

Health, Social Care and Housing Committee

10:00 am Tuesday 10 November 2015

Present

Councillors Ricky Henderson (Convener), Day (Vice-Convener), Aitken, Booth, Bridgman, Burgess, Doran, Gardner, Griffiths, Key Lunn, Rust, Shields and Work.

1. Minutes

Decision

- 3.1 To approve the minute of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee of 8 September 2015 as a correct record.

2. Health, Social Care and Housing Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan

The Health, Social Care and Housing Committee Key Decisions Forward Plan for November 2015 to January 2016 was presented.

Decision

To note the Key Decisions Forward Plan for September to November 2015.
(Reference – Key Decisions Forward Plan, submitted.)

3. Rolling Actions Log

As part of a review of the Council's political management arrangements, the Council had approved a number of revisions to committee business processes including that Executive Committees introduce a rolling actions log to track committee business.

The Health, Social Care and Housing Committee Rolling Actions Log updated to 10 November 2015 was presented.

Decision

To note the Rolling Action Log, subject to the amendment of decision 2 of item 20 to indicate the month in 2016 that the expected action would be reported to Committee.

(References – Act of Council No. 12 of 24 October 2013; Rolling Actions Log 10 November 2015, submitted.)

4. Committee Decisions – November 2014 – September 2015

Following the decision of the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on 19 June 2014, to strengthen existing arrangements and provide greater assurance with regard to the dissemination of committee decisions, a quarterly review of actions had been undertaken by directorates to ensure that all decisions taken by the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, the Executive committees and the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee were progressing as expected and to highlight any exceptions.

The report by the Deputy Chief Executive outlined the assurance work undertaken and detailed the implementation of the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee decisions covering the initial period from November 2014 to September 2015.

Decision

- 1) To note the position on the implementation of Health, Social Care and Housing Committee decisions as detailed in the appendix to the report by the Deputy Chief Executive.
- 2) To note that an annual summary report would be presented to Committee in 12 months time.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee 19 June 2014 (item 9); report by the Deputy Chief Executive, submitted.)

5. Business Bulletin

The Health, Social Care and Housing Business Bulletin for 10 November 2015 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

6. Safe Caring and Restraint Policy for Social Care Staff

Approval was sought for a policy statement in respect of Safe Caring and Restraint. The proposed policy was attached at Appendix 1 of the report by the Chief Social Work Officer.

The report, which set out expectations on staff with regard to safe caring when this involved the use of some form of restraint. The purpose of the policy was to improve the awareness of staff on what constituted restraint and to ensure that staff complied with the law and best practice on the issue.

Decision

To approve the policy statement in respect of Safe Caring and Restraint as attached at Appendix 1 of the report by the Chief Social Work Officer.

(Reference – report by the Chief ~Social Work Officer, submitted).

7. Home Care and Reablement Service Contact Time

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had requested that the Chief Social Work Officer report on the management of care staff, particularly client contact time versus total hours worked and the number of visits for each carer. This should include the full visit data for a week – visit start and finish times and shift start and finish times to compare contact time with “down-time”.

An overview was provided of the system and methodology for managing rotas in home care, alongside a description of some of the factors that influenced the contact time in the service.

Decision

- 1) To note that the comprehensive monitoring and adjusting of rotas in home care and reablement were undertaken regularly.
- 2) To note that work was underway to review a small number of historical, less productive rotas.
- 3) To note that travel time was a significant factor in contact time in home care, up to 24% of each shift.
- 4) To refer the report to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee Thursday 13 August 2015 (item 3); report by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted).

8. 21st Century Homes Progress

The Committee had previously agreed to receive a progress report on the expansion of the Council's 21st Century Homes Housebuilding Programme.

An update was provided on the programme, and approval was sought to bring an additional site, at Greendykes, into the programme. Development of around 70 new affordable homes at Greendykes G would build upon the success of the 21st Century

Homes Greendykes C development and help accelerate house building in the wider Greendykes area.

