

# MORAY COUNCIL

## Minute of Meeting of the Communities Committee

Tuesday, 27 August 2019

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

### PRESENT

Ms Jane Bartecki, Councillor Theresa Coull, Councillor Gordon Cowie, Councillor Lorna Creswell, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor Louise Laing, Mrs May McGarrie, Councillor Aaron McLean, Councillor Maria McLean, Councillor Ray McLean, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor Sonya Warren

### APOLOGIES

Councillor Paula Coy, Councillor Ryan Edwards, Councillor Ron Shepherd

### IN ATTENDANCE

The Acting Head of Housing and Property; the Building Services Manager; the Housing Services Manager; the Transformation Officer; the Acting Housing Strategy and Development Manager; Gillian Henley, Senior Housing Officer (Policy); Daska Murray, Senior Housing Officer (Policy) and Caroline Howie, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

#### **1 Chair of Meeting**

The meeting was Chaired by Councillor Laing.

#### **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 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.

Paragraph Number of  
Minute

15 and 16

Paragraph Number of Schedule 7A and Reason

9 Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by  
or to the Authority

#### **4 Written Questions \*\***

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

#### **5 Credit Unions**

At the request of the Chair, Councillor Creswell gave a presentation on Credit Unions and advised she would issue a link to Councillors that would provide further information.

#### **6 Minute of Meeting dated 28 May 2019**

The Minute of the Communities Committee dated 28 May 2019 was submitted and approved.

#### **7 Council New Build Housing Progress**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting dated 5 February 2019 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided an update on progress with the Council's new build housing programme.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note progress on the Council's new build housing programme;
- ii. to note the challenges of delivering new affordable housing at locations across Moray;
- iii. to the procurement of consultants for the proposed new build project at Spynie Hospital Elgin;
- iv. to note progress on the Bilbohall masterplan development proposals; and
- v. that further reports on programme progress will be presented to the Committee.

#### **8 Assignment Policy Review**

Under reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of the meeting of the Housing Sub Committee dated 27 March 2009 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) provided Committee with an overview of the feedback received during the consultation on the Assignment Policy and presented the Assignment Policy for approval.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the feedback received during the consultation period set out in Section 4 and Appendix I of the report;
- ii. to approve the revised Assignment Policy as set out in Appendix II of the report; and
- iii. that the revised Assignment Policy will be implemented from 1 November 2019.

## **9 Housing and Property Services Budget Monitoring - 30 June 2019**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting dated 27 February 2019 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the budget position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period up to 30 June 2019.

Councillor Gatt sought clarification on the appendices to the report, advising was of the opinion it would be helpful to include cross references in future reports as he found it difficult to cross refer these to details within the report. He further sought clarification on what IORB stands for means and details on financing costs in appendix 1 of the report.

In response the Acting Head of Housing and Property advised this would be included in future reports.

Thereafter the Committee agreed to:

- i. note the budget monitoring report for the period to 30 June 2019; and
- ii. seek information in future reports on what IORB stands for and details of costs associated with Appendix 1 of the report.

## **10 Housing Investment 2019/20**

A report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed Committee of the budget position to 30 June 2019 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2019/20.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the position as at 30 June 2019 with regards to the Housing Investment Programme for 2019/20.

## **11 Housing Performance Report - Quarters 3, 4 and Annually for 2018/19**

Under reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of Moray Council dated 22 May 2013 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed Committee of the performance of the Housing Service for the period from 1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019 and the annual performance for 2018/19. The report also updated Committee on the outcome of the Scottish Housing Regulator's recent review of its regulatory framework.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the performance outlined in the report;
- ii. the recommended target changes for 2019/20 listed in Appendix II of the report;
- iii. the suggested amendments to the performance framework listed in Appendix III of the report;
- iv. to approve the first annual Assurance Statement in Appendix IV of the report; and
- v. to note that the annual performance report for tenants and other customers will be shared with the Committee in December 2019.

## **12 Tenant Survey 2018**

Under reference to paragraph 12 of the Minute of the meeting dated 2 April 2019 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) informed Committee of the service improvement actions arising from the findings of the 2018 Tenant Survey.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the areas for improvement set out in section 4 of the report.

## **13 Service Improvement**

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the special meeting of Moray Council dated 12 February 2015 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the Committee with details of a service improvement proposal relating to management of the condition of the Council's housing stock.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- i. to note the issues of poor property condition of some Council tenancies;
- ii. that officers investigate the addition of a new Housing Inspector post to the staffing structure; and
- iii. that a further report is to be presented to Committee in October 2019 setting out the full scope of any new job description and associated costs.

## **14 Question Time \*\*\***

Under reference to item 14 of the Minute of the meeting dated 28 May Councillor Gatt sought an update on his concern that minutes were a record of decisions rather than a record of discussions.

In response, the Clerk advised that the Manager was on long term sick and this would be raised with her on her return.

Councillor Creswell sought clarification on information she had received in respect of domestic violence.

In response the Acting Head of Housing and Property advised policy officers had not yet looked at this in detail and would have to respond at a later date.

Councillor A McLean sought clarification on progress in implementing policies in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour.

In response the Acting Head of Housing and Property advised the Policy went live on 1 May and this now had to be incorporated into Council procedures to ensure the Policy is implemented.

Councillor Creswell sought clarification on Sensitive Letting and if this included those being taken into care.

In response the Acting Head of Housing and Property advised care issues would be taken into consideration.

The Chair advised a question had been raised at the Tenants Forum in relation to unadopted roads and where tenants stand legally.

In response the Acting Head of Housing and Property advised adopted roads were the responsibility of Transportation. Some subsidiary paths may not be to adoptable standards and where there were other access routes these would not be maintained by transportation. He further advised there are adoptable standards and new build infrastructure should be made to the appropriate standard.

#### **15 Building Services Trading Operation budget 2018/19 - Year End Budget Position [Para 9]**

Under reference to paragraph 18 of the Minute of the meeting dated 26 June 2018 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) identified the reasons for the financial performance reported in the Building Services Trading Operation 2018/19 unaudited year end budget.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the:

- i. findings and reasons for the 2018/19 end of year financial performance as highlighted in Section 5 of the report; and
- ii. financial improvement actions that are now in place as set out in Section 6 of the report.

#### **16 Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2019/20 - Budget Monitoring [Para 9]**

Under reference to paragraph 19 of the Minute of the meeting dated 2 April 2019 a report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure) presented the budget monitoring information for the period to 30 June 2019 for the Building Services Trading Operation.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the:

- i. financial information for the period to 30 June 2019, 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 and 7 of the report.