

APPROVED MINUTES

Regional Networks
Meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2023
at 10.00

Present:

Gordon Saunders	GS	R2	Meeting Chair	Borders
Colin Stewart	CS	R1	Chair	Aberdeen City
Liz Richardson	LR	R1	Vice Chair	Highlands
Jackie Bugden	JB	R1	Committee Member	Highlands
Linda Lennie	LL	R1	Committee Member	Orkney Islands
Kath Fennell	KF	R1	Committee Member	Orkney Islands
Alex Wilson	AW	R1	Co-optee	Aberdeen
Irina Lazarenko	IL	R2	Vice Chair	Edinburgh
Bill Campbell	BCa	R2	Committee Member	Fife
Alan Dalby	AD	R2	Committee Member	Fife
Anne Cameron	AC	R3	Chair	South Ayrshire
Bruce Cuthbertson	BCu	R3	Vice Chair	East Ayrshire
Margaret Dymond	MD	R3	Committee Member	Renfrewshire
Norma Ferguson	NF	R3	Committee Member	North Ayrshire
Shona Gorman	SG	R4	Chair	Falkirk
June Anderson	JAn	R4	Vice Chair	Clackmannanshire
John Duffy	JD	R4	Committee Member	North Lanarkshire
Jeanette Arneil	JAr	R4	Committee Member	South Lanarkshire
Frances McGonagle	FMcG	R4	Committee Member	West Dunbartonshire

In attendance:

Michael Boal	MB		Scottish Government	ScGo
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Apologies / Absent:

Carolynne Watson	CW		Scottish Government	Apologies
Eric Spence	ES	R1	Committee Member	Absent
Scott MacLeod	SMcL	R1	Co-optee	Apologies
Isabella Vint	IV	R2	Committee Member	Absent
Donna Murray	DM	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
Willie Derrick	WD	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
June Todd	JT	R4	Committee Member	Absent

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
1	10:00	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of interest</p> <p>GS welcomed everyone to the meeting. Under Declarations of Interest, CS noted his role as a Board member of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).</p> <p>GS and BCu noted their role on the TIS Board MD noted her role on the TPAS Board</p> <p>Apologies were noted as above</p>	
2	10:15	<p>Business Matters</p> <p>Minutes from previous meeting</p> <p>GS asked for a proposer and seconder of the minutes from 16th August 2023. Proposer JAn Seconder MD</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None</p> <p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Cash remains the same £16.33. Bank account opening balance £3,3385.40 at beginning of August. Expenditure in August £30 and September £2,579.70 included payment to website</p> <p>Acc balance at 30th September £775.70</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Top up R1 Bank account to cover costs of website - Move money from R2 bank account to R1's - This can wait until CW return. - Move money from R3 bank account to R1's - MD to write cheque, send to BCu for signing then forwarding to CS for balance less £10 - Move money from R4 bank account to R1's - CW has R4's cheque book, this can wait until CW's return <p>Correspondence</p> <p>Email from Scottish Government to the Chairs regarding areas that may be covered by Housing Bill in 2024 and stakeholder questionnaire. To be discussed later in the agenda.</p>	

		<p>Website Update</p> <p>Last meeting the members approved the quote for the new website and the charges are now being minuted, proposed and seconded for the record;</p> <p>Development & Delivery of Website - £2,500 Proposed GS Seconded BCu</p> <p>Hosting Fee, Maintenance and Technical support - £2,750 per annum Proposed JB Seconded BCu</p> <p>Website tweaks and ongoing support for data entry - £2,200 per annum Proposed LL Seconded AD</p> <p>Separate charge for updating data on Civic site - £750 Proposed JB Seconded MD</p>	
3	10:25	<p>Breakout Rooms</p> <p>It was agreed there was no requirement for individual breakout rooms, if something comes up during the meeting can be carried to end of the meeting.</p> <p>For Regions 2 & 3 need clearance for individual breakout minutes there was no individual breakout for R4. Please advise CS of proposer and seconder.</p>	

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
4	10:30	<p>Sub Group Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>RN Accessibility Group & Scottish Government Accessible Housing & Independent Living group (AHIL):</u> <p>LR updated there has been no meeting of the RN accessibility group since the update at the last RN meeting in August. AHIL not met since the last meeting either and still waiting on dates for consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Communications group:</u> <p>CS said that the comms group had been focused on rebranding will leave this discussion to the rebranding part of the agenda</p>	

- SHR Liaison group:

SG updated on the SHR Liaison group's pre agenda meeting to discuss range of subjects to talk to SHR about, current review of regulatory framework, how they plan to involve tenants in this next phase, update of tenant advisors, update on national panel survey, RAAC update and role of SHR in this, aware of developments, update received from landlords on dealing with damp and mould, also rent increase consultations and any messaging on this from SHR. Meeting taking place on 24th October. Future pre-agenda meetings and SHR meeting links will be put onto basecamp.

