



Communities Committee

Wednesday, 09 October 2019

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Communities Committee** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Wednesday, 09 October 2019** at **09:30**.

BUSINESS

1 Sederunt

2 Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests *

3 Resolution

Consider, and if so decide, adopt the following resolution:
"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 Item 10 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."

4 Written Questions **

5 Minute of Meeting dated 27 August 2019 **5 - 10**

6 Homelessness Policy Review **11 - 36**

Report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure)

7 Housing Investment 2019-20 **37 - 52**

Report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure)

8 Housing and Property Services Budget Monitoring - 31 53 - 60

August 2019

Report by the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning and Infrastructure)

9 Question Time ***

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

Item which the Committee may wish to consider with the Press and Public excluded

10 Building Services Trading Operation Budget 2019-20 - Budget Monitoring [Para 9]

- Information on proposed terms and/or expenditure to be incurred by the Authority;

Summary of the Communities Committee functions:

To deal with matters relating to Housing/HMOs, Housing Regeneration, Homelessness, Social Inclusion, Equalities, Community Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour (including road accidents) and Community Liaison.

Any person attending the meeting who requires access assistance should contact customer services on 01343 563217 in advance of the meeting.

GUIDANCE NOTES

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests** - The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time** - At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

Clerk Name: Caroline Howie

Clerk Telephone: 01343 563302

Clerk Email: caroline.howie@moray.gov.uk

THE MORAY COUNCIL
Communities Committee

SEDERUNT

Councillor Louise Laing (Chair)
Councillor Paula Coy (Depute Chair)
Ms Anna Bamforth (Member)
Ms Jane Bartecki (Member)
Mrs May McGarrie (Member)
Councillor Theresa Coull (Member)
Councillor Gordon Cowie (Member)
Councillor Lorna Creswell (Member)
Councillor Ryan Edwards (Member)
Councillor Donald Gatt (Member)
Councillor Aaron McLean (Member)
Councillor Maria McLean (Member)
Councillor Ray McLean (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)
Councillor Ron Shepherd (Member)
Councillor Sonya Warren (Member)

Clerk Name: Caroline Howie
Clerk Telephone: 01343 563302
Clerk Email: caroline.howie@moray.gov.uk

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.



REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 9 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS POLICY REVIEW

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Communities Committee with an update on the coming into force of provisions within the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 and amendments to the Homelessness Policy to align with the new provisions. It informs Committee of national policy development and future legislative changes.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (G) (4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the allocation and letting of houses and homelessness.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities Committee:
 - (i) notes that the legal duty to carry out an intentionality investigation as part of an assessment of homelessness will become a power;
 - (ii) agrees that the Council uses its power to investigate intentionality as part of a homeless assessment;
 - (iii) considers and approves the revised Homelessness Policy as set out in Section 4 and APPENDIX I;
 - (iv) notes the national policy developments and future legislative changes set out in Section 6; and
 - (v) notes that further changes will be required to the Homelessness Policy in accordance with the changes set out in Section 6.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Programme for Government announced by the First Minister on 5 September 2017 set out a new commitment to eradicate rough sleeping,

transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland and end homelessness.

- 3.2 The Scottish Government established the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) in October 2017 to provide recommendations to Scottish Government Ministers on the actions and solutions needed to eradicate rough sleeping and transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland.
- 3.3 HARSAG made 70 recommendations which led to the Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan, which set out how the Scottish Government will work with partners to end rough sleeping and homelessness. It sets out the actions the Scottish Government will take in partnership with others to realise shared ambitions to end rough sleeping and homelessness. It affirms a commitment to transforming temporary accommodation and prioritising settled housing for all.
- 3.4 One HARSAG recommendation was to commence the Local Connection and Intentionality provisions in the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003. The Scottish Government undertook a consultation in early 2019 to ascertain how to take this forward and seek opinions on narrowing the definition of intentionality to focus on deliberate manipulation of the homelessness system.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government announced that it intends to implement changes in law from November 2019 removing the legal duty on local authorities to investigate whether someone is intentionally homeless. Instead, this becomes a discretionary power. This will mean that individual local authorities can decide whether to investigate intentionality as part of its homeless assessment or not.

4. REVIEW OF THE HOMELESSNESS POLICY

- 4.1 The Homelessness Policy was agreed by this Committee on 23 April 2013 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers). The overall aim of the Homelessness Policy is to prevent and alleviate homelessness in a sensitive but effective manner and when homelessness does occur, to provide responsive and sustainable solutions which minimise its impact on affected households.
- 4.2 Changes in legislation and the national policy agenda mean that the Homelessness Policy requires updating. The revised draft Homelessness Policy reflects these changes (**APPENDIX I**). Given that several changes have yet to be commenced, a light touch approach has been adopted. The amendments are minimal and other than the legislative changes and setting out the Council's approach to managing intentionality decisions (see Section 5) only minor changes have been made to the policy.
- 4.3 There is no requirement to consult with stakeholders, given that the changes to the Homelessness Policy are primarily legislative, which the Council must adhere to.

5. INTENTIONALLY HOMELESS

- 5.1 The circumstances in which a person is to be regarded as having become intentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness are set out in Section 26 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended. There are three requirements – all of which must be satisfied:
- (1) The applicant, if homeless, must deliberately have done or failed to do something in consequence of which he or she has ceased to occupy accommodation which was at the time available to them. To be intentionally threatened with homelessness, an applicant must deliberately have done or failed to do something, the likely result of which was that he or she will be compelled to leave accommodation.
 - (2) It must have been reasonable for the applicant to have continued to occupy the accommodation. The local authority may have regard to the general circumstances prevailing in relation to its area in applying this test.
 - (3) The applicant must have been aware of all the relevant facts before taking or failing to take the deliberate actions referred to above. An act or omission in good faith is not to be regarded as deliberate.
- 5.2 It is the duty of the Council to satisfy itself whether an applicant became homeless or threatened with homelessness intentionally. There is no onus on the applicant to satisfy the Council that he or she did not become homeless intentionally.
- 5.3 As part of a homeless assessment, Officers will take a holistic view of an applicant's circumstances before reaching a decision on intentionality. They will not simply apply standard criteria and will be alert to the risk of a precipitative finding of intentional homelessness.
- 5.4 Issues surrounding intentionality decisions are often complex. Reasons for intentionality decisions can include defaulting on rent or antisocial behaviour.
- 5.5 Where a household is found to be intentionally homeless, a local authority must provide temporary accommodation and advice and assistance but is not required to provide permanent accommodation.
- 5.6 Moray does historically have a higher proportion of homeless cases assessed as intentionally homeless in contrast with the national average. However, in Moray, intentionality provisions are used as a positive mechanism which in many cases aids to foster a positive relationship with the applicant. Housing staff will undertake additional work with applicants, seeking to provide better outcomes for those deemed to be intentionally homeless and who are willing to engage with the service. For a large proportion of applicants this support and engagement can resolve the reason that the original intentionality decision was awarded and result in the intentionality decision being overturned.
- 5.7 Opting to remove consideration of intentionality may be perceived as removing the responsibility of the individual to retain their accommodation or

to secure suitable alternative. There is an increased risk that this would remove the responsibility of some tenants in adhering to the conditions of their tenancy and sustaining their accommodation. For some in housing need, if intentionality is removed, presenting as homeless may be perceived as a quicker route into social housing, while bypassing the need to wait on the Housing List.

