

**LOCHABER HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
HELD ON MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 15TH
FEBRUARY 2024 AT 6.30PM**

Present: Andrew Carr (Chairperson)
Di Alexander
John Cooney
Cathy Osborn
Rosemary Bridge
Moirira MacVicar
Cllr Sarah Fanet
May Tosh

In attendance: Margaret Moynihan, Chief Executive
Jenny MacKay, Director of Customer Services
Siobhan Toal, Customer Services Officer
Sean Doherty, Director of Asset Management
Maureen Cameron, LCR Manager
Brian Pearson, Housing Services Coordinator
Iain MacLeod, LHAPS Manager
Kim Stanton, Customer Services Officer
Ronnie Macrae, CHT
David Smith, Accountant

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Stuart Leitch and Jacob Green.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 15th December 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th November were **approved** with an amendment to be made to Agenda Item 4(ii).

4. Matters Arising from Minutes of Meeting held on 15th December 2023

(i) Development Mallaig

Aspects of this report have been deemed to be commercially sensitive and are therefore, not available to the public at this time

David Smith, Accountant advised the Board that as per discussions at the December meeting he has updated the projections for new build properties and suggested that the Association could increase the private finance we put towards new builds. This updated figure could be used as a guide going forwards for CHT.

The Board **noted** the update.

5. Regulatory Standards – Demonstrating Compliance

The Board **noted** the compliance with Regulatory Standards report.

6. Internal Audit Report – Duty of Care for Tenant and Resident safety

The Director of Asset Management presented the Internal Audit Report to the Board in which they were advised that while there were adequate internal controls in place and operating effectively there were three recommendations made to further enhance our systems and these have all been agreed and actioned.

1. Recommendation 1 – Mould and Dampness training to be added to the property compliance training.
2. Recommendation 2 – Action to be taken to resolve the current issues with the fire risk assessment contractor and ensure that a periodic programme of communal close are in place.
3. Recommendation 3 – Communal water tanks within factored common closes be subject to periodic inspection.

The Board discussed the three recommendations in detail, in particular the communal water tank inspections within factored blocks and the fire risk assessments. The Director of Asset Management advised the Board that a new contractor has now been instructed to carry out the communal fire assessments at these will be completed by the end of February. It was agreed that we should check with our solicitors regarding the cost of taking legal action against the previous company.

The Board **noted** and **approved** the internal audit report.

7. Rent Consultation

The Board **discussed** the consultation document which was circulated to tenants and the responses which we received to this consultation. The Board **approved** the proposed rent increase of 7.5% from 1st of April 2024.

8. EVH Wages Ballot

The Chief Executive advised the board that since the papers were circulated EVH have sent an update advising that Unite have subsequently recommended not to consider the pay deal. The proposal has now been withdrawn and ACAS are now involved.

The Chief Executive advised the Board that an email will be sent out to members should a new ballot be issued.

The Board **noted** the update.

9. Authority to Evict

The Board **discussed** and **approved** the eviction action for cases CA188 and CA190.

10. Audit & Governance Sub-Committee Recommendations

(i) LHA Quarterly Management Accounts to 31/12/23

The Board **approved** the Quarterly Management Accounts to 31/12/23.

(ii) Annual Budget 24/25

The Board **approved** the Annual Budget for 2024/25.

(iii) Approve Bad Debt Write-Offs

The Board **approved** the Bad Debt Write-Offs.

(iv) Approve Risk Register

The Board **approved** the Risk Register.

(v) Note Quarterly Management Accounts to 31/12/23 (LHAPS) A & (LCR) B

The Board **noted** the Quarterly Management accounts for LHAPS and LCR.

(vi) Note Covenant Report

The Board **noted** the Covenant Report.

(vii) Note Treasury Management Report

The Board **noted** the Treasury Management Report.

(viii) Note Quarterly Compliance Return

The Board **noted** the Compliance Return.

11. Maintenance and Estate Management Programme

The Director of Asset Management presented the quarterly report detailing the maintenance and estate management programme for quarter 3.

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

12. Health and Safety of Properties – Update

The Director of Asset Management presented the report to the Board which detailed our property Health and Safety compliance. The Board discussed the issues staff are facing with gaining access to our properties to carry out the required inspections and testing, it was **noted** that an article would be circulated within our housing brief highlighting the cost impact this has.

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

13. Development

(i) CHT Development

Aspects of this report have been deemed to be commercially sensitive and are therefore, not available to the public at this time

Ronnie Macrae, CHT, presented the development report to the Board in which he gave an update on the Mallaig development.

The Board discussed the report in detail and the impact on the timescale for completion and potential extra costs.

The Board noted development report.

(ii) LINK Development Update

The Board **noted** the LINK development update for Upper Achintore.

14. Performance

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

15.A.O.C.B

(i) Local Letting Initiative Policy

The Housing Services Co-Ordinator presented the report to the Board in which they discussed the framework and policy in detail and the next steps on how we proceed with finalising the LLI framework. The importance of an Equalities Impact Assessment for this work was highlighted and discussed.

The Board **approved** the Local Letting Initiative Policy.

(ii) EVH Board Appraisals

The Director of Customer Services advised the Board that EVH would be working with the Board through their appraisal process this year and that further information would be sent in an email.

The Board **noted** the update.

(iii) SHR Regulatory Framework

The Director of Customer Services advised the Board that the Regulator have released the updated Regulatory framework and a link for this information would be emailed out to the Board to review.

The Board **noted** the update.

(iv) Highlands & Islands Liaison Meeting

The Chief Executive advised the Board that LHA were hosting the H&I liaison meeting the following week for officers and detailed the attendees and speakers.

The Board **noted** the update.

(v) Director of Finance Vacancy

The Chief Executive advised the Board of the timeline provided by Aspen for the various stages of the recruitment process for the Director of Finance role and advised that a further update would be provided at the April meeting.

The Board **noted** the update.

(vi) Chief Executive Appraisal

The Chairperson thanked everyone who responded to the appraisal document and advised the Board that the Chief Executives appraisal would take place on 5th March 2024.

The Board **noted** the update.

(vii) Board Devices

The Customer Services Officer reminded the Board to get in contact with the Customer Services Team to allow Tecnica to install new antivirus software on their LHA devices.

The Board **noted** the reminder.