

## **YOKER HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

### **NOTICE OF MEETING**

The Forty-first Annual General Meeting of Yoker Housing Association Limited will be held on Wednesday the 16th of September 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the offices of Yoker Housing Association Limited, 2310 Dumbarton Road, Yoker. [Meeting access will be restricted to on-line web access due to the current Covid-19 pandemic and in accordance with temporary Financial Conduct Authority regulations.]

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### **AGENDA**

- 1.0 APOLOGIES**
  
- 2.0 MINUTES OF THE FORTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 18.09.19**
  
- 3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
  
- 4.0 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
  - 4.1 VOTING PROCEDURE
  - 4.2 SELECTION OF SCRUTINEERS
  - 4.3 ELECTION
  
- 5.0 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.03.20**
  
- 6.0 REPORT OF THE AUDITORS**
  
- 7.0 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**
  
- 8.0 RESULT OF ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
  
- 9.0 VOTE OF THANKS**

## YOKER HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Minutes of the Forty-First Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday the 16th of September 2020 at 19:30 hrs through the Association's on-line meeting portal.

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### Present

Shields, G (Chair)	Gahagan, R (proxy)	McQuade, M (proxy)	Ryan, I
Ashe, A (proxy)	Jarvis, A	Milne, L	Smith, B (proxy)
Ballantyne, M (proxy)	Lees, G (proxy)	Morrison, C (proxy)	Smith, E (proxy)
Barclay, J (proxy)	Lowe, T (proxy)	McNeill, A (proxy)	Smith, W J (proxy)
Busby, Elaine	Lynn, J (proxy)	McNeill, P (proxy)	Stewart, A (proxy)
Carmichael, G (proxy)	Mbomson, I	Parker, M	Trainer, A (proxy)
Carmichael, J (proxy)	McBain, C (proxy)	Paterson, H (proxy)	Vandermotten, R
Colvin, P (proxy)	McClure, J (proxy)	Patterson, M (proxy)	Wright, C (proxy)
Donnelly, L (proxy)	McGinley, A	Porter, J	Wronowska, A
Fitton, J (proxy)	McLeod, M (proxy)	Reid, C (proxy)	
Gahagan, C (proxy)	McMail, J (proxy)	Reid, E (proxy)	

### In Attendance

Cunningham, S (Auditors)	Forrest, C J (Staff)	Freeman, K (Staff)	McKendrick, M
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The Chair welcomed those present to the Forty-First Annual General Meeting of the Association and gave a brief outline of the Agenda and business of the meeting.

### 1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the following:

Dillon, J	Logan, M	O'Hanlon B	Trainer, D
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### 2.0 MINUTES OF THE FORTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 18.09.19

The Minutes were proposed by A Jarvis, seconded by A McGinley, and unanimously approved by those present.

### 3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman introduced himself to the meeting and explained that he had taken over as Chairman of the Association following the retirement of his predecessor Mary Walker from the Management Committee. He took this opportunity to thank Mary for her many years of hard work and commitment to the Association and wished her best wishes in her retirement.

He went on to explain his own background and experience of the social housing sector and the circumstances surrounding his decision to join the Management Committee almost two years earlier.

#### Management Committee

The Chairman explained that both Isabella Ryan and Michael McKendrick had joined the Management Committee last year and he was pleased to note that both had remained. Unfortunately Deborah Calder had left the Management Committee due to personal commitments. He stressed the considerable expectations now being placed on voluntary committee members and that this had been a particularly difficult year for the Management Committee due to the regulatory engagement which had been referred to in the Chairman's report last year.

He went on to explain that this regulatory engagement had culminated in the publication of an Engagement Plan by the Scottish Housing Regulator which was extremely critical of the management of the Association. He suggested that some members present may have seen the reference to "widespread failures" taken up as a headline locally by the Clydebank Post and in other on-line publications.

