA. SFHA have recently reassured RSLs that they are trying to source more funding.

The Board **noted** that the Association would continue working with Allenergy to support tenants.

19. Update re Homelessness Assessment and Local Connection

The Board **noted** that the Housing Services Co-Ordinator is developing a paper to take to a future Board meeting which will outline the framework for a local letting initiative.

20. A.O.C.B

(i) Leave of absence

The Board **noted** that Rosemary Bridge has taken a leave of absence from the LHA Board for six months.

(ii) RIHAF – Feedback

The Chairperson informed the Board that the RIHAF conference was extremely successful and the members who attended the event found the topics beneficial to issues that LHA are facing.

The Board **noted** the verbal feedback.

(iii) Christmas Lunch

The Board were reminded to respond to the Customer Services Officer with their menu choices for the Christmas lunch at the Nevis Bank Inn.

(iv) EVH Wages Ballot

Please see separate confidential minute.

(v) CEO Appraisal

The Board were reminded that the CEO appraisal document should be sent to the chairperson over the next few days.

(vi) Finance Training

The Board **noted** that the Finance Manager would be carrying out accounts training on Monday 21st November at 6pm via Microsoft Teams.