

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 6.30 P.M. VIA VIDEO LINK.

<u>ACTION</u>	<p><b>Present:</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Ms D. Smith</b></td><td><b>Elected Member (Chairperson)</b></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Mr J. Calderwood</b></td><td><b>Elected Member</b></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Mr P. Shiach</b></td><td><b>Elected Member</b></td></tr> </table> <p><b>Quorum required: 3 members (excluding co-opted)</b>  <b>Quorum achieved: Yes</b></p> <p><b>In Attendance:</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Mr J. Farrell</b></td><td><b>Head of Housing Services</b></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Mr J. Devlin</b></td><td><b>Acting Housing Services Manager</b></td></tr> </table> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Apologies</b>  Apologies were received from Ms L. Breeze, Mr J. O'Donnell and Cllr M. McNair.</li> <li>2. <b>Election of Sub-Committee Chairperson</b>  Following discussion, Ms D. Smith was duly elected as Chairperson of the sub-committee.</li> <li>3. <b>Chairperson's Remarks</b>  There were no Chairperson's remarks.</li> <li>4. <b>Declaration of Interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest.</li> <li>5. <b>Business carried over from last meeting</b>  There was no business carried over, with any updates contained in the reports presented.</li> <li>6. <b>Correspondence</b>  The Head of Housing Services circulated a letter dated 21 October 2020 from the Scottish Government's Housing Minister appealing to RSL's to increase the number of Homeless applicants rehoused in line with local authority rapid rehousing transition programme guidance.   Following discussion, it was confirmed that CHA had agreed to the Council's targets as set out in their Rapid Rehousing Transition Programme and that this had been confirmed by the sub-committee in September 2020 and notified to the Council.   No action is therefore required.</li> <li>7. <b>Q2 2020/21 Void &amp; Lettings Report</b>  The Head of Housing Services and the Housing Services Manager ran over the report circulated prior to the meeting, with the following points raised or noted:</li> </ol>	<b>Ms D. Smith</b>	<b>Elected Member (Chairperson)</b>	<b>Mr J. Calderwood</b>	<b>Elected Member</b>	<b>Mr P. Shiach</b>	<b>Elected Member</b>	<b>Mr J. Farrell</b>	<b>Head of Housing Services</b>	<b>Mr J. Devlin</b>	<b>Acting Housing Services Manager</b>
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<u>ACTION</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that the report contained information for the quarter re-lets only and that summary data on the second page will included the details of year to date figures for all re-lets. This format was requested previously by the sub-committee.</li> </ul> <p>No further points were raised or noted.</p> <p><b>8. Q2 2020/21 Allocations Report</b> The Head of Housing Services covered the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points raised or noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that void and re-let levels, although increasing, still remain well below previous year's figures. This is linked to the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic. Numbers are expected to increase as lockdown measures are eased.</li> <li>It was noted that despite the pandemic lockdown, there had been no negative impact on refusals of housing.</li> <li>It was noted that on page 17 of the report that the table referring to the time to process housing application forms should have had 2020 as the year and not 2019. This will be amended for the next report.</li> </ul> <p>No further questions or points were raised.</p> <p><b>9. Q2 2020/21 Anti-social Behaviour &amp; Estate Management Report</b> The Head of Housing Services ran through the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points raised or noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that all complaints have been concluded within the target timescales.</li> <li>It was asked if the serious complaint received had been linked to a social gathering during lockdown. It was advised that although this information was not readily available in the report that it was likely. This will be checked and confirmed by email to Committee following the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>No further questions or points were raised.</p> <p><b>10. Q2 2020/21 Arrears Management Report</b> The Head of Housing Services ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was noted that gross arrears fell by 0.2% (£8,769) between August and September 2020, with a fall of 0.11% (£4,290) between quarter 1 and quarter 2. This followed extra staffing resources being put in place and all staff taking an active approach to arrears recovery. Given the consistent rise in arrears since the start of the financial</li> </ul>
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year, this is a welcome decrease and provides a platform for staff to push on from.