### 3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Continued)

#### Management Committee (Continued)

However he went on to point out that an interesting part of the Clydebank Post article was that it started off by referring to the high levels of tenant satisfaction that the Association enjoyed – something which the Association's latest surveys show still to be the case.

The publications on-line also resulted in the Association being contacted by other housing providers who were astounded by the tone of the Regulatory Engagement Plan in the context of the Association's outstanding performance. It resulted in a number of organisations questioning the motives and the aptitude of the Scottish Housing Regulator.

He explained that this echoed the Management Committee view that the tone of the Regulatory Engagement Plan was both unfair and completely unrepresentative of the management of the Association. He made reference to the fact that the financial management of the Association was criticised by the Scottish Housing Regulator. In the context of an organisation with no loan debt or pension deficit and both rent levels and staffing costs amongst the lowest in the country he suggested that this was simply wrong. He went on to suggest that it was no accident that the Association had a bank balance of almost five million pounds and was in such a strong financial position – he stated that this was down to the financial management of the Association's Management Committee and Staff.

The Chairman went on to say that poor communication through regulatory staff who were either unwilling or unable to enter into meaningful engagement forced the Management Committee to take action. In the first instance the Association made representations to Bill Kidd MSP at the Scottish Parliament. Bill's initial reaction to the approach was one of bewilderment – he questioned why the Scottish Housing Regulator would have a problem with the only housing provider on his patch that he rarely ever gets complaints about? He reviewed the material provided including statistics showing tenants of Yoker were paying over a thousand pounds a year less in rent for a two-apartment property than tenants of other local housing providers. Bill agreed to take matters up with the Housing Minister.

In the meantime, the Association was in discussion with a number of the other housing providers who were also starting to question the Scottish Housing Regulator's approach. Freedom of Information requests put to the Scottish Housing Regulator raised serious questions about its own governance.

The Chairman then went on to explain that he met with James Dornan MSP, the Convenor of the Local Government and Communities Committee of the Scottish Parliament to whom the Scottish Housing Regulator reports. The Association's concerns with the Scottish Housing Regulator, its staff and its regulatory approach were put to James Dornan who agreed to look into the matters raised.

A new Regulation Manager was assigned to the Association early in 2020 and despite the reference to "widespread failures" in its Engagement Plan issued almost a year ago no further regulatory intervention has taken place – the Chairman invited those present to form their own conclusions as to why that might be the case.

On a more positive note, the Chairman was pleased to report that the Scottish Housing Regulator is now participating in a constructive and meaningful dialogue with the Association. The new Regulation Manager has not demanded that the Association provide any significant new information and has expressed his satisfaction with the rate of progress being made in our action plan for improvement. The Chairman hoped that this reflected the beginning of the end of an engagement process that has gone on for almost three years, that has done nothing to improve the service to the Association's customers but has cost the Association's tenants around fifty thousand pounds in consultants fees. He pointed out that every consultant engaged over the last three years has said the same thing – yes there are areas where you can improve but essentially Yoker Housing Association is a financially stable and well managed organisation.

The Chairman then went on to explain that one area where the Association can continue to improve – and that was referred to in the invitation to the meeting – was in the recruitment of local people on to the Management Committee. He expressed the view that the most successful housing providers were small, locally controlled, locally represented and locally managed organisations. He acknowledged that this has become increasingly difficult as the regulatory expectations of voluntary committee members and the burden of regulation has increased significantly over the last five years.

The Chairman then reminded those present that the Association's continued success will therefore be dependent upon the on-going support of the local community. In the absence of such support, he suggested the Association's tenants faced the prospect of higher rents, higher costs, no tenant reward scheme and a poorer repairs service associated with a transfer of housing stock to another housing provider. He urged those present to consider putting themselves or someone they know forward for membership of the Management Committee.

### 3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Continued)

#### Staff

With respect to the Association's staff, the Chairman explained that the departure of Alan to take up a post with Key Housing Association was the only staff change during the year.

