

Addendum by the Green group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee 14th May 2024

Item 7.2 – Employer Recruitment Incentives to Support Fair Work

Adds:

1.1.4 Notes that there are many reasons why businesses are currently experiencing economic difficulty, including macroeconomic factors which are unrelated to changes to the Scottish Government's "Fair Work First" criteria.

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by:

Addendum by the Green group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee 14th May 2024

Item 7.3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

Adds:

1.1.3.1 Notes that in Appendix 5 of the report, under the risk “owner and tenant engagement”, mitigations are listed for owner-occupiers, council tenants and private landlords, but not private tenants, despite this group also being impacted by Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) works.

1.1.3.2 Notes that following a request of committee, in June 2023 a briefing note was produced to outline what financial support was available to owners as part of MTIS, including benchmarking against other Local Authorities, and notes that this briefing note explained that additional funding schemes would be developed through the Scottish Government’s “Green Heat Finance Taskforce” report which was published on 22nd November 2023 (with a second report due to follow in 2024).

1.1.3.3 Notes that the original 3-year pilot programme for the MTIS is due for completion in June 2024.

1.1.3.4 Therefore, agrees it would be appropriate to bring an updated report to committee on the MTIS strategy to cover:

- i) An evaluation of the MTIS programme from the first pilot, including lessons learned around communication and engagement with residents.
- ii) What specific support is available for private tenants throughout the process.
- iii) An analysis / comparison of the different assistance schemes and repayment terms from other Local Authorities against the Council’s offer, and reflections on if / how the Council’s offer could be improved for future works, in line with a climate justice approach and with a view to scaling up the programme, if that is appropriate.

- iv) Possible revisions to the scheme of assistance available following the publication of the Green Heat Finance Taskforce

1.1.3.5 Further agrees that this report will also set out governance arrangements for the MTIS works, including via the Whole House Retrofit / MTIS dashboard which features in the Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance report, heard at each committee meeting.

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker
Seconded by:

Addendum by the Administration

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work

14th May 2024

Item 7.4 – Update: Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29

Add after 1.1.1 ... “Committee recognises the challenge that this places on officers, across the housing and planning service, to deliver agreed housebuilding and approvals targets;”

Add after 1.1.4 ... “Committee notes that that, despite the delivery challenges, it is of the utmost importance that committee does all it can to deliver affordable homes, as the present situation risks exacerbating the housing emergency; and”

Adds:

1. Committee, therefore, requests that:

1. Officers prepare a report on new financial approaches which could help mitigate the challenge of the budget cut with key risks, and pathways to implementation, clearly set out.
2. Requests this in one cycle with referral to the following Finance and Resources committee.

Move 1.1.4 to 1.1.6

The text would read:

1. Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee:

1. Notes the 24% reduction in affordable housing grant funding from the Scottish Government against expected Resource Planning Assumptions in 2024/25; going from £45.2m to £34.2m;
2. Recognises the challenge that this places on officers, across the housing and planning service, to deliver agreed housebuilding and approvals targets;
3. Notes that, with the current affordable housing grant funding commitment for already approved projects and uncertainty in the Scottish Government's

Affordable Housing Supply Programme 2025/26 budget, Edinburgh is unlikely to be able to approve any new grant funded affordable homes this year and there is uncertainty about potential commitments next year;

4. Notes the wider impacts this cut in funding has on the Affordable Housing Policy, Affordable Housing Supply Programme, the Council's own house building programme and HRA Business plan;
 5. Notes that that, despite the delivery challenges, it is of the upmost importance that committee does all it can to deliver affordable homes, as the present situation risks exacerbating the housing emergency; and
 6. Requests this report is referred to Planning Committee and request that it considers the use of affordable housing commuted sums on a citywide basis where individual legal agreements do not restrict this.
2. Committee, further requests that:
3. Officers prepare a report on new financial approaches which could help mitigate the challenge of the budget cut with key risks, and pathways to implementation, clearly set out.
 4. Requests this in one cycle with referral to the following Finance and Resources committee.

Moved by: Cllr Jane Meagher

Seconded by:

Addendum by the Liberal Democrat Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024 Item 7.4 – Update: Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/25 – 2028/29

Committee

Notes with concern the outcome of this report in relation to the development of affordable housing, with the 24% in reduction to grant funding from 45.2m to 34.2m.

Notes that affordable housing is the key cornerstone in addressing the Housing Emergency Crisis in the long term, and the need for social housing in the short-term, recognised by Shelter, Housing for Scotland and the Emergency Housing and Homelessness Taskforce.

Notes that lack of funding for housing and social housing development puts a significant strain on the positive outcome of the long-term SHIP strategy, and reinforces point 1.1.2,

‘That based on the current affordable housing grant funding commitment for already approved projects and uncertainty in the Scottish Government’s Affordable Housing Supply Programme 2025/26 budget, Edinburgh is unlikely to be able to approve any new grant funded affordable homes this year.’

Noting the wider impacts this cut in funding will have on the Affordable Housing Policy, Affordable Housing Supply Programme, the Council’s own house building programme, HRA Business plan, and the City Plan.

Therefore, urges the Scottish Government to review its Housing funding priorities, review its stance on the Edinburgh Housing Emergency, and asks the Convener to convey this to the SG in the strongest and most robust terms.

