

# Management Committee Update March 2018

Issue 8



Orkney Housing Association is governed by a voluntary Management Committee elected at our AGM in September each year. The Committee's role is to set and monitor our strategy and performance. Day to day operational management is carried out by the Leadership Team. Some of the Committee's main functions include: approving budgets, reviewing policies, diligent financial management, major decision making and organisational direction, and good governance to ensure statutory and regulatory requirements are met. Management Committee are keen to issue an update following each formal meeting (6 per year).



## Points of interest from the meeting

**The Delivery Plan** sets out the main objectives for the year ahead; to make our office welcoming; seeking recognition for our employees; a leading provider of quality affordable housing; ensuring that we make the best use of our IT systems; improving customer experience; working with Community Councils & Development Trusts and external verification of procurement systems. Members were asked to approve the operational plan which will guide the Association to achieve these objectives.

### Budgets

Looking at the year ahead, departmental budgets had already been fully examined by the Performance & Resource Sub Committee before being passed to full Committee for approval. Members discussed the requirements for the year ahead before agreeing to the recommendations.

### Committee Governance

Following the recent resignation of a member it was agreed to undertake a recruitment campaign for new members.

In addition to this, each year Committee Members are required to take part in appraisals to evaluate individual performance and identify any training needs. Members are expected to complete a minimum of 12 hours of training per year in order to keep their skills and knowledge current. This has included attendance at sector conferences, increasing understanding on law and good practice. They agreed their Training Plan for 2018/19 and a response to the Regulator's "Our Regulation & Social Housing": Discussion Paper.

### Consultation on Automatic Fire Suppression Systems

A paper regarding a consultation response on a proposal that all Scottish social housing, new and existing, should be fitted with sprinkler systems was discussed by Members. The response agreed the proposal seem admirable, they do not take account of locality or building type which will result in an unequal burden to social housing providers who are already working to tight Budgets.

### Authority for Evictions

Members were asked to approve enforcement of a Decree of Eviction in 3 cases for the event of continued non-payment of rent. This is always viewed a last resort when we are unable to engage tenants to work with us to find a suitable resolution.

### Members present on 28 March 2018

- Wendy Baikie
- Philip Cook
- Dave Dawson
- Elaine Grieve
- Stacy Johnson
- Fiona Lettice
- John Rodwell (Chair)
- Bill Wallace

## Welfare Reform Update

In February 2018 the 7 day eligibility waiting period was removed in an effort to reduce the length of time claimants were having to wait for their first payment and anyone making a new Universal Credit (UC) claim from April 2018 and who are already receiving assistance towards housing costs will be provided with an additional payment of 2 weeks housing benefit to assist with the transition to UC. In the meantime we are continuing to work towards September 2018 for the full service roll out of UC in Orkney

## Development Report

The 4 New Supply Shared Equity homes at Liberator Drive will be handed over early in May.

Works at The Dairy, Junction Road, Kirkwall are progressing well, with the contractor confident that he can achieve handover of the 6 general needs rented apartments in September.

We acquired The Crafty site, Kirkwall on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Discussion on the best use of the site will follow.

## New Homes Survey Results

A report on the responses from the new homes satisfaction surveys was presented to Members. The results showed that 100% of tenants moving into a new home in the last year were satisfied or very satisfied with the design and layout of their homes. There were some comments on the estate design regarding the shared surfaces and availability of parking within one development.

## Publication Framework

Members received a paper on the work being done to improve the information we publish and make public, in light of the possible extension of the Freedom of Information Act to include Housing Associations in 2019. In preparation for this, staff have been looking at what we currently publish and if there are any gaps. We plan to make sure that we make information as easily accessible as possible for those wishing to do so.

**Office of Scottish Charity Register Notification.** Following recent events surrounding public confidence in charities we received notification from OSCR to review our internal procedures around the safeguarding of volunteers and staff and Notifiable Events. The report to members highlighted the robustness of the systems already in place.

## Staffing Update

The Association provides opportunities for continued professional development for staff and members were informed of the latest achievements.

Catherine Browne passed her Open University course on Bookkeeping & Accounting.

Mhairi Hughes is working towards a Certificate in Corporate Governance.

Saffron Macivor has commenced Level 5 Diploma in Housing.

Ian Pickles completed his Professional Project with the Institute of Clerk of Works.

Craig Gillon has completed ISOH, PRINCE2, First line Management and is due to complete Improving Team Performance in April.

Members noted the time and commitment required by staff in order to successfully complete these qualifications.

## Resident Panel Update

Members of the Resident Panel recently met to take the allocations scrutiny forward.

They have drafted a short survey which has been sent out to all tenants that have moved into an OHAL or OIC property in the last 12 months.

The Panel are really keen to hear about your experience. It will provide valuable information on the process when they make their recommendations to Management Committee

If you have recently moved into an OHAL or OIC property please complete the survey.



Anyone interested in getting involved with the Resident Panel or any other Association activities can contact **Suzy Boardman on 01856 875253 ext 205 or [suzy.boardman@ohal.org.uk](mailto:suzy.boardman@ohal.org.uk)**

<http://www.ohal.org.uk/tenants/get-involved/>