

FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting | MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 27 November 2024
Time: 4:00pm
Location: Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness

Members Present

Lesley McInnes,
Chair

Ian Fosbrooke,
Secretary

Jackie Bugden,
Member

Carl Patching
Member

Niall Owen,
Member

Scott MacLeod,
Member

Lynne Holburn,
Member

Craig Levy,
Member

In Attendance

Kirsty Morrison,
Chief Executive Officer,
(CEO)

Maureen Knight,
Executive Dir. of Operations
(ExDO)

Andrew Martin,
Executive Dir. of Group Services
(ExDGS)

Robert Buchanan,
Director of ICT
(DoICT)

Laurie MacLeod
Head of HR
(HHR)

Laura Morgan,
Corporate Governance Manager
(CGM) - minute

1. APOLOGIES & WELCOMES

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Clea Warner and Fiona Mustarde.
- 1.2 It was noted that Craig Russell was on a leave of absence.

2. STANDING ITEM

- 2.1 Board Remit
- 2.2 The Chair confirmed that the meeting met the quorum as set out within the Board Remit.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 3.1 The Chair noted that as tenant Board Members, Jackie Bugden, Ian Fosbrook, and Scott MacLeod, had an interest in item 5.4 New Build Levy. The Chair reminded those Members of the relevant points of the Board Member Code of Conduct which would apply when discussing this item.

4. PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 Minute of Board Meeting: 29 October 2024
 - 4.1.1 The minute of the meeting was approved. This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Jackie Bugden.
- 4.2 Confidential Minute of Board Meeting: 29 October 2024
 - 4.2.1 The confidential minute was approved. This was proposed by Ian Fosbrooke and seconded by Scott MacLeod.
- 4.3 Matters Arising
 - 4.3.1 A written update on the action items had been provided and was reviewed. All actions were complete or in progress.

5. DECISION PAPERS

- 5.1 Q2 Management Accounts
 - 5.1.1 The ExDGS presented the Q2 Management Accounts & Mid-Year Forecast to the Board for approval.

ACTION

- 5.1.2 There was a discussion about the overspend for reactive maintenance. The ExDO advised that Albyn was now much more visible in communities with Officers completing regular estate walks, which resulted in an increased number of repairs being picked up.
- 5.1.3 There was a discussion about the underspend on cyclical maintenance. The ExDO advised that this partly due to a resource issue which would be addressed by a new Manager taking up a position in January 2025. The spend in this area was also expected to pick up in Q3 with the conclusion of some maintenance contracts.
- 5.1.4 The ExDGS provided an update on the delays associated with the Dornoch Phase 4 development. The relevant paperwork that was required to further the development had now been submitted by the contractor and it was expected that progress would now be made.
- 5.1.5 The Board approved the Q2 Management Accounts & Mid-Year Forecast This was proposed by Niall Owen and seconded by Lynne Holburn.

5.2 Q2 Performance Report

- 5.2.1 The ExDO presented the Q2 Performance Report to the Board for approval.
- 5.2.2 The Board raised a query over how complaints performance was reported on with regard to completion within the prescribed timeframe at stage one and stage 2. The ExDO accepted an **action** to check the information and have the Head of Performance and Projects provide clarification on the point raised post the meeting.
- 5.2.3 The Board approved the Q2 Performance Report. This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

Maureen Knight

5.3 Borrowing Proposals

- 5.3.1 The ExDGS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the recommendation made within it.
- 5.3.2 The ExDGS confirmed to the Board that advice on this matter was part of the core services provided to Albyn by its treasury advisors under an annual retainer fee.
- 5.3.3 The Board approved the process of seeking lending proposals to support the agreed Business Plan and budget to support the future development programme as set out within the report. This was proposed by Jackie Bugden and seconded by Carl Patching

5.4 New Build Rent Levy

- 5.4.1 The ExDGS spoke to his paper and sought approval of the recommendations made within it.

ACTION

- 5.4.2 The Board agreed that consultation with tenants was key to any change to the Rent Setting Policy and that this would take time to do.
- 5.4.3 There was a discussion about how reflective EPC ratings were of real life usage of energy and the importance of energy efficient systems being set up and used appropriately to deliver savings to tenants.
- 5.4.4 There was a discussion about some of the negative impacts of living in a new build property such as end of defects and snagging issues. This was balanced by the negative impacts of living in an older property, where equipment might be more likely to break down.
- 5.4.5 The Board discussed that the broad meaning of the energy use figures presented in the report was that it was highly likely to be cheaper for a tenant to live in a new build property. Beyond energy consumption, there was also a value to living in a property built to modern building standards that should be considered.
- 5.4.6 The Board discussed that tenants had voted for a new build rent levy and agreed that a levy of 10% should be applied to all stock built from April 2025 onwards. It was agreed that the revenue from this should be ringfenced to fund improvements to older stock.
- 5.4.7 The Board discussed the need for an evidence base to inform the rent setting criteria and recommended that an external review be carried out of this, to be reported back to Board within six months. The ExDGS accepted this as an **action**.
- 5.4.8 The Board approved the following:
- A 10% levy to be applied to stock built from 01 April 2025 onwards.
 - That an external study of the rent setting criteria with regard to new build homes, to be presented to Board within six months.
 - That the evidence from this study would be used to inform a review of the Rent Setting Policy, with a new policy agreed within two years.

**Andrew
Martin**

This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Niall Owen.

5.5 Highland Residential (Inverness) Ltd Annual Report 2023/24

- 5.5.1 The ExDO presented the Highland Residential (Inverness) Ltd Annual Report 2023/24 to the Board for approval.
- 5.5.2 The Board approved the Highland Residential (Inverness) Ltd Annual Report 2023/24. This was proposed by Scott MacLeod and seconded by Ian Fosbrooke.

5.6 Society Memberships Removals

- 5.6.1 The CGM spoke to her paper and sought approval of the recommendations made within it.

ACTION

- 5.6.2 The Board approved the removal of the persons noted within the report. This was proposed by Lynne Holburn and seconded by Ian Fosbrooke.

6. POLICY & STRATEGY

- 6.1 None.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

- 7.1.3 None.

8. APPROVED MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR NOTING

- 8.1 None this cycle.

9. AOB

- 9.1 The Chair noted that she had recently been made Chair of the Rural & Islands Housing Association Forum.

10. DATES OF FUTURE BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 10.1 The dates of future meetings were noted.

The meeting ended.