

**EAST LOTHIAN HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

A meeting of the **Management Committee** was held on Thursday 28 September 2023 at 4.07pm, at the Maitlandfield Hotel, Haddington.

**Present:**

Brian Logan	(1/1)	Paul Hillard	(1/1)
Jim Curran	(1/1)	Pamela Macleod	(1/1)
Peter Ewart	(1/1)	Graham Rattray	(1/1)
Alan Forsyth	(1/1)	David Rose	(1/1)
Katrina Hamilton	(1/1)		

**In attendance:** Martin Pollhammer, Chief Executive  
Karen Barry, Director of Housing  
Gary Alison, Director of Finance & Corporate Services  
Charlie Cooley, Director of Asset Management  
Eric Stoddart, Executive Support Officer (Minutes)

**1.0 GENERAL**

**1.1 Apologies**

Iain Atkinson (0/1), Joyce Bolan (0/1), Shirley Evans (0/1), Eileen Shand (0/1) and Duncan Mackay, Director of R3.

The Chair formally welcomed the new member of the Management Committee, Graham Rattray.

**1.2 Declarations of Interest by Management Committee Members**

There were no declarations of interest.

**1.3 Minutes of Meeting 24 August 2023**

The minutes were **approved** by the Management Committee. They were proposed by Katrina Hamilton and seconded by David Rose.

**1.4 Action List**

The Management Committee noted the report.

**1.5 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**2.0 GOVERNANCE**

**2.1 Election of Office Bearers**

At this point, in the absence of the Vice Chair, and Secretary, the Chief Executive, Martin Pollhammer, chaired the meeting, and invited nominations for the Chair.

*Chair:*

Brian Logan was proposed by Jim Curran and seconded by David Rose to be appointed as Chair of the Management Committee. There were no other nominations. The Management Committee **approved** this appointment.

From this point Brian Logan resumed as Chair of the meeting.

*Vice-Chair:*

Eileen Shand was proposed by Brian Logan and seconded by Pamela Macleod to be re-appointed as Vice-Chair of the Management Committee. There were no other nominations, and the Management Committee **approved** this appointment.

*Secretary:*

Joyce Bolan was proposed by Brian Logan and seconded by David Rose to be re-appointed as Secretary of the Management Committee. There were no other nominations, and the Management Committee **approved** this appointment.

**2.2 Other Management Committee Appointments**

The Chair advised that a discussion had been held with the Management Committee members during their annual meetings, concerning membership of the various Management Committee Sub-Committee, Advisory Committees, and Working Groups. It was recognised that the main gap occurred with the retirement of Peter Hayman, as he had served on four separate groups.

In respect of the Audit & Assurance Committee, Peter Hayman had stepped down as a member, but Graham Rattray offered to join, and this was agreed. Whilst responsibility for electing a Convenor to the Audit & Assurance Committee is delegated by Management Committee to the Audit & Assurance Committee, the existing Convenor (Peter Ewart) advised that he is prepared to stand serve for a further 12 months. However, as he is unlikely to be able to attend the next Audit & Assurance meeting, it was highlighted that someone would need to be able to deputise in his absence, and Paul Hillard offered to do this.

In respect of membership of the Health & Safety Committee, and Joint Consultative Committee, Katrina Hamilton offered to replace Peter Hayman at these meetings, and this was agreed.

The Remuneration Working Group (RWG) currently consists of Peter Ewart, Alan Forsyth, and Eileen Shand, and all are happy to continue in their roles. This was agreed.

The Governance Standards Working Group is losing Peter Hayman on his retiral, but there had been expressions of interest from two members of Management Committee in joining, in Katrina Hamilton and Paul Hillard, and this was agreed.

In respect of the R3 Board, the three Management Committee members currently members of the R3 Board, Alan Forsyth, Peter Ewart, and Iain Atkinson are all prepared to stand again, and their appointments were agreed.

The two serving independent members of the R3 Board, Nick Pollard and Fiona Sheldon, have both indicated their willingness to continue, and this was agreed. In addition, Peter Hayman, on his retirement from Management Committee, has offered to stand as a third independent member, and this was agreed.

The following memberships were **approved** by the Management Committee for 2023/24:

- (a) Audit & Assurance Committee: Iain Atkinson, Joyce Bolan, Peter Ewart, Katrina Hamilton, Paul Hillard, Brian Logan, Graham Rattray and David Rose. The election of a Convenor would take place at the first meeting of the Audit & Assurance Committee.
- (b) The Management Committee **confirmed** the membership of the Health & Safety Committee as: Joyce Bolan, Katrina Hamilton and David Rose.
- (c) The Management Committee **confirmed** the membership of the Joint Consultative Committee as: Joyce Bolan, Katrina Hamilton and David Rose.
- (d) The Management Committee **confirmed** the membership of the Remuneration Working Group as: Alan Forsyth, Peter Ewart and Eileen Shand.
- (e) The Management Committee **confirmed** the membership of the Governance Standards Working Group as: Joyce Bolan, Katrina Hamilton, Paul Hillard and David Rose.
- (f) The Management Committee **confirmed** the appointments of the following Management Committee members to the R3 Repairs Limited Board: Peter Ewart, Alan Forsyth and Iain Atkinson. The Management Committee **confirmed** that Nick Pollard and Fiona Sheldon be re-appointed as independent directors to the R3 Board, and that Peter Hayman be elected as an independent director to the R3 Board.
- (g) The Management Committee **confirmed** the re-appointment for reporting to the Management Committee on the work of Care & Repair Local Advisory Committee for 2023/24 to Eileen Shand.
- (h) The Management Committee **confirmed** the appointment of David Rose as their Representative Member of the SFHA.
- (i) The Management Committee **confirmed** the appointment of David Rose as their Representative Member of EVH.
- (j) The Management Committee **confirmed** that the Chair acts as EVH Representative Member in the absence of the nominated Representative Member.

