MINUTES OF THE 548TH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF WILLIAMSBURGH HOUSING ASSOCIATION, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 24TH JULY 2024 AT 6PM (HYBRID)

PRESENT:	J. Scott	Chairperson
	M. Symons	
	R. Coelho	
	D. Eadie	
	A. Ballantine	
	C. Henry	
	Cllr. M. MacLaren	
	O. Ikeh	Co-optee
	G.L. John	Co-optee
OBSERVER:	[redacted]	
IN ATTENDANCE:	J. Grant	Chief Executive Officer
	L. Ramsay	Head of Finance & Corporate Services
	L. Ferrie	Head of Housing
	G. Scott	Head of Development
	L. Reynolds	Head of Property Services
	[redacted]	C&T (for item 3)

1. (a) Apologies

Apologies were received from J. Kerr, T. Thomson, E. McDermott (Committee members), F. Stewart and L. MacKinnon (Co-optees).

(b) Declarations of Interest

Cllr. M. MacLaren declared an interest in Item 9 and would not participate in the item.

2. (a) Minutes of Management Committee Meeting: 29.05.24 (No.547)

The minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 29th May 2024 (No.547) were proposed correct, on a motion proposed by M. Symons, seconded by D. Eadie.

(b) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Accounts 2023/24

[redacted] from C&T presented a summary report highlighting the scope and findings of the 2023/24 audit of the accounts. [redacted] advised that there was an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and that no control weaknesses or governance issues had been identified. [redacted] noted a continuing strong cash position and good evidence of effective control of costs.

The Committee welcomed the positive outcome and thanked all the staff involved.

The recommendations were approved – annual accounts approved for signature, re-appointment of C&T as external auditors (to be endorsed at AGM), authorised the signing of the letter of representation – proposed by C. Henry, seconded by M. Symons.

4. Assurance Statement: Self-Assessment Review

J. Grant presented the report, noting that the self-assessment process has been thoroughly reviewed following the publication of the revised SFHA Toolkit in Aprill 2024. The Assurance Statement self-assessment document is subject to a rolling review where any material changes to compliance are recorded; this means it is a "living" document" with changes being made, in response to events. The review of the self-assessment document includes a note of areas for improvement and whether these are material non-compliance issues or non-material non-compliance issues (improvement actions). A revised and expanded "*Evidence Bank*" is also available for Committee members. This contains relevant documents and other material that supports each individual self-assessment question.

A member welcomed the comprehensive review and the progress made in making the supporting evidence more easily accessible to the Committee.

A member highlighted the importance of tenant engagement and the requirement to keep developing tenant scrutiny. How is this progressing? J. Grant advised that a range of activity covering surveys, consultation and focus groups has been undertaken. More feedback has come from on-line engagement than face to face activity. A tenant action group to engage directly on scrutiny is being developed.

The Committee noted the report.

5. Management Committee Annual Appraisal Review

J. Grant presented the report, summarising the outcomes and proposed priorities for the Committee's annual appraisals, Chairperson's appraisal, succession plan, training plan, 9-year rule decision and the CEO's appraisal. Overall, it was determined that there was effective engagement by members, good information provided, constructive debate and challenge at meetings and a good range of skills and experience amongst the Committee.

The Committee discussed the report findings and identified further actions to encourage improved communications between members: WhatsApp group, Committee team building event and personal biography for each member. The Committee also asked J. Grant to bring options for the proposed governance review to the September Committee meeting and to arrange further training attendance updates.

The Succession Plan and Training Plan were approved, as was the recommendation that M. Symons would remain on the Committee, following sufficient assurance having been received of continuing effectiveness - proposed by C. Henry, seconded by A. Ballantine.

6. Annual General Meeting 2024

J. Grant presented the report and summarised the plans for the Annual General Meeting (AGM 2024). Changes had been made to encourage greater attendance from both members and non-members. Attendees would have the opportunity to meet with both staff and external agencies, prior to and following the AGM, a prize draw will be included, and regular advertising will also be used.

