



MARYHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26th May 2015 AT 5.30PM IN THE ASSOCIATION'S OFFICES AT 45 GARRIOCH ROAD, G20 8RG

PRESENT:

Board Member	Attend	Apologies
Lorain Mackinnon (Chair)	√	
Betty Smith	√	
Bruce Dunsmore	√	
Les Currie	√	
Alastair Goad	√	
Cllr. Mohammed Razaq		√
David Brophy		√
Roger Popplewell	√	
Sandra Blair	√	
Brian Trearty		√

IN ATTENDANCE:

Staff Member	Attended
Lynn Wassell	√
Eleanor Biggs	√
Donna Birrell	√
Margaret Reid	√
Caroline Cameron	√
Jennifer Simon	√
Paul Hughes	√
Kim Grant (Minutes)	√

In Attendance	
Edith Ward	Agenda Item 4
Maureen Dickie	Agenda item 4

Item No.	Issue	Action by
4.	TENANTS SCRUTINY GROUP REPORT - REPAIRS	
4.1	Paul Hughes introduced two members of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel and gave a brief background to Panel being established. The purpose of tonight was to report to outcomes and actions of the Scrutiny Group to the Board. Nine recommendations were included in the report.	
4.2	The Panel representatives advised that the role of the Scrutiny Group was to make things better. For this reason, repairs were the first area to be scrutinised since these are a priority for all tenants.	
4.3	The Panel representatives reported on the work of the Scrutiny Group which was to listen to and observe tenants repairs issues and meet with stakeholders including City Building. The representatives found working of the Scrutiny Panel a very positive experience and was looking forward to seeing improvements.	
4.4	Paul Hughes reported that it was the intention to take action on all of the recommendations but in some cases alternate actions would be proposed which would achieve the same outcomes as those	

	recommended in the report. This was particularly the case with stopcock labelling and Trusted Traders.	
4.5	It was suggested that the Board should congratulate the Scrutiny Group on this first report. The Board added that the recommendations should be publicised along with what will be done to achieve these. This was agreed by the Board.	PH
4.6	Lynn Wassell proposed that Paul Hughes and the team write a response on what is being done as a result of the recommendations and report back to the Board. The report will include what is being done, by whom and when as well as what is not being done and why and what can be done instead. It was agreed that a draft report would go to the Scrutiny Panel and then to the Board on 23 June 2015.	PH
1.0	OFFICE SAFETY PROCEDURES	
1.1	Fire safety – The main exits and assembly point were pointed out in the case of fire.	
1.2	Leaving the office – The staff member responsible for locking up is Eleanor Biggs. For safety reasons Board members were asked not to leave the office unless accompanied by a staff member to lock the door behind them.	
1.3	Getting home safely – Arrangements were made to ensure that everyone present at the meeting would get home safely.	
1.4	Apologies – Apologies were received on behalf of David Brophy, Brian Trearty and Councillor Razaq.	
1.5	Declaration of Interests – None.	
2.0	APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES : 28th APRIL 2015	
2.1	Donna Birrell highlighted an error at page 5, point 8.1, (ii) which should read 'NISA' and not 'Noua'. With this amendment, the minutes were agreed by the Board.	
3.0	MATTERS ARISING/ACTION TRACKER	
3.1	<u>Meeting 28th April</u> Lynn Wassell advised that most items on the Tracker were either now closed or were on the Agenda for tonight's Board meeting. The exceptions to this are: 3.1 Eleanor Biggs advised that a full desk top valuation, which will allow MHA to assess if there is advantage or disadvantage to include in MHA's balance sheet, is still on schedule for May 2015.	EB

