

**Minutes of West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative  
Management Committee Meeting of  
26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 6.30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting held via MS Teams**

**In attendance:**

**WWHC Committee:**

A Anderson (AA), Chairperson	R Alexis (RA), co-opted
S Anderson (SA), Vice Chairperson	E Kerr (EK)
A Duffin (AD), Secretary	D Murphy (DM)
M Alcorn (MA)	P Welsh (PW)

Meeting is quorate.

**WWHC Staff:**

S Marshall, Acting Director (ADir)  
S Paton, Project Officer (PO) (Minutes)

**1. Apologies**

B McNicol (BMcN)

**2. Confidentiality**

The Vice Chairperson reminded Committee of the importance of confidentiality.

**3. Declaration of Interests**

The ADir declared an interest under item 23 (d) Director's Post.

**4. Previous Minutes**

**a) Management Committee meeting of 29th March 2021**

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

**b) Signing of Minutes**

The Chairperson will pass the signed minutes of the previous meeting to the PO for filing.

**5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

No matters arising.

**Actions from Previous Meeting Report**

The Secretary asked for clarification on the rent increase. The ADir confirmed that Committee agreed to a 1% rent increase for 2021/22 which has been implemented. The Committee noted the progress with actions contained in the report.

**6. Sub Committee Minutes and Referrals**

None.

**7. Correspondence**

**a) Information**

None.

**b) Decision**

The ADir reported that the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF) was holding their Summer regeneration conference on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021 via Zoom. The Secretary will attend the conference and the PO will book and confirm.

**8. Delegates Reports and Affiliated Organisation Information**

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

MA reported that the EVH AGM was held on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021. EVH are in a good financial position and events, conferences and other core activities have been affected by the pandemic.

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

The Secretary noted that there was no GWSF meeting this month.

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

None.

**9. Governance and Assurance**

**a) Management Committee Training Plan**

The Committee noted the contents of the training plan. The health and safety refresher training was completed in April.

Happy to Translate training using interpreters is ongoing. The PO will email those Committee members who have still to complete the training.

The Committee agreed that the next training session would be an in-house refresher on Freedom of Information.
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**b) Notifiable Events**

Noted.

**c) Schedule of External Submissions 2020/21**

The Committee noted that the Covid 19 monitoring report went to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This report will be submitted quarterly for 2021/22.

**d) Review of Rules**

The ADir reminded the Committee that the current 2013 model rules needs to be updated to the 2020 SFHA model rules with co-operative amendments. This work was postponed last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the SHR were informed that the rule change will take place this year. Other Registered Social Landlords also postponed the rule change.

The Committee discussed and agreed the most significant changes in the model rules relating to:

- the creation of a discretionary power for the Management Committee to impose a leave of absence when there is a severe breach of the Code of Conduct being investigated
- the creation of a discretionary power for Management Committee in rare circumstances to block a nomination to committee if it was not in the interest of the Co-operative or if there would be a conflict of interests in that person becoming a Management Committee member

In addition, Committee noted the practical changes made by SFHA which aim to make the rules more user friendly.

Committee considered each of the possible optional amendments as follows:

The Committee agreed to further consider the inclusion of the optional amendment to allow for the direct appointment of up to 5 Committee members (or a lesser number) to allow the strengthening of Committee between AGM's other than by co-option, or by filling a casual vacancy, subject to legal advice.

Existing rule 20.1 requires 45 members are present or represented at the venue for an AGM / SGM to proceed. The Committee agreed to reduce the quorum number at AGM's and SGM's to 25 subject to legal advice.

The Committee agreed that WWHC is proud to be a member controlled fully mutual housing co-operative and did not wish to extend Committee membership to allow staff members to be a part of the governing body as Executive Committee members.

The Committee did not agree to the optional amendment to prohibit related Governing Body members from serving on the Committee.

The Co-operative's policy on payments and benefits does not permit payment to Committee Members other than for Committee expenses as detailed in the Committee Expenses Policy. The Committee did not agree to the optional amendment to allow payments to Committee members.  
The Committee agreed include the optional amendment to allow virtual attendance at AGMs should physical meetings not be possible at a future point

The ADir reported that the UK Government currently has no plan to renew the legislation which allowed for virtual AGMs in 2020 which may create issues for RSLs which have not already changed their rules to allow for virtual AGMs.

GWSF plan to liaise further with the SHR and SFHA over this issue in the coming weeks as it could be that we will reach a point where actual meetings are not permitted, but with no legal alternative available. WWHC will seek legal advice on this.