- 5.8 Officers recommend that once the legal duty is changed to a power in November 2019, the Council continues to consider intentionality as part of its assessment of homelessness. Ongoing support will be provided to those applicants found to be intentionally homeless and who are willing to engage with the service with the aim of resolving the reason for the intentionality decision. In the recent Scottish Government consultation on local connection and intentionality provisions, the majority of local authorities who responded were in favour of continuing consideration of intentionality as part of homelessness assessments.

6. NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

- 6.1 The Scottish Government confirmed in its Programme for Scotland 2019 – 2020 in an attempt to eradicate homelessness in Scotland, it intends to make changes in the following areas:

Local connection

- 6.2 The Scottish Government intends to remove the requirement for people facing homelessness to have a local connection to a council area before they can receive support from that local authority.

- 6.3 Due to the more complex legislative process around changing the local connection rules, the Scottish Government is expected to commence work in November 2019, but implementation would remain a year or more away.

Unsuitable Accommodation

- 6.4 The Scottish Government has announced that it will legislate to extend the Unsuitable Accommodation Order by May 2021.
- 6.5 Currently the definition of what constitutes unsuitable accommodation only applies when the household includes dependent children or when someone within the household is pregnant. The unsuitability also relates to the location of the accommodation, the quality of the accommodation and the facilities that are available there. The most common type of accommodation which would be categorised as unsuitable accommodation is bed and breakfast type accommodation.
- 6.6 The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 reduced the maximum time spent in unsuitable accommodation from 14 days to 7 days.
- 6.7 Moray Council has not breached the unsuitable accommodation order since 2010. The provision of temporary accommodation is subject to ongoing monitoring, assessment and reconfiguration and where necessary, improving the quality of the accommodation used, to ensure that the supply of suitable

accommodation meets demand and the use of bed and breakfast accommodation is minimised.

Temporary accommodation standards

- 6.8 The Scottish Government has advised that it intends to introduce a legally enforceable temporary accommodation standards framework. Further consultation is expected in relation to legally enforceable standards in Temporary Accommodation later in 2019 which are expected to be incorporated into a revised Code of Guidance. The Scottish Government Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan sets out a commitment to transform Temporary Accommodation in Scotland by 2023.

Prevention pathways

- 6.9 The Scottish Government will create a domestic abuse prevention pathway to support women who have experienced domestic abuse to find safe accommodation.
- 6.10 The Scottish Government will create a care leavers homelessness prevention pathway, trying to understand what support people with care experience need to reduce the risk of them becoming homeless and what specific support they may need if they do become homeless.
- 6.11 Additional reports will be presented to this Committee when further information upon the changes become available and the impact on the Homelessness Policy has been considered.

7. FUTURE ACTIONS

- 7.1 Subject to this Committee's approval of the revised Homelessness Policy, an implementation plan will be developed to support a "go live" date from November 2019. This plan will include updating procedures and reviewing of all information resources to reflect the agreed changes. This will include updating the Council's website and developing guidance for applicants on the revised process.
- 7.2 The Homelessness Policy will be subject to further review and amendment in accordance with the commencement of legislative change and national policy developments summarised in Section 6.

8. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The Local Housing Strategy focuses on a set of outcomes that contribute to the achievement of the Council's wider strategic aims and priorities, in particular meeting statutory obligations to homeless households.

(b) Policy and Legal

This policy has been developed in line with the legal framework contained within the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.

(c) Financial implications

There are financial implications arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The policy has been redrafted with a view to addressing inequalities of outcome that are a result of socio-economic inequalities. As highlighted in paragraph 5.6 of this report, retaining the intentionality investigation as part of the assessment of homelessness will assist in working with customers to address the issues that have led to people becoming intentionally homeless.

(h) Consultations

Consultation on this report has taken place with the Acting Head of Housing and Property, Housing Needs Manager, Housing Services Manager, Acting Housing Strategy and Development Manager, and Officers within the Housing Service, Deborah O'Shea (Principal Accountant), Legal Services Manager, the Equal Opportunities Officer and Caroline Howie (Committee Services Officer) and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This report provides the Communities Committee with an update on legislative provisions coming into force and seeks Committee's approval of the revised Homelessness Policy. It informs Committee of national policy developments and future legislative changes which will require further review of the Homelessness Policy.**

Author of Report:	Gillian Henly, Senior Housing Officer (Policy)
Background Papers:	With author
Ref:	HPR2019



MORAY COUNCIL

HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES

HOMELESSNESS POLICY

1. Scope of the policy
2. Strategic context
3. Objectives and principles of the policy
4. The legal and regulatory framework
5. Approach to homelessness in Moray
6. Accessing the service
7. Information and advice
8. Provision of support to vulnerable people
9. Repeat homelessness
10. Avoidance of screening
11. Interview standards
12. Housing options
13. Inquiries into decision making
14. Reasonableness of occupation
15. Assessment of intentionality
16. Assessment of local connection
17. Maintaining contact with customers
18. Notification of outcomes
19. Review of an intentionality decision
20. Quality assurance
21. Provision of temporary and settled accommodation
22. Provision of permanent accommodation
23. Request for a review of decisions
24. Records management
25. Performance monitoring

1. Scope of the policy

- 1.1 The scope of this policy is to provide clear and transparent detail regarding the activities and responsibilities of the Council to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.
- 1.2 Homelessness is not a lifestyle choice that people make; it can happen to anyone, and is the most extreme form of housing need. It is rarely just a 'bricks and mortar' problem - it is a complex issue.
- 1.3 The Council aims to provide realistic solutions to address housing need in order to maximise housing options and alleviate homelessness through its commitment to improve on prevention measures.
- 1.4 For the purposes of this policy, those who use the service, including customers, service users and customers of temporary accommodation will be referred to as customers.

2. Strategic context

- 2.1 The Homelessness Policy will assist the Council to deliver Moray Local Housing Strategy, Moray 2027, the Council's Corporate Plan, priorities from the Moray 10 Year Plan and the Health and Social Care Moray Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 The Homelessness Policy will assist the Council to meet its strategic priority within the Local Housing Strategy which is "to prevent and alleviate homelessness."
- 2.3 Addressing homelessness requires a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency approach both within (corporate) and across (partnership) individual organisations, agencies or sectors. The Council is committed to effective partnership working on both a strategic and operational level, with other Council services, external agencies and landlords.

3. Objectives and principles of the policy

- 3.1 The overall aim of Homelessness Policy is to prevent and alleviate homelessness in a sensitive but effective manner and when homelessness does occur, to provide responsive and sustainable solutions which minimise its impact on affected households.
- 3.2 The specific objectives of the Homelessness Policy are to:
 - maximise housing options and early intervention mechanisms;
 - reduce the duration of homelessness when it does occur;
 - ensure that where temporary accommodation is required, it is of an acceptable standard and is affordable;
 - ensure that housing solutions are sustainable through the provision of housing support and other relevant services; and
 - promote and engage in joint working arrangements with other Council services and external partners and agencies.
- 3.3 The principles of the Homelessness Policy are to:

- comply with legislation and guidance and promote best practice;
- ensure consistency in the provision of services by providing staff training and implementing detailed procedures and agreed practices uniformly across the service;
- deliver good quality services which are efficient and effective; and
- provide services that adhere to the principles of equal opportunities.

4. The legal and regulatory framework

4.1 The Moray Council will ensure that the policy complies with current legislation, promotes good practice and has regard for:

- the Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005 (Code of Guidance);
- Meeting the Best Interests of Children Facing Homelessness Guidance (2011) and Getting It Right For Every Child;
- the Prevention of Homelessness Guidance (2009);
- Housing Support Duty to Homeless Households - guidance for local authorities; and
- Housing Options Guidance 2016.

4.2 The primary legislation relating to the provision of homelessness services is the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003. Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, introduced statutory duties on Local Authorities to assist those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness (potentially homeless), including providing accommodation in certain circumstances. Local Authorities will make inquiries into the circumstances of applicants to satisfy themselves whether the applicant is homeless or potentially homeless. Thereafter, the Local Authority then tests whether the applicant became homeless intentionally and whether the applicant has a local connection with another authority in Scotland, England or Wales.

4.3 Section 32B of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as inserted by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, section 158) places a statutory duty on local authorities to assess the need for housing support services. The types of housing support services are prescribed by the Housing Support Services (Homelessness) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. If the Council has reason to believe that a customer may be in need of one or more of these services, it must assess whether the customer, or any person residing with the customer, is in need of such support. If so, the Council must ensure that the service is provided to the person who needs it.

4.4 The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 requires the Council to assess the needs of young people formerly “looked after” by the authority, and provide housing and support solutions to enable them to move on to independent living. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, extends care leavers' entitlement to advice, guidance and assistance up to and including the age of twenty-five years old.

- 4.5 The Council adheres to other relevant legislation, including the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981, the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.6 This policy is concerned with creating equal opportunities for people who are excluded from a most basic human need – a home of their own. The Council recognises that the service deals with a diverse range of people including those who are vulnerable and in highly stressful personal circumstances. The Council will therefore:-
- ensure that all individuals and household are treated sympathetically and with courtesy and respect;
 - be sensitive and respond to the individual needs and circumstances of the people using the services; and
 - monitor services and the outcomes for people using them, to ensure that they are fair and responsive to needs.
- 4.7 To support the needs of customers whose first language is not English, the Council will provide translation and interpretation services when needed. The Council will ensure that information is accessible and available in other formats such as large print, tape and Braille, as required.
- 4.8 The Council will endeavour to ensure that no individual is discriminated against on grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes, including beliefs, or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

Regulatory Requirements

- 4.9 In planning and delivering homelessness services, the council will observe the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator as set out in the 'Regulation of social housing in Scotland' Framework. This Framework includes how the SHR will regulate housing and homelessness services provided by local authorities. More information of the role of the Scottish Housing Regulator can be found on its website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk.
- 4.10 In addition to the Scottish Housing Regulator, the council must meet the standards set by the Care Inspectorate for its residential and serviced accommodation. More information on the role of the Care Inspectorate can be found on its website at www.careinspectorate.com.

5. Approach to homelessness in Moray

- 5.1 This policy recognises that homelessness is not just a housing issue. There are a wide variety of reasons why people become homeless or are threatened with homelessness. There can be a single reason or a multiple chain of circumstances that are the causes of homeless risks.

Some reasons are outside of an individual's control, such as employment changes, or personal circumstances, such as ill health.

- 5.2 The delivery of the homelessness service is continually reviewed and improved to ensure that it is robust, effective and responsive to the current environment and local context.
- 5.3 The key strategic focus to addressing homelessness in Moray is on housing options. The process starts with the provision of housing information and advice when someone approaches the Council with a housing problem. This approach promotes early intervention and explores all possible tenure options, including social housing, the private rented sector and owner occupation. Trained officers will examine and assess an individual's options, solutions and choices in the widest sense.
- 5.4 To facilitate early intervention, the Council has discharge protocols and liaison mechanisms in place which ensure that homelessness due to households or individuals leaving institutions (hospital, prison, the armed forces, local authority care or interim supported accommodation) is minimised. The Council will also ensure that advance planning for discharge from institutions and appropriate assessments are carried out in a timely manner.
- 5.5 Awareness raising throughout Moray informs customers of the importance of contacting the Council as soon they find themselves in difficulty that could result in homelessness or a risk of homelessness.
- 5.6 The alleviation of homelessness provides positive impacts and outcomes for individuals, households and the local community. The causes of homelessness are usually a combination of both personal and societal issues. Homelessness can have detrimental and long term effects on households and communities.

6. Accessing the service

- 6.1 The Council will ensure that the homelessness services are accessible to any person who requires assistance, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.
- 6.2 The service is accessed by the Council's customer service points and contact centre which receive initial enquires and will either provide a response to an enquiry or refer the enquiry to the appropriate team or officer.
- 6.3 In an emergency, out with normal working hours, the Council provides advice and assistance through the Council's Out of Hours Service. The availability of this service is publicised at strategic places throughout Moray and can be accessed using the Out of Hours phone number.

7. Information and advice

- 7.1 The Council will provide free comprehensive information, advice and assistance detailing the full range of options and services available to people who are in housing need, or are homeless or threatened with homelessness. This will explain the context and any constraints within which the service works in order to assist customers to make informed decisions from the range of choices available to them.
- 7.2 The Council will ensure that information resources are reviewed regularly and updated and are readily available both online and at key strategic public places.

8. Provision of support to vulnerable people

- 8.1 Being able to live independently in one's own home requires much more than just securing accommodation. Not only do people need accommodation which is suitable to their personal circumstances (e.g. due to household makeup, disability, or access to services), but they may need care and support to enable them to develop the skills to sustain their accommodation or cope with the limitations of poor health or incapacity.
- 8.2 The Council recognises that people who approach the service may have additional support requirements. In accordance with the Housing Support Policy, the Council will ensure that services are available to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and who have an identified need for support. Failure to do so may compromise a tenancy and in some circumstances may lead to an individual experiencing difficulty in living independently.
- 8.3 Staff from the Housing and Property Service will work with a range of other services and agencies to ensure that vulnerable households receive appropriate support to:
- help them to avoid becoming homeless;
 - support them through any period of homelessness; or
 - assist them to resettlement and avoid homelessness recurring in the future.

9. Repeat homelessness

- 9.1 Each year, a number of people will become homeless again for reasons such as housing debt or abandonment. The Council acknowledges that in many cases there are underlying and unaddressed issues, such as poor budgeting skills, that undermine a person's capacity to maintain accommodation in the long-term. If these underlying issues are not addressed, customers may repeatedly fail to sustain their housing and may find it increasingly difficult to access housing (e.g. because of previously accrued housing related debt).
- 9.2 The Council will endeavour to identify the vulnerability factors in each individual case that may lead to further presentations. By assisting

customers to address these issues, it is hoped that recurring homelessness will be reduced and ultimately prevented. The type of assistance provided may vary from, housing support to signposting to money advice services.

10. Avoidance of screening

- 10.1 The Council will avoid screening people who approach the service and will ensure that no-one is refused the right to make a homeless application. Care will be taken to ensure staff do not carry out any informal 'first screening', either deliberately or unwittingly. Screening is defined as preventing, deterring or discouraging a person from making an application. The Council will ensure that staff are appropriately trained.
- 10.2 In accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended), any person aged 16 or over who wants to make a homeless application has the right to do so. The Council will ensure that information about this is clearly visible in offices where people in housing crisis are likely to present and in other locations across Moray. The Council has a duty to accept applications from people who are homeless and will be homeless within two months, as defined by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 10.3 Every person who contacts the Council with concerns about security of their tenure, potential or actual homelessness will be advised of their right to make a homeless application.

11. Interview standards

- 11.1 Every person will be treated with respect, courtesy and in a non-judgemental manner.
- 11.2 Where possible, customers will be advised prior to an interview that they have the right to be interviewed by a member of staff of the same sex and that they have a right to have a friend, relative or representative present at the interview.
- 11.3 Interviews will take place in a private interview room and at a time and location convenient both for the customer and their personal representative or, if required, interpreter.
- 11.4 Customers will be encouraged to disclose all relevant information. Any information provided will be used in a non-prejudicial way and in complete confidence. All information provided by a customer will be treated confidentially and will only be shared in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations.
- 11.5 Every customer will receive a clear and simple explanation of this policy and on the Council's procedures for maximising housing options and assessing homelessness applications.