3.2	<p>4.3 Recruitment on Independent Co-optees – Lynn is to contact the SFHA</p> <p>Further details were given on a number of closed items:</p> <p>5.2 Eleanor had run further scenarios tests against the Business Plan. The results were shown in a table at the end of the Tracker. Eleanor explained that these were scenarios only and do not include any borrowing options that may arise as a result of these scenarios or efficiencies generated elsewhere. Eleanor provided further explanation on the table contents.</p> <p>Lynn added that there will be a requirement to look at rents later in the year when a full review of rents, services charges etc., is planned. What is already known is that rent increases of RPI + 1% is not sustainable over the next 30 years. Lynn stated that MHA’s funders, who she had met on Monday 18 June, were comfortable with the figures but did ask if there was any change proposed to rent increases being RPI +1%.</p> <p>8.1 Donna reported that satisfactory references for NISA had been received from the Bank and from New Gorbals Housing Association.</p>	LW
3.3	The action tracker was approved by the Board.	
5.0	ANNUAL RETURN ON THE CHARTER AND QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE	
5.1	Caroline Cameron introduced the report which compared this year’s results with those for 2013/14. Figures were also given quarterly and monthly. Doing so allows not only tracking of progress but allows sense checking of all figures. The covering report gives details of specific areas that needed to be brought to the Board’s attention.	
5.2	Caroline advised that results were as anticipated. On this basis Board approval is sought for the ARC return, following which it will be sent to the Regulator.	
5.3	It was asked if it was the intention to write off any more arrears this year, particularly where there was little chance of recovering the money. Eleanor explained that there is provision for write offs and bad debt within the accounts. Eleanor also advised that the figures in the quarterly performance report and in ARC would differ because they are treated differently in each report. In ARC, write-off sums were added back in.	
5.4	Reference was made to page 20 of the ARC report – stock defined as low demand was now approaching one quarter of the total stock. How is low demand defined? Jennifer advised that this was where there	

	were a high rate of refusals, high turnover of tenancies and low waiting lists. In these cases it takes intensive management activity to let these properties.	
5.5	Quarterly performance was considered. Lynn Wassell reported that the Programme Board had looked at how the information was presented. A new format had been approved which will go to the Operational Board who in turn will report, by exception, to the next meeting of the Board.	
5.6	It was requested that month by month figures are included in the report so that trends can be identified. CC explained that this would defeat the purpose of quarterly reporting and that the Operational Team would ensure any exceptional monthly reporting would be raised to the Board, but that the Board's overview should be more strategic, focussing on quarterly and year on year trends. CC agreed to bring exceptional monthly reports to the Board but to include all 2014/15 year-end figures in the next report submission to allow for trend analysis.	CC
5.7	It was asked who paid for damage to properties and do these tenants get another property if they have damaged a property and not repaid the cost. Jennifer advised that invoices are raised and a number of tenants had missed the opportunity to transfer to another property as a result of the invoices not being settled. MHA is also becoming better at checking on past tenants. However it has to be accepted that there were, on occasion, extenuating circumstances where tenancies would be offered.	Board
5.8	Was there a dedicated voids team? Jennifer advised that there is a Voids Officer and that City Building were meeting the strict timescales for the necessary maintenance and repair works on voids. If there are any individual issues identified by Board members on voids, a note of the address would enable a check on the issues to be carried out.	
5.9	The Board approved MHA's ARC return for 2014/15	
6.0	IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME – ARREARS AND VOIDS FOCUS	
6.1	Jennifer Simon introduced the report. Action plans had, at a previous meeting, been presented on various housing activities and functions. This report gives an update on the performance of the Arrears and Voids work. One point to bear in mind that the performance had been impacted by the restructuring and the temporary loss of staff. All recruitment is now complete and performance will continue to improve.	
6.2	It was asked if people viewing voids were accompanied by a member of staff so that timescales for outstanding works etc. could be agreed. Jennifer Simon advised that they were accompanied and that the Voids Officer checks with City Building and agrees a schedule of works and timescales with City Building for all voids.	

