

APPROVED MINUTES

Regional Networks
Meeting held on Wednesday 7 February 2024
at 10.00

Present:

Anne Cameron	AC	R3	Meeting Chair	South Ayrshire
Colin Stewart	CS	R1	Meeting Chair	Aberdeen City
Liz Richardson	LR	R1	Vice Chair	Highlands
Kath Fennell	KF	R1	Committee Member	Orkney Islands
Jackie Bugden	JB	R1	Committee Member	Highlands
Gordon Saunders	GS	R2	Chair	Scottish Borders
Irina Lazarenko	IL	R2	Vice Chair	City of Edinburgh
Tiffany Ward	TW	R2	Co-optee	Scottish Borders
Margaret Dymond	MD	R3	Committee Member	Renfrewshire
Suzanne Austin	SA	R3	Co-optee	Renfrewshire
Shona Gorman	SG	R4	Chair	Falkirk
June Anderson	JA	R4	Vice Chair	Clackmannanshire

In attendance:

Carolynne Watson	CW		Scottish Government	
Rebecca Cuthbert			Observer	Aberdeen City

Apologies / Absent:

Alex Wilson	AW	R1	Co-optee	Absent
Eric Spence	ES	R1	Committee Member	Absent
Linda Lennie	LL	R1	Committee Member	Absent
Scott MacLeod	SMcL	R1	Co-optee	Absent
Alan Dalby	AD	R2	Committee Member	Apologies
Isabella Vint	IV	R2	Committee Member	Absent
Bruce Cuthbertson	BC	R3	Vice Chair	Apologies
Norma Ferguson	NF	R3	Committee Member	Apologies
Donna Murray	DM	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
Frances McGonagle	FMcG	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
John Duffy	JD	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
June Todd	JT	R4	Committee Member	Absent
Willie Derrick	WD	R4	Committee Member	Apologies

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
1	10:00	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of interest</p> <p>AC welcomed everyone to the meeting. Under Declarations of Interest, CS noted his role as a Board member of the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). GS noted his role as a Board member of the Tenants Information Service (TIS), and MD noted her role as a Board member of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS).</p> <p>Apologies were noted per the above.</p>	
2	10:05	<p>Business Matters</p> <p><u>Minutes of previous meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes were approved by CS and seconded by LR.</p> <p>CS noted that going forward there will be a requirement to approve meeting minutes more quickly in order to have these available for publication and dissemination through the subscription service. In future, minutes will be prepared within one week and posted on Basecamp, with 50% of members who attended the meeting required to indicate their approval.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>CS provided a short update on RAAC. SHR published a spreadsheet on their website on December 21st which sets out the latest available picture on RAAC in the sector. 91 landlords have confirmed no RAAC is present in their stock; 12 have confirmed RAAC is present in their stock, and 62 landlords are still carrying out investigation. To date, only one landlord has reported RAAC failure.</p> <p><u>Treasurer's Report</u></p> <p>Cash remains the same at £16.33 Bank account opening balance as at 01 December was £4322.17 Income in December of £7,000 Expenditure in December of £3,530.00 No Income in January Expenditure in January of £2,200 Closing balance as at 31 Jan 2024 = £5,592.17</p> <p>With no remaining signatories on the South East Scotland Regional Network account, this has been reported to the bank. Once the bank has completed their process to review this, the remaining funds in the account will be transferred to the main Regional Networks account, and the South East Scotland account will be closed.</p>	

