

Minute of Meeting Communities and Housing Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 16 August 2022	13:00	Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present: Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Gillian Graham, Councillor John Hood, 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

M Crearie, Director of Communities & Housing Services, F Carlin, Head of Housing Services, C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager and R Walkinshaw, Housing Regeneration & Development Manager (all Communities & Housing Services); A Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnership & Inequalities Manager, S Marklow, Strategy & Place Manager and J Castle, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executives); and J Kilpatrick, Finance Business Partner; D Pole, End User Technician, D Low, Democratic Services Manager, E Gray Senior Committee Services Officer and D Cunningham, Assistant 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.

Transparency Statement

Councillor M MacLaren indicated that she had a connection to item 7 - Draft Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023/28 - 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.

1 **Police and Fire & Rescue Services Scrutiny Sub-committee**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Sub-committee held on 7 June 2022, which forms the Appendix to this Minute.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

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

There was submitted a General Services Revenue, Housing Account and Capital Budget Monitoring report by the Director of Finance & Resources for the period 1 April to 24 June 2022. The report stated that the projected outturn as at 24 June 2022 for all services reporting to this Policy Board was an overspend position of £0.138 million. The projected capital outturn for projects reporting to this Policy Board was a breakeven position against the revised budget for the year. Summaries were provided over the relevant services in the tables within the report, together with further analysis.

It was also highlighted that revenue budget adjustments totalling £0.934 million, comprising expenditure adjustments of £0.009 million in respect of the Adult Social Care pay uplift, £0.060 million for the Duke of Edinburgh Scottish Attainment Fund, £0.240 million relating to fly-tipping enforcement actions agreed at the meeting of Renfrewshire Council held on 3 March 2022 in terms of the relevant Council motion and income adjustments of £0.004 million in terms of the Right for Renfrewshire initiative, £0.660 million for Criminal Justice and £0.031 million in connection with re-alignment of the Planning Services budget had been processed since submission of the previous report to the Policy Board.

In addition, the report detailed capital budget changes totalling £2.954 million which had arisen since the previous report which reflected budget carry forwards of £2.800 million from 2022/23 to 2023/24.

DECIDED:

(a) That the projected Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and 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 noted.

3 Community Empowerment Fund

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to applications considered for funding from the Community Empowerment Fund in the current round of funding. The total value of requested grant funding was £101,321. A cross-service panel of officers had been established to review and assess applications to the Community Empowerment Fund against agreed objectives and criteria. The report outlined the key objectives and aims of the Fund and indicated that three new applications had been received in the current round and been considered. A summary of the applications for funding, together with recommendations, was provided within an appendix to the report.

DECIDED: That the recommendations, detailed in Section 4 and Appendix 1 of the report, to (a) award £50,000 to Renfrew Victoria Youth Football Club for refurbishment and upgrade the internal areas within Kirklandneuk Pavilion, and (b) continue consideration of the applications submitted by Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust and Western Desert Recce Group SCIO to allow for further work to be carried out with the groups relating to their proposals be approved.

4 Communities and Housing Services - Annual Health and Safety Plan 2022/23

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the 2022/23 Health & Safety Report for Communities & Housing Services.

The report summarised the approach to Health & Safety within the Service, reviewed performance and set out future objectives in an Action Plan. A copy of the annual Health & Safety Report 2022/23 and Action Plan was appended to the report.

DECIDED: That the Communities & Housing Services Annual Health & Safety Plan 2022/23 be approved.

5 Scottish Social Housing Charter - Annual Return 2021/22

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Scottish Social Housing Charter Annual Return 2021/22.

The report intimated that Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords were required to submit an Annual Return relating to their performance to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) by the end of May each year. A copy of the Annual Return

2021/22 made on behalf of the Council, appended to the report, detailed Renfrewshire's performance and having taken account of the challenges faced during the Covid pandemic, highlighted the key priorities for the Housing Service as part of recovery planning activity.

The report also summarised the Renfrewshire Council outturn performance information for 2021/22, provided comparative information for the previous four-year period, together with core contextual data submitted as part of the Charter return and additional service and performance management information. The report highlighted areas of service performance most significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, areas that had achieved improved or stabilized performance and provided an update in terms of areas within the Council's recovery plan. The report also indicated that the SHR published all social landlords' performance on its website and, in common with other social landlords, the Council was required to report its performance against the Charter to all tenants. In accordance with guidance issued by the SHR tenants would be consulted on the preferred format for the tenants' report.

It was noted that the Service had commissioned a Tenant Satisfaction Survey, between March and April 2022, based on the satisfaction indicators with the Charter which indicated that satisfaction levels had remained relatively stable or had improved over the previous two-year period. It was noted that the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey were available within the Members Library area of the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS).

DECIDED:

(a) That the submission, made by the Director of Communities & Housing Services on the Scottish Social Housing Charter performance information 2021/22, as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted; and

(b) That it be noted that the report also contained the results from this year's Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

6 Tenant Participation Strategy 2022 – Draft for Consultation

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2022, in particular, seeking authority to undertake consultation on the proposed Strategy and submit a report in relation to the outcome of the consultation and the proposed final Strategy to the next meeting of this Policy Board for consideration and if appropriate approval.

The report detailed the Council's duties in terms of tenant participation and engagement. Current arrangements for tenant participation were based on the Customer Engagement Strategy, approved in August 2010, with subsequent amendments approved in January 2011 and incremental additions over recent years. At the meeting of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 17 August 2021 it had been agreed that consultants be appointed to review current arrangements for tenant participation and a new Tenant Participation Strategy developed. Accordingly, following a procurement exercise, The Tenants Information Service (TIS) had been appointed to undertake the review and develop a new Tenant Participation Strategy. Subsequently TIS had established a steering group, consisting of tenant representatives and Council officers, to oversee the development of the Draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2022, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report detailed key areas and objectives that the draft Strategy and accompanying Action Plan had incorporated, outlined how these would be achieved and provided information in connection with consultation arrangements.

DECIDED: That the Draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2022 be approved and that the Director of Communities & Housing Services be authorised to undertake consultation and to submit a report in relation to the outcome of the consultation and the proposed final Strategy to the next meeting of this Policy Board for consideration and, if appropriate, approval.

7 **Draft Renfrewshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023/28**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2023/28, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report indicated that the SHIP, which detailed how funding for affordable housing would be targeted to achieve the objectives contained within Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy and support the delivery of a range of affordable housing projects across the Renfrewshire area, was reviewed and updated annually. In accordance with Scottish Government guidance the draft SHIP for the five-year period 2023/28, incorporated a flexible approach to project management by including a roll forward of projects from the previous SHIP, taking account of projects which were expected to complete during 2022/23 alongside estimates of when new projects could potentially be brought forward. The report indicated that the Plan contained funding provision for new-build Council housing in the four Housing Regeneration and Renewal areas where new-build housing was proposed. Details of the Future Resource Planning Assumptions for the period 2022/26 were provided. The report proposed that following consultation, which would be undertaken during August and September 2022, the finalised Plan would be submitted to a future meeting of this Policy Board for consideration and, if appropriate approval, prior to submission to the Scottish Government.

DECIDED: That the draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023/28 be approved for consultation and that appropriate arrangements be made, in due course, to submit the finalised Plan to a future meeting of this Policy Board for consideration.

8 **Housing-led Regeneration and Renewal Programme for Renfrewshire – Year 1 Update**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Housing-led Regeneration and Renewal Programme for Renfrewshire.

The report outlined the aims of the Programme, approved at the meeting of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 18 January 2022. It was also noted that amended proposals for three of the eight regeneration areas had subsequently been approved at the meeting of that Policy Board held on 15 March 2022.

An update on progress made in the phase one of the Programme was provided

together with a timeline for delivery of works scheduled throughout the 10-year strategy period. Following approval of the proposals, tenants, residents and owners had been issued with regular updates advising them of the plans that were approved for each area. In addition, the Council's website had dedicated Housing Regeneration pages which were regularly updated to ensure that residents were kept informed of progress. Given the scope and complexity of the Regeneration Proposals, a phasing strategy had been developed, a copy of which was appended to the report, which took account of factors such as delivery timescales, rehousing requirements and contractor availability.

