

Minute of Meeting Housing & Community Safety Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 17 May 2016	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

PRESENT

Councillors B Brown, E Devine, M Devine, Grady, Henry, Lawson, M MacLaren, McCartin, McEwan, McGurk, Murrin, Noon, J Sharkey and Williams.

CHAIR

Councillor Williams, Convener, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

S MacDougall, Director of Community Resources; M Crearie, Director of Development & Housing Services; O Reid, Head of Public Protection, G Hannah, Strategic Change Manager and D Kerr, Service Co-ordination Manager (all Community Resources); F Carlin, Head of Planning & Housing Services and V Howie, Finance Business Partner (both Development & Housing Services); and J Lynch, Head of Property Services, D Farrell, Finance Business Partner and D Low, Senior Committee Services Officer (all Finance & Resources).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Superintendent N Burns (Police Scotland) and D Proctor, Senior Local Officer (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

1 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a joint revenue budget monitoring report by the Directors of Finance & Resources and Development & Housing Services for the period 1 April 2015 to 4 March 2016.

DECIDED:

(a) That the budget position be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that since the last report there had been net budget realignments of £94,232 relative to the reallocation of previously agreed savings and the realignment of Chief Officer budgets across Development & Housing Services.

2 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

There was submitted a capital budget monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources in respect of the Housing Division of Development & Housing Services for the period 1 April to 4 March 2016.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - SCRUTINY REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service relative to service performance and activities in the Renfrewshire area for the period January to February 2016.

The report highlighted improvements across a range of performance indicators and identified areas where further interventions were required. Over the period there had been a reduction in the number of all non-fatal fire casualties: there had been an increase in the number of incidences of deliberate fire-raising; the number of accidental primary fires had reduced while the number of accidental dwelling fires had increased; there was a significant decrease in the number of non-domestic fires; the number of false alarms had decreased; and the number of road traffic collisions had decreased from 13 to 11. The appendix to the report provided an analysis of performance and activities on a ward basis.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

4 POLICE SCOTLAND - SCRUTINY REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Chief Superintendent, K Division Police Scotland, relative to service performance in the Renfrewshire area during the period 1 April 2015 to 29 February 2016. The report provided an analysis of key performance indicators for both recorded and detected crime and covered all local police plan priority areas as detailed in the local police plan.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

5 PUBLIC PROTECTION OPERATIONAL UPDATE

There was submitted an amended update report by the Director of Community Resources relative to the achievements of Public Protection during the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

The report set out the key responsibilities of Public Protection and highlighted the priorities and challenges throughout 2016/17 including the development of an integrated plan for Public Protection; delivering the identified improvements as part of Phase 2 of the Community Safety Partnership Hub; jointly progressing the Building Safer Greener Communities Multi Agency Tasking Group with Police Scotland; delivering the work programmes as agreed by the Community Safety & Public Protection Steering Group; and responding to national priorities and direction such as the national model for Trading Standards and Scientific Services.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

6 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY - 12-14 HIGH STREET, JOHNSTONE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources seeking approval to declare the commercial property at 12-14 High Street, Johnstone surplus to requirements, as outlined on plan E2481, a copy of which was appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the commercial property at 12-14 High Street, Johnstone be declared surplus to requirements;

(b) That the property be sold to the existing tenants on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Property Services and approved by the Planning & Property Board; and

(c) That it be noted that in accordance with the recent changes to Scottish Ministers' consent when disposing of HRA assets, this disposal would be under the General Consent available and would be self-certified by the Council.

7 PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF COMMERCIAL PREMISES - 82 SYCAMORE AVENUE, JOHNSTONE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources seeking approval to declare the commercial property at 82 Sycamore Avenue, Johnstone surplus to requirements, as outlined on plan E2468, a copy of which was appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the commercial property at 82 Sycamore Avenue, Johnstone be declared surplus to requirements;

(b) That the property be sold to the existing tenants on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Property Services and at a level that delegated powers would be used to conclude the bargain; and

(c) That it be noted that in accordance with the recent changes to Scottish Ministers' consent when disposing of HRA assets, this disposal would be under the General Consent available and would be self-certified by the Council.

