

HOUSING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Confero and in Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 31 May 2023

Chair:

Councillor Davie McLachlan

Councillors Present:

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

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor John Bradley, Councillor Archie Buchanan, Councillor Joe Fagan (ex officio), Councillor Alistair Fulton, Councillor Margaret B Walker

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

G Booth, Finance Manager (Resources); H Calley, Administration Officer; C Cumming, Personnel Adviser; 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; C Mitchell, Strategy and Support Manager

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing and Technical Resources Committee held on 15 March 2023 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

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

3 Housing and Technical Resources – Workforce Monitoring – January to March 2023

A joint report dated 14 April 2023 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 January to March 2023:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ discipline, grievance and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 15 March 2023 (Paragraph 8)]

4 Housing and Technical Resource Plan 2023/2024

A report dated 10 May 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the Housing and Technical Resource Plan 2023/2024.

Details were provided on the Resource Plan for 2023/2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which outlined the:-

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

The Resource had established a number of outcomes to support the delivery of the Council Plan, Connect, in 2023/2024. To support those outcomes, the Resource had developed performance measures in an action plan detailed in Section 4 of the Resource Plan. Key or strategic measures would be included in the Council Plan progress reports 2023/2024, with the remaining measures being monitored and reported at Resource level.

Following approval at individual Resource Committees, the Resource Plans for 2023/2024 would be submitted, as a pack, to the meeting of the Executive Committee to be held on 21 June 2023 for noting.

In line with the Council's performance management arrangements, a mid-year progress report on measures identified in the 2023/2024 Housing and Technical Resource Plan and an end of year report respectively would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee.

Once approved, the Resource Plan would be made available on the Council's website.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Resource Plan 2023/2024, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;
- (2) that the Resource Plan 2023/2024 be uploaded onto the Council's website;
- (3) that it be noted that, following Committee approval, all Resource Plans would be submitted to the Executive Committee on 21 June 2023 for noting; and
- (4) that it be noted that Progress Reports on the Resource Plan 2023/2024 would be submitted, at Quarter 2 and Quarter 4, to future meetings of this Committee.

Councillors Cooper and Gray joined the meeting during this item of business

5 Pavilion at Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, Stonehouse – Asset Transfer to Friends of Stonehouse Park

A report dated 24 April 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on a request for asset transfer, by lease, of the pavilion within Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, Stonehouse, to Friends of Stonehouse Park and requesting approval of the principal terms and conditions of asset transfer, as detailed in the report.

The Council owned a pavilion within the Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, Stonehouse which had not been used for many years and was in poor condition.

Friends of Stonehouse Park was a local community organisation that worked in partnership with the Council to deliver projects and run local events in the park. Friends of Stonehouse Park had submitted a request for Community Asset Transfer of the pavilion, by lease, the validation date for which was 11 January 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 had been 6 March 2023, at which time 31 representations had been received which were all supportive of the proposal.

The request had been placed before the Community Asset Transfer Assessment Panel and details of the matters taken into consideration were provided in the report.

The property did not have independent vehicular access, therefore, in any lease agreement, there would be exclusive occupation of the building but non-exclusive access rights through the park. There were private residencies within the park which shared the existing access arrangements.

The pavilion housed electrical equipment that served the wider park and alterations would be required to ensure that the Council could continue to access this equipment.

The Council had a clear and marketable title, however, the existing lease with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture would require to be terminated. Planning Services had indicated that planning consent would be required for change of use.

The in-house Valuer had placed a rental value of £1 per annum on the property which reflected the level of investment required to bring the property back into use and its location within the public park.

The proposal was for a 15-year lease followed by phased investment in the property. Initially, the electrical equipment access would be created and the wind and watertight repairs would be undertaken by the Council to allow the organisation to store its equipment and supplies.

The property would be refurbished by Friends of Stonehouse Park to provide a Community Hub with kitchen/café, toilets and meeting space, and would be available to other community organisations.

A funding application would be made to the Council's Community Asset Transfer fund for the costs of redesigning the electrical supply area to enable external and secure access. This work would be carried out by the Council.

It was proposed to grant the lease of the pavilion at Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, Stonehouse, as shown on the plan attached to the report, to Friends of Stonehouse Park, on the principal terms and conditions as detailed in the report.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the pavilion at Alexander Hamilton Memorial Park, Stonehouse, be leased to Friends of Stonehouse Park, subject to the terms and conditions outlined in the report; and
- (2) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in conjunction 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.

6 The Fountain, Lesmahagow – Lease to Lesmahagow Development Trust

A report dated 26 April 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on a request for a lease of The Fountain, Lesmahagow to Lesmahagow Development Trust and requesting approval of the principal terms and conditions as set out in the report.

