

Minutes

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 4 August 2022

Present

Councillors Meagher (Convener), Bruce, Caldwell, Campbell, Dobbin, Flannery, Kumar, Parker, Rae, Walker (substituting for Councillor Watt, items 1-6), Watt (item 7 onwards) and Whyte.

1. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 23 June 2022 as a correct record.

2. Work Programme

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

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, submitted.)

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

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

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 7 (1) – Parental Employability Support
 - Action 9 – Motion by Councillor Campbell – Housing Service Improvement Plan – Repairs Update

- Action 10 – Motion by Councillor Rae – Lift Repairs
- 2) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.
- 3) To request that the year-by-year acquisitions and disposals location data be circulated.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

4. Business Bulletin

The Business Bulletin for August 2022 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

5. Update on the Housing Service Improvement Plan

An update on the planned work under the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) over the following six months was presented. The work undertaken to improve tenant satisfaction, operating performance and reduce costs over the previous six months was also presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made with the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) over the last six months and the 2022/23 forward plan.
- 2) To note that the next update on the HSIP would be presented to Committee in six months.
- 3) To agree to discharge the motion by Councillor Kate Campbell on the Housing Service Improvement Plan – Repairs Update as approved at Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 23 June 2022.
- 4) To agree to a further update on the complaints handling process in the next HSIP, included the progress with the new processes and the resolution team.
- 5) To agree that all future HSIP reports would include snap shot data at quarterly intervals of the number of complaints received, the number outstanding, the average time taken to resolve a complaint and whether the point of resolution was stage one or two.
- 6) To further agree that all future HSIPs would include more data about performance on repairs, noting the recently reported significant increase in repairs related complaints, with a focus on enabling performance scrutiny, not just on setting the strategy, and enabling committee to track over time the performance level and whether there is improvement within the service, number of responsive repairs undertaken, timeframes for empty homes to be brought up to a lettable standard, and should take a similar approach in presentation to the dashboard on homelessness statistics, with details to be finalised at a Committee workshop.

- 7) To agree to a one-off staff training review carried out by the Housing Income Maximisation Officer as we entered the Cost-of-Living Crisis to ensure all Housing Officers and relevant frontline support officers in Corporate Services could be enabled to effectively refer and signpost every tenant possible to the appropriate financial assistance, including UK Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and the new benefits provided through Social Security Scotland. This would include working with, signposting to, and sharing best practice with various impartial advice charities including Citizens Advice Scotland, the Granton Information Centre and Edinburgh Tenant's Federation. Progress would be reported on in future HSIP reports.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 20 January 2022 (item 2); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

6. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Committee approval was sought for the delivery and development of local projects funded by Edinburgh's allocation of £12.4m through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF).

Motion

- 1) To note the partnership engagement activities undertaken in development of recommended SPF project proposals.
 - 2) To agree the recommended portfolio of projects to be funded as part of the City of Edinburgh SPF Investment Plan and that this portfolio be submitted to UK Government in advance of the 12 August deadline.
 - 3) To agree that officers would continue to work with projects to establish detailed funding plans and project deliverables within the financial constraints of the SPF allocations.
 - 4) To agree that an annual report on progress towards delivery of this programme of investment be prepared for consideration by this Committee.
 - 5) To agree that the Committee would keep projects under review through regular update reports; that defined representation of under-represented groups in project delivery would be specifically reported on; and that the standard clawback clause would be applied to all projects.
- Moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Walker

Amendment

- 1) To note the tight timeframes required to put the application into the UK Government and therefore recognise there are limitations and constraints on this process. To also recognise that there was extremely limited information in the report about the bids committee was being asked to approve.
- 2) To further note that there was no requirement to name specific organisations, or the funding allocated to them, in the application process to the UK government which only required that we outlined the alignment to the outcomes which we aimed to achieve.
- 3) Committee therefore agrees:

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- a) To note the partnership engagement activities undertaken in development of recommended SPF project proposals, but recognise time constraints and the number of panel members who were also applicants to the scheme, so agrees that a process to diversify the panel for future funding years would be desirable.
 - b) To agree the recommended portfolio of projects to be funded as part of the City of Edinburgh SPF Investment Plan for year one only.
 - c) To agree that the outcomes we aimed to achieve would be submitted to UK Government in advance of the 12 August deadline.
 - d) To agree that officers would continue to work with projects starting in year one to establish detailed funding plans and project deliverables within the financial constraints of the SPF allocation.
 - e) To agree that a governance review of the panel would be undertaken to consider projects for years two and three, and that this would include the addition of service users, alongside ensuring representation from minority groups including BAME, care experienced and disabled people on the panel as well as considering whether elected member representation was appropriate.
 - f) To further agree to a process to reach out to small, community and grassroots organisations based in Edinburgh to offer support, advice and training on bid writing and funding applications, using SPF funding to enable this.
 - g) To agree to review the list of stakeholders which information was regularly sent out to, including a call to elected members to send details of organisations which they thought should be included.
 - h) To agree to receive a report in early 2023 on the progress with the actions agreed on outreach and panel diversification, including an update on the projects funded this year with outcomes and objectives agreed with the organisations, and detailed information about the percentage of services and projects which will be delivered in each SIMD area, alongside details of the geographical locations of projects and services.
 - i) To agree that any project on the rejected list would be able to reapply as part of this process.
 - j) To agree that this report would also bring back recommendations for future years of funding, with specific funding allocations attached to projects.
- Moved by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Kumar

Voting

For the motion - 6 votes

For the amendment - 5 votes

(For the motion – Councillors Meagher, Bruce, Caldwell, Flannery, Walker and Whyte.)

