

Minute of Meeting Communities and Housing Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 16 May 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 Jamie McGuire, 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; A Morrison, Head of Economy & Development Services, L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Partnerships, A Johnstone, Principal Estates Surveyor and J Castle, Senior Communications Officer (Chief Executives); A Scott, Criminal Justice Services Manager and J Gardyne, Community Justice Lead 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), C Hunter, Environmental Health Public Health Manager, J Murdoch, Housing Regeneration 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, D Pole, End User Technician, R Devine and E Gray both Senior Committee Services Officers and J Barron, Assistant Committee 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.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Police and Fire & Rescue Services Scrutiny Sub-committee

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Sub-committee held on 7 March 2023, a copy of which forms the Appendix to this document.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Building Communities, Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund Update

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund.

The report indicated that the key objective in allocating funding was to work with and support community groups to identify and deliver improvement projects in their local communities, improve their local greenspaces, including parks and play areas, and strengthen the identity, heritage, uniqueness and character of village life. Appendix 1 of the report provided details of current Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas and Villages Investment Funding applications, including five applications that had been submitted for approval under delegated authority for Greenspaces Funding and an application seeking £30,000 in respect of an outdoor gym in Langbank.

The report also provided updates in relation to the progress of Team Up to Clean Up and the recently launched Environmental Taskforce, setting out the Taskforce's key performance indicators and the ongoing building of relationships with businesses and housing associations. In addition, further information was provided on the status of Team Up to Clean Up's newly launched Take the Lead Campaign and the Sustainable Food Scheme.

The report detailed the activities of Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership's Youth Team; the Celebrating Renfrewshire participatory budgeting project delivered by young people, for young people; and the delivery of activity camps over the Easter break.

DECIDED:

(a) That the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they developed and delivered projects to be funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund be noted;

(b) That the impact of the funding and the benefits to the wider communities delivered by the projects, as set out in section 4 of the report, be noted;

- (c) That the work currently being undertaken by the Environmental Taskforce to support communities in the efficient removal and investigation of flytipping be noted;
- (d) That the work of the Taskforce creating partnerships with Housing Associations, and the education of private landowners be noted; and
- (e) That the upcoming Team Up to Clean Up projects designed to address wide reaching, common community concerns including dog fouling, excess of plastic waste and school lunchtime litter be noted.

3 Communities and Housing Services – Service Improvement Plan 2022/25 Outturn Report

Under reference to item 4 of the Minute of meeting of this Policy Board held on 7 June 2022, there was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to performance to deliver the Communities & Housing Service Improvement Plan during the 12-month period covering 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

The report provided a summary of performance for both the action plan and the service performance indicators, which were included as appendices to the report. It was reported that overall, the service had delivered on its priorities for the reporting period. A number of service updates and key achievements were highlighted in Section 5 of the report.

The Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure advised that data relating to (i) percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed first time;(ii) percentage of overall repairs completed within target; and (iii) average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board when that data became available.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the progress, to date, on delivering the actions contained within the Communities and Housing Services Service Improvement Plan be noted;
- (c) That the performance of the service, as measured by the scorecard indicators, be noted; and
- (d) That arrangements be made to submit data relating to (i) percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed first time;(ii) percentage of overall repairs completed within target; and (iii) average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days) to a future meeting of this Policy Board when the data became available.

4 Environment, Housing and Infrastructure – Service Improvement Plan 2023/26

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to the Service Improvement Plan 2023/26 for Environment,

Housing and Infrastructure. The Service Improvement Plan was set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Service Improvement Plan was designed to sit beneath the Council Plan, Community Plan, Risk Management Plan, and the Workforce Plan to form a suite of documents which provided the strategic direction for the service. The Plan identified the priorities being addressed, the key tasks to be implemented, the implementation timetable and the measures of success. A mid-year progress update on the Service Improvement Plan would be submitted to a meeting of this Policy Board in the autumn of 2023.

It was agreed that an update report be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board relative to the measures in place, action taken and proposed to be taken in the future to manage dampness, mould and condensation within Renfrewshire Council housing stock.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Service Improvement Plan for Environment, Housing and Infrastructure, a copy of which was appended to the report, be approved;

(b) That it be agreed that mid-year progress with the Service Improvement Plan, with updates to the actions and performance indicators, be submitted to this Policy Board in autumn 2023; and

(c) That arrangements be made to submit an update report to a future meeting of this Policy Board relative to the measures in place, action taken and proposed to be taken in the future to manage dampness, mould and condensation within Renfrewshire Council housing stock.