8 LAND ADJACENT TO 18 FULBAR AVENUE, RENFREW

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources seeking approval to declare the area of land adjacent to 18 Fulbar Avenue, Renfrew surplus to requirements, as outlined on plan E2457, a copy of which was appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the land adjacent to 18 Fulbar Avenue, Renfrew which equated to 166 square metres or thereby as indicated on plan E2457 be declared surplus to requirements;

(b) That it be noted that the sale of the land to the proprietor of 18 Fulbar Avenue should be on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Property Services utilising delegated powers;

(c) That the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the sale of the land which should include any such terms and conditions that may be deemed necessary to protect the Council's interests;

(d) That the Head of Planning & Housing be authorised to place an advert in the local press in terms of the Town & Council Planning (Scotland) Act 1959 for the proposed sale of an area of open space; and

(e) That it be noted that in accordance with the recent changes to Scottish Ministers' consent when disposing of HRA assets, this disposal would be under the General Consent available and would be self-certified by the Council.

9 LAND ADJACENT TO 20 FULBAR AVENUE, RENFREW

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources seeking approval to declare the area of land adjacent to 20 Fulbar Avenue, Renfrew surplus to requirements, as outlined on plan E2472, a copy of which was appended to the report.

DECIDED:

(a) That the land adjacent to 20 Fulbar Avenue, Renfrew which equated to 166 square metres or thereby as indicated on plan E2472 be declared surplus to requirements;

(b) That it be noted that the sale of the land to the proprietor of 20 Fulbar Avenue should be on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Property Services utilising delegated powers;

(c) That the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the sale of the land which should include any such terms and conditions that may be deemed necessary to protect the Council's interests;

(d) That the Head of Planning & Housing be authorised to place an advert in the local press in terms of the Town & Council Planning (Scotland) Act 1959 for the proposed sale of an area of open space; and

(e) That it be noted that in accordance with the recent changes to Scottish Ministers' consent when disposing of HRA assets, this disposal would be under the General Consent available and would be self-certified by the Council.

10 FERGUSLIE PARK HOUSING REGENERATION PROPOSALS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the work underway in relation to the design and feasibility assessment for the Regional Performance Sports Facility and seeking authority to consult with tenants and residents in the Tannahill area of Ferguslie on options to link the investment in new facilities as part of a comprehensive housing regeneration programme. The addresses of the tenants and residents to be consulted were included in Appendix 1 to the report and Tannahill area was highlighted on a plan attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

Councillor Williams, seconded by Councillor M Devine moved: (a) that the Director of Development and Housing be authorised to consult with tenants and residents of the addresses listed in Appendix 1 on a housing regeneration programme linked to the wider regeneration of Ferguslie Park; and (b) that it be noted that a report would be provided to a future meeting of the Policy Board on feedback from the consultation with tenants and residents on the regeneration proposals for the area.

Councillor M MacLaren, seconded by Councillor Lawson, moved as an amendment:

Remove recommendations and replace with

"2.1 It is recommended that the Director of Development and Housing Services brings forward the full details of any consultation before the Board for approval before tenants and residents of the addresses listed in Appendix 1 are consulted. This will include details of:

- How many houses will be demolished?
- How will existing tenants who wish to remain in the area be rehoused?
- How will the value of and private residence earmarked for demolition be calculated?
- How many new houses will replace those demolishes?
- How much are both St Mirren Football Club and University of West of Scotland contributing to these proposals?"

On the roll being called, the following members voted for the amendment: Councillors Lawson, M MacLaren, McCartin, McEwan, McGurk and Noon.

The following members voted for the motion: Councillors B Brown, E Devine, M Devine, Grady, Henry, Murrin, J Sharkey and Williams.

8 members having voted for the motion and 6 members having voted for the amendment, the motion was accordingly declared carried.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Director of Development and Housing be authorised to consult with tenants and residents of the addresses listed in Appendix 1 on a housing regeneration programme linked to the wider regeneration of Ferguslie Park; and

(b) That it be noted that a report would be provided to a future meeting of the Policy Board on feedback from the consultation with tenants and residents on the regeneration proposals for the area.

11 GUIDANCE ON DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FROM HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNTS

There was submitted a report relative to new guidance issued by the Scottish Government intended to give local authorities the freedom to exercise their own judgement and discretion in disposing of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets to best meet local needs and priorities, with a particular focus on enhancing the service provided to current and future council tenants.

