

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday 3 June 2021

Present

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

1. Approach to Dampness, Mould and Condensation in Council Homes

a) Deputation by the Moredun Maisonettes and Multis Residents Association and Councillor Cameron

The Committee agreed to hear a deputation from Moredun Maisonettes and Multis Residents Association in relation to the Approach to Dampness, Mould and Condensation in Council Homes report. Councillor Cameron was also in attendance as a ward councillor.

The deputation detailed their experience living in the Moredun high rise flats, highlighting the unfit state of the property upon moving in and that the windows of various properties were in disrepair which had resulted in mould, damp and condensation, leading to property damage, health concerns and higher costs of heating homes.

The deputation requested that consideration be given to how the Council could improve the repairs system to prevent mould, damp and condensation in Council homes. They also requested that resident associations were consulted in the process of writing these reports.

b) Report by the Executive Director of Place

On 18 March 2021, the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee approved a motion which agreed to provide two additional reports alongside the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) Update: a report updating on the repairs improvement plan and a report on the process for dampness, mould and condensation.

A separate report on the repairs improvement plan was also presented to this Committee (see Item 11).

Decision

- 1) To agree the improved processes that were being put in place to manage dampness, mould and condensation issues would take immediate effect.
- 2) To agree to discharge the motion agreed by the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 18 March 2021.
- 3) To agree that a process would be developed to make sure that data from repairs logged in relation to damp mould and condensation would be collated and then used as part of the asset management strategy to help inform future capital investment including the whole house retrofit programme as outlined in the housing sustainability report.
- 4) To agree that a further report would be brought back in six months to update on the asset management strategy, how data was monitored to ensure investment was targeted to where it was needed most alongside an analysis of the implementation of the new processes including data on the number of cases where mould had been removed and reinstatement work carried out. To agree that report would contain details of the current condition of Council stock, and suggestions for how we could measure improvements to the service tenants receive and the condition of homes.
- 5) To agree to a workshop for committee members to discuss key reporting outcomes which would inform the update report returning in six months' time.
- 6) To request a Business Bulletin update on progress made on AOVS to the next committee.
- 7) To request that the number of outstanding repairs cases relating to damp, condensation and mould would be reported back to committee.
- 8) To request information on the proportion of Council properties which had extractor fans, outdoor drying facilities and double/triple-glazed windows.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 March 2021 (Item 14); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

2. Minutes

Decision

To approve the minute of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 March 2021 as a correct record.

3. Work Programme

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Work Programme for June 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the Work Programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, submitted.)

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

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Rolling Actions Log for June 2021 was presented.

Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
 - Action 2 – Housing Sustainability Update
 - Action 4 (2) – Empty Homes Update
 - Action 5 – Business Bulletin
 - Action 6 (1&2) – Allocation Policy for Council Homes
 - Action 8 (1&2) – Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme 2021/22
 - Action 10 (1&2) – Emergency Motion by Councillor Kate Campbell – Repairs
- 2) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.
(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

5. Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Business Bulletin

The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Business Bulletin for June 2021 was presented.

Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

6. Capital City Partnership: Progress Update

An update was provided on the progress that had been made against the objectives and targets detailed within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Capital City Partnership (CCP).

The ongoing changes in the strategic and operational employability environment at national and local level were highlighted, which would require that the terms of the SLA would be kept under review and adapted, if necessary, to ensure it continued to strategically fit with local need and provides value for money for the Council.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress being made by the CCP against their SLA objectives and targets.
- 2) To note that the SLA had been amended in 2020/21, reflecting a £150,000 reduction in payments from the Council to CCP.

- 3) To note that the current circumstances around Covid-19 had had a major impact on the results for 2020/21 and on the employment landscape as a whole, with corresponding changes in the strategic and operational landscape at national and local level (e.g. Edinburgh Economy Strategy, City Region Deal, Scottish Government Employability Services).
- 4) To refer this report to Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

(References – Housing and Economy Committee of 18 January 2018 (Item 14); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

7. Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Applications

The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) had been opened again for applications. The following projects were recommended to be put forward for consideration: Craigmillar high street; Lauriston Castle community hub; Leith Theatre; MacMillan Hub, Pennywell; Pentlands Community Space; Portobello Town Hall; Ravelston Park Pavilion community hub; Saughton Gardens community hub; The Story Box and West Shore Road creative hub.

Decision

To agree that the listed projects be submitted to the RCGF for consideration.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee of 11 June 2020 (Item 14); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

8. Allocation Policy for Council Homes - Update

On 18 March 2021 the Housing, Homeless and Fair Work Committee considered the Allocation for Council Homes report. An update was provided on the actions agreed. It was requested that the motion by Councillor Kate Campbell from 4 February 2021 be discharged.

Ongoing actions were taking place to improve advice and information on access to housing and to agree an additional approach to assist with managing exceptional housing need cases that could not be resolved within the allocation policy framework or existing processes/multi-agency pathways to ensure good outcomes for households.