Moved by: Cllr Pauline Flannery

Seconded by: Cllr Fiona Bennett

Amendment by the Administration

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024

Item 7.5 – Review of Missing Share Scheme and Emergency Building Safety Fees

Committee:

- Acknowledges that the current missing shares threshold of £20,000 was set in in 2017;
- Acknowledges that since then the cost of construction work and materials has increased;
- Agrees that where the Council has served a dangerous building notice under S29 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, requiring permanent repairs be made to make a building or property safe, and
 - In order to prevent a position where a minority of owners could delay essential make safe, repairs and maintenance work to the building and comply with the S29 notice due to the affordability of the work required,
 - The missing share threshold be raised to a maximum of £60,000;
- Agrees that Payment plans in respect of statutory notice-related works will be based on the combined debts outstanding for individual property owners as follows, bringing it in line with current statutory notice debt policy: -
 - owners with total debts of up to £5,000 will be offered a payment plan of a maximum of four years; -
 - owners with total debts of between £5,000 and £10,000 will be offered a payment plan of no longer than seven years and - owners with total debts of more than £10,000 will be offered a payment plan of a maximum of ten years
- Agrees that the administration fee associated with this work, agreed at Council on the 27th February 2024 as being up to 10% of the existing missing shares threshold of £20,000, be kept at that maximum level of £2000.
- Requests that the report is referred to the Finance and Resources Committee.

Moved by: **Cllr Jane Meagher**

Seconded by:

Amendment by the Green group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee 14th May 2024

Item 7.5 – Review of Missing Share Scheme and Emergency Building Safety Fees

Deletes all recommendations and replaces with:

1.1 Notes that this report was neither included nor referenced at the Agenda Planning Meeting, and that it has not featured in the Work Programme of previous Committee meetings.

1.2 Agrees that a briefing session will be held jointly between Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee members and Finance and Resources committee members to explore issues relating to missing share scheme thresholds and emergency building safety work fees, including guidance on the competency of amending Council fees and charges within 6 months of the budget decision made in February 2024.

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by:

Addendum by the Liberal Democrat Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024 Item 8.1 – Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance

Committee adds

1.1.5 notes the importance that cyclical updates play in regards to transparency and thanks officers for this new direction.

1.1.6 Requests officers include 'Social Rent Home completions' in future Appendix 8.

Moved by: Cllr Jack Caldwell
Seconded by: Cllr Pauline Flannery

Addendum by the Green Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024

Item 8.1 – Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance

Adds:

Agrees that a workshop will be arranged with Committee members prior to recess to review the structure / format of this first Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance report, including discussion about how (relevant) KPIs from the HSIP will be reflected in these going forward.

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by:

Addendum by the Liberal Democrat Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024 Item 8.2 – Housing Service Improvement Plan – Six-monthly Update

Committee adds

1.1.5 Notes that recent increased awareness of possible RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) in social rent housing across the country means it continues to be a concern to residents and notes that the City of Edinburgh Council is named in the Scottish Housing Regulator RAAC Update (published 28th March 2024) as a landlord which identified RAAC within part of the estate.

Therefore requests:

that both RAAC surveying and engagement with residents is added to future HSIP Action Tracker updates, formatted at officers' discretion.

Moved by: Cllr Pauline Flannery

Seconded by: Cllr Jack Caldwell

Addendum by the Green group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024

Item 8.2 – Housing Service Improvement Plan

Adds:

1.1.5 Welcomes work ongoing to embed circular economy principles into voids / repairs work.

1.1.6 Notes that during the Circular Economy roundtable hosted by the Council, Circular Communities Scotland explained their work in providing local authorities and housing associations with the opportunity to purchase more sustainable and affordable alternatives when buying furniture and white goods for tenants.

1.1.7 Agrees that officers will engage with Circular Communities Scotland to explore if they can support a pilot in Edinburgh with updates on progress reported to Committee via the Business Bulletin (or other means).

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by:

Addendum by the SNP Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14 May 2024

Item 8.4 – Housing (Scotland) Bill – Summary and Potential Impacts

Adds:

1.1.4 That this summary does not contain any information regarding the potential benefits of the Bill.

1.1.5 That while it is important that Committee is informed about the potential risks of the Bill which will have widespread impacts on our housing service, it is also important to note that many of the risks that are highlighted are highly contested.

1.2 Housing and Homelessness Committee reaffirms the Council's commitment to implementing rent controls in Edinburgh at the earliest possible opportunity.

Moved by: Councillor Euan Hyslop

Seconded by:

Amendment by the Green Group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024

Item 8.4 – Housing (Scotland) Bill – Summary and Potential Impacts

Amends 1.1.3 to read: “The summary of the Bill provided in this report, including the potential **benefits**, risks and impacts if the Bill is passed in its current form”

Adds:

1.1.4 Welcomes the broad aims and direction of travel within the Bill, particularly in terms of raising standards and offering greater protections and support for tenants, including moves to improve affordability within the PRS, recognising that housing should exist as a social good to provide homes for people, and not as an instrument of financial speculation.

1.1.5 Notes the concerns around resourcing within Local Authorities for data collection for rent assessments, but also notes the multitude of benefits this will bring for tenants, landlords and housing practitioners, and therefore agrees that the Council should work constructively through COSLA and with the Government to find a workable solution to this, recognising that reliable data on the city’s broader housing stock will be to the ultimate benefit of all.

1.1.6 Considers that most PRS lets are not new builds and therefore any perceived impact on housing supply through rent controls might be overstated as homes can revert to alternative tenures as opposed to disappearing from the market entirely. Further considers that evidence shows that actions to raise standards within the PRS lead to the consolidation of housing with professional landlords which is consistent with this aim. Finally considers that the number of empty or underused homes, and homes used for short term lets, also impact on housing supply in the city.

1.1.8 Finally, notes concerns around the potential costs of compliance around homelessness prevention duties and agrees that the Council should continue to raise these concerns through COSLA and with the Government.

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by:

Amendment by the Green group

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 14th May 2024

Item 9.5 – HHFW meeting timings for 2024-2025

Deletes:

“A review of the HHFW future meeting dates to consider those that fall around recess times, which contributes to an undue length between one meeting and the next.”

Moved by: Cllr Ben Parker

Seconded by: