

YORKHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.

Minutes of Management Committee hybrid meeting held on Thursday 14 November 2024 at 18:00 in The Association's Office and via Zoom

Present: Y Alexis (Chair), W Docherty, M Ralph, M Green, B Hanley, D de Croy (all in-person)

J Wilson, G Mattu, C Armstrong, N McPherson (via Zoom)

Apologies: None

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

Abbreviations:

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|------------|------------------------|
| CE | Chief Executive |
| DCE | Deputy Chief Executive |
| FM | Finance Manager |
| CPI | Consumer Price Index |

| | | Action |
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| 1. | <u>Welcome and Apologies</u> Attendees were welcomed and attendance was noted. Meeting began at 18:00. | |
| 2. | <u>Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest to note. | |
| 3. | <u>Minutes of Last Meeting on 10 October 2024</u> <u>3.1 - Amendments</u> No amendments were required. <u>3.2 – Approval</u> The minutes were unanimously approved for signing. <u>3.3 – Matters Arising</u> Item 3.3: Annual Submissions – The CE confirmed that all active Committee members had now submitted their annual Declarations of | |

Interest and had re-signed the Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members.

Item 3.3: Overnewton Centre – The CE informed members that the FM will be the lead on the Centre initiative and will be looking for a small number of Committee members to form a working group. Several members indicated a willingness to join, and the FM will reach out to these members individually to agree on how exactly they can help.

FM

Item 3.3: SFHA Article – The CE confirmed that he has now circulated to Committee an article mentioned previously on SFHA’s website outlining the lack of funding and new housing being delivered compared to the level of demand for housing.

Item 4: Membership Cancellations – Members were informed that their suggested amendments to the cancellation letters to be sent to affected members had been taken on board and the letter had been amended before sending.

Item 6: Finance Info and Outcomes – Following a query at the last meeting, the FM has been able to provide some more information and is happy to share this with any members who are interested.

Item 7: Repairs and Maintenance Policy Review – The CE confirmed that the requested additional points to include in the policy update regarding damp and mould procedures had been included by the Property Services Manager.

4. **Governance Review**

Members had been issued 3 weeks earlier with the report produced by L Ewart following her review of the Association’s Governance arrangements. This evening, the Chair invited members to discuss their overall thoughts on the report and consider some of the proposals and recommendations within.

The CE re-assured members that there was no formal obligation or pressure to put the recommendations into action and that the Association would not be seen as non-compliant by Regulators for not doing so.

One member voiced concerns at some of the proposals, in particular that the number of sub-committees be reduced from 3 down to 1. They also felt that the number of recommendations being made was too high when they feel that current arrangements – and the Association’s performance – are already satisfactory.

Another member stated that they were satisfied with the report and felt it would bring Governance practices more into alignment with the rest of the sector, citing in particular the reduced volume of meetings.

There followed some discussion on how these proposals, if implemented, would see Committee's input become much more 'strategic' instead of 'operational'. On this, a member noted that it would be a major task to re-write the various roles, remits, standing orders and schemes of delegation. They also noted that staff may take some time to acclimate to the changes since they would now be acting on the direction set by Committee as opposed to previously issuing reports on things which they had already actioned. Here, the CE reassured members that staff should indeed be acting based on Committee's directions. The CE also noted that going forward, staff could still pull specific reports together as requested if a member wanted further information. These reports could be circulated more informally via the Committee portal. Alongside the intention to begin holding proper pre-agenda meetings, it is hoped this would help improve the efficiency of Committee proceedings.

The Chair added that it could be argued too much staff time is currently spent creating operational reports. Another member concurred by noting that the staff are competent and trustworthy enough that the current level of scrutiny on their daily activities is not required, and their preference is to have a broad overview of the Association's activities as opposed to discussing the minutiae of its operations. It was also noted that this alteration to Committee's workload may help attract more members who would previously have been dissuaded by the heavy meeting schedule.

Another member noted that several reports currently seen by Committee originally arose from members requesting more information. They added that while proposed changes would put more emphasis on Committee's strategic input, some operational knowledge must be maintained so that strategic decisions are well-informed and not detached from the day-to-day realities of the sector. The member also pointed out that a reduction of sub-committees could mean more information going to the Management Committee and thus making their agendas longer. On this, they suggested future agendas could have the major reports and decisions clearly marked and discussed at the top of the meeting, with other reports towards the end.

