



MINUTES

Region 1

Approved North of Scotland Regional Network 1
Meeting held on Thursday, 08th December 2022 at 11.00 a.m.
in the Scottish Government Offices,
AB1 Building, 48 Huntly Street, Aberdeen.

Present:

Colin Stewart	Chair	Aberdeen City	CS
Steve Byrne	Vice Chair	Argyll & Bute	SB
Eric Spence	Committee Member	Argyll & Bute	ES
Liz Richardson (via zoom)	Committee Member	Highlands	LR
Linda Lennie	Committee Member	Orkney Islands	LL
Kath Fennell	Committee Member	Orkney Islands	KF

In attendance:

Carolynne Watson	Scottish Government	CW
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Apologies / Absent:

Joanne Millar	Committee Member	Aberdeenshire	JM
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	Details	Action
1	<p><u>Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>CS welcomed everyone to the first face to face meeting in Aberdeen since the pandemic in 2020.</p> <p>CS made a declaration of interest that he is a board member of the Scottish Housing Regulator.</p>	<p>CS</p> <p>CS</p>
2	<p><u>Minute of Meeting held on Thursday 13th October 202</u></p> <p>CS informed everyone the minutes of the previous meeting have been approved as per basecamp. Going forward, all committee members should mark minutes as agreed on basecamp before minutes can be taken as approved. The first two committee members to mark as agreed will be noted as the proposer and seconder of the minutes.</p>	CS

<p>3</p>	<p><u>Treasurer's Report</u></p> <p>CS noticed a typo error on the previous bank account balances. CS corrected the amount from £1651.40 to £1651.04</p> <p>Expenditure for this week will show in the next Treasurers Report therefore the bank balance remains the same at £1651.04.</p> <p>The petty cash balance is £16.33.</p> <p>Committee members who complete an expenditure form should send it to CS once complete along with your bank details.</p>	<p>CS</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Business Matters</p>	
	<p><u>Website update:</u></p> <p>The website remains up to date however there have been issues reoccurring which are causing problems with uploading documents and images. There is a new update required for the website however CS has been unable to arrange this yet due to problems with the SG IT team.</p> <p>CS explained the contract was originally with CIVIC which included development work. When that contract ended, a new one was established with White Space, who then only had a contract to do backups and upgrades hence the issue with the subscription service. The contract with White Space ended at the end of October, leaving CS with no support for the website.</p> <p>CS would like to get the subscription service set up first before agreeing to another contract with a business outside SG. The subscription service has been tested, approved and is currently sitting in the development site. CS requires CIVIC to finalise the work they have been paid for in order for the subscription service to be moved to the live website.</p>	<p>CS</p>
	<p><u>SHR Liaison Group:</u></p> <p>Current members: LR, LL, ES</p> <p>The previous SHR liaison group meeting was on the 25th October. LR listed some topics of conversation which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Panel of Tenant and Service Users survey results • The Charter • Rent letter to landlords • Rent thematic. <p>LR highlighted three additional topics which were the main focus on the meeting.</p>	

- **Cost of Living Crisis** – The SHR liaison group discussed the impact on tenants and communities including future rent levels and increasing costs for landlords.

Social landlords are having to balance the reduced rent with housing upgrades. That in turn would be energy efficiency measures like double glazing etc which would reduce tenants energy bills.

- **Rent Freeze** – The SHR also discussed why a rent freeze for social housing tenants was implemented and not just for PRS. In addition, the Governments lack of social housing tenant consultation in the lead up to this legislation was also discussed. Moreover, the group also highlighted challenges facing landlords in balancing their statutory duties with asset management and affordable rent. The Housing affordability working group was also mentioned due to their progress in relation to this.

- **Tenant Participation** – The RN members on the SHR liaison group wanted the regulators to know how passionate the RN are about tenant participation as well as:

1. Concerned about RN sustainability in light of declining membership.
2. How much they value their tenant priorities team Carolynne and Jemma in their roles and how they need more support.
3. The social housing landlords role in raising awareness of and supporting TP opportunities.
4. Requested a TP thematic

LR finalised her update by stating it has not been confirmed if George Walker and Michael Cameron will attend the April meeting instead of January.

CW is going to invite Patrick Harvie, Minister for Tenants Rights, to the next RN meeting. This is due to the RN doubting they will be able to schedule a meeting with Cabinet Secretary Shona Robinson in the near future.

