

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 9 August 2017

Chair:

Councillor Josh Wilson

Councillors Present:

Archie Buchanan (Depute), Jackie Burns, Stephanie Callaghan (*substitute for Councillor Gray*), Maureen Chalmers, Gerry Convery, Poppy Corbett, Maureen Devlin, Mary Donnelly, Isobel Dorman (*substitute for Councillor Calikes*), Joe Fagan, Allan Falconer, Alistair Fulton, Eric Holford, Mark Horsham (*substitute for Councillor Horne*), Eileen Logan, Catherine McClymont (*substitute for Councillor Carmichael*), Hugh Macdonald (*substitute for Councillor Ross*), Colin McGavigan, Mark McGeever (*substitute for Councillor Campbell*), Richard Nelson, Carol Nugent, Mo Razzaq, David Shearer, Collette Stevenson

Councillors' Apologies:

Robert Brown, Janine Calikes, Graeme Campbell, Andy Carmichael, Geri Gray, Graeme Horne, John Ross (ex officio)

Attending:**Finance and Corporate Resources**

J Burke, Administration Assistant; H Goodwin, Finance Manager (Resources); C Lyon, Administration Officer; E McPake, Human Resources Business Partner; K Main, Accountant

Housing and Technical Resources

D Lowe, Executive Director; A Finnan, Head of Area Services; J Forbes, Asset Management and Property Manager; F McCafferty, Head of Property Services

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 12 July 2017 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the capital programme for Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA) for the period 1 April to 26 May 2017.

The Committee decided: that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (excl HRA) of £4.611 million and expenditure to date of £0.155 million be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 28 June 2017 (Paragraph 4)]

Councillor Holford entered the meeting during this item of business

3 Capital Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 12 July 2017 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted advising of progress on the capital programme for Housing and Technical Resources (HRA) for the period 1 April to 26 May 2017.

It was proposed to increase the HRA Capital Programme by £0.872 million to enable environmental works at a section of the former Blairbeth Golf Course site to proceed.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that Housing and Technical Resources' capital programme (HRA) of £39.709 million and expenditure to date of £3.868 million be noted; and
- (2) that an exception be submitted to the Executive Committee to increase the HRA capital programme by £0.872 million to enable environmental works at a section of the former Blairbeth Golf Course site to proceed.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 28 June 2017 (Paragraph 4)]

4 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Housing and Technical Resources (excl HRA)

A joint report dated 6 July 2017 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 26 May 2017 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excl HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2018.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the breakeven position on Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (excluding HRA), as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the forecast to 31 March 2018 of a breakeven position be noted; and
- (3) that the proposed budget virements be approved.

[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 16 February 2017 (Paragraph 6)]

5 Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Housing and Technical Resources (HRA)

A joint report dated 6 July 2017 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted comparing actual expenditure at 26 May 2017 against budgeted expenditure for Housing and Technical Resources' revenue budget (HRA), together with a forecast for the year to 31 March 2018.

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 2018 of a breakeven position be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 16 February 2017 (Paragraph 6)]

6 Housing and Technical Resources - Workforce Monitoring - April to June 2017

A joint report dated 19 July 2017 by the Executive Directors (Housing and Technical Resources) and (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Housing and Technical Resources for the period April to June 2017:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers
- ◆ Joint Staffing Watch as at 10 June 2017

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 January 2017 (Paragraph 8)]

7 Stewarton Drive, Cambuslang - Asset Transfer to Friends of Douglas Park

A report dated 14 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the asset transfer of 1,599 square metres, or thereby, of ground at Stewarton Road, Cambuslang to the Friends of Douglas Park.

At its meeting on 29 April 2015, the Executive Committee had declared 1,599 square metres, or thereby, of open space at Stewarton Drive, Cambuslang surplus to operational requirements and the site was subsequently advertised on the open market for sale with a closing date of 21 August 2015.

The Council had received 8 offers in respect of the site, all of which were conditional upon planning consent for house plots. Considerable local representation had also been received from surrounding residents objecting to the potential loss of open space and challenging the Council's title to the land.

Local residents formed a community group called the Friends of Douglas Park and entered into discussions with the Council regarding the possible asset transfer of the site.

The Community Asset Transfer Assessment Panel met on 1 August 2016 to give detailed consideration to the:-

- ◆ site
- ◆ organisation
- ◆ project

As part of its assessment, the Panel had identified a number of risks associated with the transfer which it was considered would be mitigated by any transfer being made through a lease arrangement that included a break option in the principal terms and conditions.

