

Minute of Meeting Communities and Housing Policy Board

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 07 June 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 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; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, A Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnership & Inequalities Manager and J Castle, Senior Communications Officer (all Chief Executives); (Chief Executives); J Trainer, Head of Child Care & Criminal Justice (Children's Services); F Carlin, Head of Housing Services, O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection, C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager, D Morrison, Senior Planning & Policy Manager and R Walkinshaw, Housing Regeneration & Development Manager (all Communities & Housing Services); G Dickie, Partnering & Commissioning Manager; D Pole, I Blair and J Whitehead, End User Technicians, R Devine and E Gray, both Senior Committee Services Officers and K O'Neil, Assistant Democratic Services Officer 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 would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

Apology

Councillor McGuire.

Transparency Statement

Councillor Mags MacLaren indicated that she had a connection to item 6 - Proposed Disposal of Commercial Property – 21 Maxwellton Street, Paisley - by reason of her membership of the same branch of a political organisation as the proposed purchaser. However, she indicated that she had applied the objective test and did not consider she had an interest to declare.

1 Police and Fire & Rescue Services Scrutiny Sub- committee

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Sub-committee held on 15 March 2022, which forms the Appendix to this Minute.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 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 £11,475. 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 two new applications had been received in the current round and been considered, together with one deferred application. A summary of the applications for funding was provided within an appendix to the report.

DECIDED: That the recommendations, detailed in Section 4 and Appendix 1 of the report, to award (a) £2,275 to Inchinnan Development Trust for business planning support relating to their application for a Community Asset Transfer of the India Tyres Playing Fields and (b) £9,200 to Spateston Development Trust to develop a business plan for a purpose-built community hub on the site of the former Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre, be approved.

3 Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund

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

The report provided an update on progress made in supporting community projects through the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund, detailed, in Appendix 1, projects approved by the Director of Communities & Housing in terms of delegated authority and outlined projects currently being developed by communities across Renfrewshire. 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.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they developed projects to be funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund be noted;
- (b) That the projects, detailed within Appendix 1 of the report, approved by the Director of Communities & Housing Services in terms of delegated authority, be noted; and
- (c) That it be noted that the current projects being developed by communities, and detailed with the report, would fully commit the available Greenspaces, Parks and Play areas element of the fund.

4 Communities & Housing Services: Service Improvement Plan 2022/25 and Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 Outturn Report

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Service Improvement Plan 2022/25 for Communities & Housing Services, a copy of which was appended to the report, together with an overview of performance against the actions and measures detailed within the Communities & Housing Service Improvement Plan 2021/22. A detailed outturn report was attached as Appendix 2 of the report.

The Service Improvement Plan set out a comprehensive statement of the service aims and objectives for the next three-year period, based on the resources likely to be available, and took account of the themes, actions, outcomes and targets contained within the Council Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan. The report highlighted that at the core of the Service Improvement Plan process was an action plan which detailed the priorities, key tasks to be implemented, implementation timetable and outcomes against which progress would be measured. It was noted that progress to deliver the Service Improvement Plan 2022/25 for Communities & Housing Services would be monitored and reported to this Policy Board on a six-monthly basis. The report also provided a summary of the performance of Communities & Housing Services during 2021/22, with a detailed explanation on all relevant actions and performance indicators. The service had identified key actions it aimed to achieve over a three-year period, in order to deliver improved outcomes for local people and communities and contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan. Given the unprecedented nature of events during the Covid-19 pandemic, these three-year plans had been replaced by Service Delivery Plans which had focused on a single year, 2021/22, and outlined what each service planned to do to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and associated restrictions, as well as actions to support recovery and renewal.

The Director of Communities & Housing Services gave a presentation which provided a service overview, advised of the key functions within each service area within her remit, made reference to the strategic priorities within each element of the Service and outlined some key facts relating to each element of the Service. It was noted that arrangements would be made to circulate a copy of the presentation slides to members of the Policy Board.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Service Improvement Plan for Communities & Housing Services, a copy of which was appended to the report, be approved;
- (b) That the progress made in delivering the Service Delivery Plan 2021/22 be noted;
- (c) That it be agreed that mid-year progress with the Service Improvement Plan be reported to this Policy Board in autumn 2022; and
- (d) That arrangements be made to circulate a copy of the presentation slides to members of the Policy Board.

5 Disposal of Land adjacent to 15 Glendee Gardens, Renfrew

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the proposed declaration of an area of land located adjacent to 15 Glendee Gardens Renfrew, 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 127 square metres or thereby and was an area of open space, maintained by Environment & Infrastructure. The applicant had expressed an interest in purchasing the land to create off-street parking. The area of land concerned was such that the purchase price/value 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 had confirmed that the area of land involved had no operational requirement and was not opposed to the land being declared surplus. It was highlighted that the proposed purchaser would require to obtain the required planning consents for the change of use from open space and be liable to meet the Council's reasonable professional and legal expenses incurred in processing the transaction.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the area of land located adjacent to 15 Glendee Gardens, Renfrew, identified on the plan attached to the report, be declared as surplus to requirements, with a view to disposing to the adjoining owner;
- (b) That the sale thereof to the adjoining owner of 15 Glendee Gardens, Renfrew, be authorised on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated by the Head of Economy & Development utilising delegated powers;
- (c) That the Head of Corporate Governance be authorised to conclude the sale incorporating such terms and conditions as may be deemed necessary to protect the Council's interest; and
- (d) That it be noted that the Chief Planning Officer would arrange for publication of an advert in the local press, in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1959, in respect of the proposed sale of an area of open space.

6 Proposed Disposal of Commercial Property – 21 Maxwellton Street, Paisley

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the proposed declaration of the property at 21 Maxwellton Street, Paisley, identified on a plan appended to the report, as surplus to the Council's requirements.

The property, which was held on the Housing Revenue Account and identified on a plan appended to the report, was currently leased to Mr Wahab, for an annual rent of £7,800. The property traded as a café and was the only remaining unit owned by Renfrewshire Council within the parade of three shops located in a residential/commercial area to the west of Paisley Town Centre. Mr Wahab owned the adjoining shop. Provisional agreement had been reached for a purchase price of £65,000, excluding VAT, for the property. The report highlighted that the purchaser would be granted rights of access over the strip of land, shown hatched on plan E3227, to facilitate access to carry out future repair and maintenance of the shop building. The Head of Housing Services had confirmed there were no objections to the proposed disposal and the Head of Corporate Governance had advised that there were no known restrictions that would prevent the property being sold, although the title deeds were not currently available and the position would be ascertained when they could be examined. 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 commercial property at 21 Maxwellton Street, Paisley be declared as surplus to requirements;
- (b) That the property be sold to the existing tenant, Mr Wahab, on the terms and conditions negotiated and provisionally agreed with the Head of Economy & Development under delegated powers; and
- (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.

7 Renfrewshire PREVENT Referral Strategy

There was submitted a report by the Director of Communities & Housing Services relative to the Renfrewshire PREVENT Referral strategy, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The report advised that the PREVENT strategy was part of the overall UK counter-terrorism strategy, (CONTEST). The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 placed a duty on local authorities to support the PREVENT strategy and to take steps to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by having due regard to stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The UK PREVENT strategy had three specific strategic objectives, namely (a) to respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promoted it; (b) to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they were given appropriate advice and support;

and (c) to work with sectors and institutions where there were risks of radicalisation that needed to be addressed. Awareness, vigilance, and early intervention were all deemed to be key to the success of the PREVENT strategy and process. In Scotland, safeguarding was central to the ethos and this brought confidence to the process, providing reassurance that reporting concerns would lead to support for individuals to fully disengage from radicalisation. A PREVENT referral strategy had been developed for Renfrewshire which aimed to ensure that the focus of awareness raising was on encouraging people to recognise and report issues that indicated that someone might be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and on developing the processes that would respond effectively, putting relevant safeguarding in place including PREVENT management processes and PREVENT Multi-Agency Panels (PMAP) when required. The referral process was called “Notice-Check-Share”.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the Council’s PREVENT Referral Strategy, a copy of which was appended to the report, be approved;
- (b) That the information sharing principles, governance and processes that supported the referral strategy and the focus on safeguarding and support for individuals or groups that were identified as being at risk of being drawn into violent extremist or terrorist behaviour be noted; and
- (c) That it be noted that a programme of awareness raising and training for relevant officers and public and third sector partners on the Notice – Check – Share referral process was being rolled out to support the strategy across Renfrewshire.