

Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee

ABERDEEN, 17 January 2023. Minute of Meeting of the COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Radley, Convener; Councillor McRae, Vice-Convener; Councillor Steve Delaney, the Depute Provost; and Councillors Bonsell, Bouse (as substitute for Councillor Greig), Brooks, Clark (as substitute for Councillor Nicoll), Copland, Graham, McLellan, McLeod, Councillor Mrs Stewart and Thomson.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF 1 NOVEMBER 2022

1. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 1 November 2022, for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

2. The Committee had before it the committee business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the committee business planner.

NOTICE OF MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR BONSELL

3. The Committee had before it a notice of motion from Councillor Bonsell in the following terms:-

that the Committee –

1. notes that fuel poverty is a serious problem for people in their homes across Aberdeen, particularly during this winter but forecast to continue in future years;
2. notes that the effects of climate change are increasingly being felt in all communities in the city, but especially in the most vulnerable;
3. agrees that the most effective route out of fuel poverty is reducing the need for energy consumption, which is also part of the transition to a low carbon economy, the fundamental means of addressing climate change.;

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4. notes that the widespread installation of good quality insulation in homes, to the current best standards, will reduce energy consumption and offer the prospect of decent living-wage jobs, open to local people within Aberdeen's communities;
5. notes that granite-built houses with solid walls and no cavities are a characteristic of Aberdeen;
6. recalls the long history of Aberdeen City Council in tackling fuel poverty, for example, through partnering with SCARF, Aberdeen Heat & Power, and the new Energy from Waste project;
7. agrees that we should look to maximise the benefits of public spending by integrating the work on fuel poverty, climate change and employability where possible;
8. instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to engage with appropriate social enterprises to explore the setting up, and also examine options for the in-house delivery, of a scheme to fit external wall insulation to homes with solid walls under the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS) and to report back to the appropriate committee; and
9. instructs the Chief Officer – Commercial and Procurement to report back to the appropriate committee, not later than July 2023, on options that the Council may have under its trading powers for the production, distribution and installation of insulation in Council and non-Council properties, the benefits to employment and the local circular economy, the potential for reduction in fuel poverty for occupiers of Council houses and other properties, and the level of capital and revenue investment required for different options.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that fuel poverty is a serious problem for people in their homes across Aberdeen, particularly during this winter but forecast to continue in future years;
- (ii) to note that the effects of climate change are increasingly being felt in all communities in the city, but especially in the most vulnerable;
- (iii) to agree that the most effective route out of fuel poverty is reducing the need for energy consumption, which is also part of the transition to a low carbon economy, the fundamental means of addressing climate change;
- (iv) to note that the widespread installation of good quality insulation in homes, to the current best standards, will reduce energy consumption and offer the prospect of decent living-wage jobs, open to local people within Aberdeen's communities;
- (v) to note that granite-built houses with solid walls and no cavities are a characteristic of Aberdeen;
- (vi) to recall the long history of Aberdeen City Council in tackling fuel poverty, for example, through partnering with SCARF, Aberdeen Heat & Power, and the new Energy from Waste project;
- (vii) to agree that Aberdeen City Council should look to maximise the benefits of public spending by integrating the work on fuel poverty, climate change and employability where possible.
- (viii) to note that the Council currently have a number of ongoing cavity and external wall insulation schemes to address the energy needs of Council tenants; and
- (ix) to agree that the Council continue to work with the Scottish Government to deliver Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland: Area Based Scheme, working

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with private owners to progress external wall insulation and other home efficiency measures

VERBAL OPERATIONAL UPDATE - POLICE SCOTLAND - CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT GRAEME MACKIE

4. The Committee heard from Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie, Police Scotland who provided a verbal operational update to Members.

Members asked a number of questions of Chief Superintendent Mackie.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the contacts details of the relevant Police Scotland officers be shared with elected members via the clerk, in order for the Members to forward any communications with constituents that require Police Scotland attention;
- (ii) to request that a 6 monthly report be submitted to the Committee, from the City Centre Policing Team and to include information on partnership working; and
- (iii) to otherwise thank Chief Superintendent Mackie for his verbal update.

POLICE SCOTLAND THEMATIC REPORT - UPDATE ON CYBER CRIME - POL/23/026

5. The Committee had before it a report by Police Scotland, which provided an update regarding the progress made by the North East Division Cyber Enabled Crime Team (DCECT).

The report recommended:-

that the Committee discuss, comment on and endorse the report.

