

Cloch Housing Association

05/06/2024

Minutes of Housing & Property Services (H&PS) Sub-Committee meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 6.00pm held in Cloch’s Office and on MS Teams (Hybrid)

Present (online):

Kelly Ferns, Hristina Tarpanova, David Brown, Eleanor Robertson, and Nicola McLachlan.

Attending (office and online):

Alana Durnin (CEO), Paul McColgan (Head of Property Services), Laura Young (Senior Community Health and Wellbeing Officer), and Carolyne Swinney (Corporate Services Assistant) – Minute Taker.

1.	Nominate and Approve Position of Chair and Vice Chair
	David Brown was put forward for Chair and Nicola McLachlan for Vice Chair of the H&PS Sub-Committee. This was proposed, seconded and approved.
1.1	Apologies & Declarations of Interest
	<p>The Corporate Services Assistant (CSA) intimated apologies had been received from Victoria Weir. It was noted that Victoria had read the papers and did not have any comments or questions on them.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest noted.</p>
2.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 August 2023
	<p>The Sub-Committee were taken through the minutes from the last meeting.</p> <p>A Sub-Committee member asked about the complaint logging from the previous meeting minutes as this was not carried forward as an action on the plan. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) confirmed that Cloch are recording the anti-social behaviour complaints correctly. Sub-Committee happy with the update.</p> <p><u>RESOLUTION</u> There were no amendments to be made to the Minutes. The Minutes were proposed, seconded, and approved.</p>
3.	Matters Arising & Outstanding Actions
	<p>An update was given by the Head of Property Services (HoPS) and CEO on the colour coded report.</p> <p>For Housing Services, the action in relation to the ‘Unacceptable Actions Policy, has been completed, with section 1.2 amended to reference referral to Tenancy Support Services.</p> <p>The ‘Garden Tidy Scheme Policy’ is still ongoing and will need to come to a future meeting. The CEO discussed the upcoming rent consultation and that feedback on windows completed as 40% so options should be looked at that we can take to tenants and garden tidy could be one to take forward.</p> <p>The outstanding action in relation to changes to be made to the ‘Decorations Allowance’ will be taken to the December Board meeting as there are more questions from Leadership Team.</p>

Although the 'Lettings Plan' action was ongoing at the time of sending out the H&PS Sub-Committee papers, this has now been completed as advised by the CSA, with a table added under 4.1 explaining Section 5 (Homeless Referrals) that were received.

This has been added to the 'Allocations Policy' as an appendix and will be uploaded onto our website and SharePoint for Board and staff. CSA will action this and update the 'action items' accordingly.

The action in relation to devising a Policy for 'Former Tenant Write-Offs' is still outstanding. The Head of Housing Services (HoHS) has spoken with other Housing Associations and feels there is no need for a separate policy, however, a procedure will be devised to clarify this. CEO confirmed this action will be removed and put in the Operational Plan.

For Property Services, the HoPS confirmed the action in relation to 'Management Procedure' for roof anchors was completed and added to the Departmental Action Plan.

The Sub-Committee members were asked if they had any questions. There were none.

ACTION CARRIED FORWARD

- Garden Tidy Scheme
- Decorations Allowance
- Lettings Plan (this has now been added to the Allocations Policy as an appendix but needs to be uploaded to Cloch website and SharePoint for Board and staff.
- Policy for 'Former Tenant Write-Offs' action to be removed as not needed. A procedure is to be devised instead and this will be added to the Operational Plan.

ITEMS FOR NOTING/DISCUSSION

4. Head of Property Services Report

The HoPS discussed the report and apologised for the one-day delay of it being sent to Sub-Committee. The main purpose of the report was to provide an update on all aspects of the Property Services section which outlined performance to date for that financial year and the ongoing work of the section. The report was for the period to 30 September 2023.

The key issues for consideration from the report were:

- Contractor Performance
- New tenant satisfaction survey model
- Landscape maintenance contract

The HoPS was pleased with the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets and happy where things were going as continuous improvement. As an example, non-emergency repairs increased to 92.2% for October.

The Sub-Committee asked about the setting of KPI targets for each year, and the CEO explained that these figures come to Board to agree. The HoPS confirmed that benchmarking is comparison against best value network and also against last year to give an idea of movement.

