

**Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd.
Minutes of Meeting of Management Board
Held at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 19 January 2022
Via Zoom**

Present: S. MacQuire (SMacQ) Chair; A. Tuach (AT) Vice-Chair; E. McCurdy (EM); A Cameron (AC); G. Mulvaney (GM); F. Craig (FC); C. Chalk (CS)

In attendance: A. Murphy (AM) Chief Executive Officer; R. Murray (RM) Housing Services Manager; D. Wilson (DW) Corporate Services Manager; H. Maitz (HM) Finance Manager; P. Sweeney (PS) Asset Manager; F. McDonald (FMD).

<p>1. Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>SMacQ welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed Fiona Craig to her first Board Meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from: J. Smillie (JS); G. Morrison (GM); S. Aitken (SA); B. Walker (BW).</p> <p>No Declarations of Interest were made.</p>	<p>ACTION BY</p>
<p>2. Minutes of Previous Meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 24 November 2021 were proposed as a true record by AT and seconded by EC.</p>	
<p>3. Matters Arising</p> <p>Page 1 - under 'Disposals' AM gave an update detailing that Allan Harris has been appointed for the subsequent sale of the disposal properties. AM confirmed that there has already been some interest in the properties and PS will take the lead on this.</p> <p>Page 2 – AM gave an update that we are still waiting on the signage for the streets at the Harbour. In the meantime, he confirmed that we have placed our own engraved signs at the main entrances to each block.</p> <p>DW advised the Board that the highlighted areas in yellow of the Board minutes are the areas that are redacted due to confidentiality before the minutes are published on our website.</p>	
<p>4. Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>a) Development Update</p>	

Dumbarton Harbour

AM advised the Board that planning has been approved for the viewing point at the Harbour and is hopeful to have it installed around the 3rd week in April 2022. AM also confirmed that further details for securing the benches have been requested by the Council. He is in the process of collating the details and is hopeful the benches will be installed imminently,

AM proposed to the Board that we approach the Scottish Government to arrange an official opening of the Harbour Development around about May/June 2022.

The Board **approved** the proposal to approach the Scottish Government for an official opening of the Harbour Development.

Jeanie Deans

AM confirmed to the Board we have a finance approval in principle from the Scottish Government for the grant for the site. However, AM advised that there are some planning issues with the site in terms of offsite drainage, and parking which we are waiting to hear back from Argyll & Bute Council Planning; we are hopeful these will not present an issue. AM stated that we hope to be on-site for March 2022. AM confirmed that through discussions with FMD we will also be looking at external finance.

Golfhill Drive

AM advised we are awaiting a cost plan update for the future development; however, we already have the Scottish Government finance in place. AM also advised that the site will be of 8 1-bedroom properties. AM confirmed that through discussions with FMD we will also be looking at external finance for this site.

18th Tee

AM envisages that the 18th Tee will be the next development after the above that we will go ahead with.

A conversation took place surrounding the proposed special needs housing (people with autism) and that all the different agencies should be involved and captured within the contractual agreement. AM confirmed that the development consultant would ensure this was the case with specialist housing provision.

GMu asked for reassurance that we are speaking with other agencies such as social work and the Health and Social Care Partnership in terms of the supported housing to be developed, especially if we found that developing specialist housing was becoming too expensive. AM confirmed that we are working closely with the Council and the Social Care Partnership and that we will employ a pragmatic approach from the

planning stage to ensure that we explore all options to ensure that we develop properties that are required.

AT asked if the housing will be stand-alone or if there will be supported housing requiring external support. AM confirmed that they will be stand-alone housing. AT also asked what additional costs would come into place for these types of houses. AM advised that the housing spec is different for these types of houses such as additional soundproofing, however, AM confirmed that all additional funding will be looked at.

All other future Developments

AM advised that in terms of the 30-year projections at the moment we will be focused on the Jeanie Deans, Golfhill Drive and 18th Tee developments.

b) Board Away Day

AM advised that due to the current restrictions in place by the Scottish Government we are looking to postpone the next Board Away Day scheduled for February. AM proposed that in order not to lose track of Board training that we have a 1-hour training sessions in the evening between now and March to cover development, procurement and succession planning.

GMu suggested that for Board members who can't make the training the zoom session could be recorded and circulated to all Board members. DW detailed that these could be recorded and shared.

The board **approved** for evening training to be held via Zoom.

b i) Community Links Feedback

AM confirmed that we are arranging a training session with the staff, Community Links will then take the feedback from the Board and Staff, and feedback on suggestions going forward.

b ii) Tenant Information Service Feedback

AM advised that Sharon from Tenant Information Service (TIS) will meet with staff on 9 February 2022, AM will also arrange for Sharon to meet with staff from Housing Services that will be the contacts for TP and with the tenants from the Scrutiny Panel.

GMu asked as to why we are taking forward these recommendations from TIS when we as an Association are above the Scottish average for tenant satisfaction. AM confirmed that although we have high tenant satisfaction tenant interaction is low, therefore, we were unable to get tenants to create a Tenant Participation strategy. AM confirmed that he is hopeful that this service will help with tenant participation going forward.

