

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 6 SEPTEMBER, 2018

Present: Councillors A Stirling (Chair), I Walker (Vice Chair), A Allan, D Beagrie, S Calder, P Gibb, Councillor V Harper (as substitute for Councillor D Robertson), D Mair, I Mollison (as substitute for Councillor A Kille), G Petrie, G Reynolds, A Ross and S Wallace.

Apologies: Councillor A Hassan, Councillor A Kille, Councillor D Robertson.

Officers: Director of Education and Children's Services, Head of Housing, Business Services Manager, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (K Davidson), Service Manager (Facilities and Funding), Architecture Manager, Local Senior Officer and Group Manager, Operations, (Aberdeenshire and Moray), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Chief Superintendent C Thomson and Sergeant John McAdoo (Police Scotland), Accountancy Finance Manager, Principal Solicitor (Governance) and Committee Officer (A McLeod).

1. SEDERUNT AND DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were declared.

The Chair offered her best wishes to Councillor D Robertson who was recovering from recent surgery and wished him a speedy recovery and the best wishes of the Committee.

The Chair welcomed the Director of Education and Children's Services to his first meeting of the Communities Committee and wished him well in his new post and looked forward to his contribution to the work of the Committee.

The Chair introduced Stephanie Van Dem, Artist in Residence, who was present to launch an exhibition of her art at Woodhill House, and invited her to introduce her exhibition entitled 'Lifting'. She thanked Members for inviting her to introduce her art which was inspired by Aberdeenshire, where she lives. She invited Members to view a short documentary on her website which outlined the inspiration for her work. She concluded by thanking the Committee for opening the space at Woodhill House for art, and thereafter the Chair thanked her for the insight into her work.

2A. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

Consider, and if so decided, adopt:- "In line with the Council's legal duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the Committee, in making decisions on the attached reports, shall have due regard to the need to":-

- (i) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (iii) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

2B. RESOLUTION

Consider, and if so decided, adopt the following resolution: - That under Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the Meeting for Items 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

(a) Minute of Meeting 31 May, 2018

There was circulated, **noted**, and **approved** as a correct record, the minute of meeting of the Communities Committee of 31 May, 2018.

(b) Minute of Meeting of 5 July, 2018

There was circulated, **noted**, and **approved** as a correct record, the minute of meeting of the Communities Committee of 5 July, 2018.

The Chair reported that, at the meeting of the Communities Committee on 5 July 2018, the Committee agreed to delegate the appointment of the Vice-Chair of the Culture and Sport Sub-Committee to the Director of Infrastructure Services, following consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson and following an interview process held on 31 August 2018, Cllr A Simpson has been appointed to the role of Vice-Chair.

4. PROGRESS WITH ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

There was circulated a report, which updated members on the progress made, against outstanding actions agreed, at previous meetings of the Communities Committee, held on 21 December, 2017 and 31 May, 2018.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) To note the position with regard to progressing actions from previous meetings;
- (2) That Members should confirm if they wish to attend the visit to the Police Scotland Call Centre in Dundee on 4 October 2018, by 13 September 2018; and
- (3) Items 5, 9, 11 and 12 were now completed and should be removed from the list.

5. POLICE SCOTLAND – PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND OPERATIONAL UPDATE

There was circulated a report dated 9 August, 2018, by the Director of Business Services which provided information on how the Police Service was performing against key performance measures and associated targets, as set out in the Aberdeenshire Police Plan, previously approved by the Communities Committee.

The report reminded members that the performance monitoring report provided a regular opportunity for members to maintain scrutiny of significant Police activities, in order to achieve good outcomes for the residents of Aberdeenshire.

Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson introduced the report and took Members through the various themes of the report and commented on a number of areas within the report.

The Committee asked questions in relation to: the welcome drop in crime figures, an increase in licensed premises visits, the ongoing challenges in relation to the targeting of vulnerable individuals by groups in the supply of drugs in the area and the significant increase in the detection of Group 2 crimes.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (4) Note the performance monitoring information relating to the Aberdeenshire component of the North East Division of Police Scotland;
- (5) Welcome a thematic report in relation to hate crime, demonstrating local and national trends, including issues pertaining to the gypsy/traveller community;
- (6) Thank officers for their dedication to ensure that communities are safe throughout Aberdeenshire; and
- (7) Request the Divisional Commander to continue to report to Committee quarterly on performance measures against service objectives.

6. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE THEMATIC REPORT – NON-FIRE EMERGENCIES

There was circulated a report dated 6 September 2018, by the Director of Business Services which provided information on a key priority of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Aberdeenshire in relation to responding to and reducing non-fire emergencies. The purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with information on this priority both in relation to past performance and how the SFRS intend to deliver against this priority in the future.

The Local Senior Officer introduced the report and explained that a core part of SFRS's activity locally was in responding to emergencies such as road traffic collisions and co-response to medical emergencies and flooding, as examples. He explained that firefighters are trained to a high standard and have at their disposal the most modern equipment for the rescue of persons in traumatic situations. Working with community safety partners SFRS has a significant role to play in responding to non-fire emergencies and contributing towards reducing this type of incident, either directly through SFRS initiatives, or indirectly through partner intervention, with the key aim to improve safety and reduce injury and/or harm.

Officers responded to Members questions in relation to the ability of SFRS to provide emergency response first aid, the extensive support given by SFRS to local communities, including the Safe Drive, Stay Alive campaign and the possibility of extending it to cover middle-aged drivers and commuters in order to widen the target audience, the use of virtual reality headsets as educational tools and the valued support given by SFRS to community groups.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) To invite SFRS officers to provide a demonstration of virtual reality headsets to Members at the conclusion of the next meeting of the Committee;
- (2) That Members refer any ideas for promotional activities to raise awareness in their communities of the educational resources available from SFRS to Area Managers, and that a briefing note be issued to Area Managers in this regard;
- (3) To pass on to SFRS Officers the thanks of the Committee for their extensive work and commitment in keeping the communities of Aberdeenshire safe; and

- (4) To note the information provided in the report in relation to Non-Fire Emergencies.

7. FINANCIAL MONITORING AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

There was circulated a report dated 8 August, 2018, by the Director of Business Services on financial monitoring for the period ended 30 June, 2018.

The report explained that the Council's Scheme of Governance aligned Service budget responsibility with Policy Committee responsibility. The report covered the forecast outturn for the period ended 30 June, 2018, for both revenue and capital budget monitoring.

With regard to revenue budget monitoring, the Accountancy Finance Manager introduced the report and explained that the Communities revenue budget for 2018/2019 for net revenue expenditure was £118,431,000. With proposed virements and transfers from reserves, the budget would be increased to £118,552,000. The expenditure forecast position to the end of June 2018 was on budget and the financial position was detailed in Appendix 1. She confirmed that whilst the forecast was on budget there were a number of areas of risk, due to the demand led nature of a number of services. However, a range of actions were being pursued across services to address the areas of risk and to achieve agreed savings, in order to achieve a sustainable year end position. Details of proposed budget virements were outlined in Appendix 2.

With regard to capital budget monitoring, the revised capital budget for 2018/19 was £9,812,000 and was detailed in Appendix 3, with forecast variance being detailed in Appendix 4, amounting to £9,429,000 which was £383,000 less than the revised budget figure.

Members were advised that the budget position did not reflect the additional activities of the Culture and Sport Business Unit, which would be reported to the Business Services Committee on 13 September 2018, and would form part of the monitoring report for that Committee to the end of September 2018, before transferring to the Communities Committee for budget purposes.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) That any consequences as a result of the proposals or actions in para 2.7 of report should be reported back to the Committee;
- (2) That information regarding the European Social Fund referred to in Appendix 2 be circulated to all substantive and substitute Members of the Committee, for their information;
- (3) To note the revenue and capital budget monitoring as at 30 June 2018; and
- (4) To approve the revenue budget virements set out in Appendix 3.

8. HOMELESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING ACTION GROUP (HARSAG) RECOMMENDATIONS

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of 31 May, 2018 (Item 12), there was circulated a report, dated 22 August, 2018 by the Director of Infrastructure Services, providing an update on the work of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG), which had been set up by the Scottish Government to produce short and long term solutions to homelessness and rough sleeping and to consider transforming the way that temporary accommodation was used. The Chair advised the Committee that a letter had been sent to the Scottish Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning raising concerns about the potential impacts on rural authorities of implementing HARSAG recommendations

The Head of Housing introduced the report and confirmed that the final recommendations had been published by HARSAG and had been accepted by the Scottish Government, which would require authorities to develop a 5 year rapid rehousing transition plan (RRTP), which should take account of anyone who is at risk of rough sleeping and how they can be rehoused permanently as quickly as possible, with a completion in draft form required by the end of December 2018. He also advised the Committee of proposals to extend the Housing First pilot scheme and that Aberdeenshire Council would receive funding of £877,000 in the current financial year from the Scottish Government to be used for homelessness and temporary accommodation, with service plans already in place to ensure the funding is used, where possible, to deal with some of the recommendations from HARSAG and other preventative measures. The Head of Housing was also proposing to set up a short-life Member/Officer Working Group to consider the final recommendations from HARSAG and to take forward the issue of homelessness.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) To note the further recommendations of the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) set up by the Scottish Government;
- (2) To agree to extend the Housing First Pilot due to HARSAG recommendations and to await outcomes from the consortium as detailed in paragraph 2.9;
- (3) To consider a future report detailing progress on the rapid rehousing plan and the changes this will bring to the homelessness service and the strategic action plan;
- (4) To set up a short-life Member/Officer Working Group comprising four Members, with the Administration and Partnership Group to nominate two members each and the formulation of the remit of the Group to be delegated to the Director of Infrastructure Services in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson;
- (5) That the document referred to in paragraph 2.3 of the report as a link be emailed to substantive and substitute Members of the Committee, for their information, and in future when links are used in reports, the full web address should also be published in the report, and any information available by a link should be emailed to all Members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