The CEO asked the Sub-Committee if it would be helpful to show last year's figures on the table by adding a column and they confirmed it would.

Also, within the report the HoPS explained that they used to provide update on text surveys, but we have a new CX survey that does everything we need and in an easier form. Appendix 1 that was attached was the first set of reports. It has a very limited

number of responses but does show improvement is on track and high level of satisfaction.

Key questions are covered in the survey and as more jobs are complete, this will provide more context this will provide higher numbers and comments. The HoPS was happy with this reporting.

There were some questions on the survey from the Sub-Committee Members. These were:

- Clarification of the question around 'attitude of contractor' and if this should be 'conduct.'
- Is the feedback from tenants monitored for each contractor or overall. A breakdown for each contractor about repair service and how satisfied of overall service would be good.
- Does Cloch keep a record of who attends a property as this could be how the data can be married and could be used for better satisfaction.
- Can it be asked in the survey for the individual who undertakes the work, highlighting the service to the company.
- Can the questions on the survey match and be used for the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC).
- Can survey be broken down to see trend against contractor.
- How is the survey sent to tenants.

The HoPS and CEO answered the above and confirmed:

- The question is more around positive attitude but agreed this would be better saying 'conduct' and would get this changed.
- It is the KPIs that are looked at for individual contractors. Survey data can be broken down, but it was felt this was too early given the number of responses. It is being looked into at what else the cx software can provide.
- The data does break down to per contractor and that for dissatisfaction it needs to be clear regarding overall service and if this in relation to contractor or Cloch.
- The current process only provides a percentage score. Unsure that this level of detail is available and could be time consuming, however we do scrutinise all tenant complaints which should address this situation. Cloch could not currently monitor individual contractors due to the number of repairs. The CEO and HoPS confirmed that where dissatisfaction is noted on the survey then a complaint is logged by the Customer Connectors Team, investigated, followed up, and taken forward via evidence from customer feedback. The current report might not show initially but a complaint is definitely logged.
- It cannot be used for the ARC, but the survey has the same categories/mirrors the ARC and gives temperature gauge.
- With more data then this will be great but not just one and would be discussed at performance meeting with contractor.
- CX feedback software is a link and opens up in a browser/module to complete with comments. There will be a 'show and tell' of the CX software at the next Board meeting.

It was confirmed that the contractors can identify individuals, not Cloch.

The HoPS then moved to key sections of their report.

For section 3, apology was given that 3.1 and 3.2 were round the wrong way in relation to expenditure/budget but the variance was correct.

A Sub-Committee member asked if this meant both figures were the same. The HoPS confirmed that the Void should be £21,000 variance and this would get amended. The correct figures were clarified accordingly.

The HoPS then discussed the current issues with the landscaping contractor. They are meeting with the Contractor's Director to discuss the work done and terms of the contract. This will include, complaints received, possible mutual termination, owners contribute to this service and evidence of work completed needs to be provided to justify invoicing the owners as well as paying for all work complete. It is currently work in progress.

The HoPS confirmed the above were the main parts of this report and if the Sub-Committee had any questions on the other parts.

The Sub-Committee members asked the following:

- In Section 4 regarding under water, is that legionella.
- Are there any of Cloch's properties classed as House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) and if so, are risk assessments carried out to include fire doors.
- Should Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) checks be included.
- In Section 5, £59,000 seems a bit high for over the bath showers/wet floor.
- Section 6.4, under 'consideration to reinstate flood properties,' 'yes' to drying them out but why looking to reinstate.
- If Scottish Water at fault for flooding, can the £35,000 void loss be claimed from them.

