



**Minutes of Management Committee Meeting
held on Tuesday 8th April 2025 at 6.30pm
The meeting was held at Knowes Housing Association's Office**

Present: Peter Fennessey
Lynsey Chrystal
Steve Rolfe
Hilary Edgar
Tim Ugwu
Billy Stevenson

In Attendance: Erica Davidson CEO
Peter French Head of Property Services
Freya Lees North Star Consulting & Research
Amy Sweeney Corporate Services / Compliance Officer

Observers: Patrick Cox
Kevin McNally

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

Agenda Item		To Be Actioned
1.	<p>Governance Review Presentation by Freya Lees from North Start Consulting & Research</p> <p>North Star Consulting & Research have been appointed to carry out Knowes Housing Association's Governance Review. Freya Lees attended the meeting and delivered a presentation to the committee which provided an overview of the areas that the governance review will focus on and the timescales for the review.</p> <p>Freya advised that she will be working alongside her colleague Helen Barton who will also be in contact with the committee over the next few months.</p>	

The committee thanked Freya Lees for her time and she left the meeting at this point.

2.	Apologies The following people submitted their apologies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dean Vinter• Patricia Broadfoot• Cllr Lawrence O'Neill	
3.	Declaration of Interest No interests were declared.	
4.	Correspondence None.	
5.	Minutes of Management Committee on 4th March 2025 There were no amendments and the minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on 4 th March were agreed as an accurate record and approved. Proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Steve Rolfe.	
6.	Minutes of Sub Committee Meetings An employment sub committee meeting took place on 20 th March. The meeting minutes are stored in the committee folder on Admincontrol.	
7.	CEO Report Erica presented her report to the Committee. The report included the following information: <u>Staff Updates</u> The request from the management team to review, regrade and retitle the Administrative Assistant post was approved by the employment sub committee on 20 th March. The post has now been advertised as Corporate Services/Compliance Assistant at a grade 5 with focus on governance, compliance and customer engagement to help ensure that the association meets regulatory requirements.	

The Finance Assistant (Trainee) has been given permission to continue their ACCA course for another two modules. They are on a 2-year fixed term contract which will be reviewed in September 2025.

The staff succession plan was also approved. Key risks and gaps in the structure were discussed and how these will be addressed in future.

The minutes of the employment sub committee meeting held on 20th March are available to view via Admincontrol.

Update on Abbeylands Road

The project application, which includes the proposal to build 27 new properties at the Abbeylands Road site, has been submitted to the Scottish Government and [REDACTED] is liaising with them to answer any queries on the project. Further updates will be provided to the committee when available.

Purchase of Properties through the Rental Off The Shelf Programme

We had allowed for the purchase of 8 properties through the rental off the shelf programme this year as well as one buy back through the mortgage to rent scheme. However, grant funding was only agreed in October which pushed our purchasing programme into the latter half of 2024/25. Added to the lack of properties being available for purchase in 2024 and the delays in settling purchases, we have only managed to complete 3 purchases before the 31st March 2025. The grant funding has been claimed and received for these properties. However, the additional funding received in 2024/25 has been lost due to not meeting the deadline of 31st March.

We have made offers on another 2 properties and these will be settled in April. WDC have confirmed that we will be able to participate in the ROTS programme for 2025/26 therefore we will be able to make grant claims for these properties from the 2025/26 budget.

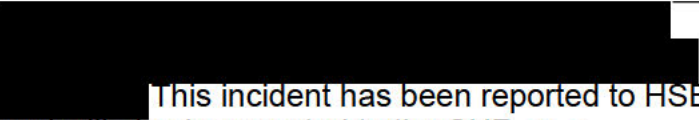
The mortgage to property purchase has not yet been settled. The cost of this property is [REDACTED] and the grant subsidy is [REDACTED] which includes a contribution towards SHQS repairs.

