

## Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 27 August 2024

### Present

Councillors Meagher (Convener), Bennet, Biagi, Bruce, Dobbin, Flannery, Jones, Key, Macinnes (substituting for Councillor Key for items 13-20), Miller, Parker and Pogson.

Also present: Councillor McKenzie (item 14)

### 1. Deputations

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**a) Living Rent (in relation to Item 7.1 on the agenda – Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance (regarding the MTIS scheme))**

The deputation felt that the service provided by the Council in regard to the maintenance of their property had been poor and that all processes should be transparent and fair. They indicated that the costs being charged to residents were excessive and many residents now faced being in long-term debt.

One of their main concerns was the high project management fee at 15% to 20%, which they indicated was higher than others charged throughout Scotland and that a payment plan offered to them had a charge of 4%.

The deputation urged the Committee to review the cost of the charges for the management fees and payment plan.

(See Item 9 below)

**b) Westfield Court Residents' Group (in relation to Item 7.6 on the agenda – Westfield Court)**

The deputation were concerned about the cost of their communal heating and maintenance bills and indicated that they felt that due to the age of the system it was no longer fit for purpose. They indicated that they were unable to find any information on who their gas supplier was, how much the charges were, how long the contract was for and any future changes to the supplier.

(See Item 14 below)

**c) Living Rent (in relation to Item 7.3 on the agenda – Affordable Housing Programme Update 2024/25)**

The deputation indicated that they were in support of the visitor levy being used towards funding council housing as they felt it would offer important opportunities to raise funds to build Council housing and, as a result, ensure that there were more homes that people could afford. They asked the Committee to

look into other forms of funding streams to help fund social housing and stressed that Edinburgh had faced a shortfall in its affordable housing allowance following the cuts at a national level and believed that it needed to seize every opportunity possible to raise money to build more council homes for people who lived in the city.

The deputation urged the Committee to use its power and review the visitor levy after two years to see how it could be used further to maximise income going into the building and renovation of council housing and emphasised that the Council housing needed was one social rents and not through a mid market tenure.

(See Item 11 below)

**d) North Edinburgh Growers Network (in relation to Item 8.1 on the agenda – Opportunities for Nature on HRA Land)**

The deputation indicated that in North Edinburgh, some areas had demonstrate the potential of HRA land, such as the thriving community gardens that had been developed by local residents on street corners in Granton over the past 14 years which were not just 'space', but had become valued places, where people met, and grew food together.

The deputation asked that consideration be given to the significant potential of HRA land, and crucially, the process by which it was improved, being a key asset in addressing the needs of communities, particularly in areas of high deprivation, where HRA land was found. The felt that opportunities for nature, opportunities for communities, and wider strategies including community wealth building, NET Zero, the food growing strategy, and the implications of right to grow were further considerations, and account should be taken of practicalities such as maintenance liability and whether measures would increase or reduce the workload of Neighbourhood Environment Services (NES).

(See Item 17 below)

**e) Edible Estates (in relation to Item 8.1 on the agenda - Opportunities for Nature on HRA Land))**

The deputation welcomed the ambition to utilise Estate Improvement Programme budget to support nature restoration on HRA land and indicated that in the recent past, the Neighbourhood Environment Programme (EIP predecessor), was in places used to tarmac greenspace to reduce maintenance costs. They noted that it had been recognised by council staff and communities, the landscape in many council estates was degraded, and did not contribute as it could to the health and wellbeing of residents.

The deputation stressed that many studies had been commissioned by the Council to investigate the improvement of the public realm and asked that nature restoration interventions feature highly in the subsequent delivery of these improvements. They welcomed the opportunity to work with the Council's

Thriving Greenspaces team and Housing Officers to bring the benefits of nature restoration into the council estates.

The deputation asked the Committee to investigate opportunities for community wealth building by contracting community anchor bodies to maintain their local greenspace, taking a community gardening approach which maximised the benefits and involvement of local residents.

(See Item 17 below)

**f) Edinburgh Student Housing Co-operative (in relation to Item 9.1 on the agenda - Motion by Councillor Parker – Expanding Edinburgh’s Successful Student Housing Co-op)**

The deputation believed that co-operatives could be scaleable and self-sustaining and that any support to accelerate their growth would pay dividends in addressing the current housing crisis by empowering many more young people to take ownership of their living conditions and build the skills to start new and contribute to existing co-operative businesses.

The deputation thanked Councillor Parker for the motion, which they fully supported in its original text, and the many members of the Committee who had engaged with them over the past years playing a crucial role in opening the door for them to take over their current site with little to no financial cost to the Council. By commissioning a report, they felt that the Committee now had the chance to once again pick up the city's pioneering role in supporting urban innovation with a model that could demonstrably deliver much-needed, affordable rent and explore how combining the Council's greater access to resources with the energy of student co-ops had the potential to unlock a new phase in the history of student housing in the city.

(See Item 18 below)

**g) Edinburgh University Students’ Association (in relation to Item 9.1 on the agenda - Motion by Councillor Parker – Expanding Edinburgh’s Successful Student Housing Co-op)**

The deputation supported the motion by Councillor Parker as they believed it would take important steps towards alleviating housing pressures in the student community, as well as improving student wellbeing and integration into the city. They felt that it was clear that there were many issues with student housing in Edinburgh; and that 12% of all students in Scotland had experienced homelessness during their studies, while rental costs in Edinburgh increased at a rate of 13.7%.

The deputation stressed that student housing co-operatives were a vital part of the solution to the student housing crisis.

(See Item 18 below)

## 2. Minutes

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### Decision

To approve the minute of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 14 May 2024 as a correct record.

## 3. Work Programme

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The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Work Programme was presented.

### Decision

To note the work programme.

(Reference – Work Programme, submitted.)

## 4. Rolling Actions Log

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The Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee Rolling Actions Log was presented.

### Decision

- 1) To agree to close the following actions:
  - **Action 9** – Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024-29
  - **Action 10(1)** – Housing Emergency Action Plan
  - **Action 14** – Motion by Councillor Caldwell – Edindex Action During the Housing Emergency
  - **Action 18** – Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance
  - **Action 19(1) and (3)** – Responding to the Housing Emergency Declaration
  - **Action 22** - Motion by Councillor Parker - Opportunities for nature on HRA land
- 2) To agree not to close Action 5 and mark as ongoing.
- 3) To ask that an expected completion date be added to Action 7.
- 4) To otherwise note the remaining outstanding actions.

