hebridean housing partnership

Making our house your home

ITEM NO 3.1.1

HEBRIDEAN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Board

<u>Minutes of Meeting held in HHP Board Room, Stornoway & via MS Teams on Wednesday, 23 August 2023 at 5.30pm</u>

PRELIMINARY ITEM	
ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES	
1	**<u>Attendance & Apologies</u>** <u>Attendees in Person</u> Gordon Macleod (Chair) Calum Mackay (Vice-Chair) Norman A Macdonald Roddy Nicolson <u>Attendees via MS Teams</u> Alison MacCorquodale Iain M Macleod Helen Mackenzie <u>Apologies Received</u> Fiona Knape <u>Apologies Not Received</u> Donald Macsween Finlay Stewart <u>Staff & Consultants In Attendance</u> Dena Macleod (Chief Executive) Donald Macleod (Director of Finance & Corporate Services) John Maciver (Director of Operations) Jonathan Fairgrieve (Corporate Services Officer – Minute Taker) Iona France (Governance Officer) Sawan Morrison (Development Manager) Michael Libby (Corporate Services Officer) Garry Campbell (Debt Management Officer) Kelda McMichael (Scottish Housing Regulator) Murray Smith (Scottish Housing Regulator) <u>Present for Agenda Items 1-8.4 only</u> Angus E MacNeil (Assets & Contracts Manager) Donalda Mackinnon (Area Manager) James Morrison (Finance Manager) Katrina Rowlands (Service Development Manager)) The Chair notified Members that Tenant Member, Fiona Knape had resigned from the Board. Fiona was thanked for her services on the Board and for being a strong voice for tenants. The Chair welcomed Kelda McMichael and Murray Smith from the Scottish Housing Regulator to the meeting.
PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
2	**<u>Declaration of Interest</u>** **Gordon Macleod declared an interest at item 9.2.** **Iain Macleod declared an interest at item 9.5.**
3.1	**<u>Minute of Board Meeting 28 June 2023</u>** Calum Mackay expressed his thanks to the Area Manager for sharing the Welfare Presentation with him. **The minute of the Board meeting of 28 June 2023 was submitted and approved as a true and accurate record.**
3.2	**<u>Action Sheet</u>** The Director of Operations advised the tender return for the Leverburgh site was now due on 25 August 2023. Helen Mackenzie asked if feedback had been received from the community on the decision to review the Low Flyer development on a six-monthly basis. The Director of Operations confirmed no feedback had been received. **The Action Sheet was noted.**
4	**<u>Date of Next Meeting</u>** The Chair advised Board meetings were to be held on a Tuesday going forward. **The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday 28 November 2023.**
5	**<u>Health & Safety</u>** **Nothing to report.**

ITEMS FOR DECISION	
6.1	**<u>Annual Assurance Statement</u>** The Chief Executive presented the Annual Assurance Statement for consideration and approval prior to submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Statement had been prepared to confirm we complied with all our regulatory requirements. The Governance Officer advised that since the report was written there were only 3 properties where Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) have not been carried out due to access issues. The Evidence Bank was updated with new and updated evidence and was available to Board Members in Decision Time. Gordon Macleod asked if there were areas where we could improve our engagement with other agencies. The Director of Operations advised that in general we engaged effectively with other agencies despite challenging cases being presented. **The Board:** **a) noted the Annual Statement – Evidence Checklist; and** **b) approved the 2023 Annual Assurance Statement.**
6.2	**<u>Annual Governance Report</u>** The Chief Executive presented our revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations following the annual review. Only minor changes had been made to both the Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations following the review. The report also sought approval in respect of AGM charitable donations, confirmed compliance with our Rules, provided information in respect of AGM arrangements for 2023 and assurances our Corporate Registers were functioning in accordance with regulatory and legislative requirements. **The Board:** **a) approved the revised Standing Orders;** **b) approved the revised Financial Regulations;** **c) approved the 5 charities listed below to be proposed to receive £1,000 each at the AGM on 24 August 2023:** • **Macmillan Nurses** • **Young Musician Hebrides** • **Stornoway PHAB Club** • **Autism Eilean Siar** • **Caraidean Uibhist** **d) noted the Partnership has complied with Rules 62 to 67 for the year ended 31 March 2023;** **e) noted the AGM arrangements for 2023; and** **f) noted the review of the Corporate Registers.**
6.3	**<u>Management Report to 30 June 2023</u>** The Finance Manager presented the Management Report for the month ended 30 June 2023. The report showed our financial covenants would be met for the year ended 31 March 2023 with £639K available to drawdown. Due to the Development Programme being below budget by £2.5M caused by slippage at Leverburgh, Gravir and Great Bernera and the Low Flyer site unlikely to begin this year, the anticipated drawdown of £5.5M was not required this year. As a result, the current year's cost of borrowing will reduce by £389K. **The Board:** **a) noted the Management Report to 30 June 2023 and revised forecast out turn at 31 March 2024; and** **b) approved to vire £116,405 of loan interest cost savings to investment, to cover increased tender costs on Kitchens and £272,955 of interest savings are to be vired to reserves and will be required in the future when funds are drawn down.**
6.4	**<u>Community Grants</u>** An application to our Community Grants Fund had been received from Pals of Bayhead Playpark, Isle of North Uist. Approval to lease the playpark to the group was sought. Gordon Macleod stated it was encouraging to see groups looking to get involved in their community. **The Board approved the:** **a) funding application of £3,303.20 from Pals of Bayhead Playpark from the Community Grant Fund; and** **b) lease of the Playpark to the Group.**