- Housing to 2040/ Strategic Board:

CS no updates, next meeting 25th October, updates at next RN meeting.

- HRA:

No update.

- Rent Affordability:

Meeting next Thursday 19th CS has had discussion with Anne Cook who has reviewed and suggested some potential changes regarding layout and background to some of the recommendations and has discussed with TPAS. CS will take report to Housing Affordability Working Group meeting in November. Discussing the definition of affordability, RN think it should be about whole house cost, shouldn't be solely about rent affordability.

LR asked if any financial people on the group as she was questioning the resistance to complete housing costs. A list of the people on the group was provided to members.

- Chairs meeting:

Nothing to report no meeting since before the last RN meeting.

- Housing Legislation Meeting:

MB explained this was to agree a process and date for the RN to respond to the stakeholder questionnaire sent out to the RN Chairs. It contains specific areas from the New Deal for Tenants Consultation which are being planned to take forward in a Housing Bill in 2024. Members agreed for an all network response to consider

		<p>the questionnaire on Thursday 19th October at 10am. The consultation needs to be completed by 27th October and will be done via the ScGo consultation platform Citizen Space. MB recommended that members look at the stakeholder paper that provided more details of the proposals. CS will send out a zoom link for the call.</p> <p><u>Update on RAAC</u></p> <p>CS added this to the agenda, JAn gave an update on the emerging issue and position in Clacks Council, where a block of flats had to be decanted. This will potentially be a large expense on social landlords. CS provided an update from the Regulators perspective, tenant safety comes under its remit but not building regulations. SHR preparing a letter for all social landlords to clarify status of RAAC in their properties to be issued by end of the week. Other members provided updates from their local authority areas. The RN are to consider whether a new working group is required to consider this issue from a tenants perspective.</p>	
5	11:15	<p>Working Group representation</p> <p>CS said he left this on agenda to remind everyone of the working groups and to put their name forward for any they are interested in. He explained it was a live document on basecamp - go to regional networks all and scroll to the bottom, 4 yellow pages one gives database links for RTOs, landlords and working groups and it gives details of who is on a particular group. He asked members to email their Chair if they are interested in joining any.</p> <p>Ministerial meeting – 27 September</p> <p>CS explained a draft of the minutes had been received and was checking if these could be sent round members. MB explained that the minutes hadn't been cleared by the Minister yet due to recess but would be shortly. CS agreed to share with the members.</p> <p>JAn asked how she was to get evidence on HRA from local authorities as requested by the Minister at the meeting, JAn asked members how this would happen. CS explained that RN should write to him, as this would cover HRA and a number of other areas discussed, now that we have the minutes, we need to detail our further info in a letter to the Minister. GS suggested members read over the minutes. JAn concerned RN members will not come forward with evidence of abuse by local authorities of their HRA. BCu explained South Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire have working groups that look at all the details of the HRA and this info is available to the tenants in these areas. LR explained in Highland Council they go through the details of the</p>	

6	11:30	<p>Rebranding and Reorganisation</p> <p>HRA and it was suggested that other areas could share their info from their reports.</p> <p>CS updated explained the current position had a meeting with a consultant who they thought may be able to support the networks with the rebranding but unable to access the funding as RN not a social enterprise or a charity.</p> <p>However following further discussions between CS and SG they contacted TIS and TPAS. TIS offered to do this and thought they would be able to access the grant funding allocated to them from the Scottish Government, they would check with CW and Anne Cook. TIS have received the networks proposal and this is currently being taken forward to get costings from TIS.</p> <p>Face to face meeting on 26th October now to be cancelled. CS confirmed will need to go back to other consultant to advise where the networks stand. CS waiting to hear from Ilene Campbell at TIS.</p>	
7	11:45	<p>A.O.C.B</p> <p>LR brought up the need for the RN to stop the stigma of social housing and tenants that exists. Highland Council along with tenants are going to try and start addressing this. It was suggested this could be something that the RN could look at, at a national level. GS highlighted the language against social housing and tenants can be discriminatory particularly where social housing is integrated with other new build. CS explained some of this could be considered as part of the RN rebranding exercise.</p> <p>Dates for further meetings, 7th February online, 3rd April online, AGM Saturday 1st June, 12th June online and face to face meeting Thursday 15th August, 2nd October online and 4th December online. Dates will be put on basecamp.</p> <p>TIS conference attendance – places were offered to the 4 chairs to attend from the Scottish Government to represent the networks and help to promote the networks at the stand being provided at the conference. SG, GS and CS to attend. R3 place to be agreed after the call as AC can't attend.</p>	
8	11:55	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wednesday 6 December at 10am, via Zoom. <p>LR are Christmas jumpers required? GS tinsel at the very least.</p>	

Date	06-Dec-23
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Proposed	GD
Seconded	BCu