The next pre meeting is January 17th
The next meeting is January 31st

	<p><u>Communications Group:</u></p> <p><u>Current Members: CS, SB</u></p> <p>Last meeting 23rd November.</p> <p>The Communications group discussed at their last meeting the changes that will be taking place across the regional networks in the new year which will be noted further down in the minutes.</p> <p>Other topics of discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the Constitution • Promoting RN using TIS/TPAS and through meetings with landlords and tenants • Meeting with the Cabinet Secretary 	
	<p><u>Rent Focus Group:</u></p> <p>Current Members: CS</p> <p>Last meeting was 3rd November 2022 next meeting is 18th January 2023.</p> <p>The rent affordability group had a meeting once they had received the results from the survey however these were only highlights. The group were disappointed by the lack of responses. There were 31 responses from landlords and 68 from tenants as well as a poor response from RN members.</p> <p>CS has the full results of the survey which will be discussed at the next meeting on the 18th January 2023 as well as being posted on Basecamp.</p>	
	<p><u>HRA Group Update:</u></p> <p>Current Members: LR Possibly adding new member JM</p> <p>Nothing new to update.</p>	

	<p><u>H2040 Group Update:</u></p> <p><u>Current Members: CS, LR, SB</u></p> <p>As a result of the Housing to 2040 Strategic Board coming in to place the RN Housing to 2040 group has not met recently.</p> <p>The Strategic Board has yet to meet, the meeting has been postponed until beginning of next year.</p> <p>CW spoke to Anne Cook who wants to reinstate the RN H2040 group next year. CW highlighted the fact that RTOs and Scrutiny groups are on the decline and that there are less formalised mechanisms for tenants to get involved in which is where CW hopes this group will come in.</p>	
	<p><u>Chairs and Secretaries</u></p> <p>Nothing to report as everything that was discussed is discussed in other sections. Chairs & Secretaires meeting have now been suspended for the foreseeable future. More details to follow.</p> <p><u>Current Members:</u></p> <p>Last meeting was 8th December 2022 No update in recording</p>	
	<p><u>Accessibility Group</u></p> <p>Current Members: LR, SB Disability & Independent Living Members: CS, KF, LR, SB</p> <p>LR said last meeting was upbeat, members treated with respect and great conversation.</p> <p>CW suggested getting TPAS involved to support the group and move it forward.</p>	
5	<p><u>North of Scotland Committee Discussions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Representatives <p>Members were asked to look at the working groups and decide if there were any groups they wish to join.</p> <p>Sub-group members will be asked to have at least a verbal report if not a written report on the last meeting they attended.</p> <p><u>Questions for next meeting with Cabinet Secretary</u></p> <p>CS told the group if they have any more questions / suggestions for the next meeting with the Cabinet Secretary to put them on Basecamp.</p>	

	<p><u>Meeting of the Chairs & the proposal for moving forward</u></p> <p>The chairs have been meeting regularly over the last few months and have realised that the same discussions are being repeated over and over across committee meetings. CS explained that despite the number of RN members increasing slightly we are still at a very low number of members. Adding in the low SG TP team staff, having 24 network meetings taking place every year, 4 Chairs & Secretaires and 4 AGMS was too much and needed to be changed</p> <p>This meeting was the last of its kind, at least temporarily, and we will begin in the new year trialling a new format.</p> <p>From now on, there will be combined meetings, all four regions will be a part of one meeting with breakout rooms to allow each region to discuss their relevant work then come back together to discuss sub groups.</p>	
	<p><u>Dates of future meetings:</u></p> <p>All meetings bar one will take place via zoom at 10 am. The face to face meeting will take place in June each year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wednesday 8th February - Wednesday 19th April - Saturday 3rd June (combined AGM) - Thursday 22nd June (F2F in Glasgow) - Wednesday 16th August - Wednesday 11th October - Wednesday 6th December <p><u>Meeting with Anne Cook</u></p> <p>CW and Shona Gorman met with Anne Cook a couple weeks ago to discuss the lack of staff in the TP team and how the SG are going to support the RN in the new year.</p>	
6.	<p><u>A.O.B.C</u></p> <p>Region 1 have welcomed new member Joanne Miller to the committee.</p> <p>CS hopes to reintroduce the £5 subsidence expense for online meetings.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Date and Time of Next Meeting</u> Wednesday 8th February 2023 Combined, All Regions meeting using Zoom</p>	ALL

(Please forward Apologies to the Chair in advance of the Meeting)