FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting |MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 31 March 2026
Time: 1.30 – 6.00pm
Location: Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness

Members Present

Lesley McInnes,
Chair

Clea Warner,
Vice Chair

Carl Patching
Member

Scott MacLeod,
Member

Jackie Bugden,
Member

Lynne Holburn,
Member

Ewan McGarrie,
Member

Annice Newlands.
Member

Craig Levy,
Member

In Attendance

Maureen Knight,
Interim Chief Executive Officer
(ICEO)

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

Robert Buchanan,
Dir. of ICT & Business Services
(DIT&BS)

Laurie MacLeod,
Head of Human Resources
(HHR)

Laura Morgan,
Corporate Governance
Manager
(CGM) - minute

Victoria Rogan,
Executive Officer (EO)

Jenna Greenwood,
Corporate Governance
Assistant (GA)

Observer

Maggie Morrison,
Highland Residential Ltd
Director

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES & WELCOMES

1.1 Apologies had been received from Niall Owen, Member.

1.2 It was noted that Terri Semple, Member, was on a leave of absence

1.3 The Chair welcomed Maggie Morrison, Highland Residential Ltd Director, who joined the meeting as an observer.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

2.1 Carl Patching noted a potential conflict of interest with regard to an information briefing issued to Board about possible partnership working with Octopus Energy as someone closely connected to him was employed by this company.

2.2 The Chair advised that the Board was not required to make any decisions with regard to the information briefing, but the potential conflict was noted should it be relevant at a future point.

3. PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 Minute of Board meeting: 27 January 2026

3.1.1 The minute of the meeting was approved. This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Scott MacLeod.

3.2 Matters Arising

3.2.1 A written update on the action items had been provided and was reviewed.

3.3 Highland Residential Ltd Board meeting: 13 November 2025

3.3.1 The Board noted the approved minute of this subsidiary meeting.

4. CEO & CHAIR UPDATES

4.1 CEO Update

4.1.1 The CEO spoke to her paper and sought approval of this organisational update.

4.1.2 The Board discussed the damp and mould case, and the risk that claims made by ‘no win no fee’ solicitors posed the sector and welcomed that Albyn was engaging with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations on this matter.

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4.1.3 The Board noted that Albyn had followed legal advice and advice from its insurers throughout the claim.

4.1.4 The Board acknowledged the unique circumstances that would be applicable to any further claims of this nature but suggested that the lessons learnt from this particular case might be used to develop a framework for future responses. The ICEO accepted this as an **action** and would report back to Board on how this work progresses. **Maureen Knight**

4.1.5 The Board approved the CEO Update. This was proposed by Scott MacLeod and seconded by Ewan McGarrie.

4.2 Chair of Board & Committee Chair Updates

4.2.1 The Chair of Board thanked Members for participating in the recent round of appraisals and noted that an update on succession planning would be brought to the next meeting.

4.2.2 The Chair of Audit & Risk Management noted that the internal audit plan for 2025/26 has been concluded with assurance ratings of 'strong' and 'substantial' throughout.

4.2.3 The Board noted the updates.

5. DECISION ITEMS

5.1 Delivery Plan 2025/26 Close Down Report

5.1.1 The ICEO spoke to her paper and sought approval of the recommendation made within it.

5.1.2 The Board welcomed the progress that had been made during 2025/26.

5.1.3 The Board approved the update provided on progress against the Delivery Plan 2025/26. This was proposed by Lynne Holborn and seconded by Scott MacLeod.

5.2 Albyn Housing Society Business Plan 2022 – 27, Year 5 Update

5.2.1 The ICEO presented the approach to the Albyn Housing Society Business Plan 2022 – 27, Year 5 Update.

5.2.2 There was a discussion about the potential cross over between the outcome relating to customer experience and the outcome relating to the customer portal. The DIT&BS advised that the former was about engagement with customers

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and improving tenant participation, whilst the latter was focussed on the digital systems required. Whilst there would inevitably be overlap, there were distinct work plans needed for each outcome. The Board accepted this.

5.2.3 There was a discussion about whether the target of 30-40% of customers using the portal by March 2027 was ambitious enough. It was agreed that this target was difficult to set as Albyn was still building its knowledge of customer segmentation, and there were potentially many barriers to customers engaging digitally.

