

CLYDESDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minute of the Office Bearer meeting held via conference call on Tuesday 24 March 2020 at 6.00pm

Present: Pauline Sandford, Chairperson
Maggie Botham, Vice Chairperson
Carmena Nixon, Secretary
Susanne Crayton, Treasurer
A quorum was achieved.

In Attendance: The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) minute

1. Apologies

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

No apologies were submitted.

2. Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Notifiable Events

The CEO confirmed that a Notifiable Event had been submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) on 20 March 2020 confirming the Office Bearers' decision on 19 March 2020 to close the CHA offices to the public and suspend face to face contact with service users in response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

4. Outcome of Proposals on Temporary Governance Arrangements

The CEO confirmed that all recommendations within the report to Management Committee, dated 19 March 2020, were unanimously approved by the Management Committee via email and text messaging. All responses have been retained by the Association for record keeping purposes.

Prior to the Office Bearer meeting the CEO had circulated a copy of an email sent to staff members earlier that day that summarised discussions held by the Management Team.

5. Summary of progress made in executing the measures outlined in the 19 March 2020 report to Management Committee

The CEO provided a verbal report

a) Office Closure and Suspension of Face to Face Contact with Service Users

- implemented from Monday 23 March 2020;
- Notifiable Event submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator on 20 March 2020;

- Staff home working commenced from Monday 23 March 2020 – IT and communications systems working well with only occasional interruptions. Managers are keeping in daily contact with their Teams and each other;
- Rota for one person attending the office during normal working hours commenced Monday 23 March 2020;
- Flexible arrangements for staff coping with school/nursery closures are working well and not adversely impacting on service provision.

b) Service Provision:

- General letter sent to all tenants on 20 March 2020 - updates on the CHA website and Facebook page will also be posted.
- Reactive Repairs:
 - Contractor method statement and risk assessment checked by Technical Services Manager (TSM).
 - A full reactive repairs service has continued until 25 March 2020 – the implications of the most recent government guidance on this service was discussed later in the meeting;
 - The TSM continues with work to source alternative contractors who can be used in the event of our multi-trade contractor's manpower being adversely impacted by the virus.
- Major repair contracts:
 - Contractor method statement and risk assessment checked by Technical Services Manager (TSM).
 - Following the latest Government guidance Contractors have subsequently advised CHA that they have suspended works/planned works until further notice;
 - The TSM is currently assessing the impact of works suspension on CHA's ability to meet the EESSH standard by the December 2020 deadline.
- Housing Management:
 - Housing Officers are supporting and advising tenants on alternative rent payment methods available and applying for Universal Credit and/or other welfare benefits in circumstances where tenants experience reduced income due to self-isolation;
 - The process for dealing with tenancy terminations and re-lets has been suspended due to the latest Government guidance – this was discussed later in the meeting;
 - The process of dealing with neighbor complaints has been adapted to remove face to face contact.
- Community Hub:
 - Lets have been suspended and user groups advised.

6. Latest Government Coronavirus Guidance

The CEO confirmed to Office Bearers that Government announcements on 23 March 2020 shifted to a strict message of stay at home. All shops, bars and restaurants have been ordered to close with the exception of stores providing essential goods.

The CEO advised Office Bearers that this action had significantly affected the Management Team's thoughts on service provision plans going forward.

7. Proposals for Further Temporary Changes to Service Provision

The CEO and Office Bearers went through service provision issues in light of the latest Government Coronavirus Guidance and reached the following decisions in accordance with the delegated authorities granted by the Management Committee:

a) Reactive Repairs:

- as of 25 March 2020, the Association's reactive repairs service will be restricted to emergency repairs only. Tenants who have previously reported as yet incomplete non-emergency repairs have been contacted and advised that these will not now be progressed until further notice;
- the CEO will submit a Notifiable Event to the Scottish Housing Regulator regarding this service change;
- Continuing to provide even an emergency repairs service is likely to become challenging as the days and weeks progress. The TSM is in dialogue with our contractor to determine what will be possible – this may require an approach to alternative contractors where Davison & Lindsey are unable to deliver our service. The Office Bearers expressed a preference to retain the current contractor over this period in order to protect service quality, tenant satisfaction and local jobs;
- The Association will continue to issue tenant advice posts for our Facebook page and website on changes to the service and essential advice on home maintenance intended to prevent demand for emergency repairs – particularly advice on avoiding drainage blockages.

b) Major and Cyclical Repairs Contracts:

- Contractors appointed to carry out the heating replacement and insulation contracts have advised CHA that they have suspended all works;
- the CEO will submit a Notifiable Event to the Scottish Housing Regulator regarding this service change;
- Tenants are being advised of this suspension in works;
- Office Bearers noted that CHA's next gas safety contract is not due until September, so hopefully arrangements will have returned to some kind of normality by then;
- The TSM has contacted HEEPS funding administrators and is awaiting guidance on how current circumstances will affect funding;

- The TSM is currently assessing the impact of work suspension on our ability to comply with EESSH by the December 2020 deadline.
- c) Rental Income:
- The Housing Management Team will continue to implement the plans already established to support and advise tenants experiencing financial difficulties as a result of Covid-19;
 - The Depute Chief Executive (DCE) will lead a campaign of awareness raising on the advice available as well as the use of alternative rent payment methods available to tenants;
 - With rental income expected to be lower than usual, the DCE and Finance Manager will monitor our cashflow position each week in order to quickly identify any pinch points;
 - The Management Team have started reviewing the 2020/21 cashflow in light of the emerging situation and a series of assumptions will be used to stress test the Association's finances.
- d) Empty House Management & Re-Lets:
- CHA will suspend all empty house and re-let activity until further notice. It is arguable that this is essential activity, however, given the current movement restrictions, it is not practical for people to move home at this time;
 - the CEO will submit a Notifiable Event to the Scottish Housing Regulator regarding this service change;
- e) Office Cover:
- The Office Bearers noted the following decision taken by the Management Team: In the interests of complying with the Government's action on restricting movement, the Management Team have decided to restrict office attendance to one individual attending on a Tuesday and Friday only until further notice. This arrangement, we feel, balances business needs with minimising the need for staff to leave their home;
 - Steps will be taken to remove the need for regular office attendance altogether through cloud-based server back-ups and mail redirection to a staff member's home address.

The CEO confirmed that a report will be prepared in order to update Management Committee on these further measures.

The Office Bearers expressed thanks to the Management Team and staff for their continued work to mitigate the impact of Coronavirus on CHA's services.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for attending and the meeting ended at 18.45.