

Business Bulletin

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 3 June 2021

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p data-bbox="199 331 566 409">Convener Councillor Kate Campbell</p>  <p data-bbox="188 853 513 925">Vice Convener Councillor Mandy Watt</p> 	<ul data-bbox="630 331 997 705" 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="1118 320 1401 436">Jamie Macrae Committee Officer Tel: 0131 553 8242</p> <p data-bbox="1118 488 1417 645">Sarah Stirling Assistant Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 3009</p>

Affordable Housing Supply - update

The final 2021/22 Affordable Housing Supply Programme grant funding allocation is £52.4 million. This is a combination of £48.2 million from the Transfer of management Development funding, which was static from 2020/21 and an additional £4.2 million from the central housing budget. This is the largest starting budget to date. Due to the strong pipeline and record delivery the Council has secured an additional £35 million in grant funding over the last four years.

In March 2020, all construction work was suspended due to Covid-19. Despite this, the programme still managed to achieve 1,287 affordable home approvals for social rent, mid-market rent and low-cost home ownership in 2020/21. Almost 75% of grant funded approved homes were for social rent. 1,087 affordable homes were also completed in 2020/21. The 2020/21 Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) grant funding allocation spent out in full.

The Scottish Government are undertaking a review of grant subsidy benchmark levels with colleagues in the sector. The current grant subsidy benchmark for new social rented homes is between £59,000 and £72,000. The Council is represented on the working group, which will assess what adjustments are required to the current set of benchmark assumptions to account for inflation and additional quality measures. The working group will consider the impact of an adjustment in the benchmarks on the number of affordable homes that could be delivered.

Edinburgh Discretionary Business Support Fund

As noted in the Business Bulletin for Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee on 18 March 2021, additional funding was made to the Discretionary Grant Fund nationally and as a result Edinburgh's allocation increased by £10,066,139. Consequently, the Council's Incident Management Team agreed, on 8 March 2021, that the additional funding would be used to extend the grant size to £4,000 and a 'top up' be made to recipients of the first grant by an additional £2,000.

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Recent News

It was also agreed to relax the eligibility criteria to effectively consider overall impact of Covid-19 restrictions rather than just those restrictions introduced since October 2020, and to provide additional support to businesses with employees. As at close of business 15 April 2021, the Edinburgh Discretionary Business Support Fund had paid out £4,004,000 to over 800 businesses.

On 12 April 2021, the Council's Incident Management Team further approved that part of the Fund would be used to fund a top up of £1,000 to all recipients of the Taxi and Private Hire Driver Support Fund. The total sum for this will be £4,406,000. Payments commenced on 15 April and should be completed by 23 April.

UK Community Renewal Fund

The City of Edinburgh Council has been seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity as part of the [UK Community Renewal Fund](#) between July 2021 and the end of March 2022.

The UK Community Renewal Fund is £220 million of investment across the UK. It aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK to pilot programmes, creating opportunities to trial new approaches and innovative ideas at the local level.

A focus for this fund is to support innovation and new ideas, investing in pilots that draw on local insights and which will help places to prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2022.

Projects must deliver activity that is line with the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and fall into at least one of the following priorities:

- Investment in skills;
- Investment for local business;
- Investment in communities and place; and
- Supporting people into employment.

We were specifically targeting proposals that fit with our local priorities:

- [Edinburgh's Strategic Skills Pipeline](#)
- [Edinburgh Economic Strategy: Delivering Good Growth for Everyone](#)

Background

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Recent News

- [Edinburgh Poverty Commission – A Just Capital: Actions to End Poverty in Edinburgh](#)
- [No One Left Behind: delivery plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- [Young Person's Guarantee - Phase 1: activity plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

More information on the Community Renewal Fund can be found at

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/ukcommunityrenewalfund. Last day for applications was 24 May with the submission to UK Government by 18 June. A report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee will follow in September, detailing the successful bids.

Background

Town Centre Fund

The Scottish Government have recently advised that there will be no Town Centre Fund allocations made to local authorities this year. They have, however, notified the Council of a new fund, the Place Based Investment Fund, which will run over the next five years. The allocation to City of Edinburgh Council in 2021/22 is £1.9 million and it is estimated that an award of approximately £1.3 million can be expected each year for the next four years.

Officers are currently working through the grant award letter provisions. The initial assessment suggests that the terms are fairly broad and that a range of projects can be supported. Expenditure is not linked to town or local centres and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are stated as a new criteria to be considered by Councils when allocating the funds.

The emerging 20 Minute Neighbourhood Strategy will be reported to Policy and Sustainability Committee in June. A special meeting of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee is being considered for later in June to consider the first allocations of funding from the Place Based Investment Fund. The projects selected will need to have funds committed by 31 March 2022 although there is no longstop date for actual expenditure.

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Recent News

EICC – Strategic Delivery Agreement (SDA)

The work on the SDA is well underway and discussions between officers and the EICC Executive are progressing well. The draft SDA is in the process of being agreed but this is dependent upon the finalisation of the other agreements needed for the hotel and hotel school project. The overall negotiation period is now nearing completion and it is envisaged that a full and final business case will be presented to Council in August this year. In order that the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee are able to consider the SDA in advance of August, it is proposed to include this if an additional Committee is arranged in late June.

Fountainbridge

Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee agreed a delivery strategy and approved the initiation of procurement process to identify a development partner for Fountainbridge. The process identified Cruden Homes (East) Limited as the preferred partner.

A report recommending an award of contract for a pre-development period was agreed by Finance and Resources Committee on 20 May 2021.

This contract will allow the Development Partner to develop the designs for all the blocks within the site and identify end users for the private homes and office building.

Further reports will be brought to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work and Finance and Resources Committee following the completion of the pre-development period seeking approval of the final business case and authority to enter into a Development Agreement for delivery of the mixed use development.

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