



Minutes of the Meeting with Management Committee held on **Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 6.00pm** via in person & via Zoom at Forgewood Community Centre

Minutes

Present:	Alan Thomson (Chair) (AT)	Callum Boughey (Vice Chair) (CB)	Jolene Martin (JM)
	Charlie Millar (CM)	John Burton (JB)	Karen Brown (KB)
	Margaret Hemmings (MH)	Kirsty Wright (KW)	Sharon Bonner (SB)
	Sandra Brown (SB)	Tommy Divers (TD)	Angie Robinson (AR)
In Attendance	Paul Lennon, Director (PL)	Elaine Hyslop, Housing Manager (EH)	Craig Anderson, Senior Finance Officer (CA)
	Richard Bolton, Senior Development Officer (RB)	Paul Murphy, Senior Corporate Services Officer (PM)	

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies	
	AT welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked committee members for attending. No apologies were NOTED .	PM to update register.
2.	Declarations of Interest	
	None.	
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 23 October 2024 (Issued in advance to committee)	
	Proposed Karen Brown Seconded Callum Boughey	Upload minutes to website
4.	Matters Arising	
	PL went through the matters arising schedule. All items were dealt with during the last 4 weeks.	

	Community Development	
5.	<p>RB stressed that funding was key for everything we do in Community Development. As committee would expect, a lot of evidence needs to be provided to funders to ensure you can evidence your delivery and outcomes. Forgewood Holdings, as always, have been so supportive of our community development work.</p> <p>RB has put a bid in for a small fund that VANL (Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire) are offering to be used for community activities.</p> <p>The Forge Ahead group appointed Tommy Divers as Honorary President in recognition of his dedication and hard work on behalf of the Forgewood community. RB added that we were the building of choice in the area.</p> <p>RB advised that we have been trying to run the centre in a way to maximise the income generated. For example, we try to rent out the hall and room 1 or the IT room to a different group at the same time especially in the evenings, when costs are higher.</p> <p>EH advised committee that staff had contacted all our contractors to see if they wanted to make a donation in vouchers which would be given to assist some of our tenants for Christmas. EH added that some contractors had already generously donated. All donations will be shared amongst those in need in the form of vouchers for Christmas.</p> <p>Committee expressed thanks to the staff and the contractors who had donated.</p> <p>RB left the meeting.</p> <p>A committee member suggested that it would be good for the Co-op to write to Forgewood Holdings to express their thanks for all the support and how much we appreciate their support.</p>	<p>Co-op to report back to committee on donations received.</p> <p>Co-op/committee to send a thank you to Forgewood Holdings for their continued support</p>
	Ethical Conduct and Notifiable Events	
6.	None	
	7.1 Tenant Safety - Internal Audit	
7.	<p>EH advised committee that the audit meeting took place on the 29th of October. The audit was very robust with a high level of rigor. EH added that we are still waiting for the report from the auditor but early indicators showed high levels of assurance..</p> <p>This was NOTED by committee.</p>	EH to provide further update on internal audit in January

	7.2 Communal Fire Risk Assessments	
	<p>PM advised committee that he was looking into commissioning communal fire risk assessments for the Co-op.</p> <p>PL added that he was consulting with other senior officers on their approach to communal fire risk assessment. He would also approach the internal auditor on their view as this forms part of their tenant safety audits and they would share experiences with other RSLs.</p> <p>This was NOTED by committee.</p>	PL to contact other RSLs, internal auditor and feedback to committee
	8.1 Asset Management Strategy	
	Committee APPROVED the Asset Management Strategy, previously issued and discussed at meetings prior to tonight.	Asset Management Strategy approved
	8.2 Housing Management Performance Reports (Issued in advance to committee)	
8.	<p>EH referred to the Housing Management Performance Reports and confirmed that performance is good all round.</p> <p>A committee member asked what the number of people was on the waiting list but also asked for a breakdown in terms of equalities information..</p> <p>EH explained that the numbers of applicants varies day to day, also a significant number of applicants applying to the common housing register select a large number of areas. Many areas they aren't genuinely interested in receiving offers of housing for. Therefore, in these cases staff time is potentially wasted. However, for the next meeting an approximate figure will be provided to give committee a rough idea of demand and some equalities information to go with it. This kind of information can be sought from external sources under the freedom of information (FOI) Act.</p> <p>Committee NOTED the Housing Management Performance Reports.</p>	Waiting list numbers and equalities information to be provided at the next/future meeting.
	8.3 Repairs & Tenant Safety Performance Report 1st Quarter to 30/09/2024	
	<p>PL referred to the Repairs & Tenant Safety Performance Report and confirmed that maintenance is performing well within target timescales.</p> <p>Committee NOTED the Repairs & Tenant Safety Performance Report.</p>	
9.	Finance – 9.1 Management Accounts to 30/09/24 (Issued in advance to committee)	