5 Scottish Housing Regulator Engagement Plan 2023/24

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to the Scottish Housing Regulator's Engagement Plan 2023/24 (the Plan).

The report advised that the Plan focussed on service provision by Councils for people who were homeless. A copy of the Plan was appended to the report. The Council required to submit two annual regulatory returns, the Annual Assurance Statement and the Annual Return on the Charter, and update reports would be submitted to future meetings of this Policy Board in connection with those submissions. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) would also require to be notified of any material changes to the Council's Annual Assurance Statement, of any tenant/resident safety matter which had been reported to or was being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive and of reports from regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers relating to safety concerns. In addition, the Plan indicated that during 2022/23 the data for all local authorities, from the Scottish Government's national homelessness statistics and the Annual Returns on the Charter, had been reviewed and compared and further information and assurances obtained from all local authorities about homelessness services. To assess the risks to people threatened with or experiencing homelessness the SHR would engage with all local authorities during 2023/24, with a focus on the provision of appropriate temporary accommodation. The Regulator would meet with Renfrewshire Council to discuss

homelessness services locally and to determine whether additional assurance was required in respect of the provision of temporary accommodation and/or whether the Unsuitable Accommodation Order was being breached. Renfrewshire Council would also make the SHR aware of emerging issues relating to the provision of temporary accommodation and compliance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. The Plan would be updated in light of any material change to planned engagement with the Council.

DECIDED: That the content of the Renfrewshire Council Scottish Housing Regulator's Engagement Plan for the period 31 March 2023 to 31 March 2024, a copy of which was appended to the report, be noted.

6 Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2023/24

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to the Private Sector Housing Investment Programme requirements for 2023/24.

The report referred to the decision taken at the meeting of the Council held on 2 March 2023 when funding provision for Capital and Revenue Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) expenditure during 2023/24 had been approved. Based on the Council budget approval and taking account of the most up to date expenditure projections, the report updated the programme requirements for the period 2023/24 to support owner participation on a range of programmes. A copy of the PSHG Investment Programme 2023/24 was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the Private Sector Housing Grant Investment Programme 2023/24, as appended to the report, be approved.

7 Compulsory Purchase Orders

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to the proposed promotion and use of proposed Compulsory Purchase Orders to acquire the last remaining privately owned property within the Auchentorlie Regeneration Area and the remaining privately-owned residential and commercial properties and land within the Paisley West End Masterplan Area. The report sought authority for officers to proceed to seek the consent of Scottish Ministers for the Compulsory Purchase Orders.

The report referred to the meetings of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 18 January and 15 March 2022 when the Council's Housing-led Regeneration Programme had been approved, with eight Housing Regeneration Areas in the first phase. One of these Regeneration Areas was Auchentorlie, which comprised thirteen closes of six flats and the regeneration proposals included retention of and investment in ten closes and the demolition of the other three, in which the Council owned seventeen flats, with the other flat, Flat 2/1, 9 Auchentorlie Quadrant, being in private ownership. Officers had been unable to secure an agreement for the Council to acquire the property on a voluntary basis. Authority was sought for the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to acquire the property as all reasonable attempts to contact the owner and agree a voluntary acquisition had been made and been unsuccessful. It was highlighted that the Compulsory Purchase Order process would run in parallel with continued efforts to acquire the property on a

voluntary basis.

The report also referred to the meeting of the Leadership Board held on 12 December 2017 when a Regeneration Masterplan for Paisley West End was approved, to be implemented in partnership with Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association Limited. The acquisition of over 100 private properties was required so that demolition could be carried out in order to facilitate delivery of the Regeneration Masterplan. The report advised that Sanctuary's agents had successfully negotiated the acquisition of most of these properties and this work continued in respect of any properties not yet acquired.

The Leadership Board had approved the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to facilitate delivery of the Regeneration Masterplan if voluntary acquisition of all privately owned residential and commercial properties and land within the Masterplan area was not possible despite all reasonable attempts. In addition, the meetings of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 29 October 2019, 18 August 2020 and 18 May 2021 respectively had authorised the specific use of Compulsory Purchase Orders at a number of properties in the Masterplan area and the meeting of the Communities and Housing Policy Board held on 25 October 2022 had authorised the use of Compulsory Purchase Order procedures where voluntary acquisition could not be secured to ensure the acquisition of the remaining properties in the approved Paisley West End Masterplan Area.

The report stated that all properties in the Paisley West End Masterplan Area were in the ownership of the Council or Sanctuary except the twenty-one listed in the table at paragraph 3.12 of the report. In accordance with the previous decisions, authorisation was sought to promote Compulsory Purchase Orders, either one Order or, at most, two separate Orders, in respect of the properties listed in the table at paragraph 3.12 of the report. It was highlighted that the Compulsory Purchase Order processes would run in parallel with Sanctuary's and its agents' continued efforts to acquire the properties on a voluntary basis.

