

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, 5 February 2020 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Gail Casey, Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Diane Docherty, Caroline McAllister, David McBride, Jonathan McColl, Iain McLaren, Marie McNair, 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; Edward Thomas, Housing Operations Manager; Martin Feeney, Building Services Manager; Janice Rainey, Business Unit Finance Partner; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor; Craig Stewart and Gabriella Gonda, Committee Officers.

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

Councillor Diane Docherty in the Chair

STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

The Chair advised that the meeting was being audio streamed and broadcast live to the internet and would be available for playback.

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 6 November 2019 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

OPEN FORUM

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

MORE HOMES WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE – WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSE NEW SUPPLY PROGRAMME

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

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 content of the report and the progress made to date in the delivery of the Council's More Homes West Dunbartonshire approach; and
- (2) to note that the report and the delivery of the Council's ambitious plans to deliver new homes to meet housing need would include significant member involvement in its delivery and as such a regular update report would be provided to each Housing and Communities Committee.

RAPID RE-HOUSING TRANSITION PLAN AND NEW APPROACHES TO HOMELESSNESS UPDATE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing a progress report relating to our Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (RRTP) for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24 entitled 'Home at the Heart' and also updating on recent changes to homelessness legislation in Scotland.

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;
- (2) to note the significant shortfall in funding from the Scottish Government to fully deliver the RRTP;
- (3) to approve that the funding allocation that had been awarded (£251k) is used to meet the objectives of the West Dunbartonshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan;
- (4) to instruct the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability and the Strategic Lead, Resources to investigate potential ways to meet the shortfall outlined within this report;

- (5) to note the publication of an updated Code of Guidance for Homelessness and inclusion of advisory standards for temporary accommodation;
- (6) to note the commencement of provisions in the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003, relating to “Intentionality” and “Local Connection”;
- (7) to note that an annual update and progress report would be provided to the next Housing and Communities Committee in May 2020; and
- (8) that a briefing note would be provided on the funding shortfall across all local authorities that shows the requests from different authorities, the actual awards granted and the difference.

TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing results of a comprehensive Tenant Satisfaction Survey on Housing and Homelessness Services that has been carried out and the results of which will be reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of our 2019/20 Scottish Housing Charter requirements.

Councillor McColl, seconded by Councillor Docherty moved:

That Committee notes the substantial improvement in performance over the past 5 years and thanks officers for their hard work delivering this positive change. It is particularly pleasing to see positive results around communication and tenant participation, with our performance exceeding the national average.

Committee notes there has been a recent dip in performance with regards repairs and maintenance, and wishes to ensure that recent gains are not lost and to facilitate the creation of an upward trend in performance.

To that end, Committee asks officers to present a report to Committee, as soon as is practicable, with an action plan to improve repairs and maintenance, which in turn should improve tenants’ overall satisfaction with the services as a whole.

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 the motion.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2019 (PERIOD 9)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability providing members with an update on the financial performance to 31 December 2019 (Period 9) of the HRA revenue and capital budgets for 2019/20.

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 shows the revenue budget forecast to underspend against budget by £0.039m (0.09%) at the year-end; and
- (2) to note the net projected annual position in relation to relevant capital projects which was highlighting a variance of £12.441m (20.0%) due to projected net slippage of £13.394m (21.5%) and an overspend of £0.953m (-1.5%).

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019/20 AS AT PERIOD 9 (31 JANUARY 2020)

A report was submitted by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability and the Strategic Lead, Regeneration providing an update on the financial performance to 31 January 2020 (Period 9) of those services under the auspices of the Housing and Communities Committee.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report which shows the revenue budget forecast to underspend against budget by £0.112m (3.0%) at the year-end;
- (2) to note the net projected annual position in relation to relevant capital projects which was showing no projected variance; and
- (3) to note the progress on efficiencies incorporated into budgets for 2019/20.

The meeting closed at 2.31 p.m.