The remainder of the report was noted with no further questions asked. The policy was unanimously approved.

**11. Q2 2020/21 Universal Credit Report**

The Head of Housing Services ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:

- It was noted that despite a rise in UC cases, UC arrears had dropped in line with the overall fall in arrears as noted in the arrears management report.
- It was also noted that the average UC arrears figure had dropped and that the budgeted estimate of £50k for the financial year was almost exact in September.
- It was highlighted that as Covid-19 lockdown restrictions eased that processing of UC cases and payments should improve allowing a further drop in arrears.

The remainder of the report was noted with no further questions asked.

**12. Policy Review - High Risk Offenders Policy**

The Head of Housing Services ran over the policy issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:

- It was noted that this is a West Dunbartonshire Council led policy and that in the absence of a review by the Council, the Policy was presented for approval in its existing form with a recommendation that we continue to use it.

The Policy was unanimously approved.

**13. Policy Review - Arrears Management Policy**

The Head of Housing Services ran over the policy issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:

- The main addition to the policy was the inclusion of arrears management measures taken or added as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Following discussion, the sub-committee agreed that the additions were welcome and that they were satisfied that they offered support and assistance to tenants whilst offering protection to CHA as far as is possible in the circumstances.

No further points were noted and the policy was unanimously approved.

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<p><u>ACTION</u></p> <p>JF</p>	<p><b>14. Policy Review – Emergency Decant Policy</b></p> <p>The Head of Housing Services ran over the policy issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was highlighted that the policy review afforded more protection to CHA and tenants via the inclusion of health and safety checks, which although already taking place were not previously mentioned in the policy.</li></ul> <p>No further points were raised and the policy was unanimously approved.</p> <p><b>15. Dogs in multi-storey flats review</b></p> <p>The Head of Housing Services ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lengthy discussion took place regarding the report, during which several scenarios were discussed without consensus being reached. The sub-committee agreed that given the unlikely chances of the Association being able to effectively operate the policy in its current form, that a review was required.</li></ul> <p>It was however acknowledged that changing the policy to allow the keeping of dogs after so many years and with such a broad range of views amongst tenants that a number of anti-social issues and tenant dissatisfaction could quickly arise.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Head of Housing Services go ahead and amend the current policy in line with the report recommendations and bring this to the next HSSC meeting in January 2021 for further discussion. At this point, if the sub-committee cannot agree a way forward then the policy will be presented to the Management Committee.</p> <p>No further points were raised.</p> <p><b>16. Review of Cage Storage Areas at Radnor Park</b></p> <p>The Head of Housing Services ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The sub-committee agreed that the measures as outlined in the report would enable a fair and safe method of reallocating cages to tenants going forward. It was however agreed that no such actions should take place until after the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown measures had passed in full.</li></ul> <p>It was unanimously agreed to recommence the issuing of cages in line with the new procedure as outlined above.</p>
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<p><u>ACTION</u></p> <p>JF</p>	<p><b>17. Young Care Leavers Housing Protocol</b></p> <p>The Head of Housing Services ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was noted that the protocol did not only involve the issuing of a tenancy to any care leaver, but also the Association having to cover the rent charge for the duration.</li><li>• Whilst the sub-committee liked the idea of assisting the Council via the protocol, they did not feel that CHA should pay the rental charge as this in effect would come from other tenants rent money.</li><li>• It was agreed that the Head of Housing Services approach the Council to discuss whether or not funding was available to pay the rent charge and bring the protocol back for further discussion following this.</li></ul> <p>No further points were raised.</p> <p><b>18. Code of Conduct for Approved Contractors and Contractors Performance</b></p> <p>The Acting Housing Services Manager referred to the policy issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In order to recognise contractor's role as representatives of the Association the existing code of conduct has been updated to bring it in line with staffs' code of conduct.</li></ul> <p>The Policy was unanimously approved.</p> <p>The Acting Housing Services Manager then referred to the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following points noted or raised;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Due to the high level of information still to be submitted from contractors due to COVID working arrangements statistics provided were based on those works which all relevant information could be extracted from.</li><li>• The number of jobs raised within the period in comparison to the previous year is substantially lower. It was stated that this is attributed directly to COVID-19 and a drop in overall performance could therefore be attributed to the effect each failure has on the overall figures.</li><li>• Performance statistics will be addressed during contractor meetings to be carried out during November and December for those contractors who have not met KPI's in a minimum of 90% of works orders submitted to them.</li></ul> <p>The remainder of the report was noted with no further questions asked.</p>
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ACTION**19. General Maintenance Report**