The final point of discussion was the possibility of a future sub-committee having delegated authority to approve motions without then requiring Management Committee ratification. The Chair noted that a formal scheme of delegation would ensure that enacting this would not put the Association at odds with any of its Rules.

When the report was ultimately put up for approval, **members agreed to give the CE delegated authority to consider each recommendation and bring forward a scheme for gradually implementing them as required.**

CE

As a way of allowing members to track developments, the CE agreed to keep them updated in future with changes made to the information presented to Committee. This would give them an idea of what information they would no longer be given under the new arrangements, and whether there was any new information which they would not have received in the past.

CE

Alongside the main report, members also received a report on the Committee appraisal process conducted in the summer. This report was for individual consideration.

5. Summary Report of Services Sub-Committee on 31 Oct

Members noted the summary of discussions held. The CE also advised that he and the DCE had been looking into how other Associations feed sub-committee information into the main Committee in case there are better alternative practices which could be adopted.

CE/DCE

6. Budget Review

The FM advised that the mid-year Budget Review allowed for alterations to be made based on more recent performance information, or to allow for previously unknown costs to be factored in. Some of the key points included:

- Increased staffing costs. The 24/25 EVH salary scales were unavailable back in March, while there has also been one re-grading and a requirement for additional staffing resources for major projects.
- The Association is likely to secure a van for the Estate Caretakers; the lease and insurance costs can now be budgeted for.
- Increased budget for reactive void repairs.
- Decrease in rental income due to money from acquired properties being received later than originally expected.
- The Association can anticipate an end-of-year surplus of £126k, a cash balance of £1.2m and continued re-payments towards the Triodos loan.
- The FM noted that another review will take place soon regarding the SHAPS deficit.

No further questions or comments. Revised budget approved.

7. Rent Increase Consultation

Report presented by the DCE concerning rent increase proposals for the next financial year.

The DCE explained that the **Consumer Price Index ('CPI')** was usually the basis for calculating rent increases. He noted that rent prices in Yorkhill are low compared to other social landlords in the area, as well as Scotland as a whole. He did advise that the ongoing rent equalisation process may have an impact on rent increases for 2026/27, but for 2025/26 the figure of CPI+1% as outlined in the Business Plan would be a maintainable position. It was highlighted that the October 2024 CPI figure was not yet known but will be available soon.

The DCE drew members' attention to a draft letter to residents highlighting that the Association would also like to consult on adding a further 1% to the proposed increase, which would help fund improved services delivered by the Estate Caretakers.

When asked by a member, the DCE did emphasise that outcomes from the consultation are not binding and only form one aspect of the evidence used to inform rent increase decisions. He added that highlighting the benefits of having the Estate Caretakers gives tenants a meaningful reason behind the proposed figures.

While members approved the motion in principle, they requested for the draft letter to be revised to remove some detailed information which may not be required and could confuse readers. The DCE agreed to this, and the re-draft will be seen by the Chair before being issued to residents.

DCE

8. Membership Applications and Cancellations

Members approved one application for membership from a local resident. Furthermore, they noted that 1 of the 48 memberships cancelled in October due to non-engagement at 5 consecutive AGMs had been re-instated after it was incorrectly cancelled due to an administrative error.

9. 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, but also wished to address the following points in the report:

Item 2.2 – The Feasibility Study report for the GreenHeat Innovation Challenge at Overnewton Court is now available for members to browse. Furthermore, since this paper had been issued, Property Services staff had a very fruitful meeting with Scottish Enterprise, and the Association’s prospects of progressing to the next stage of the scheme look good. The next steps would be to agree on a single solution, and a formal presentation would be required in early 2025.

Item 2.3 – There will be some changes to the order in which the properties due to receive new windows will be done owing to some access issues during the survey process, with work on the C-Listed properties beginning in early December. The Property Services Manager will also maintain dialogue with contractors carrying out street-level regeneration works in the same area to ensure that the schedule is not disrupted. Collection and payment of project fees from owners is also progressing well.

AOCB

The DCE reminded members that the staff-Committee Christmas lunch will be held in the Association’s office on 6 December, and asked if those who could attend could confirm ahead of time.

No further business was discussed.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input, and the meeting closed at 19:55.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: 12 December 2024 at 18:00.

Signed as a Correct Document Chairperson