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COMMITTEE RELATED MATTER,  
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR  
CHAIRPERSON,

LORNA BROWN ON **THIS HAS BEEN  
REDACTED BECAUSE IT CONTAINS  
PERSONAL DATA**

## **West Granton Housing Co-operative Limited**

### **Committee of Management**

#### **Minutes of Meeting – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**Present:** Lorna Brown (Chairperson), Marilyn Dickson (Treasurer),  
Marlyn Sinclair, George Thompson, Fiona Marshall, Elizabeth  
Robertson, Joe Moir, George Nicol, Jim Moir, Donna  
Anderson, Jon Douglas, Pat Cordiner(co-optee)

**In attendance:** Larke Adger (CEO), Alan McKee (Depute CEO), Lynne Bell  
(Finance Manager from Prospect HA), Graham Gillespie  
(Internal Auditor from Wylie & Bisset)

#### **1) APOLOGIES**

**None.**

#### **2) MINUTES OF MEETING 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Minutes approved.**

#### **3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Donna Anderson declared she was present at the meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 but that her name was not on the minutes. The CEO apologised and confirmed the Minutes would be amended.**

#### **4) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**None.**

## FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

### 5a) Cash in the Bank – November 2019

Committee were advised that WGHC has £1,380,815.90 in the bank and were given the breakdown between the working accounts with RBS, Santander (95 day notice account) and Bank of Scotland (32 day notice account).

**Committee noted the report.**

### 5b) Staff Pensions- Decision Review

In October 2019, Committee agreed to absorb the staff's increase in pension costs for 1 financial year, pending the outcome of a Short Life Working Group facilitated by EVH.

Revised figures had to be presented to Committee at the November 2019 meeting as the October figures were grossly understated. As our financial agent, Prospect Housing Association, presented us with revised figures.

Committee were advised that the October figure of £7.5 k for 2020-21 was inaccurate. At the November 2019 meeting they were advised that the figure of £15,625 for 2020-21 was more realistic. This figure includes provision of the Admin Assistant Post which is currently vacant, and being advertised.

Based on this revised figure and significant difference from the October figure, the CEO asked Committee to review and reconsider their October decision.

Staff members Alan McKee and Larke Adger declared their interest and left the meeting whilst this item was discussed. The CEO was asked to come back in to the room to explain what the increased figure would mean for WGHC and what Committee's options were. The CEO explained that if Committee decided to still absorb the staff's increased pension contributions for 2020-21 it would mean an additional cost of £15,625 for the Co-op. In addition, the CEO explained that as an employer, WGHC no longer have to pay 50% and Committee have the option to choose what the employer/employee split should be.

**Committee agreed:**

- **Committee propose that WGHC pay 50% of the increased contributions, whilst Staff will pay the remaining 50%. This 50/50 split is the same arrangement as is currently in place. The CEO will ask Committee to review this decision after they receive their presentation from Gordon Birrell, the Pensions Consultant, at the December meeting.**

### **5c) Staff Pensions- Short Life Working Group**

Although WGHC has no statutory duty to conduct a Short Life Working Group Consultation (because it has less than 50 employees), it is assumed good practice to do so.

Committee were advised that 3 staff members will form part of the Working Group which is to be facilitated by EVH Director, Eamonn Connolly.

Committee were given the remit of the group and asked to confirm membership.

In addition, the CEO is arranging for Pensions Consultant, Gordon Birrell from Chiene and Tait to advise Committee on the Pensions Options and to give them sufficient information to assist them with their decision whether WGHC should switch over to a Defined Contribution Payment Scheme. This is to happen prior to the Short Life Working Group meetings.

#### **Committee agreed:**

- **to authorise the CEO to engage the services of a Pension Consultant (Gordon Birrell) to talk to the SWLG prior to the start of any consultation**
- **That Fiona Marshall, Lorna Brown, Donna Anderson and Liz Robertson will represent Committee in the Short Life Working Group**

### **5d) SHAPS Pension Evaluation**

**Committee noted that Gordon Birrell from Chiene & Tait will attend a meeting prior to the start of the Short Life Working Group to explain the recent WGHC's SHAPS Pension Deficit Contribution Evaluation Statement.**

### **5e) Annual Return to the Financial Conduct Authority – The Mutuals Public Register**

**Committee noted that the CEO had submitted the annual return to the Financial Conduct Authority and that a copy of WGHC's entry on the Public Register is on display in Reception.**

## 5f) 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Financial Performance Report – (Appendix 1)

Lynne Bell (Finance Manager) from Prospect Housing Association presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Financial Performance Reports to Committee.

She advised that there was an underspend of £60k in the Planned Maintenance Budget due to the delay of the external paintwork in Area 1 and the replacement of the entryphone systems in Area 4.

Cash balances have decreased by £511,543 since March 2019 with net assets having increased by £175,747. This is due to the replacement of doors and windows in Area 1.

Arrears have increased by £35k since March but this is due to the timing difference of the weekly rent debit and the end of the quarterly date and overall, are only slightly higher than at September 2018.

Interest cover remains very strong at 614% compared to the 110% interest cover covenant required by our loan provider, Nationwide Building Society.

Lynne finished her presentation advising there were no concerns at this time.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 6) Governance

### 6a) Elect a new Vice Chair

Following the resignation of the Vice Chair, Committee were asked to elect a new Vice Chair.

Lorna Brown nominated Fiona Marshall; Liz Robertson seconded this. Committee ratified the election. Fiona Marshall was duly elected as the new Vice Chair.

**Committee agreed:**

- **That Fiona Marshall was the new Vice Chairperson**
- **That Annie Mauger-Thompson (their Governance/ Board Support Consultant) should meet with Fiona Marshall for a Vice Chair coaching session and a session on How to Appraise a CEO.**

## 6b) Electing a 3<sup>rd</sup> Member for the Staffing Sub Committee

Following the resignation of the Vice Chair, Committee were asked to appoint a 3<sup>rd</sup> member to the Staffing Sub Committee. Rule 54.1 states that a minimum of 3 members are required for any sub-Committee. Committee were reminded that a co-opted member cannot make up the quorum as a 3<sup>rd</sup> member.

### Committee agreed:

- **The Internal Audit Sub-Committee would be members Lorna Brown, Fiona Marshall and Marilyn Dickson. Fiona Marshall being the new addition to this Sub-Committee.**

## 6c) CEO Appraisal

The Staffing Sub- Committee were asked to agree a date and time for the CEO's Appraisal.

**Committee agreed that the date would either be Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December or Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 12 Noon. The date would be dependant on the timing of Fiona Marshall's coaching sessions with Annie Mauger-Thompson. The CEO will liaise and advise.**

## 6d) WGHC's Assurance Statement Submitted to the Regulator

Committee were advised their Assurance Statement was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The deadline was 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 6e) Internal Auditors-Audit Needs Assessment Report from Wylie Bisset (Appendix 2)

Graham Gillespie (Partner) from Wylie & Bisset presented the Internal Audit Needs Assessment Plan:

Year 1: On site visit dates: 20<sup>th</sup> January and 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Compliance Review of Regulatory Standards 1 & 3 (2 days)

Key Performance Indicators (2 days)

Arrears Management (2 days)

Allocations (2 days)

#### Year 2: 2020-21

Overall Financial Controls (2 days)

Freedom of Information (2 days)

IT Systems (2 days)

#### Year 3: 2021-22

**Committee noted the report.**

### **6f) Draft Business Plan – Appendix 3**

A draft Business Plan for the period April 2020-23 was presented to Committee. Committee were asked to approve the layout, format and presentation. In addition approval was sought for the corporate objectives that came out of the 2019 Strategy Day.

Committee were advised that the 2020 Budgets, Benchmarks, Risk Register and Policy Revision Cycle still need to be added to the Plan. The budgets will only be added in once the Budget Working Group has met and finalised a proposed budget for Committee's approval in December 2019. This final draft will be presented to Committee in February 2020 for their final approval.

**Committee approved:**

- **That no further changes were to be made to the Risk Register at present and approved the register to be entered in to the 2020-23 Business Plan.**

### **6g) Budget Working Group Remit**

**Committee noted the Budget Working Group would meet on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019. Erin Mullen from Prospect Housing Association will be in attendance as our Financial Agent.**

## 6h) 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Operational Performance Report – Appendix 5

Committee discussed and noted the report. No concerns were raised.

## 6i) Two New Polices: Appendix 6

Freedom of Information Policy and

Environmental Information Regulation Policy

Committee discussed and approved the new policies.

## 6j) Committee Training on Freedom of Information and General Data Protection

Committee agreed their training would take place with David Mills, our Data Protection Officer, in the WGHC Office on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020, 6-7 pm.

## 6k) ARCHIE – Joint Training for Boards

Committee were advised that the Chair from Manor Estates had sent out an email request to all ARCHIE members governing bodies. The email was an invite for 1 representative from each ARCHIE member to meet and explore a desire for any joint training.

Committee considered the request and agreed that they had had a full training programme this year and still had more training sessions lined up before the end of the financial year. In addition, they discussed how they now had a Governance Board Support Consultant who was also going to assist with their development and training. Committee asked the CEO to thank the Manor Estates Chair for the kind invitation but that they had no needs at this point in time to explore joint training.

## 6k) Staffing Update

Committee were advised of the number of staff sickness days in the period August 2018 to August 2019. In addition, the temporary Admin Assistant has resigned from her 12 month fixed contract (to cover maternity leave) 5 months early. The Admin Assistant, who was on maternity leave, has now resigned, so WGHC were

once again having to use a Temp Agency to cover this post whilst recruitment for a permanent replacement was underway. The Tenancy Manager will have a planned absence of at least 8 weeks to undergo surgery following an accident last August. All staff appraisals are to be completed by the end of December 2019.

**Committee noted the report.**

#### **6L) Membership Changes**

There has been one commencement and one termination since the October reports.

**Committee noted the report.**

#### **6M) Health and Safety Report**

**Committee noted there had been no accidents or incidents since the October meeting.**

### **7. ASSET MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE**

#### **7a) Update on Doors and Windows Replacement – Area One**

Committee were advised that the programme had now been completed: 143 properties had their doors and windows replaced. The programme was budgeted at £1 million. Final costs came in at £783,817 and a further £19,595 (2.5%) retention is to be paid in October 2020, which will mark the end of the 12 months defects liability period.

143 Satisfaction Survey Forms had been sent out.

58 (40%) forms were returned.

100% of WGHC tenants who responded, said they were satisfied with the contractor, Sidey, and the improvement works to their homes.

The Maintenance Manager reports there are still some minor snagging issues to be addressed which are considered normal after such a big project. Any concerns will be reported back to Committee.

**Committee noted the report**



## **7b) Procurement for Linked Smoke Alarms**

WGHC are joint procuring with Hunters Hall Housing Co-op. The tender was advertised on Public Contracts Scotland. The date for tender submission has now closed. 7 tenders were received.

Chartered Surveyor David Bonar, Stuart Orr from Hunters Hall Housing Co-op and Les Graham, WGHC Maintenance Manager, will now score each tender independently and are due to meet on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to complete the assessment process. Recommendations will be made and approvals sought at the December meeting

**Committee noted the report.**

## **7c) Electric Charging Vehicle Point**

The Maintenance Manager is currently looking in to find out how much it would cost for WGHC to install a charging point at the office for an electric vehicle. If installed, this would have to be available to any member of the public, not just WGHC tenants. Also, WGHC would have to pay for the cost of the electricity. A costing proposal will be presented to Committee for their consideration in due course.

**Committee noted the report.**

## **8) HOUSING MANAGEMENT**

### **8a) External Project Work- for People living with term conditions in Edinburgh**

It was reported that the Tenancy Manager had recently been asked to form part of a small working group consisting of 7 professionals from various sectors (such as Health, Care and Advice). The remit of the group is to look at how these organisations can work together to help provide better support for people living in Edinburgh with long term conditions. Committee will be updated of any outcomes.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 8b) Rent Arrears Court Action

Committee were advised of this ongoing court action against a tenant for rent arrears. The case has been continued twice now and will call back again in the Edinburgh Sheriff Court on 13<sup>th</sup> December at the Sheriff's decision. He has allowed the ongoing continuations to give the tenant the opportunity to adhere to a repayment agreement for rent arrears and for ongoing rent.

Committee will be kept updated.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 9) Donations

Committee were presented with a written thank you from the Craighroyston Community Youth Football Club (2007's) following their donation of £1k in October 2019.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 10) AOCB

A member advised that following WGHC's Donation to the local female empowerment organisation called SHE; they had moved their premises from the local community centre, but were still continuing to operate and work with local girls and women in the area.

No further items were raised under AOCB.

**Committee noted the report.**

## 11 ) DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**It was noted that the Committee Reports had detailed the next Committee would be on 13<sup>th</sup> December. This is a Friday and it was acknowledged that the next Committee Meeting would be Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

Signed: Redacted because it contains personal data Date: 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Chairperson**

Signed Date.....

**Chairperson**