

Knowes Housing Association
Management Committee Meeting
Tuesday 1st December 2020 at 6.30pm
Meeting conducted electronically

MINUTE OF MEETING

In Attendance

Pierre De Fence, Director
Joe Wilson, Property Services Manager

Sandra Love, SCSO

Present

Rhona Polak
Billy Stevenson
Gary Clark
Yvonne McDonald
Hilary Edgar

Katie Devaney
Lynsey Chrystal
Janet Cassidy
Lawrence O'Neill
Steven McCabe

Observer

Ross Anderson

1.	<u>Apologies</u> Nil
2.	<u>Declaration of Interest</u> None
3.	<u>Correspondence</u> Pierre advised that he had received a letter from Roberta Russell, Property Services Officer advising of her intent to retire at the end of April 2021.
4.	<u>Minutes of Previous Meeting of Tuesday 6th October 2020</u> The minute of the meeting was agreed and approved subject to the correction that Janet had submitted her apologies. Proposed by Yvonne McDonald Seconded by Billy Stevenson
4.1	<u>Minutes of Housing Sub, Audit Sub and Finance Sub</u> The minutes were made available to Committee.

<p>5.</p>	<p><u>New Share Members</u></p> <p>There were 5 new Share Members this month.</p> <p>Ross Anderson Hilary Edgar Steven McCabe Peter Heggie Janice Joyce</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>Sandra advised that all the usual office safety checks were being carried out as normal and there were no health and safety issues.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Directors Report</u></p> <p>Pierre introduced Ross Anderson, who had come as an observer to the meeting and advised that Ross lived locally and wanted to become a Member of the Committee. The Committee welcomed Ross to the meeting.</p> <p>A discussion took place as some members of committee were experiencing problems with accessing and viewing the papers that had been uploaded onto on Admin Control and Pierre advised he would contact the helpdesk and ask them to have a look at our system. In the meantime Joe was able to use his screen to load the papers so that Committee were able to access them as discussions took place throughout the meeting.</p> <p>Stock Control Year to Date as at 28th October 2020</p> <p>✓ Mortgage to Rent / Buy Backs Sale of Hillend Crescent, we are leasing this to WDC for temporary accommodation for a period of time, then they will purchase it. Buy back 1 property in Burnbrae Street</p> <p>Total properties 1046 rented (including Dunn St respite centre). 689 owners</p> <p>Covid 19 Measures Our office remains closed in line with current guidance. Our risk assessment has been updated to take account of staff entering occupied properties in emergency situations, and also to allow a maximum of 6 staff in the office at any given time now that the safety screens are in place. The policy remains however work at home unless what needs done can't be done from home.</p> <p>The move to phase 4 of the Scottish Government route map has been put back, and it is now unclear when we will move towards office working. At the time of writing we have just moved into tier 4 of the 5 tier system introduced by the Scottish Government, and this has some significant implications for our service delivery as noted below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and Maintenance We are carrying out emergency repairs and gas servicing, we have now suspended routine repairs in line with the Scottish Government advice. We are continuing with landscape maintenance and close cleaning, our kitchen replacement project was planned to start in November, however this has now been put on hold again.

- **Voids**

We are now processing all voids in line with our Covid procedure

Staff

- We have 1 member of staff off sick (not covid related)
- Furlough staff are all working their normal hours now.

- **Communication with tenants**

Summer newsletter and annual report have been sent out.

We have launched a facebook page, which has regular updates,

The tenant app is now in operation and we are rolling it out slowly.

Our Winter newsletter will be getting produced shortly to be issued early in December

- **Communication with Committee**

The Committee portal is now up and running. If anyone requires additional training let Pierre or Sandra know. We have two new committee members and training on the portal has been delivered, we hope to have another new committee member join in December.

- **Financial Impact**

We continue to maintain a stable position, rent arrears are relatively stable but fluctuate month to month, Universal Credit is a major issue for our staff. Void loss is within our target. The finance sub committee was presented with the mid year review in October.

The Finance sub committee will be discussing the rent increase at its meeting on 24th November.

