

Virtual Chairs and Secretaries Meeting Tuesday 3rd August 2021

Approved Minutes

Present:

Colin Stewart		North of Scotland	1
Leonora Montgomery		North of Scotland	1
Liz Richardson		North of Scotland	1
Steve Byrne		North of Scotland	1
Isabella Vint		South East Scotland	2
Bill Campbell		South East Scotland	2
Bruce Cuthbertson		South West Scotland	3
Margaret Dymond		South West Scotland	3
Norma Ferguson		South West Scotland	3
Mac Mckenzie		South West Scotland	3
Hugh McClung MBE		Central Scotland	4
Shona Gorman		Central Scotland	4
Lindsay Anderson		Central Scotland	4

In Attendance:

Susan McLellan		Scottish Government	SG
Carolynne Watson		Scottish Government	SG
Annabel Hoatson		Scottish Government	SG
Tony Cain		ALACHO	

Apologies:

Jemma Stewart		Scottish Government	SG
Cath McArthur		South East Scotland	2
Alan Frank		South East Scotland	2
Frances McGonagle		Central Scotland	4

Item		Action
1	<p><u>Welcome and Introductions</u></p> <p>Hugh McClung MBE welcomed everyone to the meeting and made the group aware that Tony Cain from ALACHO would be joining the meeting later on.</p>	
2	<p><u>Previous Minutes of 4 May 2021 and matters arising.</u></p> <p>Leonora Montgomery noted on page 2, item 2 the misspelling of Gerald Low's name. Annabel noted that this would be corrected.</p> <p><u>Minutes approved by:</u> Margaret Dymond, Region 3, Bruce Cuthbertson, Region 3.</p>	
3	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Nothing to update</p>	
4.	<p><u>Meeting with Shona Robison MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government</u></p> <p>Hugh gives a quick briefing of the above and told the group that the Cabinet Secretary's private office were approached for dates to meet with the new Cabinet Secretary who is taking on the "mantle" of housing in her own individual right.</p> <p>Hugh continues by saying he had agreed with the TP team that he should write and ask for a possible date, which he did and the agreed date, subject to parliamentary business, is the 22nd September at 1:30pm. A pre meeting will take place on 1 September.</p> <p>Hugh reminded the group that usually each chair and one other person from the four networks would be in attendance at these meetings however he asked if this should be done on a rota basis or to be decided by each network. Susan clarified that the networks decide as a committee who should attend these meetings and if they wish, can check lists of who has attended at previous meetings to help come to a decision.</p>	

	<p>Hugh opened up a discussion by asking if the group had any questions or points, they would like to raise at this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colin Stewart suggested discussing rents, the different structures in rents and how rents are chosen by landlords with the increasing prices each year. • Bill Campbell said he would like the lack of charging points for mobility scooters to be brought up too. Susan added by saying Geoff Morgan had also mentioned this at meetings. • Shona Gorman suggested bringing up HRA and Heat in Buildings Consultation business. • Bruce Cuthbertson suggested mitigating the cost of tenants of zero emissions to be brought up also. • Steve Byrne would also like the issues with rural broadband to be discussed • Liz Richardson would like accessible housing for disabled people to be discussed 	
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Tony Cain – ALACHO – A discussion on the main issues impacting on Social Housing</u></p> <p>Shona Gorman stated there is great concern about the cost for tenants that the new decarbonisation and zero-emissions measures will bring. Shona continues by saying tenants need to be protected if there are likely to be significant costs.</p> <p>Tony told the group that the next step of that journey was the working group Zero Emissions Social Housing Taskforce group (ZEST) which Tony participated in. The final report is in the process of being ready for publications and that is to try to unpick some of the critical issues.</p> <p>Hugh joined the conversation by asking Tony to consider implications in relation to HRA. Hugh makes Tony aware of the discussion now going on with Audit Scotland relating to the potential spend of some money from some local authority HRA accounts.</p> <p>Tony told Hugh that he was clear that rent money should be spent on landlord services and those services that benefitted tenants as tenants.</p> <p>Colin Stewart asked about affordability and why landlords are charging more for properties in city centres.</p>	

