



**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting
Held on Tuesday 6th February 2024 at 6.30pm
at Knowes Housing Association's Office**

Present: Lynsey Chrystal
Hilary Edgar
Dean Vinter
Peter Fennessey
Richard McLean
Billy Stevenson
Lawrence O'Neill
Steve Rolfe
Heather Maitz
Leanne Keegan

In Attendance: Gill Montgomery (For item 4 only)
Erica Davidson CEO
Peter French Head of Property Services
Amy Sweeney Corporate Services / Compliance Officer

Please note that the Management Committee are provided with a copy of papers one week prior to the meeting.

1.	<p>Election of Chairperson</p> <p>Erica chaired the start of the meeting to facilitate the election of the Chairperson.</p> <p>As per Rule 59.10, following the resignation of the Chair in January 2024, the Committee were required to elect another member to take over as Chairperson.</p> <p>The Committee nominated Peter Fennessey to take over as Chairperson of Knowes Housing Association. Proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Heather Maitz.</p>
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1.1	<p><i>Following the appointment as Chairperson, Peter Fennessey chaired the remainder of the meeting.</i></p> <p>Nominations to fill Casual Vacancies on Board</p> <p>As per Rule 41, following the resignation of two Committee members between annual general meetings, casual vacancies have become available on the Board. The Committee agreed to appoint members Steve Rolfe and Leanne Keegan to fill the two casual vacancies until the next AGM. Proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Lawrence O'Neill.</p>
2.	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>The following people submitted their apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yvonne McDonald • Katie Devaney
3.	<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <p>Lynsey Chrystal, Richard McLean and Dean Vinter declared an interest under agenda item 11 – Employers Ballot 2024 and did not take part in discussions on this item.</p>
4.	<p>Report on Demolition of Existing Building at New Build Site</p> <p>Gill Montgomery presented a report to the Committee on the demolition and clearance cost for the Abbeylands Road Development Site.</p> <p>Gill advised that demolition could commence on site on 1 weeks' notice, but firstly we would require a letter from West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) to confirm that services are disconnected on site and that the work can commence. We are still waiting on confirmation from WDC. We are also waiting on the offer of sale of the land from the Legal team at WDC although the price and sale have been already agreed with WDC Estates Department.</p> <p>She also explained that if the work doesn't commence before the end of February, then we wouldn't be able to access the site again until September because of the bird nesting season.</p> <p>Gill advised that she had been in discussions with the Scottish Government about funding for the site. However due to a redistribution of spend there may not be funding available this financial year and the funding request from Knowes would be considered in the Scottish Government's 2024/25 budget.</p>

	<p>The Committee questioned whether the cost could be covered by Knowes HA's own resources until we have received the funding. This would be a viable option as Knowes HA has the cash resources to allow for this. Most of the expenditure being claimed for has already been incurred.</p> <p>Following a discussion, the Committee were asked to approve the demolition and clearance of the site at a cost of £36,000 plus VAT. The Committee approved, proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Heather Maitz.</p>
	<p><i>Gill Montgomery left the meeting at this point and the Committee thanked her for her time.</i></p>
5.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>The Committee were provided with a report from Community Links about wider action work including community grants and Flourishing Faifley's activities.</p>
6.	<p>Minutes of Management Committee on 12th December 2023</p> <p>The minute of the Management Committee meeting held on 12th December 2023 was agreed as an accurate record and approved. Proposed by Richard McLean and seconded by Hilary Edgar.</p>
6.1	<p>Minutes of Additional Management Committee Meeting on 10th January 2024</p> <p>The minute of the last Management Committee meeting held on 10th January 2024 was agreed as an accurate record and approved. Proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Richard McLean.</p>
7.	<p>Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings</p> <p>The following minutes were provided to the Committee for their information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Sub Committee Meeting – 30.01.24 • Audit Sub Committee Meeting – 30.01.24 • Housing Sub Committee Meeting – 30.01.24 • Finance Sub Committee Meeting – 31.10.23 <p>During the Finance Sub Committee meeting on 30th January, the Committee members in attendance decided that a formal review of the factoring services was needed. This will be reviewed after the new Head of Finance is appointed and has settled into their role.</p>