The HoPS answered the above and confirmed:

- Yes, it is legionella and condition of tanks. A risk assessment is carried out which looks at all aspects of hot water to ensure compliance.
- Cloch have HMO properties and regulations regarding these can change for example common areas is not currently a regulation in domestic buildings. Cloch want to ensure that we have a robust policy and set of procedures. A fire risk assessment is carried out by Cloch for all HMO properties, but also the care provider carries out a risk assessment for the occupants to make sure the care providers are aware of what to do in the event of a fire i.e., evacuation.
- Cloch have a Policy on EPC. These are all recorded, and we can check when due and expiring. Also, there is an online EPC register for each property.
- Incorrect data on the report, and it had been amended to show a lot more had been completed. It was confirmed that there had been 17 grab rails and 7 over wet floor showers. CEO apologised for this error as the flooding event at Kilmacolm Road took priority. It was confirmed that that peer reviews will be done on report papers.
- CEO clarified that Cloch are not looking to reinstate the properties but will be drying them out. CEO currently meeting with Council etc to fix the issue. Scottish Government are aware of this and where they give money to build and buy houses, it has been asked if they can help with money to fix the issue. CEO explained that Scottish Water had been great and have said they may be able to lower the water. Also, there is a nursery across the road which could be demolished to give space for water mitigation. The Council offered this to Cloch, however, water mitigation is not Cloch to fix.
- CEO confirmed that the flooding is no longer an 'act of God' and at the meeting they arranged, that was the first time the Council had spoken with Scottish Water.

Scottish Water did not know the affect it had on our tenants and that we all need to work together. Scottish Water want to complete a feasibility survey to check what other burns link in. Cloch were asked to contribute but explained that our costs are already £300,000 due to the floods. It will take a while. Flood gates can be put on front doors, but water was also coming up from the floors and back of properties. CEO hopeful of Scottish Government assistance.

RECOMMENDATION

The Sub-Committee were asked to note the contents of the report and performance.

RESOLUTION

The Sub-Committee noted the report and performance.

5. Head of Housing Services Report

The CEO discussed the HoHS report. The main purpose of the report was to advise the Sub Committee on the recent activity of the Housing Services Department and to provide information on performance management for Q2 in 2023/24.

The key issues for consideration from the report were:

- Item 2.2.1 – Slight increase in current arrears from Q1 to Q2 but still good performance
- Item 2.2.3 – The table highlights a reduction in the value of Former Tenant Credits and reduction in the value of Former Tenant Arrears.
- Item 2.2.4 – Days to re-let above target primarily due to a number of lets taking over 90 days.
- Item 5 – Home Office Changes starting to have an impact on Asylum Seekers gaining a positive decision to remain in the UK.

The key recommendations in the report were:

1. Provide feedback where appropriate and otherwise note the contents of the report.

The CEO discussed the contents of the report.

It was explained that void turnaround was off target and looking at process to break this down. Décor extends this period. Enhanced voids where carpets are provided by Cloch also extends the process.

The HMO properties also extends the void process due to support package from support unit. It was confirmed that there have been supported properties ready since mid-October, however, corresponding with Social Work and Richmond Fellowship, they still had to get care packages in place. These type of properties take longer to let.

There are different rules for the void period and Cloch will be looking to standardise the service agreements.

The CEO confirmed that the Wellpark project was fantastic with properties done up really well. Cloch will be going back to tenants about this for satisfaction results.

In relation to Cloch Plus, the feedback is good, however, it is fine if on benefits but expensive if working. Cloch need to look at wider context and make a decision as do not want to put people off working.

Staffing update was provided and that a consultant will be brought in to help 3 days a week due to the HoHS moving. There is currently 'acting up' back fill resourcing in

relation to maternity leave and sickness. Succession planning is looking at the skills people have, and 'one to one' meetings being carried out just now.

Update was given on acquisitions as Scottish Government can give £91,000 to purchase larger properties. 3-bedroom properties located for tenants currently in hotel and Cloch have gone back to Scottish Government. Currently awaiting update from Scottish Government and hopefully then buy some. The HoPS has been reviewing the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) and heating etc on the properties.

The Sub-Committee were asked if they had any questions. One of the members said that it looked like it would be a struggle to get this all done by Christmas and the CEO agreed it was difficult.

RECOMMENDATION
The Sub-Committee were asked to note the contents of the report and performance.

RESOLUTION
The Sub-Committee noted the report and performance.