(Reference – Rolling Actions Log, submitted.)

## 5. Business Bulletin

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The Business Bulletin was presented.

### Decision

To note the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – Business Bulletin, submitted.)

## 6. Network of Employability Support and Training

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Approval was sought to undertake a grants commissioning process for implementing a refreshed Network of Employability Support and Training (NEST) which would include grant funding for Parental Employability Support (PES) and to increase the delivery of the successful NEST Vocational Training Framework (VTF) in 2024/25 which included extending the delivery for a further year for 2025/26, subject to the availability of funding from the Scottish Government.

### Decision

- 1) To note the co-production exercise and review undertaken in order to update, develop and realign the specification for the Network of Employability Support and Training (NEST) in Edinburgh.
- 2) To note that recommendations for funding a refreshed NEST small grants programme would be reported to Committee following completion of a grants commissioning process.
- 3) To approve additional funding of £175,000 to Capital City Partnership (CCP) to provide a total of £425,000 for the NEST Vocational Training Framework delivery in 2024/25.
- 4) To approve an extension for a further year (2025/26) of the direct award of funding at the increased level to Capital City Partnership (CCP) for the NEST Vocational Training Framework, subject to continued Scottish Government funding being available.

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Sustainable Development, submitted.)

## 7. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

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An update was provided on the delivery of the United Kingdom (UK) Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in Edinburgh.

### Motion

- 1) To note the progress made with the delivery of programmes in Edinburgh funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 2) To note the continued engagement with the UK Government regarding future UK Government Structural Funding.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### Amendment

- 1) To note the progress made with the delivery of programmes in Edinburgh funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 2) To note the continued engagement with the UK Government regarding future UK Government Structural Funding.
- 3) To ask officers that in the course of their engagement with the UK Government they call for capital funding programme(s) following on from the Shared Prosperity Fund to be designed to enable projects related to net zero, climate

adaptation and nature recovery as per the Council Business Plan aim of becoming a Net Zero City by 2030.

- moved by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Parker

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the progress made with the delivery of programmes in Edinburgh funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 2) To note the continued engagement with the UK Government regarding future UK Government Structural Funding.
- 3) To ask officers that in the course of their engagement with the UK Government they call for capital funding programme(s) following on from the Shared Prosperity Fund to be designed to enable projects related to net zero, climate adaptation and nature recovery as per the Council Business Plan aim of becoming a Net Zero City by 2030.

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Sustainable Development, submitted.)

## **8. No One Left Behind – ASN Provision**

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Details were provided on the work undertaken by the Council and the Local Employability Partnership (LEP) to put in place a Stage 1 Additional Support Needs (ASN) employability service, funded by the Scottish Government under the No One Left Behind (NOLB) strategy, for 2024/25 together with the outcome of the grant commissioning process.

### **Decision**

To note the outcome of the grant bidding process for Additional Support Need (ASN) employability Stage 1 provision.

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Sustainable Development, submitted.)

## **9. Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance**

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An update was provided of service performance showing a range of performance data across the breadth of the Housing and Homelessness service, to improve overall Committee scrutiny of key indicators. with a deep dive into Homelessness Prevention.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note the second cyclical service performance report.
- 2) To note that performance targets were not being met in the following service areas:
  - a) Void property management;
  - b) Homelessness;

- c) Damp and mould.
  - 3) To note the deeper dive into Homelessness Prevention set out in Appendix 5 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness.
  - 4) To note the ongoing progress in implementing the service review.
- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

#### **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note the second cyclical service performance report.
- 2) To note that performance targets were not being met in the following service areas:
  - a) Void property management;
  - b) Homelessness;
  - c) Damp and mould.
- 3) To note the deeper dive into Homelessness Prevention set out in Appendix 5 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness.
- 4) To note the ongoing progress in implementing the service review.
- 5) To add in reference to Appendix 6 to the report:

“Committee notes the data at Table 26 showing the number of Dampness Cases raised by Ward during the previous quarter and the recorded days to complete works from works order raised.

Committee would like additional information to be presented in Appendix 6 going forward, namely:

- a) Number of open dampness cases in current quarter by Ward compared to previous quarter;
- b) A record of the length of time these cases have been open – presented as number of cases per time period, not shown as an average;
- c) A ‘Heat Map’ showing location of dampness cases in order to indicate any ‘clustering’ of cases.”

- moved by Councillor Dobbin, seconded by Councillor Key

#### **Amendment 2**

- 1) To note the second cyclical service performance report.
- 2) To note that performance targets were not being met in the following service areas:
  - a) Void property management;
  - b) Homelessness;
  - c) Damp and mould.

- 3) To note the deeper dive into Homelessness Prevention set out in Appendix 5 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness.
- 4) To note the ongoing progress in implementing the service review.
- 5) To agree that updates under Homelessness at Appendix 4 to the report include Failure to Accommodate breaches in reports going forward.
- 6) To also agree that updates on the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service works going forward will also include:
  - a) Voting results for each phase, including non-responses in raw data and % format (where applicable)
  - b) How many Council minority blocks have been outvoted for the survey or scope of works, and which phases these apply to (where applicable)
  - c) Average (mean), range and interquartile range for estimates or final bills for MTIS works across phases (where applicable)
  - d) The total value of the management fees invoiced for each phase of work, (where applicable)
  - e) A breakdown of invoices which are paid, due and overdue for any phase of works (where applicable)
  - f) How much grant in kind funding the Council has secured per property in each phase of works (where a property owner is eligible)

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), Amendments 1 and 2 were accepted as addenda to the motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the second cyclical service performance report.
- 2) To note that performance targets were not being met in the following service areas:
  - a) Void property management;
  - b) Homelessness;
  - c) Damp and mould.
- 3) To note the deeper dive into Homelessness Prevention set out in Appendix 5 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness.
- 4) To note the ongoing progress in implementing the service review.
- 5) To agree that updates under Homelessness at Appendix 4 to the report include Failure to Accommodate breaches in reports going forward.
- 6) To note the data at Table 26 in the report showing the number of Dampness Cases raised by Ward during the previous quarter and the recorded days to complete works from works order raised.