		<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>SG shared a letter of resignation from Jeanette Arneil, Central Scotland Regional Network. Members agreed that Jeanette will be much missed, and requested SG pass on their thanks and best wishes to Jeanette for her hard work and contribution over the years.</p>	
3	10:15	<p>Website and Basecamp training</p> <p>CS noted that the development of the subscription service is now complete, and will shortly be tested by a few Network members.</p>	
4	10.35	<p>Sub groups</p> <p><u>RN Accessibility/ Scottish Government AHIL group</u></p> <p>LR requested that the RN Accessibility group be renamed to Inclusive Living. LR reported that there have been no recent AHIL meetings. In terms of the Regional Networks group, LR noted it will be useful to begin meetings again, and CW and LR agreed to revisit the topics for focus previously outlined by members, with a view to setting a date for a meeting in the near future.</p> <p><u>Communications sub-group</u></p> <p>SG reported that the group's membership has recently expanded, with AC, JA and JD joining in order to provide a more fully representative group to carry out the work on rebranding. A further update on rebranding will be covered at agenda item 6.</p> <p><u>Housing to 2040/ Strategic Board.</u></p> <p>CS reported that the Strategic Board will be meeting on 8 February and will include a workshop session focused on some of the key issues relating to the Housing to 2040 vision.</p> <p><u>HRA</u></p> <p>At the last meeting with the Housing Minister in September 2023, Mr McLennan asked members to provide an overview of the position on HRA and outline examples of the issues of concern cited at that meeting. JA requested members share evidence regarding the HRA to her in order to collate and provide the requested information to the Minister, with support from CW. The group set a date of 11 January for submissions of information and evidence on HRA from members, however to date only one submission has been received, which members agreed did not fully demonstrate the range of evidence they are keen to present.</p>	

		<p>The group discussed the possible courses of action available on the HRA issue, and agreed that while in principle they are keen to continue to work on this issue, it will be important to have a clear evidence-base on practice within the sector. The group noted that today's attendance list is comparatively low, and of those missing today's meeting, many have local authority backgrounds. JA will follow up with these members following today's meeting with support from CW and the issue can be revisited at a later date to determine any future activity on HRA.</p> <p><u>Rent Focus group/ Housing Affordability</u></p> <p>CS noted that the focus group report is now finalised following a meeting with TPAS earlier this week. The group will be sharing the report with key sector stakeholders and the report will be publicised via TPAS social media. CS also intends to share a copy with the Housing Minister. Now that the work of the group is complete, CS noted he is keen to consider any future role for the group, and noted that one option may be to combine aspects of the Housing to 2040 remit with the Rent Focus group. CS suggested arranging a meeting on 18 March to discuss this with group members, in order to identify any potential remit a group would have going forward.</p> <p><u>SHR Liaison group</u></p> <p>The last meeting with SHR took place yesterday, 6 February. The consultation on the Regulatory Framework is now complete with publication scheduled for the middle of February. The new Framework will commence in April. SHR has commissioned TPAS to carry out the upcoming Tenant Participation thematic, and work to scope this is taking place at present.</p> <p>SHR provided an update on the appointment of new statutory managers, on RAAC, damp and mould and the key risk areas for focus in the coming year, including homelessness and the interaction between local authorities and RSLs in addressing homelessness, particularly in light of current housing emergencies declared in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Argyll and Bute. Key areas for focus also include tenant safety, good governance and performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter.</p>	
5	11:00	<p><u>Working group representation</u></p> <p>There were no further updates on working group representation.</p> <p><u>Meeting with Housing Minister</u></p> <p>Members are keen to schedule a meeting with Mr McLennan during the coming weeks, and CW agreed to progress this. Once a date has been provided by Mr McLennan's Private</p>	

		Office, a pre-meeting for Network members will be arranged in order to discuss and identify topics for focus during the Ministerial meeting.	
6	11.30	Rebranding and reorganisation of Regional Networks CS updated members on progress with the rebranding project to date. Fawn Russell, TIS, is supporting the Regional Networks with this work, and has developed a workplan outlining the key stages and timescales for the project. Work will be commencing next week with a Vision Workshop, which will include members of the Comms/Rebranding group. The group also plan to hold a face-to-face meeting on 27 March at the TIS offices in Glasgow. CS noted that as part of the discussions on this project, members will be asked for their views on the structure of the Networks, criteria for membership and the constitution, and urged members who will be attending the meetings with TIS to consider the scope provided by Fawn ahead of the meetings.	
7	11.45	A.O.C.B LR highlighted that the UNCRC comes into force on 16 July (as opposed to the HR bill which will take another 2 yrs) and this prompted her appeal that we need to incorporate this into our work; after all it impacts the work we're already doing regards affordability, habitability, accessibility, etc. It's not yet embedded in the housing vocabulary (landlords and tenants), and LR asked how we could go about incorporating this into our work, whether into existing working groups or as a separate working group. Members agreed to progress a workshop on this topic, and will supply suggestions and information to CW on content and potential speakers for this session.	
8	11.55	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 3 April, 2024.	

Date	16 Feb 24
Proposed	JB
Seconded	JA