5.2.4 The Board agreed that the final Business Plan documentation would be issued to it by email with the updates suggested within two weeks. The ICEO accepted this as an **action**. **Maureen Knight**

5.2.5 The Board approved the approach to the Albyn Housing Society Business Plan 2022 – 27, Year 5 Update. This was proposed by Lynne Holburn and seconded by Scott MacLeod.

5.3 Annual Budget & Financial Forecast

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

5.3.2 There was a discussion about the challenges of budgeting for Scottish Government Net Zero requirements and what the impact would be on Albyn if the English framework was adopted in Scotland. The ExDGS advised that a reasonable level of stock was at EPC Band C rating or above; for stock falling below this, any upgrade would need to be economically viable, with a potential outcome being that a higher volume of disposals would be required. There was a discussion about Passivhaus standards for construction and the ExDGS advised that the cost of these properties was around 30% more than standard builds.

5.3.3 The Board noted that the quality of the report and that it had an appropriate level of stress testing.

5.3.4 The Board approved:

- The proposed budget for 2026/27 including the planned development programme for the period.
- The long-term financial forecast presented alongside the annual budget for 2026/27 for the next 5 and 30 years. The five-year plan will be used to submit to the Scottish Housing Regulator in line with regulatory requirements.

This was proposed by Clea Warner and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

5.4 Royal Bank of Scotland Loan Approval

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

5.4.2 The Board discussed the current balance of fixed and variable rate loans held by Albyn. The ExDGS noted that Albyn would need to consider fixing some variable rate loans in the future as part of its Treasury Management, but not at this point.

5.4.3 The Board noted the good relations Albyn had with its lenders.

5.4.4 The Board approved

- Mandate Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), on the basis of the indicative terms and conditions submitted, to provide the offer and proposed amendment to existing facility agreements for a 10-year term loan of up to £6m.
- Delegate the ExDGS to take forward any further detailed discussions with RBS and legal advisors regarding the form of agreement.

To request the final terms and conditions to be presented to Board following legal review at either the April 2026 or May 2026 meeting. This was proposed by Niall Owen and seconded by Clea Warner.

5.5 Board Calendar

5.5.1 The CGM spoke to her paper and sought Board approval of the recommendation made within it.

5.5.2 The Board had no comments.

5.5.3 The Board approved the meeting schedule for the coming AGM year (October 2026 to September 2027). This was proposed by Scott MacLeod and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

5.6 Former Tenant Write Offs

5.6.1 The ExDGS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the recommendation made within it.

5.6.2 The Board discussed the reasons as to why the debt was proposed to be written off.

5.6.3 The Board approved Board the recommendation to write off irrecoverable former tenant debts of £137,990.21 This was proposed by Lynne Holburn and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

5.7 Shareholder Applications

5.7.1 The CGM spoke to her paper and sought Board approval of the recommendation made within it.

5.7.2 The Board had no comments.

5.7.3 The Board approved the shareholding memberships of: James Wallace, Derek Small, and Terry Doe. This was proposed by Scott MacLeod, and seconded by Annice Newlands.

6. POLICY & STRATEGY

6.1 Entitlements, Payments, & Benefits Policy / Donations Policy

6.1.1 The CGM presented the updated Entitlements Payments & Benefits Policy (EPB) and a new Donations Policy to the Board for approval.

6.1.2 The Board agreed that Albyn should adopt the rural version of the EPB Policy.

6.1.3 The Board suggested the Donations Policy be renamed as 'Grants & Donations Policy.' The CGM accepted this as an **action**. **Laura Morgan**

6.1.4 The Board approved the EPB Policy, and the Donations Policy. This was proposed by Scott MacLeod and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

Maggie Morrison, Jenna Greenwood, and Victoria Rogan left the meeting at this point.

7. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

7.1 Confidential Item 1

7.2 Confidential Item 2

7.3 Confidential Item 3

8. AOB

8.1 None.

9. DATES OF FUTURE BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9.1 The dates of future meetings were noted.

9.2 It was noted that a stock tour for Board Members was hoping to be scheduled during the day before the meeting of the Board to be held in June 2026.

9.3 Board Members were reminded to let the CGM know if they wished to attend any hybrid meetings in person at the Inverness Office.

The meeting ended.