9. HOUSING SERVICE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE, EXCEPTION REPORTING, APRIL - JUNE 2018 (ABERDEENSHIRE PERFORMS)

There was circulated a report, dated 9 August, 2018 by the Director of Infrastructure Services which provided information to the Committee on the performance of the Service against key performance measures and associated targets as set out in the Infrastructure Services Plan 2017-2020, as approved by the Infrastructure Services Committee.

The report explained that the performance measures were linked to the Council priorities and the quarterly performance during the first quarter of 2018/19, and were summarised in Section 2.3 to the report with Key Service Objectives focusing on: - ensuring access to good quality, affordable housing; ensuring the service meets the outcome for the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and reducing fuel poverty.

The Head of Housing responded to issues raised by the Committee in relation to numbers of properties currently vacant awaiting upgrade works under the HIP and the subsequent loss of rental income, the potential temporary allocation of vacant properties and issues around this, the legislative requirements for properties to be brought up to an acceptable standard prior to their allocation and the ongoing review of sheltered housing which would be reported to the Committee at its conclusion.

After consideration the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) To acknowledge the positive performance achieved from April to June 2018 (Quarter 1), identified in Section 2.3;
- (2) That they had considered those measures where performance was below expectations from April to June 2018 identified in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (3) To acknowledge the publication of the complete April to June Performance Report; and
- (4) That a forthcoming report to Committee, with regard to EESH, regarding the revised capital and revenue position and the results of the current rent consultation should include, for context, information relating to void properties, including rental income information.

10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) FINANCIAL MONITORING - 30 JUNE 2018

There was circulated a report dated 6 August, 2018, by the Director of Infrastructure Services which advised the Committee of the Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital monitoring to 30 June 2018.

The report explained that the Housing Revenue Account budget for monitoring purposes for 2018/2019 was approved by Council on 8 February 2018. It was agreed that any net surplus on the HRA would be used to fund the HRA Capital Programme, whilst maintaining a minimum working balance of £2 million in reserves.

The report further detailed that the HRA capital budget for the year 2018/2019 was currently £60,744,000 with £19,046,000 budgeted to be used as Capital Funded from Current Revenue (CFCR). To ensure that the service can achieve the necessary quality targets, whilst keeping the HRA at a sustainable and affordable level, the HRA Business Plan is monitored throughout the year.

The Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the HRA revenue and capital budget monitoring at 30 June 2018.

11. FIRE DAMAGE REINSTATEMENTS: VARIOUS PROPERTIES – AWARD OF CONTRACT AND AMENDMENT TO ANNUAL WORK PLAN FOR HOUSING

With reference to the Minute of the Committee of 15 February, 2018 (Item 10), where the Committee had been asked to approve the Housing Work Plan, which included an allocation for fire damaged properties, there was circulated a report dated 7 August, 2018 by the Director of Business Services seeking an additional allocation of £500,000 to cover an increase in the number of fire damaged properties, bringing the total for reinstatement of fire/storm damaged properties to £750,000.

The Committee heard from the Head of Housing who outlined the background to the report and asked the Committee to approve the amendment to the Annual Work Plan for Housing and the amended Business Case, as detailed in Appendix A and B to the report. He also confirmed that the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services had given express permission for the tendering process which had been undertaken in respect of the fire damaged properties.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) Approve the award of the contract in respect of the total cost of £421,350.65 inclusive of fees all as detailed within the report and acceptance of the Tender submitted by Galliford Try trading as Morrison Construction Scotland, in the aggregate amount of £383,195.08;
- (2) Approve the amendment to the item on Annual Work Plan for Housing approved by Communities Committee on 15 February 2018 to make provision for increased value for fire damage reinstatements;
- (3) Note that the Head of Housing approved the Business Case following approval of the item on the Housing Annual Work Plan for Housing by Communities Committee;
- (4) Approve the amended Business Case as detailed in Appendix B.

12. SUPPLEMENTARY WORK PLAN - WINDOW AND EXTERNAL DOOR REPLACEMENTS: VARIOUS VOID PROPERTIES – CONTRACT 18143

With reference to the Minute of the Committee of 15 February, 2018 (Item 10), where the Committee had been asked to approve the Housing Work Plan, there was circulated a report dated 7 August, 2018 by the Director of Business Services seeking the addition of a contract for window and external door replacements in various void properties on the Supplementary Work Plan as attached at Appendix B to the Infrastructure Services Directorate's Annual Work Plan for Housing 2018/19, and asking the Committee to approve the Business Case attached at Appendix C for the item.

The Head of Housing advised the Committee that the use of the SCAPE procurement route for housing related works was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 June 2016 and it was considered that best value would be obtained by including this project within the SCAPE Framework. He explained that SCAPE Procure is a framework to support the public sector procurement of construction works to enable a balance of cost and quality that enables the best suppliers to deliver projects and services to a high standard.

After discussion, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) To approve the addition of the item on the Supplementary Work Plan at Appendix B to the Infrastructure Services Directorate's Annual Work Plan for Housing 2018/19 that was approved on 15 February 2018;
- (2) To approve the Business Case attached at Appendix C for the item on the Supplementary Work Plan relating to Window and External Door Replacements;
- (3) To note that the Chief Officer (Head of Property & Facilities Management) has the delegated authority to award the contract; and
- (4) That information relating to the composition of SCAPE Group Ltd be circulated to substantive and substitute Members of the Committee, for their information.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE WORK PLAN – PROCUREMENT OF LIQUIFIED PETROLEUM GAS ENERGY CONTRACT

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of 15 February, 2018, (Item 9), when the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSPC) Annual Work Plan 2018/19 had been approved by the Committee, there had been circulated a report dated 26 August, 2018 by the Director of Business Services, requesting Members' approval of an addition to the Infrastructure Services Work Plan, to provide for a contract for the supply of Liquefied Gas Petroleum (LPG) for the greenhouses at Aden Country Park.

The Committee was advised that the contract in question was a cross directorate and area contract and (1) the Education and Children's Services Committee was the Lead Policy Committee and had approved the addition of the same item to the ECS Directorate Work Plan and the Business Case in principle at its meeting on 30 August 2018, (2) that the Communities Committee was being asked to approve the same item as an addition to the Health and Social Care Work Plan, (3) subject to the Full Council's approval of a number of amendments to the Scheme of Governance on 27 September 2018 in future there would be only one report required to the lead policy committee for cross directorate/area contracts and (4) that the Head of Property and Facilities Management had the delegated power to award the contract, the Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) Note the Health and Social Care Supplementary Work Plan as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (2) Approve the item on the Supplementary Work Plan and note that the item would be added to the Health and Social Care Work Plan that was approved by the Committee on 15 February 2018;
- (3) Note that this was a cross directorate and cross area contract, that Education and Children's Services Committee was the Lead Policy Committee and had approved the same item as an addition to the ECS Directorate Work Plan and the related Business Case, in principle, at its meeting on 30 August 2018;
- (4) Note that Infrastructure Services Committee had approved the same item as an addition to the Directorate Work Plan at its meeting on 23 August 2018; and
- (5) Note that the Head of Property and Facilities Management has the delegated power to award the contract.

14. INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD SUPPLEMENTARY WORKPLAN 2018-19: AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS AND THE EXTENSION OF A STOCK ORDERING SYSTEM

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of 15 February, 2018, (Item 9), when the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSPC) Annual Work Plan 2018/19 had been approved by the Committee, there had been circulated a report dated 15 August, 2018 by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire HSPC seeking Member's consideration of an addition to the Supplementary Work Plan for Aids and Adaptations and the extension of the Joint Equipment Store Management System, as directed by the Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board (IJB).

The Business Services Manager, HSPC, confirmed that the proposed procurements identified within the Supplementary Work Plan relate to the Joint Equipment Service supplement to the Aids for Daily Living contract framework, due to go live in December 2018 and the provision of an upgrade to the current store management system, as part of an extension to an existing contract approved by the IJB and Communities Committee in January 2017. The IJB had agreed the additional items, as detailed in the 2018-19 Supplementary Work Plan on 22 August 2018 and had issued a direction to the Communities Committee to approve the additional items, which had been identified as falling within the remit of the Committee.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) Approve the items on the Directorate Supplementary Work Plan for Aids and Adaptations and the extension of the Joint Equipment Store Management System, as outlined in Appendix 1; and
- (2) Approve the items on the Work Plan identified as falling within the remit of the Committee, as directed by the Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board ("IJB").

The Chair advised Members that the next meeting of the Committee on 8 November 2018 would be preceded by a presentation from the Head of Service, IT on the 'Art of the Possible', from 9.30am to 11am and that the formal business of the meeting would commence at 11.15am, and asked that Members keep their schedule for the day free, in case the business of the agenda required to be continued into the afternoon.