The Committee heard from Detective Chief Inspector Karen Main, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from members.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the update provided by Police Scotland in regards to cyber crime.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE THEMATIC REPORT MONITORING AND TRACKING OF INITIATIVES - SFR/23/029

6. The Committee had before it a report by Scottish Fire and Rescue which presented the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Thematic Report Monitoring and Tracking of Initiatives, for 2022-23 year to date.

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The report recommended:-

that the Committee consider and note the information provided in the report in relation to prevention and protection (Appendix A: Thematic Report – Monitoring and Tracking of Initiatives).

The Committee heard from Chay Ewing, Area Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered questions from Members.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained in the report.

PERFORMANCE REPORT - CUS/23/006

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer Data and Insights, which presented the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to certain Operations and Customer services.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY - CUS/23/014

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, which presented the Community Empowerment Strategy 2023-26 which complemented and sat alongside the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), refreshed in 2021.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee endorse the Community Empowerment Strategy presented at Appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

BUILDING STANDARDS ACTIVITY REPORT - COM/23/025

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, which provided assurance and an overview of Council responsibilities in

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relation to securing dangerous buildings and protecting public safety, as well as activity on unauthorised building work and unauthorised occupation of buildings.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) notes the contents of the report and appendix; and
- (b) agrees to receive a further Building Standards Activity Report at the meeting of this Committee on 24 November 2023.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that officers review the situation in regards to the vacant shop units at Logie Place and to send the information by way of email to members, as well as the local members for Northfield/Mastrick; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

RESILIENCE ANNUAL REPORT - COM/23/013

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance, which provided the annual assurance report on the Council’s resilience arrangements in fulfilment of its duties as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee

- (a) note the progress made in further embedding the Council’s resilience arrangements during another challenging year for emergency response; and
- (b) note the updated Generic Emergency Plan which has received minor alterations under the relevant delegated powers.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS - CUS/23/027

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, which provided Members with an update on work agreed through the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Department of Work and Pensions.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the content of the report.

The Committee resolved:-

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to approve the recommendation.

OPERATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF LICENSING AND REGISTRATION SCHEMES WITHIN THE PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING SECTOR OF ABERDEEN - CUS/23/018

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, which provided assurance of the role of the Council in protecting tenants in the private rented housing sector through licensing, registration, and enforcement. It was noted that the report was brought to Committee following a Notice of Motion by Councillor Hutchison.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the operation of Landlord Registration, and enforcement of unregistered landlords within Aberdeen City;
- (b) note the operation of the licensing scheme for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) and enforcement of unlicensed landlords within Aberdeen City; and
- (c) note the operation of the licensing scheme for Short Term Lets and enforcement of unlicensed hosts and operators within Aberdeen City.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT GROUP - UPDATE REPORT JANUARY 2023 - RES/23/045

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, which provided members with an update on the work of the Housing Improvement Group and sought instructions to bring reports on a variety of issues.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the work of the Housing Improvement Group in identifying improvements and efficiencies around the management and maintenance of the housing stock and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to bring forward regular reports (bi-annual) on the work of the Group to this Committee, the first such report to go to the Committee meeting in July 2023;
- (b) note that, as part of the transformation programme, there is an ongoing review of the structure of the organisation around housing repairs and maintenance and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report any changes to this Committee on 6 July 2023;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to review, as part of the transformation programme, key planned maintenance activities required across

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- the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) portfolio and report back to this committee in July 2023) on a programme approach to delivering these works;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, to consider the balance between pro-active preventative maintenance and replacement works with a view to reporting a more robust planned maintenance programme as part of the HRA Capital and Revenue budgets, reflecting all other budget pressures;
 - (e) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report to the next meeting of this Committee on the capital programme of works to properties, following consideration of the current approach to tenants refusing improvement works, with options to change this approach and the case for changing to an approach which ensures all tenanted properties are upgraded and maintained to the same standard;
 - (f) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that a robust approach is taken in relation to common repairs within shared ownership properties and report to the next committee on the legal and logistical implications of this, with a recommendation of a course of action to ensure all tenanted properties are maintained to similar standard;
 - (g) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to review the HRA’s non1traditional housing stock to identify properties that will be unable to meet future environmental or other standards, identify a budget to undertake these inspections within the 2023/24 budget and report back to this Committee on progress in November 2023; and
 - (h) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consolidate and refresh all asset management strategies for the HRA estate and report back to this Committee on this matter by late 2024.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

- **Councillor Miranda Radley, Convener**