The AGM plan was approved, proposed by D. Eadie, seconded by J. Scott.

7. Equalities and Human Rights Strategy

L. Ferrie presented the report, explaining that the primary focus of the strategy will be to ensure that every tenant and service user can access our services without facing barriers because of their protective characteristics. The strategy's initial focus is to improve data quality so that targeted actions can be made to reduce any barriers to accessing services for people with protected characteristics. It is also important to note that the strategy aims to amend any current services where barriers are identified, and not, at this stage, to create new services.

A member welcomed the strategy and asked what training would be provided? L. Ferrie advised that training for staff and Committee would be provided, building on previous training already provided.

7. Equalities and Human Rights Strategy Contd.

The recommendations were approved – the Equalities and Human Rights Strategy was approved, and the consultation exercise endorsed - proposed by M. Symons, seconded by R. Coelho.

8. Chief Executive's Report

J. Grant presented the report, noting that the refurbishment works to Ralston house were now complete with all staff now returned to the office. He also advised that the Scottish Government had confirmed an award of grant from its Net Zero fund to install internal wall insulation. A membership application was also presented.

L. Ramsay highlighted a consultation request from TPT about its review of its statement of investment principles. Due to the technical nature of the material, it was recommended that no response was provided.

A member thanked staff for the work on the grant application and welcomed the award which would help to reduce energy bills.

The recommendations were approved - to not comment on the TPT review and to approve the membership application, proposed by J. Scott, seconded by C. Henry.

9. Strategic Objectives Q1 2024

J. Grant presented the report, noting that steady progress has been achieved against the objectives. Highlights include good progression of the Cartha Cresent development project, preparation works for the new business plan, ongoing HR strategies being embedded into policies and practice and the Estates team pilot. Furthermore, works were under way for the next part of the GDPR compliance project and the year 1 projects of the Digital Roadmap. He advised that staffing issues, the closure of the office for the refurbishment works and the comprehensive review of the assurance statement self-assessment evidence had put added pressure on resources.

A member asked if it was still the aim to purchase properties on the open market with Scottish Government (SG) grant subsidy? J. Grant advised there had not yet been an announcement from the SG on funding allocations, but we would be seeking to access the fund to enable purchases this year.

A member asked if we could purchase without subsidy? J. Grant noted that the current policy is to purchase with grant, but purchases could be made without it. Depending on the purchase price, this could still provide a strong business case without subsidy.

9. Strategic Objectives Q1 2024 Contd.

The Committee noted the report.

10. Strategic Risk Management

L. Ramsay presented the report, highlighting the status of the risk register and noting 2 new risks had been added. The first related to identified structural issues at a garden retaining wall, the second to an internal audit recommendation on the inclusion of complaints handling to the register.

A member asked what progress had been made on the retaining wall? L. Reynolds advised that the project plan was being delivered with Health and Safety systems in place, survey work underway, customer communications, legal advice, insurance input and liaison with Renfrewshire Council. Updates are also being provided at each Operations and Performance sub-committee.

The Committee noted the report.

11. Secretary's Annual report

J. Grant presented the report, confirming that Rules 62-68 have been complied with, as required by the Association's rules.

The Committee noted the report.

12. Minutes for the 7th FAC and 6th O&P sub-committee meetings

The Committee noted the minutes.

13. Any Other Business

A request for special leave of absence from the Committee until October 2024 was approved for T. Thomson.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting

J. Scott thanked everyone for their attendance and advised that the next scheduled meeting of Williamsburgh Housing Association's Management Committee would be the **Annual General Meeting, Wednesday, 11th September 2024 at 7.00pm, Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew**

The next scheduled Management Committee meeting following the AGM would be **Wednesday, 25th September 2024 at 6:00 pm, (Hybrid)**

CHAIRPERSON: **……**

DATE: **……**