

## 2021 CHSC 105

### THE FIFE COUNCIL - COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

26th May, 2021

10.00 a.m. – 13.25 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Judy Hamilton (Convener), Lesley Backhouse, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Rod Cavanagh (substituting for Councillor Julie Ford), Neil Crooks, Linda Erskine, Fiona Grant, Helen Law, Alice McGarry, Graham Ritchie, David J Ross and Darren Watt.

**ATTENDING:** Michael Enston, Executive Director - Communities; Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods; Ross Martin, Team Manager (Service Development and Strategy), Lauren Bennett, Policy Officer, Communities and Neighbourhoods; John Mills, Head of Housing Services; Paul Short, Service Manager - Housing, Health and Social Care and Older Persons; Mark McCall, Service Manager (Safer Communities), Housing Services; Paul D'Arcy, Project Manager and Carlene Simpson, Assistant Project Manager (Private Sector), Assets, Transportation and Environment - Property Services; Steve Hopton, Service Manager - Criminal Justice Service, Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Fiona MacKay, Age Concern Scotland.

**APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor Donald Lothian

#### 213. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

#### 214. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Community and Housing Services Sub-Committee of 18th March, 2021

##### Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

#### 215. JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK - ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services informing the Sub-Committee of additional funding from the Scottish Government to address the projected backlog expected when the Courts fully reopen in late summer.

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The Justice Social Work Service Priority and Development Plan included with the report provided background and context to the work undertaken within the Service.

### **Decision**

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the additional funding from the Scottish Government and proposed plan for additional resources to address the expected backlog;
- (2) noted the content of the Justice Social Work Priority and Development Plan; and
- (3) agreed an additional recommendation welcoming additional funding from the Scottish Government, recognising this was for a one year period only and asked that urgent confirmation was sought from the Scottish Government. along with COSLA, to secure ongoing additional funding for Justice Social Work Services for a three year period if possible, to address the anticipated backlog challenges when Courts re-opened later this year.

## **216. FOOD WELFARE AND SUPPORT**

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods providing an update on food and welfare support and outlining proposals for a long-term approach to food insecurity to tackle poverty and encourage crisis prevention.

### **Decision**

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the progress to date by Fife Council and partners in response to food insecurity during the pandemic;
- (2) noted the immediate recovery actions as detailed in the report;
- (3) agreed to implement the proposed framework for a Fife Food Strategy, which would be co-ordinated by a partnership working group; and
- (4) agreed an additional recommendation - that the Sub-Committee recognises and supports the Council's approach to holiday food provision in Fife; that Fife is leading the way across Scotland in providing universally accessible support to families over and above targeted support for those most in need; and is committed to continued investment and continuation of this provision.

## **217. PROGRESS UPDATE ON FIFE GYPSY TRAVELLER SITES**

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing, providing an update on site improvement at the three permanent Gypsy Travellers sites at Kelty, Thornton and Cupar, and in relation to assistance provided to nomadic Gypsy Travellers as outlined in the Fife Co-operation Policy.

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Following consideration of the report, the Convener, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, acknowledged the recent retirement of Lesley Corio, Gypsy Traveller Officer, Fife Council and expressed appreciation for the support Lesley had provided to all traveller families in Fife during her career.

### **Decision**

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) acknowledged and supported progress made in relation to improving the Gypsy Traveller Site at Tarvit Mill, Cupar;
- (2) agreed to the proposed next phase of improvements at Heathery Wood, Thornton; and
- (3) agreed to support the development of the Fife Gypsy Traveller Co-operation Policy following the evaluation of the Negotiated Stopping Places pilot across Scotland.

The Sub-committee adjourned at 11.40 a.m.

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The Sub-committee reconvened at 11.50 a.m.

## **218. GARDEN FENCING POLICY**

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing providing an update on the work being carried out to develop a Housing Services Garden Fencing Policy as part of the wider Estates Management Approach and outlining proposals to develop a consistent approach to requests for maintenance and replacement of garden fencing in Council properties.

### **Decision**

The Sub- Committee:-

- (1) noted the proposals outlined in the report and authorised officers to progress the proposed Test of Change as detailed in section 3.2 of the report;
- (2) agreed to continue to fund fencing repairs, maintenance and replacement from existing HRA Revenue and Capital budgets for the financial year 2021/2022;
- (3) agreed to consult with the Fife Tenants Forum on the development of the policy; and
- (4) agreed to consider a final report proposing a Garden Fencing Policy at its meeting on 3rd February, 2022 and requested Officers consider the issues some tenants may face with future maintenance of hedging and green options as boundaries.

