

Minutes

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday 23 March 2022

Present

Councillors Kate Campbell (Convener), Watt (Vice-Convener), Jim Campbell, Child (substituting for Councillor Day), Key, Lang, McLellan, Rae, Staniforth, Webber and Work.

1. Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Business Bulletin

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Business Bulletin for January 2022 was presented, and a verbal update was provided on the Council's incident response in relation to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees.

The Council was looking to create a dedicated response team on this piece of work, initially for 3 months. A daily Edinburgh Oversight multi-agency group would meet, including sub-groups on housing integration, Welcome Hub, and the City and Civic Aid Response. An overview was also provided on these three key stages.

Decision

- 1) To note the verbal update on the Council's incident response in relation to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees.
- 2) To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

2. Deputations

Deputation by Unite CEC Branch

The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from Unite CEC Branch in relation to the 2022/23 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme report.

The deputation indicated that they were happy to see consideration given to in-house provision of some of the capital works. Unison were keen to have discussions on what

could be done for retrofitting and other work – they highlighted the importance of union involvement in these discussions as key stakeholders. The deputation were particularly keen to see areas such as gutter replacement, kitchens and bathrooms brought back in-house. Early engagement with unions on retrofitting would be greatly appreciated.

Decision

To note the deputation.

2. 2022/23 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

Details were provided of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme of £126.819 million for 2022/23. Priority projects in the localities, as previously identified by ward Councillors, formed part of the HRA capital programme and would continue to be progressed in 2022/23.

Decision

- 1) To approve the planned HRA capital programme for investment in 2022/23 of £126.819 million, which included an accelerated budget of £5 million for the fabric upgrade programme, as agreed at Council budget meeting on 24 February 2022.
- 2) To note the significant change in investment approach from 2023/24 onwards, shifting from a focus on individual lifecycle component replacement to a holistic whole house approach, combining energy retrofit and wider building/estate improvements.
- 3) To agree to receive a progress report within three committee cycles on progress with the stock condition survey, mixed tenure area regeneration and the development of the whole house retrofit programme.
- 4) To note the key risks to programme delivery as set out in Appendix 4 of the report by the Executive Director of Place.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 3 June 2021 (Item 10); Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 2 September 2021 (Item 8); Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 20 January 2022 (Item 11); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

3. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 20 January 2022 as a correct record.

4. Work Programme

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Work Programme for March 2022 was presented.

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, submitted.)

5. Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Rolling Actions Log

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Rolling Actions Log for March 2022 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 4 (1&2) – Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2022-27
 - Action 5 – Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme – Update on Projects
 - Action 6 – Motion by Councillor Howie - Enhancing Employment Opportunities for People with a Disability
 - Action 7 – Housing Service Improvement Plan – Update
 - Action 8 (1, 2 & 3) – Update on Dampness, Mould and Condensation in Council Homes and Asset Management Strategy
 - Action 9 – Employer Recruitment Incentives to Support Fair Work
- 2) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

8. Edinburgh Living Annual Update 2020 and 2021

In line with the agreed governance structure set out for the Council's housing delivery Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs), known as Edinburgh Living, an annual update providing an overview of each financial year was required to be submitted to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee. The report was submitted to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for noting, prior to referral to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, setting out the activities carried out by Edinburgh Living in 2020 and 2021, the financial position at the end of both years and key areas of work for 2022.

Decision

- 1) To note the Edinburgh Living annual report for 2020 and 2021.

- 2) To note Edinburgh Living's positive impact on tackling housing need through the provision of new affordable homes across the city.
- 3) To refer the report to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in line with Edinburgh Living's governance arrangements.

(Reference – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 16 February 2021 (item 9); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

9. Craigmillar Regeneration Update

An update was provided on the key regeneration workstreams being progressed in Craigmillar and priorities for the year ahead. It set the ongoing work required in the context of the recently agreed 20 Minute Neighbourhood Strategy, which focused on improving active travel links and investment in the town centre area. An update was also provided on ongoing work in relation to future maintenance and community use of open space, as requested in a motion approved by Committee on 18 March 2021.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made with the regeneration of Craigmillar and the priority workstreams to be progressed in the coming months.
- 2) To note the update on ongoing work in relation to future maintenance and community use of open space.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 March 2021 (Item 9); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

10. Enhancing Employment Opportunities for People with a Disability

Details were provided of the employability support offered by the Council and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), in response to a motion from 16 December 2021.

