

STIRLING COUNCIL

MINUTES of MEETING of the ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING COMMITTEE held as a VIRTUAL MEETING via MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021 at 10.00 am

Present

Councillor Jim THOMSON (Convener)

Councillor Martin EARL

Councillor Danny GIBSON

Councillor Graham HOUSTON

Councillor Jane HUTCHISON

Councillor Alasdair MACPHERSON

Councillor Alastair MAJURY

Councillor Susan MCGILL

Councillor Alasdair TOLLEMACHE

In Attendance

Stephen Clark, Chief Officer – Housing

Linda Hill, Regulatory Service Manager (Environment & Place)

Charlie Haggerty, Legal Manger (Governance)

Fiona Hainey, Design & Projects Team Leader (Housing)

Guy Harewood, Sustainable Development Project Officer (Environment & Place)

Angela Heaney, Senior Sustainable Development Officer (Infrastructure)

Gillian Hessem, Senior Development Officer (Housing)

David Hopper, Public Transport & Sustainable Development Manager (Infrastructure)

Mark Laird, Development Planning Team Leader (Infrastructure)

Drew Leslie, Senior Manager – Infrastructure

Kirsty MacLeod, Fleet Manager (Environment & Place)

Isabel McKnight, Chief Operating Officer - Communities & Performance

Owen O'Donnell, Media Officer (Communities & Performance)

Robert Plewes, Public Transport Team Leader (Environment & Place)

Bruce Reekie, Senior Manager - Environment & Place

Brian Roberts, Chief Operating Officer - Infrastructure & Environment

Karen Swan, Committee Officer (Governance)

Stephen Swan, Housing Property and Asset Management Service Manager (Housing)

Gregor Wightman, Private Sector Housing Manager (Housing)

Michelle MacDonald, Governance Officer (Governance) (Clerk)

Prior to the start of the meeting, Councillor Thomson as Convener of the Environment & Housing Committee welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting via MS Teams. He updated the meeting on the procedures related to MS Teams and the protocols that both Members and Officers should adhere to throughout the meeting.

The Convener asked the Clerk to carry out a roll call of all Members participating in the meeting.

EH271 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies and substitutions.

EH272 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Danny Gibson declared a non-financial interest in EH281 Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey Update Report as the Stirling Council's appointed Director. He felt he could be balanced and apply sound judgement and would partake within the item.

EH273 URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CONVENER

There was no urgent business.

EH274 MINUTES OF MEETING – 16 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Minutes of the Environment & Housing Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2021 were submitted for approval.

Decision

The Minutes of the Meeting of Environment & Housing Committee held on 16 September 2021 were approved as a correct record of proceedings, with the following amendment:-

EH263 – Performance & Strategic Priorities Progress Report – Broken Glass Removal Cases and Needle Uplift to have both total and individual cases identified.

EH275 ROLLING ACTION LOG

The Rolling Action Log was submitted for review.

The Committee agreed that all actions noted within the Rolling Action Log to be addressed and updated.

The Committee requested that for EH149 A811 Petition Update - (Road Safety) clarity be sought by Officers as to what stage the design work was at and when it would go out for consultation.

It was also noted that EH267 Salt Bins criteria/ indicators had been addressed as complete and would be removed from the Rolling Action Log.

The Committee also requested that a review of all of the Environment & Housing Committee Rolling Action Log Actions be taken, updated and advised to Environment & Housing Committee Members by Thursday 25 November 2021.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to note, and remove any actions marked for removal on the Rolling Action Log.

EH276 PERFORMANCE & STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PROGRESS REPORT

A report by the Chief Operating Officer – Infrastructure & Environment presented the recommended performance indicators to be used to measure and report on progress on Council priorities reported to the Environment & Housing Committee.

Following on from Members questions, the Senior Manager – Environment & Place advised that clarity would be sought on the October 2021 indicator for Total Amount of Household Waste sent to Landfill (%) and the timescales to when the Waste Scorecard would be completed and circulated to the Environment & Housing Committee Members accordingly.

The Chief Officer – Housing also confirmed in response to a Members question that a breakdown of properties which were easier or harder to let under “Average Time Taken to Re-Let Properties (Days)” would be clarified and circulated to Members of Environment & Housing Committee.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to note performance of reported indicators within the Committee Scorecard (Appendix 1 and 2 to the submitted report).