- 7) To agree to additional information being presented in Appendix 6 to the report going forward, namely:
  - a) Number of open dampness cases in current quarter by Ward compared to previous quarter;
  - b) A record of the length of time these cases had been open – presented as number of cases per time period, not shown as an average;
  - c) A 'Heat Map' showing location of dampness cases in order to indicate any 'clustering' of cases.
- 6) To also agree that updates on the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service works going forward would also include:
  - a) Voting results for each phase, including non-responses in raw data and % format (where applicable);
  - b) How many Council minority blocks had been outvoted for the survey or scope of works, and which phases these applied to (where applicable);
  - c) Average (mean), range and interquartile range for estimates or final bills for MTIS works across phases (where applicable);
  - d) The total value of the management fees invoiced for each phase of work, (where applicable);
  - e) A breakdown of invoices which were paid, due and overdue for any phase of works (where applicable);
  - f) How much grant in kind funding the Council had secured per property in each phase of works (where a property owner was eligible).

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee 27 February 2024 (item 12); report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness, submitted.)

## **10. Annual Assurance Statement on Housing Services 2023/24**

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### **Decision**

To note that the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness had been withdrawn.

## **11. Affordable Housing Programme Update 2024/25**

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An update on the affordable housing programme provided details of commitment levels from the Scottish Government and discussions with partners in relation to phasing of projects and their ability to bring forward private finance, as well as the strategic use of commuted sums, which had all assisted in setting out an affordable housing programme of 427 new grant funded approvals in 2024/25. It was anticipated that approximately 70% of the programme would be for social rent.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note the 2024/25 programme included an estimated 587 new affordable housing approvals, 836 completions and 800 site starts.

- 2) To note that 427 new affordable housing approvals requiring grant funding would be taken forward in 2024/25 despite the 24% reduction in affordable housing grant funding from the Scottish Government, with Resource Planning Assumptions reducing from £45.2m to £34.2m.
- 3) To refer the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness to Planning Committee for information.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### **Amendment**

- 1) To note the 2024/25 programme included an estimated 587 new affordable housing approvals, 836 completions and 800 site starts.
- 2) To note that 427 new affordable housing approvals requiring grant funding would be taken forward in 2024/25 despite the 24% reduction in affordable housing grant funding from the Scottish Government, with Resource Planning Assumptions reducing from £45.2m to £34.2m.
- 3) To refer the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness to Planning Committee for information.
- 4) Welcomes the decision at Policy and Sustainability Committee to commit income from the Transient Visitor Levy towards housing, noting the positive impact this will have on the Council's ability to deliver social housing.
- 5) Notes ongoing work to look at remodelling the way affordable housing is funded, including exploration with the Scottish Government around the permissibility of transferring funds from the General Fund to the HRA.
- 6) Agrees that a briefing note will be circulated to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee members with an update on conversations with the Scottish Government on this point, as well as an outline of the "key reporting timetables" described in 4.12 of the report, to support political groups with the budget setting process for 2025-2026.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), the amendment was accepted as an addendum to the motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the 2024/25 programme included an estimated 587 new affordable housing approvals, 836 completions and 800 site starts.
- 2) To note that 427 new affordable housing approvals requiring grant funding would be taken forward in 2024/25 despite the 24% reduction in affordable housing grant funding from the Scottish Government, with Resource Planning Assumptions reducing from £45.2m to £34.2m.
- 3) To refer the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness to Planning Committee for information.

- 4) To welcome the decision at Policy and Sustainability Committee to commit income from the Transient Visitor Levy towards housing, noting the positive impact this would have on the Council's ability to deliver social housing.
- 5) To note ongoing work to look at remodelling the way affordable housing was funded, including exploration with the Scottish Government around the permissibility of transferring funds from the General Fund to the HRA.
- 6) To agree that a briefing note would be circulated to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee members with an update on conversations with the Scottish Government on this point, as well as an outline of the "key reporting timetables" described in 4.12 of the report, to support political groups with the budget setting process for 2025-2026.

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness, submitted.)

## **12. Edinburgh Living Annual Update 2023**

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Details were provided on the activities carried out by Edinburgh Living in 2023 together with the financial statements for 2023 and 2022. The 2022 financial position had previously been reported to committee on an interim basis in advance of the final audit findings.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the report by the Edinburgh Living annual update for 2023.
- 2) To agree that the Service Director of Housing and Homelessness replace the Executive Director of Place on the Edinburgh Living Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Corporate Body.
- 3) To note Edinburgh Living's positive impact on tackling housing need through the provision of new affordable homes across the city.
- 4) To refer the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny, in line with Edinburgh Living's governance arrangements.

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness, submitted.)

## **13. EdIndex During the Housing Emergency**

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In response to a motion by Councillor Caldwell a summary was provided of the allocations model, current performance and the benefits of EdIndex, in the context of the challenging supply and demand issues in the city together with an outline of some of the improvement work currently underway.

### **Motion**

- 1) To agree to discharge the actions agreed by Committee on 5 December 2023 to prepare a report, within three cycles, on EdIndex during the Housing Emergency.

- 2) To agree that the key data set out in Appendix 4 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness be included in the next Cyclical Assurance report and all future reports, rather than the Edinburgh by Numbers report.
- 3) To note a review of the Allocation Policy was underway as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) and that an update would be presented to Committee in December 2024.
- 4) To note the temporary changes made on how the Allocation Policy was applied in a Housing Emergency to support an increase in allocations of available homes to those experiencing homelessness. This would be kept under review, with the next review planned for September 2024.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### **Amendment**

- 1) To agree to discharge the actions agreed by Committee on 5 December 2023 to prepare a report, within three cycles, on EdIndex during the Housing Emergency.
- 2) Agrees that the key data set out in Appendix 4 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness be included in the Edinburgh by Numbers Report.
- 3) To note a review of the Allocation Policy was underway as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) and that an update would be presented to Committee in December 2024.
- 4) To note the temporary changes made on how the Allocation Policy was applied in a Housing Emergency to support an increase in allocations of available homes to those experiencing homelessness. This would be kept under review, with the next review planned for September 2024.
- 5) Thanks officers for the report, and recent briefing, on the EdIndex process.
- 6) a) Notes that the motion by Cllr Caldwell asked for
 

