hebridean housing partnership

Making our house your home

Agenda Item 3.1

HEBRIDEAN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Board

Minutes of Meeting held in HHP Board Room, Creed Court on Wednesday 12 February 2020 @ 5.30pm

ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES	
1	**Attendance & Apologies** Present: Calum Mackay (Vice Chair); Alex Gardner; David Blaney; Fiona Macleod; Iain Macmillan; Norman A Macdonald; Paul Finnegan; Roddy Mackay; Roddy Nicolson Apologies: Norman Macleod (Chair); Alasdair Mackenzie Staff & Consultants In Attendance: Dena Macleod (Chief Executive); Donald Macleod (Director of Finance & Corporate Services); John Maciver (Director of Operations); Anna Coyle (Head of Executive Office); Jonathan Fairgrieve (Corporate Services Officer – Minute Taker); Angus MacNeil (Assets & Contracts Manager); Katrina Rowlands (Development Manager); Peter O'Donnell (Investment Manager); Angus Smith (Corporate Resources Manager); Isabel Macmillan (Debt Management Officer); Tina Cook (Training & Development Officer) Calum Mackay took the opportunity to pay tribute to former Board Member and Councillor of the Southern Isles, Mr Gerry Macleod who served on our Board from June 2007 – May 2012.
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
2	**Declaration of Interest** Norman Macdonald declared an interest at item 9.3.
3.1	**Minute of Board Meeting 19 November 2019** **The minute of the Board meeting of 19 November 2019 was submitted and approved as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.**
3.2	**Action Sheet** Nothing to report. **The Action Sheet was noted.**
4	**Date of Next Meeting** The date of the next meeting will be 18 March 2020. The Head of Executive Office agreed to send members detail on the upcoming meetings.
5	**Health & Safety** Nothing to Report.
Add. Item	**Rent Consultation Prize Draw** As part of the 2020/21 Rent Consultation tenants were given the opportunity to win £50 credit to their rent account. All respondents names were numbered and the Director of Finance & Corporate Services selected 4 numbers using an onscreen random number generator. **The winners of the Rent Consultation prize draw were:** **Janice Mackay – 8 Beinn Mhor Cottages, Isle of South Uist;** **Ms R – Stornoway, Isle of Lewis;** **Victoria Macinnes – 4 Graham Park, Isle of Lewis; and** **Simon McCathie – 9 Ciosmul Cottages, Isle of Barra.**

ITEMS FOR DECISION	
6.1	**Business Plan Consultation** A consultation document for the 2020 review of the Business Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24 was presented to the Board for review and approval following a Business Planning Day held on 15 January 2020. The Chief Executive advised that key areas of the Business Plan were being consulted on rather than the full Business Plan to encourage responses. Following consultation the updated Business Plan would be reported to the Board on 18 March 2020. Fiona Macleod asked if an additional question could form part of the consultation saying "If there is one thing the Board could do, what would it be?" to give the Board further information for strategic planning. It was agreed this would be included in the consultation. **The Board approved the Business Plan consultation document subject to the additional question being included.**
6.2	**Budgets 2020/21** The Director of Finance & Corporate Services outlined the proposed budgets for 2020/21 including charges for rents, garages and services. The Board were also presented with the Rent & Service Charges Policy following a period of consultation with tenants. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services advised a consultation exercise on the proposed rent increase for 2020/21 ended on 31 January 2020. Two options were given to tenants: • RPI Only increase (2.2%); or • RPI + 0.5% (2.7%) The overriding outcome from the consultation was for the RPI Only option with 77% of respondents voting for this option There were 82 responses to the consultation. The Board were asked to approve an increase of 2.2% to house rents, garage rents and garage sites and all other services and charges. The Board were advised that the consultation responses suggested tenants would find it beneficial to have more time to participate in rent consultations going forward. It was agreed October RPI would be used for future rent consultations. It was also noted that there were a number of positive responses to the consultation. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services advised the proposed budgets were for noting and detailed budgets would be presented to the Board on 18 March 2020 for approval following stress testing and scenario planning by the Finance Working Group on 25 February 2020. The Chief Executive asked the Board to note the proposed rent increase was the one of lowest within the Housing Associations in the Highlands & Islands Group along with Hjatland Housing Assoication. **The Board approved:** **a) the increase of house rents for 2020/21 at RPI Only (2.2%) average increase of £1.75 per week to £81.34, following feedback from the consultation process;** **b) garage rents and garage site rents for 2020/21 be increased by 2.2%;** **c) all other services and charges for 2020/21 be increase by 2.2% in line with RPI at November 2019; and** **d) the Rent & Service Charges Policy.** **The Board noted the detailed budgets be submitted for approval on 18 March 2020 subject to the required funding being in place.**
6.3	**Asset Management Strategy Consultation 2020-24** The Assets & Contracts Manager presented the Asset Management Strategy 2020 - 2024 for consultation with staff, tenants and stakeholders on the following: • our plans to review the long term viability of houses; • our plans for investment in tenants houses and steps being taken to reduce fuel poverty; • issues which stakeholder believe should be prioritised in support of the climate change agenda; • the approach to be taken to new development; and • whether stakeholders believe it is important that we continue to build new homes. Members were advised the Asset Management Strategy was centred around guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator and incorporated current Climate Change agendas. The Assets & Contracts Manager advised that the strategy had been considered at the Business Planning Day on 15 January 2020 and updates had been made following this. Members were also advised the Asset Management Strategy would be presented for the Board for approval, following consultation. **The Board approved the Asset Management Strategy 2020-24 for consultation.**
6.4	**Management Report to 31 December 2019** The Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the Management Report for the month ended 31 December 2019. The Board were asked to note the Management Report and approve savings of £104K on interest be vired to reserves.