7.1	<p><u>Telephony System</u></p> <p>The invitation to tender for Knowes' telephone system has been posted on Public Contracts Scotland. Four companies have been invited to tender including NCS Group, Focus Group, HFD Technologies and Tecnica. The closing date for tender submissions is 25th April.</p> <p><u>The Nine-day Fortnight Policy</u></p> <p>Following discussions at the previous committee meeting, [REDACTED], Knowes Employment Solicitor was contacted to provide advice on the nine-day fortnight policy. The advice and suggestions made by [REDACTED] have been incorporated into the policy which is included under this agenda item.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the nine-day fortnight. The committee reiterated the importance of clear communication with staff members to stress that this is not a contractual term, and that this can be revoked if it is negatively impacting the association. The committee also highlighted the importance of communicating the policy to all staff, as there is a risk of staff saying that they were not aware of the policy or have not read it.</p> <p><u>Summary of Tasks</u></p> <p>Erica provided the committee with a summary of the tasks that she has been working on with the management team which included the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business plan for 2025/26 – Update of departmental objectives and suite of plans • Internal audit – plan and audits for 2025/26 • Alexander Sloan interim and final audit • Scotland Excel procurement review – required for grant funding from Scottish Government • Phone system upgrade • Staff objectives for 2025/26 and performance reviews • Update of policies and procedures • Year-end preparation and ARC reports <p>Former Tenant Debt Write Off for 2024-25</p> <p>Erica advised that the report on former tenancy arrears which was brought to the last committee meeting was incorrect, therefore the updated report has been brought</p>	<p>Nine-day Fortnight Policy – Terms to be communicated with staff.</p>
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7.2	<p>back for approval. Erica advised that the correct figures are less than previously reported and are as below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former tenant arrears to be written off – £4390.04 • Former tenant rechargeable repairs to be written off - £10965.93 <p>Erica advised that a record of former tenant arrears is kept on file, therefore individuals are unable to join Knowes' housing waiting list again until they have paid back the amount due.</p> <p>The committee approved the former tenant debt write off. Proposed by Peter Fennessey and seconded by Hilary Edgar.</p> <p>Nine-day Fortnight Policy</p> <p>Following the introduction of the nine-day fortnight, a policy has been created to outline the terms and conditions of this benefit for staff members. Erica advised that advice and suggestions from Knowes Employment Solicitor, [REDACTED], have been incorporated into the policy.</p> <p>Erica highlighted section 10 of the policy which states that the management team will discuss the operation of the policy at monthly meetings and the CEO will report to the Management Committee on a quarterly basis regarding business performance, staff welfare including absences and results of staff surveys.</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the table included under section 6 of the policy. It was highlighted that some staff may challenge the fact that they are working longer days at 7.94 hours per day, however their annual leave entitlement for one working day will remain at 7 hours. The committee highlighted that staff may feel that this is unfair and although the current staff team are happy with arrangements, new staff members may challenge this, therefore it is important that this is considered. Erica explained that staff had agreed to this arrangement for the nine day fortnight and that new staff had the option not to join the scheme or to work flexi time in the office.</p> <p>A discussion also took place regarding the additional day's leave provided to staff. Erica explained that this benefit was brought in for staff around 20 years ago to help mitigate the issue with continuous absence. An</p>	
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7.3	<p>additional leave day is provided to staff members who do not take sickness days throughout the year. Some of the committee disagreed with this approach as they felt that staff are being penalised for illness. Erica advised that there have been no complaints/challenges from staff about the additional day since it has been in place. Staff who are ill receive a generous sickness allowance through EVH Terms and Conditions. For those staff who never take sick leave this additional day was to allow a duvet day for them in the year for when they may not feel sick enough to call in for a sick day but for when they just needed some down time.</p> <p>Following discussions, the committee agreed to approve the Nine-day Fortnight Policy, proposed by Steve Rolfe and seconded by Tim Ugwu.</p> <p>Internal Audit Plan 2025-26</p> <p>Knowes' audit strategy and annual plan for 2025/26 was discussed with the committee. Erica highlighted page 4 of the plan which provides an overview of the specific areas which will be reviewed each year. She advised that this is completed on a 3 year cycle and during 2025/26 the following areas will be reviewed by the internal auditors, TIAA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Performance Management - Data Protection and Freedom of Information - Budgetary Control - Cyber Security <p>A question was raised on whether the number of days scheduled by TIAA to complete each audit were fair estimates. Erica confirmed that they were.</p> <p>There were no other comments and the internal audit plan for 2025-26 was approved by the committee. Proposed by Peter Fennessey and seconded by Billy Stevenson.</p>	
8.	<p>SHR Engagement Plan 2025</p> <p>Knowes' Engagement Plan for 2025/26 was provided to the committee for information.</p>	
9.	<p>Corporate Services Report</p> <p><u>Activities</u></p>	

