
To: Communities and Housing Policy Board

On: 16 May 2023

Report by: Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure

Heading: Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2023/24

1. Summary

- 1.1 On 2 March 2023 the Council approved a report entitled 'Non Housing Capital Investment Programme 2022/23 – 2026/27' which includes funding provision for capital and revenue Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) expenditure for 2023/24.
 - 1.2 Based on the Council budget approval and taking account of the most up to date expenditure projections, this report updates the programme requirements of £1.116m for the period 2023/24 to support owner participation on a range of programmes.
 - 1.3 As noted by the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 12 March 2019, there are funds held in reserve to support owners involved in the Orchard Street Housing Renewal Area tenement refurbishment project and to support owner participation in the eight approved Housing Regeneration areas.
 - 1.4 There is a requirement to manage PSHG resources in a flexible manner in terms of the drawdown of funds, to reflect the timing of the settlement of final accounts associated with owners in the both the Housing Investment and Housing Regeneration programmes, as well as the renewal of the contract for private sector adaptations.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities and Housing Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approve the Private Sector Housing Grant Investment Programme for the period 2023/24 as set out in appendix 1 of the report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 The Private Sector Housing Grant supports a range of services to private sector owners. This includes Adaptation grants, support costs for Care & Repair Renfrewshire, support for the pilot project to pay 'Missing Shares' and support for homeowners involved in Council Housing Investment and Housing Regeneration programmes involving common works carried out as part of external works programmes.
- 3.2 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed programme for 2023/2024 showing proposed expenditure of £1.116m. The key elements of the proposed programme currently are as follows:

(i) Adaptation Grants (Assistance to older and disabled owners)

The Council provides grant to assist owners who require adaptations to make dwellings suitable for a member of the household who is older or disabled.

The strategy for support for disabled adaptations across all tenures (excluding Housing Associations) is the responsibility of Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Integration Joint Board.

The Council is required by legislation to provide a minimum of 80% grant support to homeowners referred by HSCP, Occupational Therapy Services. Demand for adaptation grants continues to grow with the number of referrals for adaptations continuing to put strain on the available budget. An annual allowance of £550,000 to support the delivery of private sector adaptations has been included in the available grants budget for 2023/24. The Council, in conjunction with the Health & Social Care Partnership will continue to monitor demand pressures on available grant during the year.

As in previous years, Bridgewater Housing Association (Care & Repair Renfrewshire) will manage private sector adaptations and small repairs services in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils during this financial year. An allowance of £230,000 is included within the budget for Renfrewshire's costs associated with this contract.

(ii) Housing Investment Programme

Since achieving compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) in April 2015, there has been an ongoing requirement to ensure our housing stock continues to be maintained at this standard. In addition to SHQS, there is an over-arching emphasis on improving the housing stock to the latest energy efficiency standards as set out in the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing post 2020 (EESH2). However, this standard has been suspended whilst the Scottish Government carries out a review during 2023, to ensure it aligns with new net zero requirements.

The Housing Investment Programme is focussed on common works in blocks of mixed ownership and accordingly the PSHG programme will continue to support future external improvement works in mixed tenure blocks and offer grants to homeowners involved in these programmes.

The PSHG programme will also support investment in retained housing stock within the eight Housing Regeneration areas, for which the Policy Board approved a report on 7 March 2023 enhancing the level of grant support to participating private homeowners in the regeneration areas.

Energy efficiency grants also continue to be made available to eligible households through the Scottish Government's EES: ABS (Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes) programme and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme, where applicable.

An allowance of £150,000 is proposed to support grants to homeowners. As noted within this report, uncertainties around the exact timing of projects and the application of grants to owners will require programme flexibility to be maintained with this and future years.

(iii) 'Missing Shares' Pilot Project

On 21 August 2018 the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board approved an allowance of up to £100,000 for the development of a "missing shares" pilot project, initially open to owners of older traditional privately owned tenement flats.

This pilot is to assist owners in pre 1919 private blocks to get essential common repairs done where they are having difficulty receiving contributions from other owners who are unable or unwilling to pay their share.

The Council will to pay up to £10,000 per missing share for eligible works and will seek to recover these and associated administrative costs from non-paying owners.

The Council has, since the inception of the pilot project, paid out £52,000 in missing share payments for seven tenement block repair projects that have been completed. The Council has recovered £23,758 of these missing share payments leaving an available balance in 2023/24 of £71,758.

(iv) Salaries

Salaries for staff engaged on private sector investment within the Owner Services team are funded through this budget. The annual allowance of £105,000 is included, reflecting the structure within the staff grouping responsible for delivery of the programme and including agreed pay settlements.

The Private Sector Housing Grant also part funds the Council's More Homes Officer post.

(v) Support to the Private Rented Sector / Miscellaneous Fees

An allowance of £10,000 is included to fund training events for private landlords undertaken in Partnership with Landlord Accreditation Scotland. These events are currently delivered online. These funds also support membership of Scotland's Housing Network who provide online training and networking meetings for Council Officers.

- 3.3 The nature of the Private Sector Housing Investment Programme means that flexibility is required to adjust spend between projects during the financial year for a number of reasons, for example because of differences between the estimated and actual grant required once the test of resources is applied to individual owners, slippage in projects, difficulties securing the participation of some owners, increased demand for private sector adaptations to ensure that full spend is achieved and thus best use is made of the resource available.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The PSHG programme for 2023/24 totals £1.116 million.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - **Our Renfrewshire is thriving** – the support offered to private owners will help to improve housing conditions, making Renfrewshire a great place to live
 - **Our Renfrewshire is well** – the support provided to older and disabled owners will help enable people to live healthier, for longer, in their own homes
 - **Reshaping our place, our economy and our future** – investment in the refurbishment of housing stock will create jobs and contribute to the economy
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** - None
10. **Risk** - None
11. **Privacy Impact** - None

12. **COSLA Policy Position – N/A.**
13. **Climate Risk –** Grant funding to private homeowners to support their participation in housing investment programme works will help to improve energy efficiency in privately owned properties, which will contribute to residents using less energy, thus reducing emissions.

List of Background Papers

1. Report to Communities and Housing Policy Board on 7 March 2023 – Proposed Change to Scheme of Assistance in Regeneration Areas.
2. Report to Council on 2 March 2023 – Non-Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28
3. Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 12 March 2019 – Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2019/20
4. Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 21 August 2018 – Scheme of Assistance for private owners and missing shares pilot project

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Environment, Housing & Infrastructure for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Ian Mackinnon, Mixed Tenure Manager, 07483 376 245, ian.mackinnon@renfrewshire.gov.uk

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APPENDIX 1**PROPOSED PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING PROGRAMME 2023/2024**

Category	2023/2024
Adaptation Grants	£550,000
Care and Repair – Revenue Support - Contracted	£230,000
Capital Programmes – Owners Grants	£150,000
Missing Share Tenement Pilot Scheme	£71,758
Capitalised Salaries	£105,000
Miscellaneous Costs (including support for the private rented sector)	£10,000
Total	£1,116,758