

MINUTE
of
EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

Minute of meeting held at 5.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 25 June 2025.

Present:

Councillor Andrew Anderson
Councillor Caroline Bamforth
Councillor Tony Buchanan
Deputy Provost Kate Campbell
Councillor Angela Convery
Councillor Danny Devlin*
Councillor Paul Edlin
Councillor Annette Ireland*

Councillor Chris Lunday*
Councillor Colm Merrick
Provost Mary Montague
Councillor David Macdonald
Councillor Andrew Morrison
Councillor Owen O'Donnell (Leader)
Councillor Katie Pragnell
Councillor Gordon Wallace*

Provost Montague in the Chair

Attending:

Steven Quinn, Chief Executive; Alexis Chappell, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Caitriona McAuley, Director of Environment; Louise Pringle, Director of Business Operations and Partnerships; Mark Ratter, Director of Education; Lesley Bairden, Head of Finance and Resources (Chief Financial Officer), HSCP; Kirsty Stanners, Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer); Gerry Mahon, Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement); Kenny Markwick, Head of Environment (Operations); Mark Rodgers, Head of Environment (Housing and Property); Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place; Barry Tudhope, Democratic Services Manager; John Burke, Democratic Services Officer; and Bethany Mitchell, Assistant Democratic Services Officer.

(*) indicates remote attendance.

Apologies:

Councillors Jim McLean.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1250. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

MINUTE'S SILENCE – COUNCILLOR BETTY CUNNINGHAM OBE

1251. Provost Montague referred to the passing of Councillor Betty Cunningham OBE and called for those present to observe a minute's silence in her memory.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1252. The Provost indicated that, to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting, the items would be considered in the order shown below.

NOTICE OF MOTION – PLANNING MATTERS

1253. In accordance with Standing Order 27, the following notice of motion had been submitted by Councillor Edlin, seconded by Councillor Morrison:

Council hereby:

- 1. Acknowledges the decision of the Planning Applications Committee on 15 April 2025 to conditionally grant planning permission in respect of application 2025/0043/TP for the construction and operation of a 40 MW battery energy storage facility, including associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting, and landscaping.*
- 2. Notes that a previous application (2024/0168/TP) for an almost identical development was rejected by the Planning Applications Committee, a decision subsequently upheld by the Scottish Government Reporter following an unsuccessful appeal by the developer.*
- 3. Recognises the significant similarities between the two applications and the clear precedent set by the Reporter's ruling, which aligns with Local Development Plan Policy D3 regarding the development in the greenbelt.*
- 4. Therefore requests that officers prepare a report for the next appropriate Council meeting detailing:*
 - The legal and procedural steps required to issue a revocation order.*
 - An assessment of the applicant's compliance with all imposed planning conditions, including those still to be discharged before development can proceed.*
 - Clarification on potential compensation liabilities under the Planning Act, particularly where the applicant does not hold freehold title to the land in question.*
 - Consideration of the expediency of such a course of action.*
- 5. Further requests that the report includes any relevant legal and financial implications for the Council arising from a potential revocation, ensuring fully informed decision making.*
- 6. This motion seeks to uphold the integrity of the planning process, ensure policy consistency, and protect the Council's interests in the event of legal or financial consequences.*

Councillor Edlin summarised the motion and his reasons for proposing it

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1254. The Council considered and approved the Minute of the meeting held on 23 April 2025.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

The Council considered and approved the Minutes of the meetings of the undernoted:-

- (a) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 20 February 2025;
- (b) Cabinet – 6 March 2025;
- (c) Licensing Committee – 11 March 2025;
- (d) Cabinet – 27 March 2025;
- (e) Audit and Scrutiny Committee – 27 March 2025;
- (f) Local Review Body – 2 April 2025;
- (g) Education Committee – 3 April 2025; and
- (h) Appeals Committee – 10 April 2025.

AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 MARCH 2025 – INTERIM TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25 – QUARTER 4

1255. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of 27 March 2025 (Page 1120, Item 1160 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that proposed increases in the Prudential Indicators be approved arising from the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS 16), and that organisations specified for the investment of surplus funds also be approved, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) reporting on Treasury Management activities for the quarter ending 30 April 2025.

