

## ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

### COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 28 MARCH, 2019

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

**Apologies:** Councillors S Calder, G Reynolds and A Ross.

**Officers:** Director of Infrastructure Services, Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, Head of Service (Housing), Head of Service (Lifelong Learning and Leisure), Head of Service (Property and Facilities), Area Manager (Formartine), Housing Manager, Business Services Manager, Health and Social Care Partnership, Tackling Poverties and Inequalities Co-ordinator, Principal Solicitor (Governance) (L Cowie), and Senior Committee Officer (N David).

#### 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. Councillor A Allan declared an interest in Item 12 as her husband was Chair of the Tenant Participation Promotion Team and withdrew from the meeting for consideration of this item.

No further interests were declared.

#### 2A. STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

In taking decisions on the undernoted items of business, the Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
  - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - (b) advance equality and opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) Where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

#### 2B. RESOLUTION

The Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of Items 15 and 16 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraphs 8 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

### **3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE OF 21 FEBRUARY, 2019**

The Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 21 February, 2019 had been circulated, was **approved** as a correct record, and thereafter signed by the Chair.

### **4. PROGRESS WITH OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE**

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, 31 May, 6 September, 8 November and 20 December, 2018, and 21 February, 2019. The report also detailed the actions completed since the last meeting.

After consideration, the Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the position with regard to the progressing of actions from previous meetings and those which had now been completed.

### **5. COUNCIL PLAN 2017 – 2020 – PRIORITY DELIVERY PLANS**

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of Aberdeenshire Council of 23 November, 2017 (Item 10) there was circulated a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the Council Plan 2017 to 2022 and in particular the Priority Outcomes, Indicators and Delivery Plans.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to the Council Plan 2017-2022 Priority Delivery Plans, Outcomes and Outcome indicators;
- (2) that the Director of Infrastructure Services report progress to the Committee at least six-monthly, evidencing progress and performance with delivery of the Council Plan 2017-2022;
- (3) that the Director of Infrastructure Services present the first performance report for the period 2018/2019 to the Committee no later than 5 September, 2019; and
- (4) that the Director of Infrastructure Services arrange a workshop on 19 September, 2019 to review the progress and performance reporting arrangements.

### **6. INTERIM SUBMISSION TO “POLICE SCOTLAND SHAPING OUR DIRECTION AND DELIVERY 2019-22” CONSULTATION**

There was circulated a report dated 18 March, 2019, by the Director of Business Services on the interim submission to the Police Scotland Shaping Our Direction and Delivery 2019 to 2022 Consultation.

The report explained that Police Scotland were seeking views from the public and partners about how they shape the service they provide. The interim Aberdeenshire Council submission was included as an appendix to the report.

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

- (1) to acknowledge the interim response to the Police Scotland: Shaping our Direction and Delivery 2019-22 consultation at Appendix 1; and

- (2) that the Director of Business Services revise the consultation document to reflect the Committee's views that:
  - (i) the entry on "Licensing Team" (p 40) be amended to reflect the role of the Licensing Forum; and
  - (ii) the entry on commitment to working with partner agencies (p 49) be made more robust to reflect the responsibilities of those partner agencies in providing support to those presenting with a level of vulnerability; and those partner agencies often being more appropriate than Police Scotland in being the main source of such support; and
- (3) that the Director of Business Services email the revised submission to the Committee prior to onward transmission to Police Scotland.

## 7. REDUCING CHILD POVERTY IN ABERDEENSHIRE

There was circulated a report dated 28 February, 2018, by the Director of Business Services on reducing child poverty in Aberdeenshire. The report explained that the Scottish Government had explicitly stated a commitment to ending Child Poverty and the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 put a statutory requirement on it to reduce the number of children who lived in poverty. The Act also placed a statutory duty on local authorities and health boards to jointly prepare and submit to the Scottish Government an annual Local Child Poverty Action Report.

All Area Committees, the Communities Committee and Education and Children's Services Committee were being consulted on the Action Plan, prior to a report being submitted to Full Council in April 2019.

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

- (1) to acknowledge the Action Plan prior to submission to Full Council;
- (2) that the Director of Infrastructure Services provide an email update to Committee on the current position with regard to work on the Council becoming a living wage accredited employer;
- (3) that an update and presentation on Child Poverty be made to Committee in six months; and
- (4) to recommend to Full Council that the report be shared with Area Committee and outcomes be monitored.

## 8. VOID COUNCIL HOUSES

There was circulated a report dated 21 January, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on void council houses. The report explained that at the meeting of the Committee on 8 November, 2019 it had been agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting identifying reasons for properties being held void.

Following discussion, the committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to the outlined approach for retention of Internal Wall Insulation (IWI) voids;

- (2) the Directorate Supplementary Work Plan as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (3) to approve the item on the Supplementary Work Plan and note that this item will be added to the Directorate Work that was approved by this Committee on 21 February 2019;
- (4) not to reserve approval of the Business Case for approval as the item is within the Committee's remit and the value is between £50,000 and £1,000,000;
- (5) to acknowledge that the Head of Housing had delegated authority and would award the final contract;
- (6) that the Director of Infrastructure Services provide a breakdown on voids in each area to Area Committees by way of an information bulletin; and
- (7) that a six monthly review on voids be reported to the Communities Committee.

#### **9. HOUSING SERVICE QUARTERLY EXCEPTION REPORT: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2018**

There was circulated a report, dated 28 February, 2019 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 third quarter of 2018/19, and were summarised in Section 2.3 of the report, with Key Service Objectives focusing on: - ensuring access to good quality; affordable housing; ensuring the Service meets the outcomes for the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and reducing fuel poverty.