(Reference: Report by Chief Operating Officer, Communities & Performance, dated 8 November 2021, submitted).

EH277 COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM UPDATE

The Senior Manager – Infrastructure submitted a report that provided an update to the Committee on enforcement action undertaken by the Community Safety Team between 1 July 2021 and 30 September 2021.

The Community Safety Team used an intelligence led approach in dealing with anti-social behaviour and environmental crimes.

Following a Members enquiry, the Regulatory Service Manager confirmed that clarity would be sought on the details of the 2 cases of “Eviction Action Progressed” and circulated to Members of the Environment & Housing Committee.

She also noted that information in respect to action taken on the 101 fly tipping cases would be advised to Members of Environment & Housing Committee, along with future report inclusion of data on successful prosecution cases against fly tippers.

The Committee also noted that the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy had been out of date and was being overhauled. The Senior Manager – Infrastructure confirmed that the draft Anti-Social Behaviour Policy would be circulated, following clarity from Legal to All Elected Members for input prior to submission to a Council Meeting.

The Regulatory Service Manager also noted, at the request of Committee, that a briefing note on the Noise app would be circulated to Members of Environment & Housing Committee.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to note the content of report.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager, Infrastructure, dated 9 November 2021, submitted)

EH278 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – PROJECTED OUTTURN 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Housing that detailed the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Investment Programme.

Housing Revenue Account

The projected outturn for 2021/22 showed expenditure of £22.701M against a budget of £22.701M. The level of balances retained by the Housing Revenue account were projected to remain at £986,000.

Housing Investment Programme

The 2021/22 Housing Investment Programme showed expenditure of £23.405M against a budget of £23.237M. The level of new borrowing required for the current year was projected to be £2.621M over budget at £13.324M.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to note that:

1. expenditure on the Housing Revenue Account for 2021/22 was projected to remain at £22.701M;
2. the year-end retained balances were projected to remain at £986,000;
3. expenditure on the Housing Investment Programme was projected to be £23.405M; and
4. the borrowing requirement for 2021/22 was projected to be £13.324M.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer, Housing, dated 8 November 2021, submitted).

EH279 STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2022/23 TO 2026/27

The Chief Officer – Housing submitted the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2022/23 to 2026/27 to the Committee for approval. The report set out the strategic investment priorities for affordable housing across the Stirling Council area to achieve the outcomes set out in Stirling Council's Local Housing Strategy which was approved by Stirling Council in December 2012.

The Scottish Government had a Strategic Housing Investment Framework to allocate development funding to local authorities, to which Stirling Council was required to submit a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) annually to the Scottish Government. The previous Strategic Housing Investment Plan was approved by the Environment and Housing Committee in December 2020. The current draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan covered the five year period 2022/23 to 2026/27.

In response to Members questions, the Chief Officer – Housing and Senior Manager – Infrastructure confirmed that construction costs had increased, although it had to be noted that Officers and services were working with developers in open conversation which was progressing positively.

The Chief Officer – Housing also confirmed that in respect to housing stock with adaptations, Stirling Council had built more than the prescribed 5% within the local authority area.

The Committee noted that the new National Planning Framework would be brought to a future Planning & Roads Working Group.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27 for submission to the Scottish Government based on the projects identified in the Strategic Housing Investment Plan tables set out within Appendix 2 to the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer, Housing, dated 8 November 2021, submitted).

Eh280 DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUILD HOUSING AT GRAYSTALE ROAD, ST NINIANS

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Housing that explained the proposals for development of new build Council Housing at Graystale Road, St. Ninians and approval was now sought from the Environment & Housing Committee.

The site at Graystale Road was previously used for council housing. The properties had been built in the 1950's but by the early 2000s had become unpopular, mainly because they there were 4 storey tenements flats which were not in high demand from applicants on the Housing List. These properties were demolished in 2012 as part of regeneration activity in the area which was undertaken by Stirling Council. The site was demolished and marketed for sale in 2017.

Officers had considered the extend of housing need in the local area and considered that the best use of the asset would be to develop social housing which met the needs of the housing list. Stirling Council currently had over 1,300 applicants who had included this area as one of their choices. In addition, Stirling Council had one of the lowest levels of turnover of council housing in Scotland, which could result in lengthy waiting times even for households with a high level of points. The Housing Revenue Account held very few sites which could deliver a significant number of new homes so it was considered that the use of Housing Revenue Account land in addition to opportunities that arose via the Council's Affordable housing policy would help maximise the new support of affordable housing delivered in Stirling.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to:

1. approve the proposal to develop Council Housing for the Housing Revenue Account owned site at Graystale Road, St Ninians; and
2. note that proceeding with procurement for new build residential construction at Graystale Road would require approval at a future Environment and Housing Committee.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer, Housing, dated 8 November 2021, submitted).

