MINUTES

Approved Regional Networks
Meeting held on Wednesday 8 February 2023
at 10.00 a.m. via Zoom

Present:

Colin Stewart	CS	R1	Chair	Aberdeen City
Steve Byrne	SB	R1	Vice Chair	Argyll & Bute
Liz Richardson	LRi	R1	Committee Member	Highlands
Linda Lennie	LL	R1	Committee Member	Orkney Islands
Kath Fennell	KF	R1	Committee Member	Orkney Islands
Eric Spence	ES	R1	Co-optee	Argyll & Bute
Bill Campbell	BCa	R2	Chair	Fife
Irina Lazarenko	IL	R2	Vice Chair	City of Edinburgh
Cathie McArthur	CMcA	R2	Committee Member	East Lothian
Alan Dalby	AD	R2	Committee Member	Fife
Isabella Vint	IV	R2	Committee Member	Midlothian
Gordon Saunders	GS	R2	Co-optee	Scottish Borders
Anne Cameron	AC	R3	Chair	South Ayrshire
Bruce Cuthbertson	BCu	R3	Vice Chair	East Ayrshire
Norma Ferguson	NF	R3	Secretary	North Ayrshire
Margaret Dymond	MD	R3	Treasurer	Renfrewshire
Shona Gorman	SG	R4	Chair	Falkirk
Lindsay Anderson	LA	R4	Vice Chair	Falkirk
John Duffy	JD	R4	Secretary	North Lanarkshire
Frances McGonagle	FMcG	R4	Treasurer	West Dunbartonshire
June Anderson	JuA	R4	Committee Member	Clackmannanshire

In attendance:

Carolynne Watson	CW		Scottish Government	
Jemma Stewart	JS		Scottish Government	
Pat Michie	PM	R2	Observer/ R2 item 1	FFOTRA
William Derrick	WD	R4	Observer	Stirling Tenants' Assembly
Anna Johnston	AJ	R4	Observer	Stirling Tenants' Assembly

Apologies / Absent:

Joanne Miller	JM	R1	Co-optee	Apologies

Lillias Reid	LRe	R2	Committee Member	Apologies
John (Mac) McKenzie	JMcK	R3	Committee Member	Apologies
Jeanette Arneil	JeA	R4	Committee Member	Apologies
June Todd	JT	R4	Co-optee	Absent

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
1	10:00	**Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of interest** CS welcomed everyone to the first combined Regional Network meeting; in particular, Pat Michie, who has recently submitted co-option paperwork for South East Scotland (R2), and William Derrick and Anna Johnston from Stirling Tenants Assembly, who are joining the meeting as observers. Under Declarations of Interest, CS noted his role as a Board member of the Scottish Housing Regulator.	
2	10:15	**Business Matters** • <u>Correspondence</u>: None. • <u>Chairs Update</u>: CS updated on behalf of the Chairs, noting that the recent decline in Regional Network membership and duplicated agenda items at each committee meeting led to the Chairs decision to combine meetings in today's current format, with breakout rooms set up for committee business. The Chairs are hopeful this will make best use of everyone's time and will also present a good opportunity for committees to work more collaboratively going forward. • <u>Brief explanation of breakout rooms</u>: CS explained how the breakout rooms will work, and noted that CW will rotate around the breakout rooms, beginning with R1.	

BREAKOUT ROOMS			
3	10:30	**See Individual Regional Minutes**	

	Time	MAIN ROOM ITEMS	ACTION
4	11:00	**Sub Groups** • <u>RN Accessibility Group & Disability & Independent Living:</u> Following a discussion paper from LRi at last year's August Chairs & Secretaries meeting, Regional Network members agreed to consider housing, disability and independent living in more depth, and a discussion group session was held in September with Regional Network members with lived experience or interest in this area. CW reported on the topics covered at this session, including OT assessment, aids and adaptations, funding, Housing for Varying Needs, the need for effective signposting to sources of support and advice and the need for a focus in the sector on the concept of a home for life, which adapts and grows with the changing needs of residents. The group agreed to meet again in the new	

year to begin to explore some of these issues in more detail, and the next meeting will take place tomorrow, 9 February with support from CW and TPAS.

LRi also updated members on her role on the Scottish Government's Accessible Housing and Independent Living Stakeholder group which recently held its first meeting. The group includes a range of relevant sector stakeholders and the Regional Networks are represented through LRi and SB.

- Communications Group:

The communications sub-group met yesterday, Tuesday 7th February. The sub-group's key priority for the first half of the year is promotion and recruitment for the Regional Networks. Sharon Donohoe, TIS, joined the group for an agenda item on marketing and promoting the Regional Networks.

