

To: Communities and Housing Policy Board

On: 21 May 2024

Report by: Director of Communities & Housing Services

Heading: Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2024/25

1. Summary

- 1.1 On 29 February 2024 the Council approved a report entitled 'Non-Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2028 which includes funding provision for capital and revenue Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) expenditure for 2024/25.
 - 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 for the period 2024/25 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 for future Housing Regeneration areas. This project is commencing during this financial year.
 - 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 Housing Investment and Housing Regeneration Programmes.
-

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 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The Private Sector Housing Grant supports a range of services to private sector owners. This includes Disabled 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 2024/2025 showing proposed expenditure of £1.091m. 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 with adaptations to make dwellings suitable for a member of the household who is disabled.

Responsibility for determining the strategy for support for disabled adaptations across all tenures (excluding Housing Associations) is the responsibility of Renfrewshire Health & Social Care 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 2024/25. The Council, in conjunction with Health & Social Care will continue to monitor demand pressures on available grant during the year.

Bridgewater Housing Association (Care & Repair Renfrewshire) have been awarded the contract from 1 April 2024 to manage private sector adaptations and small repairs services in Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils during this financial year. An allowance of £231,000 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. The Scottish Government has been consulting on a Social Housing Net Zero Standard that will replace the second Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH2) and the Council has been developing programmes that will meet these standards.

The Housing Investment Programme is focussed on common works in blocks of mixed ownership in regeneration and other areas 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 programme will also commence works on the eight regeneration improvement areas during the year for which the Communities & Housing Policy Board approved a report on 7 March 2023 enhancing grant support to participating private homeowners in these areas.

Energy efficiency grants also continue to be made available to eligible households through the Scottish Government's EES: ABS (Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland) programme and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme.

An allowance of £150,000 is proposed to support grants to homeowners during 2024/25. 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) Salaries

Salaries for staff engaged on private sector investment within the Owner Services Team are funded through this budget. The annual allowance of £150,000 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. Private Sector Housing Grant is also funding one Energy Advocate post within the Council's Energy Management Unit, providing information on non-Council grants and loans to private homeowners.

(iv) 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 and the Under One Roof organisations 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.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The PSHG programme for 2024/25 totals £1.091 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 Housing & Community Safety Policy Board on 7 March 2023 – Proposed change to scheme of assistance in regeneration areas.
2. Report to Council on 29 February 2024 – Non-Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29.
3. Report to Housing & Community Safety Policy Board on 12 March 2019 – Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2019/20.
4. Report to Housing & Community Safety 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 Communities & Housing Services 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, Investment Programme Manager, 07483 376 245, ian.mackinnon@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Author: Ian MacKinnon, Investment Programme Manager

E Mail: ian.mackinnon@renfrewshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1**PROPOSED PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING PROGRAMME 2024/2025**

Category	2024/2025
Adaptation Grants	£550,000
Care and Repair – Revenue Support - Contracted	£231,048
Capital Programmes – Owners Grants	£150,000
Capitalised Salaries	£150,000
Miscellaneous Costs (including support for the private rented sector)	£10,000
Total	£1,091,048