

Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 23 January 2025

Westfield Court

Executive/routine
Wards

Routine
7 – Sighthill/Gorgie

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee is asked to note this update and to discharge actions agreed by Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on 31 October 2024 in respect of boiler upgrades in Westfield Court.

Gareth Barwell

Interim Executive Director of Place

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Westfield Court

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report responds to the actions agreed by Committee on 31 October 2024 in respect of boiler upgrades at Westfield Court.

3. Background

- 3.1 Westfield Court is a multi-storey block built in 1952 as a block of 88 flats, with an additional four flats added later. It is now a mixed tenure block of 92 flats in which the Council owns 32 flats, and 60 flats are in private ownership. The private ownership includes 37 landlords and 23 owner occupiers. The building itself is split up into six separate blocks.
- 3.2 On 10 August 2017, a vertical pipe within block 5 riser failed. This caused the plant room in the basement to flood. The depth of the water flooding into the basement reached the electrical systems and caused an extensive electrical failure across the blocks 5 and 6. Due to the electrical failure, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) were called to attend in the event of a fire incident.
- 3.3 Following inspection, SFRS determined that there was no fire risk, and the responsible Council officer took over management of the incident as both the electrical systems and the full heating plant had failed.
- 3.4 Scottish Power were called to investigate the damage to the electrical system and repairs were carried out on 10 August 2017 with power being reinstated later that same day.
- 3.5 Contingency plans were put into place for heating and a temporary heating plant was procured, delivered and commissioned within one week of the incident and full connections into individual homes was carried out which reinstated heating and hot water to tenants and resident's homes.
- 3.6 With the temporary heating plant in place and operational, the Council carried out investigations into the viability of the existing boilers which had been affected by the flooding. These investigations determined that the existing boilers had been damaged beyond economic and practical repair.

- 3.7 A procurement exercise commenced to replace the damaged boilers on a like for like basis. Due to the emergency and urgent nature of the situation, the Council made the decision to proceed without the usual level of consultation with tenants and owners which would normally take place
- 3.8 Prior to the flooding incident, the heating system was served by three boilers. After the flooding incident, the three boilers were replaced with two new boilers that provided the same output as the previous three.
- 3.9 The replacement boilers are fully operational and have been maintained since their installation in August 2018.
- 3.10 On 31 October 2024, Committee received a referred [report](#) from Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee in respect of Westfield Court. Committee requested further information on boiler upgrades in Westfield Court.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Since August 2018, the heating system in Westfield Court have performed well with expected repairs, maintenance and servicing.
- 4.2 The Council are aware of the high heating cost concerns raised by residents and are investigating what measures can be taken to address this. Council officers are also in dialogue with utility providers to ensure that accurate bills are being generated reflecting the actual consumption of energy in the block as a whole.
- 4.3 Committee asked for information on a number of points, detailed below:

When the boiler was replaced in 2018, who replaced it?

- 4.3.1 Following a procurement process (in partnership with Commercial and Procurement Services (CPS)), a competitive tender was published under the Multi Lot Framework 2015 - 2019 Lot 7 Mechanical Installation and Upgrade Works for the replacement of the boilers serving the heating system. The contract was awarded to McGills who commenced work on site. Unfortunately, during the installation, McGills went into administration and ultimately liquidation, and so, a second procurement exercise was undertaken through Framework and Gas Call were awarded the contract to complete installation of the boilers and commission the system. Gas Call completed this contract to the satisfaction of Council Officers.

Where they experienced and accredited in working with communal heating systems?

- 4.3.2 Yes, Gas Call are a recognised and competent (non-domestic) commercial gas contractor who provided all relevant certification required at the time of the contract award, including insurance details, Gas Safe registration and ACS (Nationally accredited Certification Scheme) accreditation. This includes work on communal heating systems. Gas engineers working on behalf of

Gas Call met competency requirements of Regulation 3 of The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

What was the make and model of the boiler and how was it chosen?

4.3.3 The new two boilers were Ideal Viceroy boilers that had been identified as the most efficient make and model at the time when they were initially installed in August 2018.

What was the make and model of the boiler that was replaced?

4.3.4 The boilers which were replaced were Ideal Viceroy models (and therefore were direct replacements for the damaged boilers. The new boilers provided the same outputs as their predecessors.

Was a procurement exercise undertaken?

4.3.5 Yes, a compliant procurement exercise was carried out.

What work was undertaken to ensure that the existing pipes and boiler were compatible?