12. Housing options

- 12.1 The Council utilises a housing options approach, delivered by a specialist housing options team. The aim of the team is to provide information and advice in an attempt to resolve housing issues and prevent them escalating.
- 12.2 The housing options team use a person-centred approach to assess a customer's needs and abilities. The intention of this is to:
- address the underlying cause of homelessness or potential homelessness;
 - identify housing options with the customer which suit their circumstances;
 - provide information and advice and realistic housing solutions; and
 - avert a housing crisis and avoid the customer becoming homeless.
- 12.3 Customers are encouraged to approach the service for assistance as soon as a risk to their current housing situation is identified. This early intervention will enable the Council to respond effectively to the presenting issues identified. The earlier the intervention, the greater likelihood there is of a successful resolution. This in turn will increase the opportunity to avoid any detrimental impact on the customer and their household.
- 12.4 Depending on the customer's circumstances, it may be possible to resolve housing problems without them becoming homeless. An initial housing options enquiry will be completed to establish the extent of a customer's housing crisis and determine if there are any intervention actions that could be taken to allow them to remain in or return to their current accommodation. This will only apply where the Council is satisfied that the accommodation is reasonable to continue to occupy. An enquiry may include an interview with customers. Where possible, interviews will be offered on the same day, or on the next working day, that a customer contacts the Council.
- 12.5 Due to the nature of homelessness, the housing options team may be required to take a lead role in co-ordinating assistance from partner agencies and services in an attempt to secure a successful outcome. Where necessary, the Council will refer customers to other independent providers of housing, financial or legal services and can offer access to mediation services for family and neighbour disputes and harassment.

13. Inquiries into decision making

- 13.1 A possible outcome following involvement by the housing options team is that a customer decides to submit a homelessness application. Every customer will be informed of their right to make a homeless application.

- 13.2 The Council's assessment of homelessness applications will be based on statutory requirements and any subsequent changes to legislation. The enquiry process involves building up a detailed picture of the customer's individual/personal circumstances. The Council will make decisions in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005.
- 13.3 The Council is required by law to undertake enquiries into homelessness in a specific order, starting with whether the customer is eligible to apply for assistance, then whether they are homeless, as defined by the legislation. Thereafter the Council's enquiries will assess whether a person has become homeless or threatened with homelessness intentionally and if they have a local connection with Moray.
- 13.4 In accordance with Section 24 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended), a person is homeless if he or she has no accommodation in the United Kingdom or elsewhere which he or she is entitled or permitted to occupy in one of the following ways:-
- by virtue of an interest in it (for example as an owner or customer); or
 - by right or permission, or an implied right or permission, to occupy (for example as a lodger or as a member of an existing household); or by virtue of some protection given by law; or
 - by virtue of a court order.
- This applies to any homeless customer and any other person who would normally reside with them. It also covers the situation where a split household is regarded as being homeless if they would normally reside together, but are not doing so as a consequence of their accommodation situation.
- 13.5 A person is defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended) as being threatened with homelessness if he or she is likely to become homeless (as defined above) within two months.
- 13.6 Any customer who is threatened with homelessness will be offered an interview within five working days and customers who are homeless will be offered an interview on the day of their approach or the next working day.
- 13.7 Where necessary, the Council may request information to support a customer's case and to assist in reaching a decision on homelessness. Examples of such information include:-
- a valid notice to quit (but will not necessarily require that an order or decree for repossession has been obtained); and
 - financial information to confirm income remaining after payment of housing costs and any changes in household income.

- 13.8 The Council will never seek information from an alleged perpetrator of abuse, nor will the Council insist that “proof” must be provided by a third party where there is alleged abuse. Officers will work with Social Work or other specialist agencies, where appropriate, to assist investigations and to support the customer in such cases.

Persons Subject to Immigration Control

- 13.9 The rights of non-UK nationals to housing and homelessness provisions are a complex area. The Council will ensure that applications received from non-UK nationals are processed in accordance with legislation. Temporary accommodation will be provided pending the outcome of enquiries into eligibility.

14. Reasonableness of occupation

- 14.1 The Council will investigate whether accommodation is available to the customer, whether it is suitable for them to remain and may ask the customer to provide evidence, depending on their situation.

- 14.2 In reaching a decision, the Council will consider each case on its individual merits, including (but not exhaustively):

- the health and safety of the household;
- any other statutory duty the Council has towards the household;
- overcrowding and condition of existing accommodation i.e. unfitness, dampness and condensation etc;
- information already obtained from functional assessment applications and assistance requested to support functional assessment applications;
- fear of domestic abuse; and
- fear of violence.

- 14.3 In accordance with legislation, a person will be considered to be threatened by homelessness or homeless where accommodation available to him/her is unreasonable to occupy because:

- the accommodation is below the tolerable standard (BTS);
- the person is living in bed and breakfast accommodation;
- the person is living in a hostel or other accommodation such as a women’s refuge, which is not intended to provide long-stay accommodation;
- there is external violence, including racial or other harassment;
- there is a risk of domestic violence;
- continued occupation of the accommodation poses a substantial risk to a person's health;
- the accommodation is impracticable for a particular person because of his or her physical infirmities or disabilities;
- he or she cannot secure entry to it;
- he or she has a mobile home, caravan, houseboat or other moveable structure but has no place where he or she is entitled or permitted to put it or moor it and to live in it;

- the accommodation is both overcrowded within the meaning of section 135 of the Act **and** may endanger health;
- it is not permanent accommodation, and a local authority had a legal duty to house the person at the time he or she occupied it; or
- as a result of an emergency e.g. fire or flood.

15. Assessment of intentionality

15.1 Where a person has been found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness, the Council has the power to investigate whether the applicant became homeless intentionally. Decisions regarding intentionality will be based on the law and the criteria stated in the Code of Guidance.

15.2 The intentionality criteria allows the Council to distinguish between the case of a person who has become homeless through no fault of their own, and the case of a person, who through deliberate action or inaction, has contributed to their homelessness. Whether or not someone is found to be intentionally homeless the local authority should seek to find solutions to the person's homelessness and offer support to address any difficulties that they face.

15.3 The circumstances in which a person is to be regarded as having become intentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness are set out in Section 26 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended. A decision of intentionality will only be made where there is clear evidence that:

- a person has become homeless, or threatened with homelessness, because they have deliberately done something, or failed to do something, while being aware of all of the relevant facts, that resulted in the loss of their secure accommodation;
- it would have been reasonable for the person to have continued to occupy their previous or current accommodation; and
- they were aware of the consequences of his/her actions.

15.4 There will be no automatic presumption of intentionality. Each case will be assessed on its own merit, taking into account the specific circumstances associated with each case. The Council must satisfy itself whether an applicant became homeless or threatened with homelessness intentionally. There is no onus on the applicant to satisfy the Council that they did not become homeless intentionally. Consideration will also be given to the less obvious reasons which may have contributed to the customer's homelessness and inquiries will take account of any relevant factors such as:-

- the threat or occurrence of domestic or external violence;
- mental health problems;
- financial difficulties;
- substance misuse issues;
- age of the customer; and

- health related issues.

15.5 The following are examples when intentionality may be considered:

- voluntary termination of property;
- non-payment of rent or mortgage;
- failure to maintain and conduct a satisfactory tenancy;
- voluntary relinquishment or sale of property without first ensuring that alternative permanent accommodation is available; and
- failure to follow reasonable advice which would have prevented homelessness.

