

## ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

### SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

**WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 12 JANUARY, 2017**

**Present:** Councillors A M Allan (Chair), G Blackett, E Chapman, L Clark, A J C Cullinane (as substitute for Councillor A K Norrie), A S Grant, W Howatson, G Petrie (as substitute for Councillor A Hendry), S W Pratt (as substitute for Councillor R Christie), E A Robertson, N Smith (as substitute for Councillor T Malone), D Stewart, I Taylor (as substitute for Councillor P Oddie) and I Walker.

**Apologies:** Councillors R Christie, A Hendry, T Malone, A K Norrie and P Oddie.

**Officers:** Director of Infrastructure Services, Head of Housing, Corporate Finance Manager, Business Services Manager, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, Housing Manager (Strategy), Stock Improvement and Maintenance Manager (Housing), Senior Solicitor (Mr P Robertson) and Senior Committee Officer (Mr N David).

### SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Chair highlighted that this was the last meeting of the Social Work and Housing Committee. The Committee concurred with the Chair in recognising the valuable contribution that the Social Work and Housing Committee had made to the decision-making process of Aberdeenshire Council.

#### 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.

Councillors A M Allan, Grant, Howatson, Robertson and Petrie declared an interest in Item 8 as Members and Substitute Member of the Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board.

No other interests were declared.

#### 2. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following 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 of 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.

## Housing

### 3. CARE AND REPAIR SERVICE INTERIM UPDATE 2016/2017

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 26 February, 2015 (Item 12), there was circulated a report dated 12 December, 2016, by the Director of Infrastructure Services which provided an Interim Update on the Aberdeenshire Council Care and Repair Service.

The report reminded Members that the Council's Care and Repair Service was previously delivered by an external provider. At the meeting of the Social Work and Housing Committee on 26 February, 2015 it was agreed to in-source the service following an unsuccessful tendering process and full options appraisal on service delivery. The service was brought in-house from 1 July, 2015, followed by a review of service, which concluded in November, 2015.

A detailed appendix to the report provided measures completed through Care and Repair from 1 April, 2016 to 30 September, 2016. The figures demonstrated that the level of service provided had remained consistent with previous years.

The report also highlighted that, following on from the Scottish Borders model, where a tenure neutral approach to adaptations with an occupational therapist working solely on major adaptations had been highlighted by the Scottish Government as an area of good practice, a pilot had been ongoing in South Aberdeenshire since April, 2016. The outcomes of this were being monitored and evaluated with consideration being given to a roll-out across Aberdeenshire.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to note and acknowledge the Aberdeenshire Care and Repair Interim Update report for 2016/2017,
- (2) that the Director of Infrastructure Services provide an update to future meetings of the Communities Committee and Integration Joint Board on the outcomes of the occupational therapist pilot in relation to major adaptations, and
- (3) that similarly, the Director of Infrastructure Services provide an update to all Area Committees on the outcomes of the occupational therapist pilot in relation to major adaptations as well as a report on the Interim Update on the Care and Repair Service 2016/2017.

### 4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2016/2017

There was circulated a joint report by the Director of Infrastructure Services, Head of Finance and Head of Property and Facilities Management on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme Monitoring 2016/2017.

The report detailed proposals for the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme to be delivered in 2016/2017 and the budget requirements to achieve this. The proposed programme had been prepared in relation to Aberdeenshire-wide priorities including: local housing strategy objectives; work that had contributed towards achieving Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) by December, 2020; works that contributed to maintaining the stock at the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS); health and safety related works; and works to protect the structural integrity of property.

The report included detailed information on Capital Programme expenditure 2016/2017; stock improvements; new build programme; allocations; and Capital Programme financing 2016/2017.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the current capital forecast for the financial year,
- (2) to acknowledge the borrowing requirement to finance the Capital Programme and resultant housing business plan implications,
- (3) that officers continue to report to the Communities Committee on overall progress in the implementation of the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, and
- (4) that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Communities Committee assessing the position with the 30 year business plan; outlining the impact of Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing; and outlining the current position with regard to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

#### **5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 30 NOVEMBER, 2016**

On a joint report dated 9 December, 2016, by the Director of Infrastructure Services and Head of Finance, the Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the position with regard to the Housing Revenue Budget as at 30 November, 2016 and that the forecast revenue surplus for 2016/2017 would offset some of the borrowing required to fund capital expenditure.