He explained that Kirsty had recently returned from maternity leave following the birth of her daughter last year and that Shamaela was currently on maternity leave following the recent birth of her daughter in August.

The Chairman reported that Covid-19 had not impacted upon any staff or committee members to date but had delayed the recruitment of new staff due to lock-down restrictions. He hoped that recruitment would commence within the next few months.

#### Development

The Chairman explained that the Association had purchased a further two tenement properties in the last year and would continue to buy up tenement properties in order to ensure that the Association could carry out common repairs or improvements in the future. He assured those present of the Association's on-going commitment to the maintenance of existing tenement stock and efforts to gain control of tenement closes where the Association was in minority ownership.

He went on to explain that the refurbishment of the old Blawarthill Hospital for four flats was well underway but that the impact of Covid-19 had been to significantly delay completion. He explained that similar delays had impacted the start date for the adjacent fifteen new build housing units on the same site.

The development of the old Yoker Primary School on Craggan Drive was then referred to by the Chairman. He explained that a proposal to build twenty-eight housing units on the site was being considered with a possible site start in the next financial year. However he expressed some concerns over the costs of this development due to site constraints and suggested that the Association may have to abandon its proposals if it could not secure sufficient grant subsidy.

As reported in the previous year, the Chairman referred to the possible provision of a further thirty housing units on the Yoker waterfront as part of a joint development with Sanctuary (Scotland) Housing Association. However, the uncertainty surrounding the exact location and timescale for the development of the proposed Yoker to Renfrew bridge meant that this development remained speculative and was not part of the Association's current Business Plan.

#### Maintenance

The Chairman confirmed that the Association remained committed to a programme of planned maintenance work aimed at protecting the Association's housing stock from the worst of the autumn and winter weather and reducing the risk of expensive structural repairs in the long term.

He went on to explain that the cyclical programme of roof and gutter maintenance inspections continued and that the Association had now completed a cyclical programme of close painting. This had seen all closes refurbished where the Association had majority ownership or where that was not the case, with the support of other owners.

Those present were then notified of the eighty-four bathroom, ten kitchen and forty-three boiler replacements completed over the last year and the programme of work planned over the next year.

The Chairman confirmed that all of the Association's lettable properties now met the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing and that the Association was already working towards meeting future targets well in advance.

#### Housing Management

The Chairman reported that the Association had allocated sixty-six houses during the last year – fifteen more than the previous year – and mostly re-lets from the Association's existing housing stock and represented just over ten percent of applicants on the Association's current waiting list for housing. At the end of March 2020, he explained that the Association had over six hundred and sixty housing applicants on the waiting list.

The fact that the Association continued to charge amongst the lowest rents of any landlord in Scotland was cited as a contributing factor for the high demand. He explained that the Association continued to have the fourteenth lowest average weekly rent compared to the one hundred and eighty-four other landlords who reported their returns to the Scottish Housing Regulator last year – and that was before taking into account the impact of the tenant reward scheme.

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### 3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Continued)

#### Tenant Reward Scheme

The Chairman confirmed that this year would see the tenth year of the Tenant Reward Scheme which was designed to help those tenants who help the Association by making sure their rent was paid on time. He reminded those present that since introducing the scheme in 2011, the Association had paid back well over three hundred thousand pounds in rent rebates to qualifying tenants.

He reminded those present that the scheme was aimed at rewarding those tenants who took full responsibility for ensuring their rent was paid on time and maintained arrangements for repayment of arrears of service charges, rechargeable repairs or other rechargeable sums. For qualifying tenants, this meant the equivalent of no rent increase since 2017.

#### Drumchapel Money Advice

The Chairman explained that this office-based service had been impacted by Covid-19 but anyone facing financial difficulties should contact a member of the Association's staff for assistance as soon as possible. He hoped that the service could resume as soon as lock-down restrictions were lifted.