*“To request a report in three cycles which outlined:*

  - 4a. *Key statistics from EdIndex over FY 23/24, including: a. number of applicants registered on EdIndex.*
  - b. *total number of successful and unsuccessful bids in the FY. c. average number of days applicants on different priority tiers.*
  - c. *A full list of partner organisations who were associated with EdIndex and the benefits that EdIndex partners, including the Council, received.*
  - d. *What alternative systems comparable local authorities used.*
  - e. *A general summation of feedback from applicants over the last year and any relevant mechanisms/proposals to collect feedback from unsuccessful and successful applicants and third sector*

*partners, as well as any proposals to maximise social equity in the system in the context of the Housing Emergency.*

5. *To request the information requested in 4. a, b, and c be appended to the annual 'Edinburgh in Numbers' report to ensure transparent public monitoring during the Housing Emergency*

- 7) Notes that a, c, d were complete
- 8) Notes that b is still outstanding
- 9) Notes Committee agreed that relevant information above would be appended to the annual Edinburgh by Numbers *to ensure transparent public monitoring during the Housing Emergency.*

- moved by Councillor Flannery, Seconded by Councillor Bennett

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), the amendment was adjusted and accepted as an amendment to the motion.

### **Decision**

- 1) To agree to discharge the actions agreed by Committee on 5 December 2023 to prepare a report, within three cycles, on EdIndex during the Housing Emergency.
- 2) To agree that the key data set out in Appendix 4 to the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness be included in the Edinburgh by Numbers Report.
- 3) To note a review of the Allocation Policy was underway as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) and that an update would be presented to Committee in December 2024.
- 4) To note the temporary changes made on how the Allocation Policy was applied in a Housing Emergency to support an increase in allocations of available homes to those experiencing homelessness. This would be kept under review, with the next review planned for September 2024.
- 5) To thank officers for the report, and recent briefing, on the EdIndex process.
- 6) a) To note that the motion by Cllr Caldwell asked for:  
*"To request a report in three cycles which outlined:*
  - 4a. *Key statistics from EdIndex over FY 23/24, including: a. number of applicants registered on EdIndex.*
  - b. *total number of successful and unsuccessful bids in the FY. c. average number of days applicants on different priority tiers.*
  - c. *A full list of partner organisations who were associated with EdIndex and the benefits that EdIndex partners, including the Council, received.*
  - d. *What alternative systems comparable local authorities used.*

- e. *A general summation of feedback from applicants over the last year and any relevant mechanisms/proposals to collect feedback from unsuccessful and successful applicants and third sector partners, as well as any proposals to maximise social equity in the system in the context of the Housing Emergency.*
- 5. *To request the information requested in 4. a, b, and c be appended to the annual 'Edinburgh in Numbers' report to ensure transparent public monitoring during the Housing Emergency*
- 7) To note that a, c, d were complete.
- 8) To note that b was still outstanding.
- 9) To agree that relevant information above would be appended to the annual Edinburgh by Numbers as well as in the cyclical assurance report *to ensure transparent public monitoring during the Housing Emergency.*

(Reference – report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness, submitted.)

## 14. Westfield Court

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In response to a motion by Councillor McKenzie details were provided on costs charged to owners at Westfield Court.

In accordance with Standing Order 33.1, the Convener agreed that Councillor McKenzie could address committee on this item.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness Service.
- 2) To agree to discharge the motion by Councillor McKenzie.
- 3) To note the information presented on potential owners' energy cost subsidies.
- 4) To note the officer recommendation that no subsidy is applied.
- 5) To direct officers to issue bills to owners upon confirmation of final costs and any agreed subsidy.
- 6) To arrange for settlement of any subsidised costs through Council funding.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### **Amendment 1**

- 1) Regrets the on-going distress caused to residents at Westfield and at other blocks factored by the City of Edinburgh Council.
- 2) Notes the confusion caused by the roles of the Council as owner, landlord and factor.
- 3) To note the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness Service.
- 4) Agrees a further report/briefing note exploring other forms of funding to support a subsidy for owners.
- 5) To note the information presented on potential owners' energy cost subsidies.

- 6) To direct officers to issue bills to owners upon confirmation of final costs and any agreed subsidy.
  - 7) To arrange for settlement of any subsidised costs through Council funding.
- moved by Councillor Flannery, seconded by Councillor Bennett

### **Amendment 2**

- 1) To note the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness Service.
- 2) To note the officer recommendation that no subsidy be applied.
- 3) To note the information presented on potential owners' energy cost subsidies.
- 4) Expresses its regret at the numerous failings relating to fees and charges, repairs and maintenance at Westfield Court, and apologises to residents whose lives have been negatively impacted by this.
- 5) Asks that officers revisit options for the payment of energy bills for 2024-2025 with residents, including setting up payment plans to spread the costs over multiple years, and asks that officers will write to all residents individually to arrange a time to discuss this with them. Further asks that ward Councillors will be notified when these invitations have been sent and an update on this action is provided to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee in the next Business Bulletin.
- 6) Notes that the contract for the communal gas supply at Westfield Court is in place until the end of the financial year (2024-2025). Agrees a briefing **note is** circulated to ward Councillors and Committee members setting out plans for the negotiation of the new energy contract and how it will constitute best value for money for residents in terms of unit cost and standing charges, including a comparison with the existing deal (noting that the unit cost of the existing contract has still not been shared, despite this being requested). Agrees that this information will also be communicated to residents.
- 7) Notes that there are other Council housing blocks which rely on communal heating and considers that any decision to subsidise communal heating charges in one block should apply across the board and be sustainable in the long-term. Therefore, agrees that further work is completed to look at options for possible subsidies to be applied to communal heating blocks across the full housing estate to act as a kind of energy "price cap", and agrees that these options are presented to Councillors as part of the budget strategy paper due in October 2024.
- 8) Recognises the particular vulnerability of households with communal or district heating systems given the lack of price caps or protections in place for them. Therefore, agrees that the Convener will write to the UK Government to raise this issue and encourage the instatement of an energy price cap for communal or district heating customers as soon as possible.
- 9) Notes that the Council has frozen communal heating charges for Council tenants at Maiden Craig Court, Cables Wynd House, Greendykes, 22 Wauchope Terrace,

Ferniehill Drive and Saughton Mains Terrace citing “ongoing issues with systems providing heat and determining the appropriate charging tariff for energy use”. Therefore, requests an urgent briefing note for Committee members setting out the status of the heating systems in each of these blocks, and information about if residents are experiencing the same issues as at Westfield Court.

