

Minute of Meeting Communities and Housing Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 31 October 2023	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Carolann Davidson, Councillor Gillian Graham, Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes, Councillor Robert Innes, Councillor Alec Leishman, Councillor Mags MacLaren, Councillor Colin McCulloch, Councillor Janis McDonald, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor Iain McMillan, Councillor John McNaughtan, Councillor Emma Rodden

Chair

Councillor McGurk, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

G McNeil, Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Partnerships (Chief Executives); A Scott, Criminal Justice Services Manager and J Gardyne Senior Planning & Policy Development Officer (both Children's Services); L Feeley, Head of Housing Services, G Hannah, Head of Climate, Public Protection & Roads, T Irvine, Homeless & Housing Support Services Manager, N Drummond, Lead Officer (Environmental Co-ordination), J Murdoch, Housing Regeneration Manager, K Dalrymple, Development Plans & Housing Strategy Team Leader, K Sillars, Housing Maintenance Manager, C Robertson, Warden Services Manager, D Murray, Area Housing Manager and R Walkinshaw, Housing Regeneration & Development Manager (all Environment, Housing & Infrastructure); and J Kilpatrick, Finance Business Partner, R Devine Senior Committee Services Officer and K O'Neill, Democratic Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast on the Council's internet site.

Apology

Councillor McGuire.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Councillor M MacLaren declared a connection in respect of Item 2 - General Services Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget Monitoring Report and Item 5 - Draft Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/29 – by reason of holding a Council appointment on the Williamsburgh Housing Association board. However, she indicated that she had applied the objective test and did not consider she had an interest to declare and intimated that it was her intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor McMillan declared a connection in respect of Item 12 - Summer of Fun – Evaluation – by reason of being a member of Thorn Athletic committee. However, he indicated that he had applied the objective test and did not consider he had an interest to declare and intimated that it was his intention to remain in the meeting and to take part in any discussion or voting thereon.

1 Police and Fire & Rescue Services Scrutiny Sub-committee

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Sub-committee held on 22 August 2023, a copy of which forms the Appendix to this document.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 General Services Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget Monitoring

There was submitted a General Services Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April to 15 September 2023.

The report stated that the projected outturn, as at 31 March 2024, for all services reporting to this Policy Board was an overspend position of £0.005 million while the projected capital outturn for projects was a breakeven position against the revised budget for the year. Summaries were provided over the relevant services in tables within the report, together with further analysis contained with appendices to the report. In addition, the report indicated that revenue expenditure budget adjustments totalling £0.239 million and capital budget adjustments of £9.3 million, had been processed since approval of the budget in March 2023. Details of the adjustments were outlined within the report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the projected Revenue outturn position, detailed in table 1 of the report, be noted;
- (b) That the projected Capital outturn position, detailed in table 2 of the report, be noted; and
- (c) That the budget adjustments, detailed in sections 4 and 6 of the report, be approved.

3 **Community Funding Applications**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to various community funding applications.

Reference was made within the report to the regular reports submitted to this Policy Board in relation to community funds, such as the Greenspaces, Parks and Play Areas Fund, Villages Investment Fund and Community Empowerment Fund. At the meeting of the Leadership Board held on 20 September 2023 guidance for a significant tranche of further funding made available for allocation through the Sustainable Communities Fund was agreed with recommendations on applications to be considered by members of this Policy Board. It was proposed that, in future, all applications and funding information relating to these funds be provided through a single community funding report to this Policy Board each cycle to strengthen oversight of funding applications.

The report provided specific information relating to recent applications to and funding awarded from the Greenspaces, Parks and Play Areas Fund, Villages Investment Fund and Sustainable Communities Fund.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the information provided on the launch of the Sustainable Communities Fund be noted and that it be noted that recommendations in relation to funding awards would be submitted to this Policy Board for consideration;
- (b) That the Greenspaces/Villages Investment funding awards detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, made in terms of the delegated authority provided to the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure to approve applications under the value of £5,000, be noted;
- (c) That it be agreed that an additional £3,400 of funding be allocated from the Villages Investment Fund to meet the final funding package agreed with Kilbarchan Community Council, as detailed in Section 5 of the report, for the installation of seating; and

(d) That the proposals for officers to explore the potential introduction of the school focused Litter Lotto programme, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, with £7,000 allocated of Greenspaces funding subject to final due diligence be agreed.

