

MORAY COUNCIL

Minute of Meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, 21 November 2023

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

PRESENT

Councillor James Allan, Ms Jane Bartecki, Councillor Neil Cameron, Councillor John Divers, Councillor Amber Dunbar, Councillor Jérémie Fernandes, Councillor Donald Gatt, Councillor David Gordon, Councillor Sandy Keith, Councillor Scott Lawrence, Councillor Marc Macrae, Councillor Paul McBain, Councillor Shona Morrison, Councillor Derek Ross, Councillor John Stuart

APOLOGIES

Ms Anna Bamforth, Ms Elizabeth McKnockiter

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive, Head of Housing and Property Services, Housing Strategy and Development Manager, Property Asset Manager, Ms Murray, Senior Housing Officer (Information) Mrs Anderson, Senior Solicitor and Mrs Robinson, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the Meeting.

1 Chair

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

2 Note of Thanks

The Chair stated that Mr Tolmie, Tenant Representative, had announced his intention to step down from his role as Tenant Representative at the last meeting of the Tenant Forum and the Committee joined the Chair in thanking him for his service to the Committee. She further stated that Ms Elizabeth McKnockiter had agreed to fill the vacant position of Tenant Representative going forward however was unable to attend the meeting today.

3 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests

In terms of Standing Order 21 and 23 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.

4 Resolution

The Committee 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 the items of business detailed below, 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
15	9 - Information on terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority.

5 Minute of Meeting dated 12 September 2023

The Minute of the meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Committee held on 12 September 2023 was submitted and approved.

6 Written Questions

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

7 Scottish Social Housing Charter Compliance

Councillor Morrison left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Under reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 12 September 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) providing information on the details of the Council's 2022/23 performance following data published by the Scottish Housing Regulator and compliance with both the Scottish Social Housing Charter and Regulatory Framework.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to:

1. note the Council's performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter in 2022/23;
2. approve the action plan in Appendix II of the report relating to performance on the Scottish Housing Quality Standard for electrical testing set out also in Section 4.7 of the report;
3. note the actions taken on ensuring properties are not affected by mould and dampness; and
4. note the content of the Annual Performance Report detailed in Section 5 of the report.

8 Tenant Participation Strategy 2024-2029

The Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive, (Economy, Environment and Finance) providing an update on the development of the Council's next Tenant Participation Strategy covering the period 2024-2029. The report further sought permission to consult with key stakeholders in this regard.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed:

1. to note the requirement to review the Tenant Participation Strategy;
2. to approve the draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2024-2029 set out in Appendix I and detailed in Section 4 of the report, for consultation;
3. that a consultation on the draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2024-2029 is undertaken with key stakeholders, as set out in Section 4 of the report;
4. to note the draft Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) at Appendix II of the report and note that this may be updated following the consultation; and
5. to note that a further report detailing the outcome of the consultation and providing a revised draft Tenant Participation Strategy and updated Integrated Impact Assessment will be presented to this Committee in May 2024.

9 Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2024/2025 - 2028/2029 Report

Under reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of this Committee dated 15 November 2022, the Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) asking for approval of the Council's draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2024/2025 - 2028/2029.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed:

1. to note the draft SHIP;
2. to approve the consultative draft SHIP submitted to the Scottish Government on 16 October 2023; and
3. that further progress reports on the SHIP are presented to this Committee as required.

10 Rent Setting Policy Review

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the Communities Committee dated 22 October 2013, the Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) providing information on the need to review the methodology used to set council house rents and service charges in Moray. The report presented a revised Rent Setting Policy for consideration and sought agreement to consult with stakeholders on the revised policy. The report further sought approval to consult with tenants on rent levels to be included within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2024/25.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed:

1. the current practice and the requirement to review the Rent Setting Policy, as detailed in Section 3 of the report;
2. to approve the revised Rent Setting Policy, as set out in Section 6 and Appendix II of the report, for consultation;
3. that a consultation exercise on the revised Rent Setting Policy is undertaken, as set out in Section 8 of the report;
4. to note the Integrated Impact Assessment on the Rent Setting Policy as set out at Appendix III of the report and that it may be updated following the policy consultation;
5. to note that an update report, detailing the outcome of the consultation and providing a revised policy for approval, will be presented to this Committee in February 2024;
6. that Council tenants are consulted on rent levels as part of the HRA budget setting for 2024/25, as set out in Section 9 of the report; and
7. that the consultation outcome and the tenants' preferred option for the annual increase are included within the HRA Annual Budget for 2024/25, due to be presented to Council in March 2024.

11 Housing Investment 2023-24

Councillor Morrison re-joined the meeting at this juncture.

The Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informing it of the progress of the Housing Investment Programme 2023/24 to 30 September 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to note the Housing Investment Programme audited outturn to 30 September 2023, as detailed in Section 3 and Appendices I to VI of the report.

12 Housing and Property Services Budget Monitoring - 30 September 2023

The Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presenting the budget position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period up to 30 September 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to note the budget monitoring report for the period to 30 September 2023.

13 Performance Report (Housing and Property Services) - Period to September 2023

The Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) informing it of the performance of the service for the period to 30 September 2023.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to note:

1. performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of September 2023; and
2. the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

14 Question Time

RACC in Council Housing Stock

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee dated 12 September 2023, Councillor Fernandes sought an update and reassurance in relation to the investigation into RAAC within the Council's housing stock.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that RAAC would not be present in properties 10-15 years old therefore would not be included in the inspection. The Property Asset Manager further advised that property records have been reviewed to check where RAAC may be present and that it is most likely prevalent in non-traditional constructions of which there are not many.

Estate Walkabouts

Councillor Gatt queried when Estate Walkabouts would recommence.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property Services advised that they have restarted and that the programme will be checked and details provided in due course.

15 Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2023/24 - Budget Monitoring [Para 9]

The Meeting had before it a report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance) presenting budget monitoring information for the period to 30 September 2023 for the Building Services Trading Operation.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously agreed to note:

1. the financial information for the period to 30 September 2023, as detailed in section 5 and Appendix I of the report;
2. Building Services operating performance for the period to 30 September 2023, as set out in section 6 of the report; and

3. the revised projected outturn to 31 March 2024, as detailed in section 7 and Appendix I of the report.