

Present: David O'Hara (Chair)
Josephine Barnshaw
Helen Eakin
Elsbeth Kerr
Alex Kerr
Joan McFarlane
David Riddell

In attendance: Pauline Burke, Director)
Jacqueline McGoran, Finance & Corporate Services Manager
Marisa McCarthy, Senior Housing Officer
Alex Gemmell, Temp Senior Maintenance Officer
Anne E Smith, Corporate Services and Finance Officer
(minute taker)

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from K Watt, V Ogar and K Nubor.

2. Declaration of interest

2.1 A Kerr declared an interest at agenda item 8.1. All staff present declared an interest at agenda item 9.2.

3. Minute of the previous meeting held Tuesday 24 January 2023

3(i) The minute of the meeting on 24 January 2023 was proposed by E Kerr and seconded by J McFarlane. No corrections were noted.

3(ii) The minute of the confidential meeting held on 24 January 2023 was proposed by H Eakin and seconded by E Kerr. No corrections were noted.

3.1 Meeting Action list 2022/23

3.1.1 P Burke presented and asked for approval of the meeting action list 2022/23.

3.1.2 Members approved the meeting action list for 2022/23.

4. Matters arising

4.1 There were no matters arising noted.

5. Director's Report

5.1 Approve Rent Review

5.1.1 M McCarthy presented the report to members, covering the detail contained within the report.

5.1.2 26.14% of tenants responded to the rent consultation on the Board agreed proposed rent increase of 5.55% for 2023/24.

5.1.3 Of those responding 53.33% agreed with the rent proposal, 17.5% disagreed and 29.17% neither agreed or had an opinion.

5.1.4 M McCarthy discussed with Board the results of the consultation and comments received as part of the rent consultation which were noted by Board.

5.1.5 After discussion the Board approved the rent increase of 5.55%

5.2 Final Budget review 2023/24

5.2.1 J McGoran presented the final budget for review and approval.

5.2.2 Board were advised the budget was based on the Board approved rent increase of 5.55% for 2023/24. J McGoran advised Board of the changes made to the draft Budget presented at January 2023 Board meeting.

5.2.3 Changes (net decrease in expenditure) have been made to the initial draft budget previously presented at the meeting of 24 January 2023 (surplus £475,745):

- £ - (774) Housing Management : Mainly higher allpay charges
- £ + (26,568) Maintenance: Mainly reduction in painterworks
- £ + (35,077) Staff Costs: Staff restructure and lower headcount
- £ - (4,800) Administrative Costs : Mainly Printing & H&S
- £ - (283) Technology Costs : Mainly Microsoft Office & SDM text
- £ - (3,000) Consultancy : Cyber Essentials added per Brightridge
- £ - (733) Finance & Other Operating Costs : Increase in OFA depreciation

- £ + (9,048) Finance Income : Increase in deposit rates
- £ - (1,918) Finance Costs : Increase in BASE/SONIA loan rates

5.2.4 The net effect of these adjustments resulted in an increase of the budgeted surplus by £59,185. The final surplus for the 23/24 budget is now forecasted at £534,929. J McGoran advised Board that the recently approved staff structure had been incorporated into the final budget resulting in a saving of just over £35k

5.2.5 In addition to these changes the opening cash balance was re-forecasted to £2M after taking account of budgeted variances at Q3 22/23 and projected to 31 March 2023

5.2.6 J McGoran advised Board that the budget meets both interest and asset cover covenants which are met by the year end.

5.2.7 J McGoran invited any questions or comments after which the Board approved the Budget.

5.3 Board Effectiveness review Quarter 3

5.3.1 P Burke presented the report and action plan from the annual board effectiveness review. Members noted the progress of the actions.

5.3.2 Board approved the updated Action Plan.

5.4 Equality and Human Rights report – Quarter 3

5.4.1 P Burke presented the report and action plan for equality and human rights.

5.4.2 A review of the Equality Action plan will be carried out in the first quarter of 2023/24. Members were asked to consider joining a small working group to take this forward. Members, J McFarlane, H Eakin and E Kerr agreed to take part in the working group.

5.4.3 The Equality Action Plan was approved by Board.

6. Housing and Technical Report

6.1 Housing Management report – Quarter 3 2022/23

6.1.1 M McCarthy presented the quarterly Housing Management report providing performance against KPI's for the third quarter. Key areas were highlighted.

