

## **ANGUS COUNCIL**

MINUTE of SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING of the **HOUSING COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 11 February 2025 at 2.00pm.

**Present:** Councillors BETH WHITESIDE, JILL SCOTT, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, LINDA CLARK, JACK CRUICKSHANKS, LYNNE DEVINE, HEATHER DORAN, ROSS GREIG, IAN MCLAREN, GEORGE MEECHAN, LLOYD MELVILLE, GAVIN NICOL, LOUISE NICOL, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM and LOIS SPEED.

Councillor WHITESIDE, Convener, in the Chair.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor Ronnie Proctor MBE, with Councillor Craig Fotheringham substituting.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY**

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

At this stage in the meeting, the Convener advised that in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 11, a Request to Speak had been received from Mr O'Brien who wished to address the meeting in relation to Items 3 and 4.

The Committee agreed to hear the Request to Speak.

Prior to consideration of Items 3 and 4, Mr O'Brien addressed the meeting and advised that he was speaking on behalf of the Tenant's Group who had chosen to support the lowest rent increase during the consultation period. He reminded members that there was still a cost of living crisis and tenants deserved value for money. By supporting the tenants choice, this would cover the budgetary requirements whilst ensuring that rents remained affordable.

There being no questions, the Convener thanked Mr O'Brien and he withdrew to the public benches.

### **3. HOUSING CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25**

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of Special meeting of the Communities Committee of 13 February 2024, there was submitted Joint Report No 39/25 by the Interim Service Leader – Housing and the Director of Finance setting out the actual Capital and Revenue spend to 31 December 2024, together with projected outturns for the year to 31 March 2025, and any required updated capital funding proposals.

The Report advised that the actual spend on the overall Housing Capital Programme 2024/25 achieved to 31 December 2024 was £4.062 million equating to 39.8% of the projected outturn. It was projected at the current time that by the end of the financial year 2024/25, net expenditure would total £10.208 million, which represented 82.8% of the monitoring budget. The main reasons for the projected underspend were contained in Section 7 of the Report.

The Interim Service Leader - Housing provided an overview of the Report and answered a number of questions from members.

Having considered the contents of the Report, the Committee agreed to note the projected year end positions on capital and revenue expenditure as indicated in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Report, and the indicative funding proposals for the programme.

### **4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENT SETTING AND BUDGET STRATEGY 2025/26-2028/29**

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of Special meeting of the Communities Committee of 13 February 2024, there was submitted Joint Report No 40/25 by the Interim Service Leader – Housing and the Director of Finance setting out the Housing Revenue Account budget strategy for 2025/2026 to 2028/29 and seeking approval of rent levels and other associated

charges for 2025/26. The Report also set out estimated income and expenditure for 2025/26, capital investment proposals, affordability assessment, and the recommendation of a continued programme of investment in new and existing stock.

The Interim Service Leader - Housing provided an overview of the Report.

*At this stage in the meeting (2.30pm), the Committee agreed to adjourn for five minutes to allow legal advice to be taken. The meeting reconvened at 2.35pm.*

Having heard from a number of members, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the revenue budget for 2025/26 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to approve an average rent increase of 5.2% for Council houses and associated service charges for sheltered, retirement and dispersed accommodation as detailed in Appendix 2 to the Report;
- (iii) to approve a rent increase of 5.2% for St Christopher's Travelling People Site, garages and garage sites as also set out in Appendix 2 to the Report;
- (iv) to approve the HRA Capital Plan for the financial year 2025/26 based on the rent strategy adopted as well as the indicative level of programme for the financial years 2026/27 to 2028/29 as detailed in Appendix 3 to the Report;
- (v) to note that, based on the assumptions made, and the affordability assessment undertaken, the 2025/26 – 2028/29 Housing Revenue Account Capital Plan was considered to be affordable, prudent and sustainable as required by the Prudential Code, and as detailed in Section 9 and Appendix 4 to the Report; and
- (vi) to approve the prudential indicators as shown in Appendix 5 in compliance with Prudential Code requirements.