4 **Environment, Housing and Infrastructure - Service Improvement Plan 2023/26 Mid-Year Monitoring Report**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the performance and achievements of the Environment, Housing & Infrastructure Service during the period 1 April to 30 September 2023.

The report stated that the Service Improvement Plan 2023/26 for the Environment, Housing & Infrastructure Service, approved at the meeting of this Policy Board held on 16 May 2023, set out the priorities for the development of the service over a three-year period, the actions which would ensure continuous improvement across the service and the performance indicators which ensured the impacts could be measured. The report provided details of the key achievements of the Service during the period; a progress update on implementing the action plan linked to the Service Improvement Plan; an assessment of performance in relation to the service scorecard of core performance indicators; and an overview of priorities for the service over the next six months. The report also indicated that the Service had made good progress in delivering positive outcomes for Renfrewshire and its residents. This included through the actions within the Service Improvement Plan and additional areas of priority/ focus which had subsequently arisen over the first six months of 2023/24. It was highlighted that to complement the six-monthly update on the Service Improvement Plan, a Service Update report would be submitted to each meeting of this Policy Board providing an overview of key service activities, an operational performance update on the services and key projects and updates on any other relevant changes to service areas covered within the remit of the Board.

DECIDED: That the report including updated performance information and progress to date on delivering the actions contained within the Environment, Housing & Infrastructure Service Improvement Plan be noted.

5 **Service Update Report**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to key service activities and providing an operational performance update on services and key projects together with updates on changes in service areas covered within the remit of this Policy Board.

Updates were provided in respect of local public protection, housing community development and criminal justice activities and specific projects and recent changes within each service area. It was highlighted that Service update reports would be submitted to all future meeting of this Policy Board.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

6 Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/29

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024/29.

The report indicated that the SHIP, which detailed how the Council and partners would deliver new affordable homes across Renfrewshire over the next five-year period and how the delivery of existing projects currently included within the Plan would be maximised. It was noted that funding for affordable housing would be targeted to achieve the objectives contained within Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy and be reviewed and updated annually. The Renfrewshire SHIP 2024/29, a copy of which was appended to the report, had been developed following consultation and took cognisance of projects which were anticipated to be completed, potential slippage and estimates of when new projects could potentially be brought forward. The finalised Plan incorporated issues raised via the comments received during the consultation process. Details of the future Resource Planning Assumptions for the period 2024/26 were also provided. It was noted that, subject to approval, the Renfrewshire SHIP 2024/29 would be submitted to the Scottish Government.

DECIDED: That the Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/29 be approved for submission to the Scottish Government.

7 Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2023/28

Under reference to item 4 of the Minute of the meeting of the former Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 15 March 2022 there was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2023/28.

The report stated that in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 local authorities had a duty to prepare a five-year Local Housing Strategy (LHS), informed by an assessment of housing provision, need and related services within the local area. The LHS outlined the strategic vision for housing and housing related services in Renfrewshire and sought to provide clear direction for strategic housing investment. The draft strategy, approved at the meeting of the former Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 15 March 2022 subject to a 12-week consultation period involving residents, tenants, housing association partners, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership and third sector organisations, proposed five strategic priorities for Renfrewshire, details of which were provided within the report, which the Council and partners would seek to deliver over the next five-year period. The draft strategy also detailed actions which the Council and partners required to deliver to achieve the strategic priorities. These actions formed the basis of an action plan to accompany the finalised LHS 2023/28 and would be monitored and reported to this Policy Board on an annual basis. A total of 56 representations had been submitted during the consultation period in addition to the 101 representations received during preparation of the draft strategy. Responses covered a wide range of areas including housing need and demand; supply and delivery of homes; wheelchair/accessible homes; stock condition; climate change; fuel poverty; homelessness; and independent living. It was highlighted that a consultation summary report detailing the consultation undertaken and how the representations and feedback had influenced

the development of the LHS was available to view on the Council's website. In addition, it was noted that the Scottish Government had reviewed the draft strategy and provided feedback identifying strengths and areas where additional information could be included.

Copies of the finalised Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2023/28 and associated Action Plan were appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2023/28 and associated Action Plan be approved.

8 Regulation of Social Housing - Assurance Statement

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the Assurance Statement 2024 which the Council required to submit to the Scottish Housing Regulator in terms of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Framework for the Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland.

The report referred to the regular reports submitted to this Policy Board regarding performance and benchmarking which demonstrated continuing strong performance across most areas of the housing service during 2022/23 and identified areas for improvement. Appendix 1 of the report detailed the Regulator's Framework requirements for all local authorities and Registered Social Landlords and provided evidence to demonstrate Renfrewshire Council's compliance. A copy of the proposed Annual Assurance Statement 2023 for Renfrewshire Council was attached as Appendix 2 of the report, for approval.