#### Finance

The Chairman explained that the Association's Director would provide a short presentation on the Financial Statements under agenda item five. However, he confirmed that the Association remained in a strong financial position with no long-term debt and sufficient bank balances to fund future development and maintenance activity well into the foreseeable future.

He explained that the Association's long-term strategy continued to be to build up cash reserves to fund future development rather than to borrow. While acknowledging that this meant the Association would grow more slowly than some, it would reduce the financial burden on future tenants and the level of risk faced by the Association. He reminded those present that this strategic approach had been fully endorsed by all those that had attended the Association's business planning consultation the previous year.

#### Conclusion

The Chairman concluded his report by thanking his fellow Management Committee members for their support and assistance in this, his first year of his Chairmanship. He acknowledged the challenges presented by Covid-19 and by the Scottish Housing Regulator but noted that the Association had continued to provide a fairly seamless service to its existing tenants, housing applicants and other customers despite these challenges. He looked forward to the re-opening of the Association's offices and welcoming members to an in-person meeting next year.

### 4.0 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Secretary explained that under Rule 39.4 the following candidates were standing for re-election without the need for nominations:

#### Candidate

Elaine Busby  
Paul Colvin  
Anna-Maria Jarvis  
Catriona Walker

He went on to explain that under Rule 40.2 there were three members standing for election as follows:

#### Candidate

Lisa-Marie Donnelly  
Thomas Lowe  
Isabella Ryan

He then confirmed that as the total number of vacancies exceeded the total number of nominations, under Rule 40.1, the Chairman could declare the candidates duly elected without the need for an election.

The Chairman then declared all the nominees duly elected.

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#### 5.0 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

The Chairman introduced C Forrest, the Association's Director to those present and explained that he would provide a report on the Association's Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020.

C Forrest provided a brief overview of the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020 and commenced his presentation with reference to the Statement of Comprehensive Income. He highlighted the modest increase in turnover for the year offset by a slightly higher increase in costs that resulted in a reduction in the operating surplus for the year from £894k to £845k. He went on to explain that the increase in costs was largely due to increased expenditure on major repairs.

C Forrest then went on to show the impact of these results on the Association's Statement of Financial Position at the end of March 2020. These showed an improvement in Net Current Assets from approximately £3.3m to £3.9m and reflected the Association's very strong financial position. Increases in the value of housing properties as a result of on-going investment and development as well as an increase of approximately £1m in cash balances were also highlighted.

C Forrest concluded his report by highlighting the increase in net worth of the Association to £14.1m at the end of March 2020.

In the absence of any questions from the floor, the Financial Statements were noted by those present.

#### 6.0 REPORT OF THE AUDITORS

The Chairman introduced S Cunningham of Alexander Sloan to those present and invited him to provide his report.

S Cunningham then referred to the audit of the Financial Statements and confirmed that this had been completed in accordance with International Auditing Standards.

He went on to explain that the purpose of the audit was to confirm three things. Firstly whether the Financial Statements gave a true and fair view of the Association's financial position and of its financial performance, secondly whether they had been prepared in accordance with accounting standards including International Financial Reporting Standard 102 and thirdly whether they had been prepared in accordance with legislation including the Co-Operative and Community Benefits Societies Act.

S Cunningham then stated that he was pleased to be able to report that in all three respects the Financial Statements met the necessary standards.

The Chairman then thanked S Cunningham for his report.

#### 7.0 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

I Ryan, seconded by M Parker, proposed that Alexander Sloan be re-appointed as auditors for 2020 / 2021.

There being no other nominations, the Chairman declared Alexander Sloan duly re-appointed.

#### 8.0 RESULT OF ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Chairman reminded those present that there had been no need for an election.

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**9.0 VOTE OF THANKS**

The Chairman then proposed a vote of thanks to all those present for their attendance and declared the formal business of the meeting closed at 20:10 hrs.

Proposed By \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded By \_\_\_\_\_