

HEBRIDEAN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Board

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 1 November 2007 @ 6.00pm

Held in HHP's Boardroom, Stornoway

Presentation by Jacqui Watt, Chief Executive, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)

Jacqui Watt gave an overview of SFHA's re-organisation and what HHP can expect from them in the year ahead.

The re-organisation of SFHA saw the closure of the Edinburgh Office and a new staff structure. SFHA is currently working on improving communication with and networking between its Members, MSPs and Local Authorities. It is also working hard to ensure that Housing Associations' voices are heard and is now represented on the Scottish Government's Housing Supply Task Force which will be feeding back into the consultation process in relation to the Green Paper - Firm Foundations: The Future of Housing in Scotland.

The SFHA are offering new services such as Public Relations, Mediation, Business Strategy Development, help with the structuring of Tenant Satisfaction Questionnaires and Graphic Design Services. HHP will also have a Member of the SFHA team allocated to them to assist with Good Practice Guidance.

George Lonie thanked Ms Watt for her presentation and looked forward to HHP receiving new and improved services from the SFHA.

Agenda Item 1

Present:

George Lonie (Chairperson)
David Blaney (Vice-Chairperson)
George Banks
Archie Campbell
Neil Campbell
Michael Cross

Hamish Fraser
Calum Mackay
Jane Mackinnon
Gerry MacLeod
Charles Nicolson
Kevin Paterson

In Attendance:

Angus Lamont
Ian MacDonald
Dena Macleod
Angus MacNeil
John A MacQuarrie

Tony Pendle
Angus Smith
Catriona MacLeod
Catherine MacIver
Laura MacLeod

Apologies:

Angela Quail

Iain Reid

Agenda Item	Item / Discussion
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
2	<u>Declaration of Interest</u> None.
3a	<u>Minute of Board Meeting of 23 August 2007</u> Approved.
3b	<u>Minute of Board Meeting 20 September 2007</u> Approved.
3c	<u>Minute of Audit & Risk Committee 23 August 2007</u> Approved.
3d	<u>Minute of Resources Committee of 22 August 2007</u> Approved.

Agenda Item	Item / Discussion
3e	<p><u>Minute of Operations Committee of 22 August 2007</u></p> <p>Approved.</p>
3f	<p><u>Note of Resources Committee of 31 October 2007</u></p> <p>The Resources Committee Meeting to review the draft budgets for 2008/09 is now scheduled for 3 December 2007 at 2.00pm.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
3g	<p><u>Note of Operations Committee of 31 October 2007</u></p> <p>Agenda Item 6 - Action Sheet</p> <p>12 December 2006 (8) - The note to be amended to say that the meeting on 6 November 2007 is with the Western Isles Residents Forum.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
3h	<p><u>Note of Audit & Risk Committee of 31 October 2007</u></p> <p>Noted.</p>
4	<p><u>Action Sheet</u></p> <p><u>Housing Green Paper</u></p> <p>HHP's Chief Executive reported on the Housing Green Paper - Firm Foundation: The Future of Housing in Scotland issued by the Scottish Government on 31 October 2007. The paper indicates that Scottish Government wants to change the way New Build is procured by reducing the amount of subsidy paid to Housing Associations. There is an important proposal to encourage competition between Housing Associations and possibly including Local Authorities for New Build Housing Grant monies. This is of great concern as it could result in work being contracted to more competitive mainland companies at a huge cost to the Islands economy. Responses on the Green Paper are to be sent to the Scottish Executive by 25 January 2008.</p> <p><u>Right to Buy Sharing Agreement - 26 April 2007 (13)</u></p> <p>The most recent communication from Communities Scotland advised that they have not changed their original stance on the Right to Buy Sharing Agreement. The Director of Resources is meeting with Dave Nicol and Dave Allan of Communities Scotland on 2 November 2007 to see if they can come to an agreement. Until this is resolved HHP will retain the benefit of the Right to Buy Receipts.</p> <p><u>Circulation of TIG Minutes - 23 August 2007 (16)</u></p> <p>HHP's Approved Minutes are now being forwarded to TIG for circulation to their Members. To keep Board members updated on TIG's interests a request was made for TIG's Minutes to be circulated to HHP's Board Members at future Board Meetings.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a copy of the Housing Green Paper "Homes for the Future" be issued to Board Members; b) A Working Group consisting of HHP Officers and Board Members - Charles Nicolson, Kevin Paterson, David Blaney and George Lonie chaired by the Chief Executive be set up to draft a response to the Scottish Executive; c) the MSP Alasdair Allan be asked to attend the Workgroup Meeting to take HHP's concerns forward; d) a report of the discussion from the Officer and Member Workgroup be brought to the December Board Meeting; and e) a request to be sent to TIG to have their approved Minutes forwarded to HHP for circulating to Board Members.
5	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) next Board Meeting will take place on 13 December 2007 at a time to be confirmed; and b) HHP Christmas Dinner will be held on the evening of 13 December 2007 in the Cabarfeidh Hotel, Stornoway.

