

**FERGUSLIE PARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING  
Held on 28 February 2024 at 5pm via Hybrid (zoom) and in The Associations  
Offices, 76 Blackstoun Road, Paisley PA3 1NT**

**1. Welcome, Sederunt & Apologies**

**Present:**

Angela Chivers	Vice Chairperson
Tracey Johnstone	Board Member
Kirsten Ferguson	Board Member
Jim Strang	Board Member
Helen Glassford	Board Member (Zoom)

**In Attendance:**

Catrina Miller	Group Chief Executive
Ivor McCauley	Head of Operations
Greg Richardson	Housing Services Manager
Jim Aird	Finance Consultant

**Apologies:** Louise McNicol, Laurie Kefalas

**Absent:** Aidan McGrogan, Ian Williams

The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

2.1 None.

**3. Minutes of Meeting 31 January 2024**

3.1 Subject to removing the resolution at item 9 (this item was for noting only) the minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

The resolution was proposed by Kirsten Ferguson and seconded by Jim Strang.

***Resolution;*** the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2024 were approved as a true and accurate reflection of the proceedings.

#### **4. Matters Arising from Minutes 31 January 2024**

4.1 None

#### **5. Draft Minutes of Staffing Sub-committee held on 13 February 2024**

5.1 Members noted the minute of the Staffing Sub-committee held on 15 January 2024.

#### **6. Rent Increase 2024/25**

6.1 The Group Chief Executive Officer (GCE) presented this report and reflected the feedback to the consultation with tenants. The response rate to the consultation was just under 20%. The GCE explained the benefits in using Research Resource to maximise responses and to add a degree of independence to the consultation. The proposed increase of 5% was discussed with the merits of how this reflects the intent to increase rents above CPI to recover some income from a record over the past 5 years of lower than inflation increase.

6.2 The GCE advised that the consultation asked additional questions around fuel poverty.

6.3 Members sought the Senior Management Teams view on those individuals who indicated the increase will have no effect on their income.

6.4 Members highlighted the good response rate to the consultation.

The resolution was proposed by Angela Chivers and seconded by Jim Strang.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board approved a 5% rent increase for 2024/25.*

#### **7. Final Budget Report for 2024/25**

7.1 The Finance Consultant (FC) presented the final budget for approval. Discussion took place on the make-up of the budget along with the implications for the long-term financial planning of the Association.

7.2 The FC reflected the decision at the prior item on the rent increase and how the increase for 24/25 helps make up some income for the business plan following years of less than inflation increases.

7.3 He advised some items that are included are impacted by external factors such as the pay increase that is yet to be agreed. It is anticipated that the line budget for this has sufficient headroom to cater for the final increase. An increase in component spend is included for the year ahead that helps make up investment that did not occur in the current year due to a number of factors

The resolution was proposed by Jim Strang and seconded by Helen Glassford.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board reviewed and approved the annual budget for 2024/25.*

## **8. Long Term Financial Report**

- 8.1 The FC presented the 30-year long term projections for approval. Members were advised that the plan has been scenario tested on a number of items and in general the outcome is that the Association is financially positive and resilient over the long term.
- 8.2 He advised that the long-term plan now includes an item for Net Zero works from 2028 for a 12-year period. The sum is an arbitrary figure as there are many unknowns around the cost and technical implications of Net Zero. However, it is seen as prudent and responsible to begin to consider future spend on this issue and the impact on the business plan.

The resolution was proposed by Angela Chivers and seconded by Jim Strang.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board approved the 30-year financial projections.*

## **9. Eviction Report**

- 9.1 The Housing Services Manager (HSM) presented this report with a request to grant approval for enforcement of an eviction decree.
- 9.2 A number of probing questions were asked by board members around the circumstances and the potential support, or lack thereof, for the tenant from other statutory service providers. Discussion took place on the confidence over the thoroughness of reaching a conclusion where eviction approval is sought. A discussion was held reflecting that staff have been diligent in seeking an alternative.
- 9.3 Further general discussion took place around whether there is a requirement for a specific policy or guidance steps for FPHA on considering how we deal with specific groups with a focus on Young People who leave the care system. An action was taken to consider how we can incorporate steps that provide specific support for this group of tenants, or prospective tenants, in their dealings with the Association.

**Action: Look into what further support can be offered to those in the young people category.**

The resolution was proposed by Jim Strang and seconded by Tracey Johnstone.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board, recognising all reasonable efforts to assist the tenant has been made, approved eviction of the tenant. This eviction for rent is permitted under the current Scottish Government Policy.*

## **10. Former Tenant Rent Write Off Request**

10.1 The HSM presented this report to write off former tenant arrears.

10.2 This request reflects our policy to bring write offs to the board for approval. The policy permits for a request for write off on two occasion in a year however general practice is that once per year suffices for business requirements.

The resolution was proposed by Helen Glassford and seconded by Kirsty Ferguson.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board approved:*

- i) Permission to write off the former tenant rent arrears as detailed in the covering report with a total value of £8,350.54; and;*
- ii) Permission to write off former tenant rent credits as detailed within the covering report with a value of £1,243.29.*

## **11. Policy Review**

11.1 The CEO presented her covering report to seek approval for a number of HR related policies which were recommended for approval by the staffing sub-committee.

The resolution was proposed by Angela Chivers and seconded by Jim Strang.

**Resolution;** *The Management Board, on recommendation from the staffing sub-committee approved the following policies:*

- i) Recruitment & Selection;*
- ii) Staff training and Development;*
- iii) Dignity at work*
- iv) Group Attendance & Absence Management;*
- v) Flexi time and TOIL; and;*
- vi) Group Staff Appraisal*

## **12. GCEO Report**

12.1 The CEO presented her covering report and advised that consultation on pay from EVH paused following rejection of an award by union members. EVH and Unite are now involved in talks that are facilitated by ACAS.

12.2 Members noted as part of the health & wellbeing for staff a request was made to introduce a health check which has been organised and has proved popular within the staff team.

- 12.3 Members noted the staffing sub-committee approved the inclusion in the establishment for an additional modern apprentice role in addition to one already included. This is to underline a commitment to help young people enter the workplace and the association has secured assistance from Skills Development Scotland.
- 12.4 The implementation of the new software system Rubixx is going well. The work is intense at the present time however staff are responding well and the assistance of the external consultant Altair has proved beneficial. As part of the work with Altair the GCEO sought approval from the Chair to spend £14k on additional process work with Altair that will help to make further improvements and efficiencies to key work processes as part of the implementation of Rubixx. Due to the pace of the introduction of the system it was not possible to wait till a board meeting to seek approval of the spend and retrospective approval was sought.

The resolution was proposed by Jim Strang and seconded by Angela Chivers.

**Resolution; The Management Board;**

- i) *Noted the update provided by EVH concerning the pay negotiations ongoing at present;*
- ii) *Noted the SHR tenant consultation events being carried out by TPAS; and;*
- iii) *Retrospective approval was given for the instruction of Altair to assist in the production of Service Blueprints, delegated approval was given on 24 February 2024 by the Chair.*

**13. AOCB**

- 13.1 The GCEO will confirm dates of the GWSF annual conference.

**The meeting ended at 6.55pm**

**Date of next meeting**

Board meeting 27 March 2024 at 5pm

I certify that the above minute has been approved as a true and accurate reflection of the proceedings:

Signed (Chair) .....

Date.....