

FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting | MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 29 November 2023
Time: 4:15pm
Location: Kingsmills hotel, Inverness

Members Present

Lesley McInnes,
Chair

Clea Warner,
Vice-Chair

Carl Patching,
Member

Scott Macleod
Member

Lynne Holburn,
Member

Jackie Bugden,
Member

Craig Levy,
Member

Craig Russell,
Member

Niall Owen,
Member

Angela Currie,
Member

In Attendance

Kirsty Morrison,
Chief Executive Officer
(CEO)

Maureen Knight,
Executive Dir. of Operations
(ExDO)

Andrew Martin,
Executive Dir. of Group Services
(ExDGS)

Robert Buchanan,
Virtual ICT Director

Laurie MacLeod,
Head of HR

Brett Fletcher,
Executive Assistant - minute

FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting |MINUTES

ACTION

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Ian Fosbrooke and Fiona Mustarde.

2. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No conflicts of interest were noted.

3. STANDING ITEM

3.1 Board Remit

- 3.1.1 The meeting met the quorum as set out within the Board Remit.

4. PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 Minute of Board Meeting: 24 October 2023

- 4.1.1 The minute of the last meeting was approved. This was proposed by Lesley McInnes and seconded by Jackie Bugden.

4.2 Confidential Minute of Board meeting: 24 October 2023

- 4.2.1 The confidential minute of the last meeting was approved. This was proposed by Lesley McInnes and seconded by Carl Patching.

4.3 Matters Arising

- 4.3.1 A written update on the action items had been provided and was reviewed. All actions were complete or in progress.

5. DECISION PAPERS

5.1 Q2 Performance Report

- 5.1.1 The ExDO spoke to her report and sought Board approval of the Q2 Performance Report.

- 5.1.2 The ExDO noted the new layout, and confirmed it followed an action received from Members in terms of streamlining information. Performance areas noted as strong related to arrears and improved response times on repair categories. It was emphasised that the strong performance on arrears was due to early interventions and without carrying out any evictions. Board was advised that the redesigned services were working better as a collective and this was a combined effort across all functions

- 5.1.3 The Board noted that the new format was easy to follow but suggested the Executive Summary was not needed.

- 5.1.4 The Board commented on the KPI relating to tenancy offers being refused and asked why this was the case when there was such a high-level housing need within the area. The ExDO explained this would be down to several reasons including the cost of living, as well as tenants needing housing for seasonal work only, meaning when a house becomes available, they may no longer require it due to moving on.

FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting | MINUTES

ACTION

- 5.1.5 With regards to damp and mould, the Board asked the ExDO to put into context the number of cases reported. The ExDO expanded on the triage process to establish the needs of the tenant and prioritising the cases in most need. Any case is vigorously recorded with photographs and real time evidence to support the extent of the case and to ensure tenants are reassured on our robust approach to reports of damp and mould.
- 5.1.6 The Board requested more commentary in relation to damp & mould, looking at the variety of choices tenants take, for example is it lifestyle, or is it that the tenant cannot afford to turn the heating on. This action was accepted as an **action** by the ExDO. **Maureen Knight**
- 5.1.7 The Board enquired about the write off of tenant debt. The CEO advised that Albyn had relatively low former tenant arrears write offs, of which a report would be coming to Board early in 2024. A tenant who had left with arrears would not be rehoused until a repayment plan was in place. Albyn had an Arrears Specialist Officer in place to recover former tenant arrears.
- 5.1.8 The Q2 Performance Report was approved. This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Niall Owen.
- 5.2 Q2 Management Accounts & Full Year Forecast
- 5.2.1 The ExDGS spoke to his paper and sought Board approval of the Q2 Management Accounts.
- 5.2.2 A few overspends were noted in areas including consultancy work and supporting the organisation where recruitment was difficult, such as procurement and clerk of work services. In addition, there were overspends in office costs due to the increase in energy costs, as well as insurance premiums as was reported to Board in October 2023.
- 5.2.3 The Board queried the underspends within employment costs. The HHR advised this was due to holding back some posts following on from the re-design, looking to see if we really do need to recruit, or do we need a different post from that first envisaged. In addition, some posts have been very difficult to recruit to such as technical posts.
- 5.2.4 The Board asked that the LT review the employment underspend to confirm all posts in the establishment were required. The ExDGS advised that this task would be completed as part of the budgeting process for 2024/25, and further detail as to the drivers of the underspend would be provided to Board within the next management accounts.
- 5.2.5 The Q2 Management Accounts & Full Year Forecast was approved. This was proposed by Carl Patching and seconded by Angela Currie.

6. POLICY & STRATEGY

- 6.1 Customer Involvement Strategy
- 6.1.1 The CEO and ExDO presented the Customer Involvement Strategy and sought Board approval of it.
- 6.1.2 It was noted that members of the Customer Involvement Strategy Group (CISMG) including some tenant Board members had developed the content and new presentation of the strategy. The CEO advised that the strategy will eventually become an interactive document which will navigate the pages and be a digitally inclusive online format.

FINAL Albyn Housing Society Board Meeting | MINUTES

ACTION

- 6.1.3 The Board noted that the strategy was clean and clear and looked forward to viewing the interactive version of it.
- 6.1.4 The Board suggested adding additional measures of success to the strategy to ensure Albyn could evidence delivery and improvement. The CEO accepted this as an **action**.
- 6.1.5 The Customer Involvement Strategy was approved. This was proposed by Clea Warner and seconded by Craig Russell.
- 6.1.6 *Angela Currie then left the meeting.*

Kirsty Morrison

7. INFORMATION PAPERS

7.1.1 Q2 Damp & Mould Update

- 7.1.2 The ExDO presented the Q2 Damp & Mould Update to the Board for its information.
 - 7.1.3 The ExDO provided assurance to the Board of the measures taken to continuously monitor damp and mould complaints. Steps taken have included triaging tenant calls, improving the quality of equipment and staff knowledge. The ExDO emphasised the need for tenant reassurance and the triage system offered this. A Technical Officer inspection is raised based on severity and priority of each case. The ExDO provided assurance to the Board that there was a high level of scrutiny currently in place around the importance of tenant safety in relation to damp and mould. This is reported to LT quarterly as well.
 - 7.1.4 Albyn recently received a compensation enquiry (via a no-win-no-fee Solicitor). Evidence was collated which disputed the claim. The ExDO advised that there is currently a £500,000 claim being made by an Angus Council tenant and the outcome of this claim will be used to tighten up on any areas of best practice guidance.
- The Board noted the update.

7.1.5

8. APPROVED COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES & CHAIR UPDATES

- 8.1 None this cycle,

9. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

9.1 Verbal update on RAAC

- 9.1.1 The ExDO explained the requirement to submit RAAC findings to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) on 31st October 2023. The exercise was time intensive and included an extensive desktop survey which was carried out in-house, including garages. The approach was to identify the age and type of build, the team then narrowed down areas and build period, type of construction and staff/contractor knowledge.
- 9.1.2 Details were then reported to Rapleys (an independent surveyor) who advised Albyn had conducted an appropriate survey methodology, and concluded that no RAAC was present based on evidence provided. Albyn met the required timescale set out by the SHR and no response from SHR has been received to date. In addition to providing assurance to the SHR Albyn has publicised on its website that there is no evidence of RAAC in Albyn homes.

ACTION

10. DATES OF FUTURE BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 10.1 The Board noted the dates of future meetings.
- 10.2 *Leadership Team members then left the meeting.*

11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

- 11.1 Confidential Item.
Meeting end.