

FYNE HOMES LTD

Minute of Management Committee Meeting held by Scopia Video Conferencing on Wednesday 19th August 2020 at 2.30pm

Present:- K Findlay S MacLeod
T Harrison T McKay
D Herriot J McMillan (Chair)
M Lang D Wilkinson

In Attendance S Cole, Business Service Director
L Haemmerle, Human Resources Director
J McAlister, Technical Services Director
C Renfrew, Chief Executive Officer
T Robertson, Housing Services Director
M Thomson, Corporate Manager (Minute Taker)

Apologies: R Henshelwood, P Lingard, L Scoullar (leave of absence)

Absent: P Wallace

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were intimated as above. With regard to P Lingard as he is unable to attend the meeting at this time due to other commitments, Committee agreed leave of absence until the end of the year in the hope that restrictions will be eased and meeting can revert to previous time.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. AOCB pre-notifications

None

4. Coronavirus Responses

(i) General Update

From a verbal report by the HR Director, the following points were noted:

- Contingency planning team continue to meet 3 times per week
- Whilst the default position remains working from home, work was undertaken for a planned return to work on 17th August for some staff. However as the Government did not progress to phase 4 of their route map by then and do not expect to until at least 14th September, this has been deferred
- Feedback from recent surveys, risk assessments and appropriate health and safety measures are being put in place in line with guidance and training will be provided for staff prior to any return to the office. Dunoon office will remain closed at this time due to difficulties with shared premises

The Technical Services Director reported that following meetings with contractors, there will be a resumption of services (void property repairs and allocations, external repairs, H&S checks, routine repairs, adaptations, cyclical servicing and painterworks) with the exception of planned property improvements.

Information has been published on social media, website and local press on how this will be managed and tenants will be contacted for their consent to contractors coming into their home and to confirm that they are not displaying any Covid19 symptoms. If they do not consent the works will be added to the deferred works list. Due to there being no relaxation by the Scottish Government on the Feb 2021 timescale for the upgrading and installation of smoke alarms, heat detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, this major piece of work will also have to be undertaken and contractors have been advised of the electrical resources required. This will be done in conjunction with any electrical inspections which need to be carried out due to the SHQS requirement for this to be done every 5 years as opposed to 10 years.

A query was raised as to how staff have been managing during working from home and it was noted that managers are in regular contact with their staff and generally they remain very flexible and positive. Surveys were also undertaken for the planned return to work for some staff on 17th August and the feedback taken into account, however this did not happen which was disappointing for some staff.

(ii) SHR Monthly Report

A copy of the report was attached for information purposes and duly noted.

5. Minute of Management Committee Meeting of 8th July 2020

On a proposal by S MacLeod, seconded by D Wilkinson, the minute was unanimously accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

(a) *Matters Arising*

There were no matters arising.

b) *Rolling Action Points*

As previously reported, the outstanding items have been deferred until there is a return to the office.

6. Quarterly Performance Reports to 30th June 2020

The reports were previously circulated for information purposes and duly noted.

A query was raised with regards to whether the budgeted capital spend will be achieved during the financial year. The Technical Service Director commented that priority will be given to the smoke alarm legislation. However with work taking longer due to Covid requirements and the potential for some people not wishing contractors in their homes, there is likely to be a significant underspend for which a proposal to utilise some of this will be presented to committee later in the agenda.

A member commented that the reports are very comprehensive, detailed and provide Committee with a good picture of what is happening within the various departments and thanks were offered to all those involved in pulling the information together.

7. Technical Services Reports

(a) *Development Report*

Tighnabruaich

Construction is progressing with a reduced labour resource and handover is expected at the end of November.

Cairndow

Works are progressing on programme and budget with block 1 wind and watertight. Foundations have been poured for the other two blocks with timber kits arriving next week. Handover is anticipated for February 2021.

Inveraray

This potential development had been put on hold until demand could be established. However recent indications have shown a lot of interest in Tighnabruaich and demand could potentially change in other rural areas eg the property market on Bute has seen renewed interest and this seems prevalent through the Scottish islands. A demand analysis will be undertaken for the area and dependent on the outcome any potential development opportunity can be brought back to Committee.

(b) *Capital Investment Report 2020-21*

A report was previously circulated to Committee detailing the capital works scheduled in each area and as previously indicated it is unlikely that they will all be carried out this financial year. The majority of works are not scheduled to take place until after 14th September due to government restrictions. However, in the interim, tenants who have capital works scheduled for their properties will be contacted to determine if they will consent to having contractors in their properties and this will be fed back to the contractors to allow them to resource and programme the works required.

(c) *Upper Academy – Rothesay*

The Technical Service Director reported that as a large proportion of the capital spend is unlikely to be made this financial year, alternative options have been considered to utilise some of the underspend with one being to explore demolition options for the Upper Academy and related buildings. At the moment the site is worthless due to the buildings on it, however a clear site could have potential for sale or development if demand on Bute was to significantly increase.

On the back of a previous feasibility study an indicative cost for demolition was in the region of £160k with a further £25k for an asbestos survey. It was also noted that there would be some costs to progress this option in relation to obtaining an asbestos survey and building warrants.

Resolution

Following further discussion Committee agreed that this option should be further explored and advertised through Public Contracts Scotland Quick Quotes System.

