

## Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 1 October 2024

### Present

Councillors Meagher (Convener), Bennet, Biagi, Bruce, Dalglish (substituting for Councillor Pogson) Flannery, Jones, Key, Macinnes, Miller and Parker

### 1. Deputations

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**a) Living Rent (in relation to Item 7.6 on the agenda –Potential Expansion of Tenanted Acquisitions)**

The deputation welcomed and recognised the work the council had put into the potential expansion of tenanted acquisitions. They stressed that doing nothing would be a lost opportunity to increase supply of council housing and reduce long -term management costs of mixed tenure blocks which they felt neither the Council, council tenants or private tenants could afford the consequences of doing nothing.

The deputation felt that the current scheme being extended to landlords was a step in the right direction, to have private tenants recognized as having a right to remain in their home was very welcome but the idea wasn't enough. They wanted to ensure that the policy taken forward was most likely to practically keep as many tenants secure as possible and they shared the concerns that landlord uptake of this would be low given the price at which they would have to sell. The deputation urged the Committee to create the conditions in which private tenants could be most protected and felt that Option 3 was the best option to take forward.

(See Item 11 below)

**b) Edinburgh Tenants Federation (in relation to Item 9.1 on the agenda – Motion by Councillor Meagher – Grenfell Inquiry)**

The deputation raised concerns regarding the use of gas and paraffin heaters being used by tenants in high rise blocks. They urged the Council to be more involved in warning tenants of the dangers of the use of these fires and to increase the advertising of funding which was available for heating properties.

(See Item 18 below)

## 2. Minutes

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### Decision

To approve the minute of the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 27 August 2024 as a correct record, subject to the adjustment to the spelling of Councillor Meagher's name on page 34.

## 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 2** Damp, mould and condensation in Council homes update

**Action 15(1)** – Increasing Affordable Homes Delivery

**Action 17(1), (2) and (3)** – Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Displaced People

**Action 19(1)** – 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme

2) 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. Housing Revenue Account Budget Strategy 2025/26

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Details were provided on the Housing Revenue Account Budget Strategy 2025/26 which set out the initial review of the Business Plan assumptions carried to date and provided an update on associated work in relation to using General Fund (GF) to support the HRA and innovative models to fund the new build programme (as potential mitigations to the increases in expenditure and reduction of grant income for affordable housing). It also provided an update on the rent structure review and sought approval

to obtain tenants' views on investment priorities as part of the annual budget consultation.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note the 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget outturn and the Month Three forecast for 2024/25.
- 2) To note the updates made to the HRA Business Plan assumptions to date since the budget was approved in February and the emerging issues that increased the financial pressure on the HRA.
- 3) To note the review of the Business Plan assumptions was on-going and the outcome of the review would be reported to Committee in December 2024, in order to inform the development of the 2025/26 proposed budget.
- 4) To agree to seek tenants' views on the 2025/26 HRA Budget Strategy.
- 5) To refer the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration in order to align with the General Fund budget development.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish.

### **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note the 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget outturn and the Month Three forecast for 2024/25.
- 2) To note the updates made to the HRA Business Plan assumptions to date since the budget was approved in February and the emerging issues that increased the financial pressure on the HRA.
- 3) To note the review of the Business Plan assumptions was on-going and the outcome of the review would be reported to Committee in December 2024, in order to inform the development of the 2025/26 proposed budget.
- 4) To agree to seek tenants' views on the 2025/26 HRA Budget Strategy.
- 5) To refer the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration in order to align with the General Fund budget development.
- 6) Requests that officers provide political groups with written guidance setting out how they could include proposals in their budgets in February 2025 to use the General Fund to support the HRA, including timescales or milestones they will need to meet in order for proposals to be deemed competent. Further requests that this written guidance is also shared with group finance leads.
- 7) Also requests that officers provide political groups with detailed information about Council Fees and Charges agreed at budget time which relate to the housing service or HRA – for example, communal heating charges,

management fees charged for the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service or recharges to the HRA – so that political groups can fully consider the impact of any proposed changes to these as part of the budget setting process.

- 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.

At this point in the proceedings the following Amendment 2 was proposed:

### **Amendment 2**

To approve the motion as originally proposed by Councillor Meagher.

- moved by Councillor Bennett, seconded by Councillor Flannery

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows:

For the Motion (as adjusted)	-	9 votes
For Amendment 2	-	2 votes

(For the Motion (as adjusted): Councillors Biagi, Bruce, Dalglish, Jones, Key, Macinnes, Meagher, Miller and Parker.

For Amendment 2: Councillors Bennett and Flannery.)

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget outturn and the Month Three forecast for 2024/25.
- 2) To note the updates made to the HRA Business Plan assumptions to date since the budget was approved in February and the emerging issues that increased the financial pressure on the HRA.
- 3) To note the review of the Business Plan assumptions was on-going and the outcome of the review would be reported to Committee in December 2024, in order to inform the development of the 2025/26 proposed budget.
- 4) To agree to seek tenants' views on the 2025/26 HRA Budget Strategy.
- 5) To refer the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration in order to align with the General Fund budget development.
- 6) To request that officers provide political groups with written guidance setting out how they could include proposals in their budgets in February 2025 to use the General Fund to support the HRA, including timescales or milestones they would need to meet in order for proposals to be deemed competent. To further request that this written guidance be also shared with group finance leads.

- 7) To also request that officers provide political groups with detailed information about Council Fees and Charges agreed at budget time which related to the housing service or HRA – for example, communal heating charges, management fees charged for the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service or recharges to the HRA – so that political groups could fully consider the impact of any proposed changes to these as part of the budget setting process.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **7. Capital City Partnership: Progress Update**

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An update was provided on progress that had been made against the objectives and targets detailed within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and Capital City Partnership (CCP).