- 10) Notes that the Council's Written Statement of Services sets out the terms, delivery and standards of arrangement between the Council as a property factor and other owners in a building. Considers that evidence in this report points to a number of failings in terms of the Council's obligations with regard to communication arrangements and repairs and maintenance as set out there and in the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011. Therefore, agrees to refer this report to Governance, Risk and Best Value committee to consider this in further detail. Further agrees that the Written Statement of Services is appended to the report as part of its referral.
- 11) Notes that the refreshed High-Rise Strategy is intended to address many of the failings outlined in this report. Therefore, agrees that this strategy is shared with Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee members as soon as possible, and appended to this report as part of its referral to Governance, Risk and Best Value committee.

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), Amendments 1 and 2 were adjusted and accepted as amendments to the Motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To regret the on-going distress caused to residents at Westfield and at other blocks factored by the City of Edinburgh Council.
- 2) To note the confusion caused by the roles of the Council as owner, landlord and factor.
- 3) To note the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness Service.
- 4) To agree a further report/briefing note exploring other forms of funding to support a subsidy for owners.
- 5) To note the information presented on potential owners' energy cost subsidies.
- 6) To express regret at the numerous failings relating to fees and charges, repairs and maintenance at Westfield Court, and apologise to residents whose lives had been negatively impacted by this.
- 7) To ask that officers revisit options for the payment of energy bills for 2024-2025 with residents, including setting up payment plans to spread the costs over multiple years, and ask that officers write to all residents individually to arrange a time to discuss this with them. Further, to ask that ward Councillors be notified when these invitations had been sent and an update on this action be provided to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee in the next Business Bulletin.



- 8) To note that the contract for the communal gas supply at Westfield Court was in place until the end of the financial year (2024-2025). To agree a briefing note be circulated to ward Councillors and Committee members setting out plans for the negotiation of the new energy contract and how it would constitute best value for money for residents in terms of unit cost and standing charges, including a comparison with the existing deal (noting that the unit cost of the existing contract has still not been shared, despite this being requested). To agree that this information would also be communicated to residents.
- 9) To note that there were other Council housing blocks which relied on communal heating and to consider that any decision to subsidise communal heating charges in one block should apply across the board and be sustainable in the long-term. Therefore, to agree that further work be completed to look at options for possible subsidies to be applied to communal heating blocks across the full housing estate to act as a kind of energy “price cap”, and agree that these options be presented to Councillors as part of the budget strategy paper due in October 2024.
- 10) To recognise the particular vulnerability of households with communal or district heating systems given the lack of price caps or protections in place for them. Therefore, to agree that the Convener would write to the UK Government to raise this issue and encourage the instatement of an energy price cap for communal or district heating customers as soon as possible.
- 11) To note that the Council had frozen communal heating charges for Council tenants at Maiden Craig Court, Cables Wynd House, Greendykes, 22 Wauchope Terrace, Ferniehill Drive and Saughton Mains Terrace citing “ongoing issues with systems providing heat and determining the appropriate charging tariff for energy use”. Therefore, to request an urgent briefing note for Committee members setting out the status of the heating systems in each of these blocks, and information about if residents were experiencing the same issues as at Westfield Court.
- 12) To note that the Council’s Written Statement of Services set out the terms, delivery and standards of arrangement between the Council as a property factor and other owners in a building. To consider that evidence in this report pointed to a number of failings in terms of the Council’s obligations with regard to communication arrangements and repairs and maintenance as set out there and in the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011. Therefore, to agree to refer this report to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee to consider this in further detail. Further, to agree that the Written Statement of Services be appended to the report as part of its referral.

- 13) To note that the refreshed High-Rise Strategy was intended to address many of the failings outlined in this report. Therefore, to agree that this strategy be shared with Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee members as soon as possible, and appended to this report as part of its referral to Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

(References – Act of Council No 21 of 27 June 2024; report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness, submitted.)

## **15. Place Based Investment Programme – 2025/26 – Provisional Allocations**

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### **Decision**

To note that the report by the Service Director, Sustainable Development had been withdrawn.

## **16. Internal Audit Update Report: Quarter 4 2023/24 – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee**

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The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred a report on the audit of Housing Operations - Management of Scaffolding to the Housing, Homelessness and Fairwork Committee for consideration.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note
  - a) Finding 2 on Scaffolding Cost monitoring
  - b) Finding 3 on Contractor performance monitoring.
- 2) To request a report which covered the approach Housing Property would take to address the issues raised in the audit findings, including improvements to processes, procedures and a review of the procurement and framework arrangements, and that this report be referred back to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny
- 3) To note the summary of the Committee discussion at Appendix 2 of the referral report.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note
  - a) Finding 2 on Scaffolding Cost monitoring
  - b) Finding 3 on Contractor performance monitoring.
- 2) To request a report which covered the approach Housing Property would take to address the issues raised in the audit findings, including improvements to processes, procedures and a review of the procurement and framework arrangements, and that this report be referred back to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny

- 3) To note the summary of the Committee discussion at Appendix 2 of the referral report.
- 4) To request a report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee (in an acceptable number of cycles) exploring the options for an insourced scaffolding service.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

### **Amendment 2**

- 1) To note
  - a) Finding 2 on Scaffolding Cost monitoring
  - b) Finding 3 on Contractor performance monitoring.
- 2) To request a report which covered the approach Housing Property would take to address the issues raised in the audit findings, including improvements to processes, procedures and a review of the procurement and framework arrangements, and that this report be referred back to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny
- 3) To note the summary of the Committee discussion at Appendix 2 of the referral report.
- 4) To request a report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee (in an acceptable number of cycles) exploring the options for an insourced scaffolding service including all associated costs.

