

APPROVED MINUTES

Regional Networks
Meeting held on Wednesday 3 April 2024
at 10.00

Present:

Shona Gorman	SG	R4	Meeting Chair	Falkirk
Colin Stewart	CS	R1	Chair	Aberdeen City
Liz Richardson	LR	R1	Vice Chair	Highlands
Linda Lennie	LL	R1	Committee Member	Orkney
Gordon Saunders	GS	R2	Chair	Scottish Borders
Irina Lazarenko	IL	R2	Vice Chair	City of Edinburgh
Anne Cameron	AC	R3	Chair	South Ayrshire
Margaret Dymond	MD	R3	Committee Member	Renfrewshire
Suzanne Austin	SA	R3	Co-optee	Renfrewshire
Norma Ferguson	NF	R3	Committee Member	North Ayrshire
John Duffy	JD	R4	Committee Member	North Lanarkshire
June Anderson	JA	R4	Vice Chair	Clackmannanshire
Donna Murray	DM	R4	Committee Member	South Lanarkshire

In attendance:

Michael Boal	MB		Scottish Government	ScGo
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Apologies / Absent:

Alex Wilson	AW	R1	Co-optee	Absent
Scott MacLeod	SMcL	R1	Co-optee	Absent
Jackie Bugden	JB	R1	Committee Member	Apologies
Kath Fennell	KF	R1	Committee Member	Apologies
Alan Dalby	AD	R2	Committee Member	Absent
Isabella Vint	IV	R2	Committee Member	Absent
Tiffany Ward	TW	R2	Co-optee	Absent
Bruce Cuthbertson	BC	R3	Vice Chair	Apologies
Willie Derrick	WD	R4	Committee Member	Absent
Frances McGonagle	FMcG	R4	Committee Member	Absent
June Todd	JT	R4	Committee Member	Absent

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
1	10:00	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of interest</p> <p>SG 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</p>	

		<p>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 and seconded on basecamp as per new arrangement where 50% of members who attended the meeting indicating their approval.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Treasurer's Report</u></p> <p>Cash remains the same at £16.33 Bank account opening balance as at 01 February was £5,592.17 No income Expenditure in February of £122.29 Expenditure in March of £696.51 Which gives a total expenditure of £818.80</p> <p>Closing balance as at 31 March 2024 = £4,773.37</p> <p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>MB highlighted the AHSP deliverability programme meeting for the RN committee members taking place 18th April at 2pm on Teams, facilitated by More Homes colleagues. Encouraged all members to attend if possible. Colin to put details on basecamp.</p>	
3	10:15	<p>Website and Basecamp training</p> <p>CS showed members where to find the expenses form on basecamp and encouraged them to complete as required. He also talked about the subscription service on the website, he went through the form and a discussion took place on the questions to be asked and it was agreed to encourage completion at the start. Registration page to register as a member to receive the newsletter etc. All members present agreed the content.</p>	
4	10.35	<p>Sub groups</p> <p><u>RN Inclusive Living and AHIL (Accessible Housing & Inclusive Living)</u></p>	

LR spoke to Angela O'Brien starting to plan for an AHIL meeting later in the spring, a full year since the last one. Likely to cover the accessible housing consultation, adaptations review, and other topics. LR disappointed this group wasn't meeting at least as often as the H2040 Strategic Board to which it was supposedly linked. Next meeting still to be confirmed.

Communications sub-group

SG reported that the group been enlarged and now looking at the rebranding. They have gained some new members to get more input and be more representative, more news later on the agenda.

HRA

MB said ScGg has nothing to report on this. JA advised that unfortunately no information has been provided by members, Housing Minister was prepared to look at this if information was available. JA thinks once scrutiny groups start up then there may be more information available. JA commends members to look at HRA as local authority tenants being affected by this. Discussion took place on why Regional Networks members need to provide info on this. MB advised Scottish Government doesn't scrutinise budgets of local authorities it would be Audit Scotland. Concern that council tenants don't know what is happening with their HRA. The issue of the current guidance not being statutory was discussed. Raising a petition at parliament was mentioned, MB said to do this you would need to have robust evidence to back up any claim / concern. CS explained that SHR do not have any powers over HRA. CS suggested an email to Audit Scotland to ask them to look into HRAs and see what they come back with. CS suggested taking HRA off the main agenda for these meetings and the HRA sub group meet as this is an issue where no progress is being made so HRA working group take this forward. If further results then it can then be brought back to the main group. AC suggested when they next meet the Minister they include a question about making the current guidance statutory. SG advised there will be a pre-meeting prior to the next Ministerial meeting to agree questions to take forward.

