

Tollcross Housing Association Limited
Minute of the Management Committee Meeting
held online on Monday 8th June 2020

Present:

Chris Elliot (Vice Chair and Chair for Meeting), Bill Dougan, Agnes Philips, Ellen Stewart, Steve Fleming and John McMorro

In Attendance:

Clive Douglas, Chief Executive
Tom Hastings, Finance Director
Frank Donohoe, Technical Director

Anne Fitzsimons, Corporate Services Director
Fiona Mills, Housing Director
Nicole Lennox, Corporate Services Assistant
Marie Campbell, Corporate Services Officer
(Minutes)

Item 1 Apologies and Declaration of Interest:

- 1.1. **Apologies:** Geraldine Connolly (Leave of Absence), Esther Skimins, Ian Smith, Andrea Bell, Brian McNally, Ellen Garscadden, Clare Newton and Theresa Findlay
- 1.2. **Declarations of Interest:** John McMorro declared an interest in Item 6.2, as Secretary of the QEF and took no part in the discussions.

Item 2 **Minutes of Previous Meetings:**

- 2.1 Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on 24th February 2020:
 - i. Matters Arising and Correction to Minute – (Post Meeting Note – Item 8 heading amended to read “Membership Report to 29th February 2020”)
 - ii. Approval of Minutes – The Minute was approved by general consent.
 - iii. Decisions taken between Meetings – None.
- 2.2 Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings – No Minutes due.

Item 3 **Finance Report** – Committee noted the detailed report and in particular the following points:

- 3.1 **IT** – In order to accommodate the current requirements for home working, the Association has invested in additional laptops.
- 3.2 **General Finance** – As of 1st June, all Finance staff are now working from home. The finance function has continued to operate as normal with general/factoring invoicing and administration, payment processing, etc., being undertaken albeit on a reduced volume basis. Salary payments to staff continue with claims made for April and May under the Government’s Job Retention Scheme, noting that furloughed staff receiving 100% of their salary.
- 3.3 **Management Accounts to 31st March 2020** – The accounts were previously submitted to the Audit & Business Sub Committee, noting that other than an increase in rent arrears at the year end, the pandemic has had no significant impact on the figures to 31st March 2020. In providing the basis for the annual accounts, the figures do not take account of any actuarial adjustments that may affect the pension figures.
 - 3.3.1 In response to a query raised, it was noted that whilst there is likely to be a positive outcome in surplus at the year end, once the pension figures are agreed, this is likely to reverse next year as the effect of the pandemic is felt across the world markets.

3.3.2 Management Committee members approved the Management Accounts to 31st March 2020.

- 3.4 **Bank Covenants** – Following the quarterly checks, Committee noted the Association’s compliance with all covenants.
- 3.5 **Statutory Accounts** - The audit work is due to commence remotely on 16th June 2020. The auditors, Scott Moncrieff Audit Services have set up a secure portal to allow the Association to upload the required information. In addition, it was agreed to accept the terms of the standard letters of engagement, etc., with the Vice Chair confirming acceptance by email and a signed copy being sent at a later date as appropriate.
- 3.6 **Treasury Management** –Committee noted that following the quarterly testing all treasury management requirements have been satisfied.

Item 4 **Housing Report** - Committee noted the detailed report and in particular the following points:

- 4.1 **Applications/Allocations** – In noting that service is being provided to customers with some areas of business having been suspended, e.g. processing of applications and allocations, it is hoped to reintroduce these services as soon as possible with training and advice being taken to facilitate this. It was noted that 5 properties have been allocated to Glasgow City Council, Homeless since 16th April 2020.
- 4.2 **Arrears** – Committee noted a 67% increase in arrears since end February 2020 with total arrears now at £217,988. The number of tenants on Universal Credit has risen from 331 to 450 since lockdown began with a number of families struggling financially. In complying with the Covid 2020 Act, it was noted that no action on arrears is being taken, however, staff continue to support families with welfare advice, etc. and are encouraging continued engagement.
- 4.3 **Anti-Social Behaviour Complaints** – Whilst limited progress can be made with some complaints under the current conditions, the Association is working closely with Police Scotland to monitor those properties/tenants where there is a risk of escalation.
- 4.4 **Voids** – 28 voids were recorded at the end of May 2020 with a further 15 to 20 due to be included due to deaths in the area.
- 4.5 **Food Parcels. Etc.** – It was noted that up to 150 food parcels have been delivered each week alongside up to 100 soup/sandwich daily deliveries. This service is coming to an end by the service provider and the Association will supplement the food provision as plans for the pantry come to fruition.
- 4.6 **Welfare Advice & Income Maximisation** – Tenants are still receiving the service from Advice Centre staff and volunteers.