15.6 If the customer is in temporary accommodation they will be required to leave following a reasonable period of time. Consideration will be given to the household's circumstances when determining what a reasonable period is.

15.7 Where the Council's decides that a customer is homeless but that they became homeless intentionally, the Council will provide them with advice and guidance in finding accommodation. During this period the customer will be expected to make every effort to find alternative accommodation and may be asked to evidence what they have done to secure accommodation.

15.8 Where the customer is willing to engage, Officers will work with them in order to address the issue which resulted in them becoming intentionally homeless and provide better outcomes (see section 19).

15.9 Only after the Council is able to demonstrate that it has given the applicant reasonable opportunity, can it end the provision of temporary accommodation and record that it has discharged its legal duties towards the applicant.

16. Assessment of local connection

16.1 The Council will only investigate local connection where:-

- a customer has been assessed as homeless, and not intentionally homeless; and
- there are reasons to suggest that the customer does not have a local connection with Moray.

16.2 The Council will base its decisions on the definition of local connection provided in the Code of Guidance. This means that a local connection will be established if:-

- the customer has been resident in Moray for at least six months in the previous twelve months, or for at least three years during the previous five years;
- the customer or a member of their household is employed in Moray;

- a member of the household has a close family member currently resident in Moray for at least five years; or
 - there are special circumstances. For example, where customers have no local connection with anywhere in the United Kingdom.
- 16.3 In accordance with Section 27 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by Section 156 of the Housing (Scotland) 2010), any person who is serving in the armed forces (and those who live with them) will form a local connection with the area they have lived or worked in.
- 16.4 Any person who is leaving a settled address out with Moray due to violence or harassment and cannot continue to live in their home locality will be accepted as having a local connection.
- 16.5 Where no local connection exists the person will be referred to an appropriate local authority where a local connection does exist. However, only those who are assessed as unintentionally homeless will be referred to another authority.
- 16.6 A person will not be referred to another local authority if there is a risk of domestic abuse, to either the person or anyone who might reasonably be expected to reside with him or her in that other local authority's area. "Abuse" includes violence, harassment, threatening behaviour, and any other conduct giving rise, or likely to give rise, to physical or mental injury, fear, alarm or distress.
- 17. Maintaining contact with customers**
- 17.1 Customers will be notified of their decision within 28 days from the date of their homeless application. Where a customer has been assessed as homeless, they will be contacted at least every 3 months to review their circumstances.
- 17.2 Customers who are placed in temporary accommodation will be contacted on a weekly basis.
- 18. Notification of outcomes**
- 18.1 The decision on a homelessness application will meet the requirements of the homelessness legislation and Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005. The decision letter will explain how and why the decision has been reached, give advice on what happens next, and include contact details of the officer dealing with the application. Details will also be given on how to request a review of the decision, list sources of independent advice and give advice on the availability of temporary accommodation.
- 18.2 The decision will normally be made within 28 days unless sufficient information cannot be obtained in that time. The officer will agree with their line manager on whether to accept the case without the full

information or advise the customer that the case will be continued and give reasons why.

19. Review of an intentionality decision

- 19.1 In line with the Code of Guidance on Homelessness 2005, if there is reason to believe that there has been a change in the customer's circumstances, officers can decide to review the earlier decision, taking into account the changed circumstances.
- 19.2 A change in circumstances can include identification of support needs, to deal with issues such as certain behaviours and/or tenancy sustainment which may have contributed to or caused the failure of their current tenancy or caused them to have to leave their last accommodation.
- 19.3 The customer will be provided with an extended period of three months in temporary accommodation along with appropriate support to address needs and assist to resolve issues.
- 19.4 The dedicated support worker will provide updates regarding the applicant and whether any progress or effort is being made by them to improve their behaviour and/or issues. The Housing Needs Officer will monitor the situation over three months.
- 19.5 At the end of the three month period the Housing Needs Officer will reassess the application based on whether the applicant has engaged with the support service and any evident commitment or progress they have shown towards improving their situation and/or their ability to sustain a tenancy. This period can be extended to six months, at the discretion of Housing Needs Senior Management, where the applicant is starting to show signs of engagement and progress.
- 19.6 Where sufficient progress has been made within the extended period, the Housing Needs Officer will overturn the intentionally homeless decision. The customer will be advised that the decision has been reviewed and that they have been assessed to be unintentionally homeless and of the rights that they will have to temporary and permanent accommodation (see section X).

20. Quality assurance

- 20.1 A random sample of 10% of all cases will be quality assured retrospectively (after the decision has been made) by the Senior Housing Needs Officer.

21 Provision of temporary and settled accommodation

- 21.1 The Council does not consider temporary accommodation to be an alternative to having a permanent home and will ensure that time spent in temporary accommodation is as short as possible. However it is recognised that customers may need access to temporary accommodation:-

- while the Council carries out a full investigation into their homelessness and /or;
 - where the Council has assessed that it has a duty to secure accommodation for a household, but has not been able to make an offer of housing.
- 21.2 Where possible, the Council will take into account the wishes of the customer, when arranging temporary accommodation although this will be influenced by the availability of temporary accommodation. The Council will ensure that:-
- accommodation is appropriate to the needs of the customer and their household; and
 - customers are advised of their right to refuse an offer of temporary accommodation and of the procedure for requesting a review of the decision to offer a particular property.
- 21.3 The Council will seek to minimise bed and breakfast usage for temporary accommodation and will comply with the requirements of Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017 that concerns families with dependent children. Bed and breakfast accommodation for families with dependent children will only be used in an emergency or if there is no other suitable temporary accommodation.
- 21.4 All properties rented by the Council will have all necessary licenses and registrations in place.
- 21.5 All temporary accommodation and furnishings provided by the Council will be of a reasonable standard of repair and will comply with fire safety regulations etc. The Council will inspect all temporary accommodation provided on a regular basis. Any damage caused wilfully, accidentally or negligently by the customer, anyone living with a customer or an invited visitor to the customer's temporary accommodation will be recharged to the customer.
- 21.6 Once a customer is placed in temporary accommodation the Council will ensure that contact is maintained, moves to alternative temporary accommodation are kept to a minimum and assistance will be given with health and education registration.
- 21.7 Customers provided with temporary accommodation will be responsible for the payment of any rent and service charges that apply to the property for the duration of their occupancy in line with the Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy. This responsibility extends to the completion of forms required in order to claim any benefits associated with the payment of the rent or service charges. Where requested, assistance to complete forms will be provided.
- 21.8 The Council will work proactively with customers to manage any arrears accrued. However, continued failure by a customer to make

regular payments or to engage with the Council, may result in them being asked to leave the temporary accommodation provided to them. This will not change the Council's duties to provide permanent accommodation.

- 21.9 The Council expects that everyone should be able to have quiet enjoyment of their accommodation, without being abused or harassed or subject to noise or other nuisance caused by those around them. Any complaints of antisocial behaviour in temporary accommodation will be investigated. The Council will work proactively with customers to address and tackle antisocial behaviour. However, if the customer does not engage with the Council, it may result in them being asked to leave the accommodation. This will not change the Council's duties to provide permanent accommodation.

Protection of belongings and storage

- 21.10 Where a customer is unable to do so themselves, the Council has a duty to protect the property of those who it believes may be homeless and who have been provided with temporary accommodation. If there are any moveable possessions that cannot be taken into temporary accommodation, and no other suitable arrangements can be made, then the Council will arrange storage for the possessions.
- 21.11 Any removals and storage of belongings will be arranged with private companies and recharged to the customer. A repayment plan for the total amount of removals and storage will be agreed with the customer.
- 21.12 When the Council's duty to provide temporary accommodation ends its duty to protect belongings also ends. The Council will inform the customer of this when they are initially provided with temporary accommodation.

Unclaimed belongings

- 21.13 If the possessions of a customer leaving temporary accommodation are not claimed, the Council will continue to store them for a maximum of six months and the cost recharged. Thereafter, unclaimed possessions will be disposed of by sale (or to a charity where the money likely to be raised will not offset the costs of the sale).

22. Permanent accommodation

- 22.1 Where a customer is accepted as unintentionally homeless, the Council will seek to provide suitable accommodation using the Council's allocation policy and nomination agreements with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and other agencies.
- 22.2 Customers will normally receive **two** reasonable offers of housing. The offer of housing may be made by other housing landlords (such as housing associations).

- 22.3 A "reasonable offer" of housing will be considered on the basis of the size and type of accommodation required, any special education, health or family support reasons or transport or employment. Consideration will also be given to any safety concerns that may exist for the household. At the time of the allocation, the customer will be advised of the procedure for appealing against decisions. This includes the decision to refuse a particular property.
- 22.4 Following the refusal of two reasonable offers of accommodation, the Council will have been deemed to have fulfilled its duty in terms of the homeless legislation. The customer will be provided with temporary accommodation for a reasonable period of time and provided with advice and assistance to enable them to secure alternative accommodation.
- 23. Requests for a review of a decision**
- 23.1 The customer can request a review of the homeless decision or offer of temporary accommodation within 21 days of the date of the decision letter or offer. The customer or their representative should make the request in writing and include the customer's signature or mark.
- 23.2 The request for a review should include the grounds on which it is made. A request for a review will be considered by a senior manager not previously involved with the original decision with a target of 28 days to respond to the customer.
- 23.3 Complaints – the corporate process**
- The Council operates a complaints procedure that is available to any customer. Details of the complaints procedure can be obtained from any Council office or Access Point.
- 23.4 Customers who are unhappy with a decision may seek a judicial review and this does not diminish their right to approach the Ombudsman or the Care Inspectorate.
- 23.5 Temporary accommodation and protection of furnishings/belongings will be provided, if required, during the review and appeals process.
- 24. Records management**
- 24.1 It will be necessary for certain information to be exchanged with other agencies with which the service works. This will be carried out in accordance with the terms of Data Protection legislation and any agreed guidelines and/or with respect to any information sharing protocols. This includes statutory agencies such as the Social Work, NHS services, the police and any other relevant voluntary agencies.
- 24.2 Certain information will be shared with the Scottish Government for statistical monitoring and analysis purposes. The Council will ensure that such information is anonymous.

24.3 The Council will ensure that confidential information will be requested, retained and managed, in accordance with the Moray Council's Information Management Strategy and Record Management Guidelines.

24.4 Information will not be disclosed to third parties without the customer's written consent. This will not apply if failing to share the information would be likely to put the customer, children or other people at risk or harm, or is required by law; if it would prejudice the prevention of crime.

24.5 The Council will ensure that customers have access to individual records by complying with the requirements of Data Protection legislation and by working in accordance with the Moray Council's policies and procedures.

25. Performance monitoring and policy review

25.1 The Council continually monitors its performance in relation to homelessness. Statistical monitoring on homeless performance is used to assist with the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator and Scottish Government statistical returns. Performance indicators are presented to the Council's Communities Committee on a quarterly basis and are also used for internal monitoring of the service.

25.2 The Council will monitor:-

Annually

Housing Options approaches and outcomes –

- number of new cases in period
- cases closed in period with outcomes –
 - homeless application made
 - chose not to make homeless application
 - lost contact
 - other

Quarterly

Homeless assessments completed within 28 days

Homeless reviews

- number requested in the period
- number completed in the period
- percentage completed in target timescale
- percentage where decision is overturned
- average length of time for review

Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation by type

- LA ordinary dwelling
- HA/RSL ordinary dwelling

- hostel – LA owned
 - hostel – RSL
 - hostel – other
 - bed and breakfast
 - women's refuge
 - private sector lease
 - other
- percentage of households requiring temporary or emergency accommodation to whom an offer was made
 - percentage of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused in the last year
 - of those households homeless in the last 12 months, the percentage satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation
 - number of temporary accommodation units and percentage units void at the end of period.
- 25.3 These performance indicators will be reported to the Communities Committee. The reports will be public documents but the confidentiality of individual customers' circumstances will be maintained.
- 25.4 Other statistics will be collected from time to time for management and planning purposes.
- 25.5 Further performance indicators may be developed over a period of time to reflect the requirements resulting from the continued implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003.
- 25.6 The Council will review the operation of the Homelessness Policy in 2022 or earlier if required by legislative changes.



REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 9 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: HOUSING INVESTMENT 2019/20

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report informs the Communities Committee of the budget position to 31 August 2019 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2019/20.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III G (3) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the maintenance of the Council's housing stock.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes the position as at 31 August 2019 with regards to the Housing Investment Programme for 2019/20.**

3. BACKGROUND

Investment Programme

- 3.1 **APPENDIX I** shows income and expenditure for 2019/20. The Appendix includes expenditure on the Council house new build programme as 'Other Capital Expenditure'. This, however, is now the subject of a separate monitoring report and the figure is provided for information only. Spend of £3.571m was achieved on the Housing Investment Programme to 31 August 2019, which represents 28% of the agreed programme. Commitments are currently standing at £8.331m, which represents 64% of the programme. This commitment will increase further during the year as more projects are progressed. The level of expenditure within the individual budget headings which make up the programme are shown in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5 below. The expenditure figure represents all payments which have progressed through the finance system to 31 August 2019. The Housing Investment Programme for 2019/20 continues to reflect investment required to maintain the housing stock at the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), attain the Moray Standard (TMS) and replace life expired elements such as kitchens, heating and windows on a lifecycle basis. It also includes capital expenditure aimed at achieving the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by 2020 and moving towards EESH2.

- 3.2 **APPENDIX II** shows expenditure on Response and Void Repairs. Spend was £1.294m to 31 August 2019 and represents 32% of the agreed programme. Commitment currently stands at £2.546m and represents 64% of the budget. Analysis of this expenditure has indicated that there has been a significantly higher number of response repairs (8,754) completed than at this point in the previous year (5,709). However, the average cost of the repairs has reduced. A similar, though not as significant pattern is evident for void repairs. Officers will be closely monitoring budget pressures on this expenditure during the second half of the year.
- 3.3 **APPENDIX III** shows expenditure on Estate Works. Spend of £134k was achieved to 31 August 2019 and represents 21% of the agreed programme level. Commitment currently stands at £207k and represents 32% of the programme.
- Asbestos - A total of 54 properties had asbestos tanks, associated debris or other asbestos containing materials (ACM's) removed during 2018/19 and 29 further properties have had removals carried out during the current financial year.
 - Estates/Forum Upgrades – Although commitment is low at this stage, project priorities for this year's programme are progressing towards site start. Estate walkabouts have taken place during September and new priorities identified for 2020/21.
- 3.4 **APPENDIX IV** shows expenditure on Cyclic Maintenance. Spend of £249k was achieved to 31 August 2019 and represents 26% of the agreed programme level. Commitment currently stands at £815k and represents 85% of the budget.
- 3.5 **APPENDIX V** shows expenditure on Planned Maintenance and Other Investments. Spend of £1.894m was achieved to 31 August 2019 and represents 26% of the agreed programme level. Commitment currently stands at £4.763m and represents 65% of the programme. The Central Heating budget is £2.527m, which covers a range of planned full heating replacement projects by external contractors and the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), together with ad hoc "one off" upgrades arising from heating failures. Due to a high number of heating failures, the ad hoc items are projected to spend £1.5m alone. The items are mainly older systems that often cannot be repaired due to obsolete parts. The higher number of unanticipated ad hoc replacements will create a pressure on the Central Heating budget. This will be closely monitored by officers during the remaining half of the year to determine if adjustments to the planned programme will be required.
- General Programme Updates**
- 3.6 Following a competitive tender procedure, consultants have been appointed to carry out a Stock Condition Survey of the Council's housing stock. The survey, which will cover a sample of 25% of the housing stock, will assess the internal and external condition of the stock and provide a costed programme of planned maintenance over the next 30 years. As well as lifetime component replacement, the programme will include improvements to meet the SHQS and the EESSH.

- 3.7 Officers are currently updating the EESSH programme of works on the basis of the progress made to date. The updated proposals and investment for achieving EESSH compliance by December 2020 will form part of the HRA budget for 2020/21.
- 3.8 Contractors involved in the Warm Homes Fund heating project being carried out in conjunction with Perth and Kinross Council, Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE) and Scotia Gas Networks (SGN) have now commenced work on site and have completed 69 installations to date. It is envisaged that the remaining 36 installations will be completed by December 2019. The Council has identified a further 360 Council properties for inclusion in a bid for Round 4 in the Warm Homes Fund with a deadline for submissions of 26 September 2019. The upgrades will involve the replacement of electric or solid fuel heating by gas or air source heat pump systems. The type of system will be dependent on proximity to the mains gas network. It is anticipated that the outcome of the Warm Homes Fund Round 4 bid will be known in February/March 2020.

Income and Expenditure for Private Sector Housing

- 3.9 **APPENDIX VI** shows the position with regard to grant expenditure for Private Sector Housing Grant to 31 August 2019. This budget in Category B is now the responsibility of the Moray Integration Joint Board and the information is only for noting at this Committee. The legally committed figure of £304k represents 61% of the allocated budget. Spend to 31 August 2019 was £218k which represents 44% of the allocated budget. The legally committed figure in Category C of £60k represents 57% of the allocated budget. Spend to 31 August 2019 was £28k which represents 27% of the allocated budget. There has been £9k repaid to this budget which has impacted on the legally committed and spend figures. There is every expectation that the budget figures will be met.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

This proposal relates to:

Priority 1 – Creating a growing, diverse and sustainable economy; and
Priority 2 - Empowering and connecting communities.

(b) Policy and Legal

Maintenance and improvement works are carried out in order to meet statutory legal requirements and in accordance with current relevant policies.

(c) Financial implications

The financial implications associated within this report are dealt with in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.9 above, with details of the Council house new build programme now being the subject of a separate monitoring report.

(d) Risk implications

Failure to expend agreed budgets may affect the Council's ability to maintain its stock at the SHQS, replace life expired elements and attain the EESSH. Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for variance will be sought from Committee in line with the Financial Regulations.

(e) Staffing implications

There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) Property

The improvement and maintenance of the housing stock will ensure that it remains sustainable in the longer term both physically and environmentally.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities issues associated with this report as it is to inform the Committee on budget monitoring.

(h) Consultations

Consultations have taken place with the Acting Head of Housing and Property, Property Resources Manager, Building Services Manager, Senior Solicitor (Property and Contracts), Principal Accountant (Deborah O'Shea), Caroline Howie (Committee Services Officer) and the Home Improvement Services Manager, who agree with the sections of the report relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Housing investment for both the Council's housing stock and the private sector enables the Council to address the identified priorities to improve the quality of housing stock in Moray. More specifically, the investment in the Council's housing stock enables it to be maintained at the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, allows for replacement of life expired elements and makes progress towards the attainment of both the Moray Standard and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.**

Author of Report:	Daska Murray, Senior Housing Officer (Information)
Background Papers:	Held on file/sharepoint
Ref:	

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus committed to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
<u>Expenditure</u>						
Response & Void Repairs	4,008	2,546	64%	1,294	32%	2,714
Estate Works	651	207	32%	134	21%	517
Cyclic Maintenance	955	815	85%	249	26%	706
Planned Maintenance (Revenue)	1,125	768	68%	344	31%	781
Planned Maintenance (Capital)	5,884	3,861	66%	1,463	25%	4,421
Other Investment (Revenue)	10	0	0%	0	0%	10
Other Investment (Capital)	350	134	38%	87	25%	263
Sub Total	12,983	8,331	64%	3,571	28%	9,412
<u>Other Capital Expenditure</u>						
New Build - Capital Costs	17,131			3,225		
Total	30,114			6,796		
<u>Funded by</u>						
HRA Revenue	6,749			2,021	30%	
Government Grant	6,898			1,675	24%	
Use of Council Tax Discount	525			0	0%	
Prudential Borrowing	12,237			3,100	25%	
Capital Receipts	0			0	n/a	
Useable Capital Receipts	0			0	n/a	
C.F.C.R	3,705			0	0%	
Total	30,114			6,796	23%	

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

Item 7

RESPONSE AND VOIDS REPAIRS

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus committed to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
West Area Office	1,137	771	68%	490	43%	647
East Area Office	882	807	91%	283	32%	599
Void House Repairs	1,429	852	60%	405	28%	1,024
Gas Heating Repairs	560	116	21%	116	21%	444
	4,008	2,546	64%	1,294	32%	2,714

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

ESTATE WORKS

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus commitments to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Garage Upgrades	25	11	44%	0	0%	25
Asbestos	258	59	23%	43	17%	215
Landscape Maintenance	35	19	54%	12	34%	23
Estates/Forum Upgrades	258	55	21%	27	10%	231
Miscellaneous	75	63	84%	52	69%	23
	651	207	32%	134	21%	517

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

CYCLIC MAINTENANCE

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus commitments to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Gas Servicing	213	192	90%	98	46%	115
Solid Fuel Servicing	41	37	90%	8	20%	33
Air Source Heat Pump Servicing	82	74	90%	8	10%	74
Smoke Detector Servicing	120	108	90%	12	10%	108
PPR & External Painterwork	271	319	118%	100	37%	171
General Servicing	88	85	97%	23	26%	65
Inspections/House Surveys	140	0	0%	0	0%	140
	955	815	85%	249	26%	706

INVESTMENT PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

PLANNED MAINTENANCE & OTHER INVESTMENTS

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Expenditure plus commitments to date	% expenditure plus commitments to date	Expenditure to date	% Budget spent to date	Budget balance
Kitchens and Bathrooms	1,375	1,093	79%	354	26%	1,021
Central Heating	2,527	1,489	59%	645	26%	1,882
EESH Programme	1,189	752	63%	107	9%	1,082
Doors and Windows	793	527	66%	357	45%	436
Sub Total (Capital)	5,884	3,861	66%	1,463	25%	4,421
Rainwatergoods	200	83	42%	30	15%	170
Roof and Fabric Repairs	225	119	53%	100	44%	125
Plumbing Upgrades	200	273	137%	94	47%	106
Electrical Upgrades	150	136	91%	49	33%	101
Safety & Security	20	18	90%	0	0%	20
Common Stairs	20	6	30%	6	30%	14
Insulation	200	3	2%	2	1%	198
Sheltered Housing	10	0	0%	0	0%	10
Decoration Vouchers	50	22	44%	22	44%	28
Shower Installations	50	108	216%	41	82%	9
Sub Total (Revenue)	1,125	768	68%	344	31%	781
Disabled Adaptations	350	134	38%	87	25%	263
Sub Total (Other Capital)	350	134	38%	87	25%	263
Enabling Projects	10	0	0%	0	0%	10
Sub Total (Other Revenue)	10	0	0%	0	0%	10
Total	7,369	4,763	65%	1,894	26%	5,475

