

## South West Scotland Regional Network committee meeting

15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 10am, via Zoom

### Minutes

#### In attendance

Anne Cameron (Chair)
Margaret Anderson (Vice Chair)
Bruce Cuthbertson (Secretary)
Margaret Dymond (Treasurer)
Norma Ferguson
Mac McKenzie

#### In attendance – SG

Carolynne Watson
Annabel Hoatson

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Anne Cameron welcomed everyone to the final meeting of 2021. Apologies were received from Helen Westwater and Mary Logan.

### **2. Minutes of meeting held 3 November 2021**

The committee discussed the minutes of meeting held 3 November 2021.

Margaret Dymond – proposer

Norma Ferguson – seconder

There were no matters arising.

### **3. Treasurers report**

Margaret Dymond set out the Treasurer's report, noting there have been no changes to the balance since the last meeting- the current balance is £1863.21.

#### **4. Reports from meetings attended by members**

##### **Rent Affordability sub-group: 18 November & 9 December 2021**

Anne Cameron updated on the recent meetings of the group, noting that meeting notes for the 18 November session are not available for sharing at this stage as the Scottish Government staff who attended the session requested the discussion not be shared further at this point. Thinking is at a very early stage in relation to the points discussed and will require further consideration before this can be shared more widely. Anne noted that she would be keen to have more intensive tenant involvement in this area, and would want more tenants to be represented on any working groups which are established in relation to affordability to ensure the tenant voice is clearly heard and all issues are identified and addressed to make this work worthwhile.

Carolynne noted that both Scottish Government staff who attended the session found this to be very useful, and the discussions raised their awareness of issues they had not considered prior to the meeting which was extremely helpful. Both staff passed on their thanks to the group. The Regional Network representatives have offered any help or support that would be of benefit to the SG staff in the course of their work on affordability, and indicated they would be very happy to participate in future discussion once work is further progressed and this was welcomed. Anne suggested individual meetings with each Regional Network would help to get an idea of the breadth of challenges in relation to affordability, and particular nuances in urban/rural and local challenges.

##### **Communications Sub-Group – 1 December 2021**

Margaret D noted that she has circulated the minutes of this meeting. In terms of actions, the group are working on a Newsletter, a tri-fold information leaflet and the website subscription service. Annabel noted that due to a change in developer on the website, work on the subscription service is still required, and is hopeful this will be carried out early in the New Year. As Annabel is moving on to her new post, Carolynne will be picking up on the work with the Comms group.

Margaret D noted she may have a diary clash for the January Comms group meeting, and Bruce offered to attend in her place.

##### **Planning sub-committee evidence session**

Bruce updated on the Planning Sub-Committee evidence session which took place a couple of weeks ago. Bruce was called to give evidence, representing the tenant view. It is likely there will be a further session early in the New Year. The draft minutes cannot be shared at this stage but will be made available and Bruce will circulate these. Architects, Council and Housing Association representatives and academics participated in the session- there was a lot of interest in how the targets will be achieved and affordability implications, and Bruce felt his views were welcomed and taken on Board by the Sub-Committee.

## **5. Discussion: The Tenant Experience**

At the last meeting, the committee had some discussion on the experiences of tenants and how this is valued. Following the meeting, Margaret A had a discussion with Lesley Baird, TPAS, and Margaret has now agreed to lead a workshop session on this subject at the TPAS conference in February. Margaret led a discussion on her plans to run the workshop and the topics she would like to cover, including a questionnaire in conference packs to gather views and experiences from conference delegates.

Margaret will be working on a presentation for the workshop in January, and noted that she is keen to get feedback from the committee today on the topics and questions she is thinking of raising during the session, including:

- Should there be a difference in society between homeowners and tenants?;
- Have you ever felt you have been treated unfairly because you are a tenant?;
- At any time have you felt services delivered by your landlord have been below quality because you do not own the property;
- Has anyone ever referred to you as 'only' a tenant and how did you react?;
- Do you live in a mixed tenure area and is there an obvious visual difference between privately owned houses and local authority/Housing Association houses?

The committee agreed that the questions Margaret has prepared are relevant and will provoke thought and discussion. Norma asked Margaret to forward a copy of her questions to Carolynne to circulate around the committee for any further views and suggestions, and Margaret agreed to do this. All comments and contributions can be passed to Margaret directly.

## **6. Meeting Planner and Meeting Dates for 2022**

Carolynne updated on the Meeting Planner, which Bruce has circulated around the committee. Carolynne has updated this with the meeting dates for 2022 which have already been agreed, and the committee discussed and agreed their committee meeting dates for next year. The first committee meeting of 2022 will be Wednesday 9 February. The committee noted they would like to hold an extra date on 14 December 2022 in hopes of being able to meet prior to Christmas.

Carolynne noted that she will continue to update the Planner as and when meetings are added for 2022 to ensure this is up to date, and the Planner will be added to the agenda for committee meetings going forward. Anne requested a month by month update on the meetings taking place, and Carolynne agreed to do this.

## **6. ZEST Information Session- 27 January 2022**

Bruce updated on the Zero Emissions in Social Housing Taskforce (ZEST) information session, which he will be leading on. All Regional Network members have been invited to the session which will be taking place on 27 January 2022, and an Eventbrite booking link has also been issued by the TP Team. Bruce is hoping to show some pictures and possibly a video of houses which have undergone work, and is hoping to make the session interactive and offer sources for those interested in knowing more to learn what is happening in the local area.

Bruce noted that affordability and funding will also be covered as part of the session, and Carolynne noted she has contacted colleagues within SG to attend the session to provide additional information on these aspects.

## **7. AOCB**

The committee noted their appreciation for all Annabel's work over the years as she moved to her new post, and wished her well. Annabel thanked the committee for their work and support during the time she has been with the team, and wished everyone well.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

9 February 2022 at 10am, via Zoom.

Followed by:

- 6 April 2022;
- 8 June 2022;
- 27 July 2022;
- 21 September 2022;
- 23 November 2022;
- HOLD- 14 December 2022.