Abbeylands Road bowling and tennis court sites

We have now seen the draft SHIP and this site is included in the SHIP, however it is not noted as a "priority" project. In discussions with WDC I am told that there will be funds within the SHIP to allow this project to proceed. Time will tell, there is no change since last month on this.

Lawrence noted at the meeting that the LDP was undergoing a judicial review as there have been legal challenges, it is anticipated that approval could now be as far ahead as March 2021. Lawrence also noted that he had been informed that it was a mistake that the project was not a priority project, and this would be rectified.

Pierre also noted that at the Strategic Housing Forum today with WDC it was noted that the Scottish government had allocated an additional £200m to social housing, and some of this will be allocated to West Dunbartonshire.

Welfare and Money advice Project

We are now providing this service from our office.

Universal Credit Roll Out

The increase in the number of people moving onto UC has slowed down. There have also been some recent changes to the way UC will be paid, which should help us manage the process, that said UC is still a major problem for our staff and has been responsible for a significant increase in rent arrears.

Community Projects

Our first grant funded community projects are now complete. The funding we obtained allowed us to provide activity packs for children over the summer, provide essential household items for people, delivered through the Foodshare, to provide new entrance

	<p>screen and doors to the church where the foodshare and recycle room operate, to provide PPE to the Foodshare and to provide equipment to allow residents get online, such as Tablets and wifi devices. We obtained circa £40,000 for these projects.</p> <p>I have now successfully obtained additional funding for another 3 community projects:</p> <p>Funding to allow the employment of a tenancy sustainment officer for 2.5 years covering Faifley, Clydebank and Dalmuir, the recruitment process is ongoing.</p> <p>Funding to supply tablet devices to 39 families, the devices will be available in January.</p> <p>Funding to employ a “Digital Connector” for a 6 month period to help people across Faifley, Clydebank and Dalmuir get online and carry out the online activities they need to.</p> <p>The tenancy sustainment officer will be employed by Clydebank HA, the Digital Connector will be employed by Knowes, the Committee needs to approve this employment as it is a temporary addition to our staff structure, albeit at no cost to the association. The recruitment process will be commencing shortly. This was discussed and agreed at the meeting.</p> <p>Strategy meeting</p> <p>Historically the committee / staff have had a strategy day every second year, with a smaller meeting in the alternate years, usually around February / March.</p> <p>This year we had an away day in February at which we agreed out strategy for this year and beyond. Clearly a lot has changed since February and the world is a different place, and there is potential for some light at the end of the tunnel next year. Will things ever return to the way they were in February this year, or has the way business is done changed forever. Clearly the way we conduct our business in the future is in our hands and is worthy of discussion.</p> <p>It is unlikely that we will be able to host a physical meeting by February or even March, but then that is one of the unknowns. I think either way we should plan for a strategy session in late February or March using online meeting facilities, and if things change between now and then we could book a venue and hold a “real” meeting.</p> <p>For now though if we can agree a date, we can work towards that and formulate an agenda, on Tuesday we can discuss whether we want a half or full day meeting etc.</p> <p>Following some discussion it was agreed that we would work towards a date of 19th March for a strategy meeting. If possible we will hold the meeting at Auchentoshan again, or if necessary the meeting will be held using Teams. Rhona asked if we can set up breakout meetings on Teams if we are needing to use this method, Pierre confirmed that we will set his up as required.</p>
7.1	<p>Committee Member Attendance Record 2020-2021</p> <p>The record was agreed as correct subject to Janet Cassidy being marked as putting in her apologies for the meeting of 3rd November 2020</p>
7.1.1	<p>Community Projects Budget</p>

Pierre ran through the budget report and advised of the spending for each of the categories and that an article on Knowes' community projects would be featuring in the December issue of our magazine. The Committee discussed the donations Knowes' makes towards the schools and nurseries and it was agreed that if a request came in that required a timeous response, that we could make a contribution and this could be brought to the attention of committee at the next meeting.

Billy enquired as to whether the budget might cover for the repair of roof solar panels for tenanted properties however Pierre advised that the panels no longer belonged to Knowes HA and the responsibility for this lay with the company who now owned them. Pierre noted that there were ongoing discussions with the maintenance firm who maintain the panels with a view to reach a solution to birds nesting underneath the panels.