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the progress being made by Capital City Partnership (CCP) against their Service Level Agreement (SLA) objectives and targets;
- 2) To note that COVID-19 had a major impact on the employment landscape as a whole, with corresponding changes in the strategic and operational landscape at national and local level, impacting employability delivery across the city.
- 3) To note that this was the final year of delivery under the previous SLA and, as of 1 April 2024, the SLA agreed by Committee in January 2024 had been implemented.
- 4) To refer the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee for scrutiny.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **8. Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Displaced People**

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The first six-monthly update on support for Refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people was provided.

### **Motion**

To note the report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalglish

### **Amendment**

- 1) To note the report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services.

### **A welcoming city for refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people**

- 2) Thanks officers for all their work and reiterates the Council's position that the city should be a welcoming place for migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people.

- 3) Agrees that officers explore how the Council can join the City of Sanctuary Local Authority network with an update about this included in the next 6-monthly update report to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee.

### **Supporting people with No Recourse to Public Funds**

- 4) Notes the significant number of individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) being supported by the Council currently and recognises that this particular group of people face significant barriers to living fulfilling lives in the UK including legal barriers to welfare entitlement owing to their no recourse status, and potentially limited English language skills, unfamiliarity with welfare and housing systems and experiences of racism and racial discrimination.
- 5) Notes that the recently published report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation ["Destitution by design: righting the wrongs of UK immigration policy in Scotland"](#) (2024) explains that:
  - a) "the former UK Government's immigration policy, particularly it's "hostile environment" approach, has been widely criticised as ineffective and harmful" (p34)
  - b) The policy of NRPF has necessitated local authorities to act as a "parallel welfare safety net, funded locally rather [than] nationally" and as a "dysfunctional" [...], ad hoc system of unofficial, piecemeal support that is marred by inadequate funding and widespread variation in policy and practice" (p33)
  - c) Several Local Authorities have developed specialist NRPF teams within their Councils to ensure all individuals with NRPF are adequately supported and not at risk of destitution, or homelessness and rough sleeping.
  - d) For individuals with NRPF, "rough sleeping experience was more common in Edinburgh than in other cities" (p73) and that practitioners report that other Local Authorities in Scotland are "more understanding and more accommodating" than the City of Edinburgh Council (p62)
- 6) Additionally notes that the report sets out a series of recommendations for the UK Government, Scottish Government, COSLA and Local Authorities (and Health Partners) in order to improve provision for people with NRPF.

Therefore:

- 7) Requests a briefing note for Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee setting out:
  - a) how the Council might respond to the recommendations from the report referenced at 1.5;
  - b) what planning and resource is in place to ensure adequacy and parity of provision for all migrant communities in the city going forward, especially

noting the likely increase in numbers of refugees making Edinburgh home, both as set out in report 7.7 “Response to Monitoring Officer report on conflicting legal obligations” at Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee (1<sup>st</sup> October 2024), and as a result of climate change and the anticipated numbers of climate refugees expected in the UK in future years.

Finally:

- 8) Requests the Convener writes to the Home Secretary to express the Committee’s sincere hope that the newly formed Labour UK Government will see an end to the UK’s racist hostile environment policy of the past 14 years, and to call on her to end the policy of NRPF noting the severe negative impact this condition has on both individuals affected, and Local Authorities across the UK.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows:

For the motion - 6 votes

For the amendment - 5 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Bennett, Bruce, Dalgleish, Flannery, Jones and Meagher.

For the amendment: Biagi, Key Macinnes, Miller and Parker.)

### **Decision**

To approve the motion by Councillor Meagher.

(Reference – report by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Justice Services, submitted.)

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

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The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) required all social landlords to prepare and publish an Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) and Assurance Statement Summary of Compliance to confirm to their tenants and the SHR that they were meeting the requirements of the Regulatory Framework.

The Council’s draft Annual Assurance Statement was provided for approval.

### **Motion**

To approve the City of Edinburgh Council’s Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) on housing services and the Assurance Statement Summary of Compliance for formal submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish

### **Amendment**

Amends the status of row 3 of Appendix 2 – page 9 of 22 in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place - from Amber to Red and to include a reference to the

Monitoring Officer's report on HMOs which finds the Council is using unlicensed HMOs to house people temporarily and is aware of that fact

- moved by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Jones

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 amend the status of row 3 of Appendix 2 – page 9 of 22 in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place - from Amber to Red and to include a reference to the Monitoring Officer's report on HMOs which found the Council was using unlicensed HMOs to house people temporarily and was aware of that fact.
- 2) To otherwise approve the City of Edinburgh Council's Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) on housing services and the Assurance Statement Summary of Compliance for formal submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **10. 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 Acquisitions and Disposals.

### **Motion**

- 1) To note that this was the third 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 ongoing mitigations to address underperformance as set out in the Next Steps section of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 4) To note the deeper dive into Acquisitions and Disposals, set out in Appendix 10 of the report.
- 5) To agree to fully discharge the motion requesting additional information on the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (Appendix 11 of the report) and partially discharge the motion additional information in relation to damp and mould (Appendix 6 of the report), with the remainder of the information requested included in the December update.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalglish



## **Amendment**

- 1) To note that this was the third 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 ongoing mitigations to address underperformance as set out in the Next Steps section of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 4) To note the deeper dive into Acquisitions and Disposals, set out in Appendix 10 of the report.
- 5) To agree to fully discharge the motion requesting additional information on the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (Appendix 11 of the report) and partially discharge the motion additional information in relation to damp and mould (Appendix 6 of the report), with the remainder of the information requested included in the December update.
- 6) Notes from report 7.7 “Response to monitoring officer report on conflicting legal duties” that there has been a “significant rise in the number of out of Edinburgh temporary accommodation placements” (4.41)
- 7) Agrees that future versions of the “Cyclical assurance on service performance report” include data on such instances, including the costs of out-of-Edinburgh placements, and the average number of placements per homeless household.

