

MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

26 JUNE 2018

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors L Laing (Chair), T Coull (Depute Chair), G Cowie, P Coy, L Creswell, R Edwards, D Gatt, A McLean, M McLean, D Ross, R Shepherd and S Warren; and Ms A Bamforth, Ms J Bartecki and Ms M McGarrie (Tenant Representatives).

APOLOGIES

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillor R McLean.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Head of Housing and Property; the Housing Strategy and Development Manager; the Building Services Manager; the Asset Manager; the Senior Housing Officer Information; Emma Armit and Gillian Henly (Senior Housing Officers Policy); the Senior Housing Officer Strategy; the Equal Opportunities Officer and Mrs Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Heather Johnson and Sam Rojas, BSL interpreters.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBER'S INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, there were no declarations from Group Leaders or Spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how Members will vote on any item on the agenda or any declarations of Member's interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

Councillor Gatt sought clarification on why item 19 "Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2018/19" and item 20 "Building services Trading Operation Budget 2017/18 – Budget Monitoring" on the agenda were considered to be confidential items.

In response the Head of Housing and Property advised both these items were presented as confidential items as they referred to the Council's trading organisation and therefore the information in the reports was commercial and sensitive.

Thereafter the meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items of business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this minute as specified below, so as to

avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

<u>Paragraph No. of Minute</u>	<u>Paragraph No. of Schedule 7A</u>
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3. MINUTE OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE DATED 1 MAY 2018

The Chair thanked Councillor Creswell for her hard work and contributions as Chair of the Committee over the last year and asked her to present the Minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 1 May 2018.

Councillor Creswell presented the minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 1 May 2018 which was approved.

4. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

5. MORAY DRAFT BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN 2018 – 2024

A report by the Chief Executive invited the Committee to approve the draft British Sign Language (BSL) plan for Moray Council 2018 – 2024 for consultation with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users in Moray and those who work with them.

The Equal Opportunities Officer presented the draft Plan which was interpreted for D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users by the BSL interpreters.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to approve the draft BSL plan for the Moray Council 2018 – 2024 for consultation.

6. HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES – SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017/18

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 12 December 2017 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided the Committee with progress on the Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan 2017/18 to 31 March 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the progress that has been achieved in relation to the Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan for 2017/18, as set out in appendix I of the report.

7. LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW 2013 – 2018

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 22 August 2017 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development,

Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of progress on the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2013 – 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the progress made on achieving the outcomes and actions of the Local Housing Strategy 2013 – 18;
- ii) note the progress made on achieving the outcomes and actions of the Homelessness Strategy 2015 – 2018; and
- iii) approve actions relating to the development of the Local Housing Strategy 2018 – 23.

8. HOUSING SERVICE AUDIT OF THE TENANT DOWNSIZING INCENTIVE SCHEME

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 8 November 2016 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided the Committee with an update on the Housing Service audit of the Council's Tenant Downsizing Incentive Scheme and proposed future actions for the Committee to consider.

Following discussion on the options provided in the report Councillor Aaron McLean was of the opinion that option 3 – Additional Resources, as detailed in paragraph 8 of the report, was the preferred option.

As no one was otherwise minded the Committee agreed option 3 was the preferred option to help manage the Tenant Downsizing Incentive Scheme.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to note:

- i) the performance of the Tenant Downsizing Incentive Scheme for 2017/18;
- ii) the main issues arising from the compliance audit;
- iii) the options appraisal in Section 8 of the report and that option 3 – Additional Resources, is the preferred option to help manage the Tenant Downsizing Incentive Scheme; and
- iv) that a further report will be presented to this Committee in September 2018 setting out the full scope of any new job description and associated costs.

9. MAJOR ADAPTATIONS POLICY

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 8 December 2015 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the new Policy on the Provision of Major Adaptations.

Concerns were raised over the lack of consultation with tenants and tenant forums and the lack of information in respect of the armed forces community.

The Head of Housing and Property advised that due to legislative changes the IJB now had responsibility for the budget, the commissioning and the work that is done, however undertook to take the concerns raised to the IJB.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note that the IJB is responsible for governance of disabled adaptations;
- ii) note the new Policy on the Provision of Major Adaptations; and
- iii) task the Head of Housing and Property with contacting the IJB to suggest amendments to the Policy in respect of consultation with tenants and the possible inclusion of reference to armed forces personnel.

10. HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTERS 3, 4 AND ANNUALLY FOR 2017/18

Under reference to paragraph 14 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 13 September 2016 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) outlined the performance of the Housing service for the period from 1 October 2017 to 31 March 2018 and the annual performance for 2017/18.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note performance outlined in the report;
- ii) the recommended target changes for 2018/19 listed in appendix II of the report; and
- iii) note that a copy of the annual report for tenants and other customers will be shared with this Committee in November 2018.

11. HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES BUDGET MONITORING – 31 MARCH 2018

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 15 February 2017 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the unaudited budget monitoring for the Housing Revenue Account and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period to 31 March 2018.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the unaudited budget monitoring report for the period to 31 March 2018.

12. ALLOCATIONS POLICY ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 1 May 2018 and paragraph 9 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 6 June 2017 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the performance of the Council's Allocations Policy during 2017/18.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the performance identified within the report;
- ii) the allocations quotas for 2018/19; and
- iii) note the planned actions for implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

13. HOUSING INVESTMENT 2017/18

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the unaudited budget position to 31 March 2018 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2017/18.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the unaudited budget position as at 31 March 2018 with regards to the Housing Investment Programme for 2017/18.

