

ALBYN HOUSING SOCIETY LIMITED

REPORT OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2014 AT 10:30 AM AT ALBYN'S OFFICES, INVERGORDON

Present

Mr D Russell (Chair)
Mrs S Slimon
Ms M Smith
Mrs I McLaughlan

Mr G Sinclair (Vice-Chair)
Mr J Oag
Ms K Williams
Mr J Convery

Mrs P Dingwall
Mr B Summerfield
Mrs E Grant
Mr T Solle

In Attendance

Mr C Macaulay: Chief Executive

Mr R Nairn: Finance &
Corporate Services Director

Ms H Barton: Customer
Services Director

Mr D Lockhart: Asset Management
& Investment Director

Miss C Lawrie: Corporate
Officer (Minutes)

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 No apologies had been received for this meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

2.1 Four conflicts of interests were noted for this meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 28 JANUARY 2014

3.1 The minutes were agreed as a true record.

4. BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN

4.1 The Chief Executive reported that work is still required on the Business Plan's Executive Summary and its financial figures, and that Section 4 regarding Risks requires to be updated.

4.2 Mr Macaulay agreed to produce a concise and clear summary for the benefit of tenants, to include relevant financial information. This should be kept as short as possible.

4.3 Risk Register

The Finance and Corporate Services Director took the Board through the risk analysis work. He noted that at its meeting on 27 March the Audit Committee will consider in detail the full risk analysis document. Mr Nairn will place the full risk analysis document on the intranet Board tab for all Board members to access.

4.4 Budget

Mr Nairn reported that at their last meeting the Management Team members had carefully reviewed the budget in detail to ensure that it was accurate and contained all the relevant information.

4.5 The Board approved the Business Plan and the budget, subject to adjusting the overall budget for 2014/15 to allow bank covenants to be achieved.

5. DECISION MAKING PAPERS

5.1 Job Evaluation Scheme: ACAS Proposal

5.1.1 The Chief Executive's paper requested the Board's approval for the revised ACAS job evaluation manual.

5.1.2 Mr Macaulay noted that the trade union has been involved in the process, so with approval from the Board the job evaluation scheme will be implemented.

5.1.3 The Board approved the ACAS job evaluation manual.

5.2 Gas Maintenance Servicing Contract: Homologation

5.2.1 The Board was asked to endorse the Chair's approval for the extension of the gas maintenance servicing contract.

5.2.2 The Board ratified the Chair's approval for the extension of the gas maintenance servicing contract.

5.3 Eviction Approvals

5.3.1 The Customer Services Director's paper asked the Board to approve two requests for enforcement for a court decree for eviction.

5.3.2 The Board discussed and considered the two evictions contained within the paper. There was concern that in one of the cases, no rent had been received since the start of the tenancy. Ms Barton responded that the processes have been tightened and new tenancies are closely monitored for any issues that might arise.

5.3.3 The Board approved the two requests for enforcement for a court decree for eviction.

5.4 Disposal for Four Flats at Crosshills, Alness

5.4.1 The Finance and Corporate Services Director spoke to the paper which recommended the transfer of four new supply shared equity flats at Crosshills, Alness to The Highland Council.

5.4.2 The Board approved the transfer of the four new supply shared equity flats at Crosshills, Alness to The Highland Council.

6. POLICY PROPOSALS AND REVIEW

6.1 There were no policies to be considered at this meeting.

7. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 Performance Committee: 11 February 2014

7.1.1 The minutes of the Performance Committee meeting held on 11 February 2014 were noted. Mrs McLaughlan reported that she had recently attended a meeting of the Customer Involvement Strategy Monitoring Group, the members of which were involved in agreeing the information required for the Annual Report of the Charter.

7.2 Health & Safety Committee: 18 February 2014

7.2.1 The minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 18 February 2014 were noted. The Chair drew attention to the revised remit which had been circulated with the minutes and the Board approved the changes made.

8. STANDING ITEMS

8.1 Welfare Reform

8.1.1 The Customer Services Director reported that the number of Albyn tenants affected by the 'bedroom tax' is currently in the region of 290. This is a drop of around 40 from the start of the year, which is due to a combination of factors, including: priority for transfers, tenancies being ended, and tenants moving off benefits and into employment. Board members were asked to note that this is not a static group of tenants. There are many more tenants who under-occupy their homes than are affected by benefit penalties, and the exact make-up of the group affected will vary on a regular basis as tenancies and tenants' circumstances change.

8.1.2 **Universal Credit**

Albyn staff have identified around 12 tenants who are known to have made or are in the process of having claims for Universal Credit assessed. It is possible that more tenants have made claims and that staff are not aware of them. All the cases identified to date have been as a result of tenants contacting Albyn or through the routine rent account monitoring activities.

8.1.3 **Making Advice Work**

In November it was reported that the "Highland Social Housing – Under Occupancy Assistance Scheme" had been successful under the joint funding bid led by Albyn. The relevant staff were recruited into post between October and January, including the Housing Options Officer and Project Administrator employed on behalf of all partners through Albyn Enterprises Ltd.

8.1.4 The Board noted the report.

8.2 Aviemore Heating System

8.2.1 The Asset Management and Investment Director had provided a written update for this item.

8.2.2 Mr Lockhart noted that, although work has taken place to address the leaks and other problems within it, the inefficiencies within the system remain. Further work will have to take place to try and identify what is causing the inefficiencies. Otherwise, the future of the entire system will need to be reviewed.

8.2.3 The Board noted the report and agreed with the proposals contained within the paper.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

9.1 There were no health and safety issues to report.

10. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

10.1 A request for a leave of absence for the Board meeting taking place on 27 May 2014 was received from Ms Grant.

11. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

11.1 Significant Performance Failure

Notification had been received from the Scottish Housing Regulator of a Significant Performance Failure regarding the installation of new heating systems at Milton. The Chief Executive updated that the Regulator had now confirmed that they were satisfied that there had been no Significant Performance Failure. The Regulator would be writing to the tenant who had raised the matter to advise them of this outcome.

11.2 Society Model Rules

The Chief Executive reported that the Model Rules needed to be updated following recent changes in legislation. He hoped that the revised Rules would be finalised before the Annual General Meeting on 19 August.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12.1 The next meeting is due to take place on 27 May 2014.