DECIDED:

(a) That the promotion and use of a Compulsory Purchase Order be authorised to acquire the last remaining privately owned property within the Auchentorlie regeneration area namely Flat 2/1, 9 Auchentorlie Quadrant, Paisley;

(b) That the progress made by the Council's delivery partner Sanctuary Housing Association in acquiring private properties in the Paisley West End Masterplan Area on a voluntary basis be noted; and

(c) That it be agreed that, in accordance with the decisions taken at the meeting of the Leadership Board held on 12 December 2017 and the meeting of this Policy Board held on 25 October 2022 a further Compulsory Purchase Order (or, at most, two such Orders) would be promoted with a view to acquiring the remaining privately owned residential and commercial properties and land within the Paisley West End Masterplan Area, as detailed within the table in paragraph 3.12 of the report.

8 Application for Funding to Support the Resettlement of Ukrainian Displaced Persons

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to an application submitted for funding from the Scottish

Government 'Longer-Term Resettlement Fund' to meet the repair costs of "last-in-the-block" Council owned flats, which were currently empty and scheduled to be sold, or may become empty in the future.

The report stated that during March 2022, the Council and its partners had been asked to support the establishment of a Welcome Hub near Glasgow Airport with the aim of supporting people arriving in Scotland from Ukraine through the Scottish Government's 'super sponsor scheme'. The Council had welcomed Ukraine Displaced Persons (UDP's) to Scotland, including the provision of temporary accommodation and support, with UDP's then moving to more settled accommodation across Scotland.

The report advised that a number of individuals and families had since been supported to resettle in Renfrewshire through the Homes for Ukraine scheme, and whilst the number of arrivals and people being supported in Renfrewshire's Welcome Hub had reduced, there continued to be challenges in terms of supporting people staying in hotels to move to settled accommodation in Scotland. The Scottish Government had made additional funding available to Councils and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) through a 'Longer-Term Resettlement Fund' for improving and bringing empty properties back into use that could be provided to UDP's for up to three years. The report provided an update on an application for finance from this fund to meet the repair costs of "last-in-the-block" Council owned flats, which were currently empty and scheduled to be sold, or became empty in the future, where these properties would be let to UDP's for up to three years, with the intention of then marketing the property for sale as originally planned when the UDP's tenancy terminated. It was noted that there were currently 33 properties that would be covered by the initial funding application.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that an application for repair and improvement costs for empty houses would be made to the Scottish Government's 'Longer-Term Resettlement Fund'; and

(b) That it be agreed that, if successful, this would allow 'last-in-the-block' properties to be let to Ukrainian Displaced Persons, and that a further report be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board on progress with this initiative.

9 Allocation of property to staff, elected member or committee members: Housing Rule 2.5

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure relative to Housing Rule 2.5, which required all housing allocations which involved either (i) Council members or their immediate families or (ii) members of staff of the Housing Services Division or their immediate families to be notified to the relevant Policy Board.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

10 Greater Glasgow & Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan 2023/25

There was submitted a report by the Director of Environment, Housing and

Infrastructure relative to the Greater Glasgow & Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan 2023/25.

The report stated that the Public Health etc (Scotland) Act 2008, amongst other things, detailed the responsibilities of Scottish Ministers, local authorities and health boards, in terms of protecting public health in Scotland. Local authorities were responsible for all public health regulation in relation to premises and property while the National Health Service (NHS) was responsible for all public health regulation in relation to persons and individuals. Health Boards in Scotland also required, in terms of the Act, to lead on the preparation of a Joint Health Protection Plan (JHPP) for the area and to consult with local authorities during its preparation. The content, nature and scope of Plans were covered in guidance issued by Scottish Ministers. The JHPP set the strategic context for Public Health Protection within the area. In preparing the Greater Glasgow & Clyde JHPP 2023/25, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board had consulted with local authorities within the Health Board area. A copy of the draft Plan was appended to the report. It was highlighted that the JHPP also required to be approved by the NHS Board and the other local authorities within the Health Board area.

DECIDED: That the publication of the Greater Glasgow & Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan 2023/25, a copy of which was appended to the report, be noted.

11 **Renfrewshire's Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Children's Services relative to the Renfrewshire Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan, together with an update in terms of local Community Justice activity.

