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

### **Committee of Management**

#### **Minutes of Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Present:** Lorna Brown  
Marilyn Dickson (Treasurer)  
Fiona Marshall (Vice Chair)  
Elizabeth Robertson  
Jon Douglas  
Donna Anderson  
Amanda Aitchison  
Colin Fraser  
Wendy Riordan

**In attendance:** Larke Adger (CEO)  
Sheena Farrell (Housing Admin Assistant as minute taker)

It was agreed that Larke Adger (CEO) would host the meeting up until Section Item 6a when a new Chairperson would be elected.

#### **1) APOLOGIES**

**Joe Moir**

**George Thomson**

## 2) MINUTES OF MEETING 19<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Minutes approved by Lorna Brown (Chairperson)

## 3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None. All passed

## 4) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Sheena Farrell (Staff Member and Minute taker) declared her interest for Report Number Item 6d. In her absence, the CEO will minute this item.

## 5. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

### 5a) Cash in the Bank

This will be reported to Committee each month.

As at 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 WGHC had the following amounts of cash in the bank:

	£
RBS (immediate access)	901,735
Santander (95 day notice account)	833,285
Bank of Scotland (32 day notice account)	21,149
Total cash in Bank	<u>£ 1,756,169</u>

For comparison, the August 2020 figure was £1,789,062

### Linkage to Business Plan/SHR Regulatory Standards Compliance

#### **SHR Standard 3.1**

The RSL has effective financial and treasury management controls and procedures, to achieve the right balance between costs and outcomes, and control costs effectively. The RSL ensures security of assets, the proper use of public and private funds, and access to sufficient liquidity at all times.

#### **SHR Standard 3.5**

The RSL monitors, reports on and complies with any covenants it has agreed with funders. The governing body assesses the risks of these not being complied with and takes appropriate action to mitigate and manage them

Committee noted the report.

## 5b) Rent Arrears and COVID-19

### Executive Summary

#### Universal Credit (UC) and Rent Arrears

- End of August 2020

As at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020, 56 tenants were claiming Universal Credit, 25 of whom had arrears. The total level of arrears for these tenants was £10,430. We receive direct payments of Universal Credit for 13 tenants, the rest receive payments directly to themselves.

#### Overall Non-Technical Arrears Figures – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020

Non-technical arrears are arrears which are owed directly by the tenants and not expected to be paid by Housing Benefit payments.

The total number of WGHC tenants in rent arrears as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 was 65 tenants. This includes the 25 tenants who are claiming UC and are in rent arrears. The total arrears for the 65 tenants amounted to £18,899. This compares with the figure of £22,433 as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

The Housing Management Team continue to monitor and manage all rent arrears cases on a weekly basis. The Tenancy Manager is reviewing all arrears cases this week to ensure adequate and proportionate steps are being taken in each case.

Tenants are now being offered access to the Welfare Rights Adviser service provided in partnership with PoLHA with the service having started on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

#### Rent Arrears and Legal Action Cases

We have 3 arrears cases within the Court system that are currently sisted. These cases are very closely monitored to judge if adequate payments are regularly being made and whether there is a need to Recall these at any point. Committee will be kept updated each month on WGHC arrears figures, given the current lockdown restrictions and how this is having an impact on tenants' incomes, and ultimately WGHC's rental income/cash flow.

**Committee noted the report**

**Linkage to Business Plan/SHR Regulatory Standards Compliance**

### **SHR Standard 3.3**

The RSL has a robust business planning and control framework and effective systems to monitor and accurately report delivery of its plans. Risks to the delivery of financial plans are identified and managed effectively. The RSL considers sufficiently the financial implications of risks to the delivery of plans.

## **6)Governance**

### **6a) Election of Office Bearers for Committee**

#### Executive Summary

#### **i) Elect a new Chairperson**

In accordance with the rules the first meeting of the Committee of Management after the AGM elects one of its number as Chairperson. The rules relating to the chairperson are 55.5 to 55.10. The Chairperson is appointed annually by the Committee of Management at the first meeting after the AGM;

Our previous Chairperson Lorna Brown had been in the role for five consecutive years prior to the 2020 AGM. Under Rule 55.10 the Chairperson cannot hold office continuously for more than 5 years. WGHC Committee now need to elect another Committee Member to be Chairperson.

