

**Minutes of West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative
Management Committee Meeting of
24th May 2021 at 6.30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting held via MS Teams**

In attendance:

WWHC Committee:

A Anderson (AA), Chairperson	R Alexis (RA), co-opted
S Anderson (SA), Vice Chairperson	E Kerr (EK)
A Duffin (AD), Secretary	D Murphy (DM)
M Alcorn (MA)	

Meeting is quorate.

WWHC Staff:

S Marshall, Director (Dir)
S Paton, Project Officer (PO) (Minutes)
M Gladstone, Assistant Director of Corporate Services (ADCS)
I Fordyce, Finance Officer (FO)

Introduction

The Chairperson welcomed the new Finance Officer to the meeting.

The Chairperson congratulated the Director on her recent appointment. The Director thanked the Committee and said she was delighted by her appointment and looked forward to working with the Committee.

The Director confirmed that the tenant observer scheduled to attend this meeting had put apologies in but will attend next month.

1. Apologies

PW

2. Confidentiality

The Chairperson reminded Committee of the importance of confidentiality.

3. Declaration of Interests

The Committee noted declarations of interest from the Chairperson, the Secretary and the Vice Chairperson under item 13 c) – note no change proposed.

4. Previous Minutes

a) Management Committee meeting of 26th April 2021

The previous minutes were proposed by EK and seconded by AD and noted as an accurate record.

b) Signing of Minutes

The Chairperson will pass the signed minutes of the previous meeting to the PO for filing.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Notifiable Event – The Director’s post is now closed on the Scottish Housing Regulator’s (SHR) notifiable event portal.

Committee Training – Freedom of information

The Committee agreed to hold the freedom of information refresher training session on the 15th of June at 6.30pm via MS Teams.

Housing Sub Committee – Allocations Policy Review

The Committee agreed to hold a Housing Sub Committee on the 7th of June at 6.30pm via MS Teams. MA submitted apologies.

Actions from Previous Meeting Report

The Committee noted this report and progress made.

6. Sub Committee Minutes and Referrals

None

7. Correspondence

a) Information

None

b) Decision

EVH – SHAPS Event (Governing Body Members)

The Secretary agreed to attend this event on the 15th June via Zoom. The AD(CS) will attend the staff SHAPS event.

Not Miss Whitlawburn – Sponsorship request

The Committee agreed a £100 donation.

8. Delegates Reports and Affiliated Organisation Information

a) Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)

MA updated that the next EVH committee meeting will be on the 7th of June 2021. The Director reminded Committee that they received the EVH bulletin in an email last week.

b) Glasgow West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)

The Secretary updated that the next meeting will be on Thursday 27th June 2021.

GWSF are conducting research that might be of interest to the Committee on governance issues such as committee recruitment, 9 year rule and attracting committee members.

c) Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)

None.

9. Governance and Assurance

a) Management Committee Training Plan

The Committee noted the training plan and the next training session will be on freedom of information on the 15th of June 2021.

b) Notifiable Events

The Committee noted the register of notifiable events. The Director's post has been closed and the change of internal auditor notification has also been closed on the SHR portal.

c) Schedule of External Submissions 2021/22

The Director assured the Committee that the external submissions schedule was up to date with submissions made within required timescales.

d) Review of Rules

At the April 2021 meeting, Committee agreed to further consider the inclusion of the optional amendment to allow for the direct appointment of up to 5 Committee members (or a lesser number) to allow the strengthening of Committee between AGM's other than by co-option, or by filling a casual vacancy, subject to legal advice.

This has been included in the updated draft provided by TC Young however, including this amendment appears to reduce the number of elected Committee members possible ie. a number of Management committee places would be reserved for appointed members.

Management Committee considered this point and agreed that the number of elected Management Committee members should be maximised and Committee strengthening between AGMs would be by co-option or filling casual vacancies arising.

Confirmation that this is the correct interpretation of this rule to be requested from TC Young Solicitors.

The Director will bring a further report on the proposed rule changes with the optional amendments to the next management committee meeting.

The Director noted that there are still current restrictions on meeting in groups and the current rules do not allow for an online Special General Meeting (SGM). Therefore as it stands there is no way to hold an SGM

to change the rules. The GWSF is looking into this problem as there is around 50% of registered social landlords needing to update their model rules.

e) Assurance Action Plan - Progress Report

The Director updated the progress of the assurance action plan and timetable of compliance self assessments against each regulatory standard over the next 3 years.

The Committee agreed that a further progress report will be brought to a future meeting with external verification in time for the October 2021 submission deadline of the Annual Assurance Statement to the SHR.

10. Regulation

a) Annual Return on the Charter

The Director explained that the full ARC submission was enclosed in the committee papers and it included a report on the variances from previous year's figures with explanations. This information is published later in the year by the SHR in the landlords report.

The Committee approved submission of the ARC along with the stock condition information to the SHR by the 31st May deadline.

b) Covid 19 Quarterly Return 2021/22

The Committee were reminded that the monthly Covid 19 returns have gone to quarterly returns to the SHR. There has been additional information required in the quarterly returns. The GWSF has asked landlords if they are having issues with the volume of information needed to be submitted to the SHR.

11. Director Report and Targets

The Director updated the Committee on the indicative timescales for re-opening the office. Staff have been consulted and are comfortable with the current indicative timescales.

The risk assessment for office working is in place and working well. Staff are well versed on the Covid 19 office protocols.

The maintenance and improvement programme has recommenced and is commencing well.

BMcN asked the Director when the window cleaning contract will resume. The Director will ask the AD (PS) to let the Committee know.

12. Tenancy Services

a) Arrears Monitoring Report

The Committee noted the monitoring report. The gross arrears figures look better in this monitoring report because of the arrears write off that committee agreed to.

The Director reported that the outturn collection figures are looking good at the end of the financial year because the tenancy services team have put significant resources into recovering arrears and it is paying off.

b) Homeless Persons Accommodation – Extension request

The Committee discussed the report detailing the South Lanarkshire Council request to extend the temporary homeless accommodation leases.

Committee agreed to an extension of the six leases for one year initially with a review in May 2022 to consider extending the lease for a further year.

13. Corporate Services

a) Quarterly Management Accounts – Q4 2020/21

The ADCS explained the quarterly management accounts and updated Committee on a few updated figures in the papers.

There was more income than expected because of the land transfer to South Lanarkshire Council. There was an underspend in some areas such as routine maintenance but a slight overspend due to enhanced cleaning requirements for voids and office Covid-19 improvement works to accommodate safe return to work.

The overall financial position of the Co-operative is strong and stable.

The Committee approved the management accounts and covenants report and the AD(CS) will submit this to the bank by the deadline tomorrow.

b) Policy Review – Cost Centre Apportionment

The Committee noted the report and approved the apportionments in appendix 1.

c) WCRC Service costs and Minute of Agreement

The AD(CS) said this agreement is approved annually and it will next be reviewed no later than May 2022.

The Committee approved the minute of agreement between WWHC and WCRC.

d) Homeworking Policy

The Committee noted the report and recommendations. The amendments in the home working policy enhances cyber security, data protection provision and the computer use policy.

The Committee approved the amended Homeworking Policy.

14. Communications Code Review

This review brings the communications code into line with the new communications strategy that the Communications Team developed. The communications strategy was approved by Committee in February 2021.

The Director reported that the communications strategy promotes good communications throughout the Co-operative.

The Committee approved the Communications Code Review.

15. East Whitlawburn

a) Legal agreement

Information has been submitted to progress the legal agreement with South Lanarkshire Council (SLC). The Director and AD (PS) have a meeting with the Scottish Government and SLC on 7th June 2021.

Some clarification is needed on the statutory road construction consent and when that is going to be in place.

b) Loan Finance

The Director reported that an indicative valuation of the new build will be carried out before going to tender for private finance.

16. Business Plan - Delivery Plan Progress Report

The Director reported the progress against the business plan delivery plan with no delays to report.

17. Any Other Competent Business

MA raised a concern about furniture being left near the towers as potential fire hazards and there have been some fire raising incidents. The Director said that Concierge were doing daily inspections and they move dumped items or items awaiting bulk uplift away from the towers. SLC had reduced bulk uplifts over the course of last year, however these have been reinstated.

The Director said that the Community Police had been involved in visits to homes who had been fly tipping on the estate.

AD asked if the committee health and safety responsibilities form needed a wet signature or if a digital signature would do. The AD(CS) said that a wet signature would be preferable.

The Whitcomm Committee are in the process of planning for the future and discussed the future provision of services at their last committee meeting and have asked WWHC to confirm its position in relation to equipment and infrastructure that is used to provide the service.

The Committee agreed to work alongside Whitcomm to discuss infrastructure, support and service provision in the future.

The AD(CS) asked for Committee views on the new layout of the committee papers. The Committee agreed to keep the reports together in one document but staple them at the top left side instead of along the left margin and review again.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

28th June 2021 at 6.30 p.m.

Closed Session - Confidential Items

[REDACTED]

20. Staffing

a) Finance Officer

The finance officer's position has been filled.

b) Director's Post

The Director's position has been filled.

Meeting Closed at 19.45pm.