8. Housing Management Report

A detailed report by the Housing Services Director was previously circulated to bring Committee up to date with progress in various areas. Some points were highlighted as follows and the remainder of the report duly noted.

***Home Argyll
Allocations***

There has been a significant increase in Shared Ownership and Shared Equity interest as well as an increase in homeless applications and domestic violence applicants. There is a backlog now as only essential moves have been carried out over recent months however in some areas where there are no homeless applicants, such as Bute, we are starting to make offers to the transfer and general lists.

Old Courthouse

No 19 is expected to conclude this week and there is interest in both flats 16 and 14 and an application has been received for No 14.

Rent Arrears

Arrears are holding well at between 0.8% and 1.4% in recent months. Housing Benefit income has increased from 49% this time last year to 52%.

Welfare Reform

Benefits support and advice continues to be a priority for the Housing Team with workarounds in place as contact cannot be made face to face. Many of the DWP concessions are still in place for claimants along with the furlough scheme and HMRC schemes to assist self-employed along with some new ones which came into play at the end of July. The volume of support is expected to increase once the furlough scheme ends with potential job losses.

Tenant Participation

C Baxter has been invited to participate in TPAS webinars in November focussing on performance and scrutiny.

Planning and preparation continues for the Rent Restructure Review and online workshops to be hosted by Arneil Johnston.

T McKay joined the meeting at this point 15.20pm.

9. Business Services Report

***(i) General
(a) Department Update***

A report by the Business Services Director was previously circulated for Committee's information and duly noted. Some points were highlighted as follows:

- Year-end audits undertaken remotely by Auditors
- Quarterly accounts completed
- IT continue to support staff with additional requests/requirements for homeworking
- IT projects revisited and upgrades undertaken
- First notice for virtual AGM on 23rd September sent out
- Draft assurance statement being reviewed by Management prior to review by volunteers from Committee. D Wilkinson and S MacLeod volunteered to assist with this review

With regards to the Assurance Statement, the Corporate Manager commented that she will be attending a training session in September along with the Housing Director which will still give time for any amendments to be made to it prior to presentation to Committee in October. The SHR is also undertaking a review and any additional guidance issued by them will also

be incorporated.

With regard to the FOI request indicated in the report, there has been no further contact from the applicant since the fee note was issued.

[Post meeting note: A reminder was sent out on 21st August and if there is no further communication the case will be closed 60 days after the issue of the fee note.]

Committee was also reminded to confirm their attendance at the AGM and if unable to do so to ensure that they return the Proxy Form.

(ii) Finance

(a) Private Finance Update

The Private Finance from RBS which was approved at the May meeting is in the process of being finalised. RBS currently hold security over 477 units totalling £19,685,000. With the increased facility additional security of £1,149,847 is required and 28 unencumbered units at Mackintosh Way and Wallace Way in Lochgilphead have been identified which are valued at £1.49M.

Resolution

Committee agreed to the recommendation that 28 units at MacIntosh Way and Wallace Way, Lochgilphead are released to provide the additional security required by RBS for the £10m loan facility.

Action

Extract minute to be provided to RBS confirming the approval of the properties for security

(b) Fyne Homes Letters of Support for Subsidiary Companies

The Business Services Director explained that letters of financial support from Fyne Homes with regards to the subsidiaries being a going concern are routinely signed as part of the approval of the annual accounts process. However with the impact of Covid-19 on the viability of many businesses, this has become more important and the Auditors wished to have it formally minuted by the Association.

Resolution

Following further discussion Committee approved the letters of support by Fyne Homes for Fyne Initiatives and Fyne Futures which will be signed by the Chair and forwarded to the Auditors.

10. Human Resources Report

The previously circulated report was duly noted with the undernoted points highlighted:

- Staffing Committee has approved two Modern Apprentice posts for Technical Services which will be advertised in the next 4/6 weeks.
- The performance aspect of the pay and reward system has been suspended for 2020/21
- Sickness absence has remained low during the pandemic

11. Secretary's Report

The report was previously circulated for Committee's information.

Resolution

- i) Committee noted the Secretary will sign a letter confirming that the requirements of rules 62-67 have been met*
- ii) Committee noted that P Lingard, J McMillan ,P Wallace and M Lang are due to stand for re-election at the AGM without nomination*

12. Request for support – Bute Litter Action Group

A letter seeking support for a newly created Bute Wombles was previously circulated to Committee for their information and attention. Although not a charity the group is registered with Litter Action UK and Keep Scotland Beautiful which is a charity.

Committee was very supportive of the initiative; however as it is not a charity our policy would only allow a donation of £50.

Resolution

Committee agreed to make a donation of up to a maximum of £200 subject to clarification if it can be processed as sponsorship at this increased level

Action

CEO and Corporate Manager to liaise with applicant and seek clarification from TC Young.

13. AOCB

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 3.35pm.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next Management Committee meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday 7th October 2020** by video conference.

It was also noted that there will be an Executive Committee Meeting on 16th September to approve the accounts and the SGM and AGM will be held virtually on Wednesday 23rd September.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance, the SMT for their useful and comprehensive reports and the staff for their continued efforts in trying circumstances.

Chair.....
(Chair)

Date.....