2.3 **Code of Conduct and Eligibility for Membership**

The Management Committee noted the Model Code of Conduct for Management Committee Members. They were also reminded to complete their Code of Conduct Form, Declaration of Interests Form and Eligibility for Membership Form, and return them to the Executive Support Officer by 28 September 2023. The Chief Executive noted that members could not continue to serve on the Management Committee if they did not complete and return these forms.

Any Management Committee member who has not received, or has mislaid their forms, should contact Eric Stoddart, Executive Support Officer, to request copies be issued.

2.4 **Secretary's Report**

The Management Committee *homologated* the Use of Seal for Homologation in respect of the Membership Certificate issued to [REDACTED], Dunbar.

3.0 **PRIORITY ITEMS**

There were no Priority Items.

4.0 **POLICIES**

4.1 **Mutual Repair Policy**

The Director of Asset Management highlighted that when the Chargeable Repair Policy was reviewed by Management Committee on 23 March 2023, it was agreed that sections relating to mutual repairs should be removed and placed in a separate Policy Document, which is now presented to Management Committee.

Katrina Hamilton queried whether in Section 5.1, 'or their representative' be added after '... the owner's name.' The Director of Housing highlighted that it is a requirement to obtain the owner's name, as this is required for debt collection purposes. It was therefore agreed to leave the wording as is.

Katrina also asked whether the Association would ever consider taking a charge against the property, and the Director of Housing indicated that she had only seen this done once, so is a rare occurrence, but it should be considered as a last resort.

Peter Ewart queried the reference in the covering report to common areas, and was concerned whether the Association could demonstrate that 'common areas' were being appropriately managed. The Director of Housing advised that the Association was following advice from Anderson Strathern and carried out regular inspections of estates. However, the Director of Housing agreed to review the approach to the management of the hard landscaping areas, with specific reference to the challenges around Seggarsdean.

Subject to this amendment, the Management Committee *approved* the Mutual Repair Policy.

#### 4.2 Rent & Service Charge Policy Review

The Director of Housing advised that the current version of the Rent & Service Charge Policy is due its periodic review. A desktop review has been carried out, and no significant changes were recommended, so there had been no requirement to consult tenants.

It was highlighted that one recommendation (at Section 11.5) is to move the use of the RPI date from November to October each year. This is so that Management Committee can use an actual rather than a projected inflation figure, when considering what increase to consult tenants on.

The Chair queried whether it was necessary to consult with tenants on the change from November to October, and the Chief Executive confirmed that this change would be noted in the 2024 consultation documentation.

Paul Hillard suggested that RPI is increasingly not being considered as appropriate as a measure of inflation, and the use of CPI is becoming more widespread in the sector. The Chief Executive said he did not fully agree and that was part of a wider discussion for the Management Committee going forwards (RPI is still the measure used within the Long-Term Projections), but agreed with the underlying issue that the assumption of RPI plus increases, largely driven by the Housing Association Grant framework, was ultimately not sustainable. However, the Chief Executive felt that an “RPI minus” approach in future years may be preferable to a comparison to CPI, since RPI is the only inflation measure that includes housing costs, and is therefore the measure most relevant to the Association’s business.

The Management Committee **approved** the revised Rent & Service Charge Policy.

#### 4.3 Attendance & Absence Management Policy

The Chief Executive advised that the Attendance & Absence Management Policy was due its periodic review, and that the policy has been reviewed by the JCC.

Pamela Macleod referred to section 11.7, questioned whether the wording in relation to IVF treatment lacked sensitivity, and wondered if this could be worded more sympathetically.

The Chief Executive explained that the wording comes from the model policy provided by the Association’s HR advisors, EVH, and he was therefore not sure if ELHA should change this. The reason was likely to be that a number of HR protocols relate specifically to pregnancy, and that there was a clear defining line between “pregnant” and “not pregnant” in a strict HR sense.

However, it was agreed that the wording ‘although as an employer, we shall be as supportive as possible.’, be added to the end of that paragraph, since this did not change the meaning of the model text, but helped to soften it.

Subject to this amendment, the Management Committee **approved** the revised Attendance & Absence Management Policy.

**5.0 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

There were no reports for this section.

**6.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 4:41pm.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Saturday 25 November 2023 at 09.30am** at Carberry Tower, Musselburgh.  
The meeting will be followed by the Management Committee Away Day.

**ADOPTION OF THESE MINUTES APPROVED AT THE MEETING ON  
25 NOVEMBER 2023**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair)