

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee held in Committee Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, on Wednesday 9 August 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Brown, Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Caroline McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, John Mooney and Sally Page.

Attending: Richard Cairns, Strategic Director, Regeneration, Environment and Growth; Peter Barry, Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability; Jim McAloon, Strategic Lead, Regeneration; John Kerr, Housing Development and Homelessness Manager; Martin Feeny, Building Services Manager; Alan Young, Housing Asset and Investment Manager; Raymond Lynch, Section Head – Licensing; Sally Michael, Section Head - Contracts and Property; and Nuala Quinn-Ross, Committee Officer.

Apologies: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor John Millar.

Councillor Diane Docherty in the Chair

CHAIR'S REMARKS

Councillor Docherty welcomed Mikayla Deeley, Housing Strategy, to the meeting, advising that Mikayla is currently undertaking a 12 month internship with West Dunbartonshire Council.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any item of business on the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee held on 7 June 2017 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the reference, within the Welcome, to Councillor Bride being amended to Councillor McBride.

FIRE SAFETY – HIGH RISE FLATS

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on the Council's response to the tragic fire in the Grenfell Tower in London, in particular, work to provide reassurance to tenants.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report and the work done to date;
- (2) to note that officers will develop an enhanced standard for fire safety for West Dunbartonshire Council's high rise blocks, and submit a report to the Committee in May 2018; and
- (3) to thank staff, tenants and residents for their helpful response following the tragedy in Grenfell Tower.

MORE HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – COUNCIL HOUSE NEW BUILD PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on progress with the Council's ambitious New House Building Programme.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability and the Housing Development and Homelessness Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report and the progress made to date; and
- (2) to note that a further progress report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

A draft report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing details of West Dunbartonshire Council's annual progress report on meeting the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report and recognise the continued improvements within housing services in West Dunbartonshire; and

- (2) that a further progress report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter would be submitted to the November 2017 meeting of the Committee and to note that this report would include detailed benchmarking information.

MORE HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – STRATEGIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on the progress to date of the Strategic Housing Partnership with the Wheatley Group.

Having heard the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made and achievements to date with regards to the strategic housing partnership including;
 - (a) the delivery of 87 new homes for social rent in West Dunbartonshire to date;
 - (b) an increase in the partnership development programme from an initial 323 homes to 548 homes to be delivered by 2021 assisting in the delivery of Council's strategic housing objectives;
 - (c) developing new social rented units at 25% below benchmark levels helping to maximise Resource Planning Assumptions (RPAs); and
 - (d) the establishment of a town centre office for Cube Housing Association providing a town centre access point for their customers providing tenant and housing advice; and
- (2) to note that a further progress report would be presented to the Committee in May 2018.

MORE HOMES BETTER HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/2018 PROGRESS REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing an update on the progress of the Housing Capital Programme 2017/18.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Lead, Regeneration and the Building Services Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report and the progress made to date; and
- (2) to note that a further progress report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

BUILDING SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing information on the performance of Building Services and an update on the Council's aspirations for a successful Direct Labour Organisation (DLO).

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the objectives the Council had set for Building Services;
- (2) to note the conclusions of the report; and
- (3) to recognise areas of continued improvement and the areas identified where development is required.

REVIEW OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL BYELAWS PROHIBITING CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR IN DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Regulatory providing an update on the review carried out on the current West Dunbartonshire Byelaw for the Prohibition of the Consumption of Alcohol in Designated Public Places, which is required on a ten year basis by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

Having heard the Section Head - Licensing in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- 1) that a consultation be undertaken with all active Community Councils on the Byelaw; and
- 2) that once the consultation has been completed, a report be submitted to the Committee detailing the outcome of the consultation.

WORKING WELL TOGETHER - ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT: QUARTER 1 (APRIL – JUNE 2017)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, People and Technology advising on attendance levels across the Council for quarter 1 providing detailed analysis on the attendance performance for the strategic lead areas within the locus of this Committee.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Director and the Building Services Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report and the Council's attendance results for quarter 1, namely an increase of 0.2 FTE days lost (8.4%) compared to the same period last year;

- (2) to note the attendance performance of the Strategic Lead areas covered by the report for quarter 1, namely an increase of 0.53 FTE days lost (33.1%) compared to the same period last year; and
- (3) to note the contents of the appendices to the report, providing details of the Council's performance for the period, and the results for each relevant Strategic Lead area.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2017 (PERIOD 3)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Director, Regeneration, Environment and Growth providing an update on the financial performance to 30 June 2017 (Period 3) of the HRA revenue and capital budgets.

Having heard the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the projected favourable revenue variance of £0.182m (0.4%); and
- (2) to note the position advised in relation to the capital budget which is currently projecting an in-year favourable variance of £7.220m (23.6%), of which £5.921m (19.4%) relates to project re-phasing and an in-year underspend of £1.299m (4.2%).

FINANCIAL REPORT 2017/18 AS AT PERIOD 3 (30 JUNE 2017)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Director, Regeneration, Environment and Growth providing an update on the financial performance to 30 June 2017 (Period 3) of those services under the auspices of this Committee.

Having heard the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report which showed the revenue budget forecast to underspend against budget by £0.019m (2.8%) at the year-end;
- (2) to note the net projected annual capital underspend of £0.045m (8.2%), which was due to project rephasing ; and
- (3) to note the progress on savings incorporated into budgets for 2017/18.

The meeting closed at 11.05 a.m.