	<p>Tony responded by saying “There are two points, the total cost of rents and how you distribute that amongst tenants”. Tony continues by saying “if you work on the assumptions that everything that the landlord does is funded from rents then essentially you have to divide the total costs by the number of houses and that will be the average rent, how you distribute that (the rent structure) is essentially a zero sum game. If you have to raise £20 million and you have got 20,000 homes, 20 million divided by 20,000 that tells you. How you structure it is a judgement call”</p> <p>Hugh thanked Tony for attending the meeting and asked if he would consider attending a further meeting in the future. Tony stated he would be happy to attend any follow up meeting.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Review of the Charter Consultation</u></p> <p>Hugh asked the group if they felt that the meetings they attended in relation to the above were satisfactory.</p> <p>Steve Byrne felt it was satisfactory. Colin Stewart said he thought that the charter consultation was going to be more of an instructive training to teach people what the charter was rather than going straight into the questions. Susan responded by saying the charter was really focused on the changes if any that are going to be made as opposed to training.</p> <p>Shona Gorman found her session fine and is interested to know what changes landlords think should be made.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Meetings held – updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>HRA Group</u> – Hugh told the group that there was previously a discussion with Audit Scotland and he asked if they had given advice to local authorities regarding the HRA spend on non HRA accounts. Audit Scotland said they could not offer that advice as it was not in their remit. Under the 1987 act Housing revenues money can be spent as long as its legal, however tenants disagree as it should be ring-fenced. • <u>Rent Affordability Group</u> – Colin told the group that they met last week with TPAS and are building the conclusion from it. Lesley from TPAS is going to forward the slides shown on the meeting for comments to be added on some contributions on what the report should mention. • <u>SHR Liaison Group</u> - Leonora told the group they met a couple weeks ago and discussed the national panel of tenants and service users report. Updates at the SHR 	

	<p>meeting included: Covid 19 monthly return which will run quarterly, the recruitment process for two board members had closed and the successful candidates will come into role in early November. Also, the group was advised that the appointment of 4 new board members for their second term which included George Walker, Siobhan White, Andrew Watson and Bob Gill. The group was also updated on the statutory engagement for Fairfield Housing and engagement plans for both Faifley and Caledonia Housing. Publications that are due to come out are Equality and Human Rights, Annual Assurance Statement and the National Report on the Charter. Next meeting in October.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Communications sub-group</u> – Meet tomorrow 4th August. Colin begins talking about the RN website, and told the group that himself and the TP team have been chasing up CIVIC to complete outstanding. Colin goes on and said there are two things awaited, one of which is the subscription service and the other is the new map. CIVIC replied last week and said they would update the website with the subscription service last week but have not heard anything since. Annabel told Colin she had a draft of the newsletter that she would send for viewing. 	
8.	<p><u>H2040</u></p> <p>Susan McLellan told the group that there was nothing to update at this stage but it would be kept on the agenda going forward.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Regional Network training questionnaire update</u></p> <p>Carolynne told the group that there were 4 responses from each of the regional networks. Pulling together responses into a training programme which will cover 3 key areas for direct training. These include: Partnership working, working as a committee, the Future of TP and Engagement. The team are looking to set up a training week which will take place over the course of a few days, and will likely include 3 or 4 half days, involving TIS and TPAS.</p> <p>TPAS will be providing training for chairs and vice chairs, with TIS providing training for new secretaries.</p>	
9.	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <p>Susan told Hugh that she spoke with Tony about meeting with Laura from COSLA and that they should probably meet with their counterpart in the SFHA so that Housing Associations are covered as well.</p>	

	A note of thanks was given to Hugh for chairing the meeting.	
10.	<u>Date of Next meeting</u> Colin asked if meeting start time can move to 10AM and the group agreed Next meeting 2nd November at 10AM and Region 1 to chair.	