

West Whitlawburn Housing Co-Operative Limited (WWHC)

Minutes Of Management Committee Meeting

Held In The Co-Operative Offices At 57 Belmont Road

Monday 28th October 2019 At 6.30 P.M.

Committee In Attendance:

11 members in attendance

Meeting is quorate.

Staff In Attendance:

WWHC Director **WWHC** Project Officer

WWHC Assistant Director Corporate Services

1. Apologies etc: – signing in book

(CB).

2. Confidentiality

AA reminded committee about confidentiality.

3. Declaration of Interests

No Declarations of Interests.

4. WWHC Attitude Menu

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

5. WWHC Communication Code

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

6. Previous Minutes

a) Management Committee 23rd September 2019:

No amendments.

b) Signing of minutes

Minutes proposed by **EK**.

Minutes seconded by **MA**.

The minutes were approved by committee as a true record and signed by the chair.

7. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Item 7 **SP** looked into the EVH Governing Body Leadership Programme and forwarded the details to **AA**. Item now concluded.

Item 12 c) **AA** attended the SHAPS support group on the 25th October.

Item 18 c) **PF** informed committee that the meeting with South Lanarkshire Council about the legal agreement for the East Whitlawburn Development has been further postponed.

8. Committee training plan and integration

a) Future Training Plan: priorities.

1) Working with Interpreters

SP had proposed to show Committee the training aid video from Happy to Translate tonight but this will be postponed until early next year because of the EVH presentation on pensions taking place tonight.

2) Understanding Reports

Nothing further to report.

3) Whistleblowing

SP will present this training to committee next month.

4) Freedom of Information

Nothing further to report.

b) Other Governance items to be progressed

1) Committee Appraisals 2019/20 progress report

AA reported that the Committee Appraisals for this year are now complete.

SP informed committee that the new format appraisal forms will be distributed to committee next month and will be due for return after the New Year.

9. Sub Committee Minutes and Referrals

None.

10. Pensions

a) Actuarial Valuation

Committee noted the report contained within the papers. A report containing a summary of SHAPS Pension Position following SHAPS Pension Scheme actuarial valuation of 30th September 2018 was circulated to committee.

Committee noted the Management letter received from our Auditor.

b) Future Costs and Staff Consultation

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

At 7.15 pm LR from EVH gave a presentation to committee on staff pensions and changes to the pension contribution rates. All staff present declared an interest and stayed for general discussions but left to allow committee more detailed discussion with Lorna. Lorna stated that there is a lot of information available about pensions but EVH are particularly involved in staff relations and how decisions should be considered and how staff should be consulted. The defined benefit pension schemes have significant contribution increases from April and the time scales are short for staff consultations.

Defined benefit pension schemes carry more risk for the employer whereas defined contribution pension schemes the risk is with the employee. In relation to the changes in contributions it is no longer the case that the employer has to pay a minimum of 50% in contributions but if changes are planned to lessen our contribution level to below 50% it would need consultation with staff and we should be conscious of the likelihood of negative feedback and it would be best to seek professional pension advice for this. LR advised that any consultation should be full and thorough and normally the employer would absorb the increase to previous levels (50:50 in our case) to allow a longer consultation.

Committee discussed the issue in detail including a proposal to remove the Defined Benefit: Care 60th pension to employees. It was decided that given the time restraints and complexity of the issue committee would arrange a separate meeting to come to a final decision. Committee agreed that this meeting will take place on the 5th November 2019 at 6pm at the **WWHC** offices.

11. Delegates Reports and Affiliated Organisations Info

a) EHV Members Report

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

b) GWSF monthly update

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

c) SFHA News

None.

12. Correspondence

a) Information

None.

b) Decision

The current Donations Schedule was circulated to committee. Committee declined the donation request from St Andrew's Hospice- Memorial Christmas tree light in honour of someone.

Committee agreed to issue Pensioner Christmas Vouchers to the value of £7 to qualifying tenants this year.

c) Training.

PW agreed to attend the SHARE Housing Bright Future Conference at Peebles Hydro in March 2020. **SP** will book.

SP will get more details for committee about the SHARE – Governance Masterclass events happening in January and February 2020.

13. Policy Reviews.

a) Standing Orders

Committee ratified the Standing Orders Policy.

b) Use of Seal

Committee ratified the Use of the Seal / Authorised Signatories Policy.

c) Complaints Policy and Procedures

Committee noted the Complaints Policy Review and the WWHC Complaints Handling Procedure and approved the policy for implementation.

d) Internal Audit Policy

Committee noted the Internal Audit Policy Review and approved the policy for implementation.

e) Smoke Free

Committee ratified the Smoke Free Policy.

f) Alcohol and Substance Misuse

Committee agreed to adopt the EVH model policy on Alcohol and Substance Misuse.

g) Stress Management

Committee agreed to adopt the EVH model policy on Stress Management.

h) Freedom of Information and Environment Impact Policy

Committee ratified the Freedom of Information and Environment Information Policy.

i) Procurement Policy

Committee noted the Procurement Policy Review and approved the policy for implementation.