- 6.1.2 Gross rent arrears improved slightly reducing from 2.77% at the end of Quarter 2 to 2.73% at the end of quarter 3.
- 6.1.3 Average days to relet a void property improved slightly in Quarter 3 from 17.47days to 16.07 days but is still higher than the target of 10 days.
- 6.1.4 E Kerr asked what the reasons were for the increase in re-let times. M McCarthy advised it was due to a number of reasons in particular that some of the conditions that voids had been in required additional works. AG confirmed that he would bring a more detailed report of the voids to the next meeting.
- 6.1.5 25 ASB and neighbour disputes were received to 31 December 2023. Only one case wasn't resolved as this was received immediately prior to the Xmas holiday period, this has now been resolved.
- 6.1.6 SPSO complaints received to date totalled 24 with all being responded to within appropriate timescales.
- 6.1.7 Welfare rights outcomes continued to prove crucial to the tenants of DHC with a total of 36 appointments attended, with financial gains totalling £27,611.27.
- 6.1.8 The Tenancy Sustainment Fund proves to be a vital lifeline to our tenants, with many facing financial difficulties during the cost of living crisis. The housing management team assisted tenants with food parcels, food vouchers, fuel vouchers, decoration allowance and new tenant rent incentive.
- 6.1.9 DHCL were successful in securing £17,500 from Social Housing Fuel Support Fund administered by the SFHA. This has allowed us to purchase energy vouchers, energy efficient light bulbs and high tog duvets which have been available to all tenants. We also have secured a limited amount for purchasing flooring for those tenants we have identified as being in need.
- 6.1.10 M McCarthy was also delighted to update Board that we recently received notification that our application to the Winter Hardship Fund administered by the SFHA has been successful and DHCL have been awarded £23,950. This means the Co-operative will be able to distribute a £50 food voucher to every tenant.
- 6.1.11 Board noted the contents of the report.

6.2 Bad debt write-off report – Quarter 3

6.2.1 M McCarthy presented the report to Board asking for approval of bad debt write offs totalling £1,683.00 for quarter three.

6.2.2 Board approved former tenant rent arrears totalling £1683.00 to be written off.

6.3 Planned and Cyclical progress report 2022/23

6.3.1 A Gemmell presented the report to Board giving the position of the planned and cyclical programs for 2022/23.

6.3.2 A Gemmell asked Board to note the following: -

- All planned maintenance on bathrooms, kitchens, boilers and windows are complete with the exception of one window installation that has been scheduled for March 2023.
- The planned maintenance program with exception of Kitchen and boilers were completed within budget. Kitchen and Boilers were overspent by £2,892 which was due to additional works required due to changes in drawings and additional boiler installation charges.
- All cyclical programs are now complete with real cost savings experienced on both the painterwork and gutter cleaning programs of approximately £10k.
- This section of the minute has been removed from the public record as it is commercially sensitive.

6.3.3 Board noted the contents of the report.

6.4 Adhoc Component Replacement Report

6.4.1 A Gemmell presented the report to Board requesting an increase of £25,000 to the ad hoc component replacement budget to reflect the projected position of boiler replacements to 31.03.2023.

6.4.2 As noted at previous Board meeting, the trend for replacing boilers has continued with a total of 38 ad hoc boilers replaced this year to date.

6.4.3 A Gemmell presented the findings of an exercise carried out to identify boiler makes and models that were replaced to see if there was a common make/model. Board discussed the findings but agreed that boiler replacements were essential therefore agreed the increase to the budget of £25,000.

6.5 Approved Contractors List

6.5.1 AG presented the report to Board requesting to add two additional contractors to our approved contractors list. This request was to ensure the Co-operative obtains value for money for essential maintenance works.

6.5.2 After a lengthy discussion, Board approved All Pest Services & DG Roofing to the approved contractors list.

6.6 Stock Condition Survey

6.6.1 A Gemmell presented his report to Board requesting an increase to the 2022/23 budget and to appoint David Adamson and Partners Ltd as contractor to carry out the stock condition survey this year.

6.6.2 Board approved increase to budget to [REDACTED] and the appointment of David Adamson and Partners Ltd to complete the surveys.

7. Policy review

7.1 Policy Review report

7.1.1 PB presented the following policies to the Board for approval.

7.1(i) Social Media policy

7.1(ii) Disaster recovery and business continuity plan

7.1.2 Board approved the above policies.

8. Governance

A Kerr left the meeting at this point.

8.1 Membership Report

8.1.1 There were 53 prospective members on the membership report for approval.

8.1.2 Board approved 53 prospective members and 5 share certificates.

A Kerr returned to the meeting at this point.

8.2 Ethical Conduct and Notifiable Events

8.2.1 There are no ethical conducts to report, and no notifiable events submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator since the last Board meeting.

9. Audit, Risk and Staffing sub-Committee

9.1 The minute of the meeting on 10 November 2022 was approved by Members.

***A Smith, A Gemmell and M McCarthy left the meeting at this point.
They did not return to the meeting.***

9.2 The Board approved the recommendations from the Audit, Risk and Staffing sub-Committee.

10. Any Other Competent Business

10.1 There was no competent business discussed.

11. Date of next meeting

11.1 The next Board meeting will take place on **Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 6.00pm**

Chair.....Date.....