SHR Liaison group

Nothing to report as group have not met since last Regional network meeting. SG confirmed there is a pre-meeting later this month in advance of the next meeting with SHR in May.

Rent Focus group/ Housing Affordability

CS confirmed they have decided to combine the RN Rent Focus group with the RN Housing to 2040 group and will get a date in

		<p>the diary when Carolynne is back. Will agree focus and outcomes for the group. Rent affordability report has been done and sent out to key people including all landlords and TPOs and Minister.</p> <p>The Housing affordability Working Group has one further meeting to agree definition of affordability, need to move away from current rental costs only and have definition on whole house costs. CS will update the group on discussions about this after groups meets.</p> <p><u>Housing to 2040/ Strategic Board.</u></p> <p>CS explained not a lot to report on this as key views have been played out in the press. A number of members attended the LGHP committee to give evidence on the housing budget, all identified concerns on how new social house building targets will be met. Regional Networks put out a statement regarding this to give the tenants view point as CS was unable to attend this.</p>	
5	11:00	<p><u>Working group representation</u></p> <p>CS confirmed this was a standing item for anyone wanting to join any working group or any new group to be formed. CS showed members how to access this info on basecamp, all regions project, training videos are there and meeting dates and, working group reps, especially for new members. Any updates to CS. SG brought in SA as a new co-optee member, SA interested in participating and SG suggested waiting until after the AGM so she can determine what specific interests she has. New members will have a buddy to support them.</p> <p><u>Meeting with Housing Minister</u></p> <p>MB explained that Carolynne had sent a further email to Ministers private office to ask them to confirm a date for this. CS suggested every year, 2/3 dates are agreed in advance for the year. Members agreed this was a good way to proceed. SG said with so much going on in housing it's more important than ever that we meet. LR suggested Regional Networks should be prioritised above ribbon cutting at new housing developments.</p>	
6	11.30	<p>Rebranding and reorganisation of Regional Networks</p> <p>CS updated members on progress with the rebranding project to date. Met last Wednesday (27th March) in person with an excellent workshop facilitated by Fawn Russell and Sharon Donohoe, TIS. A name has not been agreed yet but there were good discussions on potential options and ideas for the logo. With each option getting pointed against a number of factors. There was a further meeting with just the rebranding group on 1st April and Scottish Tenant Engagement Network came out as</p>	

		<p>initial favourite and Scottish Tenant Participation Network as second option, however STEN has already been taken by CX. CS emailed CX to ask about the networks taking the name and had a response which didn't see any movement on this. Members discussed a number of options and changes and it was agreed CS and SG to meet CX. Fawn to provide a number of suggestions for the logo. CS also highlighted a further meeting on Friday 5th April to discuss suggestions for the restructure of the networks and changes for the constitution in advance of the AGM and encouraged all members who were able to attend to do so.</p>	
7	11.45	<p>A.O.C.B</p> <p>CS reminder to everyone that they all give feedback and any changes required to the draft minutes as soon as they go on basecamp.</p> <p>JA asked if there was any update on the situation with RAAC – she provided information on situation in Clackmannanshire where there are still many problems for residents who have had to move out. CS reported SHR update report is available on their website and provides updated figures relating to social housing. Regulator engaging with those landlords who have identified RAAC and those still in the process of reporting. LR highlighted work with some tenants in the Highlands encouraging them to participate in a class action suit being taken by Thompsons solicitors in relation to damp and mould in a number of tenancies. Concerned situation is not getting any better.</p> <p>LR asked about encouraging new members to get involved. CS suggested waiting till nomination papers for AGM go out by TIS. Closing date for nominations 17th May. CS confirmed part of the conversation we intend to have on Friday is regarding widening membership and changes to the constitution. In response to a concern from JA - SG confirmed that everyone who provided details at last TIS conference were contacted on several occasions, some did not respond. CS confirmed that everyone who puts name forward at events will be contacted. CS suggested they have an iPad available at the TPAS conference and get the interested people to fill in the subscription page on the website, to be left with CS to arrange.</p> <p>IL asked if signatures are required in nomination form for those interested in being involved. CS confirmed this is something we will need to consider in the restructure.</p>	
8	11.55	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>AGM - Saturday 1st June 2024 – via Zoom Followed by Wednesday 12th June 2024 – via Zoom</p>	

Date	14-Apr-2024
Proposed	JD
Seconded	DM