

## HJALTLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (Policy) HELD AT HJALTLAND OFFICES – 6 NORTH NESS AND VIA ZOOM ON THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024 AT 6.00 P.M.

Present: Colin Nicholson (**CN**) (Chair)  
Andrew Lyall (**AL**)  
Emma Perring (**EP**)  
Jeff Goddard (**JG**)  
Neil Manson (**NM**)  
Pamela Shead (**PS**) – via ZOOM  
Theo Smith (**TS**)

In Attendance: Bryan Leask (**BL**) (Chief Executive)  
Ian Bray (**IB**) (Head of Housing & Customer Services)  
Susan Gray (**SG**) (Head of Finance & Corporate Services)  
Kim Laidlaw (**KL**) (Corporate Services Officer)  
Liz Sinclair (**LS**) (Health & Safety Manager)  
Jennifer Tait (**JT**) (Housing Admin Assistant)  
Mark Henry (**MH**) (Housing Admin Assistant)

#### 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Agnes Tallack, Bob McGeady, Karen Eunson, Lorna Willis and Lucy Lawson. Jim Anderson did not attend.

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The Chair asked for any declarations of conflict of interest in the evening's business, there were no declarations made.

#### 3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### 3.1 Management Committee Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024

CN went through the minutes of the Committee meeting, held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, after which Members **APPROVED** the minutes on a motion by NM, seconded by AL.

**APPROVED**

##### 3.2 Finance & Audit Sub-committee Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

CN then went through the minutes for the Finance & Audit Sub-committee meeting, held on 6<sup>th</sup> March, after which Members **APPROVED** the minutes on a motion by NM, seconded by CN.

**APPROVED**

#### 4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

#### 5 ADMINISTRATION

##### 5.1 Chief Executive Report

BL began by presenting Members of the Management Committee with a report on the sector and the issues facing Hjalmland at the moment. The main body of the report was the findings of the latest Scottish House Condition Survey, recently released by the Scottish Government. Highlights of the findings included:

- Fuel poverty is up, especially in remote and rural areas
- The condition of social housing properties, with regards to mould & damp, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) failure rate (41%) and excess bedrooms

- Energy efficiency and carbon emissions, with 52% of Scottish homes rated as EPC band C or better
- Heating satisfaction, with 16% of all households find that their heating keeps them warm enough in winter only sometimes and 5% find it never keeps them warm
- Energy consumption, with 74% of the modelled household energy demand was from space heating

BL finished off by commenting that there has been a 46% reduction in new build house starts in Scotland, which is a fairly significant level, which will probably only get worse. AL queried if there was enough contractor resources in Shetland to continue building at the level required. BL replied that the Council was going to bring together various elements of the construction industry in Shetland, to discuss the various issues and any possible work-arounds.

After an in-depth discussion, Members **NOTED** the report.

**NOTED**

## 5.2 Use of Seal

There has been no use of the seal during the period.

Members **NOTED** the report.

**NOTED**

## 5.3 Health & Safety Report

LS took over, providing Members with an update on health and safety, and assurance in the Associations activities for health and safety for February 2024.

Highlights of the report included:

- The Global Risk Register
- The figures for mould and damp issues and repairs are very good
- There has been an incident in Scalloway, of the fire alarm sounding continuously in the building. This was after the installation of a new system, which was more sensitive than the previous system. This issue has now been resolved.

IB commented that there were schemes, especially in the older stock, where there were repeat issues with mould and damp, but interventions there, have made a difference.

After some discussion, Members **NOTED** the report.

**NOTED**

## 5.4 Bad Debt Write Offs

IB then presented Members with the proposed bad debt write offs for 2023/24. IB informed the Committee that every effort has been made to reclaim the debts, but in these cases, it hadn't been possible IB finished by commenting that, even though these debts were written off, they can be reinstated, should the debtors resurface.

After some discussion, Members **APPROVED** the bad debt write offs on a motion by JG, seconded by TS.