	<p>CA read his report on the Management Accounts up to the 30th of September 2024.</p> <p>The document provided financial commentary on any variance against the budget for the period ended 30 September 2024</p> <p>The Statement of Comprehensive Income or the Income and Expenditure shows a surplus to date of £42,846 against a budgeted surplus of £29,638.</p> <p>The Statement of Financial Position highlights the movements in assets and liabilities, cash and reserves. The cash balance is sitting at £462,492 compared to the budgeted £728,579.</p> <p>A committee member asked why the cash balance is significantly different from what was budgeted.</p> <p>CA explained that this variance is due to the Co-op drawing down a smaller amount of our loan than initially budgeted thus saving on interest payments.</p> <p>CA added that insurance costs have also impacted our expenditure for 24/25 and we are starting the process of looking at reducing these costs for 25/26.</p> <p>Proposed Karen Brown Seconded Alan Thomson</p> <p>Committee APPROVED the Management Accounts to 30/09/24</p>	
	<p>9.2 Budget (draft) to 31/03/26</p>	
	<p>The budget (draft) to 31/03/26 was DEFERRED and will go to the February meeting.</p>	<p>Budget (draft) to 31/03/26 deferred</p>
	<p>9.3 Loan Covenants / Portfolio</p>	
	<p>CA advised committee that he had sent information to Nationwide building society on new covenant calculations and confirmed there were no breaches. This would have close attention paid to it at all times. The Terms and Conditions under the new loan now allows for covenant compliance checking for all loans whereas Nationwide were relaxed prior to this current loan, however the co-op still ensured all covenants were met. .</p> <p>PL added that the Co-op has to provide an in year running loan portfolio to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and CA has done this and it will form part of SHR's Annual Risk Assessment they do of all RSLs.</p>	
	<p>9.4 Rent Increase (Issued in advance to committee)</p>	
	<p>EH spoke to the paper provided to committee in their paperwork.</p>	

