

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 7 February 2024

Chair:

Councillor Davie McLachlan

Councillors Present:

Councillor Walter Brogan, Councillor Archie Buchanan, Councillor Mathew Buchanan, Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Andrea Cowan, Councillor Margaret Cowie (Depute), Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Colin Dewar, Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Gladys Ferguson-Miller (*substitute for Councillor Geri Gray*), Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Ross Gowland, Councillor Cal Johnston-Dempsey (*substitute for Councillor Ian McAllan*), Councillor Ross Lambie, Councillor Richard Lockhart, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Kenny McCreary, Councillor Norman Rae, Councillor David Shearer, Councillor Kirsty Williams

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Geri Gray, Councillor Ian McAllan

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

G Booth, Finance Manager (Resources); H Calley, Administration Officer; E Maxwell, HR Business Manager; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy); M M Wilson, Legal Services Manager; L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

Housing and Technical Resources

S Gibson, Executive Director; S Egan, Head of Housing Services; J Forbes, Head of Property Services; G McParland, Property Manager (Assets and Estates); C Mitchell, Strategy and Support Manager

1 Declaration of Interests

The following interests were declared:-

Councillor(s)	Item(s)	Nature of Interest(s)
Lockhart	Lease of Proposed Development – Lanark Community Workshop at Lanark Racecourse	Member of groups who have an involvement and interest in developing the assets of Lanark Racecourse
Marrs	Lease of Proposed Development – Lanark Community Workshop at Lanark Racecourse	Personal connection to members of Lanimer Committee

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Technical Resources Committee held on 8 November 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 - Housing and Technical Resources (Excl Housing Revenue Account (HRA))

A joint report dated 10 January 2024 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April to 1 December 2023 for Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA).

As at 1 December 2023, there was a breakeven position against the phased budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. Following the probable outturn exercise, the forecast to 31 March 2024 was a breakeven position, after approved transfers to reserves.

Virements were proposed to realign budgets and those were detailed in appendices B and C to the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position as at 1 December 2023 on Housing and Technical Resources' (excl HRA) revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2024 of a breakeven position, after approved transfers to reserves, be noted; and
- (3) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 3) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 January 2024 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 - Housing and Technical Resources (Housing Revenue Account (HRA))

A joint report dated 10 January 2024 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April to 1 December 2023 for Housing and Technical Resources (HRA).

As at 1 December 2023, there was a breakeven position against the phased budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. Following the probable outturn exercise, the forecast to 31 March 2024 was a breakeven position. This breakeven position included a lower than anticipated transfer from reserves.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on Housing and Technical Resources' (HRA) revenue budget, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, and the forecast to 31 March 2024 of a breakeven position, be noted; and
- (2) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 4) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 January 2024 (Paragraph 3)]

5 Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 - Housing and Technical Resources (Excl Housing Revenue Account (HRA))

A joint report dated 17 January 2024 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the capital programme for Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA) for the period 1 April to 1 December 2023.

The revised budget for Housing and Technical Resources was £11.488 million. On 22 November 2023 and 24 January 2024, the Executive Committee agreed changes to the Programme totalling a net decrease of £0.770 million, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

Anticipated spend to date was £2.238 million and spend to 1 December 2023 amounted to £1.988 million. This represented an underspend of £0.250 million which was due to the timing of project spend on the demand-led Prioritised Urgent Investment Programme being less than anticipated.

The projected outturn for 2023/2024 was £8.800 million, an underspend of £2.688 million. This was mainly due to the anticipated timing of spend on a number of multi-year projects.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Housing and Technical Resources' (excl HRA) capital programme of £11.488 million and expenditure to date of £1.988 million be noted; and
- (2) that the projected outturn of £8.800 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 5) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 22 November 2023 (Paragraph 4) and 24 January 2024 (Paragraph 4)]

6 Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/2024 - Housing and Technical Resources (Housing Revenue Account (HRA))

A joint report dated 10 January 2024 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the capital programme for Housing and Technical Resources (HRA) for the period 1 April to 1 December 2023.

The budget was based on the revised capital programme for the year which had been approved by the Executive Committee on 24 January 2024.

The Housing capital programme for 2023/2024 totalled £67.443 million and was detailed, along with the funding sources, in Appendix A to the report.

Actual expenditure to 1 December 2023 was £33.973 million. This was £0.658 million ahead of programme and was due to the number of buy backs through the open market purchase scheme being ahead of programme.

Current estimates suggested an outturn of £67.443 million. The Resource was expected to spend to this level and work would continue in the coming months to deliver spend.

The Committee decided: that the revised Housing and Technical Resources' (HRA) capital programme of £67.443 million and expenditure to 1 December 2023 of £33.973 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 6) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 January 2024 (Paragraph 4)]

7 Housing and Technical Resources – Workforce Monitoring – September to November 2023

A joint report dated 21 December 2023 by the Head of Finance (Strategy) and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Housing and Technical Resources for September to November 2023:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ discipline, grievance and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews
- ◆ Staffing Watch as at 9 September 2023

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 7)]

8 Housing Revenue and Capital Account Budget 2024/2025

A joint report dated 12 January 2024 by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the revenue estimate proposals for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2024/2025 which had been prepared in line with the 30-year Business Plan
- ◆ the 2024/2025 Housing Capital Programme totalling £77.303 million

The HRA revenue budget for 2024/2025 had been prepared in line with the 30-year HRA Business Plan, developed to reflect the investment priority to maintain and improve the housing stock to meet national housing quality and energy efficiency standards. The programme also included projects to increase the supply of Council housing as well as environmental works and legislative compliance programmes, to ensure that all safety requirement standards were met.

The movement from the original 2023/2024 revenue budget was summarised in the report and outlined in Appendix 1 to the report.

The 2024/2025 budget proposal also included a provision of £3.743 million for bad debt which would be required to continue to provide for the potential impact on rent collection and arrears. This included contingency for the ongoing uncertainty on rental collections in the coming year due to cost-of-living pressures and an allocation of £0.300 million for tenancy sustainment mitigation.

During previous budget engagement, tenants had favoured multi-year agreements on the basis that they would have some clarity regarding rent levels in the medium term. A rent increase of 6.50% was proposed from 2024/2025 with a further 6.50% increase in 2025/2026 and again in 2026/2027. In accordance with statutory requirements, this 3-year commitment would be subject to annual review and customer engagement. This approach would allow the Council and tenants to plan and budget on a longer-term basis. To achieve this level of rent increase, a re-profiling of the long-term investment priorities had been undertaken. Short-term investment priorities and current service levels would be maintained.

A recently published Scottish Government draft budget for 2024/2025 included the reduction in funding available for the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. The 2024/2025 budget represented a decrease of 22% on the previous published figure for 2024/2025 and it was still unclear how the Scottish Government would reduce individual Councils' funding. Further discussions were planned with the More Homes Team at the Scottish Government for further clarity on the situation. Any reduction in Scottish Government grant available for the Council could impact the planned investment to increase the overall supply of Council housing. An update would be provided to the Committee when information on the impact for the Council, which might affect the 2024/2025 and future years capital programmes, was available.

Based on the latest Scottish Social Housing Charter returns, the average rent charges for South Lanarkshire Council tenants remained affordable and were currently the seventh lowest of local authority landlords in Scotland. In addition, South Lanarkshire Council tenants' rent charges were the lowest of all the social landlords operating in South Lanarkshire.

In line with the HRA Business Plan, a reduction of £0.300 million for efficiencies had been included within the Resource's Supervision and Management and Other Income budgets. £0.100 million of the efficiencies did not affect the delivery of services to tenants and related to the removal of vacant posts from the current establishment. The remaining £0.200 million was anticipated to come from standardising charges for washing and drying facilities across all Council areas which had been approved by this Committee on 8 November 2023.

At the Executive Committee on 24 June 2020, the Council approved the implementation of the findings from the Loans Fund Review which included work by Link Asset Services to analyse the impact on the HRA loans fund principal repayments if a Loans Fund Review for the HRA was implemented. This work was refreshed at the end of March 2023 and further details of the Loans Fund Review were provided in the report. Implementing the Loans Fund Review meant looking at the repayment terms of loans and the lifespan of the related assets.

As at 31 March 2023, outstanding Loans Fund Advances for the HRA totalled £292.694 million. However, by applying the Loans Fund Review, the Loans Fund Advances as at 31 March 2023 would have been £407.126 million, which meant that the accounting for repaying debt resulted in an overpayment of £114.432 million. This was referred to as a recalculation adjustment which was detailed in table 1 of the report.

It was proposed that the recalculation adjustment be applied over the financial years 2023/2024 to 2025/2026 to reduce the HRA repayments in those years by £22.000 million, compared to current repayment profile.

How the benefits of the Loans Fund Review would be utilised were detailed in the report as well as information on additional debt repayments.

Details of the proposed Housing Capital Programme, totalling £77.303 million, were provided in Appendix 3 to the report and information on how the Programme would be funded was summarised in the report.

The Budget Scrutiny Group (BSG) provided the main consultation process between the Council and tenant representatives. Each year, the Council and the BSG worked together to develop and co-ordinate the consultation programme on setting Council rent levels for the year ahead.

This year's consultation programme followed a similar approach to previous years and included the Tenant Participation Co-ordination Group (TPCG). A summary of the feedback received from the BSG and TPCG was detailed in the report as well as feedback received from various engagement events and an online survey.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee:

- (1) that the rent increase of 6.50% to be applied in 2024/2025 with a further 6.50% increase in 2025/2026 and again in 2026/2027 subject to annual review and customer engagement for all Council houses, Gypsy/Traveller sites, lockups and garage sites and the revenue estimate proposals for the HRA, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be endorsed;
- (2) that the findings of the HRA Loans Fund Review, as detailed in Section 4 of the report, be endorsed for implementation; and
- (3) that based on the rent increase of 6.50%, the 2024/2025 Housing Capital Programme of £77.303 million, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be endorsed.

[Reference: Minutes of 23 January 2023 (Paragraph 2) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 June 2020 (Paragraph 12)]

9 Housing Allocation Policy – Local Letting Plans 2024/2025

A report dated 11 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on progress against the 2023/2024 letting targets and requesting approval for:-

- ◆ the 2024/2025 letting targets
- ◆ the 2024/2025 Local Letting Initiatives (LLIs)

Local Letting Plans (LLPs) were a key feature of the Housing Allocation Policy and continued to ensure that a strategic and flexible approach was taken in the allocation of Council housing. Annually, LLPs were prepared for each housing management area and provided an overview of local supply and demand setting out:-

- ◆ annual letting targets for each of the 4 housing lists (in relation to mainstream and sheltered properties)
- ◆ details of LLIs in operation within a local area

LLPs and associated targets were subject to this Committee's approval and this was the fourth annual report since the revised Housing Allocation Policy had been introduced.

Details of the projected outcomes in relation to the letting targets set for both mainstream and sheltered properties in 2023/2024 were set out in appendices 1 and 2 to the report and factors, which had been taken into account when setting the mainstream letting targets, were summarised in the report.

The Housing Allocation Policy allowed for the establishment of LLIs in areas where there were particular needs, issues or circumstances which required to be addressed. It was proposed that the 6 LLIs set out in Appendix 3 of the report be retained during 2024/2025.

In the previous LLP report presented to this Committee on 15 March 2023, it had been recognised that there were benefits to supporting tenants living in larger homes to downsize to a smaller property. Consequently, it was agreed that during 2023/2024, a proactive approach would be taken to support Council tenants under occupying larger sized properties to downsize to a smaller property where they wished to do so.

During 2023, a review of Council tenants living in 4-bedroom properties had been carried out. The key aim was to consider the tenants' needs and application preferences, provide housing options advice and, where appropriate, ensure applications had been placed appropriately on the housing register to maximise tenants' chances of being re-housed to a smaller property.

A change in operational practice had also been introduced to ensure that when a Council tenant living in either a 3 or 4-bedroom property submitted a new application for housing, specific consideration was given to application preferences and housing options advice was provided to enhance the tenant's chance of being re-housed.

As a result of the review exercise and through the mainstream allocation process, 19 tenants had been rehoused in a smaller, more suitable property and 3 tenants had been made an offer of housing. In addition, through the right to mutual exchange, a further 20 tenants had also been rehoused from a larger property to a smaller home.

It was proposed that this approach would continue and be expanded to include a focus on tenants living in 3-bedroom properties.

The 2024/2025 LLPs would be published on the Council's website.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that progress against the 2023/2024 letting targets be noted;
- (2) that the 2024/2025 mainstream housing letting targets, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (3) that the 2024/2025 sheltered housing letting targets, attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved; and
- (4) that the Local Letting Initiatives, attached as Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 15 March 2023 (Paragraph 9)]

10 South Lanarkshire Council Customer Involvement Strategy 2024 to 2029

A report dated 20 December 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted requesting approval for the introduction of the revised Customer Involvement Strategy with effect from 1 April 2024.

This was the 5th Customer Involvement Strategy, a copy of which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report, and had been prepared and developed in accordance with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

On 14 December 2022, this Committee had approved the updated Policy and Strategy Review Schedule which confirmed that a review of the Council's Customer Involvement Strategy would take place during 2023.

The key aim of the Strategy was to ensure extensive engagement with tenants and other customers to inform the important decisions taken across housing and related services. The Strategy had also been developed to reflect the principles of both the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the National Standards for Community Engagement.

The actions taken during the pre-consultation stage to support the development of a consultative draft were detailed in the report. The comments received and views expressed during the pre-consultation stage had also been used to inform the consultative draft Strategy.

To ensure extensive engagement with customers to inform the important decisions taken across housing services, the revised Strategy set out the approach the Council would take in customer involvement. This approach was in line with the Council's values outlined in Connect 2022 to 2027.

The consultative draft Strategy had been developed in conjunction with the Tenant Participation Co-ordination Group (TPCG) and was issued for formal consultation from 1 September to 8 December 2023. It had also been published on the Council's website, together with an online survey, which had been developed to guide responses in relation to key aspects of the Strategy. Further information on the formal consultation process was detailed in the report.

Subject to approval, the revised Strategy would be implemented from 1 April 2024 and, in conjunction with the TPCG, an annual report on progress would be provided to Committee.

An officer responded to a member's question in relation to using different methods of and venues for engagement.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the revised South Lanarkshire Council Customer Involvement Strategy, attached as Appendix 1 of the report, be approved; and
- (2) that the revised Strategy be implemented with effect from 1 April 2024.

[Reference: Minutes of 14 December 2022 (Paragraph 10) and Minutes of 23 May 2018 (Paragraph 9)]

11 Homelessness Pressures - Impact and Proposals

A report dated 5 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted:-

- ◆ providing an update on the challenges resulting from unprecedented demand for statutory homeless services, including temporary accommodation
- ◆ highlighting the actions being progressed and proposed in mitigation

Local authorities had a range of legal duties in responding to homelessness which included securing settled housing. Locally, the Council and its partners had a strong record of effective delivery of homeless services. The commitment to preventing and alleviating homelessness had been a continuing strategic focus for over 20 years and was clearly set out within the Local Housing Strategy and Community Plan along with other key Council and partner strategies.

In October 2017, the Scottish Government established the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to develop solutions to end homelessness. Final recommendations included a requirement for local authorities to develop a 5-year Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan (RRTP), setting out the local context and detailing actions which partners would have to take to achieve a change in reducing homelessness.

The Scottish Government had provided funding of £2.66 million to support delivery of the South Lanarkshire RRTP, which was significantly less than the £14 million estimated to be required. Despite the significant shortfall in funding, tangible success had been achieved in years 1 to 3 of the Plan, as outlined in the report.

The fourth year of the RRTP (2022/2023) had proved extremely challenging both locally and nationally, with national statistics reflecting homelessness at the highest level since current statistics began in 2002. The increase was significantly more pronounced within South Lanarkshire than Scotland as a whole and had resulted in a wholesale reversal on the previously reduced trend in relation to the level of homelessness and had also placed extreme strain on local services and budgets. The scale of demand experienced in 2022/2023 resulted in an overspend in the homelessness budget.

The annual RRTP review, approved by this Committee on 30 August 2023, noted the scale and impact of the reversal experienced in the year and reconsidered the ambitious 5-year targets to significantly reduce homelessness and caseload backlog to a new target to reduce or maintain current levels within 2023/2024.

In July 2023, SOLACE (the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) and ALACHO (the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers) produced a report which set out a wide range of concerns, including a chronic shortage in the supply of affordable housing, an increasing demand trend that was projected to continue and a risk to the delivery of new builds at the scale required culminating in a housing emergency in Scotland. As local authorities and partners increasingly raised concerns over pressures in the homeless system, the Scottish Government had established a short life Housing Review Group in June 2023. The focus of the Group was to consider the recommendations of SOLACE and ALACHO, explore opportunities to increase affordable housing supply and maximise existing supply to meet demand.

The local issues and actions were detailed in the report which included statistics on the continuing scale of increased demand which compared the position at the end of November 2023 with the corresponding period in the previous year.

After consideration of all available statistical information, actions across wider authorities and the detail of national discussions, actions to address the emergency homeless situation in South Lanarkshire had been identified and were detailed in the report.

Officers responded to members' questions on various aspects of the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the scale and nature of the increase in demand for homelessness assistance, both nationally and locally, be noted;
- (2) that the pressure and impact within South Lanarkshire stemming from the increase, which was above those being experienced nationally, be noted;
- (3) that the mitigation measures in place be noted; and
- (4) that the proposed further actions, as detailed in paragraph 5 of the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 30 August 2023 (Paragraph 14)]

12 Lease of Proposed Development - Lanark Community Workshop at Lanark Racecourse

A report dated 6 December 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 37(c) because of the timescales involved, by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to grant the lease of the proposed Lanark Community Workshop at Lanark Racecourse to Lanark Lanimer Committee.

In October 2015, the Council had applied to the Scottish Government's Regional Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) to support the development of a Clydesdale Rural Development Centre in Lanark. The Council had received the formal offer of a grant on 19 May 2016 for £1 million against a project cost of £2 million, with the remaining funds to come from other grants.

The project that was submitted followed a community consultation, market appraisal and preparation of a detailed feasibility plan developed through work with organisations including Lanark Lanimer Committee, a potential tenant for the community facilities portion of the project.

During 2016, negotiations to purchase the original identified site, the former Alston's Yard, reached an impasse so the project could not be delivered at that location. Other locations were considered, however, those could also not be delivered. Consequently, there was a need to explore other options and identify an alternative site to fulfil the intention of the grant and deliver a workable project for the town.

An opportunity at Lanark Racecourse, on the site of a demolished building, had been identified as the best solution. Following discussions with the Scottish Government, it was confirmed the project could be progressed. Discussions had also taken place with community representatives and potential occupiers who had all indicated their support, in principle, for the revised project.

The Scottish Government had confirmed a revised offer to deliver the Community Workshop project. The proposed site, part of the Common Good, comprising the footprint of a former stable block, currently a concrete pad, soft landscaping and car parking area, was of sufficient size to accommodate the building to be constructed. Planning consent had been obtained.

The community benefit from the Lanark Lanimer Project was assessed as if subject to the Community Asset Transfer process and qualified for a 77% discount to the market value (rental). Prior to committing to the construction of the new building, negotiations had been ongoing to agree the terms of occupation with Lanark Lanimer Committee. Although this was not a Community Asset Transfer, Lanark Lanimer Committee had asked that, when setting the rent, the Council considered the role it played within the local community and the community benefits.

The market value of the building, when completed, would be £16,000 per annum. At a 77% discount, the rental would be £3,680 per annum. In addition, in return for the fit out of the building being completed at Lanark Lanimer Committee's expense, a 5 year rent-free period had been requested.

The proposed principal lease terms for the lease to Lanark Lanimer Committee, together with any financial implications, were outlined in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 37(c), by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to grant the lease of the proposed Lanark Community Workshop at Lanark Racecourse to Lanark Lanimer Committee, be noted; and

- (2) that the authority granted to the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Head of Administration and Legal Services, to conclude matters and enter into the necessary legal agreements in terms of the principal conditions contained in paragraph 4.6 of the report and terms which were in the best interests of the Council, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 9 August 2022 (Paragraph 13)]

Councillors Lockhart and Marrs, having declared an interest in this item, withdrew from the meeting during its consideration

13 Acquisition of Houses at Jacktonhall, Jackton (Section 75 Planning Reference EK/09/0218) and Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton (Section 75 Planning Reference HM/10/0052)

A report dated 14 December 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted requesting approval to acquire 89 homes across 2 developments, at Jacktonhall, Jackton and Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton, from Barratt Homes, for inclusion in the Council's housing stock in fulfilment of the Planning obligations associated with the development of the residential sites.

At its meeting on 30 November 2022, the Council's Executive Committee had approved the Local Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 and a new affordable housing supply target for the Council which aimed to deliver an additional 1,300 homes by 31 March 2027. This would be delivered through a combination of new Council homes and the acquisition of existing homes on the market, with the new sites set out within the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which was updated on an annual basis.

On 8 November 2023, the SHIP 2024 to 2029 had been approved by this Committee. This included projects with a total potential capacity for delivering up to 2,442 affordable homes in South Lanarkshire over the 5-year period to March 2029 and included both Jacktonhall, Jackton (40 units) and Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton (49 units).

In November 2023, the Council entered into discussions with Barratt Homes to fulfil its planning obligation for new affordable homes through a turnkey arrangement with the Council paying staged payments for each key stage completed for each house. The mix of houses across the sites consisted of 2, 3 and 4-bedroom homes including cottage flats, terraced, semi-detached and detached houses. It was anticipated that those houses would be completed in 2026.

The proposal provided by Barratt Homes had been assessed by the Council's relevant technical and commercial services as presenting value for money for the Council. Therefore, it was proposed to acquire 89 completed houses from Barratt Homes, subject to the principal conditions detailed in the report.

Acquisition of the properties would be funded from the Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and would be eligible for Scottish Government Affordable Housing grant funding which would reduce the overall cost to the Council.

The proposed purchase price for each unit type compared favourably with the asking prices of the same house types within the development and prices of similar new properties on the open market.

An officer undertook to provide the Chair with the number of 4-bedroom homes included in the proposal.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the acquisition of 89 completed affordable homes from Barratt Homes for a total price of £17.8 million (which included the cost of land and circa £500,000 in recoverable VAT payments), to fulfil the Planning obligations associated with the residential development of the sites, be approved; and
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) to instruct Legal Services to conclude transactions, in the appropriate manner and in the best interests of the Council, where each individual transaction was in excess of the current £100,000 acquisition limit under the existing delegated powers arrangements.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 November 2023 (Paragraph 8) and Minutes of the Executive Committee of 30 November 2022 (Paragraphs 6 and 7)]

14 Former David Milne Centre, 84 Old Mill Road, Uddingston – Asset Transfer to Rivals School of Martial Arts

A report dated 10 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of a request for asset transfer, by lease, of the former David Milne Centre, 84 Old Mill Road, Uddingston to Rivals School of Martial Arts and requesting approval of the principal terms and conditions of asset transfer, as detailed in the report.

The Council owned the former David Milne Centre, 84 Mill Road, Uddingston. The property closed in March 2023 and was currently vacant.

Rivals School of Martial Arts had been in existence for 16 years and a charity since April 2016. The School had submitted a request for Community Asset Transfer (CAT) of the former hall, by lease, with the validation date of 18 September 2023.

In addition to placing the application and supporting documentation on the Council's Planning Portal, notices had been placed on the property advising that the Council was considering an asset transfer. The closing date for responses was 19 October 2023, at which time 57 representations had been received, 34 in favour and 23 objections.

The request had been considered at the CAT Assessment Panel on 12 December 2023 when matters in relation to the property, organisation and project had been taken into consideration.

It was proposed to lease the former David Milne Centre, 84 Old Mill Road, Uddingston to Rivals School of Martial Arts on the principal terms and conditions detailed in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the former David Milne Centre, 84 Old Mill Road, Uddingston be leased to Rivals School of Martial Arts, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in paragraph 5 of the report; and
- (2) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Head of Administration and Legal Services, be authorised to conclude all matters in respect of the lease and enter into the necessary legal agreements on terms which were in the best interests of the Council.

15 Former Hareleeshill Sports Barn, Donaldson Road, Larkhall – Lease to Rivals School of Martial Arts

A report dated 10 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of a request for asset transfer, by lease, of the Hareleeshill Sports Barn, Donaldson Road, Larkhall, to Rivals School of Martial Arts and requesting approval of the principal terms and conditions of asset transfer, as detailed in the report.

The subjects at Hareleeshill Sports Barn, Donaldson Road, Larkhall were, until recently, managed by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC). Following a review of its business plan, the SLLC Board announced that it could not sustain service delivery from that facility and control had been returned to the Council.

Rivals School of Martial Arts had approached the Council with a request for an annual lease of the subjects to enable the facility to re-open for community participation in sports, participation in martial arts and associated health promotion activities. The lease would enable them to operate the facility whilst testing the viability of a future Community Asset Transfer (CAT).

This was not a formal CAT request in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, however, the application to lease had been assessed following the established CAT procedure. The CAT Working Group had recommended that the applicants be granted a 100% rent reduction for the annual lease.

It was proposed to lease the subjects at Hareleeshill Sports Barn, Donaldson Road, Larkhall to Rivals School of Martial Arts on the principal terms and conditions detailed in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1)** that the subjects at Hareleeshill Sports Barn, Donaldson Road, Larkhall, be leased to Rivals School of Martial Arts, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in paragraph 5 of the report; and
- (2)** that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Head of Administration and Legal Services, be authorised to conclude all matters in respect of the lease and enter into the necessary legal agreements on terms which were in the best interests of the Council.

16 Former Spittal Community Centre, Carrick Road, Rutherglen and Former Toll Pitch Community Hall, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang – Lease to the LEAP Project

A report dated 10 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of a request for a concessionary lease of the former Spittal Community Centre, Carrick Road, Rutherglen and former Toll Pitch Community Hall, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang to the LEAP Project and seeking approval of the principal terms and conditions, as detailed in the report.

The subjects at Spittal Community Centre, Carrick Road, Rutherglen and Toll Pitch Community Hall, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang were, until March 2023, managed by South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC). Following a review of its business plan, the SLLC Board announced that it could not sustain service delivery from those facilities and control was returned to the Council.

The LEAP Project had approached the Council with a request for an annual lease of those subjects to enable the facilities to re-open for community use. The leases would enable them to operate the facilities whilst testing the viability of a future Community Asset Transfer (CAT).

This was not a formal CAT request in terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, however, the application to lease had been assessed following the established CAT procedure. The CAT Working Group had recommended that the applicants be granted a 100% rent reduction for the annual leases and it was anticipated that a formal CAT application would be developed.

The Council had no alternative operational requirement for either of the subjects. Should the lease prove unsustainable for the LEAP Project, the Council would have the ability to resume full ownership and consider the future of the properties.

It was proposed to lease the subjects at Spittal Community Centre, Carrick Road, Rutherglen and Toll Pitch Community Hall, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang to the LEAP Project on the principal terms and conditions detailed in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the former Spittal Community Centre, Carrick Road, Rutherglen be leased to the LEAP Project, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report;
- (2) that the former Toll Pitch Community Hall, Hamilton Road, Cambuslang be leased to the LEAP Project, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in paragraph 5.2 of the report; and
- (3) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Head of Administration and Legal Services, be authorised to conclude all matters in respect of the leases and enter into the necessary legal agreements on terms which were in the best interests of the Council.

17 Housing and Technical Resource Plan: Quarter 2 Progress Report 2023/2024

A report dated 5 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the Housing and Technical Resource Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report for 2023/2024 for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

The Resource Plan measures were rated using a traffic light system of red, amber or green as well as blue (BRAG), which indicated that an action had been completed.

Details were provided on:-

- ◆ progress against all Resource Plan measures contained in the Quarter 2 Progress Report 2023/2024, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report
- ◆ key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report
- ◆ areas for improvement and associated management actions, as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Housing and Technical Resource Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report 2023/2024, as summarised at paragraph 5.2 and detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report, be noted; and

- (3) that the areas for improvement and associated management actions, as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 May 2023 (Paragraph 4) and Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 15 June 2022 (Paragraph 3)]

18 Delegated Authority Report – Update

A report dated 10 January 2024 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on transactions processed by Property Services during Quarters 2 and 3 of 2023/2024.

The Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), under delegated powers, had authority to deal with various transactions including:-

- ◆ leases up to the value of £50,000 per annum and a maximum period of 20 years
- ◆ rent reviews up to an increase of £20,000 per annum
- ◆ disposals up to a value of £200,000
- ◆ acquisitions up to a value of £200,000

Details of the transactions undertaken during Quarters 2 and 3, as contained in Appendix 1 of the report, were as follows:-

Quarter 2 2023/2024:

Number of transactions	107
Total value of lease transactions	£91,405.30 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£7,176,652
Total value of miscellaneous transactions	21

Quarter 3 2023/2024:

Number of transactions	103
Total value of lease transactions	£83,302.29 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£6,949,200
Total value of miscellaneous transactions	Nil

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 May 2023 (Paragraph 9)]

19 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair advised the Committee that this would be the Clerk, Helen Calley's last meeting, as she would be leaving the Council, and wished her all the best for the future.