DECIDED:

(a) That the regulatory requirements and evidence of Renfrewshire Council's compliance, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted; and

(b) That the Renfrewshire Council Annual Assurance Statement 2023, attached as Appendix 2 of the report, be approved for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

9 Annual Housing Performance Benchmarking Report 2022/23

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the Council's performance in terms of the key Social Housing Charter indicators in comparison to those of other social housing providers.

The report provided information and analysis on the Council's performance during 2022/23 in relation to key Housing Charter indicators, such as tenant satisfaction, housing quality and maintenance, customer and landlord relationship, estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood nuisance, tenant disputes, homelessness, rents and services charges. Comparative information together with analysis was provided in respect of other local authorities and Registered Social Landlords.

DECIDED: That the Council's performance during 2022/23, in relation to key Housing Charter indicators compared to other social landlords be noted.

10 **Community Learning and Development Strategy 2021/24 – Year 2 Progress Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to delivery during 2022/23 of the Renfrewshire's Community Learning and Development (CLD) Strategy 2021/24.

The report advised that Renfrewshire's CLD Strategy and Action Plan 2021/24 had been approved at the meeting of the former Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 17 August 2021 and that the strategy had been developed in partnership with a wide range of statutory, voluntary and community groups, and partners to delivery of the Action Plan, which was aligned to Renfrewshire's Community Plan Vision and underpinned by the shared values identified by the Community Learning and Development Standards Council. The report was the second annual update in terms of delivery of the strategy and specifically provided a summary of the key activities undertaken during 2022/23. The report provided a summary update on the progress achieved during 2022/23, which was detailed more fully within the Appendix to the report. It was also highlighted that, in future, to further enhance scrutiny and oversight of local community learning and development activities six-monthly update reports on progress in terms of the CLD Strategy would be submitted to this Policy Board and that Education Scotland were currently undertaking a programme of inspection visits across all 32 local authority areas with a focus on progress made locally in terms of the delivery of the CLD Strategy and that further updates would be provided to elected members in due course to update on the outcome of any local inspection visit.

DECIDED:

(a) That the progress achieved during 2022/23 in terms of the Community Learning and Development Strategy by local services, partners and communities, as outlined within Appendix 1 of the report, be noted;

(b) That it be noted that six-monthly update reports on progress in terms of the Strategy would be submitted to this Policy Board; and

(c) That it be noted that the Service was anticipating an inspection visit from Education Scotland during 2023/24 to review local progress on the implementation of the Strategy and that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board on the inspection findings once these became available.

11 **Community Justice Update and Annual Return 2022/23**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice relative to the Community Justice Renfrewshire Annual Outcome Activity Report 2022/23.

The report advised that Community Justice Renfrewshire, like other justice partnerships, was required to report on local progress towards national justice outcomes. These local achievements were relayed to Community Justice Scotland who combined them with those of other justice partnerships to create a national report. The report detailed the local progress attained and described how Community Justice Renfrewshire would build on these strengths and further develop its improvement approach in alignment with latest guidance and direction.

A new National Strategy for Community Justice had been published during June 2022 which set the improvement priorities for Scotland's community justice partnerships and outlined their contribution to the wider Vision for Justice in Scotland, published in February 2022. Community Justice Scotland supplied community justice partnerships with a reporting template which required to be used to describe the local community justice activity delivered over the preceding financial year and its contribution to national justice outcomes. The 2022/23 template acknowledged that strategic developments had taken place at a national level and that this has affected reporting requirements. It was highlighted that the publication of the revised National Strategy for Community Justice part way through a reporting period meant that justice partnerships were unable to fully align their local progress to national justice outcomes. In response, Community Justice Scotland had revised the scope of the 2022/23 template to allow for more reflection on how learning could be carried forward in pursuit of the revised national justice outcomes.