The report advised that the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 provided the legislative framework for the current model of community justice and placed a duty on local authorities and their statutory partners to produce a Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan (CJOIP) for their local authority area setting out which nationally determined outcomes were a priority, identified planned actions required to achieve or maintain nationally determined outcomes and had a collective responsibility to ensure community justice outcomes were achieved through effective collaboration and reporting.

The report detailed the work undertaken by Community Justice Renfrewshire (CJR) to produce the Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan (CJOIP) 2023/26, indicating that it would shape future Community Justice activity in Renfrewshire and guide associated reporting. In addition the report highlighted that the CJOIP focused on the added value that came from working in partnership, rather than on the contribution of individual agencies, did not seek to replicate the actions set out in the strategic and service plans of partners, and presented new areas of focus that would contribute to national justice outcomes.

The CJOIP outlined the broad areas of collaborative work CJR believed would have the greatest impact on national community justice outcomes. A detailed action plan and associated measures of success would be developed and enable CJR to review the recently published Community Justice Performance Framework and conduct a comprehensive strategic strength and needs assessment as data was released from Community Justice Scotland. A range of local measures would be identified to supplement national indicators and both local and national indicators would be

monitored and form the basis of annual reports. Renfrewshire's CJOIP would be shared with Community Justice Scotland in accordance with statutory requirements and be made publicly available, and arrangements made with partners to conduct a strategic needs and strengths assessment.

DECIDED:

(a) That Renfrewshire's Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan 2023/26 be approved; and

(b) That it be noted that the Renfrewshire's Community Justice Outcome Improvement Plan would be shared with Community Justice Scotland in the coming months.

12 Land Adjacent to 8 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the proposed declaration of an area of land located adjacent to 8 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood, identified on a plan appended to the report, as surplus to the Council's requirements.

The area of land involved, which was held on the Housing Revenue Account, extended to 26 square metres or thereby and was currently garden ground leased to the Council house tenant at 6 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood. The owner of the property at 8 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood had expressed an interest in acquiring the land to provide additional garden ground and a purchase price had been agreed subject to this Policy Board declaring the ground surplus. The purchase price of the land would be at a level upon which delegated powers granted to the Head of Economy & Development for the disposal of surplus property would be utilised. The Head of Housing Services, in consultation with the tenant of the property at 6 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood, had confirmed that she was not opposed to the land being declared surplus. It was highlighted that the proposed purchaser would be liable to meet the Council's reasonable professional and legal expenses incurred in processing the transaction.

DECIDED:

(a) That the area of land identified on the plan appended to the report be declared as surplus to the Council's requirements, with a view to disposing of it to the adjacent owner of 8 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood;

(b) That the sale thereof to the adjoining proprietor of 8 Fulwood Avenue, Linwood, on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Economy & Development utilising delegated powers be authorised; and

(c) That the Head of Corporate Governance, in conjunction with the Head of Housing Services, be authorised to conclude the sale incorporating into the bargain such terms and conditions as may be deemed necessary to protect the Council's interest.

13 Disposal of property at 20 Thornhill, Johnstone

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the proposed declaration of the property at 20 Thornhill, Johnstone, identified on a plan appended

to the report, as surplus to the Council's requirements.

The report advised that the property, which was held on the Housing Revenue Account, was located within a parade of seven shops with residential properties above. Of the seven shops, two had been disposed of by the Council. The residential properties were a mix of Council and privately-owned properties. The tenant of the property at 20 Thornhill, Johnstone, who had been in occupation for over 10 years, had expressed an interest in acquiring that property and after negotiation, a provisional purchase price of £125,000 had been agreed subject to this Policy Board declaring the property surplus to requirements. The proposed purchase price was considered best value for the disposal of the property. The Head of Housing Services had confirmed that she was not opposed to the disposal of the property at 20 Thornhill, Johnstone and it had been confirmed that there would be no title restrictions that would prevent the sale. It was highlighted that the proposed purchaser would be liable to meet the Council's reasonable professional and legal expenses incurred in processing the transaction.

During discussion it was proposed and agreed that consideration be given to options to make local members aware of the proposed disposal of land and/or property in their ward earlier in the process.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the property at 20 Thornhill, Johnstone, identified on the plan appended to the report, be declared as surplus to the Council's requirements, with a view to disposing of it to the existing tenant;
- (b) That the sale thereof to the existing tenant of 20 Thornhill, Johnstone, on the provisional terms and conditions agreed and detailed in the report;
- (c) That the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the sale incorporating into the bargain such terms and conditions as may be deemed necessary to protect the Council's interest; and
- (d) That consideration be given to options for making local members aware of the proposed disposal of land and/or property earlier in the process.