

YORKHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Minutes of Management Committee hybrid meeting held on 30 May 2024 at 18:00 in The Association's Office and via Zoom

Present: Y Alexis (Chair), W Docherty (Secretary), M Green, D de Croy, M Ralph, P Braat, J Wilson (Zoom), N McPherson (Zoom)

Apologies: B Hanley

In Attendance: T Mallaghan (Chief Executive), G Kennedy (Deputy Chief Executive), G Watson (Finance Manager), C Davidson (Governance Assistant, mins)

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies were noted.</p> <p>Meeting began at 18:00</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive ('DCE') made members aware that staff would be required to leave the room later in the meeting, while members deliberate on agenda item 8; the reason being that staff will be directly affected by the outcome of the decision.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Minutes of Last Meeting</u></p> <p><u>3.1 - Amendments</u></p> <p>Item: SFHA Update – there was a request for a correction here, whereby it should note that J Wilson (<u>not</u> M Ralph) was to attend the SFHA Poverty Conference last month.</p> <p>Item: Matters Arising, point 10 – there was a request for the word 'notification' to be inserted after the sentence "staff have been reminded about using their out of office..."</p> <p>The Chief Executive ('CE') confirmed that these changes will be actioned.</p> <p><u>3.2 – Approval</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved based on the above amendments.</p>	TM

3.3 – Matters Arising

Item 1: The CE confirmed that [REDACTED] has been contacted regarding his leave of absence, and this line of communication will be maintained going forward. The Chief Executive also made members aware that M MacKintosh had resigned from her position as a co-opted member of the Management Committee.

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Item 5: The CE updated members regarding the Overnewton Centre, advising that he and the Finance Manager ('FM') had made contact with [REDACTED]. Discussions are ongoing for them to initially make use of the interview rooms within the YHA office, where they will provide a service that [REDACTED]. The intention is that eventually the Overnewton Centre will become a suitable space for them to move into and use in future.

J Wilson briefly dropped out and returned to the meeting due to a connection error.

4. Membership Applications/Cancellations

Members approved one new application for membership:

[REDACTED] (Local Resident)

There were no cancellations.

The total membership therefore now stands at 104.

The DCE informed the meeting that the new membership applicant had also expressed an interest in joining the Management Committee, and that the applicant will meet with the CE and DCE soon to discuss this proposition. This would possibly be followed by the applicant attending the next Management Committee in June as an observer.

5. Chief Executive's Report

Report prepared by the CE to provide members with an update on the latest general situation both within a wider local and national housing context, as well as with the Association itself. He welcomed members to discuss or ask about any points within the report. He further highlighted that a UK General Election had been called since the report was written, but that the crux of the issues detailed in the report remained – namely a lack of funding and overall clarity for the housing

sector.

The CE further updated that the Tenancy Services Assistant's ('TSA') post had been re-graded after going through the relevant procedures with EVH. Members expressed their high regard for the work done by the TSA. A member noted that the CE should be mindful to ensure the TSA is appropriately supported and trained to manage their revised workload. The CE agreed with this, and advised that while training and support would indeed be provided as appropriate, the re-grading itself arose from the need to reflect that the TSA already currently undertakes some of these additional responsibilities.

The CE also updated that the temporary Property Services Assistant's ('PSA') post had been extended to the end of summer. While this will allow them to continue their role, it will also allow time for the Association to carry out its plans to recruit a Modern Apprentice. The Customer Services Assistant will also be able to work with the PSA as part of YHA's succession plans.

The CE updated members on the funding for a feasibility study as part of the Green Heat Retrofit Innovative Challenge, advising that the procurement of consultants for the feasibility study was well underway. He also advised that care was being taken to ensure that although the project must be innovative, there must also be assurance that it can be implemented successfully.

Item 2.5 - mentioned that YHA's interest in any future developments on [REDACTED] has been formally noted. A member asked whether the Association were solidifying plans beyond registering interest, by accounting for things such as what YHA would like to use the space for – which type of housing needs they would seek to meet, e.g., retirement housing, special needs, homes for those requiring multiple bedrooms, etc. The CE advised that these factors would be built into future plans as things progress, and that evaluation of the waiting list would also help inform YHA on the needs to be met.

When asked, the CE also informed the Chair that there were no concrete timescales on the matter. The Chair suggested that as and when things progress, a special Committee meeting to discuss matters would be advisable.