DECIDED: That the introduction of new guidance in relation to the disposal of assets from local authority HRAs issued by the Scottish Government in March 2016 be noted.

12 DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING SERVICES RISK REGISTER 2016/17

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the Development & Housing Services Risk Register 2016/17, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The Risk Management Plan and Risk Register provided the methodology, analysis and evaluation of risks to service delivery and identified management actions to minimise those risks.

DECIDED: That the Development & Housing Risk Register 2016/17 be approved.

13 EMPTY HOMES LOAN FUND - "HOMES AGAIN RENFREWSHIRE"

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to a national programme that was delivered locally by Renfrewshire Council under the "Homes Again Renfrewshire" initiative, the key aim of which was to bring private sector empty homes which had been lying empty for more than six months back into use.

The report intimated that the arrangements for the Homes Again Renfrewshire Initiative had been approved previously by this Board as a means of issuing interest free loans to the owners of long term empty properties. Authority was now sought to amend the criteria to enable loans to be issued to companies such as landlords, businesses or property developers.

DECIDED: That the criteria for eligibility to the Empty Homes Loan Fund be amended to allow loans to be issued to companies which owned one or more long term empty homes and met the relevant criteria.

14 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015/16 - 2017/18 OUTTURN REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Director of Development & Housing Services relative to the service improvement plan (SIP) outturn report for the Service to 31 March 2016.

The SIP detailed the key challenges facing the service and provided details of the key achievements of the service over this period; progress on implementing the action plan linked to the service improvement plan for 2015/18; and as assessment of performance in relation to the service scorecard of core performance indicators.

DECIDED: That the progress made with the implementation of the Development & Housing Services 2015/18 service improvement plan actions and performance indicators for the activities relating to this Policy Board's remit be noted.

15 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A POLICY TO SUPPORT THIRD PARTY APPLICATIONS TO THE PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING PANEL

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Resources relative to the establishment of criteria that would require to be met before the Council would refer matters to the Private Rented Housing Panel on behalf of a tenant.

The report intimated that The Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 as amended specified minimum living standards for private rented properties and landlords had a legal obligation to ensure property they let met these standards. Where they failed to do so, tenants could make an application to the Private Rented Housing Panel (PRHP) who had powers to compel the landlord to effect repairs, imposing penalties where action was not taken to do so. In recognition that many tenants were unwilling to make an application on their own behalf, often through fear of reprisal or eviction, amendments in legislation contained in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and introduced in December 2015 provided local authorities with new powers to make third party applications to the PRHP on behalf of tenants. These powers had been available to Renfrewshire Council from April 2016.

In order to ensure that the process was effectively managed, the report recommended that criteria be established that would require to be met before the Council would refer matters to the PRHP on behalf of a tenant. Work was ongoing to establish criteria and a policy which would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board for approval.

DECIDED:

(a) That the new legislative provision to permit Local Authorities to make third party applications to the Private Rented Housing Panel (PRHP) where private rented property was identified as failing the Repairing Standard be noted;

(b) That the progress on developing appropriate criteria and a policy for making third party applications to the Private Rented Housing Panel set out in section 3 of the report be noted; and

(c) That a finalised policy and criteria be submitted for the approval of this Policy Board at its meeting in August 2016.

16 REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE IN POLICING

There was submitted a joint report by the Director of Community Resources and the Head of Corporate Governance relative to the review of governance in policing undertaken by the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).

The report intimated that the Terms of Reference for the review identified four workstreams covering localism and community accountability: the structure and skills of the SPA; information requirements and processes; and stakeholder engagement requirements. In terms of governance, the review included a discussion on the current governance model and consideration of whether other models would be more effective. These other models included where police were directly overseen by the Parliament or where they were directly overseen by elected members of the scrutinising body. The conclusion reached was that the current structure of a police authority at arms-length from government to oversee policing was a good one. Therefore, no structural changes were proposed although there were recommendations on how the operation of the current structure could be improved including proposals to strengthen communication between the SPA and local authorities.

DECIDED: That the terms of the report to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice by the Chair of the Scottish Police Authority following his review of Governance in Policing be noted.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Board resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the press and public were present, there could be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973.

17 BUILDING SERVICES TRADING BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

This item is exempt,