

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 21 May 2019

Report by: Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services

Heading: Scottish Enterprise Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund – Award of Funding

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report advises members that the council has been awarded £150,000 grant funding from the Scottish Enterprise Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund, which will be supplemented by £150,000 from Housing Revenue Account (HRA) resources to deliver an innovative project to measure internal environmental conditions within council houses to seek to reduce future maintenance costs and to help identify tenants who may require energy advice.
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2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Board:

- (i) note and approve the acceptance of grant funding of £150,000 from Scottish Enterprise Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund and authorise the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services to oversee delivery and operational management of the programme;
 - (ii) note and approve the use of resources from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme to supplement the funding as set out in paragraph 3.7 of this report; and
 - (iii) note a further report will be brought to a future meeting of this Board at the end of the programme.
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3. Scottish Enterprise Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund

- 3.1 The council has been awarded £150,000 from Scottish Enterprise's Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund for a project which will measure internal environmental conditions within our housing stock using innovative sensor technology. This project will be delivered over a two year period to approximately 1,000 properties, with data analytics tools developed to measure the outputs and benefits over this period of time.
- 3.2 This follows a recent small-scale pilot project undertaken by the Housing Investment team to measure internal environmental conditions following the installation of external wall insulation, in order to assess the impact of these works. This piloted the use of sensor technology to measure temperature, humidity and carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions within 60 council houses whose residents had opted into the programme.
- 3.3 The data generated from this pilot project allowed the council to measure the impact of the energy efficiency improvement works as well as highlight cases where further action may be required to help tenants fully realise the benefits from the improvement works.
- 3.4 The insights gained from this small-scale pilot project have indicated there are potential benefits for both the council and our tenants from making use of this sensor technology to gather data on environmental conditions within our housing stock generally and is not confined to only those properties which have had external improvement works completed. The data gathered can potentially reduce future maintenance costs by highlighting properties which may require some form of intervention to prevent conditions such as condensation and mould growth developing where poor ventilation and irregular heating is identified.
- 3.5 In addition to the maintenance aspect, the council wants to offer support to tenants who may require assistance in ensuring their home is heated and ventilated adequately. The council is committed to promoting affordable warmth and tackling fuel poverty and it is anticipated that the use of this technology will help identify tenants who may require energy advice and who can then be signposted to our Energy Advocacy service.
- 3.7 The two year project will also be supported with £150,000 allocated from existing resources within our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme. The project will be delivered and managed by the Housing Investment team and a report on the outputs will be brought to a future meeting of this Board at the end of the project.

Implications of the Report

- 1. **Financial** – Grant funding of £150,000 from Scottish Enterprise to deliver a pilot project.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None

3. **Community/Council Planning –**

- **Our Renfrewshire is well** – Tackling inequality and improving housing conditions benefitting tenants. Addressing fuel poverty.
- **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** – Identifying and resolving potential maintenance issues to improve council houses.

6. **Information Technology** – Use of technology to measure internal environmental conditions.

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** – Open tender process will be followed to procure supplier.

10. **Risk** - None.

11. **Privacy Impact** - None.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – N/A

List of Background Papers - None

FC/LF
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