9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE Assessment – We have achieved Customer Service Excellence with Compliance Plus. The assessment report is included under this agenda item. <p>The committee suggested publicising this good news.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Newsletter – The spring newsletter will be completed over the next few weeks and will be posted to all tenants and factored owners. • Customer Working Group – The last meeting took place on 20th March. At the meeting we discussed the Allocations Policy, Void Management Policy and satisfaction survey results. Although we still only have a small group of participants we are hoping to grow this group over the next year. <p>Wider Action Update from Community Links Scotland (January – March 2025)</p> <p>Provided to the committee for information.</p>	
10.	<p>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</p> <p><u>Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Alarm – Weekly fire alarm tests are continuing every Thursday. • Monthly Checks – Monthly housekeeping, legionella testing, emergency lighting and ladder checks continue to be carried out with no issues. • Health and Safety Audit – We will be arranging an internal health and safety audit with ACS over the next few weeks. <p><u>Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Harassment Awareness Training – Management training took place on 10th March and training for all other staff members took place on 18th March. <p><u>Accident at Work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [REDACTED] 	

	<p> This incident has been reported to HSE and will also be reported to the SHR as a notifiable event.</p> <p>A discussion took place about how this can be avoided in future. It was explained that due to Knowes' small team, two person visits all the time would not be possible. The committee suggested introducing a check-in system for lone-workers similar to the system in place for the Housing Officers. The management team will arrange a meeting to discuss options further and then report back to the committee.</p>	<p>H&S protocols to be discussed and reported to committee.</p>
11.	<p>Property Services Reports</p> <p>Peter presented the repairs and maintenance reports.</p> <p><u>KPI Report</u></p> <p>KPI results in February 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs – 7 days. • Average time taken to attend emergency repairs – 26 minutes. • Average time taken to complete emergency repairs – 1hr 37 minutes. <p>There have been no statistically significant changes in KPIs since 1st April 2024.</p> <p><u>Capital Projects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen Renewals – Installations started on 10th March. The programme will run for 18 weeks. • Boiler Renewals – 107 addresses have been identified (includes an additional 58 addresses). A pre-start meeting took place on 22nd January, surveys were conducted in March and the project started in April. • Window & Door Replacements – 41 addresses have been identified for window and door replacements. Surveys took place in March and installs are in May. • Water Tank Removal – This project started on 24th February and we are currently half way through. 	

Maintenance and Service Projects

- Paint Project 2025-26 – This project will involve 25 tenements and 86 terrace properties. The draft start date is post school holidays. Owners have been notified in advance by letter.
- Skips – The tender report for this is included under this agenda item for approval.
- Gutter Cleaning Project – This project is complete.
- Landscape Maintenance Project – Spring maintenance cycle has begun. It is proposed to extend the contract with Continental into Year 5 (final year).

Peter advised that [REDACTED] Housing Association have decided not to extend their contract with [REDACTED] into year 5, and they will be going out to tender for a new contractor. We will monitor their choice in terms of price and quality.

EICRs

- 6 addresses are due an EICR this calendar year.
- The tender report for this project is included under this agenda item for approval.

Health and Safety

- EICRs in Common Areas – EICRs are being carried out in the common areas as part of the delivery of the fire risk assessment outcomes. Estimated completion date of May. Any remedial work identified as a result of the EICRs will be carried out.

Medical Adaptations

- We have received a grant award of £20k from the Scottish Government for adaptations during 2024/25. So far, we have spent £20,131 on adaptations during 2024/25. An application has been submitted for funding for 2025/26. We have already have 4 requests on the 2025/26 programme.

Storm Damage

- Work is ongoing, however we are making good progress.

H&S Audit

We have received the audit report which will be presented at the sub-committee meeting at the end of May. The report has confirmed that we have substantial assurance which is the best outcome.