4.3.6 Visual inspections of the boilers and associated plant were carried out by the Council and a competent commercial heating contractor. Findings suggested that a contract was required urgently to install new boilers which were to be connected to the existing pipework. At the time as the inspections, there were no concerns raised regarding the condition of any of the existing pipework associated with the boilers. The new boilers were of the same make and model as those replaced and so compatible with the existing pipework which was reaffirmed during the commissioning process.

Please provide a table of natural gas use, by volume (rather than by cost) for the heating system each year since 2020.

4.3.7 Readings provided by the gas supplier are attached in Appendix 2.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Ongoing servicing and maintenance of the heating plant is in place. This is designed to reduce to an absolute minimum the risk of the failure of the heating plant at Westfield Court.
- 5.2 Four void properties have been retained for the specific use of carrying out structural testing to enable completion of a full, holistic building survey of the entire block. This will include detailed information on the condition of the roof, external fabric, all mechanical and electrical services, the presence and condition of asbestos materials and the heating system.
- 5.3 The survey report is expected in spring 2025 and will provide a complete health check of the building as a whole and will also provide a cost options appraisal so that these can be discussed in detail and decision made as to how to proceed.

- 5.4 This report will be shared with residents and owners and will enable engagement with them to reach a collective decision on any future works to maintain the building.
- 5.5 Any agreed works can be taken forward by the Council, through existing frameworks and procurement processes.
- 5.6 Any appointed contractor will be subject to stringent key performance indicators throughout the life of the contract(s) and will be managed in accordance with all usual contractual arrangements.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The costs of the proposed comprehensive Condition Survey on all elements of the building, including the communal heating systems, will be met by the Council in this instance.
- 6.2 It is anticipated, however, that the investment cost per flat will be significant. Once the condition survey is complete, officers will engage with owners on the recommendations, estimated costs and potential options moving forward. Any opportunity to secure grant funding to alleviate the costs will be investigated as appropriate.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 This report does not put forward any recommendations for decision or change; therefore, there are no direct Equality and Poverty Impacts arising from this report.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 This report does not put forward any recommendations for decision or change; therefore, there are no direct Climate and Nature Emergency implications arising from this report.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The Council cannot make decisions on the future of the block without consulting with the owners. Owners will be asked to vote as part of a Scheme Decision under the Tenement Management Scheme when decisions are required. This will include any proposed investment required following the recommendations of a full building condition survey.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 None.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1: Actions agreed by Committee on 31 October 2024.

Appendix 2: Westfield Court Gas Usage from 2020.

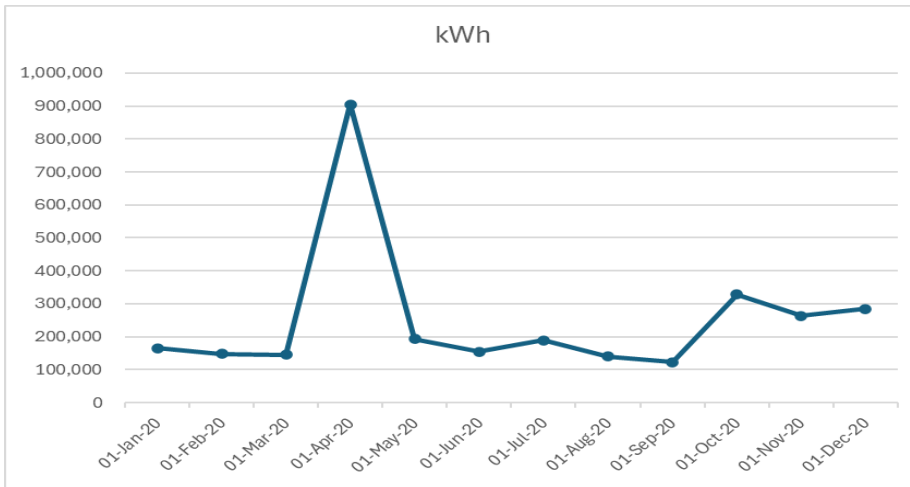
Appendix 1 - Action agreed by Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on 31 October 2024

Governance, Risk and Best Value requested the following information:

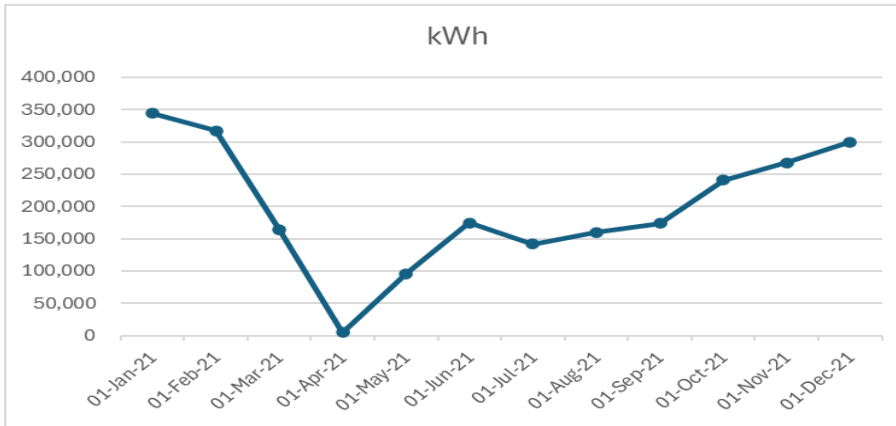
1. When the boiler was replaced in 2018, who replaced it?
2. Were they experienced and accredited in working with communal heating systems?
3. What was the make and model of the boiler and how was it chosen?
4. What was the make and model of the boiler that was replaced?
5. Was a procurement exercise undertaken?
6. What work was undertaken to ensure that the existing pipes and boiler were compatible?
7. Please provide a table of natural gas use, by volume (rather than by cost) for the heating system each year since 2020.

Appendix 2 – Westfield Court Gas Usage from 2020

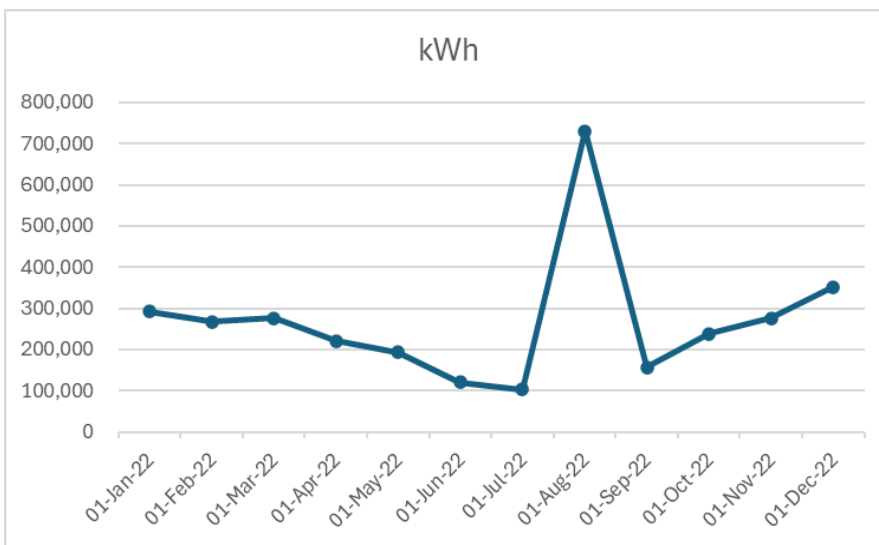
2020



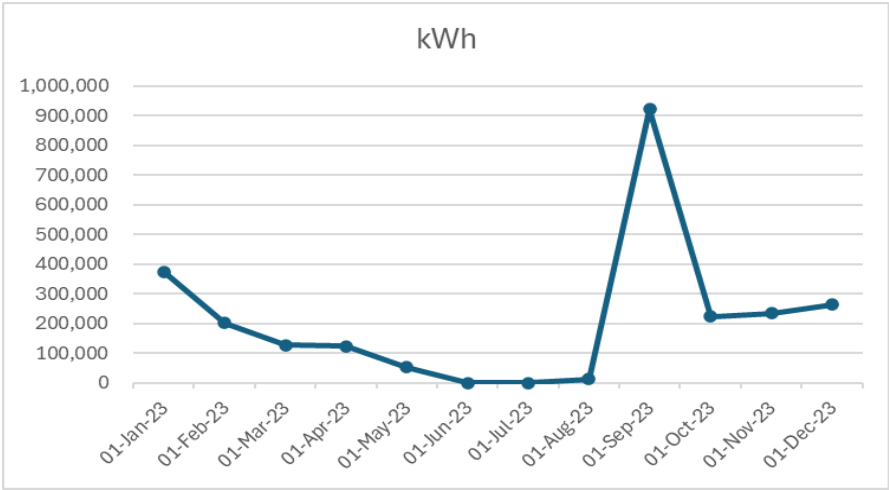
2021



2022



2023



2024