Councillor Morrison clarified that no further borrowing had been taken during the quarter due to current high interest rates but, that as balances depleted, this position would be unsustainable. Having confirmed that treasury management performance was satisfactory relative to performance indicators measuring risk, prudence and debt, he referred to IFRS 16 and related issues, and the investment of surplus funds.

The Council agreed to approve the:-

- (a) proposed increases in the Prudential Indicators as a result of the introduction of the new financial reporting standard, IFRS16; and
- (b) organisations for the investment of surplus funds, in accordance with Appendix 8 to the report.

CABINET – 6 MARCH 2025 – GENEREAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1256. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 6 March 2025 (Page 1105, Item 1138 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend that the Council note and approve movements within the General Fund Capital Programme, and that a shortfall of £0.362m and income and expenditure be managed and reported on a regular basis, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) monitoring income and expenditure as at 31 December 2024 against the approved Programme, and recommending adjustments where possible.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Director of Education, supported by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer), clarified that following a joint assessment with the Scottish Government and Scottish Futures Trust, priority was being given to expanding the school meals service at Giffnock Primary School where the greatest challenges were faced, but that all of the capital funds secured would be used as intended, albeit with some expenditure being

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rephased. It was confirmed that parents were being contacted to help maximise take up of entitlement to free school meals, and that should additional funds become available, work on extending school meal facilities at other schools could be done.

The Council:-

- (a) approved and noted the movements within the 2024/25 Programme; and
- (b) noted the shortfall of £0.362m and that income and expenditure on the Programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

CABINET – 6 MARCH 2025 – HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

1257. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of the Cabinet of 6 March 2025 (Page 1105, Item 1139 refers), when it had been agreed to recommend that the Council note and approve movements within the Housing Capital Programme, and note that a shortfall of £0.119m and income and expenditure would be managed and reported on a regular basis, the Council considered a report by the Head of Finance (Chief Financial Officer) and Director of Environment monitoring income and expenditure as at 31 December 2024 against the approved Programme, and recommending adjustments where required.

In response to Councillor Morrison who sought an update on progress regarding net zero standards for social housing given that the age of some boilers in these properties was detrimental to heating bills, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) reported that guidance on this was still awaited, on receipt of which investment plans would be updated. Councillor Morrison expressed disappointment that the guidance had not yet been received.

Councillor Ireland sought clarification on both internal element renewals and aids and adaptations, work on both of which had been delayed due to increased contractor costs and contractor changes. The Head of Environment (Housing and Property) confirmed that work on these was being rephrased, and that a change of contractor had been necessary, regarding which there would be adherence to the approved procurement process.

The Council agreed to note:-

- (a) and approve the movements within the 2024/25 Programme; and
- (b) the shortfall of £0.119m and that income and expenditure on the Programme would be managed and reported on a regular basis.

STATEMENTS BY CONVENER AND REPRESENTATIVES ON JOINT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

1258. The following statements were made:-

- (a) **Councillor Anderson – Convener for Education, Culture and Leisure**

Councillor Anderson commented that investment of £250k in gym and fitness equipment in leisure centres had helped the Culture and Leisure Trust sustain high growth in gym membership, which had almost doubled since 2015 and stood at an all-time high of 4,340 members.

Referring to the refurbishment of Neilston Library, he reported that the facility had reopened in early February to acclaim from both staff and library users, a

much more welcoming and modern space having been created that the community could be proud of.

Councillor Anderson also referred to work completed on changing rooms and the Sauna and Health Suite in Barrhead Foundry. He highlighted that, despite the unavailability of the pool for lessons during the completion of the work, the Learn to Swim Programme had continued to grow to a record 3,326 participants, representing a 19% increase compared to the previous year.