	The Director of Finance & Corporate Services explained the main changes from the previous report were a savings on consultancy fees and legal costs. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services advised that budgets are set assuming that properties are completed and occupied by a certain time. A delay in the development programme has contributed to a saving on interest. Members were advised that monies not drawn down in this financial year on development would be drawn down in the next. The Chief Executive assured members that slippage in the development programme is accounted for in our 30 year financial plans. **The Board:** **a) noted the management information at 31 December 2019; and** **b) approved further savings of £104K on interest be vired to reserves.**
POLICIES	
7.1	**<u>Health & Safety Policy</u>** The Corporate Resources Manager presented the Health & Safety Policy to the Board for approval following the annual review. There were no proposed changes to the Health & Safety Policy. **The Board approved the:** **a) Health & Safety Policy; and** **b) Safety Testing and Risk Assessment Programme.**
7.2	**<u>Fraud Policy & Fraud Checklist</u>** The Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the Fraud Policy and Annual Fraud Checklist for consideration and approval. Following an internal audit in August 2019, the policy was updated and recommendations from the audit were taken into account. Members were advised the main changes to the policy following the audit were: • updating job titles that have changed since 2016; • reference to the whistleblowing policy; and • clarity given with regards to the reporting limit on fraudulent transactions. The policy requires a fraud checklist to be prepared and reported to the Board for approval annually. This has been completed and was presented for approval. **The Board approved the:** **a) Fraud Policy; and** **b) Fraud Checklist for 2019.**
7.3	**<u>Investment Programme Monitoring Report</u>** This item was considered after item 6.4. The Assets & Contracts Manager updated the Board on procurement of the 2020-2022 Investment Programme and provided a progress report on the 2019/20 Investment Programme. Members were advised on changes since the report had been written. Roughcasting works mentioned in the report have been secured with a site start scheduled for Monday 17 February 2020. A proposal has been received from SSE in relation to insulation. Fiona Macleod raised concerns over the Occupational Therapy (OT) waiting list and the knock on effect this can have on other services in the community. The Assets & Contracts Manager advised an additional bid had been placed with Scottish Government to secure funding but a response had not been received as yet. A waiting list for adaptations was now developing which would be addressed in the next financial year. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services advised members the Board approved £120K of the Partnership's funds in 2020/21 be committed to OT in the Budgets 2020/21 report at item 6.1. Norman Macdonald raised questions on the viability and condition of current stock. The Director of Operations explained the condition of stock is assessed through regular Stock Condition Surveys which take place every five years, with the next survey due in 2022. This gives detail on the investment requirements for current stock. Stock viability will be picked up through the Asset Management Strategy 2020-2024 report at item 6.3. **The Board:** **a) approved the replacement of windows and doors at 5 houses in Cladh Siar, Tarbert;** **b) noted the current position of the Occupational Therapy budget;** **c) noted the 2019/20 Investment Programme progress; and** **d) noted the financial update.** **It was agreed further budgetary information on OT would be provided to the Board where required.#**