Decision

- 1) To note progress in delivering the 21st Century Homes programme.
- 2) To agree to the development of affordable housing at Greendykes G, subject to community consultation, Planning and other statutory consents.
- 3) To note that consultants would be appointed, in accordance with Council Standing Orders, to develop detailed designs for the Greendykes G site on condition that Parc renounced its option over the HRA land.
- 4) To agree to seek Scottish Government grant funding from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme to support delivery of social rented homes on the Greendykes G site.

(References – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 16 June 2015 (item 10); report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted).

9. Housing Revenue Account – Budget Strategy 2016/17-2020/21

Details were provided of the five year HRA budget strategy and the proposed 2016/17 budget.

The Council is the sixth largest landlord in the country. Operating on a commercial basis, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was self-funded by tenants' rents and income from its assets. Tenants' satisfaction with their homes and the housing service was amongst the highest in Scotland. The delivery of the current HRA investment programme had a positive impact on the quality of tenants' homes and neighbourhoods. At 3,000 homes, the Council's current house building programme was one of the largest in the country.

Details were provided of the significant financial challenges experienced by many tenants and, more widely, the impact of rising housing costs in the private housing market on those on low to moderate incomes. A new strategy was set out which prioritised future investment in programmes and services that significantly reduced tenants' living costs and which significantly expanded the current, Council led, house building programme from 3,000 to 8,000 affordable homes.

Motion

- 1) To note the Council had made significant progress in improving tenants' homes and establishing one of the largest house building programmes in the country over the last five years.
- 2) To note the financial hardship faced by many tenants and the impact of the shortage of affordable homes in the city on those on low to moderate incomes.

- 3) To note that, at 2.0%, the 2015/16 rent increase was the third lowest among Scottish local authorities and was significantly lower than the 8.8% rent increases experienced by private sector tenants.
 - 4) To agree to prioritise investment in measures and services that reduced the cost of living for tenants.
 - 5) To agree to expand the Council led house building programme.
 - 6) To agree to refer the draft budget set out in Appendix 1 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval and subsequent referral on to the Council budget meeting.
 - 7) To note the intention to build an HRA contingency fund to manage any unforeseen budget pressures.
 - 8) The Acting Director of Services for Communities to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee on the way forward for accessible housing.
- moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Work

Amendment

- 1) To note the Council had made significant progress in improving tenants' homes and establishing one of the largest house building programmes in the country over the last five years.
- 2) To note the financial hardship faced by many tenants and the impact of the shortage of affordable homes in the city on those on low to moderate incomes.
- 3) To note that, at 2.0%, the 2015/16 rent increase was the third lowest among Scottish local authorities and was significantly lower than the 8.8% rent increases experienced by private sector tenants.
- 4) To agree to prioritise investment in measures and services that reduced the cost of living for tenants.
- 5) To agree to expand the Council led house building programme.
- 6) To agree to refer the draft budget set out in Appendix 1 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval and subsequent referral on to the Council budget meeting.
- 7) To note the intention to build an HRA contingency fund to manage any unforeseen budget pressures.
- 8) The Acting Director of Services for Communities to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee on the way forward for accessible housing.
- 9) The decision over which type of new heating systems to install, as referred to in paragraph 3.16 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities,

would not be made without an options appraisal being reported to the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee, including a comparison of overall installation costs, projected fuel bills for residents and level of climate-changing pollution for each option.

- 10) To agree to receive a report within one cycle on the costs, benefits and impacts to the HRA of using HRA funds to undertake voluntary stock transfer from the private sector to council ownership, including examining the potential to transfer the flats currently occupied by members of the Lorne Community Association who were under threat of eviction.
- moved by Councillor Booth, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Voting

For the motion – 12.

For the amendment – 2.