<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>8.2</p>	<p>Finance Reports</p> <p>Rent Increase and Budget Report</p> <p>Erica presented the rent increase and budget report to the Committee. She advised that a rent questionnaire was sent out to all tenants as part of the consultation exercise. Given the rate of inflation, we consulted on an increase of 5.6% and 6.6% and also provided tenants with the option to not agree with either of the proposed increases. Six tenants returned the completed questionnaire and of those surveyed two opted for a rent increase of 5.6%, two opted for a rent increase of 6.6% and two didn't agree with either of the proposed increases. All respondents said the current rent is affordable to them.</p> <p>The Management Committee were asked to approve the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of 5.6% for rents and service charges for 2024/25. • Approval of the budgets for 2024/25 and long-term cash flow projections. <p>The Committee approved the rent increase of 5.6% and the budgets for 2024/25. Proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Lawrence O'Neill.</p> <p>Rent Consultation – Prize Draw</p> <p>The six respondents from the rent consultation were entered into a prize draw and one person was selected at random to win a £50 voucher. Respondent number four was selected as the winner.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Management Committee Attendance Register</p> <p>The attendance register was provided to the Committee for their information.</p> <p>It was highlighted that there was a committee meeting in January but the register has been marked as 'no meeting'. Amy will update the register to include the attendance at the January meeting.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>Erica presented her report to the Committee. The report included the following information:</p> <p><u>Land at Skypoint Centre and Edinbarnet School/Nursery</u></p>

A meeting has taken place with the WDC Housing and Development Team and we have formally expressed an interest in being involved in the development of the sites which will be available at Skypoint Centre, Edinbarnet Primary School and Lennox Nursery. WDC Housing and Development Team believe that the sites should be used for social housing and will be discussing this with estate department who are responsible for selling the sites. The Development Officer at WDC will provide an update on this after they meet with the estate department.

House Purchases through the ROTs Programme

Four properties have been purchased through the ROTs programme to date. WDC has confirmed there will be grant funding available for a further two purchases this financial year and for eight purchases in 2024/25.

Charity and Community Funding Income and Expenditure for 2023/24

A breakdown of the budgets and spend for 2023/24 was included for information.

Tenancy Sustainment Officer Post Update

In July we agreed to part fund the post of Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO) with Clydebank HA and Dalmuir Park HA from August 2023 to March 2024 and the cost of this is £1,698 per month or £13,024 in total. Clydebank HA (CHA) is employing the TSO and recharging Knowes HA and Dalmuir Park HA for their share. This will be funded out of Knowes HA's solar panel income – but no invoices have been received from CHA yet. We are contacting them to find out if they are intending to invoice at the end of the financial year as one payment.

CHA was successful in their lottery bid to continue funding for this post for a further three years and Knowes HA's contribution will be as follows:-

Year 1 – £8,000
Year 2 – £8,000
Year 3 – £10,000

CAB Funding for Dedicated Support Worker

Community Links Scotland was successful in obtaining lottery funding for a further three years for this service. Knowes' share of the service includes a dedicated support worker from CAB attending our office once a week to give money and benefits

advice to our tenants.

Staff Changes

As reported at our January meeting, the Head of Finance is leaving Knowes HA at the end of January. This leaves the Head of Finance post vacant. A report on the recruitment for this post and reviewing the options available is included under agenda item 20.

The recruitment for a Maintenance Officer (to fill the post being vacated at the end of March by a long term member of staff retiring) is underway. Interviews scheduled for 19th February. The CEO, Head of Property Services and Head of Housing will be on the interview panel.

Staff Objective Setting/Appraisals

The management team has completed the follow up staff objective setting/appraisals for 2023/24 and we are also planning to carry out a staff survey this year.

