

GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
6.30PM – WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2024

AGENDA

- 1. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Report attached – *for action*)

- 2. MINUTES**
 - 2.1 Minute of Board of Management Meeting of 24/01/24 (Report attached – *for approval*)
 - 2.2 Matters Arising from above Minute

- 3. FINANCE & STAFFING MATTERS**
 - 3.1 Financial Report to 31/1/24 (Report attached – *for approval*)
 - 3.2 Arrears Report to 31/1/24 (Report attached – *for information*)
 - 3.3 Rent Increase and Budget 2024/25 (Report attached – *for approval*)
 - 3.4 Wages Ballot (EVH) (Report attached – *for information*)
 - 3.5 Window Programme – update (Verbal Report)

- 4. GOVERNANCE**
 - 4.1 Standing Orders - Review (Report attached – *for approval*)
 - 4.2 Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 (Report attached – *for approval*)

- 5. POLICY REVIEW**
 - 5.1 Document Retention (Report attached – *for approval*)

- 6. AOCB**

GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION
MINUTE OF BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING
WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2024

PRESENT:

- G Ross (GR)
- B Allan (BA)
- I Muirhead (IM)
- J Smith (JS)
- P Milne (PM)
- J McArthur (JMc)
- A Crook (AC)
- S Garrioch (SG)

IN ATTENDANCE:

- T Thomson (TT), Thomson Cooper
- A Dickie (AD)
- I Byers (IB)
- K Milne (KM)

1. APOLOGIES & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies: S Thomson (ST)
T Newman (TN)

Declarations of Interest: None

2. MINUTES

2.1 Minute of Board of Management Meeting 24/01/2024

The above Minute was proposed by JMc, seconded by AC and approved as a true record of the meeting.

2.2 Matters Arising from the above Minute

2.2.1 Item 3.5 – Finance Review – AD confirmed a report from A Berwick would hopefully be ready for the March Board meeting.

- 2.2.2 Item 2.2.2 – Housing Officer post – AD confirmed that the interviews had taken place and the successful candidate, Norah McGaw, is due to start on 1st March 2024

3. FINANCE AND STAFFING MATTERS

3.1 Financial Report for the year to 31/01/2024

TT presented this item and referred members to the detailed reports accompanying the accounts. The accounts as presented were **approved**.

- 3.1.1 AC referred to the purchase of a thermal camera and asked about its use. IB explained that this was purchased as a replacement and is used for damp/mould/leaks/insulation inspections and is a very useful maintenance tool.

3.2 Arrears Report to 31/01/2024

IB presented this report which was **approved**.

- 3.2.1 Table 1 - IB highlighted the decrease in the Present Tenant Arrears, despite still being down one Housing Officer in the team. GR asked that staff be commended for their diligence in getting the arrears down, despite resourcing issues.

- 3.2.2 Table 3 - IB highlighted the missing info on the last two columns which should read:

Less Bad Debt Provision - £16,896

Total Arrears Figure per Accounts - £38,282

- 3.2.3 Former tenant arrears: IB confirmed the write offs approved last month had been processed.

3.3 Budget & Rent Increase 2024/25

AD presented this report

3.3.1 Rent Consultation Analysis

Total surveys returned – 138 (88 paper copies/50 digital copies) = 27.71% of households.

80.29% agreed with the proposed 6.6% rent increase, with 19.71% disagreeing.

AD confirmed that the majority of respondents had provided addresses so they will be responded to accordingly along with a Newsletter distributed to all tenants, providing feedback on the consultation.

JMc commented on the volume of comments this year and suggested this was unusually high compared with other years, adding that he had found many interesting points raised that helps Board understand the tenants' perspective, and not just in terms of deciding on a rent increase.

JS concurred, adding that there were a couple of comments that showed a level of engagement that suggested a potential Board Member in the writer.

SG asked that the Newsletter reflect the types of things we do with a rent increase, e.g. repairs and maintenance (reminding tenants of the reporting procedure etc). PM agreed with this, suggesting, tenants take comfort in knowing that improvements are in hand, based on their feedback.

AC referred to the comment where the tenant has suggested we should list the types of things they stand to lose should a rent increase not be implemented. AD agreed this was an interesting point and can be considered in the consultation next year.

AC asked if there is a correlation between those in receipt of assistance with rent payments that said yes/no to the increase – IB to investigate and feed back if possible.

3.3.2 Main Assumptions used for Budget

AD presented this report and there followed participative discussion on the main assumptions and the proposed budget.

