

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee held in the Civic Space, Council Offices, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 15 August 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Brown, Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Caroline McAllister, David McBride, Iain McLaren, Marie McNair, John Millar* and Sally Page.

*Note:- arrived later in the meeting.

Attending: Richard Cairns, Strategic Director – Regeneration, Environment and Growth; Jim McAloon, Strategic Lead – Regeneration; Stephen Brooks, Working 4U Manager; Martin Feeney, Building Services Manager; John Kerr, Housing Development and Homelessness Manager; Edward Thomas, Housing Operations Manager; Alan Young, Housing Asset and Investment Manager; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor and Nuala Quinn-Ross, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor John Mooney and Peter Barry, Strategic Lead - Housing and Employability.

Councillor Diane Docherty in the Chair

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 9 May 2018 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that an update on the ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government the disparity of the grant subsidy per unit for affordable housing to Registered Social Landlords and Councils would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee; and

- (2) that an update be provided to the next meeting of the Committee regarding the request made to the Scottish Government asking for them to make a financial contribution to works being undertaken by this Council to develop an enhanced standard for high rise flats in the aftermath of the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London.

OPEN FORUM

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

MORE HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on progress with West Dunbartonshire's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP).

After discussion and having heard the Housing Development and Homelessness Manager and the Housing Operations 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 in the delivery of the Council's More Homes West Dunbartonshire approach;
- (2) to note the Strategic Lead – Regeneration's intention to serve notice on community groups currently operating from the Longcraggs facility and provide support to investigate alternative accommodation solutions;
- (3) that the work to identify alternative facilities for Bellsmyre Digital and Bellsmyre School's Out Club to be accelerated to identify a solution for both short and long term accommodation to allow both groups to continue to provide services to the Bellsmyre community;
- (4) that no later than the December Council meeting, officers to submit a report on the work undertaken with Bellsmyre Digital and Bellsmyre School's Out Club, bringing viable options for both short and long term accommodation before members. This is to allow Council to make an informed decision on the way forward before the notice to quit is enforced;
- (5) to note the intention to appoint a strategic delivery partner subject to final approval by the Council's Tendering Committee on 29 August 2018; and
- (6) to note that the report and the delivery of the Council's ambitious plans to deliver new homes to meet housing need will include significant member involvement in its delivery and as such a regular update report will be provided to each meeting of the Committee.

Note:- Councillor John Millar arrived during discussion on the above item of business.

SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an 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 continued improvements across housing and homelessness services in West Dunbartonshire which have been recognised by the Scottish Housing Regulator; and
- (2) that a further progress report on the Scottish Social Housing Charter, which will include detailed benchmarking information, be submitted to the November 2018 meeting of the Committee.

WORKING 4U PROGRESS UPDATE AND COMMUNITY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability:-

- (1) providing information regarding Working 4U's progress towards key aims in 2017/2018; and
- (2) setting out the requirements for an updated statutory Community Learning and Development Plan 2018-2021.

After discussion and having heard the Working 4U Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) the consultation and development process for the completion of the Community Learning and Development Plan;
- (2) that a report on the impact of Universal Credit and the strategies in place to deal with it be presented to a future meeting of the Committee;
- (3) that a Members' Seminar on Universal Credit be arranged; and
- (3) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

NO HOME FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on the launch and roll out of *No Home for Domestic Abuse*, the Council's new zero tolerance approach to tackling domestic abuse within West Dunbartonshire.

After discussion and having heard the Housing Operations Manager in further explanation of the report and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to note the Council's further work to share good practice with other Scottish social landlords and the roll out of the toolkit to partners locally and nationwide; and
- (3) that an update report be presented to the Committee on an annual basis.

SPECIAL NEEDS ADAPTATIONS – 2017-2018 PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing an update on the progress of improving performance in relation to Special Needs Adaptations.

After discussion and having heard officers in further explanation of the report and in answer to members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and the progress made to date.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2018 (PERIOD 3)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing an update on the financial performance to 30 June 2018 (Period 3) of the HRA revenue and capital budgets.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Director in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the projected favourable revenue variance of £0.136m (0.3%); and
- (2) to note the position advised in relation to the capital budget which projected an in-year favourable variance of £7.442m (22.3%), of which £7.384m (22.1%) related to projected re-phasing and an in year underspend of £0.058m (0.2%).

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES FINANCIAL REPORT 2018/19
AS AT PERIOD 3 (30 JUNE 2018)**

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability and the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing an update on the financial performance to 30 June 2018 (Period 3) of those services under the auspices of this Committee.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic Director in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report which showed the revenue forecast to overspend against budget by £0.243 (10%) at the year end;
- (2) to note the net projected annual position in relation to relevant capital projects which highlighted a projected slippage of £0.259m (29%); and
- (3) to note the progress on savings incorporated into budgets for 2018/19.

The meeting closed at 12:07 p.m.