Decision

- 1) To note the Council had made significant progress in improving tenants' homes and establishing one of the largest house building programmes in the country over the last five years.
- 2) To note the financial hardship faced by many tenants and the impact of the shortage of affordable homes in the city on those on low to moderate incomes.
- 3) To note that, at 2.0%, the 2015/16 rent increase was the third lowest among Scottish local authorities and was significantly lower than the 8.8% rent increases experienced by private sector tenants.
- 4) To agree to prioritise investment in measures and services that reduced the cost of living for tenants.
- 5) To agree to expand the Council led house building programme.
- 6) To agree to refer the draft budget set out in Appendix 1 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval and subsequent referral on to the Council budget meeting.
- 7) To note the intention to build an HRA contingency fund to manage any unforeseen budget pressures.
- 8) The Acting Director of Services for Communities to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee on the way forward for accessible housing.

(References – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 16 June 2015 (item 12); report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

10. Energy Advice and Support for Housing Services

Approval was sought to continue the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Housing Service and Changeworks Resources for Life (Changeworks) for the provision of energy related services, noting that savings of up to 10% would be sought in 2016/17, in line with Council's approach to securing savings from third sector organisations through collaborative working.

The report set out a number of energy services required to support the development of the housing strategy over the next three years.

Decision

- 1) To continue to procure energy related services from Changeworks up to a value of £140,000.
- 2) To note that savings of up to 10% would be sought through negotiation with Changeworks.
- 3) To refer the report to the Finance and Resources Committee to seek approval to waive the Council's Contract Standing Orders to extend the Service Level Agreement (SLA) by two years, with an option to extend for a further year.

(Reference – report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Burgess declared a non-financial interest in the above item, as a Director of Changeworks.

11. Consultation on a Code of Practice and Training Requirements for Letting Agents

The Scottish Government was currently consulting on a new code of practice and training requirements for letting agents in Scotland. A framework for the regulation of letting agents was introduced in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

A summary was provided of the key issues covered by the consultation and highlighted areas where the draft code of practice could be strengthened. A full response to the consultation had been drafted following discussions across relevant service areas. The report sought approval to submit a response to the consultation paper, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities.

Decision

- 1) To note and welcome the Scottish Government consultation on a code of practice for letting agents.
- 2) To agree to submit a response to the Scottish Government as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities,

which supported the proposals for a code of practice for letting agents and highlighted areas where it could be strengthened.

- 3) To refer the report to Regulatory Committee for information.
(Reference – report by the Acting Director of Service for Communities, submitted.)

12. Housing and Regeneration Policy Assurance Statement

Information was provided on the review of the four Council policies relevant to Housing:

- Lettings Policy.
- Rent Collection Policy.
- Repairs Policy.
- Scheme of Assistance for Homeowners.

Council Policies were key governance tools. They helped realise the Council's vision, values, pledges and outcomes, and were critical to the Council's operations, ensuring that statutory and regulatory obligations were met in an efficient and accountable manner.

To ensure that Council policies remained current and relevant, all Council directorates were required to review policies on an annual basis.

Decision

- 1) To note that the Council policies detailed in this report had been reviewed and were fit for purpose.
- 2) To note that minor revisions had been made to ensure policies were up to date.
(Reference – report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

13. Progress on Establishing the Future of Council Funded Police Officers

The Committee had previously agreed the new Service Level Agreement 2015/16 with Police Scotland, for the provision of additional locally based, council funded, Community Police Officers.

An update was provided on the establishment of the Council funded community police officers and their future funding.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of this report.

- 2) To discharge the remit from the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee of 21 April 2015, to provide an update on the establishment of the Council funded community police officers and their future funding.

(References – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 21 April 2015 (item 10); report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted.)

14. Progress of the Private Rented Sector Forum

An update was provided on the work of the Private Rented Sector Forum which was set up to help identify the key concerns and challenges affecting the private rented sector in Edinburgh.

The formation of the Forum was considered by the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee on 10 September 2013, which agreed to consider future annual reports on the progress of the work plan.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress of the improvement work plan of the Private Rented Sector Forum.
- 2) To agree the continuing work of the Private Rented Sector Forum.