The Acting Housing Services manager ran over the report issued prior to the meeting, with the following decisions made, points noted or raised:

- Stock Condition 2020/21. Surveys are to be commence in December this year however this is subject to change based on any further Government COVID-19 restrictions. A final report will be submitted to the Association no later than 20th February 2021 along with an updated LCC database incorporating all recent major repairs works.
- Procurement – Reactive Repairs Contractors and Painter work contracts are to be uploaded to Public Contract Scotland in the coming weeks following the completion of the ESPD stage of the process. The Association remains on track to complete the process for both contracts in February 2021.
- Electrical remedial works at Radnor Park – The following points were noted or raised;

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- First time central heating at Dumbarton Road – Union Technical Services have been appointed as a consultant to identify and apply for all available funding revenues available for the scheme. A notice of interest for LCITP funding has been submitted however notification of the outcome of funding applications will not likely be provided until April 2021.

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- Out of Hours Service – Following a meeting with WDC representatives it was stated that an extension to the current agreement for WDC to provide an out of hours service for emergency repairs to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 had been reached in principle. WDC will now submit revised costs to provide the service which will need to be accepted by the Association. Based on costs provided from other sources it was stated that an increase in costs based on a percentage increase would likely still provide value for money.

The remainder of the report was noted, with no further points raised.

**20. ARC Statistical Reports**

The Acting Housing Services Manager noted an issue with regards to opening the Maintenance ARC statistical report for Maintenance indicators excluding SHQS and EESSH data. It was stated that a revised report distributed again just prior to the meeting did not contain all the information and that a revised report will be distributed to the Management Committee for review. The contents of the full report were reported by the Acting Housing Services Manager with the content noted by the Sub-Committee.

It was highlighted that due to Covid-19 restrictions, works to achieve SHQS and EESSH compliance had been halted. These works had recommenced and will be reported at the next Housing Services Sub-Committee meeting.

The remainder of the report was noted with no questions asked

**21. Cyclical & Major Repairs Reports**

The Acting Housing Services Manager ran over the reports circulated prior to the meeting, with the following points raised or noted:

- It was highlighted that due to Covid-19 restrictions, major repair works had been largely affected. This has meant that most programmed works were halted. Works have now recommenced and every effort is being made to ensure that work re-commences or commences during the current financial year. This is subject to any further disruptions as a result of the Government's Pandemic response measures.
- It was noted that cyclical works remain on target, with the exception of the gas safety check failures noted in the report caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown.

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ACTION**22. Carbon Management Report**

The Acting Housing Services Manager referred to the report distributed prior to the meeting and noted that due to COVID progress had slowed with regards to most targets set out within the report. It was noted however that all works identified as part of the office refurbishment had been completed with the exception of lighting upgrades.

The remainder of the report was noted with no questions asked

**23. Training Session – Contractor Performance**

The Head of Housing Services provided a short training session to the sub-committee on what to look out for in the arrears management report. This included:

- Highlighting the columns in the Contractors Performance report showing the percentage achieved and comments.
- Questioning where reasons were not included in the report for performance which was below 90%.
- Explanation of the links between contractor performance and void/standard/emergency repair times, budgets and customer service.

**24. Agree Next Training Session**

A further training topic will be agreed in advance of the next meeting.

**25. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19 January 2021 at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed

APPROVED .....

PROPOSED .....

SECONDED .....

**JF/JD 20/11/2020**