The subjects at The Fountain, Lesmahagow had been, 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 this facility and control had been returned to the Council.

Lesmahagow Development Trust had approached the Council requesting an annual lease of the subjects to enable the facility to re-open for community use and enable the Trust 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, similar matters had been considered.

The extent of the property was shown on the plan attached to the report and, as there was no change of use or development, proposed planning consent would not be required.

Part of the subjects at The Fountain was currently leased to the Bank of Scotland and this area would be excluded from the lease to Lesmahagow Development Trust and would remain with the Council.

The upper floor of the property was a former flat which was in poor condition. Lesmahagow Development Trust was content that the flat be included in the lease, subject to the outcome of its building condition survey.

It was proposed to lease the subjects at The Fountain, Lesmahagow to Lesmahagow Development Trust on the principal terms and conditions as detailed in the report.

At the expiry of the lease, the Council and Lesmahagow Development Trust would consider renewal of the lease, subject to being satisfied as to the operation of the subjects by the Trust.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the subjects at The Fountain, Lesmahagow be leased to Lesmahagow Development Trust on the terms and conditions outlined in the report; and
- (2) that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), in conjunction 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.

7 Annual Update on the Property Asset Management Plan 2021 to 2025

A report dated 11 May 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted:-

- ◆ on the outcomes of the Property Asset Management Plan 2021 to 2025 annual update 2022, including the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Indicator outcomes for Property Condition and Suitability
- ◆ on the outcomes of the review into the extended model for Corporate Asset Management Plans
- ◆ advising of the development of a new Energy Demand Reduction Plan to be incorporated into the Property Asset Management Plan 2021 to 2025

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the 2022 update to the Property Asset Management Plan 2021 to 2025, including the updated Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicator outcomes for Property Condition and Suitability, be noted;
- (2) that the outcomes of the review into the extended model for Corporate Asset Management Plans be noted; and
- (3) that proposals to develop a new Energy Demand Reduction Plan within the Property Asset Management Plan 2021 to 2025 be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 8 December 2021 (Paragraph 15)]

8 Revision of Costs Associated with the Acquisition of Houses at Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton - Section 75 Planning Reference PL/21/2093

A report dated 21 April 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 conclude the contract with Taylor Wimpey in relation to the revision of costs associated with the acquisition of houses at Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton.

On 14 December 2022, this Committee agreed that the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) be authorised to acquire 50 completed affordable homes from Taylor Wimpey for a total price not in excess of £8.545 million, which included the cost of land, to fulfil the planning obligations associated with the residential development of the site.

Following that approval, Taylor Wimpey had advised the Council that it had not included costs for full Electrical Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) to be installed for each dwelling being purchased by the Council on the site. Instead, it opted to provide costs relating only to the ducting and infrastructure, with the EVCPs to be installed at a later date. Installation of full EVCPs for each unit on the site was, however, required, as set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance to the South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2.

Therefore, an additional £166,000 was required to complete the transaction and authority had been requested, by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources), to acquire 50 completed affordable homes at the revised cost of £8.711 million.

Despite the increase in costs outlined in the report as a result of the requirements of installing full EVCPs, there would be no further financial implications associated with the acquisition. The revised costs remained within the financial assumptions made and, as such, would continue to have a neutral impact on the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

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

The Committee decided:

- (1) that 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 conclude the contract with Taylor Wimpey in relation to the revision of costs associated with the acquisition of houses at Brackenhill Farm, Hamilton, 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 to enter into the necessary legal agreements on terms which were in the best interests of the Council, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 14 December 2022 (Paragraph 9)]

9 Delegated Authority Report – Update

A report dated 6 April 2023 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on transactions processed by Property Services during Quarter 4 of 2022/2023, together with a year-end summary.

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 Quarter 4 and the annual summary for 2022/2023, as contained in Appendix 1 of the report, were as follows:-

Quarter 4 2022/2023:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Number of transactions | 38 |
| Total value of lease transactions | £68,669 per annum |
| Total value of capital transactions | £1,584,075 |
| Total value of miscellaneous transactions | Nil |

Annual Summary 2022/2023:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Number of transactions | 216 |
| Total value of lease transactions | £597,477 per annum |
| Total value of capital transactions | £6,229,202 |
| Total value of miscellaneous transactions | £55,502 |

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 15 March 2023 (Paragraph 12)]

10 Notification of Contracts Awarded - 28 October 2022 to 31 March 2023

A report dated 11 April 2023 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 28 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, as follows:-

- ◆ contracts awarded by Consultancy Services
- ◆ contracts awarded by the Procurement Team

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

Officers responded to a member's question in relation to a particular contract.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the contracts awarded by Consultancy Services, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the contracts awarded by the Procurement Team, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 14 December 2022 (Paragraph 19)]

11 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.