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COLIN FRASER ON **REDACTED INFORMATION**



## Committee of Management

### Minutes of Meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**Present:** Colin Fraser  
Wendy Riordan  
Stacey Powch-Scott  
George Nicol  
Liz Robertson  
Amanda Aitchison  
Morag Orr

**In attendance:** Larke Adger (CEO)  
David Mills (COO)

#### 1. APOLOGIES

George Thomson  
Joe Moir  
Jim Hemphill

#### 2. MINUTES OF MEETING 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022 were **approved** by Committee. These were proposed by LR and seconded by WR.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest.

## 5. GUESTS, VISITORS, OBSERVERS

Donald Martin, WGHC Housing Manager.

## 6. CASH IN BANK

All cash balances across the 5 x WGHC bank accounts were presented by the CEO and a summary total provided, which stood at £1.601million. There was an increase in the sum of almost £67k from the figure reported to Committee in September. Interest ratio cover was discussed along with inflation (9.9% - August 2022) and the trend of rising interest rates and further rises to inflation. Interest ratio cover was declared at 940%. The CEO also confirmed the transfer of £180k from Santander 95 day notice account to the RBS interest bearing account. This was undertaken to assist with liquidity given the instability with both interest rates and inflation.

- **Committee noted the report**

## 7. RENT FREEZE UPDATE LEGISLATION

On 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the Scottish Parliament passed the **Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) (Scotland) Bill** which is now in effect. The Bill places a temporary hold on evictions (with certain exceptions) and a rent freeze for tenancies for 6 months in response to the cost of living crisis. Ministers have the option to enforce a rent freeze or rent cap for 2023/24. Rents are critical to the survival of social landlords as this income pays for essential services for tenants and enables continued investment in tenants' homes by replacing kitchens, boilers, bathrooms and providing various financial initiatives to support tenants. Scottish Ministers are aiming to make their mind up by the end of December. They would like landlords to feedback to them about their tenants' view from rent consultations.

SPS asked if WGHC would "run out of money" if rents were capped moving forward with scenarios if 0%, 3% or 6% - This was answered under the following section.

- **Committee noted the report**

## 8. TENANT RENT CONSULTATION 2023-24

This report recommends the basis on which tenants should be consulted in respect of proposed rent increases for 2023/24. It provides information on a range of issues relating to rents to assist the Committee of Management in its consideration of the level of proposed rent increases.

Crude scenario financial planning shows that based on an inflation rate of 6%, a rent freeze or rent cap up to 3% would result in WGHC falling the below the required holding balance figure of £600k in 2025 and again in 2028. An assumption of 6% is based on forecasted future inflation rates levelling out to 6%.

- **Committee unanimously agreed that a tenant rent consultation should be proposed at either 6% or 7% for the year 2023-24**

## 9. DRAFT RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & RISK REGISTER

Risk Management is key to the ongoing viability of WGHC. Especially, with the current economic climate in relation to the effects of COVID, BREXIT, rising fuel costs and more recently, the war in Ukraine where the Russia's threat to cut off gas supplies to Europe is plausible.

It is critical that these Risks are identified and mitigated where possible, along with the impact they may have. This comes in the form an appropriate Risk Management Policy and Register. The main items in the Risk Register have come from the Committee Members who attended the recent Annual Strategy Away Day on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 with May Murray LLP, the CEO and the COO. (Appendix One)

- **Committee were asked to consider any additional risks they wished to be included within the Risk Register – none were suggested**
- **Committee approved the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register**
- **These were proposed by SPS and seconded by LR.**

## 10. DRAFT COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A draft Committee Development Plan (Appendix Two) was compiled by WGHC governance consultants, May Murray LLP, following input and development of Committee at the recent Annual Strategy away day held on Friday 30 September 2022.

SPS tabled 3 questions

- **What would happen to a Committee member who failed to attend essential training?**
- **How would 'continued effectiveness of individual members' be measured?**
- **Who would provide support to members with 9yrs + service to demonstrate continued effectiveness?**
- **Committee approved the Committee Development Plan**
- **These were proposed by SPS and seconded by WR.**

## 11. SHR – FEEDBACK DISCUSSION

Committee took the opportunity to discuss the visit from the Scottish Housing Regulator where they observed the Committee meeting of 21.09.22 and their follow up emails. The Committee were pleased with the findings of SHR.

- **Committee noted the SHR report and follow up emails**
- **Committee agreed that if ever there were a similar scenario, facts, not hearts and heads should prevail.**

## 12. DRAFT ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2022

The draft Annual Assurance Statement (2022) (Appendix Three) was presented to Committee and discussed. The SHR guidance makes it clear that it is the governing body, in this case the WGHC Committee of Management who are responsible for signing off the Assurance Statement.

The guidance made it clear that it is the Committee who are giving their assurances to the Regulator.

- **Committee approved the draft Annual Assurance Statement for signing by the Chair**
- **Committee approved the submission of the ASS to SHR (and published on the WGHC website)**
- **This was proposed by SPS and seconded by GN.**

### **13. UPDATE CHANGEWORK'S DATA ANALYSIS FOR EESSH2**

The Committee previously approved to commission CHANGEWORKS to carry out some data analysis work of WGHC's stock in relation to the above. The aim of the proposed work was to help WGHC understand the current levels of energy efficiency of the stock and have a robust data set so they can plan and deliver programmes to best support tenants. Further, the proposed analysis helped identify any suitable energy efficiency or low carbon heating projects that could be planned with government funding, for example the Social Housing Net Zero Heat fund.