<p>5. Finance</p> <p>a) Draft Budget Report 2022-23</p> <p>HM took the Board through the report. She gave a brief overview of how the Draft Budget is compiled. HM confirmed that each manager looks at their own section and provides assumptions going forward detailing what their anticipated spend is going to be and also the spend that has not happened in that year and decides if this is required to be carried into the next year. HM confirmed once each manager has looked at their respective budget, it is then passed onto Finance for the final checks to take place. HM reminded the Board that there may be some changes to the figures on the final budget which will be brought to the Board in March.</p> <p>HM advised that the Association’s financial ratios are at reasonable levels and the higher debt per unit ratio results from the continuing development programme and is not a concern at this point.</p> <p>AT asked in terms of our current loans and future loans if we are expecting the interest rates to increase and will this affect us in any material way. FMD confirmed that the Bank of England’s current base rate is 0.25% and we are assuming an increase to around 1%. FMD confirmed that there is an element in the budget for 22/23 for an increase however it won’t have a major impact and will then be built into the Associations long term projects.</p> <p>GMu asked with regards to the bad debts why this has almost halved throughout the years? HM confirmed that this is due to the rent arrears which have come down significantly throughout the years.</p> <p>GMu also queried why the professional fees have gone down? HM confirmed this is with regards to a reduction in Board Away Days and less work using consultancy.</p> <p>GMu requested if in future we can have the forecast outturn column as well as the previous year’s budget to give a clearer comparison. HM confirmed she will look at it and see if this can be implemented for the final budget in March.</p> <p>The Board noted this report.</p>	
<p>6. Corporate Services</p> <p>a) Staff Equalities Survey</p> <p>DW gave the Board an update on the recent Staff Equalities Survey. He confirmed that to meet the requirements of the Assurance Statement, as set by the Scottish Housing Regulator, we are required to carry out an internal, and external survey, collating data on equalities.</p>	

<p>GMu queried what happens with the information that is collated and also had a concern that as we only have 23 staff members it would be easier to identify individuals. DW detailed to the Board the process used to collate the information, which ensures staff information remains separate and prevents identification. He detailed that the information may not provide any findings that the Board may reflect on with regards to recruitment, as it does reflect a small number of people. He did however confirm with the Board that our recruitment process has been independently scrutinised both for Investors in People and Disability Confident and he hoped that this paper continues to provide the Board with assurance that we are following best practices. AM detailed that we have been similarly asked to look at tenant profiling using similar questions, but we are awaiting sector-wide feedback on how to approach this before we begin this process. AM would question the need for such detailed information about our tenants.</p>	
<p>7. Asset Management</p> <p>a) Asset Management Report</p> <p>PS gave a comprehensive presentation covering the works of the Asset Management Team, this included an update on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement • EESSH • SHQS • Reactive repairs service • Cyclical Works • Major works • Legislation • Gateway System • Insurance Work • Medical Adaptations <p>SMacQ enquired how we were progressing with changes to smoke detection legislation. PS detailed that we were aware of the changes to the tolerable standards of the Housing Scotland act 1987. The Asset Team have picked this up, covering it in our procurement contract, and we are addressing the few outstanding no access cases.</p> <p>PS highlighted to the Board that material costs are beginning to increase and this will impact on contracts costs. He also highlighted the new software (Gateway Systems) which allows for the remote testing of smoke alarms, which allows for saving for the Association as well as being an enhanced safety feature. AT enquired if the system details if an alarm is going off, and PS confirmed that it does.</p> <p>The presentation was noted by the Board.</p>	
<p>8. Housing Services</p>	

<p>a) Annual Rent Review Consultation</p> <p>RM confirmed that the rental income is the amount detailed in HM's earlier report. He took the Board through the report: covering the background, the proposed increase, and the rental income generated by this. RM asked for Board to hold a special meeting on 9 February 2022 to consider the survey responses and to agree on the final increase amount. This was agreed and shall be hosted by Zoom at 6 pm. RM will circulate a paper in advance.</p> <p>The Board agreed to consult tenants on a 4.2% rent increase.</p> <p>At this point, PS left the meeting and an IT issue resulted in disconnection for all present. The meeting was reconvened, but EM and AC were unable to reconnect.</p>	
<p>9. Items Raised by the Chair</p> <p>a) Community Support Fund The Chair raised the matter of the Community Support Fund and requested the Boards views on the renewal of this Policy. It was agreed that feedback should be sought from board and staff members, then following this, a separate meeting agreed to review this Policy.</p> <p>At this point, DW raised with the Chair that the meeting had reached two hours. Those present members all agreed to extend the meeting, in line with rule 36, until its completion.</p> <p>It was agreed that AM /HM would collate suggestions from staff and SMacQ would collate the same from the Board; on completion Board representatives and AM/HM and staff could discuss the future running of the community support fund.</p> <p>b) Leave of Absence The Board agreed to extend a leave of absence to Board Member Julie Smillie.</p>	
<p>10. New Policies 10.a.1 Abandoned Properties Policy</p> <p>The Board agreed the Abandoned Properties Policy.</p>	
<p>11. A.O.C.B DW detailed to the Board, in his role as DPO, that we have received a Freedom of Information request, and following consultation with our solicitors, we shall be replying to this in full.</p>	
<p>12. Date of next meeting – 23 February 2022</p>	