Whilst reporting on the Annual East Renfrewshire Dance Championships in March, Councillor Anderson commented that he had had the pleasure of being part of the audience at Eastwood High School. He highlighted that dancers from Isobel Mair School, 16 primary schools and 7 secondary schools had performed over two nights, commending and congratulating the competitors for their performances, and the teachers and parents who helped choreograph the dances. Highlights had included the Isobel Mair Wheels in Motion team.

Finally, Councillor Anderson reported that March had witnessed the launch of the small-sided football season in East Renfrewshire, delivered by the Trust in partnership with East Renfrewshire Soccer Development Association. Over 3,000 players, from 285 teams, had played 1,500 fixtures across 10 venues in the area, illustrating the continued growth of the small-sided game locally.

(b) Councillor Pragnell – Convener for Social Work and Health

Councillor Pragnell reported that she and Councillor O'Donnell had written to the First Minister, asking if the Scottish Government planned to adhere to its commitment to abolish all non-residential social care charges by the end of the parliamentary term. Having confirmed that a copy of the letter and response had been circulated to all Elected Members, she commented that the response from the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport had been deeply disappointing, confirming that, at present, there was little hope that the charges would be abolished. She reported that the Minister had attended only one meeting focused on ending the charges in the past two and a half years, and that the number of wider Scottish Government meetings on non-residential social care charging had drastically reduced. She considered this news to be a blow, both for those who campaigned for abolishment of the charges and relied on these services.

Councillor Pragnell reported that the 2025/26 budget had been approved at the most recent Integration Joint Board (IJB) meeting in March, the Board having sought assurance that statutory duties could be met and that the budget was achievable. The IJB remained concerned about prescribing pressures, recognised this was a national issue, and had taken assurance from development work the NHS Board was progressing on a whole systems approach to prescribing. The latest budget monitoring showed a projected underspend of £288,000, which was a significant improvement from the overspend previously reported. This was due mainly to an additional £1m from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde to help address prescribing pressures.

The IJB had received an update on The Promise following the publication of the 5th Anniversary Report which was to be considered by the Council later in the meeting. The IJB had welcomed that The Promise was at the heart of the Council's Children's Services Plans, and commended Children's Services on their positive inspection results on fostering, adoption and adult placement services.

The IJB had received assurance on the closure of Greenlaw Medical Practice, which would continue to operate until every patient had been reallocated on a phased basis which was expected to be concluded by the end of June. An update had also been received on preparedness and current compliance levels with the Health and Care Staffing Scotland Act, regarding which some services remained to achieve substantial assurance. Further guidance was expected from the Care Inspectorate on registered social care services to be developed, which would be the subject of a future IJB seminar.

Councillor Pragnell reported that the IJB had thanked the Chief Officer, HSCP for her leadership, knowledge and experience, following which she thanked her for her service to East Renfrewshire residents over the past 24 years, wishing her a long, happy and well deserved retirement.

The Council noted the statements.

PROVOST ENGAGEMENTS

1259. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships, providing details of civic engagements attended and civic duties performed by Provost Montague since the meeting on 26 February 2025.

The Council noted the report.

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING REPORT

1260. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval of the East Renfrewshire Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report.

It was explained that the Council continued to strive towards eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations between those from different protected characteristic groups. Having highlighted that East Renfrewshire had one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse communities in Scotland, the report itemised various requirements the Council had to adhere to under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

Structured in line with statutory requirements and mirroring Scottish Government reporting under six principles, the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report 2025 appended to the report demonstrated how the Council was meeting its duties under the Act. It detailed actions taken to ensure equalities and human rights were embedded throughout the organisation; provided an update on progress made towards achieving 2021 Equality Outcomes over the past 2 years; and focussed on how employees were supported. The 2025–2029 Equalities Outcomes Report, a copy of which was also appended to the report, set out new outcomes for the next four years.

The report concluded that it was aimed to ensure everyone was treated fairly, had equality of opportunity, and was empowered to contribute to their community, referring to the value of the diverse local population, and opportunities to learn from the experiences, perspectives and skills different individuals and communities brought to the area.

In response to Councillor Pragnell, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships confirmed that the Corporate Management Team had recently approved a new policy on neonatal care which was now in place, information on which would be relayed to employees.

