

Minutes of the Regional Networks Chairs & Secretaries Meeting
4 May 2021 via Zoom

Present:

Colin Stewart		North of Scotland	1
Leonora Montgomery		North of Scotland	1
Terry Kirby		South East Scotland	2
Cath McArthur		South East Scotland	2
John McKenzie (Mac)		South West Scotland	3
Margaret Dymond		South West Scotland	3
Bruce Cuthbertson		South West Scotland	3
Anne Cameron		South West Scotland	3
June Anderson		Central Scotland	4
Hugh McClung		Central Scotland	4
Philomena McClung		Central Scotland	4
Shona Gorman		Central Scotland	4

In Attendance:

Susan McLellan		Scottish Government	SG
Carolynne Watson		Scottish Government	SG
Annabel Hoatson		Scottish Government	SG

Apologies:

Jemma Stewart		Scottish Government	SG
Lillias Reid		South East Scotland	2
Alan Dunton		South East Scotland	2

Item		Action
1	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>Anne Cameron, Temporary Chair of Region 3, welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>	
2	<p><u>Previous Minutes of 2 February 2021 and matters arising.</u></p> <p>Matters arising:</p>	

	<p>Leonora noted some corrections:</p> <p>Page 3 - 5th Paragraph - Last sentence does not read right. Page 4 4 - 1st Line - 'are we' should be 'we are'. Page 4 - 4th Paragraph - remove 'have' before 'seem' on 2nd line. Page 4 – 4th Paragraph - Last line - remove 'it' after 'PB'. Page 4 - 6th Paragraph - 4th line - should be 'would' after PB. Page 4 - 6th Paragraph 5th line - 'included' should be 'including'. Page 4 - 6th Paragraph 6th line - 'lightning' should be 'lighting' and 'that' should be 'than'. Page 6 - 4th Paragraph 11th line - insert 'the' before 'community'. Page 7 - 1st Paragraph 3rd line - 'discussing' should be 'discuss'. Page 8 - 6th Paragraph 3rd line - 'that' should be 'the'. Page 9 - 4th Paragraph last line - 'for' should be 'to'. Page 10 - 4th Paragraph 4th line - remove 'is' after 'RSL'. Page 10 - 5th Paragraph 2nd last line - insert 'is' between 'it' and 'too'. Page 13 - 1st Paragraph 3rd line - remove 'there' at the end of line. Page 13 - 2nd Paragraph 2nd last line - replace 'this shall' with 'will'. Page 16 - 1st Paragraph 1st line - replace 'so' with 'is'. Page 16 - 6th Paragraph last line - first word should be 'interested'</p> <p><u>Minutes approved by:</u> Margaret Dymond, Region 3, Leonora Montgomery, Region 2.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Nothing to update</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>HRA update</u></p> <p>Hugh advised that the HRA sub-group had now reconvened with the following members: Hugh, Gerald Lowe, Tom O'Brien, John (Mac) McKenzie, Margaret Anderson, Anne Cameron, Hugh McClung, June Anderson, Frances McGonagle.</p> <p>A meeting was held with Kevin Stewart, Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, on 2 March 2021, Hugh advised the group that he had to put in his apologies for this meeting and June Anderson put forward Hugh's question in his absence.</p>	

	<p>The Minister noted the points and concerns of the Regional Network members in attendance and suggested a meeting take place between the sub-group and the Chair of the Accounts Commission to discuss these matters further.</p> <p>Hugh noted some background in relation to the issue, advising the group that he wrote to Audit Scotland, with guidance from the TP team, giving a background to the current guidance on HRA spending, background to how the networks became involved in this and subsequent questions. Audit Scotland replied on the 29th March which Hugh felt did not fully address the points raised in his letter.</p> <p>The meeting between the Accounts Commission of Audit Scotland and the HRA sub-group took place on 26 April. Hugh provided an overview of the meeting and some of the questions that were raised, for example, how would Audit Scotland get detailed information from local authorities on spend and how would they confirm this was being done in line with legislation and guidance? The sub-group members also asked the Accounts Commission team how they ensure HRA accounts are properly managed and what steps tenants can take if they believe this is not the case.</p> <p>Hugh stated he found the meeting disappointing as in his view, the Accounts Commission were not forth coming in their response regarding HRA money being spent on non-housing related projects, and it appeared that Audit Scotland were not in a position to direct local authorities or to take specific actions in relation to use of the HRA and the sub-group members in attendance agreed with this view.</p> <p>Hugh finished by saying he believes a constructive relationship with the Accounts Commission will be important to reinforce the views and priorities of tenants, and that further meetings will be helpful to reach a conclusion.</p> <p>Carolynne Watson, TP Team, stated that the Accounts Commission team were open to hearing further questions and points from the sub-group and it was agreed further meetings would help keep the momentum going with this work.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Rent Consultation and Affordability Focus group update</u></p> <p>Terry Kirby starts the discussion by saying that the focus group's first meeting took place on the 4th March with 8 representatives. Since then there was a meeting in April and the third meeting taking place in May.</p>	

	<p>Terry stated that he received a response from the Minister of Local Government, Housing and Planning regarding rent affordability but felt the response did not fully address his questions. Terry went on to say very little is known about how rents are set and about tenant engagement and that Covid-19 has affected how rent changes and the group hopes to consider this as part of their meetings.</p> <p>Colin Stewart noted that he hasn't come across any affordability tool that takes into account house costs such as heating and lighting and says that it is something that will be important as the group's work progresses.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Heat in Buildings consultation update</u></p> <p>Annabel Hoatson opened up the conversation by saying that some network members attended a webinar in early March regarding the Heat in Buildings consultation. Annabel also said that she arranged for Graeme Wilson from TPAS to meet with some network members on the 13th and 20th April 2021.</p> <p>Annabel advised that the consultation had now been completed and submitted by the Networks.</p> <p>General feedback on the sessions was that there was a lot of technical terms that were quite difficult to understand at times but the second session seemed easier and the Networks member who attended the session answered the questions to the best of their ability and knowledge.</p> <p>Annabel thanked the Network members for attending and for completing the consultation.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>AGM discussion</u></p> <p>The AGMs will be taking place virtually this year, with support from TIS and TPAS, and the dates were noted for each Region.</p> <p>Region 1 – Saturday 15th May Region 2 – Saturday 8 May Region 3 – Saturday 5 June Region 4 – Saturday 22 May</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Meetings Held – Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHR Liaison Group – Leonora Montgomery tells the group there is an upcoming meeting of the Liaison group with SHR and representatives will update on the rent focus group, the HRA group and AGMs. Leonora notified the group that the SHR would be recruiting for two new board members over the next few months and also noted the 	

	<p>review of the Charter consultation would be launching in June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Social Security – Annabel Hoatson tells the group that she has contacted the team that were leading on the Housing and Social Security group and they said are going to reconvene this group. • Age, Home and Community Group – Annabel Hoatson tells the group that she contacted Margaret Irving and Mandy Brown regarding this group and she understands that this group will not be reconvening under this format but believes under the Housing to 2040 they will be looking at their objectives within that remit and this may reconvene under a different name. • Fire Safety - nothing to update • Communications subgroup – Annabel Hoatson tells the group that the Communications sub group last met on the 24th March. Colin Stewart tells the group that a newsletter for the website should be starting in June. 	
9.	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <p>Housing to 2040 update: Susan McLellan told the group that the H2040 document was published last month and that Network members would be involved in this in the near future</p>	
9.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>Anne Cameron thanked everyone for attending and a vote of thanks was given to Anne for chairing the meeting.</p> <p>11AM on Tuesday 3rd August 2021 via Zoom.</p>	