It was noted that Neighbourhood Renewal Plans (NRP) were also being developed in each of the eight Regeneration Areas which would operate in parallel with the physical regeneration plans and that these would be tailored to the needs and circumstances of each area, going beyond housing and the immediate external environment and taking account of broader issues including links to health and wellbeing, access to outdoor space and sustainable travel and employment or training opportunities to maximise the benefits achievable for local residents.

It was highlighted that there would be ongoing engagement with residents regarding the NRP with a roadshow of 'pop-up' events held in each regeneration area. Feedback received during the consultation phases had been utilised to ensure issues raised by tenants and residents about property condition and the wider environment were addressed within the programme of works for each area. This included where tenants had advised of works that they felt should be prioritised, such as the internal and external fabric of their blocks, condition of common areas and the external environment surrounding their homes.

A summary of progress to date in each regeneration area was provided, within an appendix to the report, together with information relating to the anticipated timeline for investment, demolition, new-build and rehousing initiatives where this was relevant. The report also highlighted that where newbuild housing was proposed, a key objective of the regeneration programme would be the delivery of homes of a suitable type and size to meet current and future needs and to enable existing households to remain in the area where possible. In addition, it was stated that all Council tenants affected by demolition would be offered suitable alternative accommodation in line with the Council's housing allocation policy and would be entitled to apply for home-loss and disturbance payments subject to qualification criteria where the move was in accordance with the phasing strategy that facilitated the regeneration initiative.

DECIDED:

(a) That the baseline timescale for delivery of works across all eight areas in phase one of the 10-year Regeneration and Renewal Programme, a copy of which was appended to the report be approved; and

(b) That the Director of Communities & Housing Services arrange to provide regular updates on progress against that baseline.

9 Last-in-the-block Sale and Acquisition Policy

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to a proposal to amend the current policy, approved in May 2014, which allowed the sale of the last house in a block in certain circumstances.

The report advised that mixed tenure flatted blocks often presented difficulties when delivering investment programmes, because the delivery of such programmes required the consent of co-owners within flats. It was noted that of the Council's 12,216 properties, almost 70% were flatted, with many in mixed tenure blocks. It was also highlighted that resolution of the issue of mixed tenure blocks would be critical to the successful delivery of the £100 million Housing Regeneration investment programme. The report set out a proposal to amend the current sale and acquisition policy for last house in the block, to include any flatted blocks, which currently applied to blocks of more than five, and included provision to enable rehousing of tenants, with their agreement, where the Council was a minority owner. It was noted that receipts from the sale of such properties would be used to acquire properties that could assist in facilitating investment works in other mixed tenure blocks or meet other housing needs by adding to the supply of affordable housing for social rent across Renfrewshire and, as a consequence, there would be no loss to the stock, and overall repairs and improvements would be easier to deliver in the future.

DECIDED:

(a) That the changes to the "last in the block sale and acquisition policy", as set out within section 3 of the report and in full accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegated Functions and Financial Regulations be approved, in order to allow:

(i) Re-housing of tenants, with their agreement, to allow disposal;

(ii) Disposal of flats which were "last-in-the-block" but where the legal title included more than one block;

(iii) Disposal of "last in the block" flats regardless of the number of properties in the block;

(iv) The use of receipts for acquisition of properties to increase Council ownership in other mixed-tenure blocks; and

(b) That the Director of Communities & Housing Services be authorised to seek the consent of Scottish Ministers as required.

10 Land at Maple Drive, Johnstone Castle - Regeneration Phase 2

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the proposed declaration of an area of land at Maple Drive, Johnstone, identified on a plan appended to the report, as surplus to the Council's requirements.

Reference was made to Renfrewshire's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/24, approved at the meeting of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 21 August 2018, which had identified a site in Johnstone Castle as suitable for development by a housing association. The site, identified on a Plan attached to the report, had subsequently been declared surplus to the Council's requirements following the demolition of existing Council housing on Cedar Avenue, Elm Drive and Maple Drive and officials authorised to negotiate disposal to a housing association for affordable housing. During discussions with Link Group Limited it had been identified

that that there was a need to adjust the boundaries of the site to accommodate the planned development layout. The report proposed that the site boundaries be adjusted to reflect: (a) adjoining land ownerships, with the route to the sub-station between 13 and 17 Maple Drive excluded; (b) the design layout produced by Link which now included Cedar Avenue and Maple Drive carriageways, layby parking and footways and (c) best practice asset management to avoid small strips of isolated land remaining in Council ownership. As a result, the proposed site now extended to 2.24 hectares or thereby and was identified on Plan E3228A attached to the report.