Item 5 **Maintenance Report** – Committee noted the detailed report and in particular the following points:

- 5.1 **Staffing** – The Association is currently working on risk assessments and method statements to allow the Maintenance Officers to safely resume their

- on-site duties e.g. void pre and post inspections and common area annual inspections.
- 5.2 **Repairs Service** – Throughout the lockdown tenants and service users have been able to contact the Association to action emergency repairs on a 24 hour basis, through home working and using Hanover out of hours. Non-emergency works are being recorded for action when appropriate. Whilst a number of contractors have worked throughout, additional contractors are preparing to resume services following Government guidance. A total of 196 emergency jobs were undertaken from 1st April to 30th May, all made safe within our 6 hour timescale. A further 229 non-emergency jobs have been done e.g. follow up work for both emergencies and gas services. Repairs spend is £70k against a budget of £173k year to date, with no void repair work having been carried out.
 - 5.3 **Stairwell Cleaning** – Whilst continuing to operate on a limited basis throughout the period, as of 1st June 2020 a full service will be resumed.
 - 5.4 **Bulk Uplift /Waste** – As a temporary measure, given the suspension of the bulk uplift service by Glasgow City Council and the ongoing issue with overfilled bins, etc., the Association’s landscape contractors are cleaning out the bin areas on a fortnightly basis and removing bulk items to refuse depots.
 - 5.5 **Landscape Works** - The landscape contractor has operated throughout the lockdown with a reduced squad of operatives, concentrating on the Tollcross area.
 - 5.6 **Cyclical and Major Works** – It was noted that minimal major works have taken place during the period. A number of cyclical and major works contractors are now indicating their intention to re-commence services. Accordingly revised expenditure figures have been produced to more accurately reflect works and expenditure for the current year.
 - 5.7 **Gas Servicing** - In accordance with Government guidelines, gas servicing arrangements have continued with 93.2% completed within timescale. A total of 20 properties (6.8%) have not provided access to carry out the gas service within the regulatory 12 month period, reasons for refusal being due to shielding / being away from property living with relatives / not giving access / unable to make contact. The Chief Executive is providing a report on gas servicing performance on a weekly basis to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Association has recorded these addresses and reasons for no access, but has taken no further action such as sheriff officer visits, at present. The properties that have missed their annual service anniversary date will be top priority for the Association at the end of the lockdown period.

Item 6 Corporate Report - Committee noted the detailed report and in particular the following points:

- 6.1 **Management Committee** – Committee approved a further 3 month leave of absence for Geraldine Connolly.
- 6.2 **QEF Affiliation 20/21** - Committee approved affiliation for 20/21 at cost of £790.
- 6.3 **Scottish Housing Regulator** – The Regulator is being kept updated with a monthly report issued. Committee noted the report for May 2020.

- 6.4 **Staffing** – Committee noted that of the 45 staff employed (43.6 full time equivalent), 30 staff are working from home, 14 staff are now furloughed and 1 member of staff is on sick leave. In addition, it was noted that the Care Inspectorate have requested details of any sheltered housing staff absences that are related to the pandemic be reported via the portal. There are none so far. This is in addition to the usual reporting regime for incidents or issues in our sheltered properties related to the pandemic.
- 6.5 **Health & Safety** – Committee noted the additional expenditure required to undertake risk assessments across all of the Association's sites. In addition Committee noted that:
- Regular briefings are issued to all staff to assist with wellbeing.
 - There have been no incidents or accidents reported since the last report to Committee.
 - There are 3 fire risk assessments outstanding (not including HQ) and these will be arranged as soon as practicable. All other risk assessments are up to date.
 - All staff are due to commence their e-learning H&S modules.
- 6.6 **ARC 19/20**- The Regulator has advised that submission of the ARC will be delayed until July 2020 with work ongoing.
- 6.7 **Internal Audit Programme** – Committee noted the programme for 20/21, noting that some of this work will be done remotely.
- 6.8 **Freedom of Information** – Although some changes to timescales were introduced during lockdown, these have now been removed with the website updated accordingly.

Item 7 **Development Report** – Committee noted the report and overall that the Association's development projects have been halted during the lockdown. It is hoped that work on projects will resume in the next few weeks. Likewise, no progress has been made on the completion of the outstanding defects on Dunira Street Phase 1 and the New Office, however, retention monies are still with the Association. In terms of future funding for projects, the City Council are unable to make any commitments at present, however, it is hope that if some guarantee can be given in future, the Association may front fund projects.

Item 8 A.O.C.B.

- 8.1 **The Pantry** – It was noted that GHA has provided the premises at 213 Braidfauld Street on a rent free basis and it is hoped to get the project up and running in the next few weeks.
- 8.2 **GDPR** – It was noted that training materials, including a link to a video will be sent to Committee Members in the near future, which will ensure we meet the expectations of the Information Commissioner that refresher training is undertaken regularly.
- 8.3 **Gifts & Hospitality** – It was noted that a member of staff has been dealing with a member of their family being very ill with Covid-19 symptoms. On behalf of the Committee, a food hamper had been issued, along with a get well message, which has been recorded in the register. The staff member

was very grateful for this gesture. Committee asked that their best wishes for a full recovery be conveyed to the family.

- 8.4 **Chris Elliot, Vice Chair** – Chris thanked everyone for the support and condolences received upon his father’s recent passing.

Item 9 **Date and Time of Next Meeting:** To be confirmed.