

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 12 November 2008

Chair:

Councillor Alex McInnes

Councillors Present:

John Anderson, David Baillie (Depute), Walter Brogan, Jackie Burns, Andy Carmichael, Maureen Devlin, Jim Docherty, Douglas Edwards, Beith Forrest, Ian Gray, Anne Higgins, Graeme Horne, Bobby Lawson, Brian McCaig, Brian McKenna, Jean McKeown, John Murray, Patrick Ross-Taylor, David Shearer, Richard Tullett

Councillors' Apologies:

Barry Douglas, Edward McAvoy, Bert Thomson

Attending:

Corporate Resources

C Lyon, Administration Officer; L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

Finance and Information Technology Resources

L Crosby, Accountant (Research)

Housing and Technical Resources

J Hayton, Executive Director; L Freeland, Head of Area Services; P Murphy, Head of Support Services; S Short, Customer/Administration Manager; J Stobie, Head of Property Services

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Housing and Technical Resources Committee held on 3 September 2008 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Capital Budget Monitoring 2008/2009 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 14 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology 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 3 October 2008.

The Committee decided: that the Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme of £38.543 million and expenditure to date of £14.977 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Capital Budget Monitoring 2008/2009 - Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 14 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology 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 to 3 October 2008.

The Committee decided: that the Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (excl HRA) of £11.551 million and expenditure to date of £1.940 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/2009 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 14 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 3 October 2008 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2009.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2009 of a breakeven position be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 5)]

6 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/2009 - Housing and Technical Resources (Excl HRA)

A joint report dated 14 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 3 October 2008 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2009.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA), as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2009 of a breakeven position be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in Appendices B to E of the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 6)]

Councillor Burns entered the meeting during consideration of this item of business

7 Property Services Performance Review

A report dated 20 October 2008 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the trading position of the Property Services Trading Division which had achieved an operating surplus of £1.453 million
- ◆ personnel issues including maximising attendance and health and safety statistics
- ◆ contract/statutory performance indicators at 5 September 2008
- ◆ the Housing Investment Programme
- ◆ customer complaints and enquiries recorded during the period 11 August to 5 September 2008
- ◆ customer satisfaction levels

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 7)]

8 Housing and Technical Resources - Workforce Monitoring - August and September 2008

A joint report dated 19 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Corporate Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Housing and Technical Resources for the period August and September 2008:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 8)]

9 Housing and Technical Resources' Statutory Performance Indicators - 5 Year Comparison 2003/2004 to 2007/2008

A joint report dated 4 September 2008 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on Housing and Technical Resources' Statutory Performance Indicators for the financial year 2007/2008. Comparisons and explanations, where appropriate, were provided for the 5 year period covering 2003/2004 to 2007/2008.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 October 2007 (Paragraph 9) and Executive Committee of 5 November 2008 (Paragraph 8)]

10 Housing and Technical Resources' Resource Plan 2008/2009 - Quarter 2 Progress Report

A report dated 17 October 2008 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the Housing and Technical Resources' Resource Plan 2008/2009. Details

were provided on progress made at the end of quarter 2, covering the period 1 April to September 2008, in implementing the priority projects identified in the Resource Plan.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 4 June 2008 (Paragraph 5) and Executive Committee of 5 November 2008 (Paragraph 7)]

11 Plan for the Management of Asbestos within Council Houses and Related Common Areas

A report dated 15 October 2008 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on a Housing specific Asbestos Management Plan.

Since 1998, there had been a policy in place to deal with materials containing asbestos which were identified in any Council premises, including common parts of Council houses such as closes and shared lofts.

The ongoing works within the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) had identified the need for a specific plan, with associated procedures on how to deal with asbestos in Council houses and common areas. Although the Council had no legal obligation regarding asbestos within Council houses, it had obligations to any tradespersons and tenants if works instructed by the Council resulted in asbestos being disturbed. Tenants would be informed if asbestos was located in their property and advised of any associated risks and what precautions should be taken.

The purpose of the Plan, which was attached as an appendix to the report, was to provide a summary of the action that Housing and Technical Resources would undertake to minimise the risk to tenants, employees and contractors of exposure to asbestos. The Plan was supplemented by a variety of detailed procedures which would be updated on an ongoing basis to ensure adherence to legislation and best practice guidance. A summary of the main actions was detailed in the report.

The target date for full implementation of the Plan was the end of February 2009. Prior to this date, appropriate training would be given to all relevant employees and computer systems would be updated to ensure effective transfer of information relating to asbestos.

The Committee decided: that the Plan for the Management of Asbestos within Council Houses and Related Common Areas, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Councillor Docherty left the meeting and Councillor Lawson entered the meeting during consideration of the above item of business

12 Local Housing Strategy Annual Review 2008

A report dated 17 October 2008 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the 2008 annual review of the Local Housing Strategy.

There was no requirement for the Council to submit a written review to the Scottish Government for 2007/2008. However, it was considered useful to produce a written review in terms of monitoring progress, priorities and actions.

The report provided a summary of the Local Housing Strategy Annual Review 2008 and confirmed good progress had been made in strategy implementation under each of the themes contained within the Local Housing Strategy.

An updated action plan for the year 2008/2009 was also contained within the Review.

The Committee decided: that the Local Housing Strategy Annual Review 2008 be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 31 October 2007 (Paragraph 15)]

13 Project Services - Structure Alterations

A joint report dated 16 October 2008 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Corporate Resources) was submitted on the implementation of a revised senior management team and supporting employee structure in the Project Services Section of Property Services.

A review of the staffing structure had been carried out with the aim of realigning posts to facilitate improved service delivery. Improvements in the way resources were shared would provide a better balance in terms of responsibility and workload and would include the change to more generic job titles for senior officers as follows:-

- ◆ Property Services Manager
- ◆ Property Manager (Strategy and Legislation)
- ◆ Property Manager (Technical)
- ◆ Property Manager (Assets)
- ◆ Property Manager (Commercial)
- ◆ Property Manager (Design Programmes)

Both the current and proposed management arrangements were detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

As well as the realignment of senior posts, consideration had also been given to the creation of dedicated support teams. This review had identified the need to change the roles and responsibilities of senior management, including the Property Manager (Design Programmes) and Property Manager (Assets) who would hold responsibility for the day to day delivery of the Council's programmes of work.

An ambitious programme required to be undertaken to ensure that the Council met its requirements in the areas of legislative compliance and sustainability. It was proposed that 12 additional posts be established to carry out training and monitoring work on key areas of asbestos, water quality, fixed electrical inspection and testing, together with fire safety over the next 5 years. Funding of £1 million was available over the next 5 years to support this work and 12 posts were detailed as follows:-

- ◆ 1 post of Technical Support Manager (Asbestos) on Grade 4, Level 2 (£33,870 to £35,969)
- ◆ 4 posts of Compliance Officer (Asbestos) on Grade 3, Level 1-2 (£20,731 to £27,519)
- ◆ 2 posts of Compliance Officer (Water Quality) on Grade 3, Level 1-2 (£20,731 to £27,519)
- ◆ 2 posts of Compliance Officer (Fixed Electrical) on Grade 3, Level 1-2 (£20,731 to £27,519)
- ◆ 1 post of Energy Manager on Grade 4, Level 2-5 (£33,870 to £38,743)
- ◆ 1 post of Energy Engineer (Projects) on Grade 3, Level 8 (£31,936 to £34,381)
- ◆ 1 post of Energy Officer (Projects) on Grade 3, Level 2 (£23,687 to £27,519)

A Council wide security strategy had been approved and, to ensure that the strategy was delivered effectively, it was proposed to amend the current contracts of the Security Manager and CCTV Development Co-ordinator from a 2 year fixed term contract to permanent ones.

The proposed changes would increase the current establishment from 188.6 posts to 202.6 posts and all associated changes would be introduced at no extra cost.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the proposed realignment of the senior management structure within Project Services, with defined roles and responsibilities applied to each of the Technical functions ensuring that all Grade 5 Managers reported to the Project Services Manager, be approved;
- (2) that the establishment of the 12 posts required to deliver the Council's legislative compliance and sustainable development requirements, as detailed above, be approved; and
- (3) that the 2 fixed term appointments of Security Manager on Grade 4, Level 5-9 (£35,968 to £42,374) and CCTV Development Co-ordinator on Grade 4, Level 2-5 (£33,870 to £38,472) be made permanent.

14 Notification of Contracts Awarded - 12 August to 16 October 2008

A report dated 15 October 2008 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ contracts awarded by Housing and Technical Resources in the period 12 August to 16 October 2008
- ◆ contracts instructed under the General Services Partnership
- ◆ contracts instructed under the Primary School Framework Agreement Phase 2
- ◆ contracts awarded by Procurement

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

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 3 September 2008 (Paragraph 12)]

15 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.