After consideration the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the positive performance achieved from October to December 2018 (Quarter 3), identified in Section 2.3;
- (2) that they had considered those measures where performance was below expectations from October to December 2018, identified in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (3) to acknowledge the publication of the complete October to December Performance Report.

#### **10. UNIVERSAL CREDIT: ABERDEENSHIRE UPDATE**

There was circulated a report dated 28 February, 2019 by the Director of Infrastructure Services which provided an Aberdeenshire update on Universal Credit.

The report reminded members that Universal Credit full service had been available across Aberdeenshire since 31 October, 2018. The detailed report provided information and updates on Personal Budgeting Support; Assisted Digital Support; Universal Support from 1 April, 2019; People on Universal Credit; and the Housing Service.

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

- (1) to acknowledge the support being provided to customers in receipt of Universal Credit;

- (2) to acknowledge the approach adopted by the Housing Service in response to Universal Credit implementation;
- (3) that the Director of Infrastructure Services provide a six monthly report to the Committee including information on: inclusion of individuals with protected characteristics in information and support provided by the Service; and the potential for private landlords to be part of the Portal; and
- (4) that reports providing update information on Universal Credit be submitted to Area Committees as appropriate.

#### **11. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON LOCAL CONNECTION AND INTENTIONALITY PROVISIONS IN HOMELESSNESS LEGISLATION**

There was circulated a report dated 1 March, 2019 by the Director of Infrastructure Services on a response to the Scottish Government consultation on Local Connection and Intentionality Provisions in Homelessness Legislation.

The report explained that a response to the consultation had been developed by the Homelessness and Options Team in the Housing Service. The Housing Service, members of the Homeless Strategic Outcome Group, the Officer/Member Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Working Group and the Community Justice Partnership were invited to contribute to the response to the consultation. The response formed an appendix to the report.

The Committee **agreed** to delegate approval of amendments to the proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on local connection and intentionality provisions in homelessness legislation to the Director of Infrastructure Services, following consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Opposition Spokesperson.

#### **12. TENANT PARTICIPATION: A NEW APPROACH**

Councillor A Allan had declared an interest and withdrew from the meeting for this item.

There was circulated a report dated 27 February, 2019 by the Director of Infrastructure Services on a new approach to tenant participation. Section 53(1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 placed a duty on local authorities and Registered Social Landlords to develop a tenant participation strategy. Aberdeenshire Council must therefore demonstrate how it intended to communicate with and involve tenants and residents in the decision making process.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) acknowledge the Council's statutory and regulatory obligations in respect of Tenant Participation and the required development of a new approach to engagement; and
- (2) receive regular reports on progress towards the development of a new Tenant Participation Strategy, timescales to be approved on conclusion of Scottish Government sponsored Next Steps Programme.

### 13. HOUSING FIRST – ABERDEEN AND ABERDEENSHIRE CONSORTIUM

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 21 February, 2019 (Item 7), there was circulated a report, dated 13 March, 2019, by the Director of Infrastructure Services on the Housing First Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Consortium.

The Committee **agreed** to approve the proposal to enter into a Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire 'Social Bite' Housing First Programme/Consortium funded by way of Social Bite (Sleep in the Park events) and the Scottish Government (Ending Homelessness Together Fund).

### 14. CHARGING POLICY 2019/20

With reference to the minute of meeting of the Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board of 27 February, 2019 (Item 7), there was circulated a report, dated 25 January, 2019, by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership on the Charging Policy 2019/20.

The report reminded members that Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board, in line with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, had a number of services delegated to it from Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian. The setting of charges was not delegated to the Integration Joint Board (IJB) and remained a power held by Aberdeenshire Council.

The Committee **agreed** to:-

- (1) approve the Charging Policy for Non-Residential Care and Support 2019/20:
  - a) the recommendations as approved by Aberdeenshire IJB as detailed in Appendix 1
  - b) as detailed in the refreshed charging policy document in Appendix 2
  - c) the rates for Charges and Allowances as detailed in Appendix 3
  - d) Unit Costs are agreed as detailed in paragraph 5.1; and
- (2) approve the Charging Guide for Residential Care and Support 2019/20 as detailed in the document in Appendix 4.

### 15. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (HIP) 2017 TO 2021

There was circulated a joint report dated 22 February, 2019, by the Directors of Business Services and Infrastructure Services on the Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) 2017 to 2021.

The report provided detailed information on the contractors on site and currently undertaking the four year Housing Improvement Programme of works. The report also provide information on: Internal Wall Insulation (Voids); Future Years; Photovoltaics; and Expenditure.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to endorse the current position with regard to progress on the delivery of the Housing Improvement Programme for 2017- 2021;
- (2) to acknowledge the current forecast expenditure for the Financial Year 2018/2019 on the Housing Improvement Programme;
- (3) to instruct Officers to provide quarterly updates to Committee;

- (4) that an information bulletin be issued to all Councillors with the Housing Improvement Programme information; and
- (5) reports be submitted to Area Committees after September 2019.

#### **16. DIRECT AWARD OF CONTRACTS FOR SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT AND INDIVIDUAL FUNDS**

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 20 December, 2018 (Item 22), there was circulated a report dated 15 March, 2019, by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership on the direct award of contracts for self-directed support and individual support services.

The Committee **agreed** to approve the direct award of three contracts for Self-Directed Support Services as detailed within the report.

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