In order to protect the Council's best interests, the lease term would be for 12 years with a break option confirming that, should the tenants be unable to secure the necessary community support and funding to undertake the proposed regeneration of the open space within 2 years of the date of entry, the lease would be terminated.

The other principal terms and conditions of the lease agreement were detailed in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the open space at Stewarton Drive, Cambuslang (1,599 metres, or thereby) be leased to the Friends of Douglas Park, subject to the principal terms and conditions detailed in 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.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 29 April 2015 (Paragraph 12)]

8 Disposal of Domestic Dwelling House at 2 Wheatpark House, Lanark

A report dated 10 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on a proposal to declare the vacant dwelling house at 2 Wheatpark House, Lanark surplus to the operational requirements of Housing and Technical Resources.

The property comprised a 1 bedroom ground floor flat within a traditional sandstone detached property. The Council had invested in a new central heating system, kitchen and bathroom for the property during 2010.

As the location and construction of the property differed from the remainder of the housing stock in the area, disposal of the asset was considered to be a suitable solution in terms of property management.

If declared surplus, the property would be marketed for sale on the open market.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the vacant property at 2 Wheatpark House, Lanark be declared surplus to the operational requirements of Housing and Technical Resources;
- (2) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) be authorised to deal with disposal of the property through the Council's normal surplus property procedure; 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 any subsequent disposal and enter into the necessary legal agreements in terms which were in the best interests of the Council.

9 7 to 21 Lovat Place, Springhall, Rutherglen

A report dated 14 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the future sustainability of the property at 7 to 21 Lovat Place, Springhall, Rutherglen.

The property was a 2 storey concrete frame building with a flat roof, which comprised of library accommodation on the upper floor, owned by the Council, and 5 privately owned retail units on the ground floor.

The building required significant investment, both in terms of its condition and its suitability. In addition, the outdated appearance of the property, together with the condition of the surrounding footpaths and service areas, had created a negative impact on the quality of the local environment.

Under the terms of the title for the property, the Council was solely responsible for the maintenance of the upper floor and had a duty to provide a roof to the shops below. The owners of the retail units were jointly responsible for the repair and maintenance of the ground floor together with the surrounding environment. The current ownership arrangements were complex in terms of developing a strategy for the future of the library and materially affected the viability of some of the Council's options.

Due to the title position, the feasibility of any of the options was dependent on the co-operation of the current shop owners and tenants. It was, therefore, proposed that Property Services engage with the owners and tenants to establish their priorities and commitment to working in partnership with the Council, prior to any proposals in terms of future investment.

The outcome of those discussions would allow the development of options available to the Council and detailed proposals would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

The Committee decided: that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) be authorised to enter into discussions with the owners and tenants of the premises at 7 to 21 Lovat Place, Springhall, Rutherglen regarding the future options for the property.

10 Council Housing New Build Housing Programme Update

A report dated 11 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ progress made in relation to increasing the supply of affordable housing through the Council's New Build Housing Programme
- ◆ the increased Scottish Government Grant Resources allocated to the Council for the development of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018 to 2023

On 13 November 2013, this Committee had approved a report to increase the scale of the Council's New Build Housing Programme (NBHP) with a commitment to deliver 500 homes by 2020. At a special meeting of the Council on 16 February 2017, this commitment was increased to 1,000 new homes.

At its meeting of 12 October 2016, this Committee had approved the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2017 to 2022. It highlighted a number of major policy changes which informed the development of the new SHIP, including:-

- ◆ a substantial increase in the Scottish Government Affordable Housing Budget to achieve 50,000 units over the lifetime of the Parliament
- ◆ a 60% increase in Resource Planning Assumptions for preparation of the SHIP and increased grant levels per unit
- ◆ the introduction of the Housing Infrastructure Fund and Partnership Regeneration Fund to help unblock large scale sites which required additional support in priority areas
- ◆ the end of Right to Buy in July 2016 and the significant increase in sales receipts resulting from a late surge in Right to Buy applications

In June 2017, the Minister for Local Government and Housing announced that an increased budget of approximately £1.754 billion would be allocated to councils across Scotland over the 3 years to March 2021. This was intended to allow councils to plan their affordable housing programmes with greater confidence.

In terms of South Lanarkshire, the revised Resource Planning Assumptions (RPAs) to be included in the SHIP were as follows:-

Year	£million
2017/2018 (Existing Allocation)	18.074
2018/2019	23.592
2019/2020	26.690
2020/2021	28.476

The SHIP was due to be submitted to the Scottish Government every 2 years, however, in light of the increased long-term RPAs, it had been agreed to switch to annual submissions. An updated SHIP, based on the new figures, would be submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 October 2017 and reviewed annually thereafter to facilitate forward planning.

