

# Knowes Housing Association

## Housing Management Sub Committee

Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Knowes Housing Association Offices, Field Road, Faifley

### MINUTE OF MEETING

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**Present:**

Yvonne MacDonald  
Katie Devaney  
Rhona Polak  
Frank Newey  
Billy Stevenson  
Sheila Cope  
Martin Harvey, Housing Manager

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**1.0 Apologies**

1.1 No apologies submitted

**2.0 Minutes of Last Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019 and Matters Arising**

2.1 Slight typo in section 4.2 where the word wok was used rather than work. Other than that the minutes was agreed as being accurate.

2.2 Proposed by Sheila Cope and seconded by Billy Stevenson.

**3.0 Declaration of Interest**

3.1 There were no declarations of interest on any of the items contained within the agenda.

**4.0 Void Loss Report**

4.1 Martin outlined the void loss for January. He again outlined to the members present that the void report has been improved to allow members to see the difference in the financial void loss and also that which is reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator to take into account our re-categorised voids. Using the ARC figures the Association are on target at 0.2% void rent loss.

**4.2 Report noted by members**

**5.0 Arrears Summary Report**

Martin highlighted a decrease in arrears for January with gross arrears falling to £108,850 and net arrears down to £49,131. Housing Staff will focus on arrears management over the next few months to bring the arrears levels down.

No other comments from members on arrears report.

### **Report noted by members.**

**a) Bedroom Tax – Update** - Martin advised that Bedroom Tax cases are being managed with the assistance of DHP covering the shortfall.

**b) Universal Credit –** Martin provided information on a further increase in UC cases. This also accounted for approximately £7,900.00 of the arrears total. Martin outlined that this figure was likely to increase as more tenants went on to UC.

Martin explained to the members the process that staff were carrying out when we received confirmation of a tenant going on to UC.

The Association received updates through the DWP via the Landlord portal which gives us information on new claimants and then allows us to provide verification of rents, property size and any service charges so that the correct money was paid to the UC recipient. The portal also provides the Association with information on who is claiming UC allowing us to letter each individual with a letter inviting them in for an interview to discuss their claim and their responsibility to pay their rent and also the Scottish variations which would allow payments to be paid directly to us. This is proving very useful and allows us to discuss the responsibilities tenants have on paying rent but also on how they can avoid sanctions etc. It also allows us to signpost them to our welfare rights and money and debt advisers.

Although there has been an impact on arrears which will likely continue, once we gain experience and expertise in managing our UC cases we would be expecting to see these become more stable.

## **6.0 Any Other Business**

1. Erica Davidson has asked the Housing Sub Committee for comments on the Quarter 3 Finance report as she was unable to attend this evening meeting. I asked members if they wished to discuss this or if they were in a position to have the report proposed and seconded. The members asked that they would prefer to discuss this with Erica and it was agreed that this would be discussed with her at the next meeting.
2. Frank Newey asked if he could have the floor for a few minutes as he wanted to inform the members of a decision he has made about his future with the committee. After a recent bout of ill health Frank has decided that he is no longer in a position to fulfil his commitment to the Committee and the Board of the Association and was therefore submitting his resignation from both. Frank read out an eloquent letter explaining his reasons and this was handed to Rhona Polak the Chair of the Association. Rhona expressed her disappointment at losing Frank and thanked him for his contribution and years of service to the community through his work with the Committee and Board of the Association. All members and staff wholeheartedly agreed with Rhona's remarks, thanking Frank and wishing him all the best.

Rhona asked Martin to ensure that this was raised at the next Board Meeting.

**7.0**

**Date of Next Meeting**

19<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 6.30

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**Minutes Approved By Chair – Signed .....**

**Date .....**