

Business Bulletin

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 18 March 2021

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p data-bbox="199 331 566 414">Convener Councillor Kate Campbell</p>  <p data-bbox="188 851 518 929">Vice Convener Councillor Mandy Watt</p> 	<ul data-bbox="630 324 997 705" style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Chas Booth• Cllr Jim Campbell• Cllr Graham Hutchison• Cllr David Key• Cllr Kevin Lang• Cllr John McLellan• Cllr Claire Miller• Cllr Gordon Munro• Cllr Norman Work	<p data-bbox="1117 318 1396 436">Jamie Macrae Committee Officer Tel: 0131 553 8242</p> <p data-bbox="1117 488 1412 649">Sarah Stirling Assistant Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 3009</p>

Accessibility Housing Study

The Housing Service has commissioned research on accessible housing through the Housing Consultancy Framework.

The key elements of the accessible housing study are:

- Analysis of existing stock, across tenures, to establish extent of adapted stock and accessible stock in the city.
- Provide clarity on definitions of accessible housing and specialist housing provision (definitions vary across organisations and have varied over time).
- Provide estimate of current and projected need for adapted housing and wheelchair accessible housing, as well as the need for supported accommodation to meet wider health needs.

The study will inform the cross-tenure wheelchair housing target for inclusion in the next Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP).

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders, including getting views from wheelchair users where possible, will form part of the study. The study will also inform the Housing Need and Demand Assessment work currently being undertaken with neighbouring local authorities as well as joint work with Health and Social Care partners.

The study involves collation and analysis of a large amount of complex data. Collecting data on the profile of housing stock across all tenures, but particularly the private sector, and on the housing-related needs of wheelchair users can be challenging due to the limited availability of some data and because it has to be collected from many different sources. A methodology has been agreed with the consultants, using a combination of primary and secondary data sources.

Contact:

elaine.scott@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 2277

Recent News	Background
<p>The project timescale is estimated at around 5-6 months, taking into account the proposed stakeholder consultation activity.</p>	
<p>Update on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Acquisitions and Disposals strategy</p> <p>The HRA Acquisitions and Disposals (A&D) strategy was originally approved at Health, Social Care and Housing Committee on 26 January 2016. The overarching objective of the strategy is to increase supply and reduce ongoing management and maintenance costs by consolidating HRA assets. Homes are purchased where full block consolidation could be achieved and homes are sold to divest from blocks where the Council is the minority owner.</p> <p>The programme is self-funding, with the proceeds of homes sold being used to purchase homes. Scottish Government grant funding is also levered in to support the purchase of homes for social rent. Since its implementation, 124 homes have been purchased and 68 homes have been sold. This is a net increase of 56 social rented homes. This has led to 50 blocks where the Council has divested its interest and 38 blocks where the Council has further consolidated its ownership.</p> <p>In June 2018, Housing and Economy Committee approved the Mixed Tenure Improvement Strategy which set out steps to tackle mixed tenure repairs in previously Council-owned estates including proposals for a revised Scheme of Assistance to provide more flexible support to owners to meet the costs of repairs and improvements to their homes and a dedicated Mixed Tenure Delivery Team to engage with residents, liaise with owners and to support delivery of mixed tenure projects. The mixed tenure improvement pilot is being taken forward in the Murrayburn/ Hailesland and Dumbryden areas, to assist this. Eighteen homes have been purchased in the Murrayburn area.</p> <p>Prior to homes being sold on the open market, Registered Social Landlords who have ownership in the</p>	<p>Contact:</p> <p>lisa.mallon@edinburgh.gov.uk</p> <p>0131 529 6291</p>

block are given an opportunity to purchase homes at market value. In addition to this, 16 homes have been identified for sale to Link Housing Association for rent through the Private Sector Leasing scheme.

Scottish Government Capital Funding for Affordable Housing

Scottish Government published the draft Infrastructure Investment Plan for consultation in September 2020 setting out its intention to create and fund a plan for high quality, energy efficient, zero carbon affordable housing with access to outdoor space, sustainable transport links, digital connectivity and community services. The consultation plan included £2.8bn in capital over the next five years to deliver more new affordable and social homes; a 16% increase on the current five year capital allocation. A further £58m was budgeted to help Registered Social Landlords deliver adaptations needed to enable tenants to stay in their homes for longer, or permit them a swift and safe return from hospital care.

The final Infrastructure Investment Plan was published on 4 February 2021 and the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) has increased from £2.8bn to £3.3bn over the next five years. The Scottish Budget 2021-22 announced on 28 January 2021 included £667.6m grant funding for affordable house building, i.e. £575.4m through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and £92.2m for Edinburgh and Glasgow under local government grant as part of Transfer of Management of Development Funding (TMDF). This funding forms the first tranche of the £3.3bn investment as part of the Infrastructure Investment Plan.

The joint TMDF allocation for Edinburgh and Glasgow has been frozen at £92.2m with no change anticipated in Edinburgh's share of the allocation. Scottish Government has topped up the TMDF allocation in previous years with Glasgow receiving £110.896m in 2020/21 and Edinburgh receiving £48.209m. The Convenor of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee has written to the Minister (Kevin Stewart MSP) requesting an uplift in funding for Edinburgh.

Contact:

elaine.scott@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 2277

Recent News

Background

Officers expect to receive a Resource Planning Assumption for 2021/22 in March.

Business Support Update

Following the report on Covid-19 Business Support to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee on [15 January 2021](#), there was a request for number of businesses supported throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. We can confirm that, as at 1 February 2021, the position across the key business support schemes* delivered since March 2020 was:

Applications received: 26,707

Applications approved: 20,312

Applications paid out: 20,312 (£146,592,420)

Applications rejected: 4,099

Applications pending: 2,296

* Business Grant scheme, Business Closure and Hardship Fund, Furlough Scheme, Contingency Fund (Nightclubs and Soft Plays), Strategic Framework Business Fund, Hospitality, Retail and Leisure Sector top up, Taxi and Private Hire Driver fund.

To date, we have provided financial support to over 19,000 Edinburgh businesses in response to COVID-19, with funding in excess of £181.4 million. This includes supporting 4,240 Taxi drivers with a total of £6.36 million of grant funding.

Since we launched the Discretionary Fund in early February, we have distributed £2,000 grants to over 600 businesses. Scottish Government have indicated their intention to expand the Discretionary Grant Fund with £90m nationally, to be confirmed on 18 March 2021. Edinburgh's allocation will be just over £10m. Officers are currently shaping proposals for how this should be distributed, aiming to expand the eligibility criteria to support more businesses, and will liaise with partners and group spokespeople with an aim to obtain agreement and open for applications from businesses as soon as possible after 18 March 2021.

Contact:

Elin.williamson@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 469 2801

Town and local centres – Funding and schedule of priority projects

The Scottish Government has announced a further £50m Town Centre Fund for projects across Scotland. It is intended to bring forward a report will be brought to Committee in June 2021 seeking agreement on projects to be funded from Edinburgh’s allocation.

In response to previous Town Centre Fund allocations, the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee agreed a strategic statement for investment in town centres and local centres in Edinburgh: “The Council will direct investment in Edinburgh’s town centres and local centres to projects that strengthen and reinforce their roles as set out in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan; contribute to delivery of the Economic Strategy; and enhance their resilience and sustainability in the face of change.” The Committee also agreed that officers should prepare a schedule of key projects in town and local centres as a resource to help inform where future investment could be directed, including the option to purchase empty units when the case for purchase was sufficiently strong.

Following consultation with ward councillors and with community councils, officers have produced a schedule. It identifies a top priority project for most of the eight town centres and 61 existing (and four proposed) local centres in Edinburgh although in some cases no projects have been identified. It is proposed that the schedule be used as a resource to help inform where investments in town centres and local centres could be directed. It will be used to generate the list of projects to be considered for the Town Centre Fund although it should be noted that the schedule also contains projects that are not eligible for this specific fund.

The schedule is a fluid document that can be updated and amended as required, e.g. in response to initiatives such as the 20 Minute Neighbourhood project. Officers will continue to maintain the schedule as projects are developed. If members wish to discuss a project for inclusion please contact Kyle Drummond.

Contact:

Kyle.drummond@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 4849

Edinburgh Economy Strategy Reporting

The Policy and Sustainability Committee on [1 December 2020](#) discussed a report on the Edinburgh Economy Strategy. At that meeting a proposed approach and timescales for the Edinburgh Economy Strategy was approved, with a draft planned for publication being reported to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 18 March 2021. A revised plan has been made due to continued uncertainty over the duration of the current lockdown and awareness that the crisis response period will be prolonged at least into the end of Q1 2021. Taking account of this change in context an issues paper will be prepared for the Policy and Sustainability Committee for 1 June 2021. To inform this report officers are continuing to engage on recovery plans with stakeholders and this will include the Edinburgh Economic Advisory Panel and further elected member oversight and support through the Adaptation and Renewal All Party Oversight Group with all party membership extended as appropriate for sessions on the Edinburgh Economy Strategy. Some of the emerging themes for the strategy include a focus on the recovery of the city centre, supporting fair work, sustainable growth and maximising net zero carbon opportunities for Edinburgh.

Contact:

chris.adams@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 6258

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Additional Funding

Scottish Government have provided Local Authorities with an additional £5m of rapid rehousing transition plan (RRTP) funding to support the increased pace of work around local rapid rehousing transition plans as we recover from the pandemic. The funding allocation for Edinburgh is £563k. The funding will support the homelessness transformational investment programme recently agreed at the Council Budget meeting equating to £994k of Council investment focusing on:

- stopping people from becoming homeless in the first place and in turn reducing the number of households accessing temporary accommodation; and

Contact:

nicky.brown@edinburgh.gov.uk

0131 529 7589

Recent News	Background
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting people to move out of temporary accommodation and into settled, permanent housing as quickly as possible. <p>This investment includes increasing the capacity of homeless housing officers, identifying and supporting households at risk of homelessness through the establishment of a multi-disciplinary team, maximising people’s income thus increasing housing options, and piloting family group decision making approaches.</p>	
<p><u>Performance Reporting</u></p> <p>Following an audit of homelessness services it was recommended that the Homelessness and Housing Support Service would provide a programme for performance updates to Committee, by March 2021.</p> <p>This will now be provided in June 2021 to ensure that all performance reporting is linked to the Council’s Business Plan.</p> <p>In addition to the future reporting requirements, the service currently provides an annual report to Committee on the statutory returns for homelessness. The most recent statutory returns report was presented to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 5 November 2020</p>	<p><u>Contact:</u></p> <p>nicky.brown@edinburgh.gov.uk</p> <p>0131 529 7589</p>