Motion

- 1) To note the full range of employability services provided or funded by the Council that disabled people can access.
- 2) To note that the Local Employability Partnership had considered those with a disability when planning services for recommissioning to help mitigate changes to provision from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) or other agencies.

- moved by Councillor Kate Campbell, seconded by Councillor Watt

Amendment

- 1) To note the full range of employability services provided or funded by the Council that disabled people can access.
- 2) To note that the Local Employability Partnership had considered those with a disability when planning services for recommissioning to help mitigate changes to provision from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) or other agencies.
- 3) To note that the Scottish Government would pilot Adult Disability Payment (ADP) from 21 March 2022, a new form of financial assistance for disabled people in Scotland. Until now, this had been provided by the UK Government's Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

- moved by Councillor Webber, seconded by Councillor Jim Campbell

Voting

For the motion - 7 votes
For the amendment - 4 votes

(For the motion – Councillors Kate Campbell, Child, Key, Rae, Staniforth, Watt and Work.

For the amendment – Councillors Jim Campbell, Lang, McLellan and Webber.)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Kate Campbell.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

11. Employer Recruitment Incentives – Targeted Additional Funds for Young People Living in Poverty

In response to a request from Committee to investigate the possibility of creating a bursary to support young people who were most disadvantaged and living in poverty to take up Modern Apprenticeship (MA) opportunities, committee was presented with a recommendation to pilot an approach with an initial 10 enhanced funding awards.

Decision

- 1) To agree the proposed allocation of £100,000 from the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee funding for a pilot of 10 enhanced funding awards, to fund an uplift in wages for young people who were most disadvantaged to take up Modern Apprenticeship (MA) opportunities.
- 2) To agree the proposed eligibility criteria for the enhanced funding, as set out in the report by the Executive Director of Place.

- 3) To note that officers would report back to Committee in Spring 2023 on the profile of participants and interim outcomes delivered by the project.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 14 January 2021 (item 13); Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 2 September 2021 (item 5); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

12. Young Person's Guarantee Delivery 2022/23

Approval was sought for priority groups and activities to be funded for delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG), and for the allocation of funding for these activities. Delegated authority was requested to award small grants, up to a value of £75,000 each, to enable activities to begin as soon as possible in the new financial year.

Decision

- 1) To note the funding which had been allocated by the Scottish Government for delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) in financial year 2022/23.
- 2) To approve the priority groups, activities and framework for future funding, as set out in paragraph 4.8 of the report by the Executive Director of Place, in addition to the eligibility criteria laid out by Scottish Government.
- 3) To approve the proposed activity as detailed in the report by the Executive Director of Place.
- 4) To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with a spokesperson from each political party, to award small grants up to a value of £75,000 each, as set out in paragraphs 4.12 to 4.14 of the report, and to approve continuation of funds for projects as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report.
- 5) To agree that the small grants process set out in paragraphs 4.12 to 4.14 should also include a requirement that the grants are prioritised to organisations based in, and delivering activities in, areas of SIMD 1 and 2. To further agree there should be a geographical spread across the city which meant that provision was accessible to people in all communities.

(Reference – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 2 September 2021 (item 5); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

13. Prevention Duty Consultation

The findings of the Prevention Review Group were published and submitted to Scottish Government on 18 February 2021. These set out recommendations to identify legal duties on local authorities and other public bodies to prevent homelessness. Scottish Government were now consulting on the Prevention Duty, with responses due by 31 March 2022. The draft response was provided for Committee agreement prior to being submitted to Scottish Government.

