

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, 21 June 2022

Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX

### **PRESENT**

Councillor James Allan, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor David Gordon, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Bridget Mustard, Councillor Derek Ross

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Theresa Coull, Ms Anna Bamforth, Ms Jane Bartecki, Mr Ronald Tolmie

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Also in attendance at the above meeting were the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), Head of Housing and Property Service, Acting Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Property Asset Manager, Georgina Anderson, Senior Solicitor and Lindsey Robinson, Committee Services Officer, as Clerk to the Committee.

#### **1. Chair**

Councillor Amber Dunbar, being Chair of the Housing and Community Safety Committee, chaired the meeting.

#### **2. Declaration of Group Decisions and Members 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.

#### **3. Resolution**

The Meeting resolved 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 12 and 13 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Paragraph Number of Minute	Paragraph Number of Schedule 7a and Reason
12	1 and 2 - Information relating to staffing matters and information relating to any occupier or former occupier of, or applicant for, accommodation provided by or at the expense of the Authority

13	9 - Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority.
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#### **4. Minute of the Meeting of 22 March 2022**

The minute of the meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee dated 22 March 2022 was submitted and approved.

#### **5. Written Questions \*\***

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

#### **6. Housing and Property Services - Unaudited Outturn as at 31 March 2022**

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of the Council dated 22 February 2022, a report by the deputy Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presented the unaudited outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period to 31 March 2022.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the unaudited outturn for 2021/22 for the period to 31 March 2022.

#### **7. Local Housing Strategy 2019 - 2024 Mid Term Review**

A report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of progress made in achieving the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024 and of the progress made with the development of the next Housing Need and Demand Assessment.

During discussion Councillor Gordon sought clarification as to whether compulsory purchase orders could be extended into the town centre regeneration projects.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that there were a range of different factors that fed into a compulsory purchase such as the planning scenarios as well as other ongoing related activities but that it was something he could give consideration to through opportunities that arise but would not be something that would solely be within the remit of the Housing Service to deliver.

Following further consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note progress made on the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024;
- ii. to approve the Local Housing Strategy action Plan 2022/23 - 2023/24;
- iii. to note progress made on development of the next Housing Need and Demand Assessment; and
- iv. the service developments of £46k per annum detailed at paragraph 5.3 of the report.

## **8. Housing Investment 2021-22**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the actual unaudited outturn to 31 March 2022 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2021/22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note the Housing Investment Programme unaudited outturn to 31 March 2022, as detailed in section 3 and appendices I to VI of the report.

## **9. Allocations Policy Annual Performance Report 2021-22**

Under reference to paragraph 16 of the minute of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 8 June 2021, paragraph 8 of the minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 2 April 2019 and paragraph 9 of the minute of the meeting of the Communities Committee dated 5 February 2019, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the performance of the Council's Allocations Policy during 2021/22.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the performance identified within the report;
- ii. the allocations quotas for 2022/23 detailed at paragraph 5.4 of the report; and
- iii. the service developments of £41k per annum detailed at paragraph 7.4 of the report.

## **10. Performance Report (Housing and Property Services) - Period to March 2022**

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the minute of the meeting of the Council dated 7 August 2019, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2022.

During consideration Councillor Gatt asked if the full figures could be included in future reports in relation to rent arrears rather than just the percentages. This was agreed.

Following further consideration, the Committee agreed :

- i. to note performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2021;
- ii. to note the actions being taken to improve performance where required;
- iii. to grant delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Property Services to submit the Annual Assurance Statement on behalf of the Committee, following a briefing for Members as detailed in paragraph 6.9 of the report; and
- iv. that the full figures as well as percentages, in relation to rent arrears, be included in future reports.

## **11. Question Time \*\*\***

Councillor Morrison sought clarification on the waiting times for property adaptations and asked if there was an update on whether the waiting times had improved.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that he did not have the figures to hand but that we are performing well in a national context and that good progress had been made locally.

## **12. Decommissioning of Temporary Homeless Accommodation [Para 1 & 2]**

A report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informed the Committee of the intent to cease using a building in Keith for the purpose of providing temporary accommodation to people who are homeless, as defined in Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, Part II, (Homeless Persons), as amended.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to:

- i. the proposed closure of the Temporary Accommodation property detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report;
- ii. delete the Hostel Caretaker post (Grade 3) from the Housing and Property staffing structure;
- iii. note that the Hostel Caretaker staff member will be redeployed to a suitable, vacant role within the service; and
- iv. note that alternative accommodation will be offered to the residential Hostel Caretaker in order to prevent homelessness.

## **13. Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2021-22 - Budget Monitoring [Para 9]**

Under reference to paragraph 21 of the meeting of the Economic Growth, Housing and Environmental Sustainability Committee dated 8 June 2021, a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presented the unaudited budget monitoring information for the period to 31 March 2022 for the Building Service Trading Operation.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed to note:

- i. the unaudited financial information for the period to 31 March 2022, as detailed in section 5 and appendix I of the report: and
- ii. Building Services operating performance for the period to 31 March 2022, as set out in section 6 of the report.