14. THE HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014, PART 2

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 1 March 2016 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided the Committee with an update on the commencement of the provisions of Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 coming into force and of the requirement to review the Allocations Policy to reflect the legislative changes.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the requirements of the provisions of Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and the dates that these will commence;
- ii) note the requirement to review the Allocations Policy as set out in Section 4 of the report;
- iii) consult with service users, tenants and other key stakeholders as set out in Section 5 of the report; and
- iv) note a progress report will be presented to this Committee in autumn 2018

15. THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME IN MORAY

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 6 March 2018 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) was submitted to inform the Committee of progress on the affordable Housing Investment Programme in Moray. The report also provided an update on the Bilbohall Masterplan.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) note the outturns on the Moray Affordable Housing Supply Programme 2017–18;
- ii) note the Moray Resource Planning Assumption for 2018 – 19;
- iii) note the Moray Strategic Local Programme 2018 – 19 programme;
- iv) note progress on the Bilbohall masterplan;
- v) approve the appointment of technical consultants for the Council new build projects detailed at paragraph 7.1 of the report; and
- vi) note that further reports on programme progress will be presented to this Committee.

16. QUESTION TIME

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of the meeting dated 1 May 2018 Councillor Ross raised further concerns over litter and asked for a report on what had happened since he had requested a newspaper campaign regarding litter in Moray. He further sought clarification on responses from local businesses urging them to use more recyclable packaging.

In response the Head of Housing and Property undertook to contact the Community Safety Team to get an update and advised he would update Committee once he had the information.

The Chair was of the opinion the issues raised were wider than the Communities Committee had the remit to resolve and suggested Councillor Ross may wish to raise the issue at a meeting of Moray Council.

Councillor Ross was of the opinion litter was an important issue and that it was a good idea to discuss this at Council.

Councillor Creswell sought clarification on the possibility of a report to a future Committee to allow discussion of Cosla (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) briefings.

In response the Chair advised it was customary for Cosla briefings to be given at Corporate Management Team meetings however she would discuss this with Councillor Creswell outwith the meeting.

If response to a query from Councillor Warren the Head of Housing and Property advised the use of scatter flats had been reasonably successful and further flats would continue to be added when young care leavers are ready to move into their own property.

Councillor Aaron McLean sought clarification on the possibility of a press release to promote the newly opened affordable housing in Forres.

In response the Housing Strategy and Development Manager advised Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning would be visiting the site towards the end of August and there would a press release to coincide with the visit.

17. TENDERS [PARA 8 & 9]

Under reference to paragraph 15 of the Minute of this meeting the Housing Strategy and Development Manager provided a verbal update on tenders received in relation to the appointment of an Employers Agent.

In response to a query from Councillor Gatt the Housing Strategy and Development Manager advised it had not been possible to provide a written report to this meeting as the deadline for receipt of quotations was in the week following the deadline for the submission of reports.

Councillor Gatt was of the opinion it was unacceptable to ask Committee to agree the spend advised in the verbal report without written confirmation of what was being requested and moved not to agree the appointment of an Employers Agent until such time as a written report could be provided.

Councillor Maria McLean seconded the motion.

Councillor Warren sought clarification on the possibility of agreeing the appointment of an Employers Agent at this time with the proviso that written information be provided after the meeting.

Following clarification from the Head of Housing and Property that the tenders received were in relation to paragraph 7 of item 16 of the agenda "The Affordable Housing Programme in Moray" Councillor Warren moved as an amendment to agree the appointment of an Employers Agent.

Councillor Cowie seconded the amendment.

On a division there voted:

For the Motion (3) Councillors Gatt, M McLean and Edwards

For the Amendment (9) Councillors Warren, Cowie, Coull, Coy, Creswell,
Laing, Ross and Shepherd

Abstentions (0)

Accordingly the amendment became the finding of the meeting and the Committee agreed to the appointment of an Employers Agent.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to appoint the Employers Agent who had provided the most suitable quotation, as verbally advised by the Housing Strategy and Development Manager.

Ms Bartecki left the meeting at this juncture.

18. BUILDING SERVICES TRADING OPERATION BUDGET 2018/19 [PARA 9]

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the Building Services Trading Operation Budget for 2018/19 for approval.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- i) the proposed Building Services Trading Operation Budget for 2018/19, as detailed in appendix I of the report;
- ii) the service development proposals at a new cost of £29k as detailed at paragraph 6.1.1 of the report; and
- iii) the 2018/19 Business Plan priorities highlighted in appendix II of the report.

Councillor Warren left the meeting during discussion of this item.

19. BUILDING SERVICES TRADING OPERATION BUDGET 2017/18 – BUDGET MONITORING [PARA 9]

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of this meeting dated 6 June 2017 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed the Committee of the unaudited position to 31 March 2018 for the Building services Trading Operation Budget for 2017/18.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the:

- i) unaudited financial information for the period to 31 March 2018, as detailed in appendix I of the report; and
- ii) Building Services operating performance and the Business Plan 2017 – 2020 update as set out in sections 6, 7 and appendix II of the report.