For the amendment – Councillors Campbell, Dobbin, Kumar, Parker and Rae.)

Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Meagher.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Kumar made a statement of transparency as a volunteer for Empty Kitchens Full Hearts.

Councillor Caldwell made a statement of transparency as a volunteer for Leith Chooses.

Councillor Rae made a statement of transparency as Chair of Leith Chooses.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 23 June 2022 (item 6); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

7. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan – Annual Update on Progress

The second annual update of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), which covered April 2021 to March 2022 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made to date.
- 2) To agree the content for submission to the Scottish Government.
- 3) To recognise the high pressure on housing services in the city and commends the progress being made in tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 4) To recognise that the Council had a responsibility to meet the housing needs of disabled people in the city.
- 5) To note the detail in the report about pressures on providing accessible homes and about how most social lets not made to homeless households were offered to applicants assessed for a gold priority due to mobility needs.
- 6) To note with concern the reference to the Integrated Impact Assessment in the report which identified the possible negative impacts on other vulnerable groups owing to the strategy of letting more numbers of social lets to homeless households as described in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- 7) To request a briefing after the publication of the Accessible Housing Study to understand more about:
 - a. the detail of the IIA referenced in the report
 - b. the relationship between – and overlap with – housing demand amongst homeless households and disabled households in the city
 - c. the findings and recommendations of the Accessible Housing Study

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 September 2020 (item 1); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

8. Place Based Investment Programme – Provisional Allocations for 2022/23 to 2024/25

An update on the progress of projects funded under the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) was presented. The report also noted the provisional allocations of funding for years 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Motion

- 1) To note the update on the allocations of the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) for 2021/22.
- 2) To agree the provisional allocation of the PBIP for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 as set out in the report by the Executive Director of Place.
- 3) To note that future updates on the funding would be reported to Committee, including detail on the proposed allocation of the final tranche in financial year 2025/26.
 - Moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Watt

Amendment

- 1) To note the update on the allocations of the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) for 2021/22.
- 2) To note that the call for projects for the long list was in November 2021, and that half the council was made up of new councillors who had not had the opportunity to input.
- 3) To agree a new call for projects be issued to all councillors and engagement undertaken on a locality basis.
- 4) To note the recommendations for allocations in 2023/24; and 2024/25, as set out below, were provisional and may be subject to change depending on a range of factors.
- 5) To agree that future updates on the funding would be reported to Committee annually for approval, including detail on the proposed allocation of the funding for financial years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26
- 6) To agree the allocations as amended in place of appendix 4 of the report by the Executive Director of Place, for year 2022/23:

Project	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
1. The Causey	£400,000	£300,000	£0	£700,000
2. Granton	£483,641	£231,572	£543,500	£1,258,713

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Gasholder				
3. Macmillan Hub	£325,000	£175,000	£0	£500,000
4. Portobello Potteries 1906 Kiln restoration	£172,750	£0	£0	£172,750
5. Powderhall civic square	£0	£0	£171,946	£171,946
6. Queensferry Town Centre – public realm and placemaking project	£200,000	£425,000	£425,000	£1,050,000
7. Wester Hailes Regeneration	£50,000	£0	£72,554	£122,554
8. Coalie Park Improvements	£109,609	£81,428		
Total	£1,741,000	£1,213,000	£1,213,000	£4,167,000
Forecast available budget	£1,741,000	£1,213,000	£1,213,000	£4,167,00

- Moved by Councillor Campbell, seconded by Councillor Kumar

Voting

For the motion - 4 votes

For the amendment - 7 votes

(For the motion – Councillors Meagher, Bruce, Watt and Whyte.

For the amendment – Councillors Campbell, Caldwell, Dobbin, Flannery, Kumar, Parker and Rae.)

Decision

To approve the amendment by Councillor Campbell.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 25 June 2021 (item 1); Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 4 November 2021 (item 5); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

9. Parental Employability Support Fund – Grants Update

The result of engagement with Canongate Youth on their project delivered through Parental Employability Support funding between April 2021 to March 2022 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To note the engagement had with Canongate Youth.
- 2) To approve the recommendation to not further fund the project 'Networks', using Parental Employability Support funding.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 23 June 2022 (item 5); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

10. Repairs, Maintenance and Investment to Lifts in Multi Storey Tower Blocks

The processes in place to maintain, repair and invest in lifts in multi storey tower blocks were presented for information.

Decision

- 1) To note the information provided on the processes and programme in place to maintain, repair and invest in lifts in multi storey tower blocks.
- 2) To note that the Council maintained an in-house stock of commonly used replacement parts but that there were instances when bespoke parts were required due to the age of some of the lifts across the city.
- 3) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 23 June 2022 to prepare a report for Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee detailing on the acquisition and storage of parts for emergency lift repairs.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 23 June 2022 (item 8); Report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)