Since 2010, the Council had delivered a total of 312 new Council homes across South Lanarkshire. This included 166 homes approved through funding commitments prior to November 2013 and 146 homes delivered towards the target of 500 approved at that time. A summary of the programme to date was provided in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Council had also delivered 41 new sheltered housing units, 86 amenity flats and 20 wheelchair standard bungalows, built to the latest standard for energy efficiency and Housing for Varying Needs Standard for improved accessibility. A number of new homes had also been adapted to meet the specific needs of individual tenants.

Feedback from new tenants had been very positive and reflected the standard of design and amenity within the new homes. The feedback would also be used to refine specifications and designs for the next phase of housing projects scheduled to commence during 2017.

The current position in terms of the NBHP was summarised in Appendix 1 to the report. Work to develop the forward programme to deliver the balance of new Council homes by 2021 was ongoing and would be the subject of regular reports to this Committee.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the progress in delivering the Council's New Build Housing Programme be noted;
- (2) that a report on the South Lanarkshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan for the 5 year period to March 2023 be presented to this Committee in October 2017 for approval, prior to being submitted to the Scottish Government by 31 October 2017; and
- (3) that future updates on the Council's supply of new homes be brought to this Committee as part of an annual report on the Strategic Local Programme.

[Reference: Minutes of 12 October 2016 (Paragraph 8) and Minutes of South Lanarkshire Council of 16 February 2017 (Paragraph 2)]

11 Update on Welfare Reform Legislative Changes

A report dated 10 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the impact and progress achieved in relation to a number of key legislative changes in terms of Welfare Reform.

An update was provided on the following activities:-

- ◆ under occupancy provisions
- ◆ benefit cap
- ◆ Universal Credit

The Committee decided: that the implementation of the legislative changes relating to Welfare Reform and progress by the Council in response to those legislative changes be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 January 2017 (Paragraph 12)]

12 Inspection by the Care Inspectorate of South Lanarkshire Council's Sheltered Housing Support Services

A report dated 3 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the outcome of the inspections of the Council's Sheltered Housing Support Services by the Care Inspectorate.

Sheltered Housing Support Services had been assessed and awarded a grade between 1 (unsatisfactory) and 6 (excellent) across the following 3 quality themes:-

- ◆ quality of care and support
- ◆ quality of staffing
- ◆ quality of management and leadership

In the Clydesdale and East Kilbride areas, all 3 quality themes had been assessed, while in Hamilton/Larkhall and Cambuslang/Rutherglen/Blantyre, only 2 of themes were assessed. The overall assessment of the Sheltered Housing Support Services was very positive, with a grade of very good awarded across the themes in all 4 registered areas.

As well as recognising the progress that had been made since the last inspection, the Care Inspectorate's reports had highlighted a number of strengths across the service.

The inspection reports did not identify any formal requirements or recommendations, however, there were a number of minor improvements suggested which would be incorporated into the improvement planning process and progressed accordingly.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 2 March 2016 (Paragraph 10)]

13 Delegated Authority Report - Year End Update

A report dated 14 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the level of transactions processed by Property Services during the period 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017 along with a year end summary.

The Head of Property Services, 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 in the period 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017 were as follows:-

Number of transactions	130
Total value of lease transactions	£565,222 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£2,349,862

Details of the annual summary of all transactions progressed under delegated authority during the financial year 2016/2017 were as follows:-

Number of transactions	247
Total value of lease transactions	£1,157,143 per annum
Total value of capital transactions	£3,097,424

The Committee decided: that the level of transactions processed by Property Services under delegated authority for the period 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017, along with the year end summary, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 18 January 2017 (Paragraph 13)]

14 Proposed Lease of Ground at Crawford Primary School with Associated Servitude Right of Access in Favour of Scottish Power Energy Networks

A report dated 20 July 2017 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted advising on action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c), in view of the timescales involved, by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to approve the:-

- ◆ 99 year lease of approximately 25 square metres of ground at Crawford Primary School to Scottish Power Energy Networks to construct an electricity sub-station and the laying of cables to serve Crawford Primary School as part of the Primary Schools' Modernisation Programme at a rent of £1 per annum, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in the report
- ◆ grant of a servitude right of access to allow the inspection and maintenance of the cables servicing the sub-station

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 36(c), by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to progress a 99 year lease of approximately 25 square metres of ground at Crawford Primary School for the construction of an electricity sub-station and the laying of cables and the grant of a servitude right of access at a rent of £1 per annum, subject to the terms and conditions detailed in the report be noted; 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 to enter into the necessary legal agreements on terms which were in the best interests of the Council.

15 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.