6.5	<u>**Appointment of Internal Auditors**</u> The Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the outcome of the procurement exercise for internal audit services. With the current internal auditor's (Wylie + Bisset) appointment coming to an end, tenders were issued on the Public Contracts Scotland portal. The Chair acknowledged the work undertaken by Audit & Rick Committee members, Helen Mackenzie and Roddy Nicolson who were involved in the tender scoring. **The Board:** **a) noted the outcome of the tender process;** **b) approved the appointment of Wylie + Bisset as internal auditors for a period of 4 years commencing 1 October 2023.**
POLICIES & STRATEGIES	
7.1	<u>**Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy**</u> The Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy, formerly Alcohol & Drugs Policy, was presented for review and approval. The policy had been reviewed in line with EVH and Croner model policies including clarification of consequences of an employee suspected to be involved in illegal activity concerning substances, alcohol being served at work events and police involvement. **The Board:** **a) approved the Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy for consultation with Staff and the Union; and** **b) if there are no material changes to the Policy arising from the consultation, that the Policy is approved, otherwise a revised Policy be presented to the next meeting of the Board.** **Alison MacCorquodale left the meeting.**
7.2	<u>**Lone Working Policy**</u> The Lone Working Policy was presented for approval. Following the review of the policy no significant changes were made. **The Board approved the Lone Working Policy.**
7.3	<u>**Particular Housing Needs Policy**</u> The Particular Housing Needs Policy was presented for approval. Following the review, sections of the Policy had been reorganised to make it clearer. **The Board reviewed and approved the Particular Housing Needs Policy.**
7.4	<u>**Engagement Policy**</u> The Service Development Manager presented the Engagement Policy, formerly Unacceptable Actions for Complaints Policy, for review and approval. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) suggest organisations develop an Engagement Policy to replace the Unacceptable Actions for Complainants Policy. Members were advised we had adapted the SPSO's Engagement Policy to meet our needs, due to no model policy for RSLs being available. **The Board approved the replacement of the Unacceptable Actions for Complainants Policy with the Engagement Policy.**
7.5	<u>**Openness & Confidentiality Policy**</u> The Governance Officer presented the Openness & Confidentiality for review and approval. The Policy was reviewed in line with our Policy Review Schedule and updated to reflect current working practices, especially around information security and home working. The report also detailed the number of requests for information under Freedom of Information received this calendar year compared to the same period last year, which had increased significantly from 7 to 27. **The Board:** **a) reviewed and approved the Openness & Confidentiality Policy for consultation with Staff; and** **b) if there are no material changes to the Policy arising from the consultation, that the Policy is approved, otherwise a revised Policy be presented to the next meeting of the Board.**
7.6	<u>**Tenant Participation Strategy Update**</u> The Service Development Manager presented an update on the Tenant Participation Strategy and Action Plan. Since the previous update the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) contract for tenant participation had ended and we appointed a Tenant Engagement Officer. Tenant Events for 2023 were being planned with the launch of CX Housing Management Customer Portal due to be promoted at the events. The dates of the events would be shared with the Board once arranged. Helen Mackenzie suggested a fresh approach be taken to tenant participation to try and improve tenant involvement at all levels. **The Board noted the Tenant Participation Strategy Action Plan update.**