Following the Committee decisions above, the draft of the rules will be submitted to TC Young for legal advice and any further comment which will be subject of a further report on rule amendments for further consideration.

**10. Regulation**

**a) Monthly Covid Return to Scottish Housing Regulator (Mar 21)**

The ADir advised that there has been a reduction in rent arrears due to an increase in levels of discretionary housing payments to tenants.

**b) Annual Return on the Charter**

The ADir assured Committee that the preparation for the ARC is progressing well. The ARC will be brought to the May meeting for approval for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the end of May.

**11. Director Report and Targets**

The ADir said that progress was being made to have more staff in the office line with Scottish Government guidance.

The Finance Officer will start on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Finance Assistant has formally notified the Co-operative that their date of retirement will be 31st July 2021.

Work being carried out within properties are now resuming including the insulation works which restarted today.

**12. Tenancy Services**

**a) Arrears Monitoring Report**

The Committee noted the report and that the gross arrears figures decreased because of discretionary housing payments. The arrears monitoring report will have the arrears write off included next month so the figures will reflect this.

**b) Housing Sub Committee - Allocations Policy Review**

The ADir reminded Committee that an allocations working party with staff and committee had been on hold in the last year. Committee agreed to arrange a Housing Sub Committee to consider the reviewed policy before the consultation stage.

**13. Property Services**

**a) Asset Management Software**

The Committee approved the recommendation to purchase a licence for the Hub from the John Martin Partnership for ongoing monitoring and updating of our asset management data.

## **b) Landlords Health and Safety Consultant - Procurement**

On review of the report on the tender process, Committee agreed the appointment of Housing H&S Compliance UK Ltd to carry out the independent review of WWHC's landlord health and safety.

### **14. Corporate Services**

#### **a) Five Year Financial Projections**

The 5 year projections submitted annually to SHR were presented for approval. The figures are taken from the recently updated 30 year projections approved by Committee which include the East Whitlawburn development proposals. The staff cost to turnover ratio in year 0 is calculated automatically by the SHR website, and is wrong due to a program error. This has been resolved by the SHR.

The Committee approved the 5 year projections for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

### **15. Complaint Handling Procedure**

#### **a) 2020/21 Complaint outcome report**

The Committee noted the report. There were 28 complaints last year and 25 were dealt with within timescales. One had been escalated to the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) but they concluded that WWHC had acted reasonably and there was no further action.

The learning from complaints highlighted the importance of maintaining good communications. Committee noted these figures will be included in the ARC.

#### **b) Internal Audit Report**

The Committee noted that Internal Audit report on the complaints handling reported that there were sound controls in place and procedures were being followed. There were no recommendations to improve.

### **16. Policy Reviews**

#### **a) Unacceptable Actions Policy**

The ADir explained that this is a new policy in line with the SPSO's complaints handling procedure. The ADir said that staff had been consulted and they were happy with the proposed policy and timescales.

The Committee approved the Unacceptable Actions Policy.

#### **b) Housing Alarms Policy**

This policy is due for review with no changes proposed. The equality impact assessment has been added.

The Committee approved the Housing Alarms Policy.

**17. East Whitlawburn**

**a) Legal agreement**

The ADir has reported that the draft turnkey agreement and terms set out by South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) terms was not acceptable. The Co-operative's solicitor is working with SLC to progress a suitable agreement.

**b) Loan Finance**

The Committee noted that the loan finance tendering process will be completed before the legal agreement is signed.

**18. Internal Audit Tender**

The ADir reported that the current Internal Auditor's contract had been extended previously and there is no room to extend it further. The Committee noted the timeline for the Internal Audit tender. The tender will be conducted through Public Contracts Scotland on a 60/40 quality price ratio with a desktop quality assessment. Internal Auditors recommended by other RSL's will be invited to tender

<p>The Committee approved the tender process for Internal Audit services and the ADir will bring the recommendation report back to committee once tenders have been received.</p>
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**19. Freedom of Information 2020/21 Summary Report**

The Committee noted that 9 FOI requests were received during the year and that all required response times were met.

**20. Any Other Competent Business**

There was no other business.

**21. Date and Time of Next Meeting 24th May 2021 at 6.30 p.m.**

The Committee noted the time and date of the next meeting.

**Confidential Items**

**22.**

[REDACTED]

**23. Staffing**

**a) Finance Officer**

This item has been covered under Director's report.

**b) Concierge Officer Post**

This item has been covered under Director's report.

**c) Training Request**

Committee approved the training request.

**d) Director's Post**

The Secretary confirmed with Committee that interviews are scheduled for 27/04/2021.

**The meeting closed at 7.05 p.m.**