**APPROVED**

## 5.5 Audit Plan

SG took over, providing Members with the proposed Audit Plan, explaining that this has already been to the Finance & Audit Sub-committee for discussion, but the Sub-committee can't approve it, it has to be the full Committee. Areas to be covered in the audit are mostly the same as in previous years with the addition of income recognition, which requires that auditors presume that there is a fraud risk present in revenue recognition unless it can otherwise be disproved. The fees are also covered in the plan. SG finished by commenting that Irene Hambleton has now done the requisite number of years as the Principal Auditor with RSM, with Kelly Adams taking over.

After some discussion, Members **APPROVED** the report, on a motion by JG, seconded by NM.

**APPROVED**

## 5.6 Standing Orders

BL then rounded off this section of the agenda by presenting the proposed new Standing Orders, taking into consideration the changes in Committees and Sub-committees. BL explained that the draft version had been up before Members last month, when it couldn't be approved, but now it can be.

NM commented the new Standing Orders looked good and any changes or tweaks can be made going forward. BL reminded members that standing orders can only be updated once a year.

After this brief discussion, Members **APPROVED** the new Standing Orders on a motion by NM, seconded by AL. **APPROVED**

## 6 POLICY UPDATES

### 6.1 Policy Update Report

BL followed on and presented Members with a report, seeking approval for updates to various policies. The updates to the various policies are stated in their agenda item. After a brief discussion around some of the changes, Members **APPROVED** the policies contained in the Policy Update Report on a motion by EP, seconded by AL. **APPROVED**

#### 6.1.1 Rent Policy

This policy is updated annually, in line with the approved rent increase for the coming year.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.2 Business Continuity Plan

Track changes used for updates, includes notifiable events.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.3 ICT Strategy

Track changes used for updates. Increase information regarding IT and Cyber, updated action plan.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.4 Complaints Policy

Full review to reflect complaints leaflet.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.5 Value for Money

Date reviews no changes.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.6 Whistleblowing

Date reviews no changes.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.7 Code of Conduct

Date reviews no changes.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

#### 6.1.8 Pets Policy

Updated with new legislation regarding dangerous dogs i.e. XL Bully dogs.

Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

## 6.2 Development Policies

### 6.2.1 Consultation Policy

Date review and minor change.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.2 Defects Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.3 Development Risk Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.4 Development Strategy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.5 Dispute Resolution Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.6 Energy Efficiency Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.7 Environmental Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.8 Handover Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

### 6.2.9 Land Banking Policy

Date reviews no changes.  
Previously **APPROVED** in Item 6.1.

**APPROVED**

EP left the meeting at 7:00pm.

## 7 STRATEGY

### 7.1 Internal Business Plan

BL continued by presenting Members with the proposed Internal Business Plan (BP), commenting that this was probably the most important document for the Association, laying out the strategy, viability, financial projections, development, risks and proposed budgets for the next 5 years. BL commented that large chunks of the BP have already been before the Committee and approved, this was the whole document being presented for overall approval.

BL then went through various sections of the BP with the Members, focussing on development plans, long-term viability and risk management. NM suggested that there should be an additional section, with something more specific on tenant health & safety. BL agreed, commenting that the SHR would be focussing more and more on this, so it would be prudent to include it in the main document for the Association.

SG informed Members that the new pay award has just come through from EVH, which is for 6%. Senior managers had budgeted for 5.5% in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the BP, this wasn't a significant difference, so wouldn't really change anything going forward. After a very lengthy and robust discussion, with various Members commenting that there had clearly been a lot of time and effort put into the BP, which was an excellent piece of work, the Internal Business Plan was **APPROVED** on a motion by NM, seconded by JG. **APPROVED**

8    **AOB**

BL and SG finished off the meeting by informing the Committee that the Level of Engagement for the coming year has been received from the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), with the Association's level being low. Basically what this means is that the SHR will be happy as long as all the statutory reports are submitted.

9    **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

- 9.1    Audit & Risk Sub-committee – **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 @ 5:30pm**
- 9.2    Finance Sub-committee – **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May @ 1pm**
- 9.3    Management Committee – **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2024 @ 6pm**
- 9.4    Management Committee – **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 @ 6pm**

The meeting closed at 7:30pm

.....Chairman