



Pre-Housing and Communities Committee Forum –open to all tenants and TRA representatives

Note of zoom meeting on Monday 1st February 2021

This note also includes the **outcome** of the Housing and Communities Committee (HACC) on the 3rd February 2021 which is noted in boxes after each item discussed.

Present:

Cllr Diane Docherty (Housing Convenor)- chaired meeting
Frances McGonagle (Littleholm TRA + WDTRO)
Billy Neeson (Westbridgend TRA + WDTRO)
Mary Paton (Willox Park TA)
Harry McCormack (Tullichewan TRA + WDTRO)
John Kerr (Housing Development & Homelessness Manager)
Jane Mack (Snr Development Officer-Tenant Participation)
Stefan Kristmanns (Housing Development Co-ordinator)
Janice Rainey (Finance Manager)

Apologies received from: June Todd (WDTRO), Janette Donlin (Dalmeir MSF's TRA) and Jacqui Peacock (Dalmeir MSF's TRA).

Discussion focused on committee papers that tenants most interested in.

Item 10. Housing Revenue Account Budgetary Control Report to 31 December (period 9).

Update paper on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which shows a projected favourable variance of £1.911m(4.33% of the total budget) of which £2.029 is COVID related. Also Capital programme has £14.928m projected slippage into next financial year.

Key points from discussion

Question asked about the amount of slippage and how this is going to be managed? Janice Rainey advised that some slippage is due to delays in newbuild programme and this is all back on track and will catch up within the 5 year plan. The level of

slippage is high and until it is known when the current lockdown restrictions are lifted don't know how quickly will be able to catch up. Not overly concerned about the level of slippage but maybe an issue if still as high in 6 months time. Have contractors who are going to help accelerate the programme once restrictions are lifted.

Question asked if extra contractors taken on, will that increase costs and so reduce the amount of work tenants will get? Janice confirmed it won't and any additional sub-contractor costs would be within the Maintenance trading account.

Item 10. Housing Revenue Account Budgetary Control Report to 31 December (period 9).

Agreed

Item 11. Financial Report 2020/21 as at Period 9 (31 December 2020)

Update financial report on services under the auspices of the Housing & Communities Committee. Shows a revenue overspend of £0.434m at the year end. Capital projects showing no projected variance.

Key points from discussion

WDTRO raised concern about inclusion in paragraph 4.1 again of option that lost income could be charged to the HRA. The WDTRO don't accept that position as it is against the HRA Guidance and questioned the use of the wording 'continue to be charged'. Janice advised that Stephen West has included the paragraph as it is a financial solution but not keen to do it as aware of opposition and is only a last resort. The DLO recovery plan is in operation to minimise any deficit. Is a difference between what is allowed and what is appropriate and WDC appreciates that might be allowed but not in the spirit of the HRA Guidance and so not appropriate. Janice also advised that Government given them other financial flexibilities like loan holidays which will ease pressure on General Fund.

Councillor Docherty confirmed she would take tenant concerns to the HACCC meeting and WDC and other Council's well aware that this is a key concern for tenants.

Item 11. Financial Report 2020/21 as at Period 9 (31 December 2020)

Agreed

Item 6. West Dunbartonshire Empty Homes Strategy (Private Sector) 2021-24.

Paper outlines the Strategy to bring empty homes back into usage to increase housing supply. Empty Homes Officer having a positive impact and 94 properties back into use in West Dunbartonshire.

Key point from discussion -No questions on paper .

Item 6. West Dunbartonshire Empty Homes Strategy (Private Sector) 2021-24 Agreed

Item 7. Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan and new approaches to homelessness update report

Update report on Rapid rehousing transition plan and John highlighted additional £156k been awarded for 20/21 and £234k for 2021/22. Also no unsuitable accommodation (B&B) been used even during lockdown.

Key points off discussion – no issues raised.

Item 7. Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan and new approaches to homelessness update report Agreed

Item 8. More Homes West Dunbartonshire –West Dunbartonshire Council Affordable Housing Supply Delivery Programme

Progress report on new build programme and gives update on each site. Includes update on discussions ongoing to purchase old care home site at Willox Park and site at Bank Street – not concluded yet but would hope to be positive outcome if value for money and looking to use as future new build sites.

Key points off discussion

In relation to any future development at Willox Park, it was asked what type of accommodation would be considered and John confirmed that it would be looking at additional sheltered accommodation and if purchase successful will be looking at design possibilities for the whole site as well as additional sheltered units.

Item 8. More Homes West Dunbartonshire –West Dunbartonshire Council Affordable Housing Supply Delivery Programme Agreed
--

Item 9. ‘Involving You ‘ West Dunbartonshire Council’s Tenant Participation Strategy 2021-24.

TP Strategy for 2021-24 been developed with tenants and will build on the positive developments from previous years. Strategy also includes an action plan for implementing the Strategy.

Key points off discussion - tenants happy with positive content of new Strategy. Housing News to be used to promote new strategy and encourage more tenants to get involved.

Item 9. 'Involving You ' West Dunbartonshire Council's Tenant Participation Strategy 2021-24.

Agreed

The next Housing & Community Committee (HACC) will be on 5th May so there will be a **Pre- HACC Forum on Monday 3rd May 2021** (probably via zoom) to discuss the papers with the Housing Convenor and officers who have written the papers.

The papers are available the week before and electronic copies will be sent to all TRA Secretaries, WDTRO members and via TP Facebook page.

Paper copies will also be made available as are usually a lengthy document to read on a small screen.

This Forum is open to any tenant or member of a Tenant & Resident Association