The Committee agreed that the Community Projects Budget report would be included in the papers of future meetings.

8. Property Services Report

Joe advised that the recent new Covid 19 restrictions had impacted on our planned work schedule however the landscape maintenance was ongoing and this contract was going out to tender and would be renewed in April 21.

Reactive Repairs

The recently implemented Tier 4 restrictions have meant that we are carrying out emergency only repairs. However calls for all non-emergency repairs were being logged with a view to them being carried out as soon as possible after we drop back to Tier 3 restrictions.

Gas Servicing

This is continuing through Tier 4 restrictions

Medical Adaptations

To date we have 5 orders for adaptations and 3 of these are currently on hold due to the restrictions. We have a budget of £20,000 for Medical Adaptations.

Windows

This work is now complete at Veitches Court.

Kitchens

Joe had a meeting with City Building and the work has been put on hold until the current restrictions are lifted. Joe also advised that customers had been lettered to say there was now a delay in starting the project and they would be notified when the situation changed. Billy commented that he had not received a letter and Joe is looking into this. Janet enquired as to whether there had been a warranty on the kitchen installed last year and if it had expired. Pierre advised the response to the kitchen installation from our tenants had been good, and Joe that any problems which were brought to his attention were quickly responded to at the time. Joe did note that the kitchen cupboard depth would be deeper with this forthcoming contract as it was felt the cupboards were slightly short in depth with the last contract.

Post meeting note, the properties at Quarryknowe St new build are not part of this year's project, they are however included in next year's project.

	<p>Gutter Cleaning Joe advised that 60% of the gutter cleaning contract had been completed and the contractor was on site.</p> <p>Electrical Testing This work is out to tender and a contractor will be appointed in Jan/Feb 2021 with a completion date for the work of March 2022</p>
11.	<p><u>Policies for Approval</u></p> <p>FP18 Customer Refunds</p> <p>Pierre advised that this is a new policy and is required to comply with the Financial Services Authority legislation re the introduction of Knowes' new customer portal.</p> <p>Proposed by Gary Clark Seconded by Yvonne McDonald</p>
12.	<p>EVH Report</p> <p>The EVH report was circulated for information and Rhona reiterated that information on Share training courses was available through their website and to let Sandra know if any of the Share courses or those being held at Clydebank were interest to members.</p> <p>Rhona asked Ross if he had enjoyed the meeting so far and if he would like to join the Committee and come to future meetings. Ross replied he would be very happy to do so as he lived locally and had an interest in housing matters.</p> <p>As such, Ross was voted on as a co-opted member</p> <p>Proposed by Billy Stevenson Seconded by Janet Cassidy</p>
13.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Some members of committee had experienced problems with accessing and viewing the papers which had been uploaded onto on Admin Control and Pierre said he would contact the helpdesk and ask them to have a look at our system. It was helpful that throughout the meeting Joe was able to use his screen to load the papers so that Committee were able to access them as discussions took place.</p> <p>Post meeting note; Pierre has spoken to Admincontrol and identified the problem with the portal, this should not happen again. Pierre has also arranged for a short session immediately prior to the February meeting with Admincontrol just to go over the best way to access information to ensure everyone is using the facility to its best advantage.</p> <p>Appraisals</p> <p>The appraisals are being carried out by Rhona, Katie and Sandra, and that Katie, Lynsey and Gary already had already had theirs. Billy, Yvonne and Rhona are scheduled for 3rd December and it was arranged that Lawrence would also have his on Thursday 3rd Dec</p>

	<p>and Janet on Monday 5th Dec. The three new committee members will have their first appraisal at this time next year.</p> <p>Faifley Housing Association</p> <p>Pierre advised that he had made contact with the new Interim Director at Faifley HA and was waiting for a response.</p> <p>Share Register</p> <p>Sandra advised that 10 Share Members were being removed from the Share Register and the list provided at the last meeting had accidentally contained those who had already been removed the previous year.</p>
14.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>2nd February 2021</p>