14. Staffing:

SP left the room to allow committee to deal with these issues.

a) Concierge

PF informed committee that DB **WWHC** concierge officer has been offered the senior position. Routes to Work will be approached about finding suitable cover.

AD gave verbal update of the Stage 3 Grievance response which will be finalised next week and sent out once complete.

15. Governance and Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

a) New Regulatory Framework: Self Assurance Statement October 2019

1) Statement for Signing

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

AA signed off the Assurance Statement and it will be sent to **SHR** tomorrow.

2) Progress Report

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

PF stated that the Action Plan is continuous but there is nothing of material concern.

b) The cost of regulation.....and who pays it

Nothing to report.

16. Internal Audit

a) Action Plan: Update

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

SP reported that the Internal Audit Committee met last week.

b) 2019/20 Programme

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

The 2020 programme has been agreed with Alex Cameron the Internal Auditor.

17. Health and Safety

Nothing to report.

18. East Whitlawburn.

a) Project Update

PF informed committee that the two public meetings about the proposed road closure were badly attended.

b) Legal Agreement

Nothing to report.

19. Springhall and Whitlawburn Neighbourhood Plan.

a) Update on WWHC 5 asks

SP informed committee that Healthy and Happy had indicated that funding from a Climate Change Fund could be applied for to facilitate edible planting, things like fruit bushes and strawberries which would be low maintenance. Committee discussed how this might work but thought it might be misused and was not suitable for us.

20. Risk Management

No issues to report.

21. Energy Project

a) Progress report and Retention figures.

PF confirmed to committee that last week he signed a conclusive letter that now completes the contract. Great news after having waited 6 years. **WWHC** still have £30,000 to pay Npower but will retain a further £12,000 taking the total retention figure to £94,000 which is even better news.

b) 2nd 1/4ly Report 19/20

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

PF brought to committee attention that the figures should be in the black once adjustments are made for RHI income over quarters one and two.

22. WWHC Financial Analysis....and hard decisions

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

PF stated to committee that **WWHC** have managed their resources well and are currently financially strong with goods reserves. There is low exposure with our current loans. This situation is weakened due to work imposed on **WWHC** post Grenfell and the growing caseload of tenants receiving Universal Credit and the debt typically associated with these tenants. Additional expenditure is also an issue with the current concierge sickness cover giving serious cause for concern, the possibility of meeting pending Multi Storey Flat (**MSF**) Fire Door Regulations which could cost in the region of £500,000 with no indication of grant funding, likely increase costs on future repair works after tender, kitchen and bathroom replacements, office improvements and the pension past service deficit reduction not being completed in the anticipated timeframe leading to ongoing payments to service this along with increases in current pension costs.

Committee discussed these issues at length including the amount needed to meet expenditure, paying loans off early, our past rent rises, current inflation rates, not offering some services, reduction in services and our past reserve levels. Given the complexity of these issues committee decided it warranted a separate meeting to allow serious and deep consideration given the importance of the decisions. This meeting will take place on Tuesday 12th November at 6pm.

PF reminded committee that staff can offer advice, but committee must make the decisions. The rent consultation takes place at the end of January and the Pension

Trust needs 3 months' notice of our decision and 60 days is needed for the staff pension consultation.

23. Freedom of Information: Update

MG updated committee that staff training is taking place this week. Some items are not complete including changes to the website. This was due to IT problems, but **MG** is confident these will be completed by the end of the week.

24. Moorepay Update

PF stated that it has been a bit of a rollercoaster journey but a development in another court could set a precedent and now means the Moorepay case is no way near as solid and is much less watertight.

25. Communication Strategy: WWHC Logo etc

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

PF informed committee that they are still awaiting some costs.

Committee decided that given the current financial pressures a change of logo and rebranding would be postponed to a later date.

26. Capital Programme Update: 5 Year Programme: Hard Decisions required

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

27. Budget and Rent Setting 19/20

Committee decided to postpone a decision until after the meeting on Financial Analysis taking place on the 12th November 2019 when they should be in a better position to make an informed decision.

28. Estate Gritting Report

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

Committee approved the appointment of Nurture Landscapes for the gritting and snow clearance work for 2019/20 as detailed in the report.

29. GDPR 1/4ly Report

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

30. Complaints and Compliments 1/4ly Report

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

31. Fire Safety Review 1/4ly Report

a) Technical

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

b) Operational

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

c) Communications

Committee noted the report contained within the papers.

32. Business Plan and Senior Staff Succession Planning: Progress

PF informed committee that he had met with John Mullholland from the Mullholland Consultancy, who advised that the Regulator will need to see evidence of committee being involved in the business planning including the 3-year plan and 30-year plan. Dates identified for committee training are Sunday 26th January 2020 or Saturday 1st February 2020. Committee will check their availability.

Paragraph on staff redacted.

33. A.O.C.B. – Any Other Competent Business

None.

34. Date and time of next meeting: Monday 25th November 2019 at 7.15 p.m.