

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 5 September 2023. Minute of Meeting of the COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Radley, Convener; Councillor Henrickson, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Bouse (as substitute for Councillor Delaney, the Depute Provost), Brooks, Copland, Cross, Davidson, Graham, Greig, Lawrence, Macdonald (as substitute for Councillor Tissera), McLellan and Mrs Stewart.

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 6 JULY 2023

1. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 6 July 2023, 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 (Legal).

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to agree to remove item 37 (Park and Open Spaces Management Rules) following the Service Update that had been published; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the committee business planner.

POLICE SCOTLAND - PERFORMANCE REPORT - POL/23/298

3. The Committee had before it a report by Police Scotland, which presented the Police Scotland Performance Report which covered April 2022 to March 2023, for Committee scrutiny.

The Committee heard from Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie, who spoke in furtherance of the report and answered various questions from Members. Chief Superintendent Mackie also provided details on a new 12 week pilot scheme that was currently underway in regards to crime reporting. The information on the pilot had been forwarded to all Councillors via email.

The report recommended:-

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that Police Scotland share the contact details with the clerk for forwarding onto Members, for passing on any feedback in relation to the pilot 12 week scheme that was underway regarding crime reporting;
- (ii) to encourage Members to pass any comments or feedback to Police Scotland, once the contact details were shared;
- (iii) to request that Police Scotland liaise with local Community Councils in regards to the new pilot scheme;
- (iv) to request that Police Scotland bring a report back to this Committee in January 2024, outlining the benefits and restraints of the pilot scheme; and
- (v) to otherwise note the performance report.

POLICE SCOTLAND - MENTAL HEALTH THEMATIC REPORT - POL/23/299

4. The Committee had before it a report by Police Scotland, which updated Members in regards to the nature and extent of mental health challenges in the community and their impact on policing.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the contents of the report.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

POLICE SCOTLAND - ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - ABERDEEN CITY CENTRE - POL/23/280

5. The Committee had before it a joint report by Police Scotland and Aberdeen City Council, which updated Members regarding the nature and extent of Antisocial Behaviour within Aberdeen City Centre and the measures being taken to address the issues.

The report recommended:-

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

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that Police Scotland provide a breakdown to Members, via the clerk, in regards to the current outcomes following action being taken in order to address anti-social behaviour at the east of Union Street/ St Nicholas Square; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the information contained in the report.

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PERFORMANCE REPORT - COM/23/246

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

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the information contained in the performance report.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

ABERDEEN CITY EMPTY HOMES UPDATE REPORT - COM/23/256

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, which provided an update on progress in relation to the service the Council provided in relation to empty homes.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the progress made in relation to the service the Council provides in relation to empty homes, including how they are brought back into use.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

FOOD STANDARDS SCOTLAND AUDIT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTIONS FOOD LAW CODE OF PRACTICE (SCOTLAND) ACTION PLAN UPDATE - RES/23/248

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, which presented an update on the Action Plan that resulted from findings of the Food Standards Scotland's Audit, at Aberdeen City Council (ACC), of the Local Authority implementation of Interventions Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) Food Law Enforcement Services undertaken on 6th and 7th December 2022.

The outcome of the Audit was initially presented to this Committee on 16th May 2023 and this report provided a further update on progress.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the update on current progress with the Audit Action Plan contained in appendix B.

The Committee resolved:-

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to note the report.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE PLAN 2023/2024 - RES/23/225

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, which advised that the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 required Local Authorities to prepare an annual Service Plan which detailed the intended activity of the Service based on the resources allocated, and noted that this plan must be approved by Committee.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee

- (a) approve the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2023/2024 as detailed in Appendix A; and
- (b) note the review of performance against the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2022/2023 contained within Appendix 2 of the Service Plan 2023/2024.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

INSTALLATION OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE BARS (CALLISTHENIC STATION) IN PARKS - RES/23/264

10. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, which provided background to a petition presented to the Finance and Resources Committee on 5 July 2023 and the information asked for by the Committee, which included the estimated cost of the installation of callisthenic stations in four Aberdeen parks.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the full estimated, capital and revenue costs for the Installation of callisthenic stations in four Aberdeen parks; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to refer this report to the Council's budget setting process for 2024/25.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Service liaise with Councillor Mrs Stewart outwith the meeting in relation to any insurance claims that had been made in relation to parks in Aberdeen; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

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ESTABLISHING A TRUSTED TRADER SCHEME IN ABERDEEN CITY - RES/23/272

11. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, which sought approval for the creation and operation of an Aberdeen City Council Trusted Trader Scheme (ACCTTS) overseen and controlled by Aberdeen City Council Trading Standards Service (TS), with back-office and administrative functions provided by Trader Directory Services (TDS).

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) approve the creation and the operation of Aberdeen City Council Trusted Trader Scheme (ACCTTS);
- (b) approve that the scheme is funded by members' annual subscription fees of £200, which would be split between Aberdeen City Council Trading Standards Service and Trader Directory Services to cover their respective costs, as set out in paragraph 3.10 below;
- (c) approve the creation of an incentive scheme to encourage membership whereby the first 10 businesses to apply and be granted membership will be offered a discounted rate of £130+VAT for the first year by Aberdeen City Council waiving our £70 portion of the full membership fee; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to report back to the Committee in 12 months on the effectiveness of the ACCTTS against the aims of the scheme.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

THE ABERDEEN CITY RETAILERS' CHARTER FOR THE RESPONSIBLE SALE OF TOBACCO AND VAPING PRODUCTS - RES/23/258

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, which explained that intelligence and complaints received by Aberdeen City Council Trading Standards Service (TS) led officers to believe that there was a growing issue in the city, particularly on Union Street, of “proxy purchasing” of tobacco and Nicotine Vaping Products (NVP), particularly Single-Use NVP (“vapes”).

It was noted that Proxy Purchasing was a criminal offence enforced by Trading Standards, but it was very difficult to detect and prove. This Retailers' Charter was an attempt to work with retailers to solve this problem using the Five Principles set out in Appendix 1 of the report whilst maintaining focus on existing legal responsibilities in respect of age restricted products.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

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- (a) note the contents of the report and the Five Principles set out in the Retailers' Charter detailed in Appendix 1;
- (b) approve the adoption of the Retailers' Charter and instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to implement the Charter in Aberdeen City, with initial focus on Union Steet retailers; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer Operations and Protective Services to report back to the Committee in 12 months on the effectiveness of the Charter.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request that the use of acronyms be restricted in committee reports in order for reports to be easier to read and understand; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations.

REMEMBERING TOGETHER PUBLIC ART WORK - RES/23/265

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services, which provided a background to the national Remembering Together initiative being managed by Station House Media Unit on behalf of Culture Aberdeen and Aberdeen City Council. The report also provided details on the proposed new public artwork and recommended a preferred location to site this artwork.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the preferred location for the Remembering Together Public Artwork as Bon Accord Gardens; and
- (b) note that the full costs of designing, fabricating, and installing the statue will be met by the Remembering Together project being managed by Greenspace Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government, and at no cost to the Council.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT - CUS/23/262

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, which sought approval for the Council's Annual Assurance Statement for the year 2023/24, which must be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2023.

The report also highlighted the improvement areas identified from this assurance review were services for people experiencing homelessness, void property management, rent management and customer satisfaction.

The report recommended:-

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that the Committee approve the Annual Assurance Statement appended to the report for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2023.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT DUTY - CUS/23/247

15. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, which explained that the Armed Forces Act 2021 amended the Armed Forces Act 2006 to create legal obligations on specified bodies in all four home nations of the UK.

These legal obligations were referred to as The Armed Forces Covenant Duty and came into force on 22 November 2022, and the report outlined how the Council's Housing service intended to discharge their duties under the Covenant.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the statutory guidance available in Appendix A; and
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to monitor implementation of the proposed actions for housing and incorporate them into the next Local Housing Strategy; and update progress on actions through the Local Housing Strategy.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE - COM/23/291

16. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Interim Chief Officer - Governance (Assurance), which provided an update on arrangements which had been put in place with communities across the city to support them in local emergency responses during disruptive weather events and power outages.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the interest from community groups in developing their own resilience arrangements;
- (b) note the measures taken by the Council to support communities in supporting themselves during disruptive weather events, including power outages; and
- (c) agree to support the establishment of further community resilience groups and that members have a role to play to facilitate their development.

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The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

NEW HOUSING CLOVERHILL GOLD STANDARD - RES/23/286

17. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Capital, which highlighted the delivery of the first phase of Council Led Gold Standard new housing at Cloverhill and the expected benefits which were anticipated to be provided.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note that a report was due to go before the Finance and Resources Committee on 13 September 2023: Capital Programme Delivery: Projects Update Report no RES/23/284, which outlined the delivery of the first phase of 36 Units built to the Gold Standard at Cloverhill;
- (b) note further phases would continue to be delivered between now and 2026 when it was expected the full complement of 536 Units would be complete;
- (c) note the expected benefits to be derived for the new Council tenants who would occupy this development,
- (d) note that the delivery of new technology would bring about the need to train staff to enable them to be able to maintain and service the new equipment as noted in paragraph 3.9; and
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to report to this committee when other phases of all new housing developments were delivered charting any issues.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE PILOT PROJECT 2023 - RES/23/294

18. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, which considered the proposals for the re-introduction of a planned preventative maintenance programme for the Council's housing stock and to propose a pilot scheme for such a programme in the Lang Stracht area of the city.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to adopt the methodology (option 1) for planned maintenance as set out in appendix 1;
- (b) note the area identified in the pilot scheme as noted in the report and instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to report back on the scheme in Q1 2024/25; and

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- (c) instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to introduce the use of low maintenance, or maintenance free, materials to replace items such as gutters, downpipes, window frames etc when these items next require replacement.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

- **Councillor Miranda Radley, Convener**