It was noted that negotiations would continue in relation to the proposed sale terms would be either submitted to the Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board for approval or approved in terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegated Functions, as appropriate, prior to completion of the sale.

DECIDED:

(a) That the area of land at Maple Drive, Johnstone, outlined and hatched on drawing E3228A, and extending to 2.24 hectares or thereby, be declared as surplus to the Council's requirements;

(b) That the Head of Economy & Development and Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to negotiate terms for the disposal of the site to a housing association for the development of affordable housing; and

(c) That it be noted that the proposed sale terms would be either submitted to the Infrastructure, Land & Environment Policy Board for approval or approved in terms of the Council's Scheme of Delegated Functions, as appropriate, prior to completion of the sale.

11 **Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2022/23**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) Investment Programme 2022/23, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report referred to the decision taken at the meeting of the Council held on 3 March 2022 to approve the report entitled 'Non-Housing Capital Investment Programme 2022/23-2026/27' which had included funding provision for Capital and Revenue PSHG expenditure during 2022/23. 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 2022/23 to support owner participation in a range of programmes. The requirement to manage PSHG capital and revenue resource 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 Programme and the renewal of the contract for private sector adaptations was highlighted. It was highlighted that the contract for private sector adaptations expired on 31 March 2023 and Communities & Housing Services were working closely with the Health & Social Care Partnership to procure future Care & Repair services. In addition, it was noted that funds were held in reserve to support owners involved in the Orchard Street Housing Renewal Area tenement refurbishment project, as previously noted at the meeting of the Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board held on 12 March 2019, and for any increased programme requirements that might be identified in the future.

DECIDED: That the Private Sector Housing Grant Investment Programme 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

12 **Housing Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Programmes: 2022/23 Award of Funding**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Scottish Government's Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Schemes (EES: ABS) Programme 2022/23 and the allocation of up to £1,657,500 for qualifying projects within the Renfrewshire Council area.

The report advised that the Scottish Government's EES: ABS programme, formerly known as the Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS) had been introduced in 2013/14. The programme was targeted at private sector homeowners to assist their participation and ensure projects to improve energy efficiency could proceed. The key objectives of the programme were detailed within the report, together with the potential benefits and it was highlighted that local authorities acted as coordinating agents for all EES: ABS programmes within their area. It was noted that Renfrewshire Council had applied for up to £1,657,500 and confirmation of being successful had been received on 6 July 2022 and accepted by the Director of Communities & Housing Services. Homologation of this action was sought. It was noted that, as in previous years, the proposed projects, which were detailed within the report, had focused on mixed tenure blocks of solid wall construction type to support social landlords in meeting the requirements of the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing as well as an allocation to support private homeowners within houses wholly private blocks which would be delivered via a managing agent. It was highlighted that the costs of the Managing Agent role would be met by the EES: ABS funding.

The report stated that the delivery of the 2021/22 EES: ABS programme had been significantly impacted by a range of issues which caused delays as the construction industry emerged from the restrictions put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic. Accordingly, there had been a need to reprofile the timetable for the EES: ABS investment programme with works being rescheduled over this year and next year. It was noted that there continued to be complexity and a degree of uncertainty around the programming schedule due to the ongoing issues being faced by the construction industry and that this could potentially impact on the scheduling of works and the timetable for drawing down EES: ABS funding, which would be managed by the Director of Communities & Housing in line with the Scottish Government's funding criteria timescales.

DECIDED:

(a) That the action taken by the Director of Communities, & Housing Services in accepting grant funding of £1,657,500 awarded as part of the Scottish Government's EES: ABS programme for qualifying projects, in 2022/23, within the Renfrewshire Council area, be homologated; and

(b) That the Director of Communities & Housing Services be authorised to oversee delivery and operational management of the programme.