

## CASTLEHILL HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the **Management Committee** meeting held on **Wednesday 4 March 2026** via MS Teams and 7 Waverley Place, Aberdeen.

*Present:* Mr Ben Westland (Convener), Mrs Janice Lyon, Mr Alan Pilkington, Mr Graeme Ogston, Ms Julia Urbankowska, Mrs Pauline Innes

*In attendance:* Mr David Lappin, Mrs Joanne Ramsay, Mrs Mhorag Ewen, Ms Charlotte Mackintosh, Mr Peter Rice (observer)

**1** Apologies for absence – Apologies were received from John Black, Andrew Brown and Matthew MacAulay.

**2** Declarations of interest – Staff declared an interest in agenda item 6.

**3** Minutes of Meeting 15 December 2025 – The minutes were approved with no amendment.

**4** Matters Arising from the minutes –

Item 9 - JL sought an update on the Urquhart Road property. Due to lack of commercial interest, an estate agent for residential use is being sought to market the property, with a viewing by the estate agent now scheduled for Monday 9 March. If no progress is made after five months on the market, the matter will return to the Management Committee.

**5** Departmental Updates

5.1 Q3 Housing Services Report – ME presented the Q3 report highlighting voids and arrears performance continues to move in the right direction. Q3 void and relet figures are commonly impacted by the two-week office closure in December, making it difficult to maintain average relet times. Despite this, the team performed well, and average relet days have reduced. Rent arrears are moving closer to the 3% target. ME concluded by highlighting a long-term void is being relet by year end however while positive, this will result in a property with 1,900 void days being reported in the ARC, resulting in a significant negative impact on the average re-let figure.

5.2 Q3 Property Assets Report - DL provided an update advising the external funding proposal [REDACTED] will not proceed, following completion of testing last week as the proposed technology would not meet our requirements. MM is now revisiting options and will return with an alternative proposal. JL suggested it would be helpful for the Committee to receive a summary outlining a view of stock and heating systems in place. DL addressed the formal complaint from [REDACTED] relating to the heating installation and emphasised the team had dealt with this effectively and they continue to ensure tenants are receiving accurate information to the most appropriate energy tariffs.

5.3 Q3 C&R Report - ME provided a comprehensive update summarising the ramp loan scheme continues and referrals from Aberdeen City Council are being received under the Equipment and Adaptations framework. 17 referrals have been received from Aberdeenshire Council to supply and install Geberit toilets, to be completed before year end which is expected to boost income generation. Discussions with the Health and Social Care Partnership remain ongoing to establish a formal agreement with ME highlighting the challenges in obtaining funding payments. Applications for additional funding have been submitted, although none have yet been confirmed and we continue to explore funding opportunities. A “test for change” proposal has also been approved for the Disabled Adaptations Group, enabling Care and Repair staff to act as trusted assessors for minor

adaptations. There are some concerns regarding resourcing and while using trusted traders helps deliver services efficiently, labour charges may reduce the overall profit margin.

5.4 Chief Executive Update including 3-year Strategic Plan Objectives – DL thanked members for their contribution to the Strategy Day, which was considered a success. The discussion from the session will be used to update the existing strategy for the year ahead which will be circulated to all members in advance of the next meeting for feedback, with the aim of seeking formal approval at the May meeting. DL reminded that the Annual Work Plan is updated on an ongoing basis. The latest version, including recent updates, is available on SharePoint under Key Documents.

6 Salary Benchmarking and Staff Cost of Living Award 2026– All staff members withdrew from the meeting so the committee could discuss in confidence the Salary Benchmarking and cost-of-living award for the Financial Year 26/27 for CHA employees. [REDACTED]

7 Castlehill Housing Association Budget 2026-27– [REDACTED]

The committee approved the recommended budget.

8 CHT & CHA Lease Agreement – ME presented the draft lease between CHA and CHT in respect of the properties at Banff. It was noted the formal lease had not previously been signed. The proposed terms included rent levels structured to ensure CHA does not incur any financial loss in comparison with direct CHA rents for similar properties. The committee approved the proposed lease agreement, with DL authorised to sign on behalf of CHA.

9 Policies for Approval –

9.1 Entitlements, Payments & Benefits – The policy was approved by the committee.

9.2 Pet Permission Policy – The policy was approved by the committee.

10 Write Off report - ME presented the report detailing the changes to former tenant debt management, drawing attention to the new process involving HomeMaster and the new debt collection agency. Current figures suggest that progress is being made and the impact of the debt collection agency will be monitored. The committee approved the write-off request.

11 Learning & Development Report- JR presented the L&D report outlining the training that had been delivered during the year and much of the training budget has been utilised. The report also set out planned training for next year and included an update on succession planning, noting that several specialist roles do not currently have immediate successors. JR highlighted the launch of a new LMS platform which will go live on 1 April. The Committee approved the objectives set out in the report.

## **12 Minutes of subsidiary and sub-committee meetings**

- 12.1 Finance, Audit & Risk Sub-committee of 2 March 2026 – BW provided a verbal update explaining the budget review discussion and the external auditors presented the audit plan for year end March 2026. It was also noted that they have been appointed for a one-year contract extension due to legislative changes and the auditors were happy to accept this arrangement. The audit contract will go out to tender next summer for 31 March 2028 year end.
- 12.2 Solutions Board of 4 March 2026 – JL provided a verbal update that the Solutions Board’s financial position was improving and that there had been no voids. The Board approved a donation to CHA in the region of [REDACTED], with the final figure to be determined once year-end figures were available. The Board also approved the 2026/27 budget and a new void management procedure.

## **13 Standing Items**

- 13.1 Report on the Use of the Seal and Signing of Legal Documents – The committee noted the contents of the report for information.
- 13.2 Notifiable Events – There was nothing to report.
- 13.3 Health and Safety – There was nothing to report.
- 13.4 Freedom of Information – No freedom of information requests had been received.
- 13.5 Corporate Scorecard Q3 – Committee noted the scorecard for information.
- 13.6 Complaints Summary Q3 – Committee noted the complaints summary for information. JL noted a typing error in the report relating to the number of Stage 2 complaints. The correct number is 6, not 3.

## **14 AOCB**

- [REDACTED] application for membership was formally accepted.  
[REDACTED] An update was provided on Waverley Place highlighting an enquiry had been received regarding the purchase of half of the building, however changes to the title deeds would be required along with structural works to separate the buildings. [REDACTED]
- A stock condition survey paper was requested to enable the Committee to gain a clearer understanding of what approach is proposed to assess the condition of the housing stock.  
[REDACTED] BW provided an update on the Chief Executive recruitment [REDACTED]

**Date of next meeting** – Monday 25 May at 2pm

*Approved by the Management Committee on 25 May 2026*