7.4	**Whistleblowing Policy** The Whistleblowing Policy was presented alongside the Fraud Policy & Fraud Checklist at item 7.2 to the Board for review and approval. There were minor changes to the policy to provide further clarity within the policy. **The Board approved the Whistleblowing Policy.**
7.5	**Procurement Policy & Procurement Strategy 2020/21** The Procurement Policy & Procurement Strategy for 2020/21 were presented the Board for consideration and approval. The Corporate Resources Manager advised there were minor updates made to the policy, primarily in relation to EU thresholds. Members were advised there had been no changes made to the Procurement Strategy for the coming financial year. **The Board:** **a) approved the revised Procurement Policy;** **b) noted the Procurement Plan for 2020;** **c) approved our updated Procurement Strategy 2020/21 and performance measurement framework;** **d) noted the procurement performance for 2019; and** **e) noted the Contracts & Community Benefits Register.**
7.6	**Time off in Lieu Policy** The Chief Executive gave details on a draft policy for Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) and an alternative option to extend the flexi carry forward allowance to 14 hours and 10 minutes, for consideration and consultation with staff and the Union. Following the pay and grading review the flexi system was amended to allow one day flexi to be taken (7 hours and 5 minutes) and one day to be carried over from one period to the next. The Chief Executive agreed to look at a TOIL policy to provide an option where it is necessary for staff to work outwith their core hours. Benchmarking with other organisations took place in the drafting of the policy. The Board were asked to approve consultation with the staff. Iain Macmillan asked if this was covered within delegation to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive advised this was taken to the Board as our standing orders require all new policies to come before the Board for approval. **The Board approved consulting with staff and the Union on:** **a) the draft Time of in Lieu Policy; or** **b) amending the current flexi system to allow 14 hours 10 minutes to be carried forward.** **Members agreed this should be delegated to the Chief Executive and the consultation response would come back to the Board for noting.**
7.7	**Parental Leave Policy** The revised Parental Leave Policy was presented to the Board to approve for consultation with the Joint Consultative Committee and staff. The Head of Executive Office advised members that formatting changes had been made to the policy and amendments to eligibility in line with statutory updates. The main change is that parents with children under 18 can access the Parental Leave Policy. Following consultation with the Joint Consultative Committee and staff, the policy will be presented the Board in May 2020. Norman Macdonald asked whether 'exceptional circumstances' had been taken into consideration in the review of the policy. The Head of Executive Office confirmed that exceptional circumstances is already considered under the Special Leave Policy. **The Board approved the draft Parental Leave Policy for consultation with the Joint Consultative Committee and staff.**
7.8	**Asbestos Policy** The Investment Manager presented the Asbestos Policy to the Board following a review. The policy has been reviewed following a health & safety audit carried out in 2019. There have been no material changes made to the policy in light of the audit. **The Board approved the Asbestos Policy.**
	MONITORING REPORTS
8.1	**Performance Monitoring Report** The Chief Executive advised members that an area causing concern with performance is arrears. The Board were assured that officers continue to work hard to tackle arrears but that the impact of Universal Credit is causing challenges. The Chief Executive informed members that arrears tracking is reported through regular performance reports issued monthly to Board Members. **The Board noted performance.**

8.2	<u>**Quarterly Treasury Report to 31 December 2019**</u> The Treasury Management Activities of the third quarter of 2019/20 were presented to the Board for review. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services advised that all Scottish Government grant for many of our developments has been drawn down and private finance was funding the remaining developments, resulting in a reduction in cash balances. **The Board noted the:** **a) quarterly report on the Analysis of Investment and Borrowing;** **b) outstanding loans at 31 December 2019 of £4.91 million; and** **c) cash balance at 31 December 2019 of £5.796 million.**
8.3	<u>**Development Programme Update**</u> The Development Manager provided an update to the Board on the progress with the Development Programme 2018-21 including changes since the report was written. The Chief Executive advised members would be kept up to date on press enquiries surrounding development. The tender return date for Low Flyer, Balivanich was extended to Friday 14 February 2020. Mackenzie Avenue was nearing completion with two plots remaining to be handed over and TIG are working on the Shared Equity sales. An Glib, Point and Edgemoor Square, Ness are to be handed over in February 2020. Progress is good at Goathill Farm with kits starting to going up. An update on the position on Shared Equity was provided. David Blaney advised he had received positive feedback on the Garrynamonie development when in the local area. There was discussion on the amount of development in comparison to our waiting lists. The Director of Operations advised waiting lists are slowly decreasing and in line with current population trends for the islands. After lengthy discussions the Chief Executive advised members the Board is responsible for ensuring housing provision is sustainable and affordable. Iain Macmillan asked if feasibility studies take account of demand. The Development Manager confirmed that TIG have been asked to include demand feasibility as well as a technical feasibility in their studies. It was agreed a further update on development would be provided to the Board in March 2020. The Chief Executive encouraged Board Members to attend our Housing 2040 Consultation Event scheduled for 20 February 2020. **The Board noted the:** **a) detailed developments update;** **b) development progress report;** **c) overview of developments;** **d) feasibilities update; and** **e) new supply shared equity update.**
MEETING GOES INTO PRIVATE SESSION	

Chairperson Mr Norman M Macleod

SIGNED ………………………………………………………

DATE ………………………………………………………