

CORDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

**MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 8th DECEMBER 2020 AT 3pm
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Present Martin Walker (Chair)
Margaret McCallion
Veronica Hamilton
Lilian Peters
Gary Wilson
Graham Logan

Apologies Christopher Paton

In Attendance Leigh Grubb Director of Finance and Governance, Caledonia
Andrew Kilpatrick Director of Assets, Caledonia
Barry Johnstone Director of People, Caledonia
Jenna Noble Head of Frontline Services
Carol-Ann Burns Governance Officer, Caledonia, Minutes

Leave of absence Aileen Overend

103/20 Apologies

Apologies were received from Christopher Paton.

104/20 Declaration of Interest

There were no declaration of interests.

105/20 Draft Minutes of Management Committee held on 20th October 2020

The members asked about correspondence to tenants regarding the delays with planned maintenance such as kitchen replacements. The Director of Assets advised the website was updated to inform tenants of the delay. Members advised they had requested for tenants to be communicated with via various methods as not all had access to online services. The Director of Assets apologised for this and advised this had not been recorded in the action points but would now progressed. The members advised they had not received a summary of the grounds maintenance contract, the Director of Assets advised this was also omitted in the action points and would provide this information.

The minutes were proposed by Margaret McCallion and seconded by Lilian Peters

106/20 Matters Arising

None.

107/20 Head of Frontline Services Report

The Head of Frontline Services provided the Management Committee with updates on the following;

- Business Continuity Plan – Update
- Service Delivery/Performance
- Cordale October performance
- Comparison October performance;
- Staff Welfare
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2021
- Charter Self-Assessment 2019-2020
- Waterside Update
- Privacy Notice for Governing Body Members

The Head of Frontline Services advised that the Customer Service team are working on providing updated figures for contractor statistics. An error has been identified in the recording of made safe and completion dates.

There has been a significant increase in arrears cases and Neighbourhood Officers are working closely with tenants to manage this. The rent loss is primarily at Waterside View as this attracts higher service charges. The Head of Frontline Services advised backdated payments due from housing benefit are also affecting the rent loss figure.

The members discussed the importance of correct reporting of contractor made safe and completion dates to allow for accurate reporting of targets as this is an annual return on the charter requirement (ARC). The Head of Frontline Services advised she would clarify the void rent loss and report back to members.

The members discussed 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 of the report. They expressed concern over 96% rental income collected and whilst this is challenging times, this figure was concerning as a high proportion of tenants receive benefits to pay for rent. The members also discussed the support to vulnerable tenants and tenants of who have lost their income due to the pandemic. The members discussed the need to have a plan to reduce the debt otherwise we run the risk of this sliding into years 2 and 3 of the budget. The Head of Frontline Services agreed there has been an increase in the local area since April and although a proportion can be attributed to housing benefit payments there has been a significant drop in rental income received. The members discussed the benefit of having detailed analysis to identify areas of concern and produce a localised plan to address this issues. The Head of Frontline Service agreed this could be made available to members.

The members asked if new and existing tenants have access to support, the Head of Frontline Services advised Neighbourhood Officers provide advice and guidance to new and existing tenants more so during this time online and over telephone. The members discussed the importance that tenants are not being missed because they do not have access to online services.

The Director of Finance & Governance agreed with the members over their concern with the rental income figure however in term of financial consequences this is still

within the approved budget of 6% rental loss notwithstanding the situation will continually be monitored.

The Management Committee **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the contents of the report.

108/20 Business Planning Assumptions

Confidential.

109/20 Schedule of Meetings 2021

The Director of Finance & Governance presented the members with a proposed schedule of meetings for 2021 and explained the rationale for the proposed scheduling of committee meetings which it was believed would have efficiency gains and result in more timely production of committee reports.

Some members expressed concern to the proposed change of day due to other commitments. The members requested a matrix be produced of member's availability to help inform and come an agreement. The Director of Finance & Governance advised the Governance Officer would liaise with the Chair to facilitate this.

The Management Committee **DISCUSSED** the report and **REQUESTED** a matrix be produced of members availability.

110/20 Development and Planned Maintenance update

Confidential.

111/20 Former Tenant Accounts Write Off Report

The Head of Frontline Services requested approval from the members to write off former tenant rent arrears and credits within their delegated authority in line with the Group Policy on Delegated Authority 2020 and the provisions within the Group Arrears Management Policy 2019.

The decision to write off these cases has been taken because the prospect for recovery of the arrears is considered to be very unlikely or the return of credit funds is not feasible or it was housing benefit overpayments which the local authority have not recovered nor currently intend to. In line with the Association's Arrears Management Policy, these debts will be reactivated and recovery action will recommence if the whereabouts of the former tenant becomes known and if the local authority contact us in the future regarding any overpayments of housing benefit.

The members discussed the high balance of deceased tenants and the recovery process. The Head of Frontline Services advised she would share the process with the members for recovery of arrears. The process involves the Neighbourhood Officer contacting the tenant 1 month of a missed rent payment and working with the tenant.

The Management Committee **APPROVED** the write off of the former tenant accounts detailed in **Table 1**.

Graham Logan left the meeting.

112/20 People Strategy Update

The Director of People outlined the progress delivering the key themes, while highlighting how Co-vid requires a refocus and reset of priorities.

Overall engagement has increased since the advent of Covid. However, we experienced a decline at the end of the second quarter. The data highlights that across the organisation wellness and personal growth were key metrics that dipped. Accordingly, these are areas which we are targeting for improvement. Meanwhile our ability to segment engagement data helps identify the tailored interventions necessary to improve engagement within specific teams.

The members commended the report and acknowledged the positive culture within the Group.

The Management Committee **NOTED** the report.

113/20 Group Information Risk Management Policy

The Director of Finance & Governance sought comments from members on a new Group Information Risk Management Policy that is to be considered for approval by the Caledonia Management Board on 15 December 2020.

The Director of Finance & Governance advised of a typing error in the cover report.

The members commented positively on the report.

The Management Committee **NOTED** the cover report and **DISCUSSED** and **APPROVED** the draft policy.

114/20 Learning and Development Strategy

The Director of People discussed the Learning and Development Strategy and detailed the link to the Business Plan, while outlining the learning context, describing the key learning and performance needs that shaped the Strategy. The Strategy includes three strategic themes: establishing a continuous learning culture; defining and expanding competencies and leadership development; and developing a Group wide induction plan. The Strategy has included a strong focus on talent management and mentoring, reflecting the Caledonia Board's feedback as to the importance of succession planning when approving the People Strategy in February.

The members had no further questions.

The Management Committee **NOTED** the Learning and Development Strategy.

115/20 AOCB

The members discussed the action plan from their away day and will put on the January agenda for discussion. The Head of Frontline Service advised the Governance Officer has sent the members the updates action plan discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair today for feedback. The members **AGREED** to meet prior to the January meeting to discuss whether or not the action plan and the Stuart Eglinton report should be a combined action plan or remain as two action plans. The Chair will coordinate with the Governance a suitable date to meet prior to the January meeting.

Meeting concluded at 16.20pm

Date of Next Meeting

Date to be confirmed

Signed (Chair):-----

Date: _____