- moved by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Jones

In accordance with Standing Order 22(3), Amendments 1 and 2 were accepted as addenda to the Motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note
  - a) Finding 2 on Scaffolding Cost monitoring
  - b) Finding 3 on Contractor performance monitoring.
- 2) To request a report which covered the approach Housing Property would take to address the issues raised in the audit findings, including improvements to processes, procedures and a review of the procurement and framework arrangements, and that this report be referred back to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny
- 3) To note the summary of the Committee discussion at Appendix 2 of the referral report.

- 4) To request a report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee (in an acceptable number of cycles) exploring the options for an insourced scaffolding service including all associated costs.

(References – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee of 7 May 2024 (item 8); referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)

## 17. Opportunities for Nature on HRA Land

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In response to a motion by Councillor Parker, details were provided on opportunities for nature on HRA land.

### Motion

- 1) To note the intention to provide an annual update on projects delivered through the Environmental Improvement Programme, including details of how these projects had contributed to nature and biodiversity.
- 2) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 27 February 2024 on opportunities for nature on HRA land.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

### Amendment 1

Committee:

- 1) Thanks officers for the report.
- 2) Notes the recent Right to Grow report presented to Culture and Communities and the fantastic deputations given by North Edinburgh Community Growing Network.
- 3) Notes the success of Inch Nursery in partnership with Craigmillar Growers and Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust in providing nearly 1,500 kgs of locally harvested fruit and vegetables to local food pantries in Craigmillar, Gilmerton, Inch House and Gracemount Primary School.
- 4) Notes that there are many small providers and collectives presently supporting communities to grow food and improve the biodiversity of their areas.
- 5) Notes that what is set out in the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness allows for groups to “propose” projects (4.7) but the projects will be delivered through procurement by approved contractors (4.11), only.
- 6) Believes that consideration should be given for smaller projects to not only be proposed by, but also delivered and managed by, local communities.
- 7) To note the intention to provide an annual update on projects delivered through the Environmental Improvement Programme, including details of how these projects had contributed to nature and biodiversity.
- 8) Agrees to a further report within one cycle to outline how a proportion of the monies allocated to EIP can be accessed by community groups to allow them to deliver and manage agreed proposed projects, and before the November EIP deadline.

- 9) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 27 February 2024 on opportunities for nature on HRA land  
- moved by Councillor Flannery, seconded by Councillor Bennett

### **Amendment 2**

- 1) To note the intention to provide an annual update on projects delivered through the Environmental Improvement Programme, including details of how these projects had contributed to nature and biodiversity.
- 2) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 27 February 2024 on opportunities for nature on HRA land.
- 3) Notes from the report that due to capacity, “supporting estates work has been a lesser priority in recent years” and recognises that, in the context of a Housing Emergency, Housing Officers will be concentrating on “core activities [...] including dealing with the letting of void properties, supporting tenants with rent arrears and tenancy management tasks”. Further recognises that not all Housing Officers will have knowledge and experience in delivering projects which put nature recovery at their heart.
- 4) Welcomes the decision at Culture and Communities under its “Right to Grow” update to further progress actions to support community growing, including on existing hardstanding, and on HRA land.
- 5) Recognises that existing community groups and 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector organisations have a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with communities to design high quality, community-led, estate-based projects which improve outcomes for nature (including community growing).

Therefore:

- 6) Agrees to host a roundtable discussion to explore how, in line with Community Wealth Building principles, the HRA’s EIP budget could be restructured to better empower 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector and community growing organisations to work in closer partnership with Housing Officers, as well as colleagues in Neighbourhood Environment Services, Thriving Greenspaces and nature recovery, to deliver projects which more readily support the Council’s “Right to Grow” agenda and wider aims to tackle the nature emergency.
- 7) Agrees that invitations to this roundtable will include relevant Council officers working on Community Wealth Building, Right to Grow, Thriving Greenspaces, nature recovery and procurement, as well as relevant 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector and community growing organisations.
- 8) Finally agrees that this roundtable discussion will take place before the tendering for the renewed EIP is completed in the Autumn, and that a write up from the roundtable with next steps is included in the Business Bulletin of the next Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee meeting.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

In accordance with Standing Order 22(3), Amendments 1 and 2 were accepted as addenda to the motion

## **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To thank officers for the report.
- 2) To note the recent Right to Grow report presented to Culture and Communities and the fantastic deputations given by North Edinburgh Community Growing Network.
- 3) To note the success of Inch Nursery in partnership with Craigmillar Growers and Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust in providing nearly 1,500 kgs of locally harvested fruit and vegetables to local food pantries in Craigmillar, Gilmerton, Inch House and Gracemount Primary School.
- 4) To note that there were many small providers and collectives presently supporting communities to grow food and improve the biodiversity of their areas.
- 5) To note that what was set out in the report by the Service Director, Housing and Homelessness allowed for groups to “propose” projects (4.7) but the projects would be delivered through procurement by approved contractors (4.11), only.
- 6) To believe that consideration should be given for smaller projects to not only be proposed by, but also delivered and managed by, local communities.
- 8) To note the intention to provide an annual update on projects delivered through the Environmental Improvement Programme, including details of how these projects had contributed to nature and biodiversity.
- 9) To agree to a further report within one cycle to outline how a proportion of the monies allocated to EIP could be accessed by community groups to allow them to deliver and manage agreed proposed projects, and before the November EIP deadline.
- 10) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 27 February 2024 on opportunities for nature on HRA land.
- 11) To note from the report that due to capacity, “supporting estates work has been a lesser priority in recent years” and recognise that, in the context of a Housing Emergency, Housing Officers would be concentrating on “core activities [...] including dealing with the letting of void properties, supporting tenants with rent arrears and tenancy management tasks”. Further recognises that not all Housing Officers would have knowledge and experience in delivering projects which put nature recovery at their heart.
- 12) To welcome the decision at Culture and Communities under its “Right to Grow” update to further progress actions to support community growing, including on existing hardstanding, and on HRA land.
- 13) To recognise that existing community groups and 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector organisations had a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with

communities to design high quality, community-led, estate-based projects which improved outcomes for nature (including community growing).