P Braat joined the meeting at 18:15

Another member suggested that further along, the Association should consider a purposely-acquired Development Officer, while being mindful of the impact future projects in this regard could have on existing staff who already have full workloads. The member has some

professional background experience in matters such as these, and offered to provide support if required on future initiatives. The CE agreed with the point about workloads, and advised that his preference would be to acquire the services an officer from an organisation that already provides this service rather than recruiting an officer ourselves.

Finally, the CE received positive feedback on the format and general topics covered within this report.

6. Factoring Write-Offs

Report seeking approval for Committee to write-off a Factoring debt of a now deceased individual, whose arrears exceeded the threshold for the CE to write-off.

No questions or comments. Write-off approved.

7. Policy Reviews

The DCE informed members that the paper sent out to them for this item had been superseded since it was sent to them. As such, one of the policies for approval was not on their papers and will instead be presented for approval at the June meeting.

The DCE then advised that this item featured a new style of reporting, whereby it tracks changes or additions to policies, rather than relying on Committee to read a full policy document for each renewal. He advised that full policy documents would also be uploaded soon to a new online portal for Committee to access at their leisure, and finally that more policies have also been identified for merging in future as part of an overall streamlining process.

Members approved the merging of the Recruitment and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policies, and noted that there were no changes to the Staff Code of Conduct (which is itself adapted from the EVH model, which has not been updated since YHA last reviewed).

A member requested for the proposed new Complaints Handling Procedure to be revisited, as there is a section within it that contradicts a stipulation found in the Allocations Policy. The DCE noted this observation, and agreed to amend as necessary.

8. Business Parking Permits

Due to the aforementioned declaration of interest, the 4 YHA staff members at the meeting left the room at 18:35 while Committee

GK

deliberated on this topic. *The minute for this agenda item only was recorded by M Green:*

The DCE had circulated a report inviting Management Committee to review its policy of assisting with the purchase of Business Parking Permits for staff, given changes to the costs and administration of Restricted Parking Zone Permits introduced by GCC from April 2024.

Since the inception of the Local Parking Zone, YHA has purchased permits for staff up-front who wished for one and recouped the cost via monthly salary deductions. While previously staff members who only attended the office for part of the week were able to share a single permit amongst themselves as required for display on the appropriate vehicle, two key changes have been made. Firstly, the cost of a permit has gone from £650 p/annum to £850 p/annum. Secondly, permits will now be issued in electronic form rather than physical, meaning that every permit is identified with a single specified vehicle and thus sharing of permits will not be possible.

The DCE drew attention to the financial hardship these cost increases may cause staff, and to the consequential unattractiveness of working for the Association to prospective employees. Committee were therefore invited to consider 3 options:

1. The Association could meet the **full** cost of all staff permits
2. The Association could meet **half** of the cost of the permits
3. The **status quo** could be maintained, with no subsidy offered

After discussion, members recognised that the intention behind the Restricted Parking Zones – which now cover an increasing number of areas in Glasgow – is to discourage commuting, free up spaces for residents and visitors, and reduce carbon emissions. Committee agreed that there was no evidence that Yorkhill – an area relatively well-served by public transport – is likely to prove an unattractive place to work. They therefore **agreed to maintain the current policy** whereby staff would meet the full cost of their commuter parking.

Staff were invited back into the meeting at 19:08, and C Davidson resumed minute-taking duties.

Staff were informed by the Chair of Committee's decision to maintain status quo.

A member did suggest that Committee could be open to forward-funding public transport costs for staff, and that the business permit issue could again be reviewed further down the line. The CE noted this, and highlighted that – as with tonight's report – the tax implications of a

proposal to subsidise public transport use would be considered.

9. ARC Performance 2023-24

Committee were presented with a covering report as well as a finalised report of the Association's performance against the Annual Return on the Charter for the past year. The report is presented to members for approval for senior staff to submit it to the Scottish Housing Regulator, although the content within the report was statistical and was therefore for information purposes.

The Chair invited members to ask any questions or make any comments on the information.

A member asked for clarity on what was meant by 'self-contained stock' and why some self-contained stock was listed as exempt from the Scottish Housing Quality Standard ('SHQS'). The CE advised that these are self-contained flats or homes, which is to say they are not properties shared with other households. Additionally, he informed the member that exemptions would normally be applied to stock that could not feasibly meet SHQS – he gave an example of particularly small flats where the kitchen exists within a recess and it would not be realistic to create more space. The DCE added that he hoped to achieve a figure of zero properties in abeyance of SHQS next year.

From the data presented, another member wished to congratulate the Association on a successful past year, citing particular standout KPIs such as low void turnaround times and arrears figures. The Chair added that she echoed this sentiment.

No further questions. ARC 2023-24 approved for submission.

TM/GK

10. Five Year Financial Plans (FYFP) 2025-30

The FM presented the Association's FYFP, for approval for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator, and provided members with a narrative on some of the key issues and assumptions made in the plans:

- The FM informed members that 'Year 0' within the plans relates to the financial year that just ended (2023-24), and is based on figures from the Management Accounts, but made members aware that some changes may occur when the Annual Accounts are returned.
- For Statement of Comprehensive Income, the FM advised that

for years 2-5, the proposed rent increase will be [REDACTED] and rent income from acquisition flats has also been factored in.

- Operating costs will fluctuate over the five years in line with changes in staff costs, overheads and maintenance works.
- Interest payments will decrease over the 5 years as loans continue to be repaid, however will see an increase when the fixed loan ends in 2028.
- While a net deficit in 23/24 is reported, there will be a net surplus each year increasing to [REDACTED] in year five. The net surplus excludes any movement resulting from changes in the value of the pension fund.
- There have been no assumptions made on developments – only foreseeable planning – while acquisitions have also not been built in, but this can be done if opportunities arise.
- Components within properties will continue to be replaced, such as windows and fire safety systems.
- Cash balance should not drop below [REDACTED], and ends at [REDACTED] in year 5.
- Reserves finish up at a final total of [REDACTED], but monitoring the cashflow is a priority.
- Decarbonisation costs have not been built in as the costs are such an unknown at this time.

In response to a question from a member, the FM confirmed that grants for additional welfare, Fuel Support funds etc., were categorised under Grants from Scottish Ministers.

There were no further questions, and the Plans were approved for submission.

GW

11. Reports from Sub-Committees

11.1 – Housing Management Services Sub-Committee – 18 April

The Chair pointed out that the summary reports from both the Housing and Property Services meetings had the same heading, so requested that going forward the titles make it easier to distinguish which is which. The CE agreed that this would be actioned.

TM

The contents were otherwise approved.

11.2 – Property Services Sub-Committee – 25 April

The CE quickly clarified that the debts mentioned in item 4.1 are the same debts submitted for write-off this evening in agenda item 6.

Contents approved.

11.3 – Governance and Finance Sub-Committee – 9 May

A member asked for clarity on what was meant by SAR and EIR. The DCE clarified that they stood for Subject Access Request and Environmental Information Request respectively.

The CE also added for information that the topic of risk appetite was being looked into with the assistance of the external auditors.

Contents approved.

12. 'Housing Perks'

The DCE presented a scheme he had been made aware of in place at another RSL – an app called 'Housing Perks', whereby tenants, owners, Committee and staff can be invited to use it to purchase discounted gift cards at various retailers and keep the savings (e.g., x% off gift cards at supermarkets, retailers etc.).

The scheme will cost around £1 per unit of housing stock, and will not cost tenants extra. There is also an intention that further down the line, tenants may be able to pass savings made through the scheme directly into their rent accounts. The DCE advised that staff who had already downloaded it reported back positively on the scheme, and so he sought Committee's views.

A member asked what the implications would be for users from a data security standpoint, and who would be controlling the data and what they would do with it. The DCE confirmed they are a private company, however all that is required to use the scheme is a phone number for first-time access – no names, addresses or email addresses will be required.

Another member suggested seeking out other RSLs (such as Wheatley Group), who have similar schemes to see whether they have any learnings they could share with YHA.

Members approved the scheme being rolled out, and the Chair also approved the DCE purchasing 2x £30 gift vouchers to be used in a prize draw to promote the initial roll-out.

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13. SFHA, GWSF and EVH Updates

The CE advised that he had circulated various sector newsletters to members recently, and he will continue to issue any pertinent updates as and when they come. He further added that he builds relevant updates into the Chief Executive's report.

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The CE confirmed that he and M Green will be attending the SFHA Annual Conference in June on behalf of YHA, while several members reported that they found the recent EVH Conference in Dunblane useful.

A member expressed thanks to YHA staff for cascading all the information required by members.

14.

AOCB

The CE updated members that the court case regarding [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was heard that day, and that while he had sought information on any outcomes, he was yet to hear back and will issue any relevant information to Committee as and when he receives it.

TM

The DCE gave a brief demonstration of the new Committee website portal, with the intention being that eventually the portal becomes a hub for Committee papers and policies for members to reference in their own time.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input at the meeting.

Meeting Closed at 19:50

Date and Time of Next Meeting: 13 June 2024 at 18:00

Signed as a Correct Document

..... Chairperson