- **Committee noted the report**

### **14. GUTTERING PLANNED MAINTENANCE WORKS**

Committee were updated on the situation regarding procurement of quotations / issuance of a work order to facilitate planned gutter maintenance within areas 1 and 2. 4 companies were, initially, asked to tender. However, for the re-tender (with clarifications) 3 companies were asked to quote.

- **Committee noted the report**

### **15. CEO and COO ANNUAL APPRAISALS**

Committee were advised that the CEO would be subject to a 360 appraisal process as similar to last year. This was in accordance with the instructions of the staff sub-committee. It was further agreed that the COO would undertake the same process after the CEO appraisal.

- **Committee noted the report**

### **16. GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE REPORT**

The COO presented his governance and compliance report to Committee. He highlighted that a large amount of time had been spent working on the PROCast in the absence of the Maintenance Manager.

- FOISA / EIR Requests since last meeting = NIL
- Subject Access Requests since last meeting = NIL
- Information Data Breaches since last meeting = One\*
- Open Notifiable Events with SHR = NIL

\* There has been one reported data breach. An incorrectly addressed letter was sent by a member of the HM team. The letter was subsequently re-posted to the correct address by the incorrect recipient, un-opened. The data breach report form and data breach register were subsequently completed. The data breach is not reportable to the ICO.

- **Committee noted the report.**

## **17. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE CHARTER**

As a registered social landlord, WGHC must produce an annual report for its tenants on how it has performed each year against the outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Committee were advised that the report had been created and sent to print. The reports are being hand delivered out to all tenants with the Autumn Newsletter on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022. A copy of the Annual Performance Report on the Charter has also been made available on the WGHC website. A copy has also been sent to the Scottish Housing Regulator as is required.

- **Committee noted the report**

## **18. PROCAST – CONTRACT UPDATE**

Committee previously approved the appointment of PROCast for component replacement works (Bathroom replacements, Area 2 / EICR various / Boiler replacements, Area 5)

Committee were advised that WGHC had to instruct PROCast to suspend work for one week in order to 'catch up' and complete all outstanding snagging works before being allowed to commence more bathrooms. Committee understood the rationale behind the decision but instructed operational staff to ensure closer scrutiny over the management of the contract. It was noted that the Maintenance Manager was on holiday for just over a fortnight during the commencement of the contract.

- **Committee noted the report**
- **Committee requested an update from the COO at the next meeting**

## **19. CASUAL VACANCY**

An application for a Committee membership on a casual vacancy basis had been received from Lynne Jameson (**Appendix Four**). Committee considered the application and made their decision accordingly.

- **Committee considered the report**
- **Committee approved the decision to appoint Lynne Jameson as a casual vacancy to Committee**
- **Proposed by MO, Seconded by SPS**

## **20. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT**

There were no Health & Safety incidents to report since the last meeting.

- **Committee noted the report**

## 21. APPEAL

An appeal from a tenant was put before the Committee for their consideration. The appeal related to a request to keep a pet dog within the FQ flatted development. This followed a previous appeal to keep a therapy dog within the same flatted development. The circumstances of this appeal were different from the previous appeal although seeking the same outcome. Having considered the documentation provided:

- **Committee noted and discussed the submitted documentation**
- **Committee deferred their decision asking the CEO to obtain further supporting documentation from the tenant's GP**
- **Committee would re-consider and make their decision at the next meeting**

## 22. MEMBERSHIP & USE OF THE COMPANY SEAL

Since the last meeting, there have been:

1 commencement of membership

Membership Number **770**

Type: Succession

1 cessation of membership

Membership Number **416**

Reason: Deceased

- **The Chair applied the WGHC seal to the membership certificate (770)**
- **The Chair and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair signed the membership certificate (770)**
- **Committee noted the report**

## 23. RIGHT FIRST TIME – UPDATE REPORT TO COMMITTEE

During the September 2022 Committee meeting a presentation was provided by Scotland's Housing Network that took statistics from the 20-21 and 21-22 ARC submissions. These seemed to show a slight reduction in both 'Repairs Satisfaction' and 'Right First Time' repairs.

The COO presented new data to Committee following the recent tenant satisfaction survey undertaken in February 2022 that confirmed the statistics had improved to 99% and 98% respectively.

- **Committee noted the report**

## 24. AUDIT SCOTLAND PRIZE – AWARDED TO WGHC STAFF MEMBER

Committee were informed that, last year, Jiewen Gao (WGHC's Assistant Finance Officer) achieved the highest score in Scotland for her CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accounting) exam. Due to an admin error from CIPFA and Audit Scotland, Jiewen never received her prize for this achievement. This was corrected and an Amazon voucher for £200 was presented to Jiewen.

- **Committee noted the report**

## 25. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

WR asked if 'better weather planning' could be taken into account if there were likely to be component replacement programmes next year that could leave tenants without heating or hot water temporarily, i.e. could the works be programmed in fair weather months as opposed to Autumn/Winter

SPS reminded Committee that there needs to be a concerted effort to try and increase Committee recruitment levels and better engagement plans for the AGM next year

- **Committee noted the requests**

## 26. DATE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

It was proposed the next meeting be held on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 6.30pm. Doors will open at 6.00pm for Committee to chat / network and have refreshments prior to the formal meeting start.

- **Committee approved the next Committee Meeting to be held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Signed **REDACTED INFORMATION**

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Chairperson**

**NB: Committee Board Papers available upon request, contact our office.**

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