- 14) To agree to host a roundtable discussion to explore how, in line with Community Wealth Building principles, the HRA's EIP budget could be restructured to better empower 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector and community growing organisations to work in closer partnership with Housing Officers, as well as colleagues in Neighbourhood Environment Services, Thriving Greenspaces and nature recovery, to deliver projects which more readily support the Council's "Right to Grow" agenda and wider aims to tackle the nature emergency.
- 15) To agree that invitations to this roundtable would include relevant Council officers working on Community Wealth Building, Right to Grow, Thriving Greenspaces, nature recovery and procurement, as well as relevant 3<sup>rd</sup> / voluntary sector and community growing organisations.
- 8) To finally agree that this roundtable discussion would take place before the tendering for the renewed EIP was completed in the Autumn, and that a write up from the roundtable with next steps be included in the Business Bulletin of the next Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee meeting.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 27 February 2024 (Item 23); report by the Service Director, Sustainable Development, submitted.)

## **18. Motion by Councillor Parker – Expanding Edinburgh's Successful Student Housing Co-op**

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The following motion was submitted by Councillor Parker in terms of Standing Order 17:

- "1) Notes commitment in the Council's Housing Emergency Action Plan to "investigate models of housing cooperatives, including for different characteristics; the funding models and advantages available and the possibility of introducing these in Edinburgh."
- 2) Notes the success of the Edinburgh Student Housing Coop which has been operating successfully in the city for over 10 years and is the biggest student housing co-op in the UK according to the UK Federation for Student Housing Co-ops.
- 3) Notes the desire of students to expand the co-operative given high demand and welcomes their ongoing work to explore funding and delivery models to achieve this, including with the University and other 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.
- 4) Given 1), and the Council's previous concerns expressed about the crisis in student homelessness in the city, notes that there might be a role for the Council in supporting 3).

Therefore:

- 5) Agrees a report in 2 cycles to summarise:
  - a) What work has taken place to explore housing cooperative models as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan to date;
  - b) Ideas about how the Council could support the Student Housing Co-operative with its expansion plans. This might include:
    - i) offering the Student Housing Co-op first refusal on Council properties which are being disposed of, including from the Council's corporate estate where re-development / conversion might be possible;
    - ii) investigating options for the Student Housing Co-op to take on long-term void properties from the Council which are in a state of disrepair;
    - iii) investigating options for development of "gap sites" on Council land (where available), for example through conversion of redundant outbuildings such as garages;
    - iv) acting as a financial guarantor, offering loan funding and/or developing lease agreements;
    - v) what are the (perceived) barriers to the expansion of the Student Housing Co-op within the city;
    - vi) what learning can be taken from examples of the development of student housing co-ops abroad, including best practices on how to scale the model.
- 6) Agrees that officers engage with the Student Housing Coop, and other relevant stakeholders, when writing this report."

### **Motion**

To approve the motion by Councillor Parker.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

### **Amendment**

To delete paragraph 5) of the motion by Councillor Parker and 6) and insert:

"Notes that, as part of the Local Housing Strategy, CEC staff are doing a lot of work to understand the nature of the problem of student housing and how it fits into our overall housing strategy.

Notes the following actions currently underway:

- Housing and Homelessness staff are arranging an engagement session with student representatives across the four universities to feed into the Local Housing Strategy.



- Planning colleagues are setting up a further Edinburgh Student Housing Engagement Event for early October, bringing together Council officers, elected members, the Universities and student representatives.
- In advance this, a session is being organised with Cllrs across HHFW, Planning and Development Management Sub-Committee to explore feedback gathered through the LHS which has relevance across housing and planning - with student housing one of the main issues the session will focus on.

Therefore, agrees that the draft Local Housing Strategy, which will come to committee in December, will include the work outlined above, as well as information about what work has taken place to explore housing co-operative models as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan to date and ideas about if the Council could support the Student Housing Co-operative with its expansion plans.”

- moved by Councillor Meacher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

In accordance with Standing Order, 22(13), the amendment was accepted as an amendment to the motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Parker:

- 1) To note commitment in the Council’s Housing Emergency Action Plan to “investigate models of housing cooperatives, including for different characteristics; the funding models and advantages available and the possibility of introducing these in Edinburgh.”.
- 2) To note the success of the Edinburgh Student Housing Coop which had been operating successfully in the city for over 10 years and was the biggest student housing co-op in the UK according to the UK Federation for Student Housing Co-ops.
- 3) To note the desire of students to expand the co-operative given high demand and welcome their ongoing work to explore funding and delivery models to achieve this, including with the University and other 3rd parties.
- 4) Given 1), and the Council’s previous concerns expressed about the crisis in student homelessness in the city, to note that there might be a role for the Council in supporting 3).
- 5) To note that, as part of the Local Housing Strategy, CEC staff were doing a lot of work to understand the nature of the problem of student housing and how it fitted into the overall housing strategy.
- 6) To note the following actions currently underway:
  - Housing and Homelessness staff are arranging an engagement session with student representatives across the four universities to feed into the Local Housing Strategy.
  - Planning colleagues are setting up a further Edinburgh Student Housing Engagement Event for early October, bringing together Council officers, elected members, the Universities and student representatives.

- In advance this, a session is being organised with Cllrs across HHFW, Planning and Development Management Sub-Committee to explore feedback gathered through the LHS which has relevance across housing and planning - with student housing one of the main issues the session will focus on.
- 7) To therefore, agree that the draft Local Housing Strategy, which would come to Committee in December, would include the work outlined above, as well as information about what work had taken place to explore housing co-operative models as part of the Housing Emergency Action Plan to date and ideas about if the Council could support the Student Housing Co-operative with its expansion plans.
  - 8) To agree that officers engage with the Student Housing Coop, and other relevant stakeholders, when writing this report.

## **19. Motion by Councillor Parker – Accessible Housing Summit and Council Adaptations Process**

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The following motion was submitted by Councillor Parker in terms of Standing Order 17:

- “1) Notes commitment in the Council’s Housing Emergency Action Plan to strengthen partnership working between health and social care partners and housing and homelessness services, as well as commitments to “review the suitability and accessibility of housing for households with multiple disabilities.”.
- 2) Additionally, notes work to review the Council’s allocation processes, including reviewing what support is available to disabled people to access suitable housing.
- 3) Recognises that the success of 1) and 2) depends on accurate data being kept against housing stock, and strong partnership working between health and social care partners and the housing and homelessness service in order to explore how homes could be adapted to be made suitable for prospective tenants.
- 4) Notes that there is currently a lack of accurate information about the accessibility of housing stock across the city, as described in the findings of the Council’s Accessible Housing Study published in 2022.
- 5) Notes that the Scottish Government has consulted on Part 1 of the Housing for Varying Needs Design Guide and introduction of a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which relates to new build homes, which could help identify existing homes that are accessible, and appropriate design guidance for adapting existing homes.
- 6) Notes that Home 2 Fit is an online register of accessible homes created by Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living to advertise accessible properties, cross-tenure (including ownership), across Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen, and regrets that the planned wider roll-out of the website across Scotland has been stalled.