In response to Councillor Ireland, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships clarified that membership of the Communities Equality Forum was open to groups and individuals with a connection to East Renfrewshire interested in its work, residency within the area not being a requirement under its Terms of Reference. She undertook to provide some examples of the types of people and groups represented on the Forum.

Having highlighted reference in the report to LGBT plus young people being at higher risk of mental health problems and to the LGBT plus community being at higher risk of isolation and loneliness, Councillor Ireland welcomed the report and progress made, or planned, on issues, thanking all officers involved.

In response to Councillor Ireland who sought clarification on when engagement data on Time for Inclusive Education (TIE) would be available, the Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity) clarified that schools engaged via the TIE website and access to on-line training. Although it was not possible to track access to these, engagement was discussed at the Equalities Forum where various resources were shared.

In response to Councillor Morrison who asked how a good sample size could be achieved to determine the extent to which young people felt connected to their communities, the Head of Communities and Transformation confirmed that this issue was continuing to be considered as part of the work on *A Place to Grow*, with there being a range of active engagement mechanisms across schools and communities. Although no data was available thus far, work on this was ongoing linked to *A Place to Grow*, with a view to reporting on this in future years.

Councillor Edlin referred to the importance of Councillors having the opportunity to engage in the Communities Equality Forum.

On the issue of equality, Councillor Wallace commented that support for underrepresented or disadvantage groups could only exist where that support did not discriminate against others, seeking clarification on monitoring done within the Council to minimise the risk of someone being treated more favourably solely because they had a protected characteristic. The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships did not hold any particular concerns regarding this, commenting on various issues including recruitment processes, improved workforce diversity and related issues, and the Equalities Staff Forum attended by employees from across the Council who were concerned with fairness generally. In response to a request from Councillor Wallace to put appropriate monitoring in place to ensure the Council was not at risk of acting unlawfully in terms of positive discrimination, the Chief Executive commented that he was not aware of any instances of such discrimination, but was happy to ensure that appropriate safeguards and mechanisms continued to be in place to allow any such allegations to be reported, which was encouraged, and dealt with appropriately, this being one mechanism through which monitoring was undertaken. He assured Elected Members that any such complaint, including through whistleblowing, would be considered appropriately.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to acknowledge the duties of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012;
- (b) to approve the content of the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Report prior to publication (Annex 1);
- (c) to approve the new Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029 (Annex 2); and
- (d) that examples of the membership of the Communities Equality Forum be circulated to all Elected Member for information.

A PLACE TO GROW UPDATE AND YEAR 1 DELIVERY PLAN

1261. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 931, Item 931 refers), when the Council had approved the strategic vision *A Place to Grow*, the Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships seeking approval of the first-year delivery plan (2025/26) for *A Place to Grow*, the Council's and Community Planning Partnership's vision for East Renfrewshire by 2040, and setting out how this would be progressed further over the coming months.

Having commented on the three pillars on which the vision was built, the report commented on work progressed, since the Plan had been approved, to share with and promote *A Place to Grow* with stakeholders, which had been well-received, and next steps which included a Community Conference in Barrhead on 26 April 2025.

The report referred to the rationalisation of Plans and streamlining of reporting, and the replacement of the previous Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) with a new Organisational Health Check about the kind of organisation the Council needed to be to deliver *A Place to Grow* and track progress. In terms of Governance, the new Delivery Plan would shape the type of organisational culture, service objectives, employee skills and capabilities and activities needed to deliver successfully *A Place to Grow*. This linked strongly to the new People Strategy, the Council's three values (ambition, kindness and trust) and capabilities (prevention, empowering communities and digital change), and leadership and digital transformation plans, helping to ensure the Council meets its statutory Best Value requirements.

Whilst commenting in detail on the report, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships referred to the three pillars, the public launch of *A Place to Grow* in December 2024, the forthcoming community conference aimed at continuing the conversation on how it could be brought to life, and how local people and organisations could be taken on that journey and play their part. Whilst an ambitious vision had been set out, collective thoughts and plans for delivering it would iterate, shape and develop over time in partnership with local people.