Waste Skip Tender Report

The tender report for provision of waste skips to the association on a yearly basis for a period of 4 years was presented to the committee for approval. The contract was published through a QuickQuote notice on the Public Contracts Scotland Portal.

Four tenders were received from [REDACTED]

Upon completion of the tender assessment process, it is recommended that Biffa Waste Services Limited are awarded the contract.

The committee approved the recommendation to award the contract to Biffa Waste Services Limited. Proposed by Tim Ugwu and seconded by Steve Rolfe.

EICR Tender Report

The tender report for the electrical contract was provided to the committee. This contract is to be let for a period of three years commencing 1st April 2025.

The tenders were assessed in terms of quality and price and upon completion of the tender assessment process it is recommended that the contract is awarded to Magnus Electrical Services Ltd.

The committee approved the recommendation to award the contract to Magnus Electrical Services Ltd. Proposed by Steve Rolfe and seconded by Billy Stevenson.

Repairs and Maintenance Budgets and Spend

	The budgets and spending for repairs and maintenance were provided the committee for information.	
12.	<p>Policies for Approval</p> <p>The following policies were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Engagement – Staff were consulted on this policy at a recent staff meeting. The staff were happy with the policy and no changes were suggested. There were no comments and the policy was approved, proposed by Billy Stevenson and seconded by Lynsey Chrystal. Stress at Work – No changes have been made to the wording of this policy. There were no comments and the policy was approved, proposed by and seconded by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Steve Rolfe. Anti-Bribery Policy – It was agreed that this policy would be brought back to the meeting in May after confirmation of policy changes. Anti-Fraud Policy – Erica advised that the information in the previous Anti-Fraud Policy was outdated therefore there have been changes made throughout the policy and additional information added specifically under section 4, 7, 9, 10 and appendix 1. There were no comments and the policy was approved, proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Steve Rolfe. Retirement Policy – There were no comments and the policy was approved, proposed by Tim Ugwu and seconded by Billy Stevenson. 	Anti-Bribery Policy to be brought back to May meeting.
12.1	<p>Appendix from Dignity at Work Policy (Sexual Harassment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EVH has not yet released a stand alone policy for sexual harassment awareness, once this is introduced we will adopt their model policy, however for the time being we will be adopting the appendix from their Dignity at Work Policy which includes information on sexual harassment. EVH have confirmed that this is sufficient for the time being. 	

	This was approved by the committee, proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Steve Rolfe.	
13.	<p>Summary of Changes to EVH Terms and Conditions 2025</p> <p>The summary of changes to EVH Terms and Conditions were provided to the committee for information and approval.</p> <p>A question was raised on whether we require a separate policy to outline the leave that is provided to employees if they experience pregnancy loss or whether this is covered in EVH's terms and conditions. It was confirmed that this is included in EVH's terms and conditions.</p> <p>The committee approved the changes, proposed by Steve Rolfe and seconded by Peter Fennessey.</p>	
14.	<p>New Share Members</p> <p>One new share application has been received. The committee were asked to approve share membership 632.</p> <p>The share membership was approved, proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by Tim Ugwu.</p>	
15.	<p>EVH Report</p> <p>The EVH Report for March 2025 was provided to the committee for their information.</p>	
16.	<p>Notifiable Events</p> <p>The Maintenance Officer's accident in the workplace will be reported to the regulator as a notifiable event.</p>	
17.	<p>Management Committee Attendance Register</p> <p>The attendance register was provided to the Committee for their information.</p>	
18.	<p>Any Other Business and Apologies for Future Meetings</p> <p><u>Casual Vacancies on the Board</u></p>	

	<p>Erica advised that following the recent resignation of 3 board members, casual vacancies have become available. Erica advised that Patricia Broadfoot has filled one of the casual vacancies but there are still two available. Tim Ugwu is currently a co-optee, however would be able to fill one of these vacancies. The committee approved and Tim Ugwu filled the casual vacancy. Proposed by Lynsey Chrystal and seconded by and Steve Rolfe.</p> <p><u>Apologies for Future Meetings</u></p> <p>Steve submitted his apologies for the meeting on 20th May. Peter advised that he may only be able to join the meeting remotely.</p>	
19.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next committee meeting will take place on Tuesday 20th May 2025 at 6:30pm.</p>	