

Business Bulletin

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 31 October 2019

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Convener Councillor Kate Campbell</p>  <p>Vice Convener Councillor Mandy Watt</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Chas Booth• Cllr Jim Campbell• Cllr David Key• Cllr Kevin Lang• Cllr John McLellan• Cllr Claire Miller• Cllr Gordon Munro• Cllr Iain Whyte• Cllr Norman Work	<p>Jamie Macrae Committee Officer Tel: 0131 553 8242</p> <p>Sarah Stirling Assistant Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 3009</p> <p>Lisa Mallon Housing Operations Manager Tel: 0131 529 6291</p>

Recent News

Town Centre Fund and Strategic Statement

On 6 June 2019 the Housing and Economy Committee agreed allocations for the £2.613m of funding that Council received from the Scottish Government as part of the 2019/20 budget settlement. A number of projects were put forward for consideration but unfortunately there was insufficient funding available to allow all of these projects to proceed.

A detailed design and construction pack has been prepared for South Queensferry and procurement is underway with a contractor expected to be in place by the end of 2019. Asbestos has been removed from Granton Station and work is underway to move materials from the grounds, with the scope of further works currently being agreed within the project team. On Westside Plaza, detailed designs are being prepared by HarrisonStevens. On the Pennywell Cultural and Learning Hub, work is ongoing with North Edinburgh Arts to progress the development. A monitoring regime is being developed to assess the impact of each project with the Scottish Government requiring progress updates at the end of November.

In considering this matter the Committee asked that updates be provided on each of the projects that were allocated funding and also asked that officers prepared a Town Centre Strategic Statement to assist in the allocation process should funding be made available in future years. This work is underway and a report will be brought to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work in January 2020 for consideration.

Update on European Structural Funds Scotland Programme Pre-Suspension

In May 2019 European Programme lead delivery partners were advised that following a European Commission audit of the Scottish Structural Funds

Background

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Recent News

Background

Programme a pre-suspension procedure was being initiated by the Commission.

This means that the European Commission will not pay any claims submitted from Scottish Government until the audit issues identified have been resolved.

As these audit findings relate to the wider structural funds programme, Scottish Government have advised lead partners (including COSLA and SLAED) that eligible expenditure incurred by partners under current programme arrangements would be honoured- although it has introduced delays in the financial claims process.

There has been a regular dialogue between Scottish Government, COSLA and SLAED on this issue to help mitigate the impact of this pause in the programme. This has including lead partners (including City of Edinburgh Council) sourcing and providing additional information on programme activity to help Scottish Government resolve the audit findings and enable a lifting of the pre-suspension.

Scottish Government have advised partners that they anticipated the audit issues will be resolved by November 2019.

Street Change

Whilst Street Change was initially introduced in Glasgow, it was suspended. After further exploration there were significant unresolved IT issues with the programme. On this basis it was not considered to be a viable option for Edinburgh and as an alternative, it was felt that 'personal budgets' were more effective.

Small amounts of 'personal budgets' can be used to help people access help and support. For example a rough sleeper applied for a job but didn't have suitable clothes for the interview. The personal payment helped to purchase clothes. The man was successful in obtaining employment. Other people have been helped to secure ID, essential for claiming welfare benefits.

The Council and partners have been working effectively to address rough sleeping in Edinburgh. Most rough sleepers have a combination of mental health and

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Recent News

Background

addiction issues plus adverse childhood experiences. This has left them very vulnerable and often 'mainstream services' are unable to engage with these individuals successfully.

Three 'rapid access accommodation' services have been established; two sites are owned and managed by the Cameron Guest house Group and one by the Salvation Army. Streetwork make referrals into these 68 rapid access beds for rough sleepers directly off the street.

Streetwork, Salvation Army and Y-people provide on-site support assessments and ongoing support while the Council offers on-site homelessness assessments to help people access re-housing more rapidly.

Since December 2017, 125 individuals have used the Rapid Access Accommodation (RAA) and allied services. Everyone entering RAA has been offered safe, secure accommodation, a support assessment, help to access support and a homelessness assessment.

RAA also offers a breathing space and period of stability for people who might have been on the streets for a considerable length of time.

76 people (61%) have been helped to access more suitable move on accommodation. This is a significantly higher rate of success than might have been achieved in mainstream services. Anyone leaving RAA without a positive accommodation outcome is welcome to return when they are ready.

Fountainbridge Development Update

On 7 March 2019, the Finance and Resources Committee agreed the outline business case for the Fountainbridge development and the initiation of a procurement process to appoint a development partner in line with the strategy for the site agreed by Housing and Economy Committee.

Council officers have now completed the market engagement stages of the procurement process and the

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Recent News

formal stages started earlier this month. This process will run into the early part of next year and it is anticipated that a development partner will be appointed by Summer 2020, subject to approval from Finance and Resources Committee. A 38 week pre-development period would then commence during which the Council and development partner would work together to carry out preparatory activities with construction starting in 2021.

Alongside this process, work is also progressing with the appointment a contractor to carry out advanced enabling works; the submission of detailed planning applications; the agreements needed with SP Energy Networks around the relocation of the primary substation; the continued engagement with the community around further improvements to the project; and the identification of funding opportunities for the energy solution

Background