**Fiona Marshall was elected the new chairperson.**

#### **ii) Elect a new Vice Chairperson**

- **Lorna Brown was elected the new Vice Chairperson**

#### **iii) Elect a Treasurer**

- **Marilyn Dickson was elected the Treasurer**

## Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance

### **SHR Standard 1.2**

The RSL's governance policies and arrangements set out the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of governing body members and senior officers, and the governing body exercises overall responsibility and control of the strategic leadership of the RSL.

### **SHR Standard 1.3**

The governing body ensures the RSL complies with its constitution and its legal obligations. Its constitution adheres to these Standards and the constitutional requirements set out below.

### **SHR Standard 6.1**

The RSL has a formal, rigorous and transparent process for the election, appointment and recruitment of governing body members. The RSL formally and actively plans to ensure orderly succession to governing body places to maintain an appropriate and effective composition of governing body members and to ensure sustainability of the governing body.

### **SHR Standard 6.4**

The RSL encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body.

## 6b) Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests – Appendix 1

### **Executive Summary**

There are 2 forms for each Committee Member to sign:

1. The Code of Conduct
2. The Declaration of Interests Form

All registered social landlords must have a Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members. WGHC's code is based on the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations ("SFHA") model.

The essence of the document remains that a position on Committee should not be used for personal gain and that members should not bring disrepute upon WGHC.

**Each Committee member is required to review and sign the code annually (please sign on page 12)**

**All Committee Members have signed and returned The Code of Conduct and The Declaration of Interests Form**

## Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance

### **SHR Standard 1.2**

The governing body ensures the RSL complies with its constitution and its legal obligations. Its constitution adheres to these Standards and the constitutional requirements set out below.

### **SHR Standard 1.6**

Each governing body member always acts in the best interests of the RSL and its tenants and service users, and does not place any personal or other interest ahead of their primary duty to the RSL.

### **SHR Standard 1.7**

The RSL maintains its independence by conducting its affairs without control, undue reference to or influence by any other body (unless it is constituted as the subsidiary of another body).

### **SHR Standard 2.2**

The governing body recognises it is accountable to its tenants, and has a wider public accountability to the taxpayer as a recipient of public funds, and actively manages its accountabilities.

### **SHR Standard 5.1**

The RSL upholds and promotes the standards of behaviour and conduct it expects of governing body members and staff through an appropriate code of conduct. It manages governing body members' performance, ensures compliance and has a robust system to deal with any breach of the code.

### **SHR Standard 5.4**

Governing body members and staff declare and manage openly and appropriately any conflicts of interest and ensure they do not benefit improperly from their position.

## 6c) Annual General Meeting

### **Executive Summary**

The AGM took place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 at 7.00pm.

The meeting was held virtually using Zoom. This was made possible by the Corporate and Insolvency Act 2020.

At the AGM Lorna Brown, Joe Moir and Donna Anderson were re-elected to Committee. There were 3 nominations: Wendy Riordan, Amanda Aitchison and Colin Fraser. All 3 were elected.

This means the Committee of Management continues with 11 fully elected members as follows:

Committee	Member
Donna	Anderson
Lorna	Brown
Marilyn	Dickson
Fiona	Marshall
Joe	Moir
Elizabeth	Robertson
George	Thomson
Jon	Douglas
Wendy	Riordan
Amanda	Aitchison
Colin	Fraser

Auditors Alexander Sloan had to step down as they had been in service with WGHC for the maximum period of 7 years. Chiene and Tait were formally appointed as WGHC's new external financial auditors; there were no objections.

12 sole or first named joint members attended the meeting virtually.

In addition, 24 members were represented by proxy (last year: 11).

This meant attendance was 36 or 9.6% (last year: 39 or 10.5%).

A quorum is 7.5% so it was achieved.

### **Committee noted the report**

**Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance**

**SHR Standard 1.3**

The governing body ensures the RSL complies with its constitution and its legal obligations. Its constitution adheres to these Standards and the constitutional requirements set out below.

**SHR Standard 6.1**

The RSL has a formal, rigorous, and transparent process for the election, appointment, and recruitment of governing body members. The RSL formally and actively plans to ensure orderly succession to governing body places to maintain an appropriate and effective composition of governing body members and to ensure sustainability of the governing body.

**6d) Updated Staffing Report**

<b>Executive Summary</b>
Some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data

**Committee noted the report**

**6e) Memberships**

<b>Executive Summary</b>
There had been no new memberships and only 1 termination since the last report.
<u>Termination:</u>
Some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data

**Committee noted the report**

<b>Linkage to Business Plan/SHR Regulatory Standards Compliance</b>
<b><u>Standard 6.1</u></b>
The RSL has a formal, rigorous, and transparent process for the election, appointment, and recruitment of governing body members.
<b><u>Standard 6.4</u></b>



The RSL encourages as diverse a membership as is compatible with its constitution and actively engages its membership in the process for filling vacancies on the governing body.

## 6f) Health & Safety Report

<b>Executive Summary</b>
There had been no incidents or accidents since the last report during this period of COVID-19.

### Committee noted the report

<b>Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance</b>
<b><u>SHR Standard 5.3</u></b> The RSL pays due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and human rights, and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics in all areas of its work, including its governance arrangements.

## 6g) Committee Member seeking authority to study “The Governance of Scottish Housing Associations qualification”

<b>Executive Summary</b>
Committee member Fiona Marshall had approached the CEO about studying for the Governance of Scottish Housing Associations. This is an accredited course by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).
The course is not running at the moment but is due to run later on in the financial year by SHARE. The cost is approximately £1.1k.
In order to successfully achieve this award the Committee Member is required to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend an induction ½ day (virtual)</li><li>• Work with their assessor to gather the evidence</li><li>• Be observed at two Committee meetings</li><li>• Have discussions with assessor</li><li>• Meet all the criteria in the qualification</li></ul>
The qualification can be completed in 6-9 months and support is provided throughout the qualification and meetings are organised around the committee member’s availability. SHARE recommends that only a maximum of 2 Committee Members undertake the qualification at the same time.

Committee approved the committee member to undertake this study.

#### Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance

##### **SHR Standard 6.5**

The RSL ensures all new governing body members receive an effective induction programme to enable them to fully understand and exercise their governance responsibilities. Existing governing body members are given ongoing support and training to gain, or refresh, skills and expertise and sustain their continued effectiveness.

### 7) Maintenance Report

#### Executive Summary

- **Out of Hours Emergency Repairs service**

Our Out of Hours Emergency contractor....**some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data**

The Maintenance Manager had been actively sourcing another contractor to take over this work. He had approached 7 multi-trade contractors and finally manage to secure the services of ...**some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data**

Committee noted the report.

#### Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance

Under the Scottish Social Housing Charter, WGHC has a duty around the safety of tenants' homes.

##### **SHR Standard 2.1**

The RSL gives tenants, service users and other stakeholders information that meets their needs about the RSL, its services, its performance and its future plans

## 8) Housing Management

### Executive Summary

#### Legal Action Update:

Some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data.

#### Voids

It was previously reported to Committee that we had only 1 void in the last quarter due to lockdown restrictions, but now that we have resumed our Allocations service in full, we were expecting the numbers to increase.

Committee were informed that as at 08.09.20, WGHC had 4 void properties available for relet and we are expecting another 4 by the end of September

### Committee noted the report

#### Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance

Under the Scottish Social Housing Charter, WGHC has a duty around the safety of tenants' homes, and to respond to resolve incidents of anti-social behaviour within locally agreed timescales.

## 9) AOCB

- [Invite from the Board at Manor Estates Housing Association for some joint training](#)
- The Chair of Manor Estates Housing Association, is inviting individual Board Members from all the ARCHIE housing association/co-operatives, to join them for some joint training.
- No sessions have been booked yet but Manor are keen to share some sessions. They think it would be good to share experiences with other ARCHIE board members and also it would work out a bit cheaper by doing a group session.
- Members are reminded that ARCHIE stands for "Alliance of registered co-operatives and housing associations in Edinburgh".

**Committee agreed Marilyn Dickson would be the representative for the WGHC Committee and attend the joint ARCHIE Board Members initial meeting to discuss training requirements.**

- [Alternative names for the Job Title of the new Grade 8 post](#)

In item 6d, it is proposed the job title for the new Grade 8 post is Governance & Compliance Manager. **Some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data**

## 10)DATE OF NEXT MEETING –

### **Executive Summary**

It is proposed the next meeting be held on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

This meeting will either be held virtually by Google Meet or in the main hall at the Prentice Centre (if the Centre can accommodate the meeting date/time)

**Committee approved the next Committee Meeting will be on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 at the Prentice Centre- or virtually – dependant on lockdown restrictions.**

### **Linkage to Business Plan/Regulatory Standards Compliance**

#### **SHR Standard 1.1**

The governing body sets the RSL's strategic direction. It agrees and oversees the organisation's business plan to achieve its purpose and intended outcomes for its tenants and other service users.

Signed **Some information has been redacted as it contains either personal data or commercially sensitive data**

**Chairperson**