(References – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 10 September 2013 (item 7); report by the Acting Head of Services for Communities, submitted.)

15. Novel Psychoactive Substances – Trading Standards Enforcement Action

The growing use of Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) had led to serious health concerns for users. Often incorrectly known as 'Legal Highs', the open sale and availability of these substances had encouraged usage and led to the misconception amongst some users that these were safe to use in comparison with illegal or controlled drugs.

The response to the use of NPS within the city had been co-ordinated in the form of a thematic citywide Community Improvement Partnership (CIP), with all partners including Trading Standards, Community Safety and Council Neighbourhood Teams, Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and third sector agencies working together to provide a co-ordinated approach to tackling the issues.

Decision

- 1) To note the contents of the report.

- 2) To note that the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership was overseeing the enforcement approach to Novel Psychoactive Substances.
- 3) To refer the report by the Chief Social Work Officer to the Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel for information.
- 4) To commend the Council officers and police for the work undertaken.
- 5) To note that there would be continued vigilance in respect of this issue.

(Reference – report by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted.)

16. Self-Directed Support Update Report

An update was provided on the progress made in implementing self-directed support in Edinburgh and the impact on citizens.

There was focus on the uptake of the four options of self-directed support, the ways in which people had exercised choice and control over their support and partnership working with service providers, particularly in relation to Option 2 in the report by the Chief Social Work Officer.

Details were provided of some of the challenges faced in implementing self-directed support and the links being made with the Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care Integration.

Decision

To note the progress in implementing self-directed support in Edinburgh, the challenges faced and the actions being taken.

(Reference – Health, Social Care and Housing Committee 11 November 2014 (item 5); report by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted).

17. Services for Communities Financial Monitoring: 2015/16 – Half Year Position

Details were provided of the month three financial monitoring position for Services for Communities revenue and capital budgets. A balanced position was forecast for the General Fund Revenue Budget. There was £1.6m slippage forecast for the General Fund Capital Budget. The Housing Revenue Capital Budget was contributing £17m towards the construction of new homes. There was £5.4m slippage for the Housing Revenue Account Capital Budget.

These forecasts should be considered in the context of significant pressures and risks in both capital and revenue budgets.

Decision

To note Services for Communities' (SfC) financial position and the actions underway to manage pressures.

(Reference – report by the Acting Director of Services for Communities, submitted).

18. Corporate Performance Framework: Performance to August 2015

An update was provided on Council performance against Health, Social Care and Housing strategic outcomes. The report was presented in line with an update on the Council's Performance Framework approved by the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee in June 2015. It contained an overview of performance covering the period to August 2015.

Decision

To note the performance for the period to August 2015.

(Reference – Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee in June 2015 (item 7); joint report by the Action Director of Services for Communities and the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted).

19 Health and Social Care 2015/16 Revenue Budget - Action Plan Update – Referral Report from the Finance and Resources Committee

The Finance and Resources Committee on 24 September 2015 considered a report on the projected month four revenue monitoring position for Health and Social Care and on the Health and Social Care Budget Action Plan. The report had been referred to the Health, Social Care Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Finance and Resources Committee 24 September 2015 (item 19); report by the Head of Legal and Risk, submitted).

20. Health and Social Care Revenue Budget Monitoring 2015/16

At the Council meeting on 17 September 2015, £9.8m of one-off savings from other service and corporate budgets were approved to assist in alleviating the pressures in the Health and Social Care budget for 2015/16.

The Finance and Resources Committee on 24 September 2015 considered at report on the Health and Social Care Revenue Budget – Action Plan Update and agreed to refer the report to the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee for information.

Decision

To note the content of this report and the actions being taken to mitigate the pressures, as summarised in the report on the Budget Action Plan referred for information from the Finance and Resources Committee.

(References – Act of Council No 10 of 17 September 2015 and Finance and Resources Committee 24 September 2015 (item 19); report by the Chief Social Work Officer, submitted.)