Committee and CEO Appraisals

EVH have now completed the Committee appraisals for 2023/24 and the summary report will be presented at the meeting in March with a suggested training needs assessment for the Committee.

The appraisal of the CEO is now due and should be scheduled in before the end of March. This is usually carried out by the Employment Sub Committee. Date to be confirmed.

MP Visit

Martin Docherty-Hughes MP has expressed an interest in visiting a SFHA member and has contacted Knowes HA to ask if we would be interested in hosting him for a meeting. We have agreed and are meeting with him on 14th February.

Strategy Day – Committee and Staff

A discussion took place about holding a strategy day for the Committee and staff this year. The Committee agreed that it would be useful to hold a strategy day because there are new members. It was suggested that we hold a Strategy Day for Committee and staff and a separate day for the new Committee Members to come into the office and meet the staff. Suggested dates for the strategy day will be provided to the Committee over the next few weeks.

10.1

Quarterly KPIs

	<p>The quarterly KPIs for each department were included for information.</p>
11.	<p>Employers Ballot 2024</p> <p>As per agenda item 3, Lynsey Chrystal, Richard McLean and Dean Vinter declared an interest in this agenda item and did not taken part in discussions.</p> <p>EVH have recommended a deal of an increase of 5.5% on all salary points (bar points PA1 to PA6 which will be increased to the set rate for the Real Living Wage of £12.00 per hour). This increase will also be applied to all allowances, bar the standard HMRC fixed mileage allowance.</p> <p>As a full member organisation, Knowes HA is required to vote on whether they would accept this proposal.</p> <p>After discussion, the Committee agreed that they would accept an increase of 5.5%. Proposed by Peter Fennessey and seconded by Steve Rolfe.</p>
	<p><i>After agenda item 11 had been discussed and a decision had been made, Lynsey Chrystal, Richard McLean and Dean Vinter rejoined the meeting.</i></p>
12.	<p>New Share Members</p> <p>No new applications received.</p>
13.	<p>Corporate Services Report</p> <p>Amy presented her report on the ongoing activities that the Association is involved in within the community.</p> <p><u>Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel Vouchers (Energy Redress Scheme) – Community Links have started distributing vouchers to households and they are making good progress with this. • SFHA Funding – The Tenancy Sustainment Officer has been distributing air fryers, microwaves and heated blankets to tenants. This community project is nearly complete as most applicants have now received their items. • Cycling Scotland Grant – The grant acceptance form has been returned to Cycling Scotland and we should receive the funds within 4 – 6 weeks.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Excellence – Our assessment will take place on 12th February. During the assessment the assessor will speak to staff members, community partners and customers.
14.	<p>Complaints Report</p> <p>Amy presented her report on the complaints that have been received between 1st October 2023 and 31st January 2024.</p> <p><u>Targets for Complaints</u></p> <p>Stage 1 Complaints – Respond within 5 working days Stage 2 Complaints – Respond within 20 working days</p> <p><u>Complaints Received</u></p> <p>Total number of complaints received – 4</p> <p><u>Stage 1 Complaints</u></p> <p>Number of complaints received – 0</p> <p><u>Stage 2 Complaints</u></p> <p>Number of complaints received – 4 Average time in working days for a full response – 8.5 days Percentage of all complaints responded to in full – 100%</p> <p><u>Breakdown of Stage 2 Complaints</u></p> <p>Repairs – 2 Factoring – 1 Housing – 1</p> <p>The Committee agreed that going forward they would like information on the outcome of complaints to be included and whether they have been upheld or not.</p>
15.	<p>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</p> <p>Amy presented her report on the health, safety and wellbeing updates within the Association.</p> <p><u>Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Alarm – Weekly fire alarm tests are continuing every Thursday.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Checks – Monthly housekeeping, legionella testing and ladder checks continue to be carried out with no issues. • PAT Testing for Office – This will be carried out at the end of February. • Health and Safety Control Manual – The latest version of the Health and Safety Control Manual is available to view on Admincontrol under the policies and procedures heading. <p><u>Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethan Hart will be attending Emergency First Aid at Work Training on 29th February.
16.	<p>Property Services Reports</p> <p>Peter presented his reports on repairs and maintenance updates for the Association.</p> <p><u>Capital Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathrooms – This project is now complete. • Boiler Replacement – This project is now complete. • Windows – Installations start on 5th February 2024. This project is due to be completed in March 2024. • Kitchens – 2 tenders were returned in December. Neither of the tenders were recommended for acceptance due to high unit costs so the tender will be re-issued. We expect to receive the returns by mid-March. • Tenemental Water Tank Removal – The tender report for this project is included under this agenda item for approval. <p><u>Service Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas Service Contract – The gas servicing contract with City Building expires in April 2024. We have received an excellent service from City Building and instead of going out to tender it is our recommendation that the gas contract is directly awarded to City Building through the Scotland Excel framework. • Landscape Maintenance Contract – The landscape maintenance contract expires in April 2024. It is recommended that the current contract is extended for one year. This will mean that we will go out to tender again in 2025.

The Committee approved both recommendations put forward for service projects. Proposed by Richard McLean and seconded by Steve Rolfe.

EICR

There are 3 contractors working to complete EICRs. We have 50 EICRs that are due to be completed by the end of March.

Health and Safety

- Fire Risk Assessment – ACS will carry out a fire risk assessment of the common areas of Knowes HA's tenemental stock. This work should commence during February 2024.
- Condition Survey of Trees – It has been identified that several trees (approx. 50) have been affected by Ash Dieback and need to be removed. The work to remove the trees has already started.
- Asbestos – Work is required to remove asbestos present in common areas (18 closes). The completion of this work will remove the requirement to survey annually. The work will commence on 19th February 2024.

Medical Adaptations

- 22 adaptations have/are being delivered which will exhaust the £25k budget. Further requests will be held off until the next financial year. We have received 1 request since the budget was exhausted which will be held off until we have received the new grant.

Policies

- Electric Safety Checks Policy – It was agreed that this new policy would be covered at the Committee meeting in March instead.
- Development and Procurement Policy – This policy is covered under agenda item 17.

KPI Report

KPI results from the period 01/04/2023 – 30/01/2024.

- Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs – 7 days.
- Average time taken to attend emergency repairs – 29mins.
- Average time taken to complete emergency repairs – 1hr 53mins.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas Service Report – 1044 out of 1045 properties with a valid gas safety certificate within 12 months (99.90%). <p><u>Update on Repairs and Maintenance Spend</u></p> <p>The Committee were provided with the repairs and maintenance spend to end of December 2023.</p>
17.	<p>Policies for Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Business Risk – Minor changes were made to this policy. Additional text was added under page 3 ‘equalities’. The policy was approved, proposed Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Leanne Keegan. Donations – No changes were made to the wording of the policy. The policy was approved, proposed by Peter Fennessey and seconded by Richard McLean. Equalities and Diversity – Changes were made to the plan of action on this policy along with minor changes to wording. The policy was approved, proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Heather Maitz. Declaration of Interest – No changes were made to the wording of the policy. The policy was approved, proposed by Richard McLean and seconded by Lynsey Chrystal. Development and Procurement – No changes were made to the wording of the policy. The policy was approved, proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Richard McLean.
18.	<p>EVH Report</p> <p>The EVH Report for January was provided to the Committee for their information.</p>
19.	<p>Notifiable Events</p> <p>Erica advised that there have been two notifiable events;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resignation of the Chair The Head of Finance leaving Knowes HA. <p>Both have been reported to the SHR. Erica will provide an update to the SHR on the appointment of the new Chair and recruitment for the Head of Finance post.</p>
20.	<p>Report on Recruitment of Head of Finance Post</p> <p>Erica presented the report on the Recruitment of Head of Finance to the Committee. She advised that the current post holder has</p>

	<p>informed Knowes HA that they will be leaving the Head of Finance (HOF) post on 31st January 2024 to take up a promoted post with another Registered Social Landlord.</p> <p>Erica provided 3 options to the Committee with the benefits and costs of the options proposed. The options were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leave the HOF post vacant and require the CEO to carry out the work of CEO and HOF. The benefit of this would be the saving of a senior management salary. However the disadvantages and risks of doing this would be significant. 2. Buy in the services of an external accountancy agency to carry out the work of the HOF. The benefit of this may be savings in term of salary and pension costs but the HOF role is varied and it is unlikely that an external agency would be able to cover all of the responsibilities that the role requires. 3. Recruit a new HOF for Knowes HA. This would allow for all of the roles and responsibilities of the current post to be carried out and also for segregation of duties between the CEO role and the HOF role in Knowes HA. <p>A discussion took place about the job description. A Committee Member mentioned that some roles are now incorporating finance and corporate services and that this may attract more applicants. However, this would require a restructure of the organisation and management team which is not being considered as an option for Knowes just now.</p> <p>The Committee were asked to approve the following recommendations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recruit a new Head of Finance to fill the post presently being vacated. • For the recruitment process to be carried out internally by the Committee and Management Team. • For the post to be advertised at the existing pay grade and the structure of the existing management team will not change during this recruitment process. • For the current Finance Officer to be given a temporary acting up allowance to take them from an Officer Grade to Senior Officer Grade for the period of time it will take to fill this post in recognition of the additional senior duties this member of staff will be required to fulfil. <p>The Committe approved the recommendations. Proposed by Lawrence O’Neill and seconded by Lynsey Chrystal.</p>
21.	Proposal to Reappoint Internal Audit Company

	<p>Erica presented the report on the proposal to reappoint the internal audit company. Knowes HA's current internal auditors are The Internal Audit Association (TIAA). They were appointed by a tendering process in April 2021 for a minimum period of 3 years with the option in the tender to appoint for a further 3 years.</p> <p>TIAA are experienced auditors in the housing sector and have provided excellent support and a good value for money service to Knowes over the past three years.</p> <p>Many RSLs have found it difficult to obtain services of audit firms and there is a lack of response to tenders on the PCS website. Erica advised that when Knowes tendered for the internal audit services in 2021 they received only three responses – TIAA being appointed on a price quality basis. She explained that if we were to re-tender this year then there is no guarantee that we would receive a sufficient response to make the time and expense of tendering worthwhile.</p> <p>The total cost for internal audit services to Knowes for the past three years has been £23,175 (including VAT) – on average £7725 per annum.</p> <p>TIAA have proposed the same daily rate for the next three years increased by December CPI (4% for 2024).</p> <p>Erica advised that it is recommended that we reappoint TIAA to serve as Knowes' internal auditors for the next three years.</p> <p>The Committee approved the request to reappoint the internal audit company – TIAA. Proposed by Heather Maitz and seconded by Billy Stevenson.</p>
22.	<p>Proposed Dates for Future Meetings</p> <p>The Committee discussed the timetable of proposed meeting dates.</p> <p>The following dates were agreed for the main Committee Meetings 2024/25;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 16th April 2024 • Tuesday 21st May 2024 (ARC approval) • Tuesday 25th June 2024 • July 2024 – No Meeting • Tuesday 13th August 2024 (Accounts to be signed) • Tuesday 3rd September 2024 (AGM) – Lynsey Chrystal submitted apologies in advance for the AGM. • Tuesday 8th October 2024 (Appointment of Office Bearers and approved of Annual Assurance Statement)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 12th November 2024 • Tuesday 3rd December 2024 (Festive Celebrations) • January 2025 – No Meeting • Tuesday 4th February 2025 (Approval of rent increase and budgets). • Tuesday 4th March 2025 <p>A discussion took place about holding some Committee meetings over Zoom. The Committee agreed that they enjoy meeting in the office however this may be a good option for every third meeting.</p>
23.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EVH Annual Conference – Committee members to contact Amy if they would like to attend the EVH Annual Conference.
24.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th March 2024.</p>