Decision

- 1) To agree the draft consultation response for submission to the Scottish Government, subject to a change in the response to questions 27 and 28, which would instead indicate that further clarity was needed on proposals for 16- and 17-year-olds.
- 2) To note that the agreed response would be submitted to Scottish Government by the deadline of 31 March 2022.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

13. Homelessness Services' Performance Dashboard

Committee agreed the measures to be contained in the performance dashboard on 3 June 2021. The dashboard was provided to Committee with performance information which was linked to the Council's Business Plan, the Poverty Commission Delivery Plan and the delivery of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan activities. Committee were provided with data related to the first three quarters of 2021/22.

Decision

- 1) To note the content of the performance dashboard to quarter three of 2021/22.
- 2) To note that the next Performance Dashboard would be presented to Committee in September 2022.

(Reference – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 2 September 2021 (item 10); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

14. Gig Economy Task Force

The short-life Gig Economy Task Force was established to seek to understand the real experiences of, and to explore actions that could improve working conditions, rights, and quality of employment for workers in the gig economy in Edinburgh. Details were provided of the findings of that inquiry.

Decision

- 1) To note the final report of the short life Gig Economy Task Force.
- 2) To agree to consider a report by Autumn 2022 on progress on plans for delivery of task force priority recommendations 1 and 2.
- 3) To agree to the development of a forward work programme with proposed timelines and resources needed for implementation of task force recommendations 3 to 7 by Autumn 2022.
- 4) To agree that engagement with the Scottish Government should continue, alongside engagement with other stakeholders in the development of this work.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 4 November 2021 (Item 8); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

15. Review of Effectiveness of Scrutiny of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee – Self-Evaluation and Lessons Learnt

A summary was provided of a self-evaluation workshop undertaken by Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee (HHFW) members on 7 February 2022 to assess current political management arrangements (PMAs), committee effectiveness and lessons learnt from this Council term.

Decision

- 1) To note the outputs from self-evaluation workshop undertaken by the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee members on 7 February 2022 to assess current political management arrangements, committee effectiveness and lessons learnt from this Council term.
- 2) To note the outputs from the self-evaluation workshop will be used to inform the design of political management arrangement proposals and support provided to elected members around the local government election 2022 and following Council term.

(Reference – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, 18 January 2022 (item 5); report by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)

16. Place Directorate - Revenue Monitoring - 2021/22 Month Eight Position

Details were provided of the month eight revenue monitoring position for the 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Place Directorate General Fund (GF) for services within the scope of this Committee.

Decision

- 1) To note that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was forecasting a contribution of £11.448m to the Strategic Investment Fund from revenue generated in year as part of the capital investment programme funding strategy.
- 2) To note that the Place General Fund (GF) 'business as usual' revenue budget forecast was projecting a £0.190m overspend (excluding COVID-19 impact) at month eight. Services within the remit of the Committee were forecasting a balanced position.
- 3) To note that the Place GF COVID-19 impact was projected to cost £12.416m at month eight. Services within the remit of the Committee were forecasting a cost of £0.200m which could be met within the earmarked budget provision.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 20 January 2022 (Item 15); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

17. Homelessness and Housing Support - Revenue Monitoring 2021/22 – Month Eight Position

Details were provided of the 2021/22 projected month eight revenue monitoring position for the Homelessness and Housing Support service, based on analysis of actual expenditure and income to the end of December 2021, and expenditure and income projections for the remainder of the financial year.

Decision

- 1) To note a net residual budget pressure of £1.967m for the Homelessness and Housing Support service at month eight, a reduction to the £2.8m pressure reported at month six.
- 2) To note the potential recurring aspects of this in-year pressure.

(References – Finance and Resources Committee of 2 February 2021 (item 5); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

18. Place Services Internal Audit – Actions Update

An update was provided on progress on management actions arising from Internal Audits which specifically related to services within the remit of this Committee.

Decision

To note the progress made on the overdue Internal Audit management actions as they related to services within the remit of this Committee.

(Reference –report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

19. Internal Audit: Overdue Findings and Key Performance Indicators as at 26 January 2022 - referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred the attached report to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for ongoing scrutiny of relevant overdue management actions.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, 8 March 2022 (item 5); report by the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services, submitted.)