The draft Community Justice Renfrewshire's Annual Outcome Activity Return, a copy of which was appended to the report, detailed the opportunities identified over the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, and how these had informed the current approach locally. In accordance with guidance, the return emphasised collaborative activity rather than detail activity progressed by individual teams, services, or organisations. This reduced duplication of reporting and focused on the partnership's added value. It was noted that the draft Return had been submitted to Community Justice Scotland in advance of the submission deadline, with an indication that the finalised Report would be submitted and published following approval and/or amendment by this Policy Board.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Reporting Template for the Community Justice Renfrewshire Annual Report 2022/23, a copy of which was appended to the report, be approved; and

(b) That it be noted that the Community Justice Renfrewshire Annual Report Template 2022/23 had been submitted to Community Justice Scotland in draft format and, subject to approval and/or amendment by this Policy Board, the finalised Report would be submitted and published.

12 **Summer of Fun – evaluation**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the multi-agency, universal and targeted work developed and delivered across Renfrewshire throughout the summer holiday period as part of the 2023 Summer Holiday Provision initiative.

The report made reference to the £10 million allocated to local authorities by CoSLA

in line with the Scottish Government's commitment for targeted provision of accessible activities, childcare and food for 5 –14 year-old children from low-income families during the 2023 school summer holiday period. It was highlighted that the Scottish Government had wanted a particular focus to be on six main targeted groups who were especially vulnerable to falling into poverty, namely lone parent families; ethnic minority families; those with a disability; mothers under 25; those with a child under one year of age; and those with more than three children. Renfrewshire Council had been allocated funding of £292,415, which had been used to deliver a highly successful programme of activities for children, families and young people, which encouraged them to access a wide range of activities and healthy food. Almost 1,000 individual children had benefitted from activities over the summer period. A summary of the final detailed evaluation report for the Summer of Fun Programme, submitted to the Scottish Government, was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the content of the evaluation report in respect of the Summer of Fun Programme be noted.

13 **Renfrewshire's Local Air Quality Management Update – 2023 Air Quality Annual Progress Report**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to air quality within Renfrewshire and specifically Renfrewshire's 2023 Annual Progress Report.

The report provided an update in relation to air quality within Renfrewshire and detailed the findings of the Council's most recent Local Air Quality Management report, Renfrewshire's 2023 Annual Progress Report, which reviewed air quality monitoring data from 2022. It was noted that there had been no exceedances identified within Renfrewshire during 2022 of any quality objectives with concentrations of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter continuing to show a downward trend. In addition it was noted that there had been three consecutive years of compliance with statutory objective levels throughout all of Renfrewshire and eight years of compliance within Paisley and the Paisley Town Centre Air Quality Management Area, that the legislative framework permitted Air Quality Management Areas to be amended or revoked and Scottish Government Policy Guidance recommended that, as a minimum there would normally be at least three consecutive years where the pollutants of concern were compliant with the relevant objective levels and that Environment, Housing & Infrastructure staff would continue with the current monitoring programme throughout 2023/24 prior to considering whether to amend or revoke any of the Council's three Air Quality Management Areas.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Renfrewshire 2023 Air Quality Annual Progress Report be noted; and
- (b) That it be noted that there were no exceedances identified within Renfrewshire during 2022 of any quality objectives.

14 Consultation on Licensing of Activities Involving Animals

Under reference to item 8 of the Minute of the meeting of the Regulatory Functions Board held on 18 August 2021 there was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure relative to the consultation exercise launched by the Scottish Government on the extension of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 proposing to licence further commercial animal related activities, and to replace existing legislation covering animal boarding and riding establishments.

The report advised that under these regulations, the Local Authority where the premises were located was normally considered to be the relevant licensing authority and that the consultation sought views on proposals to extend the current licensing regime to include sectors such as dog walking, dog grooming, providing livery services and businesses offering canine fertility services. Any new licensable activities would have mandatory general and activity-specific conditions attached with these conditions detailed within the Regulations. The proposal allowed for fees to be set locally, which would enable Local Authorities to recover reasonable costs relating to the processing of applications, inspections and enforcement activities. It was noted that there would be resource implications for the Council, should the provisions of the Regulations be enacted in full however it was not possible to quantify, as the Council had no information on the numbers of traders currently operating within Renfrewshire who would require to be licensed. It was proposed, as was currently the case for existing licensable activities, that Licences would be issued for either one, two or three years with their duration dependent on factors including previous compliance, confidence in management of the activity, and whether the licensee was already operating to higher standards than the minimum set.

A copy of the consultation response, prepared and submitted on behalf of the Council prior to the deadline for responses, was appended to the report for homologation.

DECIDED:

(a) That the consultation proposals be noted and the response submitted, a copy of which was attached as Appendix A of the report, be homologated and

(b) That a further report, providing an update on the implications for the Service be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board when the regulations had been finalised.