

Housing and Economy Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 21 March 2019

Dean of Guild Court Room, City Chambers, Edinburgh

Housing and Economy Committee

Convener:	Members:	Contact:
<p>Convener Cllr Kate Campbell</p>  <p>Vice Convenor Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Jim Campbell• Cllr David Key• Cllr Kevin Lang• Cllr John McLellan• Cllr Claire Miller• Cllr Gordon Munro• Cllr Susan Rae• Cllr Cameron Rose• Cllr Norman Work	<p>Lesley Birrell Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 4240</p> <p>Sarah Stirling Assistant Committee Officer Tel: 0131 529 3009</p> <p>Lisa Mallon Housing Operations Manager Tel: 0131 529 6291</p>

Edinburgh Living

Edinburgh Living welcomed its first tenants in January 2019 at the newly built Clermiston development in the north west of the city. The development was completed as part of the Council's own housebuilding programme and includes 22 homes for social rent, which are owned and managed by the Council, and 22 homes for mid market rent which were purchased by the Edinburgh Living partnership.

Kevin Stewart MSP, Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning visited the new development on 22 January 2019 and toured the new mid market rent homes. He was met by the Convenor and Vice Convenor of the Housing and Economy Committee as well as representatives from the Scottish Futures Trust, the Council's partner in Edinburgh Living. The new mid market rent homes will be let and managed on behalf of Edinburgh Living by Lowther Homes, part of the Wheatley Group, who were appointed to deliver this service following a procurement process at the end of 2018.

Following on from the successful completion of the Clermiston development, Edinburgh Living will start to purchase new homes for mid market rent at the Council's Greendykes and North Sighthill developments over the next few months. This is in line with approvals from the Finance and Resources Committee in [June 2018](#) and [December 2018](#) for the Council to transfer homes from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to Edinburgh Living on completion, in return for a capital receipt.

Promoting Play on HRA Land

On [30 August 2018](#), Committee considered a report on the use of 'no ball games signage' on HRA land and the approach Locality Housing Teams would take to consult with local residents on the potential use of suitable areas for active play.

An information page has been created on the Council [website](#) where residents are also able to report the location of 'no ball games' signs for potential review. A leaflet is available for use in the localities and an article was included in the recent addition of the Tenant Courier newsletter to raise awareness.

Housing officers have also been reviewing the use of signs in their individual patches and are starting to engage with

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Recent News

Background

residents on potential removal of signs where they may no longer be required. They are also identifying areas that could benefit from wider discussions on alternative uses and opportunities to consider Neighbourhood Investment Projects.

Our Power

Our Power was an energy provider and a Community Benefit Society with the aim of tackling fuel poverty for social housing tenants. On [27 August 2015](#), Finance and Resources Committee approved the recommendation for the Council to become a member of Our Power and to enter into an agreement with the company as the preferred supplier. In October 2016, Our Power became the default energy supplier for any Council homes being re-let.

On 25 January 2019 the energy regulator Ofgem reported that Our Power had ceased trading. On 31 January 2019 Ofgem appointed the energy firm Utilita, who will switch all existing domestic Our Power accounts across to their network. Ofgem protects Our Power's domestic customers, ensuring a continued energy supply, that pre-payment meters can be topped up and that outstanding credit balances are switched to the new supplier. Utilita are contacting Our Power customers by letter and have advised that a welcome pack explaining the switch of energy providers will shortly be issued. Advice has been provided to localities to assist in answering any queries from tenants.

In order to ensure continuity of service for the Council's default energy supply, officers are arranging for the Council contract with Our Power to be transferred to Utilita via contract standing orders. The contract is due to terminate in October 2019 and, therefore, work is being undertaken to put in place a replacement contract.

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McGills & Co

It was announced on Friday 1 February 2019, that McGills & Co Ltd went into administration, with the loss of 374 jobs. The Council, via Housing Property, currently has 11 live contracts with McGills and had awarded a further two which were yet to commence on site.

Live contracts:

- Kitchen and Bathroom upgrade (5 contracts)
- Electrical upgrades (6 contracts) which includes smoke alarm upgrades and heating upgrades.

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Heating, electrical refit and smoke alarms are classed as 'day works' which means that when the job begins, these are completed within a few days. It is not expected that any of these works will have been left unfinished but checks will be made by operational staff. Any electrical outstanding works will be dealt with through the repairs service.

The immediate priority is to deal with around 10 properties where the contractor was in the process of replacing kitchens and bathrooms and where tenants currently have no kitchen units or white goods. Team leaders visited these properties on 4 February 2019, and have either spoken to tenants, or where tenants were not in, have left information to contact us urgently. We plan to take these projects in-house and ensure that these tenants have functioning kitchens and bathrooms as quickly as possible.

There are a further 70 properties which are at later stage of the process and outstanding work should largely involve things like tiling etc. We are in the process of making contact directly with these tenants.

If you have constituents who are concerned about how this affects them can you please ask them to call us directly on the numbers below.

8.30am – 5.00pm

Housing Property – 0131 529 5969

8.00am – 8.00pm

Repairs Direct – 0131 200 2345,
repairsdirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

If you have any immediate concerns which you want to raise directly with the service please contact Willie Gilhooly (Interim Housing Property Manager) on 0131 529 7866 or Trisha Blore (Operations Manager) on 0131 529 7856.

Edinburgh Tenants Federation and Neighbourhood Alliance Service Level Agreement Update

On 30 August 2018, the [Housing and Economy Committee](#):

- Noted that revised Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for 2018/19 and improvement plans were being put in place for Edinburgh Tenants Federation (ETF) and the Neighbourhood Alliance (NA).

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- Agreed that the funding for both organisations would be extended to 31 March 2020 subject to performance improvement milestones in the revised SLAs being met.

Revised SLA and key performance measures have been progressed and agreed with ETF. Specific actions to support the development and implementation of a new Tenant Participation Strategy have been set out, including ETF support for ongoing tenant participation in a range of policy initiatives, such as rents, allocations and other strategic work, e.g. repairs, tenant participation, stair-cleaning and work on mixed tenure initiatives. ETF will also be expected to support and promote the new Neighbourhood Networks to strengthen the tenant voice in the localities.

In addition, key improvement actions to support and strengthen ETF to move forward effectively within the context of the advantageous new Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) governance arrangements, which ETF successfully negotiated with the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) in 2018, are in place. This includes recruitment to the Executive Committee (EC), membership that is more representative of tenant profile in age/diversity, and a review of learning opportunities provided to the EC to strengthen organisational development and governance skills.

Key objectives and performance measures in the SLA sets out the actions and initiatives expected to be delivered by ETF. These will be measured against initial output measures, longer term outcome measures, and the expected delivery timescales. These will be monitored through regular business planning meetings with Senior Managers. A review and evaluation of performance and outcomes against the 2018/19 SLA and a mid point evaluation of the 2019/20 SLA have also been included as key milestones.

ETF EC members have been proactively meeting with team leaders in each of the localities to discuss local housing issues. They have also been involved in supporting training and working with locality offices and the Contact Centre to help with assessing and improving the front facing customer service that tenants experience. The experience of those who use housing services continues to provide important insight to the Council.

The NA focuses primarily on supporting tenants during regeneration in the Niddrie Craigmillar area. The SLA and improvement plan for the work of the NA within the North East Locality continues to centre on supporting residents to

be involved in focused, locality based place making and regeneration. An example of this is the role that the NA had in the community event held in Craigmillar on 2 February 2019. NA were part of the Short Life Working Group for a community event held in Craigmillar on 2 February 2019 to bring together the local community, to promote the wide range of services available and to encourage residents to get involved. On the day the NA had a stall raising awareness of their role and the local 'Changing Craigmillar' place making project they are leading on.

Proposed Old Town Business Improvement District (BID) Update

The steering group have made steady progress since the appointment of Jocelyne Fleming as Project Manager in January.

The project has been relaunched and rebranded with a new look consultation document produced for distribution to the business community.

The project is in the process of rebranding. The key messaging around the aims and objectives for the proposed BID has been simplified as being:

- Cleaner and Safer
- Vibrant and exciting
- Welcoming and inclusive
- Sustainable and respectful

A clear timeline to progress towards a ballot has been included in the new consultation document:

- April - New Consultation Document Produced
- May - Consultation
- 27 June - Notice (154 days) served to Council of intention to ballot
- June-July - Draft business plan developed and further consultation
- 22 August - Business Plan submitted to Council and Scottish Government
- 29 August - Housing and Economy Committee - Approve or Veto proposed plan
- 19 September Last day Council can veto proposals
- 3 October - Final Business Plan Produced and circulated; Ballot Instructions
- 17 October - Ballot Opens

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Recent News

- 28 November - Ballot closes – result announced

The Vice Convener of Housing and Economy continues to represent the City of Edinburgh Council on the steering group. Special briefing meetings for elected members, including the city centre ward members, are being arranged during April.

Further information is available at www.oldtownbid.com

Background

West Edinburgh and Airport Relief Road

Since the report to the last committee meeting, officers have continued to work with Edinburgh Airport and others to progress development in West Edinburgh. There have been regular meetings with both the Airport and Crosswind and work is underway on a Memorandum of Understanding to put in place the working arrangements for delivery of the Airport relief road.

Working with City Deal Partners and Transport Scotland the Council is leading on the procurement of consultancy services to identify a programme of works to assist public transport in West Edinburgh and West Lothian that will be delivered through the City Region Deal Partnership. The procurement is being configured to allow Edinburgh Airport to utilise the same consultancy service which they can use to configure their access arrangements to the Airport and Crosswind.

There have been no new planning applications submitted within this area. The assessment of the application for the International Business Gateway (Phase 1) is progressing towards a determination in the coming months.

The West Edinburgh All Party Oversight Group (APOG) met for the first time on the 20 of February 2019 to discuss the overall programme in West Edinburgh and the co-ordination of this activity.

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