6.3	Lynn Wassell advised that arrears and time to let voids will continue to fall. These are key measures and the report gives a good flavour of what has been done and what is still to do. All actions have owners and timescales. However, Lynn Wassell wanted to highlight the potential effect of Universal Credit on the arrears position and the likelihood that this will pose a real challenge in future. Lynn also reminded the Board that the financial inclusion team were not permanent staff.	
6.4	The Board approved the next areas of work to build on and further improve performance.	
7.0	REVIEW OF PLANNED AND REACTIVE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS	
7.1	Paul Hughes advised that the report was a joint report from him and Margaret Reid. Paul would deal with the first part of the report – Reactive and Voids Maintenance. Margaret would deal with section 2, Planned Maintenance and QS Services.	
7.2	Paul Hughes advised that the current contract was for three years with the option of a one year extension. We are currently in the third year of the contract and the question is where we go next and how. The report gives details of the performance of the contract and the proposal is to extend the contract for a further year to give time to look at the long-term options for Reactive and Voids Maintenance. He noted that City Building is meeting c95% of their targets and are close to meeting all targets.	
7.3	The report summarised the options that could be considered in the longer term. It should be noted that the procuring of a new contract would take 8-9 months to process since it will require OJEC (European) procurement.	
7.4	The Board advised that they would be happy to see repairs carried out on a schedule of rates.	
7.5	The Board thought that it was realistic to look at a one year extension. He would support continued negotiations with City Building on the points raised in the report. If the one year extension is agreed, the Board would also like to see a full Project Plan for developing and assessing the options presented to the Board.	
7.6	The Board was advised that Alan Burns (City Building) had agreed to meet the Board to talk through the agreed contractual changes and the Board agreed to do this.	
7.7	Margaret Reid introduced the section of the report on Planned Maintenance (City Building) and QS Services (Armour Construction) with a recommendation to extend both contracts to end March 2017, with an interim review of the QS services in March 2016.	

7.8	Margaret advised that considerable strategic work is currently underway and information is being gathered on the housing stock, particularly in terms of Stock Condition, SHQS and EPC data. Until this information (and the “stock value” exercise), is available and analysed, it is difficult to project what the detailed priorities will be over the next 5 years. ESSH is also a significant consideration between now and 2020.	PH
7.9	The Board was asked to consider this recommendation in light of the previous decision made on the Reactive and Voids Maintenance contract.	
7.10	There was a question about the effect on small contractors in the area. Paul Hughes responded that local contractors are used by City Building and will continue to receive work. The small contractors report that they have not seen any reduction in their workloads since the contract had been awarded to City Building.	
7.11	Margaret reported that satisfaction levels, costs and community benefits have been reviewed and City Building were performing well overall as reflected in the reported resident satisfaction levels and cost reports.	
7.12	Margaret also advised that the component based programme (KBR’s etc.) is “bread and butter” for City building and that the programme in 2016/17 is likely to contain further elements of component replacements including, KBR’s, windows, bathroom/electrical replacements etc. Other works (e.g. M and E Compliance works and environmental works are tendered separately).	
7.13	In terms of the Armour contract, Margaret reported that it has been in place since stock transfer, following a separate full EU procurement process. Armour’s rates are competitive and they provide a quality, responsive QS service. Armour has agreed to hold their rates to March 2017 and to also take on the role of Principal Designer in new contracts (as per new CDM legislation) and have agreed to charge the current competitively tendered CDM Co-ordinator rates implemented by Ewing Somerville.	
7.14	Margaret reported that one disadvantage is that we are putting all “eggs in one basket” with one consultant both for QS and H and S services. However, the Planned Maintenance Team is small and the ability to deliver and manage multi design teams is limited. This is already challenging with different contracts in place.	
7.15	The Board approved the use of MHA’s contractual option to extend the current “Reactive Maintenance and Voids” and “Planned Maintenance” contracts for 1 year from January / February 2016 to end March 2017 and also to extend the current Armour Q.S. appointment to end March 2017.	