A significant number of local authority areas are either un or under-represented at the moment, and the sub-group agreed that the initial focus for promotion should be on those areas, with the aim of recruiting to vacant places at the AGM in June. Sharon offered support from TIS to help with this, and the group agreed to approach TPAS for support also. TPAS have also offered the Regional Networks a webinar slot in April to talk directly to an audience of tenants, residents and landlord staff about the Regional Networks and their work.

Beyond this initial focus, the sub-group agreed a marketing campaign would be helpful to spread the word about the Regional Networks and their work to tenants and residents more generally. The group discussed the communications approach and branding of the Networks and agreed that although not an immediate priority, they are keen to consider this in more detail in the future.

- RN Housing to 2040 & H2040 Strategic Board:

CW introduced this agenda item, noting H2040 is Scotland's long term strategy for housing which was developed following engagement with the housing sector, stakeholders, tenants, residents and the public and is a document which sets out the vision for Scotland's housing by the end of 2040.

Housing to 2040 includes a commitment to establish a network of tenants who represent the diversity of the Scottish social housing tenant base. Initial discussions with Regional Network members took place on this last

year, and the members involved agreed a national panel of interested tenants would best fulfil this, sitting alongside the existing Regional Networks.

CS updated on his membership of the Strategic Board, which will provide oversight on the progress of Housing to 2040. The First meeting of the Board was due to take place in December however was postponed. A new date of 23rd February was set, and the meeting will be chaired by Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing & Local Government Shona Robinson, MSP.

- HRA:

There was nothing new to update on regarding HRA. The committees agreed they are keen to re-focus attention on the HRA this year, and asked CW to revisit this with Anne Cook. Dependent on the outcomes of this, the Networks agreed to consider a letter to Mr Harvie or Ms Robison to emphasise Regional Network concerns.

- RN Rent Focus Group & Housing Affordability Group:

The Rent Focus Group met on 18 January, and discussed the results of the surveys which were issued to landlords and tenants at the beginning of the autumn. The results are now influencing a set of questions which the group are developing to use as the basis for more detailed focus group discussions with landlords and tenants during March. Everyone who replied to the survey has been invited to participate, however there is no expectation that participants should also have completed the survey, and the aim is to involve as many landlords and tenants as possible to maximise the breadth of response.

CS fed back on the Scottish Government's wider Housing Affordability group. The most recent meeting was on 2nd November, however a further meeting date is yet to be confirmed. This group are also intending to hold focus groups shortly to look in more detail at a range of issues within their remit, and CS will continue to represent tenants and the Networks on this group.

- SHR Liaison Group:

The group last met with SHR on January 31st and topics of discussion included: publications issued by SHR in the last quarter, the risk assessment, homelessness, service delivery, tenant and resident safety (including dampness and mould) and financial health and governance. A minute of the meeting will follow from SHR, and the next meeting with SHR will take place on 25 April.

		• <u>Website & Subscription Service Update</u>: CS noted the Regional Networks website is up to date, with the exception of committee members. CS noted that the ongoing issues with the website have led to problems with uploading, some of which CS is able to work around, however tasks such as updating committee members, adding photos etc are affected. CS and CW continue to try to progress this work with Civic, and recently met with Civic regarding these issues and the subscription service, with the intention of commissioning Civic to finalise the work outstanding on the site. • <u>Chairs Meetings</u>: As per the Chairs' update at item 2 above, the Chairs continue to meet regularly. The Chairs will shortly begin work to plan the June AGM in conjunction with CW.	
5	11:30	**Business Matters (cont'd)** • <u>Working Group Representation</u>: A spreadsheet listing the various Regional Network working groups and corresponding members by Regional Network was distributed along with the paperwork for today's meeting, and CS asked all members to review the sheet to ensure the details of their current involvement is up to date. Any amendments can be passed to CS, CW or JS to update. • <u>Questions for Cabinet Secretary</u>: Due to limited time remaining, CS proposed moving this agenda item forward to the next meeting on 19 April, and this was agreed.	
6	11:45	**A.O.C.B.** • <u>Comments on the new meeting formats</u>: Due to limited time remaining, CS requested any comments on the new format be added to Basecamp. The Chairs and members noted their thanks to Colin for setting up today's meeting and for the preparatory session earlier in the week. • <u>Upcoming AGM</u>: The 2023 AGM will be held virtually on Saturday 3 June at 11am, and will follow a similar format to today's joint Regional Network meeting. The Chairs have begun planning for the AGM along with CW, and invitations and	

		booking details will be issued to Regional Network members in April.	
7	11:55	**Date and Time of Next Meeting** Wednesday 19th April 2023 – 10.00am via Zoom	