EH281 ORDER OF MALTA DIAL-A-JOURNEY UPDATE REPORT

The Senior Manager – Infrastructure submitted a report that offered an overview of the performance and activity of Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey (OMDAJ) in the provision of the Door-to-Door and Shopmobility services supported by Stirling Council, and covered the period from 01 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.

Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey (OMDAJ) was a registered charity that provided a door-to-door transport service for people who were unable to use conventional public transport, as well as a shopmobility service in Stirling City Centre (based at Stirling bus Station). Stirling Council provided funding for the provision of these accessible services to assist people with mobility difficulties.

Following a Members question, the Public Transport Team Leader confirmed that clarity would be sought on how Order of Malta Dial-A-Journey communicated with their Members who do not have internet etc. and advise Members of Environment & Housing Committee.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to note the update report in relation to Dial-a-Journey's Door-to-Door and Shopmobility services.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager, Infrastructure, dated 9 November 2021, submitted)

EH282 SUSTAINABLE STIRLING: PUBLIC BODIES' CLIMATE CHANGE DUTIES ANNUAL REPORT, 2020-21

A report by the Senior Manager – Infrastructure was submitted that detailed the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 that introduced mandatory annual climate change reporting for public bodies to record progress in delivering their duties to reduce emissions, adapt to climate change and act sustainably while exercising their functions. The report attached as Appendix 1 fulfilled the reporting requirement while it also provided an update on activity to support delivery of the Council's Climate and Nature Emergency Plan. Once approved by Committee, the attached Sustainable Stirling report would be submitted to Scottish Government.

Responding to Members questions, the Senior Manager – Environment & Place confirmed that flood risk work at Stratblane, in particular, gauges and cameras, had been delayed. He confirmed that clarity on the status of flood risk gauges and camera for Strathblane would be sought and advised to Members of Environment & Housing Committee.

Following concerns raised by Members about First Bus's future intensions within the Stirling area, the Public Transport & Sustainable Development Manager advised that clarity on the status of First Bus and the service changes would be investigated and information would be circulated to All Elected Members. .

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to approve the draft Sustainable Stirling 2020-21 report attached at Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager, Infrastructure, dated 9 November 2021, submitted)

EH283 DESIGNATION OF LOCAL NATURE CONSERVATION SITES

The Senior Manager – Infrastructure submitted a report to seek approval for procedures to designate Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCSs) within the area covered by the Adopted Stirling Local Development Plan (LDP) and to agree to commence designation of the first tranche of sites, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the submitted report.

Scottish Planning Policy (October 2014) confirmed planning authorities had a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to further the conservation of biodiversity. International, national and locally designated areas and sites should be identified in local development plans and afforded an appropriate level of protection.

The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC), with the assistance of local environmental voluntary groups and working in partnership with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, had continued to survey and assess a range of candidate LNCSs, and had now finalised a list of seventeen sites within the Stirling Local Development Plan area deemed to be of sufficient biodiversity value to merit formal designation.

Following a Members question, the Sustainable Development Project Officer confirmed that a full list of the Local Nature Conservation sites would be circulated to Members of Environment & Housing Committee.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to:

1. note the national and local development plan policies and guidance that promoted the designation of Local Nature Conservation Sites;
2. the proposed procedures set out within the report to designate Local Nature Conservation Sites;
3. commence designation of the first tranche of sites, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the submitted report, and
4. the procedures be followed for future designations.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager, Infrastructure, dated 9 November 2021, submitted)

EH284 REPLACEMENT OF REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLES

Following notification from the Convener of the Environment & Housing Committee, the Replacement of Refuse Collection Vehicles report would be deferred to a Special Meeting of Environment & Housing Committee in December 2021. Due to elements within the report, it was required to be updated to allow Committee the opportunity to have all relevant details to make an appropriate decision.

Decision

The Environment & Housing Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report to a Special Meeting of Environment & Housing Committee in December 2021.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager, Environment & Place, dated 9 November 2021, submitted)

The Convener declared the Meeting closed at 12.15pm.