8.0	POLICE SERVICES SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT	
8.1	Lynn Wassell introduced the report. Following on from a recent Board session with Commander Joe McKerns, who has responsibility for Safer Streets, more research was carried out with Cube and NG Homes on the levels of contribution they make to similar initiatives. A budget sum of £50,000 has been allocated by MHA for the current financial year although there is no agreement in place with Police Scotland to make any contribution this year.	
8.2	The research with Cube and NG Homes show that they do not provide additional police funding but work closely in collaboration with Police Scotland in other ways. It was also noted that, in common with MHA, Cube and NG Home are experiencing a fall in anti-social behaviour.	
8.3	The proposal is that, recognising that it is important to work closely with Police Scotland, £20,000 of the current budget sum be retained for targeted additional activities with Police Scotland. The outcomes for these additional activities will have to be additional and as needed and will have specific performance measures which will be reported. Activities could include, for example, specific campaigns and raising awareness of crime. The attention of the Board was also brought to the continued use of the 'brand' of Safer Streets and that a clear partnership strategy will be entered into with Police Scotland.	
8.4	The Board raised the point that Commander McKerns has proposed a leaflet to tell people how to phone if incidents occur. Jennifer Simon advised that this will be included in the next Newsletter.	JS
8.5	It was asked if the remaining budget £30,000 now not being spent on Safer Streets could be used to upgrade CCTV. Lynn reported that there is a budget to upgrade the CCTV equipment and we are looking at what can be done. Lynn further advised that the £30,000 is being retained as a budget sum in overheads. It could be used to deal with, for example, specific initiatives on anti-social behaviours should these rise.	
8.6	It was agreed by the Board that MHA retains a budget for our Safer Streets Service Level Agreement of £20,000 during June - November 2015. In the event that additional services are needed over and above the core service MHA can expect from the police, any work will be based on an agreed rate of £49 per hour per police officer, planned and agreed in advance with clear outcomes and with all payments subject to satisfactory performance.	
9.0	CONSTRUCTION (DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT) REGULATIONS (CDM) 2015 POLICY	
9.1	Donna Birrell introduced the report. MHA currently has a CDM policy but this needed to be reviewed and updated with the requirements of the new CDM Regulations 2015. The main change was that the CDM	

9.2	<p>Co-ordinator is replaced with a Principal Designer.</p> <p>MHA have put in place arrangement for this to happen including transitional arrangements for any contracts already underway with Planned Maintenance in place and Reactive Maintenance being developed by Paul Hughes. In addition, staff training has been undertaken.</p>	
9.3	<p>The Board was asked to note that on Page 8, Section 9.2 that the 4th bullet point was superfluous and should be deleted – no information had been missed.</p>	
9.4	<p>It was agreed by the Board approve the revised Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM) Policy.</p>	
10.0	CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT	
10.1	<p>Lynn Wassell advised that this report was to provide the Board with an overview of key activities and issues for information and briefly ran through key items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board Effectiveness Plan – The Regulator is broadly happy with plan and noted the need to ensure senior staff are involved in the learning development. 2. Draft Priorities: Lynn circulated a paper on which were listed five key priorities for the coming year. These were discussed between the CEO and Directors. They were introduced to all staff at a communications session last week and will now be fleshed out with and update on direction, priorities and plans being presented to the next meeting of the Board. <p>Lynn asked for any feedback, tonight or later, to be advised. The Board thought that on point 2, we should also be listening to staff. This was agreed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Maryhill Locks Phase 2 has been shortlisted for a Scottish Homes Award. City Building has invited two MHA representatives to a Finalist Reception on 2nd June from 5.30pm at the Hilton Grosvenor in Edinburgh. Nominations from Board sought. In addition, City Building has invited 4 representatives from MHA to the Awards Dinner on 18th June from 7pm in the Thistle Hotel, Glasgow. Donna Birrell will co-ordinate the attendance of Board and staff members. 4. Forthcoming dates for Board members: Lynn advised that a Leadership Development day for Board members, which is part of a larger MHA wide programme, is scheduled for 1 July from 12.30pm-7.30pm at House of an Art Lover. The timings has been adjusted to, hopefully, make it easier for Board members to attend. <p>On 28th May the first Regulation workshop will be held from 6pm.</p>	<p>Board</p> <p>DB/Board</p>

	<p>For Board members unable to attend on 28th May a second had been arranged for 18th June but this now clashed with the Finalist Dinner and a new date will be advised to members.</p> <p>Week commencing 8th June is Board appraisal week and Board members are asked to ensure that they have an appraisal slot booked by contacting Kim Grant.</p> <p>5. Resignations: Lynn advised that Isabella McTaggart and Catherine Stylianou have resigned from the Board due to family and other commitments. Letters are being sent by the Chairperson to thank both for their work as Board members and flowers will also be sent as a token of appreciation.</p>	
11.0	DIRECTOR OF HOUSING : RECRUITMENT	
11.1	Lynn reported that a verbal offer had been made to one candidate who has accepted. The successful candidate is required to give 2 months' notice in their previous post and therefore should be joining MHA in early August 2015.	
12.0	ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS	
12.1	There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 1950 hrs.	