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MANAGEMENT	
6	<p><u>Internal Management Plan - Planning Day</u></p> <p>The Planning Day will be facilitated by NewHaven Research. It will be mainly workshop based looking at what the big themes will be for HHP in the next three years.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Chief Executive's actions in commissioning Newhaven Research for the Planning Day on 7 November 2007 be noted.</p>
7	<p><u>Draft Budgets 2008/09</u></p> <p>The Director of Resources advised that the main area of the Draft Budgets requiring review is the Supervision and Management Costs. The Resources Committee will meet as a Workgroup on 3 December 2007 at 2.00pm to identify where savings can be made to bring it in-line with the Business Plan.</p> <p>The Board noted the Draft summary of the 2008/09 Budgets as shown at Appendix 1.</p>
8	<p><u>Annual Financial Strategy</u></p> <p>HHP is required to produce an annual Financing Strategy which should include the matters as listed in the Treasury Management Policy.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Annual Financing Strategy for 2008-09 be presented to the Board in March 2008 for approval; and b) the list of Financial Institutions shown at Appendix 1 be approved as those in which the Partnership can invest funds and include in the Treasury Management Policy Appendix B.
9	<p><u>Service Contracts 2008 - 2011</u></p> <p>The Board were presented with the Process and Timetable for the review and procurement of a number of Service Delivery Contracts with the Comhairle which are due to expire on 11 September 2008.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to review the scope and content of the current contracts in the light of the Partnership's experiences in the first year and its future requirements. The review will also assess potential providers and whether all services require to go to tender; b) to review the monitoring process for the current contracts to ensure that HHP Management and the Board have relevant performance information; c) that following on from the above reviews, to draw up a tender process for required services for the three year period from September 2008; d) to put these services out to tender, taking into account issues of performance, cost and quality whilst striving for best value; and e) the timetable at Appendix 2 be noted and approved.
10	<p><u>Area Committees</u></p> <p>This item was withdrawn with the Chairperson's approval.</p>
11	<p><u>Voids / Hard to Let Properties</u></p> <p>The Board were advised that there are no areas of low demand for rented housing in the Western Isles.</p> <p>There has been a significant increase in tenancy turnover and in some cases restoring the property to a lettable standard can be costly.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the report be noted; and b) a report on issues regarding Change of Tenancies to be brought to a future meeting.

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12	<p><u>Proposed Changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme</u></p> <p>HHP staff were admitted to the Highland Council Pension Fund which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The report outlined proposed changes to the LGPS which are intended to ensure the long term viability of the Scheme.</p> <p>It was agreed that the report be noted.</p>
13	<p><u>Disposal of Land at Kennedy Terrace and Tarbert</u></p> <p>The land referred to in the report is an undevelopable open grass space currently maintained by the Comhairle and is off no benefit to HHP.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Board agree in principle to the sale at a nominal price of £1 to Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar of the area of ground at Kennedy Terrace, Tarbert which is shown on the Plan at Appendix 2 of the report; and b) this sale progresses subject to there being no cost associated with the transaction which will have to be borne by HHP and also subject to the approval of the sale by Communities Scotland in terms of Section 66 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
POLICIES	
14	<p><u>Rental Policy</u></p> <p>This item was withdrawn with the Chairperson's approval.</p>
15	<p><u>Expenses Policy</u></p> <p>Following a review of Officer's subsistence rates by the Comhairle the Partnership have determined that HHP Employee Expenses be aligned to those now paid by the Comhairle.</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Friends and Family and incidental expenditure rate be increased to £30; b) the maximum rate for 24 hours subsistence be increased from £82.53 to £94.82; c) the rate for meals be amended to Breakfast £8, Lunch £12 and Dinner £25.00, based on receipted expenditure not allowances; d) the revised rates be effective from 1 October 2007; and e) A report be brought to the Board early in the New Year on Expenses for Board Members.

Chairperson Mr George Lonie

SIGNED

DATE