	MONITORING REPORTS
8.1	**Quarterly Treasury Report to 30 June 2023** The Director of Finance & Corporate Services presented the Treasury Management activities for the first quarter of 2023/24 and confirmed our cash balances were £9.574M, an increase of £1.581M compared to the previous quarter, driven by government grants relating to 22/23 being received in April 2023. All covenants were forecast to be complied with for 2023/24. **The Board noted the:** **a) quarterly report on the Analysis of Investment and Borrowing;** **b) outstanding loans at 30 June 2023 of £17M;** **c) cash balance at 30 June 2023 of £9.574M.**
8.2	**Business Plan Monitoring Report** The Chief Executive presented progress to 30 June 2023 on the Delivery Plan for the Business Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24. The report showed that overall, we are on target. Gordon Macleod commented it was excellent to see staff regarded us as a good employer. **The Board noted the Business Plan Monitoring Report to 30 June 2023.**
8.3	**Development Monitoring Report** **This item was taken following item 6.5.** The Development Manager presented an update on progress on our 5 Year Development Plan (2022-27) since the Board meeting on 28 June 2023.

Project	Update
Blackwater	Due to issues with weather, SSE and Scottish Water and extension of time application was lodged from the Contractor. Quantity Surveyor is assessing the request.
Lochmaddy	Due to slippage, handover is expected in 2024/25.
Scott Road	Tighean Innse Gall have been instructed to prepare a planning application which will require significant engineering design work. Options for the design of the sewer system are currently being re-assessed.
Scarista	Detailed Feasibility has been instructed.

Members were advised that the tender return for the Leverburgh site had been extended to 25 August 2023 at contractors request

An additional recommendation was presented following receipt of formal confirmation from the Comhairle that the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for 2023/24 was being revised to move 4 homes from Balivanich to Leverburgh bringing the total of homes for social rent to 10. Delegation was sought for the Development and Finance Committee to agree with the Comhairle and Scottish Government on how to deliver the remaining two homes prior to conclusion of contracts.

Iain Macleod questioned what would happen to the homes that were initially planned to be built in Balivanich. The Chief Executive advised the SHIP was to be considered by the Comhairle in September 2023 and more information would be available once this had happened.

The Board:

a) noted the Development Plan update.

b) subject to tender prices being acceptable by Scottish Government and within our approved budgets approved the construction of 12 new homes in Leverburgh, 10 of which will be for social housing; and

c) delegated authority to the Development and Finance Committee to agree with the Comhairle and Scottish Government how to deliver the remaining 2 homes prior to the conclusion of contracts.

8.4	**Investment Programme Monitoring Report** The Assets & Contracts Manager provided an update on the 2023/24 Investment Programme. A grant award of £800K has been made from the Social Housing Net Zero Fund enabling postponed investment work to be carried out. Tenders had been returned on windows, kitchens and bathroom works that were significantly above budget. It was proposed the window replacement at 2 schemes, Clachan Biorach and Baile na Cille, be postponed to enable other works to progress. The condition of the windows in these schemes is relatively good for their age and they have not been problematic in terms of repair and maintenance. On the basis of condition of components, the preferred option is to go ahead with the kitchen & bathroom replacements and delay Clachan Biorach and Bailen na Cille window replacement until the Stock Condition Survey is completed. This option should result in less pressure on the reactive and void repair

	budget. Virements were to fund increased tender costs of Heating, Kitchens and Windows. Gordon Macleod stated it was encouraging to see the success of the application for the replacement of Infra-red heating systems. **Helen Mackenzie did not partake in the decision of this item.** **The Board:** **a) noted the progress on the Investment Programme.** **a) approved the postponement of the window replacement at Clachan Biorach and Baile na Cillie and be rescheduled following completion of the stock completion survey; and** **b) approved the following virements:** • **To vire £52,250 to Heating from Interest Receivable to cover increased tender costs;** • **To vire £7,781 of savings on Bathrooms and Showers to Kitchens to cover increased tender costs; and** • **To vire £334,400 from Clachan Biorach & Baile Na Cille Windows to fund increased tender costs on Heating (£116,777), Kitchens (£12,505) and Windows (£205,117).**
MEETING GOES INTO PRIVATE SESSION	

Chairperson Mr Gordon Macleod

SIGNED ……………………………………………………

DATE ……………………………………………………