

**West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative**  
**Management Committee Meeting of Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 6.30pm**  
**Meeting held in Whitlawburn Community Resource Centre**

**In attendance:**

**Committee:**

A Anderson – Chairperson (AA)	M Alcorn (MA)	B McNicol (BMcN)
S Anderson – Vice Chairperson (SA)	R Alexis (RA)	D Murphy (DM)
A Duffin – Secretary (AD)	E Kerr (EK)	

**WWHC Staff:**

S Marshall – Director (Dir)

G Clayton – Deputy Director (DD)

R Hosie – Corporate Services Assistant (CSA) (Minutes)

**Other:**

S McCready – Wylie & Bisset Internal Auditor (IA)

Meeting is quorate. The Vice Chairperson chaired this meeting.

**1. Apologies**

P Welsh (PW)

**2. Internal Auditor**

**a) Internal Overall Financial Controls**

A high-level controls review across all key financial control systems including a review of processes relating to purchasing, income, cash and banking, payroll, and fixed assets was carried out as part of the 2021/22 Internal Audit Annual Plan.

The Audit Objectives were:

Objective 1: Efficient and effective procedures and controls are in place for key finance processes.

Objective 2: Adequate segregation of duties are in place.

Objective 3: There is adequate management oversight of finance processes.

The Auditor can provide the Co-operative with an overall substantial level of assurance surrounding their financial controls and have raised 10 recommendations for improvement, this includes 3 medium grade and 7 low grade recommendations.

## **b) Follow up review 2020-2021**

The purpose of the review was to assess whether the Co-operative has appropriately implemented the internal audit recommendations made in the 2020/21 and earlier years. The review considered all outstanding recommendations to provide West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative Management Committee, with independent assurance that these recommendations have been fully implemented by the Co-operative and can therefore be removed from the audit action plan. This audit is part of the agreed 2021/22 Annual Internal Audit Plan for the Co-operative.

The Auditor can provide the Co-operative with an overall weak level of assurance surrounding the arrangements in place to implement recommendations raised in previous years. Specifically, 2 have not been implemented, 2 partially implemented and 1 fully implemented.

Committee noted that these have been added to the Audit action plan and progress has been made since the Audit

## **c) Audit Plan 2022/23**

This proposed Plan was developed following discussions with the Co-operative's Director and Deputy Director. It is proposed to delay the Procurement review scheduled for 2022/23 until 2023/24 and bring forward the Governance review from 2023/24 to 2022/23 due to the Co-operative acknowledging that there is work to be undertaken in relation to procurement and a number of procurement exercises to be undertaken during 2022/23.

The original Audit Needs Assessment ("ANA") was presented to the Management Committee for approval on 26 July 2021. This document covers the plan for 2022/23.

Committee approved the Audit Plan 2022/2023 for implementation.
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The IA left the meeting at 18:45.

## **3. Confidentiality**

The Vice Chairperson reminded committee of the importance of confidentiality.

## **4. Declaration of Interests**

Dir, DD and CSA declared an interest at agenda item 10.a) and will not take any part in discussion or decision making.

## **5. Equalities and Human Rights**

No issues raised at this meeting.

## **6. Previous Minutes**

### **a) Management Committee meeting of Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

The previous minutes were proposed by MA and seconded by EK and noted as an accurate record.

### **b) Management Committee training of 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

Approved by Committee

### **c) Signing of Minutes**

The Chairperson will pass the signed minutes to the Dir for filing.

## **7. Matters arising from Previous Minutes**

- CX Feedback (CXFB) tool has been progressed, staff training has been implemented. CXFB planned for launch in April 2022.
- Asset Management is ongoing, the DD advised that the data will be updated for the ARC Return.
- Discussions have started surrounding the Fibre Network. AD (CS) has met with City Fibre to look at the condition of equipment and view the options available.
- Research on a Defibrillator is on hold due to staff absence. WWHC are looking to secure this for public use, not just for tenants/members.
- Equalities and Human Rights training is ongoing. Once completed by committee, an internal session on strategy will be arranged.

## **8. Sub Committee Minutes and Referrals**

- a) Performance, Assurance and Risk (PAR) Sub Committee of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 (draft) for information.

### **b) Property Policy Reviews**

- i) Right to repair policy
- ii) Alterations and Improvements policy
- iii) Satellite Dish Policy
- iv) Fire Safety Policy
- v) Electrical Safety Policy

The above policies were approved at the Property sub-committee of October 2021. The DD provided a verbal summary of the updated policies. The Electrical Safety Policy was introduced upon recommendation of the H&S Audit.

Committee approved the below policies for implementation:

- Right to repair policy
- Alterations and Improvements policy
- Satellite Dish Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy

**c) TS Policy Reviews**

- i) Lock up Management Policy
- ii) Tenancy Agreement
- iii) Section 5 Protocol

The DD provided a verbal summary of the above policies. The policies were considered and approved at the Performance, Assurance & Risk Sub Committee of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022.

Committee agreed to approve the Lock Up Management Policy for implementation. Confirmed the ongoing use of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement. Confirmed the Section 5 Protocol with any further review subject to SLC proposals and consultation.

**d) Business Continuity Plan**

This policy has been updated with the consideration of disaster recovery of the Co-operative's District Heating Network.

Committee approved the updated plan for implementation.

**9. Correspondence**

**a) Information**

No items.

**b) Decision**

No items.

## **10. Delegates Reports an Affiliated Organisation Information**

### **a) Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH)**

MA did not attend this meeting due to Committee training requirements.

The EVH wage negotiation letter was tabled at the start of the meeting.

The Dir, DD and CSA did not take part in discussions or decision making.

The notification recommends a single year deal on salaries - a 4.1% increase on all salary points from 1 April 2022.

Committee agreed to vote for the EVH proposal of a 4.1% increase on all salary points from 1 April 2022. The ballot was signed by the Chairperson, on behalf of Committee, to be returned to the Dir for submission to EVH.

For information purposes, the Dir will bring forward updated budget impact information.

### **b) Glasgow West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF)**

Update as provided in the papers. AD advised Domestic Abuse is currently a prominent topic. Committee noted the update.

### **c) Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)**

No items.

## **11. Governance and Assurance**

### **a) Schedule of External Submissions**

The Dir informed committee that SHR quarterly Covid returns have ended and there is no longer a requirement to submit these after April 2022. The schedule will be updated accordingly.

Committee noted the monitoring report.

### **b) Management Committee Training Plan**

The Short Life Pension Working group next meeting is 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

Training from 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022 with Linda Ewart is now complete. Training topics such as The Scottish Social Housing Charter, Regulatory Standards and Equalities strategy are to be organised in the coming year.

In terms of training delivery, Committee advised they prefer in-person training as well as presentations from external groups.

Committee noted the monitoring report.

### **c) Governance, Recruitment and Succession Planning**

Points raised from the 7<sup>th</sup> March training, regarding Committee recruitment, were discussed. Currently the Co-operatives' committee has 9 members, 2 more than the minimum required. Discussions remain ongoing about recruitment to the Management Committee.

BMcN suggested a recruitment panel to encourage member recruitment.

The Dir advised that external recruitment is a possibility, if numbers fall to 7 and further committee members are not recruited, the SHR may step in and appoint members as this is a potential risk to the Co-operative.

EK suggested that WWHC should engage more in social media platforms to enhance various parts of the organisation.

Committee noted the update with further discussions to follow.

### **d) Register of Interests**

Committee noted both the Register of Interests Word Document and Excel sheet. The Word Document will be published and available to view on WWHC's website. Declarations should be kept up to date throughout the year.

Committee noted the content of the papers.

## **12. Regulation**

### **a) Notifiable events**

There are no open notifiable events. Committee noted the monitoring report.

## **13. Director Report and Targets**

Currently WWHC are operating a closed office with tenant appointments and house visits arranged on an emergency basis. We are looking to move to an open office in the near future with caution as Covid infection rates are high. WWHC staff are remaining at home upon a positive test result/close contact positive test.

Figures regarding Smoke/Heat alarms and EICR inspections will be reported to the SHR. EK questioned if penalties will be incurred for non compliance with new regulations. The DD responded the report to SHR will include

information on all no access cases are well documented and have been as a result of Covid delays.

DM questioned if there will be follow up from the EICR inspections. The DD responded this will follow soon after completion of inspections of the reports. Follow up works will be planned in due course.

Committee noted the update.

## **14. Property services**

### **a) Energy Centre – Electricity supply contract renewal**

Due to the time sensitive and volatile nature of the market, the quote received from the electricity supplier was approved by the Co-operative's office bearers. The Co-operative has instructed Utility Aid to secure a new contract with SSE for a duration of 3 years. The DD advised that the figures were reported at a time of world crises therefore, are high, and that all contracts will commence on 1 April 2022.

A discussion was had surrounding the current supplier of wood chips to the Energy Centre. The DD advised that AMP are currently prioritising existing customers. WWHC fall within this category.

Committee noted the update.

## **15. Tenancy services**

### **a) Arrears monitoring report**

The Dir highlighted the slight increase in arrears figures and reassured Committee that work remains ongoing to action these arrears.

Committee noted the Monitoring report.

### **b) SLC Urgent Housing**

SLC contacted WWHC to request that they commit to provide housing for people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Due to the urgent nature of the request, the Office Bearers were contacted via email on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to approve the request. WWHC have identified 4 properties within the MSF and are awaiting an update from SLC.

Committee noted the update.

## **16. Corporate services**

### **a) Insurance**

The Dir advised that renewals are in progress as the Co-operative tendered in 2021. Committee will be updated when these are complete and there are currently no areas of concern.

Committee noted the update.

### **b) Lease extension – Copier/scanner**

The Multi-function device (MFD), currently used in the office, lease is due to expire in May 2022. WWHC have received an offer to extend the lease for three years with a total saving of £650.88. If extended, WWHC would save further money on procurement costs.

Committee approved the request to extend the office MFD lease for three years.
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### **c) Digital boost grant**

This item was tabled at the start of the meeting. Papers were distributed to all those in attendance.

The ICT infrastructure has reached, or is nearing, its end of useful life and will need to be replaced over the next 18 – 24 months. WWHC applied for Digital Boost Development Grant from the Scottish Government. WWHC's application was approved for 50% of the cost of an approved project.

We are able to use the grant funding for 50% of the first year's ICT Support contract (excluding VAT), which Committee have already approved.

In addition to ICT support, we requested funding toward the cost of additional hardware and software which provides significant improvement to our ICT infrastructure and will increase the resilience of the organisation, the security and availability of the data, which will in turn allow us to provide a more efficient service to tenant/members.

Our server has reached its end of useful life and will need replaced within the next 12 months.

Funding has been accessed to offset the cost of upgrading however, there will be a projected budget overspend of around £22,300.

The grant funding is only available to us now and only for the specific items detailed.

It would be prudent use of resources and provide tenant/members with value for money to proceed with the project.

Costs are increasing across all sectors and if we were to delay the project the cost would increase significantly and would not be supported by grant funding.

Committee approved the £22,300 overspend of the ICT/Computer budget for the year 2022/2023.

#### **d) Donation Schedule**

Committee noted the reported information.

### **17. Health & Safety**

#### **a) Minutes of meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021**

Committee noted the minutes tabled for information.

#### **b) Minutes of meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

The DD notified committee that H&S inspections and audit items have now been carried out.

Committee noted the update.

### **18. Policy Review**

#### **a) Enlargement and stock acquisition**

The policy principles and requirements are covered in WWHC's Asset Management Strategy, Development Strategy and Business Plan therefore a further separate policy is not required.

Committee approved the retirement of the Enlargement and Stock Acquisition Policy.

#### **b) Domestic Abuse Policy (new policy)**

The Scottish Government's consultation paper, A New Deal for Tenants, (Rented Sector Strategy) reminds us about the social housing tenancy provisions in the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021, which, when implemented by the end of 2022, will give social landlords greater control to end a perpetrator's interest in a joint tenancy, transfer tenancies to a victim/survivor, and take a more proactive role in supporting and protecting victims/survivors of domestic abuse.

Although not directly related to this draft rented sector strategy, during 2022 there is expected to be a greater focus on social landlords' approach to domestic abuse.

Committee approved the Domestic Abuse policy for implementation and for WWHC to sign up to Make A Stand.

## **19. East Whitlawburn**

### **a) Legal Agreement**

The DD advised that on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 the missives were concluded.

### **b) Loan Finance**

On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022, WWHC submitted a claim for £4.59 million Scottish Government grant finance to be received and for this to be transferred to SLC when required. Committee reminded to submit biographies as required by the lender.

Committee noted the update.

### **c) Road Construction**

Visits to the new site for Committee members are to be arranged in the near future. Update report at next meeting.

The DD informed that the cleaning of gable end of properties has been postponed due to EW construction works. If completed at this stage, the contractor would have to return sooner in the year to clean again.

Committee noted the update.

## **20. AOCB**

EK informed that a bollard has been removed between Staffa Road and Iona Place.

BMcN requested that workmen who enter tenant properties wear shoe guards.

The DD noted both items and will be passed to Property Services.

## **21. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 6.30pm