<p>EH advised that staff had used the SFHA (Scottish Federation of Housing Associations) toolkit to help inform the process.</p> <p>A committee member asked if the rent increase set last year, was the hike in inflation in the middle of the rent increase or was it calculated into the costs to reflect the outputs.</p> <p>PL replied that it was part of the reason that there was a deficit in the annual accounts due to the high levels of inflation within the year but our rent increase last year (5%) was about half the level of inflation therefore added to the shortfall, including other factors already reported to Management Committee.</p> <p>A committee member reflected on a tough year financially and asked if the proposed rent increase had factored in higher costs linked to contractors attempting to put right a bad year financially for them the previous year.</p> <p>PL advised that we wanted to propose as low a rent increase as possible while being mindful of the financial climate. But affordable rents and the cost of living forms a large part of our decision on the rent review, however getting the balance right to also meet expenditure was always tricky, but we have managed for 30 years and will focus on managing for all future years, without tenant service being disrupted,</p> <p>EH stated that the proposed recommendation is that the Co-op consults with tenants on a rent increase of 3.3% across all properties. This consists of CPI + 1% as per our business plan.</p> <p>EH added that a proposed 3.3% increase will allow the Co-op to maintain the current level of service and spend required to maintain our homes.</p> <p>Committee discussed the proposal further.</p> <p>Committee APPROVED the proposal to consult tenants on a proposed rent increase of 3.3% across all properties.</p> <p>Included within this consultation will be the proposed change from charging rents 4 weekly to monthly from 1 April 2025. It was confirmed however, that while we hope to charge rents monthly, tenants can still pay by the frequency suiting them.</p> <p>The consultation process collating the feedback from tenants have to be returned by 8 January 2025 and the Rent Review Focus Group is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 15 January 2025.</p> <p>EH asked committee if they were supportive of encouraging tenants to pay the rent charge monthly.</p> <p>Committee felt it made sense to move to monthly from four weekly.</p>	<p>Consult tenants on a proposed rent increase of 3.3% across all properties</p> <p>Committee to receive feedback on the consultation process on 22 01 2025</p> <p>Consult tenants on a proposal to change rent payments from four</p>
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	<p>CA added that in regard to the accounting period it is easier if payments are monthly and not 4 weekly.</p> <p>Committee APPROVED the proposal to consult tenants on changing their rent payments from four weekly to paying monthly.</p>	weekly to monthly
	9.5 Loan Covenants	
	<p>PL advised that we completed the first covenant calculation we had to complete and return to Nationwide building society in the time with them. (as previously discussed)</p> <p>This was NOTED by committee.</p>	
	9.6 Finance Function	
	<p>PL advised committee that the Co-op's long standing finance agent, Clark Davidson would be retiring at the end of March 2025.</p> <p>The committee wanted to record their thanks and best wishes in recognition of the length of service and dedication to the role shown over the years in their time with the Co-op.</p> <p>PL advised that as previously discussed we will assess what is required going forward.</p> <p>Committee NOTED the update provided.</p> <p>PL confirmed to committee that finance training for the committee will take place in January.</p> <p>CA left the meeting.</p>	Finance training to be arranged for January 2025.
	Payments, Benefits & Entitlements	
10.	None	
	Membership Report	
11.	PM confirmed that there were no membership applications for this meeting.	
	Staffing	
12.	None	
	Senior Staff Appraisals	
13.		

	<p>PL advised committee that he would start to schedule in the senior staff appraisals, commencing January 2025.</p> <p>PM advised that the Director's appraisal would take place April 25 onwards, to ensure a full year in the role had been completed.</p> <p>Committee NOTED the update provided.</p>	
	Correspondence	
14.	<p>18.1 SHR – Registered Social Landlords borrowing down in 2023/24 as interest rates reach 15-year high, Regulator reports</p> <p>The correspondence was discussed and NOTED.</p> <p>18.2 SHR – Housing Regulator publishes annual report and accounts for 2023/24</p> <p>The correspondence was NOTED.</p> <p>18.3 SHR - Regulator publishes the outcome of its thematic inquiry into tenant and Gypsy/Traveller participation in Scottish social housing</p> <p>The correspondence was discussed and NOTED.</p> <p>18.4 SHR - Regulator publishes update on reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in social housing</p> <p>The correspondence was discussed and NOTED with assurances provided by PL to committee.</p>	
15.	Use of Delegated Authority	
	None	
	Any Other Competent Business	
16.	<p>PL advised that the Garrion Committee had requested a Christmas committee and staff get together. PL asked if the Forgewood committee would be interested in a similar event with some food and a quiz.</p> <p>After some discussion, Monday the 9th of December was agreed as a date for the event to take place in the Community Centre at 5.30pm</p>	Arrangements to be made
	Summary of actions / decisions at this meeting	
17.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee APPROVED the proposal to consult tenants on a proposed rent increase of 3.3% across all properties 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee APPROVED the proposal to consult tenants on moving their rent payments from four weekly to paying monthly. • Management Accounts to 30/09/24 – APPROVED • Asset Management Strategy – APPROVED • Commissioning Communal Fire Risk Assessments – APPROVED pending some enquiries • Financial training to committee to be arranged for Jan 25 - AGREED 	
	Meeting Evaluation	
18.	<p>AT asked members for their evaluations of the meeting.</p> <p>Committee members felt that the meeting had been productive and enjoyable.</p>	
	Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 22nd of January 2025	
19.	AT reminded Committee members of the date of the next meeting.	
	Meeting Close	
20.	AT thanked committee & staff for attending the meeting. AT wished anyone who couldn't attend the Christmas event a wonderful Christmas and New Year. The meeting closed at 7.52pm.	