

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee held by video conference on Wednesday, 5 May 2021 at 2.01 p.m.

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

*Arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property; John Kerr, Housing Development and Homelessness Manager; Edward Thomas, Housing Operations Manager; Martin Feeney, Building Services Manager; Janice Rainey, Finance Business Partner; Alan Young, Housing Asset and Investment Manager; Michelle Lynn, Asset Coordinator; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor; and Lynn Straker, Committee Officer.

Also Attending: Chief Superintendent John Paterson and Divisional Commander Coleen Wylie, Police Scotland; and Joe McKay, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Gail Casey and Marie McNair.

Councillor Diane Docherty in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

Councillor Docherty, Chair, welcomed everyone to the May meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee which was being held remotely, in terms of Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Accordingly, the Chair advised that a process/procedure had been developed for the meeting (a copy of which had previously been circulated to Members). Thereafter, the Committee agreed to note the procedure in place for the conduct of the meeting and the meeting then continued by video conferencing.

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 3 February 2021 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

In relation to the item under the heading 'Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan and New Approaches to Homelessness Update Report', it was noted that, in accordance with Scottish Government guidance, the annual update and progress report would now be submitted to the September 2021 meeting of the Committee.

OPEN FORUM

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

HOUSING AND EMPLOYABILITY DELIVERY PLAN 2020/21 YEAR END PROGRESS REPORT AND 2021/22 DELIVERY PLAN

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer - Housing and Employability presenting the 2021/22 Delivery Plan for Housing and Employability and the Year End progress report for the 2020/21 Delivery Plan as agreed at Committee on 4 November 2020.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Housing and Employability, the Housing Development and Homelessness Manager and the Housing Operations Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made on the delivery of the 2020/21 plan;
- (2) to note the 2021/22 Delivery Plan; and
- (3) to note that Chief Officer – Housing and Employability would provide a briefing to Members before the next Committee meeting regarding work to encourage members in communities to set up Community Councils and advise if there were still areas where one had not been set up.

Note: Councillors McLaren and Millar entered the meeting during consideration of this item.

MORE HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer - Housing and Employability providing an update on progress with West Dunbartonshire's More Homes Programme which oversees the strategic delivery of the Council's new homes.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Housing and Employability, the Housing Development and Homelessness Manager and the Housing Operations Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the content of the report and the progress made to date in the delivery of the Council's More Homes West Dunbartonshire approach including handover of the full project at Creveul Court and partial handovers at St Andrews, Aitkenbar and Haldane;
- (2) to approve the development of the Passivhaus pilot at Pappert outlined in paragraph 4.10 of the report and invite the Chief Officer - Housing and Employability to provide a regular update to Committee on progress;
- (3) to note the acquisition of the sites at Bank Street, Alexandria and Willox Park, Dumbarton have been concluded to allow the delivery of new Council homes following approval by the Housing and Communities Committee in November 2020; and
- (4) to approve the purchase of the former care home site at Mount Pleasant, Old Kilpatrick for the delivery of new Council homes outlined in paragraph 4.10 of the report for £200k subject to clear title.

BETTER HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer - Housing and Employability updating Members on the More Homes Better Homes Housing Asset Management Plan 2018-2023 which was approved in February 2018.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Housing and Employability, Housing Development and Homelessness Manager and the Housing Operations Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made in the Strategy and the comments regarding the impact of Covid-19 on current and future progress;
- (2) to note the results of the Asset Management Database assessment and the priorities that are emerging from this exercise;
- (3) to invite the Chief Officer - Housing and Employability to enter into a consultative exercise with tenants in respect of the future of Brunswick,

Montreal and Quebec Houses and report back to Committee in November 2021;

- (4) to approve the suspension of letting activity for the above properties pending the completion of the options appraisal exercise;
- (5) to approve the revised approach to dealing with Owner Occupiers within the properties that have structural problems in Silverton and to write a letter to the next Housing Minister detailing the current circumstances of residents in unsafe properties and requesting a meeting with Councillors to discuss this further; and
- (6) to agree to receive progress reports on a yearly basis.

SCRUTINY REPORTS

(A) POLICE SCRUTINY REPORT

A report was submitted by the Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland providing an update on local police matters.

Having heard the Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the undernoted corrections to the report:-
 - the removal of the data caveat which had now expired (top left page 1).
 - the insertion of the wording 'YTD there have been 141 complaints about the Police recorded within West Dunbartonshire, compared to 140 in the same period last year.' (top right of page 1).
 - the removal of the word 'slightly' from the following sentence in the Public Protection section (centre of page 1): 'Rape and attempted rape crimes have decreased with 40 crimes compared to 55 last year, while indecent / sexual assaults also reduced from 91 to 63.'; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

(B) FIRE AND RESCUE SCRUTINY REPORT

A report was submitted by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing appropriate performance data measured against priorities in the West Dunbartonshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 4:15 p.m.