

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via MS Teams and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 16 September 2020

Chair:

Councillor Josh Wilson

Councillors Present:

Councillor Walter Brogan (*substitute for Councillor Gerry Convery*), Councillor Robert Brown, Councillor Archie Buchanan, Councillor Janine Calikes, Councillor Stephanie Callaghan (Depute), Councillor Graeme Campbell, Councillor Maureen Chalmers, Councillor Margaret Cooper, Councillor Maureen Devlin, Councillor Mary Donnelly (*substitute for Councillor Collette Stevenson*), Councillor Allan Falconer, Councillor Grant Ferguson, Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Geri Gray, Councillor Eric Holford, Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Catherine McClymont (*substitute for Councillor Andy Carmichael*), Councillor Colin McGavigan, Councillor Mo Razzaq, Councillor David Shearer, Councillor Jared Wark

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Andy Carmichael, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Poppy Corbett, Councillor George Greenshields, Councillor Martin Lennon, Councillor John Ross (ex officio), Councillor Collette Stevenson

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

M M Cairns, Legal Services Manager; H Goodwin, Finance Manager (Resources); E Maxwell, Human Resources Business Partner; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Strategy), H Tennant, Administration Officer, L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

Housing and Technical Resources

D Lowe, Executive Director; A Finnan, Head of Housing Services; F McCafferty, Head of Property Services

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Previous Meeting

Note of Delegated Decisions taken by the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, on items of business relating to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 17 June 2020 submitted for information.

Officers responded to a question in relation to item 9 of the meeting note.

The Committee decided:

that the delegated decisions taken by the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, in relation to the Housing and Technical Resources agenda of 17 June 2020 be noted as a correct record.

3 Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/2020 – Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 26 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (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 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Total expenditure at 31 March 2020 was £4.032 million. The underspend of £3.278 million was mainly due to timing of spend on multi-year projects.

The continued effects of COVID-19, including the closure of construction sites prior to the financial year end, had impacted on capital spend achieved in 2019/2020 and would continue to impact the 2020/2021 capital programme.

The Committee decided: that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (excl HRA) of £7.310 million and expenditure to 31 March 2020 of £4.032 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2020 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/2020 – Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the capital programme for Housing and Technical Resources (HRA) for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Expenditure at 31 March was £51.235 million. The underspend of £10.600 million related to timing of expenditure on New Build and Housing Investment programmes. The underspend would be carried forward to the 2021/2022 programme pending a review of the impact of COVID-19 on the 2020/2021 programme.

The Committee decided: that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (HRA) of £61.835 million and expenditure to 31 March 2020 of £51.235 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2020 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Capital Budget Monitoring 2020/2021 – Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 26 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (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 2020 to 19 June 2020.

The budget of £12.773 million, approved by the Council in March 2020, had been updated to include the carry forward from 2019/2020. Expenditure at 19 June 2020 was £0.056 million. Progress in delivery of the 2020/2021 Capital Programme had been affected by lockdown which had required the closure of construction sites. COVID-19 restrictions would continue to impact delivery of the 2020/2021 Capital Programme.

A review of the General Services Capital Programme to provide a realistic estimate of anticipated spend levels for 2020/2021 was underway. The outcome of this review would be reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Committee decided: that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (excl HRA) of £12.773 million and expenditure to 19 June 2020 of £0.056 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 June 2020 (Paragraph 6)]

6 Capital Budget Monitoring 2020/2021 – Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (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 19 June 2020.

The Housing Capital Programme for 2020/2021 of £97.303 million was approved by the Council in February 2020. Lockdown, due to COVID-19, had resulted in little progress on the planned Housing Investment and New Build Programmes. Actual expenditure to 19 June 2020 was £3.357 million.

A review of the HRA Capital Programme would be undertaken to provide a realistic estimate of anticipated spend levels for 2020/2021. Details would be reported through the agreed Recovery Board arrangements and, thereafter, to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Committee decided: that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (HRA) of £97.303 million and expenditure to 19 June 2020 of £3.357 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 24 June 2020 (Paragraph 6)]

7 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2019/2020 – Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 for Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA).

Prior to transfers, an underspend position against budget of £0.401 million was reported at 31 March 2020. Once approved transfers to reserves had been made, the Resource moved to an overspend position of £0.033 million. The overspend was solely due to additional Health and Safety costs incurred as a result of COVID-19.

Further details on variances for individual Services were detailed in the appendices to the report.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA) final outturn position as at 31 March 2020 of an overspend of £0.033 million, after transfers to reserves, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted; and

(2) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2020 (Paragraph 5)]

8 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2019/2020 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 for Housing and Technical Resources (HRA).

At 31 March 2020, there had been a breakeven position against budget following a final transfer to the balance sheet of £0.244 million. The drawdown position, which was lower than anticipated, was primarily due to underspends in bad debt provision, IT milestone payments and employee costs. Those were partially offset by overspends in repairs and under recovery in rental income.

Further details on the variances for the HRA were detailed in Appendix A to the report.

The Committee decided:

(1) that the final outturn breakeven position on Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted; and

(2) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2020 (Paragraph 5)]

9 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/2021 – Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on the actual expenditure measured against the revenue budget for the period 1 April to 19 June 2020 for Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA).

An overspend position of £0.244 million at 19 June 2020 against the phased budget was reported. This overspend was a result of the Resource response to COVID-19, with additional expenditure incurred for temporary accommodation costs for homeless people, and additional health and safety measures required for employees and service users. Further details were provided in Appendix D to the report.

Property Services had continued to incur fixed overhead costs and a recharge of £9.538 million would be required to cover those costs.

Further details on variances for individual services were contained in the appendices to the report

The Committee decided: that the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA) of an overspend of £0.244 million at 19 June 2020, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 12 August 2020 (Paragraph 3)]

10 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2020/2021 – Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 6 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure for the period 1 April to 19 June 2020 against budgeted expenditure for the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA) together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2021.

A breakeven position was reported at 19 June 2020 which reflected COVID-19 costs being managed within HRA budgets. The forecast for the budget to 31 March 2021 was also a breakeven position, which reflected the management of the overall HRA finances by a drawdown of reserves in the current financial year.

The impact of COVID-19 on the budget continued to be monitored. A reduced volume of repairs and an increase in the rental debt levels, which could require an increased bad debt provision, were reported. Annual rental income projections for the year were expected to be lower as a result of the delayed completion of new properties.

Property Services continued to incur non variable costs which required to be offset, therefore, a recharge of £4.635 million to date to the HRA revenue budget had been required.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2021 of a breakeven position be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 12 August 2020 (Paragraph 3)]

11 Housing and Technical Resources – Workforce Monitoring – May to July 2020

A joint report dated 17 August 2020 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Housing and Technical Resources for the period May to July 2020:-

- ◆ 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 13 June 2020

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2020 (Paragraph 7)]

12 Housing and Technical Resource Plan 2020/2021

A report dated 20 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the Housing and Technical Resource Plan 2020/2021.

Details were provided on the Resource Plan for 2020/2021, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which outlined the:-

- ◆ key areas of focus for the year ahead
- ◆ Resource objectives and outcomes
- ◆ measures and actions
- ◆ resourcing of the Plan

In line with the Council's performance management arrangements, a mid-year progress report on actions identified in the 2020/2021 Resource Plan would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee: that the Housing and Technical Resources' Resource Plan for 2020/2021 be approved and uploaded to the Council's website.

[Reference: Minutes of 4 September 2019 (Paragraph 10)]

13 Annual Review of the South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019/2020

A report dated 27 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the first annual review of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 to 2024.

In October 2017, the Scottish Government established the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to develop short-term and long-term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping across Scotland. In June 2018, HARSAG produced a final report with recommendations that included a requirement for local authorities to develop a 5 year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP).

The Council's RRTP 2019 to 2024 had been approved by this Committee on 23 January 2019 and had been reported to the Community Planning Partnership Board on 19 June 2019.

The RRTP was structured around 5 high level priority objectives, with 52 indicators to monitor progress, comprising 32 actions and 20 measures. Those measures were categorised as 'green', 'amber' and 'red' depending on the progress made against each.

During 2019/2020, 83% of the 52 indicators were on, or slightly behind, target to achieve the projected outcomes within the identified timescales. No indicators had been categorised as red, with 9 indicators to be reported later. Six indicators, comprising 4 measures and 2 actions, had been categorised as amber, representing minor slippage against the target within Year 1.

The annual review had confirmed that good progress had been made towards delivering on the agreed RRTP year 1 priorities. A summary of key highlights and achievements in relation to each of the 5 priority objectives for 2019/2020 (Year 1) was provided in the report. Following the annual review, a small number of minor amendments had been made to the RRTP, as detailed in the report.

A summary of the key priorities to be progressed during year 2 of the plan (2020/2021) was detailed in the report.

The RRTP Annual Review 2019/2020, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, had been submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 August 2020 and would be published on the Council's website. The outcomes from the Annual Review would be submitted to the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership Board on 21 October 2020.

The Homelessness Strategy Group (HSG) would continue to meet regularly throughout the year to ensure that RRTP priority actions continued to be delivered and to monitor and report on progress made. The impact of COVID-19 would be closely monitored and this would be reported as part of the next annual review process.

To date, the Scottish Government had provided £1,019,077 to support the development and implementation of the RRTP, including £453,000 for 2020/2021. Additional funding would be required to deliver the strategic objectives of the RRTP.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the progress made in delivering the RRTP objectives, as set out in the RRTP Annual Review 2019/2020, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the revisions to the RRTP, as detailed in the report, be approved; and
- (3) that the key priorities to be progressed in 2020/2021, as detailed in the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 23 January 2019 (Paragraph 13)]

14 39 Coronation Street, Carstairs – Lease to Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub on Concessionary Terms

A report dated 11 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the request for a concessionary lease of 39 Coronation Street, Carstairs to Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub.

The property at 39 Coronation Street, Carstairs had formerly been part of the Council's social housing stock and had recently been used by the local Housing Office as an office/community flat. The property was no longer required for operational purposes and there was no demand for the property to be used for social housing. The other 3 properties within the "4-in-a-block" layout were Council owned and tenanted.

Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub, which had been established in April 2018 and had been awarded charitable status in March 2020, had requested to lease the property for use as a community drop-in facility. The organisation received funding from the Robertson Trust and through self-funded events. Once premises had been secured, the Hub intended to apply to the Big Lottery for additional funding of £10,000.

Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub planned to use the premises to facilitate community engagement and interaction and reduce social isolation. The Hub would work in partnership with the Clydesdale food bank to host workshops on 'living on a budget' and 'healthy eating' as well as clubs for all ages, including activities for over 65s, lunch clubs and after school clubs. The Hub also aimed to have a sensory room to support local children with additional support and development needs.

It was proposed that the premises at 39 Coronation Street, Carstairs be let on the following conditions:-

- ◆ rent would be £1.00 per annum
- ◆ annual missive
- ◆ the property would be used as a community facility
- ◆ the tenant would be responsible for internal repairs, maintenance and insurance
- ◆ the Council would insure the building and would recover the premium from the tenant
- ◆ the tenant would be responsible for all rates, water rates and utility costs

The grant of the lease at £1.00 per annum would be a concessionary rent which would be the subject of reassessment based on the community benefits realised through the continuing project. The lease would mitigate any short-term potential revenue liability on the Council in terms of vacant rates, maintenance, insurance and security of the property.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the community flat at 39 Coronation Street, Carstairs be leased to Carstairs Junction Welcome All Hub for a concessionary rental of £1.00 per annum; 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 concessionary lease.

15 Housing and Technical Resource Plan – Quarter 4 Progress Report 2019/2020

A report dated 20 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the Housing and Technical Resource Plan for 2019/2020.

Details were provided on:-

- ◆ progress made in implementing the priority projects identified in the Resource Plan 2019/2020, as detailed in the Quarter 4 Progress Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report
- ◆ those measures which had changed in red/amber/green status during the period from Quarter 2 to Quarter 4, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Quarter 4 Progress Report 2019/2020, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the key achievements made by the Resource to date, as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report, be noted;
- (3) that the areas for improvement and management actions, as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report, be noted; and
- (4) that the details of those additional measures which had changed in the red/amber/green status during the period between Quarter 2 and Quarter 4, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 4 September 2019 (Paragraph 10)]

16 Delegated Authority Report - Update

A report dated 11 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on transactions processed by Property Services during the final quarter of 2019/2020 and providing a year end summary of transactions.

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 £100,000

Details of the transactions undertaken during Quarter 4, 1 January to 31 March 2020, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, were as follows:-

Quarter 4:

Number of transactions	45
Total value of lease transactions	£207,730 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£1,301,645

The annual summary of all transactions taken under delegated authority during 2019/2020, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, was as follows:-

Annual Summary

Number of transactions	221
Total value of lease transactions	£596,398 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£5,516,768

The overall profile of the volume and value of transactions during 2019/2020 was consistent with previous years.

The Committee decided: that the transactions processed by delegated authority during the final quarter of 2019/2020, together with the year-end summary of all such transactions, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 13 November 2019 (Paragraph 17)]

17 Notification of Contracts Awarded – 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020

A report dated 7 August 2020 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on contracts awarded by Housing and Technical Resources valued in excess of £50,000, in the period 1 January to 31 July 2020, as follows :-

- ◆ contracts awarded by Consultancy Services
- ◆ contracts awarded by Procurement Services
- ◆ contracts awarded by Building Services

Details of the contracts and projects were provided in the appendices to the report.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted

[Reference: Minutes of 5 February 2020 (Paragraph 18)]

18 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.