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING GRANT
SCHEME OF ASSISTANCE - 2019/20

31 August 2019
(all amounts in £'000)

	Budget Allocation 2019/20	Spend to date	Balance	Legally Committed	Completed Cases
CATEGORY					
Independent Living					
Category A (Revenue)	8	0	8	8	0
Category B	500	218	282	304	30
Category C	105	28	77	60	8
Overall Total	613	246	367	372	38

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS	
Category A	External agency running costs
Category B	Grant Assistance to aid Independent Living - Adaptations
Category C	Grant Assistance to aid Independent Living - House Condition Works



REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 9 OCTOBER 2019

SUBJECT: HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES BUDGET MONITORING – 31 AUGUST 2019

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents the budget position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period up to 31 August 2019.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of section III G (1) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the management of budgets.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Communities Committee considers and notes the budget monitoring report for the period to 31 August 2019.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council agreed the HRA Budget for 2019/20 at a special meeting on 27 February 2019 (paragraph 6 of the Minute refers). Housing and Property budget monitoring reports are presented to each cycle of meetings.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TO 31 August 2019

- 4.1 **APPENDIX I** details the HRA budget position to 31 August 2019.
- 4.2 The main expenditure variances relate to:–
 - 4.2.1 **Supervision and management** – there are a range of variations within this budget resulting in a net underspend of £207k. There were underspends in staffing (£75k), training (£4k), ICT (£3k), tenant participation (£6k) and reduced insurance premiums (£184k) due to a new council insurance contract. These underspends are reduced by overspends in void rent loss (£54k), council tax (£7k), and other minor overspends (£4k).

- 4.2.2 **Sheltered Housing** – there was an underspend of £3k due to lower than expected energy costs. This position is likely to change over the winter period.
- 4.2.3 **Repairs and maintenance** – there was an underspend of £23k in the repairs and maintenance budgets. The main underspend was in void works (£52k) which is reduced by overspends in planned works (£15k) and response repairs (£14k).
- 4.2.4 **Bad and doubtful debts** – there was an underspend of £36k to date due to fewer write offs than expected being approved in the period.
- 4.2.5 **Downsizing Incentive Scheme** – there was an underspend of £5k with fewer transfers completed than expected to 31 August 2019.
- 4.2.6 **Service Developments** – the budget of £39k included provision for ICT improvements (£5k), a review of the Housing Business Plan (£12k) and funding for the Research and Information Officer within the Community Safety Team (£22k). The budget is showing a minor underspend of £5k to date.
- 4.2.7 The income at 31 August 2019 was £3k lower than projected.

5. **OTHER HOUSING BUDGET**

- 5.1 **APPENDIX II** provides details of the budget position to 31 August 2019.
- 5.2 **Planning and Development** consists of Improvement Grants and Affordable Housing budgets. There were underspends of £9k to date. Underspends in discretionary grants (£17k) and Admin costs (£1k) was reduced by an overspend in disabled adaptations (£9k).
- 5.3 **Housing Management** relates to the Gypsy/Traveller budget. This budget is currently on target with £14k committed to date.
- 5.4 **Homelessness/Allocations** comprises of Homelessness and Housing Support services. There was an underspend of £3k in this budget with the main underspend in temporary accommodation (£16k). This was due to the homeless furniture store at Unit 8, Mosstodloch being vacated earlier than predicted. The underspend was reduced by overspends in housing support (£2k) and the provision of temporary accommodation (£11k). Homelessness is a “high risk” budget as pressures can quickly arise in the event of an increase in homelessness presentations. Service Managers will therefore continue to monitor this budget for the remainder of the year.
- 5.5 **Miscellaneous General Services Housing** comprises of House Loans, a maintenance bond from Grampian Housing Association and the new complex needs development at Urquhart Place, Lhanbryde. There was an underspend of £13k across the three budgets. An underspend in Urquhart Place (£18k) was reduced by an overspend in the maintenance bond (£5k) which is now exhausted.

- 5.6 **The Building Services Budget** is reported in detail separately on this Committee's agenda and any surplus achieved will return to the HRA.
- 5.7 **The Property Services Budget** includes the budgets for the Design Team and Property Resources. There was an underspend of £134k to date with Design showing an underspend of £53k across a range of budgets and Property Resources likewise (£81k).
- 5.8 As at 31 August 2019, the Other Housing budget shows a net underspend of £165k.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The provision of new affordable housing, the maintenance of the Council's housing stock and dealing with homelessness are priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the Council's Local Housing Strategy, the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Financial Implications

The financial implications of this report are considered in Sections 4 and 5 of this report and detailed in **APPENDICES I and II**.

(d) Risk Implications

Budget Managers are aware of their responsibilities for managing budget allocations and approval for variance will be sought from the Committee in line with Financial Regulations.

(e) Staffing implications

None.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities/socio economic impacts arising from this report.

(h) Consultations

This report has been prepared in close consultation with Finance staff. Consultation on this report has been carried out with Deborah O'Shea (Principal Accountant), Legal Services Manager, Senior Managers within Housing and Property Services, and Caroline Howie (Committee Services Officer) who all agree the content of the report where it relates to their area of responsibility.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This report sets out the budget position for the HRA and General Services Housing budgets to 31 August 2019 and also comments on the variances on these budgets.**

Author of Report:	Graeme Davidson, Acting Head of Housing and Property
Background Papers:	Held by author
Ref:	CC/JS/LS – Housing Budgets –

Housing Revenue Account

Appendix I

Budget Monitoring to 31st August 2019

Service Description	Annual Budget 2019-20	Budget to 31st August 2019	Actual to 31st August 2019	Variance to 31st August 2019
Expenditure	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Supervision & Management	4,272	1,514	1,307	207
Sheltered Housing	33	11	8	3
Repairs and Maintenance	6,707	2,515	2,492	23
Financing Costs	4,325	0	0	0
Bad & Doubtful Debts	250	42	6	36
CFCR	3,705	0	0	0
Downsizing Incentive Scheme	72	30	25	5
Service Development	39	16	11	5
Total Gross Expenditure	19,403	4,128	3,849	279
Income	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Non-dwelling rents	214	116	116	0
House rents	19,062	8,340	8,331	(9)
IORB	35	0	0	0
Other income	92	38	44	6
Total Income	19,403	8,494	8,491	(3)
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	0	4,366	4,642	276
Accumulated Surplus Balance brought forward			1,172	
Estimated Surplus Balance at 31st March			1,172	

General Services Housing & Property

Appendix II

Monitoring to 31st August 2019

Service Description	Annual Budget 2019-20 £'000	Budget to 31st August 2019 £'000	Actual & Committed to 31st August 2019 £'000	Variance at 31st August 2019 £'000
Planning & Development	284	33	24	9
Housing Management	16	14	14	0
Homelessness / Allocations	2063	900	897	3
Miscellaneous General Services Housing	(20)	(8)	(21)	13
Building Services	0	284	278	6
Property Services	1235	354	220	134
General Services Housing & Property Savings	(260)	0	0	0
General Services Housing & Property Allocations	(170)	0	0	0
General Services Housing & Property Total	3148	1577	1412	165