Additionally:

- 7) Notes that in response to Written Questions submitted to the Full Council meeting on 27th June 2024, it was stated that the Council's adaptations process has not been reviewed "for a number of years" and that "the Accessible Housing Sounding Board identified [the adaptations process] as a key area of work that would benefit from a review."

Therefore

- 8) Requests a report in 2 cycles to outline what work is taking place to strengthen partnership working between health and social care partners and the housing and homelessness service, with a particular focus on the adaptations process, agreeing that the report should cover:
  - a) The governance processes for adaptations, and how these could be strengthened and improved.
  - b) What consideration is given to completing preventative adaptations (as opposed to reactive adaptations), and how this could be strengthened and improved, including information about what factors are considered when determining "accessibility."
  - c) The funding arrangements for adaptations work, and whether these are fair and appropriate.
- 9) Further agrees that the report should cover:
  - a) Progress against actions from the Accessible Housing Study in 2022, for example work to improve data around Council housing stock, as well as information about any barriers to delivery of these actions, for example resourcing and/or budget constraints, and how these could be circumvented.

Additionally:

- 10) Agrees to host an Accessible Housing summit with organisations across the city to discuss how a similar register to Home 2 Fit could be developed for Edinburgh, including representation from Edindex partners, Health and Social Care partners, representatives from the private rented sector, letting agencies / estate agents, Disabled People's Organisations, relevant Council officers, committee members and any other relevant bodies.
- 11) Agrees that a summary of these discussions and any agreed next steps will be included in the report at 8), as well as details of indicative funding requirements to take forward such a project."

## **Motion**

To approve the motion by Councillor Parker.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

## Amendment

To amend paragraph 10 of the motion by Councillor Parker to read:

**“Agrees to host an Accessible Housing Summit in the new year, inviting organisations across the city to discuss how a similar register to Home 2 Fit could be developed for Edinburgh, including representation from Edindex partners, Health and Social Care partners, representatives from the private rented sector, letting agencies / estate agents, Disabled People’s Organisations, relevant Council officers, committee members and any other relevant bodies. Report referred to in sections 8), 9) will include a proposal for an agenda and attendance at the summit to be discussed at Committee.”**

- moved by Councillor Meacher, seconded by Councillor Pogson

In accordance with Standing Order, 22(13), the amendment was accepted as an amendment to the motion.

## Decision

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Parker:

- 1) To note commitment in the Council’s Housing Emergency Action Plan to strengthen partnership working between health and social care partners and housing and homelessness services, as well as commitments to “review the suitability and accessibility of housing for households with multiple disabilities.”.
- 2) Additionally, to note work to review the Council’s allocation processes, including reviewing what support was available to disabled people to access suitable housing.
- 3) To recognise that the success of 1) and 2) depended on accurate data being kept against housing stock, and strong partnership working between health and social care partners and the housing and homelessness service in order to explore how homes could be adapted to be made suitable for prospective tenants.
- 4) To note that there was currently a lack of accurate information about the accessibility of housing stock across the city, as described in the findings of the Council’s Accessible Housing Study published in 2022.
- 5) To note that the Scottish Government had consulted on Part 1 of the Housing for Varying Needs Design Guide and introduction of a Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which related to new build homes, which could help identify existing homes that were accessible, and appropriate design guidance for adapting existing homes.
- 6) To note that Home 2 Fit was an online register of accessible homes created by Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living to advertise accessible properties, cross-tenure (including ownership), across Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen, and regrets that the planned wider roll-out of the website across Scotland had been stalled.

- 7) To note that in response to Written Questions submitted to the Full Council meeting on 27th June 2024, it was stated that the Council’s adaptations process had not been reviewed “for a number of years” and that “the Accessible Housing Sounding Board identified [the adaptations process] as a key area of work that would benefit from a review.”
- 8) To request a report in 2 cycles to outline what work was taking place to strengthen partnership working between health and social care partners and the housing and homelessness service, with a particular focus on the adaptations process, agreeing that the report should cover:
  - a) The governance processes for adaptations, and how these could be strengthened and improved.
  - b) What consideration was given to completing preventative adaptations (as opposed to reactive adaptations), and how this could be strengthened and improved, including information about what factors were considered when determining “accessibility.”
  - c) The funding arrangements for adaptations work, and whether these were fair and appropriate.
- 9) To further agree that the report should cover:
  - a) Progress against actions from the Accessible Housing Study in 2022, for example work to improve data around Council housing stock, as well as information about any barriers to delivery of these actions, for example resourcing and/or budget constraints, and how these could be circumvented.
- 10) To agree to host an Accessible Housing Summit in the new year, inviting organisations across the city to discuss how a similar register to Home 2 Fit could be developed for Edinburgh, including representation from Edindex partners, Health and Social Care partners, representatives from the private rented sector, letting agencies / estate agents, Disabled People’s Organisations, relevant Council officers, committee members and any other relevant bodies. Report referred to in sections 8), 9) would include a proposal for an agenda and attendance at the summit to be discussed at Committee.
- 11) To agree that a summary of these discussions and any agreed next steps would be included in the report at 8), as well as details of indicative funding requirements to take forward such a project.

### **Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Parker made a transparency statement in respect of the above item as he worked for Housing Options Scotland.

Councillor Pogson made a transparency statement in respect of the above item as a Trustee of Housing Options Scotland.

## **20. Internal Audit Update Report June 2024 – referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee**

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The Committee, in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, excluded the public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business for the reason that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.

The Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee had referred the Internal Audit Update Report: June 2024 report to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration.

### **Decision**

To note the referral from the Governance Risk and Best Value Committee.

(Reference – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee 4 June 2024 (item 5); referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)