Members were asked to approve the draft budget as presented, however, taking cognisance of the major finance review with Alistair Berwick of ATFS during the next couple of months, the budget set may require some tweaks which will be re-presented.

AD/IB met with Triodos last week to explain how Glen HA is approaching the challenge of Net Zero, i.e. the archetype surveys carried out with Changeworks. AD confirmed that they also touched on the potential for a revolving credit facility which Steven MacGregor, our Relationship Manager said he would be happy to discuss further.

BA referred to the Staffing Costs/Salaries and the assumed 5.5% increase from 01/04 – in view of the union's ballot result to reject the 5.5% employers offer.

PM referred to the interest received figure which she felt was budgeted quite low at £30,000. TT advised that she had also broached this with AD in view of the anticipated outcome of £60k+, however AD explained that she would rather err on the side of caution as we didn't know at

this point, how much cash reserves would be getting used for the window/door replacement programme.

3.3.3 Graph B – Glen HA Cumulative Cash Balance with 2.5% rent arrears from year 2 onwards.

AD referred to this graph which shows the importance of staff keeping arrears in check, one of the biggest risks to an organisation our size. JMc referred to the minimum working balance being £500k for some time, and asked if this should be increased. BA explained the working cash balance is generally 3 months rental income.

AD advised that this graph would be reproduced after the finance review which will also see the Treasury Management policy reviewed. IB added that a revolving credit finance could also affect the cumulative closing cash balance.

3.3.4 Members were asked to now consider the consultation feedback along with the proposed budget and vote on a rent increase for 2024/25.

Members present unanimously agreed an increase of 6.6%. AD advised that ST had submitted agreement with a 6.6% increase at the time tendering his apologies.

Meeting thereafter agreed the draft of the Annual Budget for 2024/25, including the accompanying rent increase of 6.6%.

3.4 **Wages/Ballot (EVH)**

AD presented this report, adding that at 5.50pm tonight, notification had been received from EVH with the date for the meeting with UNITE and ACAS being 5th March 2024. Should it be required, AD will email all Board Members, unless the dates coincide with a Board meeting.

IM asked what the relationship is with EVH & Unite – AD explained EVH members form the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) who are authorised to meet with UNITE to discuss wage settlements.

3.5 **Window Replacement Programme - Update**

AD presented a verbal report on this matter. She commenced with an apology to Members as she had not confirmed the date for the open day for tenants on the first phase of the window/door replacement programme would be the 7th February.

The event was well attended with approximately 30 households in attendance throughout the day, mostly from Heimdal Gardens. This event might be replicated in the Leven area at the time they move on to

Groban & Arbaile, albeit, the tenants from these properties were invited and offered transportation to and from Glenrothes for this event, (one tenant from Groban attended).

AD confirmed that the pilot house would be starting tomorrow (22nd Feb) and there would be someone from every organisation involved in attendance. Clydebuilt Home Improvements are intent on taking their time with this house, ironing out any issues before proceeding with the full programme.

JMc had attended the event and asked IB if he could clarify how many DMEVs would be fitted – there appeared to be conflicting information in terms of whether it would be 2 or 3 areas, particularly where there is a WC or utility room – IB noted.

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Standing Orders – Review

AD presented the reviewed Standing Orders which were **approved**, with Board noting the additions to the relevant terms of reference at the introduction and the amendment to the description of how the Board monitors Risk Management.

4.2 Internal Audit Plan 2024/25

AD presented this report, explaining that this confirmed what had already been agreed on. Alex Cameron, Internal Auditor was in last week doing an audit of Planned Maintenance & Stock Condition and AD had asked if there was anything else relevant to consider. Alex confirmed the past couple of years had seen audits for Glen on the Annual Assurance Statement, Risk Management and Budget Setting – all matters considered fairly high profile by the Regulator.

BA referred to the Internal Audit service being due for review for 2025/26 and advised that his work had just tendered for this service and happy to report that they received 4 tenders.

Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 – **approved**.

5. POLICY REVIEWS

5.1 Document Retention & Disposals Policy & Associated Data Retention Schedule

Approved.

6. AOCB

- 6.1 AD advised that the SFHA Affiliate Membership 2024/25 fees are £6339 which she feels still represents value for money.
- 6.2 AD reminded those that hadn't already done so, to complete the Risk Management Survey by Friday 23/02/24 - the completed surveys will be compiled into a report with the results delivered at the 20th March Board meeting.
- 6.3 AD confirmed with members that they had all noted the schedule of Board Meetings for 2024 that was contained within the Board Workplan paper presented at last month's meeting.

APPROVED

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm