

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 17 February 2010

Chair:

Councillor Alex McInnes

Councillors Present:

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

Councillors' Apologies:

Walter Brogan, Barry Douglas, Ian Gray, Edward McAvoy

Attending:

Corporate Resources

G Cochran, Administration Assistant; C Lyon, Administration Officer

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; M Wood, Strategic Planning Manager

Also Attending:

M McLellan, Scottish Housing Regulator

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Technical Resource Committee held on 25 November 2009 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Capital Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 13 January 2010 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 23 December 2009.

The Committee decided: that the Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme of £40.441 million and expenditure to date of £27.028 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Capital Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 - Housing and Technical Resources (Excl HRA)

A joint report dated 13 January 2010 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 23 December 2009.

The Committee decided: that the Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (excl HRA) of £7.020 million and expenditure to date of £3.526 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 12 January 2010 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 23 December 2009 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2010.

Details were provided on proposed budget virements to realign budgets.

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 2010 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 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 5)]

6 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2009/2010 - Housing and Technical Resources (Excl HRA)

A joint report dated 12 January 2010 by the Executive Directors (Finance and Information Technology Resources) and (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 23 December 2009 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2010.

Details were provided on proposed budget virements to realign budgets.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the underspend on the Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA) of £0.007 million, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2010 of an underspend of £0.178 million be noted; and
- (3) that the budget virements, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 6)]

7 Property Services Performance Review

A report dated 22 January 2010 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 £2.966 million at 23 December 2009
- ◆ personnel issues including maximising attendance and health and safety statistics
- ◆ contract/statutory performance indicators at 23 December 2009
- ◆ the Housing Investment Programme
- ◆ customer complaints and enquiries recorded during the period 30 November to 23 December 2009
- ◆ customer satisfaction levels

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 7)]

8 Housing and Technical Resources - Workforce Monitoring - October to December 2009

A joint report dated 11 January 2010 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 October to December 2009:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers
- ◆ Joint Staffing Watch as at 12 September 2009

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 8)]

9 Award of Debt Management Contract

A report dated 11 January 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the outcome of the tendering process for the Debt Management contract.

The tendering process for the Debt Management contract had commenced in July 2009 and, following completion of pre-qualification questionnaires, all parties had been issued with an invitation to tender. 4 tender submissions had been returned. 1 tender had been excluded from the evaluation due to unquantifiable pricing in relation to the tenderer's interpretation of the contractual requirements under TUPE being at variance to the Council's legal opinion.

The 3 remaining tender bids had been evaluated on a 60% cost and 40% quality basis and, following a full assessment of each tenderer, the Assessment Panel had considered that bcwgroup plc best demonstrated the ability to deliver the Council's operational requirements.

The contract would operate over a 3 year period from 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2013 at a total value estimated at £1.2 million.

The Committee decided: that the Debt Management contract be awarded to bcwgroup plc for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2013.

[Reference: Minutes of 7 February 2007 (Paragraph 12)]

10 Housing Allocation Policy - Local Letting Plans 2010/2011

A report dated 21 January 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ the performance over the first 6 months of the Housing Allocation Policy against the 2009/2010 local letting targets
- ◆ the local letting targets for 2010/2011
- ◆ a number of amendments to letting initiatives

The Council's revised Housing Allocation Policy had been in place since June 2009. A key feature of the new Policy was the introduction of Local Letting Plans to ensure a more strategic and flexible approach to the allocation of housing in South Lanarkshire.

Performance information set against targets during the first 6 months of the Policy were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. The 8 housing management areas were generally meeting their targets.

The proposed letting targets for 2010/2011 for each of the housing management areas were also detailed in Appendix 1 to the report. In order to respond to local housing need, some minor adjustments were proposed for 2010/2011. The letting targets proposed for each sheltered housing development were set out in Appendix 2 to the report. The targets had been set for 2010/2011 to take account of the low level of lets.

It was proposed that 1 new letting initiative be introduced and that the scope of a further 2 letting initiatives be amended in 2010/2011. Details of those changes were provided in Appendix 3 to the report.

A further report would be presented to this Committee in June 2010 setting out revised targets for 2011/2012 and confirming any amendments to letting initiatives.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the performance against the 2009/2010 letting targets be noted;
- (2) that the 2010/2011 letting targets, as detailed in the report, be approved;
- (3) that the 2010/2011 support needs targets for sheltered developments be approved; and
- (4) that the amendments to letting initiatives, as detailed in the report, be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of 17 June 2009 (Paragraph 6)]

11 Consultation on Revised Homelessness Policy

A report dated 21 January 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the progress of the consultation on a revised Homelessness Policy.

The draft revised Homelessness Policy set out the aims, objectives and principles of the Council's Homelessness Service and how the Council would provide and manage services to people affected by homelessness taking account of developments in:-

- ◆ legislation and policy
- ◆ understanding of good practice
- ◆ the extent and nature of homelessness in South Lanarkshire

The draft revised Policy would be issued for consultation to all partners, including elected members, with a deadline for responses of 28 April 2010.

A further report on the finalised Policy would be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Committee decided: that the progress of the consultation in relation to the revised Homelessness Policy be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 16 September 2009 (Paragraph 10)]

12 Notification of Contracts Awarded - 29 October 2009 to 22 January 2010

A report dated 22 January 2010 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ contracts awarded by Housing and Technical Resources in the period 29 October 2009 to 22 January 2010
- ◆ contracts awarded under the Primary School Framework Agreement Phase 2
- ◆ contracts awarded by Procurement Services

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 25 November 2009 (Paragraph 18)]

13 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

Chair's Closing Remarks – Retiral of Jim Hayton, Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

The Chair advised that this would be the last meeting of the Committee that Jim Hayton, Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), would be attending as he was retiring. The Chair, on behalf of the members of the Committee, thanked Mr Hayton for all his hard work and achievements during his time as Executive Director and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Councillor Shearer expressed his thanks to Mr Hayton and, on behalf of the Opposition members, wished him a long and happy retirement.