- 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 that this was the third 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 ongoing mitigations to address underperformance as set out in the Next Steps section of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 4) To note the deeper dive into Acquisitions and Disposals, set out in Appendix 10 of the report.

- 5) To agree to fully discharge the motion requesting additional information on the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (Appendix 11 of the report) and partially discharge the motion additional information in relation to damp and mould (Appendix 6 of the report), with the remainder of the information requested included in the December update.
- 6) To note from report 7.7 “Response to monitoring officer report on conflicting legal duties” that there had been a “significant rise in the number of out of Edinburgh temporary accommodation placements” (4.41)
- 7) To agree that future versions of the “Cyclical assurance on service performance report” include data on such instances, including the costs of out-of-Edinburgh placements, and the average number of placements per homeless household.

(Reference: report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## 11. Potential Expansion of Tenanted Acquisitions

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Details were provided on potential options to extend the tenanted acquisitions to PRS landlords to enable their tenants to remain in their home.

### Motion

- 1) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 17 May 2024 (set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report by the Interim executive Director of Place).
- 2) To note the options for expansion (set out at paragraph 4.20 of the report) and the risks associated with each option (set out at paragraph 9.2 of the report).
- 3) To agree to support option 2 which extended the tenant acquisition offering (under current conditions) to private sector landlords in all Housing Revenue Account (HRA) led mixed tenure improvement projects where the Council currently owned at least 50% of the homes in the block.
- 4) To agree to monitor the uptake of the scheme and provide regular updates to Committee through the cyclical assurance report.
- 5) To note that a review of the success of the extension of tenanted acquisitions would be carried out after a 12 month period with a report to Committee in Winter 2025.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish

### Amendment

- 1) To agree to discharge the motion agreed at Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee on 17 May 2024 (set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report by the Interim executive Director of Place).
- 2) To note the options for expansion (set out at paragraph 4.20 of the report) and the risks associated with each option (set out at paragraph 9.2 of the report).
- 3) To agree to support option 2 which extended the tenant acquisition offering (under current conditions) to private sector landlords in all Housing Revenue

Account (HRA) led mixed tenure improvement projects where the Council currently owned at least 50% of the homes in the block.

- 4) To agree to monitor the uptake of the scheme and provide regular updates to Committee through the cyclical assurance report as well as details about the number of instances known to officers of private landlords evicting tenants to sell on the open market during the works.
- 5) To note that a review of the success of the extension of tenanted acquisitions would be carried out after a 12 month period with a report to Committee in Winter 2025.
- 6) Recognises from the report that extension of the current tenanted acquisition policy to landlords is “likely to have limited uptake” and therefore the policy may not achieve the intended aims of reducing the number of private tenants being made homeless during mixed tenure improvement works.
- 7) Understands that enhancing the offer to private landlords as part of the scheme will require additional funding, but that this report does not contain full details of possible sources of funding for this if committee were minded to enhance the offer.
- 8) Considers that other aspects of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) works have been subject to discussion including the rate of the management fee charged and subsidies offered to owners as part of the work, as set out in report 8.2 “Mixed Tenure Improvement Service Pilot – Strategy and Completion Report” on the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work agenda on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024, and that any changes to these aspects of the MTIS scheme would also have financial implications.
- 9) Therefore agrees that, in advance of the budget setting process in February 2025 and in discussion with political groups, officers provide a briefing note to set out options for alternative models for financing MTIS works which would include options for enhancing the tenanted acquisitions policy in addition to any other changes political groups may wish to make around the MTIS, allowing political groups to consider all possible, additional costs relating to MTIS works in the round.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows:

For the motion to	-	6 votes
For the amendment	-	5 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Bennett, Bruce, Dalgleish, Flannery, Jones and Meagher.

For the amendment: Biagi, Key Macinnes, Miller and Parker.)

## Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Meagher.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## 12. Response to the Monitoring Officer Report on Conflicting Legal Obligations

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Details were provided on the operating context for the Council's homelessness service, the risk profiles and data supporting decision making over the use of temporary accommodation, and the emerging pressures and risks from UK and Scottish Government legislation and policy.

### Motion

- 1) To note that during the Covid-19 pandemic the Council was required to take urgent action to provide housing for homeless people in order to protect them and comply with public health guidance.
- 2) To note that many of the properties secured urgently at that point were non-compliant with regard to licensing requirements and suitability, but were inspected for safety before being allocated to homeless people.
- 3) To note that since the Covid-19 pandemic homeless presentations had been rising and were in excess of pre-pandemic levels, meaning the plan to eliminate the use of such accommodation had been nullified.
- 4) To note the steps taken so far to reduce the compliance risk identified.
- 5) To note the Monitoring Officer report considered by Council on the 26 September 2024.
- 6) To note the projected budget required to accommodate homeless households stated at section 4.30 of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 7) To note the increase in the number of households presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation who had recently left Home Office accommodation following a positive asylum decision, and that asylum matters were reserved to the UK government.
- 8) To note the increase in the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons (UDP's) presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation and that refugee matters were reserved to the UK Government, with some elements of refugee policy, notably Ukraine, overseen by the Scottish Government.
- 9) To note that the Council Leader wrote to the Home Office on 14 August 2024 requesting cost neutral funding for providing housing to asylum seekers and refugees, and that a response was received on the 12th September outlining steps being taken to look at such funding.
- 10) To note the award of £14.8m acquisition funding from the Scottish Government to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation.

