



*1986-2016: Celebrating 30 years working in the community*

## **Barrhead Housing Association Limited**

### **35th Annual General Meeting Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 September 2021 at 6.00 p.m. Conducted by Zoom Video conferencing**

#### **Present:**

D McCready (Chair)	L Mills
T Buchanan, Councillor	D Greig
D Yates	T Reilly
A Devine	M Mukhtar
R McGuire BEM	D Greig
J Hamilton	J Piatkowska
D McKinney	

#### **In Attendance:**

L Wilson, Chief Executive, BHA

H Sutherland, Director of Corporate Services and BHA Secretary

I MacLean, Corporate Services Manager, BHA

L Dallas, Director of Customer Services, BHA

J Ward, Director of Asset Management, BHA

J Chittleburgh, Senior Partner, Chiene + Tait, External Auditor

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome, and Apologies</b> The Chair welcomed members to the 35 <sup>th</sup> AGM and the Chief Executive introduced herself to members.  Apologies were received from the following members – L Carr, E Graham, W Graham, J Ralston, M Ralston, A Dunlop, L Hendry, J McShane, A Hay, A Paterson, J Logue
<b>2.</b>	<b>Chairperson's Report</b>  D McCready spoke about his time with the Association as this is his final meeting as Chair of the Governing Board, having served on the Board for 12 years.

	<p>In 2020/21, the Association has made great progress but there is much work we still need to do. He is proud of having responded swiftly to the provision of delivering essential services during the pandemic over past 18 months, managing 947 homes and responding efficiently and effectively to our customers during this challenging time.</p> <p>Over past 12 months, the Board has overseen some challenges and also oversaw the recruitment of a new Chief Executive and expressed his delight to have Lorna in place. He thanked the Board for their support, and patience during the past 18 months whilst conducting meetings remotely via ZOOM.</p> <p>D McCready then spoke about the knowledge, expertise and diversity of those sitting around the Board table and is delighted that a governance excellence plan is in place to ensure that the Board retains the skills it needs to be effective.</p> <p>In conclusion, he expressed his thanks to staff and senior staff for their support during his time on the Board, as well as the Association's former Chief Executive, Shirley Robison and a debt of gratitude is owed to her for all the hard work she undertook. He is confident the Association will go from strength to strength and wishes the Association well for the future.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Minutes:</b></p> <p><u>Special General Meeting 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020</u></p> <p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were proposed by D Yates and seconded by D McCready. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.</p> <p><u>Annual General Meeting AGM 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020</u></p> <p>The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and were proposed by D Yates and seconded by D McCready. There were no matters arising from the Minutes.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Chief Executive's Highlights</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive took members through a presentation which provided detail of the activity and achievements over the past year. Key areas highlighted within the presentation included:</p>

- Association and Team carried out a great job during the pandemic, with only non-essential repairs and the on-site sheltered service being impacted
- New repairs contractor appointed and new IT interface
- Lot of work undertaken to review the provision of housing information and advice, including new home-swapper and house options advice services
- New Digital Engagement platform
- Looking to get closer to our customers, with staff being out and about more talking to our customers
- Revised approach to customer engagement and working with partners to find solutions
- New Tenancy Support Officer and Welfare Rights Assistant appointed
- Programme of Service Reviews underway
- Refreshed delivery plan and new staff appraisal system
- New ways for the staff team to get more involved, and improved business improvement processes
- Investment in staff wellbeing, including yoga and mindfulness
- Staff charity event took place
- Brilliant Scotland project and new People Strategy and IIP re-accreditation underway
- Blended working trial started at end of August – learning from this will inform future service delivery
- Spend on planned, cyclical investment and adaptations.
- New preventative maintenance service introduced
- New Property Service compliance post is in place
- Spent £800,000 on new housing, with £600k grant funding. This year 10 homes were completed and other homes are planned across a range of sites
- New Asset Strategy approved this year
- Working on solutions to make our homes carbon neutral
- Range of community regeneration projects have been undertaken and funding has been secured to offer a wide range of supports to those facing economic/health etc challenges

The Chief Executive then indicated that she was keen to work with non-Board members, to look at ways our members can become more engaged in the work of the Association.

She expressed her thanks to the wider staff team, and offered a special thanks to the Directors and the Corporate Services Manager for their support, and a special thanks to the governing Board for its support and advice.

A special thanks was then given to the 2 retiring 2 Board members, T Reilly and D McCready for all their support.

D Yates asked about interaction with residents and the outcome of survey results. The Chief Executive advised the AGM that the last survey was undertaken in 2019 (Pre-Covid). This will be followed up in 2022. The new CX Platform is now being used to get real time feedback from our customers and is showing 80+% positive experience of our repairs service. She explained that there is interest in tenants working with us as we undertake service reviews.

Regarding the planning for further housing developments, the Chief Executive explained that our current developments are undertaken in partnership with developers – where the Association purchase properties direct from developers.

**5. Auditor's Report & Presentation of Financial Statements for year ending 31st March, 2021**

H Sutherland took members through the Statement of Comprehensive Income, highlighting a number of main points to note for 20/21:

- Turnover increased and operating expenditure reduced
- Operating surplus nearly £1.6m
- Low levels of interest receivable
- Surplus of £1.3m for year
- Deficit on pension scheme at £628k (which is an accounting adjustment)
- £672,000 total comprehensive income
- Turnover increased by almost 3%
- Operating expenditure reduced by just over 2%
- Interest received reduced by 44.3%
- Loan interest paid reduced by 16%

The DCOS then took members through the Statement of Financial Position, including:

- Tangible fixed assets decreased by £244k
- £500k increase in debtors
- Cash increased by £741k
- Creditors <1 year +£605k from last year
- Ratio of debtors to creditors 2.9
- Creditors > 1 year loans payable reduced by £651k
- Overall, good financial performance in year
- Many costs carried into 2021/22
- Managed to access community hardship and recovery funds
- Small grants of over £13k distributed

	<p>J Chittleburgh from the Association's External Auditor Chiene+Tait then thanked the Association for its support during the audit.</p> <p>He advised members that the Audit had been undertaken virtually this year, but they had still been able to carry out a robust audit process. He confirmed that their audit had gone well and that the auditor had found no weaknesses in the controls from the work carried out and that they were happy to offer an unqualified audit opinion.</p> <p><b>J Chittleburgh left the meeting at this point</b></p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Approval to appoint External Auditor, Alexander Sloan under Rules 72 and 74</b></p> <p>The DCoS advised members that a tender exercise had been undertaken in relation to External Audit and that, on the basis of this, it is proposed that Alexander Sloan would be appointed for a 3 year period. This was approved by members, being proposed by D McCready and seconded by D Yates.</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Election of Governing Board under Rules 39 and 40</b></p> <p>The Chair gave members an update on the requirement to elect Board members. There are 12 places on the Board. 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Board members need to stand down this year – D McCready, T Reilly, J Hamilton and B Welsh. J Hamilton and B Welsh have expressed an interest in being re-nominated. D McKinney also stands for election, having filled a casual vacancy. This leaves 3 Board vacancies. 2 new nominations have been received from A Glasgow and A Paterson.</p> <p>As there was no need for any elections, the 3 members (D McKinney, A Glasgow and A Paterson) were duly elected to the Board.</p>
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Donations made during the year ending 31st March 2021</b></p> <p>The Chief Executive indicated than no donations had been made during the year.</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Members Questions</b></p> <p>The following questions had been asked and were answered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the Association's plans for opening up the office to the public?</li> </ol> <p>The Chief Executive explained the blended working trial and that we will be asking customers what they want. Meantime, visits to the office will be by appointment only. We will look at options for opening up in the autumn, depending on prevailing guidance and that meantime the staff Team will be out and about, closer to our customers.</p>

2. What plans do the Association have to increase its supply of affordable housing?

The Chief Executive explained that we have a development programme and that our main focus is working in partnership with developers on projects (including Neilson, Grahamston Road, Weavers Lea, Dealston Road), and that we are exploring the feasibility of a number of other projects.

3. How have the Association's finances been affected by Covid?

The Chief Executive explained that the main impacts are rental income and expenditure. The Director of Customer Services then said a few words about our approach to arrears, including a new policy and procedure based on a tailored approach to individuals, along with the creation of an additional welfare post, and additional assistance including fuel vouchers to help customers. The Director of Asset Management then provided information in relation to planned maintenance spend for this year and next, and some of the Covid related financial challenges.

4. Has there been discussion regarding the housing of Afghan Refugees

Discussions have taken place with the Council and the Association will help in any way we can. A Buchanan then advised members about discussions which are taking place, but there is a lack of suitable family homes in East Renfrewshire. Currently 3 resettlement schemes are available by the UK Government, but there is a concern that there might be insufficient funds to support refugees as grant funding will be time limited.

The Chief Executive then provided information to members in relation to the Association's ongoing work with the Scottish Refugee Council.

5. Regarding Lavern Property Services, a question was asked about the structure of Centenary Court and whether any investment is planned.

The Director of Asset Management confirmed that a new landscape contractor has been appointed and a structural engineer has also been appointed to take an independent look at the fabric of the building and that the Director of Asset Management has agreed to have a forum meeting with the owners. It was agreed that this would be the appropriate forum for these issues to be discussed.

There were no further questions.

<b>10.</b>	<b>Close of Business</b> The meeting was closed with a vote of thanks for the staff and Board members of Barrhead HA.