Decision

- 1) To note the update on the proposed approach to assist with the management of exceptional housing need following engagement with key stakeholders and ongoing actions to improve advice and information on access to housing.
- 2) To agree that an additional level of 'waiting time' could be added to the current silver exceptional need priority where an 'officer panel' decision was taken that a case was urgent and could not be resolved within the allocation policy framework or existing processes/multi-agency pathways.
- 3) To agree to discharge the motion by Councillor Kate Campbell on Allocations Policy as approved at the City of Edinburgh Council of 4 February 2021.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 March 2021 (Item 4); Act of Council No. 10 of 4 February 2021; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

9. Housing Sustainability Update

On 5 November the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee considered a report on Housing Sustainability. An update was provided on the key elements of the decision, as well as a wider update on housing sustainability in relation to new build Council homes and the whole house retrofit approach for existing Council homes.

Since November 2020, all new build Council homes were being designed to deliver net zero carbon with the first handovers of these homes expected in 2023.

Motion

- 1) To note the progress that had been made in developing the Housing Sustainability approach.
 - 2) To agree to discharge the Green group motion approved by the City of Edinburgh Council on 5 November 2020.
 - 3) To agree to receive an update on Housing Sustainability as part of the annual Capital Investment Programme report.
- moved by Councillor Kate Campbell, seconded by Councillor Watt

Amendment

- 1) To note the progress that had been made in developing the Housing Sustainability approach and warmly welcomes that all new council housing in design and development from November 2020 would be net zero carbon.
- 2) To agree to discharge the Green group motion approved by the City of Edinburgh Council on 5 November 2020.
- 3) To agree to receive an update on Housing Sustainability as part of the annual Capital Investment Programme report.
- 4) To note that in relation to new Council homes, 'net zero carbon' implied an element of offsetting, and therefore to agree that future updates in the Capital Investment Programme would specify how new council buildings would align with Scottish Building Regulations' silver / gold / platinum categorisation, and how the new Scottish Government's commitment to all new local authority homes being zero emission homes by 2026 would be met in Edinburgh.
- 5) To note that achieving significant emissions reductions from existing Council homes was highly dependent on Council homes in mixed tenure blocks; to welcome the establishment of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service, but nonetheless to note that existing funding and policy levers were unlikely to deliver the rapid reduction in emissions required to meet council targets.
- 6) To therefore agree that the Convenor would write to the Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport, and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, to urge the Scottish Government to:

- a) Accelerate the Heat in Buildings strategy.
- b) Enhance incentives and introduce regulatory levers as soon as possible to allow local authorities to meet their ambitious carbon reduction and fuel poverty targets, including but not limited to, introducing regulations to set minimum energy efficiency standards at point of sale and major refurbishment to come into force within the next five years, as recommended by the Existing Homes Alliance Scotland in their recent “Pathway to zero carbon homes” report.

- moved by Councillor Booth, seconded by Councillor Rae

In accordance with Standing Order 22.12, the amendment was accepted as an amendment to the motion.

Decision

To approve the adjusted motion by Councillor Kate Campbell.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 5 November 2020 (Item 6); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

10. Updated Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

An updated 2021/22 and 2022/23 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme was set out, following consultation with Elected Members. The 24-month programme included an assessment of the impact of further restrictions due to Covid-19 on timescales and the re-profiling slippage from 2020/21.

Detail was also provided of the accelerated spend to improve internal common stairwells in areas of highest poverty in the city and the impact of increased resources for the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) approved by Council on 18 February 2021.

Decision

- 1) To approve the updated 2021/22 HRA capital programme.
- 2) To note the draft 2022/23 planned programme and five-year investment programme.
- 3) To agree to receive a report in two cycles on the projects outlined in the key priorities in Appendix 3 of the report. This should include, for large scale projects such as external fabric improvements, status updates on community engagement and consultation, design work, the scope of works and indicative time frames for work to begin.

(References – Act of Council No. 1 of 18 February 2021; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

11. Housing Service Improvement Plan – Repairs Update

On 18 March 2021, the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee approved a motion which agreed to provide two additional reports alongside the Housing Service

Improvement Plan (HSIP) Update: a report updating on the repairs improvement plan and a report on the process for dampness, mould and condensation (see Item 1).

A separate report on the process for dampness, mould and condensation was also presented to the meeting of 3 June 2021.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made to date with improvements within the repairs service and the priorities for the next 12 months.
- 2) To agree to discharge the motion agreed by the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 18 March 2021.
- 3) To agree to receive an update in six months as part of the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) six-monthly update report.
- 4) To agree to a workshop for committee on the monitoring and communication of repairs.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 18 March 2021 (Item 14); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

12. Housing Service Improvement Plan – Update

An update was provided on the work being taken forward as part of the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP). The measures set out in the improvement plan aimed to significantly improve customer satisfaction, operating performance and reduce costs.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made with the Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) over the last six months and the 2021/22 forward plan.
- 2) To agree to receive an update report in six months.

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

13. Gas Service Improvement Plan

An update was provided on the progress made with the Gas Service Improvement Plan since it was presented to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on the 23 March 2021. Details were set out in the plan to build on and improve the Council's approach to gas safety. The report was referred to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for information.

An update of the Gas Service Improvement Plan was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made and the updated action plan for the Gas Service Improvement Plan since it was presented to Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on 23 March 2021.

- 2) To note that progress would be reported to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee as part of the Housing Service Improvement Plan.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 23 March 2021 (Item 17); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

14. Gas Service Improvement Plan – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Committee, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business for the reason that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1, 12 and 15 Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on a gas service improvement plan, which provided details on the history of inspection, the review of the Council's gas inspection and management and maintenance. Details were set out in the plan to build on and improve the Council's approach to gas safety. The report was referred to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 23 March 2021 (item 17; report by the Chief Internal Auditor, submitted.)

15. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan – Annual Update on Progress

The Scottish Government instructed all local authorities to develop, produce and cost a 5-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) by 31 December 2018. Further to this, local authorities were asked to submit updated RRTP's, the second iteration of the Edinburgh RRTP was agreed at the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 18 September 2020 and subsequently submitted to Scottish Government.

It was agreed at the annual updates would be received on progress of the plan. In order to meet the requirement to submit this to Scottish Government by 30 June 2021 this update covers the period from September 2020 to end of March 2021.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made to date.
- 2) To agree the content for submission to the Scottish Government.

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

16. Homelessness Services' Performance Dashboard

The Council's Internal Audit service recommended that Homelessness Services, in addition to providing an annual report on the service's statutory returns, should provide additional performance information to Committee.

Approval was sought for the measures contained in the report and agreement that these reports should be provided on a 6-monthly basis, beginning with a report to coincide with the statutory returns report in August 2021

Decision

- 1) To note the performance dashboard.
- 2) To agree the performance measures contained within the dashboard and reporting cycle for future meetings.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

17. No One Left Behind Phase 2

As part of No One Left Behind Phase 2 (NOLB2) and employability transformation in Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council was expected to receive additional funding from Scottish Government for local employability delivery from 1 April 2022.

Plans were set out for research and coproduction which were currently underway to determine arrangements for future provision in Edinburgh, based on NOLB2 and Network of Employability Support and Training (NEST).

Decision

- 1) To note that it was expected that City of Edinburgh Council would receive funding for No One Left Behind (NOLB2) transformation of local employability delivery from 1 April 2022.
- 2) To note the joint coproduction exercise and review of the Council's employability grants programme with the new arrangements for NOLB2 to develop plans for specialist employability support and training in Edinburgh from 1 April 2022.

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

18. Homelessness Services Internal Audit – Actions Update

An update was provided on the progress of outstanding audit actions from the audit of Homelessness Services undertaken in July 2019. This followed a previous update presented to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 5 November 2020.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress against recommendations within the Internal Audit of Homelessness Services undertaken in July 2019.
- 2) To acknowledge the rationale as to why some audit actions had required change and reconsideration due to the need to deliver services differently as a result of the public health crisis.
- 3) To recognise the complexities and issues which had delayed progress and completion of some actions within the agreed timescales.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 5 November 2020 (Item 10); report by the Chief Executive, submitted.)

19. Place Services Internal Audit – Actions Update

On 23 March 2021, the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee considered a report on Overdue Findings and Key Performance Indicators at 10 February 2021. This report was referred to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee (see Item 20).

An update was provided to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on progress on management actions arising from Internal Audits which specifically related to services which fell within the remit of the committee.

Decision

- 1) To note the progress made on recommendations made on Internal Audit actions relating to the Housing Property service.
- 2) To recognise the complexities and issues which had delayed progress and had led to revised implementation dates for some management actions.
- 3) To note that there were audit actions which had been agreed corporately, and that services which sit within the remit of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee were working on.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 23 March 2021 (item 5; report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

20. Internal Audit: Overdue Findings and Key Performance Indicators as at 10 February 2021 – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on Internal Audit Overdue Findings and Key Performance Indicators at 10 February 2021, which provided an overview of the status of the overdue Internal Audit (IA) findings as at 10 February 2021, to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 23 March 2021 (item 5; report by the Chief Internal Auditor, submitted.)

21. Affordable Housing Policy Update – referral from the Planning Committee

The Planning Committee had referred a report on the Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) performance in 2019/20 and 2020/21, which also provided an update on the use of commuted sums to support the delivery of new affordable homes over the same period, to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for information.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Planning Committee of 19 May 2021 (item 6); report by the Executive Director of Place, submitted.)