- 11) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness, to take immediate steps to secure safe transition to compliant and, as far as is possible, suitable temporary accommodation from all unlicensed HMO accommodation for all homeless households affected.
- 12) To refer the report to Finance and Resources Committee with a request to consider additional funding be provided, as required, to ensure such safe transition and agrees that an update be provided to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee once this request has been considered.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish

#### **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note that during the Covid-19 pandemic the Council was required to take urgent action to provide housing for homeless people in order to protect them and comply with public health guidance.
- 2) To note that many of the properties secured urgently at that point were non-compliant with regard to licensing requirements and suitability, but were inspected for safety before being allocated to homeless people.
- 3) To note that since the Covid-19 pandemic homeless presentations had been rising and were in excess of pre-pandemic levels, meaning the plan to eliminate the use of such accommodation had been nullified.
- 4) To note the steps taken so far to reduce the compliance risk identified.
- 5) To note the Monitoring Officer report considered by Council on the 26 September 2024.
- 6) To note the projected budget required to accommodate homeless households stated at section 4.30 of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 7) To note the increase in the number of households presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation who had recently left Home Office accommodation following a positive asylum decision, and that asylum matters were reserved to the UK government.
- 8) To note the increase in the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons (UDP's) presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation and that refugee matters were reserved to the UK Government, with some elements of refugee policy, notably Ukraine, overseen by the Scottish Government.
- 9) To note that the Council Leader wrote to the Home Office on 14 August 2024 requesting cost neutral funding for providing housing to asylum seekers and refugees, and that a response was received on the 12th September outlining steps being taken to look at such funding.
- 10) To note the award of £14.8m acquisition funding from the Scottish Government to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation.

- 11) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness, to take immediate steps to secure safe transition to compliant temporary accommodation from all unlicensed HMO accommodation for all homeless households affected.
- 12) To refer the report to Finance and Resources Committee with a request to consider additional funding be provided, as required, to ensure such safe transition.
- 13) Additionally, to note the changing demographics of people accessing homelessness support within the Council, as set out in 4.33 of the report, and recognises that the Council's service offer may need to change to respond to differing needs within that population. Further notes the impact of this changing demographic on services right across the Council – for example, Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership and Children's, Education and Justice Services – as set out in 4.40-4.49 of the report.
- 14) To therefore agree that the request for additional funds at 12 should be cognisant of: i) the need for the Council to acquire suitable and not just compliant temporary accommodation, and ii) the impact of the needs of changing demographics in the homelessness service across all Council services, and their associated costs.
- 15) To agree that if all of these costs cannot be captured adequately in time for consideration at the next meeting of Finance and Resources committee, officers should set out to both committees how they intend to present this information to Councillors for consideration in the future, all in order to ensure all Council services are adequately resourced to ensure all groups accessing support from the Council are sufficiently supported.
- 16) To refer the report to Edinburgh Integration Joint Board for their consideration, noting the references within the report to social work services.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

## **Amendment 2**

- 1) To note that during the Covid-19 pandemic the Council was required to take urgent action to provide housing for homeless people in order to protect them and comply with public health guidance.
- 2) To note that many of the properties secured urgently at that point were non-compliant with regard to licensing requirements and suitability, but were inspected for safety before being allocated to homeless people.
- 3) To note that since the Covid-19 pandemic homeless presentations had been rising and were in excess of pre-pandemic levels, meaning the plan to eliminate the use of such accommodation had been nullified.
- 4) To note the steps taken so far to reduce the compliance risk identified.
- 5) To note the Monitoring Officer report considered by Council on the 26 September 2024.

- 6) To note the projected budget required to accommodate homeless households stated at section 4.30 of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 7) To note the increase in the number of households presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation who had recently left Home Office accommodation following a positive asylum decision, and that asylum matters were reserved to the UK government.
- 8) To note the increase in the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons (UDP's) presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation and that refugee matters were reserved to the UK Government, with some elements of refugee policy, notably Ukraine, overseen by the Scottish Government.
- 9) To note that the Council Leader wrote to the Home Office on 14 August 2024 requesting cost neutral funding for providing housing to asylum seekers and refugees, and that a response was received on the 12th September outlining steps being taken to look at such funding.
- 10) To note the award of £14.8m acquisition funding from the Scottish Government to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation.
- 11) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness, to take immediate steps to secure safe transition to compliant and, as far as is possible, suitable temporary accommodation from all unlicensed HMO accommodation for all homeless households affected.
- 12) To refer the report to Finance and Resources Committee with a request to consider additional funding be provided, as required, to ensure such safe transition and agrees that an update be provided to Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee once this request has been considered.
- 13) Instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to provide a costed plan with milestones and a long stop date of one year to end the practice of housing homeless households in unlicensed temporary accommodation to the next meeting of the Committee for scrutiny and approval. This plan to provide a business case for use of Council owned or on contract accommodation rather than off contract waivers to bring down the cost per unit, comply with all necessary standards and reduce the uncapped budget pressure on the service.
- 14) Instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to investigate best practice in providing urgent additional and compliant temporary accommodation from Councils around the UK starting with discussions with Cardiff Council which has purchased former student accommodation, a hotel and existing HMO premises to provide compliant temporary accommodation and has also built Passivhaus modular units in the meantime, to increase the number of temporary accommodation units available.
- 15) Refer the report to the Regulatory Committee with a request that the Committee ensure steps are taken to enforce HMO Licensing conditions on any owner/property that does not comply within a maximum timescale of ten months, but with an expectation of compliance quicker where it is possible for the

building to comply or earlier enforcement where compliance is impossible (the current average time to determine an HMO licence application as indicated on the Council website). Also, that the Committee ensure that no new properties are used that do not have an HMO licence before occupation and that any that have recently been occupied without a licence are subject to enforcement action. The purpose being to ensure that the Council is not complicit in housing people in unlicensed accommodation which is itself a criminal offence.

- 16) Instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to ensure that the Housing Service provide all information about non-compliance to Licensing enforcement officers within the next week; that tenants affected are informed by the Council of the status of their accommodation, their rights and the standards their landlords are expected to comply with; and action is taken to check whether all the HMOs (licensed or unlicensed) being used by the Council are fully compliant with landlord Registration requirements with enforcement action being taken where this is not the case.

- moved by Councillor Bruce, seconded by Councillor Jones

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), Amendment 2 was accepted as an addendum to Amendment 1.

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows

For the Motion	-	4 votes
For Amendment 1 (as adjusted)	-	5 votes
For Amendment 2	-	2 votes

(For the Motion: Councillors Bennett, Dalgleish, Flannery and Meagher.

For Amendment 1 (as adjusted): Biagi, Key, Macinnes, Miller and Parker.

For Amendment 2: Councillors Bruce and Jones.)

There being no overall majority, Amendment 2 fell and a second vote was taken between the Motion and Amendment 1 (as adjusted).

### **Second Vote**

The voting was as follows:

For the Motion	-	4 votes
For Amendment 1 (as adjusted)	-	5 votes
Abstentions	-	2

(For the Motion: Councillors Bennett, Dalgleish, Flannery and Meagher.

For Amendment 1 (as adjusted): Biagi, Key, Macinnes, Miller and Parker.

Abstentions: Councillors Bruce and Jones.)



## Decision

To approve the following adjusted Amendment 1 by Councillor Parker:

- 1) To note that during the Covid-19 pandemic the Council was required to take urgent action to provide housing for homeless people in order to protect them and comply with public health guidance.
- 2) To note that many of the properties secured urgently at that point were non-compliant with regard to licensing requirements and suitability, but were inspected for safety before being allocated to homeless people.
- 3) To note that since the Covid-19 pandemic homeless presentations had been rising and were in excess of pre-pandemic levels, meaning the plan to eliminate the use of such accommodation had been nullified.
- 4) To note the steps taken so far to reduce the compliance risk identified.
- 5) To note the Monitoring Officer report considered by Council on the 26 September 2024.
- 6) To note the projected budget required to accommodate homeless households stated at section 4.30 of the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place.
- 7) To note the increase in the number of households presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation who had recently left Home Office accommodation following a positive asylum decision, and that asylum matters were reserved to the UK government.
- 8) To note the increase in the number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons (UDP's) presenting as homeless and accessing temporary accommodation and that refugee matters were reserved to the UK Government, with some elements of refugee policy, notably Ukraine, overseen by the Scottish Government.
- 9) To note that the Council Leader wrote to the Home Office on 14 August 2024 requesting cost neutral funding for providing housing to asylum seekers and refugees, and that a response was received on the 12th September outlining steps being taken to look at such funding.
- 10) To note the award of £14.8m acquisition funding from the Scottish Government to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodation.
- 11) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness, to take immediate steps to secure safe transition to compliant temporary accommodation from all unlicensed HMO accommodation for all homeless households affected.
- 12) To refer the report to Finance and Resources Committee with a request to consider additional funding be provided, as required, to ensure such safe transition.
- 13) Additionally, to note the changing demographics of people accessing homelessness support within the Council, as set out in 4.33 of the report, and recognise that the Council's service offer might need to change to respond to differing needs within that population. To further note the impact of this changing demographic on services right across the Council – for example, Edinburgh

Health & Social Care Partnership and Children's, Education and Justice Services – as set out in 4.40-4.49 of the report.

- 14) To therefore agree that the request for additional funds at 12 should be cognisant of: i) the need for the Council to acquire suitable and not just compliant temporary accommodation, and ii) the impact of the needs of changing demographics in the homelessness service across all Council services, and their associated costs.
- 15) To agree that if all of these costs could not be captured adequately in time for consideration at the next meeting of Finance and Resources Committee, officers should set out to both committees how they intended to present this information to Councillors for consideration in the future, all in order to ensure all Council services were adequately resourced to ensure all groups accessing support from the Council were sufficiently supported.
- 16) To refer the report to Edinburgh Integration Joint Board for their consideration, noting the references within the report to social work services.
- 17) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to provide a costed plan with milestones and a long stop date of one year to end the practice of housing homeless households in unlicensed temporary accommodation to the next meeting of the Committee for scrutiny and approval. This plan to provide a business case for use of Council owned or on contract accommodation rather than off contract waivers to bring down the cost per unit, comply with all necessary standards and reduce the uncapped budget pressure on the service.
- 18) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to investigate best practice in providing urgent additional and compliant temporary accommodation from Councils around the UK starting with discussions with Cardiff Council which had purchased former student accommodation, a hotel and existing HMO premises to provide compliant temporary accommodation and had also built Passivhaus modular units in the meantime, to increase the number of temporary accommodation units available.
- 19) To refer the report to the Regulatory Committee with a request that the Committee ensure steps were taken to enforce HMO Licensing conditions on any owner/property that did not comply within a maximum timescale of ten months, but with an expectation of compliance quicker where it was possible for the building to comply or earlier enforcement where compliance was impossible (the current average time to determine an HMO licence application as indicated on the Council website). Also, that the Committee ensure that no new properties were used that did not have an HMO licence before occupation and that any that had recently been occupied without a licence be subject to enforcement action. The purpose being to ensure that the Council was not complicit in housing people in unlicensed accommodation which was itself a criminal offence.
- 20) To instruct the Service Director – Housing and Homelessness to ensure that the Housing Service provide all information about non-compliance to Licensing enforcement officers within the next week; that tenants affected be informed by

the Council of the status of their accommodation, their rights and the standards their landlords were expected to comply with; and action be taken to check whether all the HMOs (licensed or unlicensed) being used by the Council were fully compliant with landlord Registration requirements with enforcement action being taken where this was not the case.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

### **13. Rent Rebates and Compensation for Tenants Affected by Damp and Mould**

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In response to two motions by Councillors Dobbin, details were provided on how a scheme offering rent rebate to tenants living with damp and mould for an extended period from reporting the problem if the issue was not resolved to their satisfaction within a specified period of time would work and how a process to provide recompense for tenants who had experienced damage to or loss of personal belongings as a result of damp and mould could be established for current and new cases..

#### **Motion**

- 1) To note that officers had sought advice from colleagues in Legal Services, Insurance Services and the Council's Insurer in exploring the proposals presented in the motions.
- 2) To note that there were existing processes in place to consider rent abatements for tenants who did not have the full use of their homes due to repair issues. Officers would ensure that this was discussed with tenants when appropriate.
- 3) To agree that consideration of whether a rent abatement would be appropriate would be considered on current and new cases but not retrospectively due to the potential impact on resources, service performance and the financial implications for HRA revenue.
- 4) To note the significant risks noted in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place that set out the response from the Council's insurer to the proposal to establish a compensation scheme for tenants, that such a scheme might invalidate all Council insurance policies.
- 5) To note that the officers' recommendation was therefore not to establish such a scheme given the position set out by the Insurer.
- 6) To note that Housing Officers in the Dampness team would work with tenants to support them with referrals to sources of financial or practical support that was available to help mitigate any loss they had experienced as a result of damp or mould in their home.
- 7) To agree to discharge the motions by Councillor Dobbin.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalglish

## **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note that officers had sought advice from colleagues in Legal Services, Insurance Services and the Council's Insurer in exploring the proposals presented in the motions.
- 2) To note that there were existing processes in place to consider rent abatements for tenants who did not have the full use of their homes due to repair issues. Officers would ensure that this was discussed with tenants when appropriate.
- 3) To agree that consideration of whether a rent abatement would be appropriate would be considered on current and new cases but not retrospectively due to the potential impact on resources, service performance and the financial implications for HRA revenue.
- 4) To note the significant risks noted in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place that set out the response from the Council's insurer to the proposal to establish a compensation scheme for tenants, that such a scheme might invalidate all Council insurance policies.
- 5) Agrees that details about the number of rent abatements agreed due to disrepair related to damp and mould is reported as part of the Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance report, heard at each committee.
- 6) Further agrees that this report includes historic data for the number of rent abatement cases agreed each year (where this is held), as well as the total cost each year.
- 7) To note that the officers' recommendation was therefore not to establish such a scheme given the position set out by the Insurer.
- 8) To note that Housing Officers in the Dampness team would work with tenants to support them with referrals to sources of financial or practical support that was available to help mitigate any loss they had experienced as a result of damp or mould in their home.
- 9) To agree to discharge the motions by Councillor Dobbin.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

## **Amendment 2**

- 1) Notes the meeting on 25th October between the North Edinburgh Parents Action Group and the Senior Management Team from Housing where tenants impacted by long term damp and mould presented their cases, and that many of the tenants attending also presented their cases at a previous meeting in May.
- 2) To note that officers had sought advice from colleagues in Legal Services, Insurance Services and the Council's Insurer in exploring the proposals presented in the motions.
- 3) To note that there were existing processes in place to consider rent abatements for tenants who did not have the full use of their homes due to repair issues. Officers would ensure that this was discussed with tenants when appropriate:

- Note that the Scottish Welfare Fund will only offer support to tenants when conditions in a residents property have been permanently fixed
  - Agree that the proposal for Rent Abatement must be formalised and published so that Tenants understand their rights rather than it being discretionary and that the Rent Abatement should cover the whole period of extended living in such conditions.
- 4) To agree that consideration of whether a rent abatement would be appropriate would be considered on current and new cases but not retrospectively due to the potential impact on resources, service performance and the financial implications for HRA revenue.
  - 5) To note the significant risks noted in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place that set out the response from the Council's insurer to the proposal to establish a compensation scheme for tenants, that such a scheme might invalidate all Council insurance policies.
  - 6) To note that the officers' recommendation was therefore not to establish such a scheme given the position set out by the Insurer.
  - 7) To note that Housing Officers in the Dampness team would work with tenants to support them with referrals to sources of financial or practical support that was available to help mitigate any loss they had experienced as a result of damp or mould in their home:
    - Agrees in exceptional cases, Housing Officers can consider making a discretionary ex-gratia payment of up to £250
    - Agree that the process for submitting a claim to the Council's insurer be published clearly on the Council Website and be available as an online form and that the current paper Claim Form be made available in Council Offices and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Organisations
    - Agree a that Housing Officers will as standard practice inform new tenants of the Council arranged Home Insurance policy, to be recorded as a process accordingly
  - 8) Agree to bring back an updated report addressing the above in one cycle.

- moved by Councillor Key, seconded by Councillor Biagi

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), Amendment 1 was accepted as an amendment to the Motion, and Amendment 2 was accepted as an addendum to the Motion.

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted Motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the meeting on 25th October between the North Edinburgh Parents Action Group and the Senior Management Team from Housing where tenants impacted by long term damp and mould presented their cases, and that many of the tenants attending also presented their cases at a previous meeting in May.

- 2) To note that officers had sought advice from colleagues in Legal Services, Insurance Services and the Council's Insurer in exploring the proposals presented in the motions.
- 3) To note that there were existing processes in place to consider rent abatements for tenants who did not have the full use of their homes due to repair issues. Officers would ensure that this was discussed with tenants when appropriate:
  - note that the Scottish Welfare Fund would only offer support to tenants when conditions in a residents property have been permanently fixed.
  - To agree that the proposal for Rent Abatement must be formalised and published so that Tenants understood their rights rather than it being discretionary and that the Rent Abatement should cover the whole period of extended living in such conditions.
- 4) To agree that consideration of whether a rent abatement would be appropriate would be considered on current and new cases but not retrospectively due to the potential impact on resources, service performance and the financial implications for HRA revenue.
- 5) To note the significant risks noted in the report by the Interim Executive Director of Place that set out the response from the Council's insurer to the proposal to establish a compensation scheme for tenants, that such a scheme might invalidate all Council insurance policies.
- 6) To agree that details about the number of rent abatements agreed due to disrepair related to damp and mould be reported as part of the Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance report, heard at each committee.
- 7) To further agree that this report include historic data for the number of rent abatement cases agreed each year (where this was held), as well as the total cost each year.
- 8) To note that the officers' recommendation was therefore not to establish such a scheme given the position set out by the Insurer.
- 9) To note that Housing Officers in the Dampness team would work with tenants to support them with referrals to sources of financial or practical support that was available to help mitigate any loss they had experienced as a result of damp or mould in their home:
  - agree in exceptional cases, Housing Officers could consider making a discretionary ex-gratia payment of up to £250
  - agree that the process for submitting a claim to the Council's insurer be published clearly on the Council Website and be available as an online form and that the current paper Claim Form be made available in Council Offices and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Organisations
  - agree a that Housing Officers would as standard practice inform new tenants of the Council arranged Home Insurance policy, to be recorded as a process accordingly.

10) To agree to bring back an updated report addressing the above in one cycle.

(References – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee of 14 May 2024 (items 18 and 19): report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **14. Draft Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan – referral from the Policy and Sustainability Committee**

---

The Policy and Sustainability Committee had referred the Draft Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan to the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee for consideration, particularly in relation to the actions in Priority A in the Plan on reducing flooding and overheating of buildings and surrounding environment, increasing the resilience of Edinburgh’s social housing stock and rental sector, and supporting owners of basement properties to prepare for increased flood risk; Priority F on strengthening resident and community resilience to climate change and incorporating other extreme weather events into Edinburgh’s Winter Weather Contingency Plan to ensure homeless people and rough sleepers are informed and protected during these times; and Priority G on increasing business resilience, skills and job opportunities in adaptation.

### **Motion**

To note the report by the Policy and Sustainability Committee.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish

### **Amendment**

- 1) To note the report by the Policy and Sustainability Committee.
- 2) Notes the significant areas of crossover between the Climate Ready Edinburgh plan and the work of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee
- 3) Requests that Officers engage with committee members and officers from across the Council, including members of CLT (if required), to bring forward a proposal about how Committee papers can better reflect considerations from within the Climate Ready Edinburgh plan and build adaptation governance into routine Committee decision making going forward.

- 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 report by the Policy and Sustainability Committee.
- 2) To note the significant areas of crossover between the Climate Ready Edinburgh plan and the work of Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work committee
- 3) To request that Officers engage with committee members and officers from across the Council, including members of CLT (if required), to bring forward a proposal about how Committee papers could better reflect considerations from

within the Climate Ready Edinburgh plan and build adaptation governance into routine Committee decision making going forward.

(References – Policy and Sustainability Committee of 22 August 2024 (item 10); referral from the Policy and Sustainability Committee, submitted.)

## **15. Month 3 Financial Monitoring**

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A summary was provided on the out-turn for financial year 2023/24, whilst focussing on the month three 2024/25 revenue monitoring position including early projections for Housing and Homelessness, and Business Growth and Inclusion together with the impact of emerging pressures on the 2025/26 budget.

### **Decision**

- 1) To note the 2023/24 outturn for Housing and Homelessness and Business Growth and Inclusion.
- 2) To note the Place service area, which included, Housing and Homelessness, Culture and Wellbeing, Sustainable Development and Operational Services, was forecasting a pressure of £10.83m for 2024/25 as at month three.
- 3) To note that Housing and Homelessness was forecasting a budget pressure of £7.5m, as at month three.
- 4) To note that Business Growth and Inclusion was forecasting a breakeven position for 2024/25, as at month three.
- 5) To note that mitigating actions were being progressed to help to address the pressures identified in the Homelessness Service. The forecast took account of the expected impact of the actions identified to date.
- 6) To note the ongoing risks to the achievement of a balanced revenue budget for services delivered by the Housing and Homelessness service.
- 7) To note the need for all existing pressures, savings delivery shortfalls and risks to be fully and proactively managed within Directorates.
- 8) To note that updates would continue to be provided to Committee during the remainder of the year.
- 9) To note the forecast pressures on the Homelessness service for 2025/26 due to the full year impact of increased demand for temporary accommodation in 2024/25.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **16. Mixed Tenure Improvement Service Pilot – Strategy and Completion Report**

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Details were provided of the evaluation of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) pilot, post-delivery with the results of the MTIS pilot following completion of works in Wester Hailes.



## **Motion**

To note the results of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) Pilot to help support common repairs and maintenance in blocks where there was a mix of Council and privately-owned homes.

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalglish

## **Amendment 1**

- 1) To note the results of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) Pilot to help support common repairs and maintenance in blocks where there was a mix of Council and privately-owned homes.
- 2) Welcomes the work of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) and recognises its strategic importance both in terms of improving the quality of Council housing stock and in supporting residents across the city to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, bringing down energy bills and helping to alleviate fuel poverty and tackle the climate emergency.
- 3) Notes that 38 families lost their tenancy following MTIS works, as landlords have chosen to sell properties instead of investing in works, and considers that this fact is not consistent with the Council's stated support for a "just transition" response to the climate emergency. Further notes that options to better protect private tenants from this risk will require additional financing as set out in report 7.6 "Potential Expansion of Tenanted Acquisitions".
- 4) Notes that data from the "Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance" report (7.5) shows that costs for MTIS works are extremely variable. Nevertheless, recognises that in many cases average costs far outstrip the possible grant in kind funding available, thus placing a financial burden on owners. Further notes from the "Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance" report (7.5) that, in order to ensure works are cost neutral to the Council, Council management and administration fees can rise into thousands of pounds.
- 5) Considers that since the MTIS works were first agreed, additional Council strategies have been approved, such as the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and associated Delivery Plan, which sets out a city-wide, place-based approach to decarbonising heat and improving the energy efficiency of buildings. Further notes that findings from the Scottish Government's Green Heat Finance Taskforce which is supposed to develop a portfolio of innovative financial solutions to support this work, is still to come forward with proposals.
- 6) Believes that each of the above points gives cause for concern about the current structure and trajectory of the MTIS programme, despite the clear benefits it is bringing to residents across the city.

Therefore:

- 7) Agrees that, in advance of the budget setting process in February 2025 and in discussion with political groups, officers provide a briefing note to set out options for alternative models for financing MTIS works which would include options for

reducing Council management fees, leveraging recommendations from the Green Heat Finance Taskforce (when these are available), for consideration in the round as part of the Council's budget setting process in February 2025.

- 8) Further agrees that this briefing note will also set out how Council resource and intelligence between the LHEES project management office, central climate team and MTIS team is being pooled to ensure consistency in messaging and approach towards residents as part of MTIS works, recognising the clear overlap between the aims of projects managed by these different parts of the Council.
- 9) Finally agrees that there will be no further major expansion of the MTIS scheme into an additional part of the city (beyond where officers have already begun work) before February 2025 to allow any prospective changes political groups may wish to make to the scheme as part of the budget setting process.

- moved by Councillor Parker, seconded by Councillor Miller

In accordance with Standing Order 22(13), Amendment 1 was accepted as an addendum to the Motion.

At this point in the proceedings the following Amendment 2 was proposed:

### **Amendment 2**

To approve the motion as originally proposed by Councillor Meagher.

- moved by Councillor Flannery, seconded by Councillor Bennett

### **Voting**

The voting was as follows:

For the Motion (as adjusted)	-	7 votes
For Amendment 2	-	4 votes

(For the Motion (as adjusted): Councillors Biagi, Dalgleish, Key, Macinnes, Meagher, Miller and Parker.

For Amendment 2: Councillors Bennett, Bruce, Flannery and Jones.)

### **Decision**

To approve the following adjusted motion by Councillor Meagher:

- 1) To note the results of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) Pilot to help support common repairs and maintenance in blocks where there was a mix of Council and privately-owned homes.
- 2) To welcome the work of the Mixed Tenure Improvement Service (MTIS) and recognise its strategic importance both in terms of improving the quality of Council housing stock and in supporting residents across the city to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, bringing down energy bills and helping to alleviate fuel poverty and tackle the climate emergency.
- 3) To note that 38 families lost their tenancy following MTIS works, as landlords had chosen to sell properties instead of investing in works, and considered that this fact was not consistent with the Council's stated support for a "just transition"

response to the climate emergency. To further note that options to better protect private tenants from this risk would require additional financing as set out in report 7.6 “Potential Expansion of Tenanted Acquisitions”.

- 4) To note that data from the “Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance” report (7.5) showed that costs for MTIS works were extremely variable. Nevertheless, to recognise that in many cases average costs far outstripped the possible grant in kind funding available, thus placing a financial burden on owners. To further note from the “Cyclical Assurance on Service Performance” report (7.5) that, in order to ensure works were cost neutral to the Council, Council management and administration fees could rise into thousands of pounds.
- 5) To consider that since the MTIS works were first agreed, additional Council strategies had been approved, such as the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and associated Delivery Plan, which set out a city-wide, place-based approach to decarbonising heat and improving the energy efficiency of buildings. To further note that findings from the Scottish Government’s Green Heat Finance Taskforce which was supposed to develop a portfolio of innovative financial solutions to support this work, was still to come forward with proposals.
- 6) To believe that each of the above points gave cause for concern about the current structure and trajectory of the MTIS programme, despite the clear benefits it was bringing to residents across the city.
- 7) To agree that, in advance of the budget setting process in February 2025 and in discussion with political groups, officers provide a briefing note to set out options for alternative models for financing MTIS works which would include options for reducing Council management fees, leveraging recommendations from the Green Heat Finance Taskforce (when these were available), for consideration in the round as part of the Council’s budget setting process in February 2025.
- 8) To further agree that this briefing note would also set out how Council resource and intelligence between the LHEES project management office, central climate team and MTIS team was being pooled to ensure consistency in messaging and approach towards residents as part of MTIS works, recognising the clear overlap between the aims of projects managed by these different parts of the Council.
- 9) To finally agree that there would be no further major expansion of the MTIS scheme into an additional part of the city (beyond where officers had already begun work) before February 2025 to allow any prospective changes political groups might wish to make to the scheme as part of the budget setting process.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Place, submitted.)

## **17. Update on Housing Services Internal Audits 2023/24**

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An update was provided on the progress made against the agreed management actions in response to the findings of five audits within the Housing Services area, a summary of the common themes identified through the audits and an update on how improvements in the service were being taken forward in response to the key areas of concern.

## Decision

To note the update on actions arising from Internal Audits in 2023/24 and that updates would be provided in future Committees in the Business Bulletin.

(Reference – report by the Interim Executive Director of Housing, submitted.)

### **18. Motion by Councillor Meagher – Grenfell Inquiry Report**

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

“Committee:

Acknowledges the publication of the Grenfell Inquiry Report on the 4th September and recognises that concerns will be raised by tenants regarding fire safety within council properties. The tragic events at Grenfell Tower have highlighted the importance of ensuring that all possible fire safety precautions are thoroughly implemented and maintained in all Council owned buildings.

Notes the High-Rise Fire Safety Arrangements briefing circulated to committee by officers outlines the current Fire Safety arrangements in all multi-storey blocks across the city. Committee therefore agrees:

- Communication is made with tenants, for example via an article in Tenants’ Voice and or The Council Courier, outlining the steps being taken to enhance fire safety and reminding tenants of their responsibilities to ensure the safety of their block.
- Requests a report to HHFW Committee in one cycle providing assurance on the fire safety measures the Council have in place, in conjunction with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.”

- moved by Councillor Meagher, seconded by Councillor Dalgleish

## Decision

To approve the motion by Councillor Meagher.

### **19. Directorates Cyber Incident Response – Internal Audit Report Phased Implementation Plan – 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 a report on directorates cyber incident responses to the Housing, Homelessness and Fr Work Committee for discussion and information.

## **Decision**

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

(Reference – Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee 17 September 2024 (item 24); referral from the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee, submitted.)