**219./**

**219. DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY - TRANSFER OF FORMER BLACKLAW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE, BLACKLAW ROAD, DUNFERMLINE**

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing and the Head of Assets, Environment and Transportation Services advising of the decision taken by the Executive Director, Enterprise and Environment and the Executive Director, Communities, acting under delegated authority, to transfer the site of the former Blacklaw Primary School, Blacklaw Road, Dunfermline to the Housing Revenue Account for the development of 80 affordable homes.

**Decision**

The Committee noted the decision taken under delegated authority to transfer the site of Blacklaw Primary School to the Housing Revenue Account to allow for further affordable housing development to take place.

**220. COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Sub-Committee noted the Community and Housing Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme, which would be updated accordingly.

**221. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME – 115 NEW UNITS, OVER 4 DEVELOPMENTS (PUBLIC REPORT)**

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Procurement Service Manager seeking authority as part of the ongoing implementation of Phase 3 (2017-22) of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme, to continue negotiations and conclude legally binding agreements with the Developer for the following:-

- (a) 8 New Houses – High Street, Methil
- (b) 34 New Houses – West Wood Park, Glenrothes
- (c) 34 New Houses – Boreland Road, Dysart
- (d) 39 New Houses – High Street, Kirkcaldy

**Decision**

The Sub-Committee noted the contents of the individual reports for the sites listed above, and that there followed, later on the agenda, confidential reports providing detailed information on the (commercial) terms as contained in the individual reports at Para. 222 below.

**222. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME – 115 NEW UNITS, OVER 4 DEVELOPMENTS (PRIVATE REPORT)**

The Committee, under Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

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The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Procurement Service Manager seeking authority as part of the ongoing implementation of Phase 3 (2017-22) of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme, to continue negotiations and conclude legally binding agreements with the Developer as outlined in the relevant appendix to the report:

- (a) High Street, Methil (8 New Houses) - to purchase newly constructed units to Housing for Varying Needs Standards;
- (b) Westwood Park, Glenrothes (34 New Houses) - to purchase newly constructed units to Housing for Varying Needs Standards;
- (c) Boreland Road, Dysart (34 New Houses) - to acquire the site for the development of new affordable council houses for rent; and for the construction of new affordable council houses for rent (recognising the stated figures may be adjusted as the detail in the proposals was worked through); and
- (d) High Street, Kirkcaldy (39 New Houses) - to acquire the sites for the development of new affordable council houses for rent; and for the construction of new affordable council houses for rent (recognising the stated figures may be adjusted as the detail in the proposals was worked through)

*Councillor Caldwell left the meeting during consideration of the above item.*

### **Decision**

#### **(a) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 8 New Houses, High Street, Methil**

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from Allanwater Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 8 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as 251 High Street, Methil for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through) all as described in Appendix A. The acquisition will be for completed units.

#### **(b) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 34 New Houses, Westwood Park, Glenrothes**

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1)/

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- (1) the acquisition from Keepmoat Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 34 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as Westwood Park, Glenrothes for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through) all as described in Appendix A. The acquisition will be for completed units.

**(c) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 34 New Houses, Boreland Road, Dysart**

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from Allanwater Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 34 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as Boreland Road, Dysart, as described in Appendix A;
- (2) the direct award of a construction contract to Allanwater Homes Limited for the construction of the development of 34 new council houses for social rent at the site known as Boreland Road, Dysart for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through); and
- (3) to suspend the CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS – Scheme of Tender Procedures 2018 in terms of Contract Standing Order 6.1 in respect of the proposed direct award of the construction contract to Allanwater Homes Limited on the grounds of the special circumstances described in the report.

**(d) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 39 New Houses, Kirkcaldy High Street**

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into a legally binding agreement on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from GMC Ventures Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 39 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as 257 - 261 High Street, Kirkcaldy as described in Appendix A;
- (2) the direct award of a construction contract to GMC Ventures Limited for the construction of the development of 39 new council houses for social rent at the site known as 257 - 261 High Street, Kirkcaldy for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through);
- (3) to authorise the acquisition of land prior to full planning approval in order to support the overall Town Centre Capital Delivery programme timescales; and
- (4)/

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- (4) to suspend the CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS – Scheme of Tender Procedures in terms of Contract Standing Order 6.1 in respect of the proposed direct award of the construction contract to GMC Ventures Limited on the grounds of the special circumstances described in the report.
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