6. Work of the Community Support Team - Presentation

The Senior Tenancy Support Officer (STSO) gave a presentation on the Community Support Team. Key points from this were:

- Team introduced, their job title, workings hours and that everyone is acting up to drive the service forward.
- It is a Scottish Government funded project until March 2026.
- Aim is to provide a person-centred approach and for the team to reach out to our vulnerable tenants, building links in our community.
- Priority Groups are families struggling to cope with changes in their lives, young people taking up tenancies for the first time, people with mental health issues, older tenants and struggling vulnerable households including those in our furnished tenancies.
- A tenant can make a referral to the team via Cloch Portal, and staff can make referral via internal email address.
- There is a Handyman as part of the service for 3.5 hours per week. Amazing uptake by tenants when we sent details of this via our CX software.
- Works include joinery, minor plumbing, small electrical work, safety/security measures, and moving small items of furniture.
- Not included are anything that Cloch is responsible for as a landlord, work that takes longer than 2 hours, gardening, painting, or decorating, boiler servicing or repairs, domestic appliances repairs (other than changing plugs or fuses), re-hanging doors and re-felting garden huts.
- The Handyman Service was used for Kilmacolm Road and was invaluable.
- There have been 51 referrals in which 40 are ongoing, 10 non engagement and 1 complete. Historic referrals can be picked back up. Currently trying to concentrate on ongoing ones.
- Cloch First surveys completed with positive feedback. Cloch need to ensure that the service charge is not too high for people and that tenants are fully aware, prior to signing up of the implications of a furnished tenancy.
- Awaiting outcome on Golden Creatives funding application submitted for Elliott Court regarding digital inclusion and creative ideas for tenants.
- Team is the admin for Cloch White Goods for tenants who need fridges etc as this took up a lot of Housing Services time.

- The team are going out to 'Community Links,' 'Carers Centre' and 'Your Voice' to highlight what the team does.
- Make Winter Warmer event was an amazing day. It was so good to see so many tenants. Other partners were invited, these were, 'Financial Fitness,' 'Community Tracks,' 'Carers Centre,' 'Inverclyde Bothy, and 'Wise Group.' There were great enquiries and event was so worthwhile.
- First 3 monthly monitoring report was sent to the Scottish Government and the team received amazing feedback on the case studies that were supplied.
- From April to September 2023 there have been 628 referrals (51 direct, 130 through 'Financial Fitness' and energy groups, and 447 from 'Starter Packs').

The STSO discussed the case study that had been sent to the Scottish Government. This was a good tenant who never complained, however, other issues were highlighted. They were a hoarder which was a fire risk and struggled to connect with other organisations. They also had no social work involvement. The team engaged with the tenant, built up trust in which they found he had no heating or hot water and no washing machine. The team started getting the tenant to a GP, got medication, registered with a dentist and have been working with them since May. Team worked with Wise Group regarding energy, got money to put in gas meter, started de cluttering the house, and enrolled tenant in outreach programmes. Tenant now does walks with community links and member of a camera club. The team are still currently working on fully de cluttering the house and are looking into this with the council. The tenant had no phone or access to the internet and no quilt cover. The team got him these so that he can keep in touch.

There was also another tenant which our property services had highlighted the condition of a property to the team. The team have got this property de cluttered too.

The STSO then gave an update on what was coming up which was:

- Shadow sanctuary housing.
- Continue to develop a map of services within the community.
- Continue to assist housing services with the Kilmacolm Road flood.
- Hosting a housing options event.
- Planning group activities for 2024, i.e., book club, blether.
- Meeting the Trust to develop volunteering opportunities.
- Care experience session.
- Sheltered housing.
- Elliott court, Christmas event.

There were no questions by the Sub-Committee, however, one member did give a 'well done' to the team and that the amount of work in such a small space of time was brilliant and amazing.

RECOMMENDATION

The Sub-Committee were asked to note the contents of the presentation.

RESOLUTION

The Sub-Committee noted the presentation.

7.	Health & Safety
	The HoPS confirmed that there was nothing to note as everything was covered in their report that was discussed earlier in the meeting. For tenancy safety and compliance there was no other incident to report.
8.	AOCB & Reflections

	A Sub-Committee member said the presentation about the Community Support Team was tremendous and that tenant engagement is down to the enthusiasm of the STSO.
9.	Date of Next Meeting – 13 February 2024
	The meeting closed at 19.34pm