#### **6. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

There was circulated a report dated 6 December, 2016 by the Director of Infrastructure Services on affordable housing.

The report provided information on the progress during 2016/2017 and that during the period April to December, 2016, 189 new affordable homes had been completed across Aberdeenshire across all partners. These mean 111 new homes for social rent; 48 mid market rent; and 30 for low cost shared equity. A further 11 households accessed affordable home ownership through the resale of existing low cost shared equity properties. In the meantime work had commenced on site to deliver a further 149 units for social rent, 12 mid market and 12 for low cost shared equity across Aberdeenshire.

The report further provided information on the completed phases 1 to 5 of the Council's New Build programme. The report then went on to outline the programme for phase 6 of the Council's New Build Affordable Housing developments which had been approved by the Social Work and Housing Committee at the meeting on 6 November, 2014.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the completion of phase 5 of the Council's New Build Housing programme and to approve phase 6 of the updated New Build Development programme,
- (2) to acknowledge progress regarding "Create Homes Aberdeenshire" – National Housing Trust Council Variant,
- (3) to approve the Development Programme for 2016-2018 as detailed within the report, and

- (4) that the Director of Infrastructure Services submit a report to all Area Committees reporting on the completed phases of the Council's New Build Housing programme and also phase 6 updated New Build Housing Development programme.

#### **7. HOUSING SERVICE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE – EXCEPTION REPORTING JULY – SEPTEMBER, 2016**

There was circulated a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services on how the service had performed against key performance measures and associated targets as set out in the plan governing the period until September, 2016. The report included a summary of the performance during this quarter. This highlighted that there were a total of 6 current measures, of which 4 were reported this quarter, against the 3 key service objectives. This quarter, 3 measures were on target. A copy of the full performance monitoring report for the period July to September, 2016, had been made available on Ward Pages. One measure demonstrated performance below expectations and this measure, including actions being taken to improve performance, was outlined in an appendix to the report.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the positive performance achieved from July to September, 2016,
- (2) to acknowledge the measure where performance was below expectations in the period from July to September, 2016, as detailed within the report,
- (3) to acknowledge the progress towards delivering the projects, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report,
- (4) to note the publication of the complete July to September performance report in Ward Pages, along with a reporting rationale document for all indicators, and
- (5) that an information bulletin report be provided to each Area Committee once work had been completed to further break down the information in relation to performance indicators for reducing fuel poverty.

### **Social Work**

#### **8. NON-RESIDENTIAL CHARGING POLICY 2017/2018**

There was circulated a report by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, on the Non-Residential Charging Policy 2017/2018.

The report explained that Aberdeenshire Council's Charging Policy 2016/2017 was amended and the cap on the maximum amount a person would pay was removed so that those with the means to do so would contribute up to the cost of the care and support.

In addition, following the implementation of Self Directed Support in April, 2014, Aberdeenshire Council were in the process of transferring all clients onto the contribution-based Charging Policy. The report indicated that this process would be completed by April, 2018. The Charging Policy for 2017/2018 therefore contained information for clients who had not yet transferred to the pathway.

The report highlighted that it was proposed that an increase of 2.9% be applied to charges and allowances outwith Self Directed Support. This 2.9% inflation rate increase was based on the HM Treasury Retail Price Index forecast for 2017 and was also used by Housing.

The Aberdeenshire Integration Joint Board, as a formal consultee of the Social Work and Housing Committee, had considered a draft version of the report at the meeting on 23 November, 2016. The Integration Joint Board made no additions or alternative recommendations.

During the discussion on the report, Members were verbally advised of examples of the impact of the Charging Policy on example clients. Members indicated that the examples provided did not cover those clients upon whom the policy would have the most severe impact.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to approve that the current financial assessment template be maintained, and
- (2) to approve in principle the Charging Policy for Non-Residential Care and Support 2017/2018, subject to the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, providing full financial information to all Members of the Committee for consideration; that financial information to include a complete range of impact scenarios of the increased charges on service users, including those who would be required to pay the most; also providing information on the impact of the take-up of services by service users due to previous increases in charges; thereafter the Charging Policy for Non-Residential Care and Support 2017/2018 to be approved by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership, following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair and Group Spokespersons.