She clarified that the report considered the first-year Delivery Plan for *A Place to Grow*, attempted to streamline the planning and reporting framework, and set the foundation for the detailed annual reports the Council would consider each summer. She explained how the Delivery Plan made a commitment to partnership-level actions, outlined a new measurement framework, covered statutory requirements of the Community Empowerment Act, and enabled the Council to assess its part in delivering *A Place to Grow*. It was emphasised that strong cross-party partnership and community support was essential to developing the ambitions and priorities of the vision, it being crucial that delivery of *A Place to Grow* was not solely seen as a Council activity as continued engagement, commitment and resources of all stakeholders were required to fully realise its vision.

The Director of Business Operations and Partnerships also referred to a range of related issues, including on-going work on partnership, leadership and governance structures; what the Delivery Plan replaced; and attempts being made to gather information once and use it for multiple purposes whilst joining-up reporting to minimise information duplication. A final report on the ODP would be submitted to the Council in June, reviewing performance in 2024/25, with all future reporting following the framework of *A Place to Grow*.

In response to Councillor Morrison who referred to comparative data available in relation to the ODP, the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships confirmed that comparative data would be provided where possible.

Having welcomed the engagement that had taken place to reach this stage and thanked all those involved in taking these first steps, Councillor O'Donnell commented that he was looking forward to the forthcoming community conference, to which all Elected Members had been invited, and hearing the views of all those attending. Councillor Buchanan echoed those comments, during which he highlighted and welcomed the work done thus far from a firm foundation, referring to the importance of the Community Planning Partnership, and the benefits of rationalising data.

The Council agreed:-

- (a) to note the progress on sharing *A Place to Grow* with stakeholders and developing a Delivery Plan in line with its vision and ambition;
- (b) to approve the year-one delivery plan and measurement framework attached as Annexes 1 and 2 respectively, which replaced the previous Outcome Delivery Plan and introduced a new Organisational Healthcheck section, noting that these would continue to evolve over the coming year and beyond; and
- (c) to note that work was ongoing to develop Community Planning Partnership leadership and governance structures to oversee delivery of the Plan.

SCHEME FOR MEMBERS' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES 2025/26

1262. The Council considered a report by the Director of Business Operations and Partnerships on the updated Scheme for Members' Remuneration and Expenses for 2025/26 in accordance with the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025. A copy of the Scheme was appended to the report.

Having referred to recommendations made to the Scottish Government in February 2024 by the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) following its independent review of Councillor Remuneration, the majority of which had been accepted and implemented, the report referred to changes that required to be made by the Council in light of the amendments to the Regulations.

Councillor Ireland commented on the allocation and recipients of special responsibility payments when the Council's Administration was established in 2022 and increases in Remuneration arising from the implementation of the new Regulations, following which Councillor Wallace and Councillor Buchanan expressed their views on the discussions that had taken place at the time. Councillor O'Donnell stressed that the new levels set recognised new and changing roles of Elected Members, encouraged individuals to stand for Elected Office, and overcame related barriers to that, highlighting that it was not in the Council's gift to apply an alternative scheme.

The Council agreed to note that the Scheme for Members' Remuneration and Expenses had been updated for 2025/26 in terms of Councillor remuneration.

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2000

1263. The Council considered a report by the Chief Officer (Legal and Procurement) regarding the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (RIPSA) 2000, referring to surveillance activity undertaken by the Council during 2024-25, and seeking approval to amend the Council's Procedure on Covert Surveillance to reflect changes to those designated as approved authorising officers, a copy of which was appended to the report.

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The report commented on the purpose of RIPSAs, oversight of the regulatory framework by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, changes made to the Council's procedure over time, and a general reduction in surveillance activity undertaken by the Council in favour of a more overt approach. Reference was made to training provided to applicant and authorising officers.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) note the use of directed surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources during the period of 2024/25; and
- (b) approve the revised Procedure on Covert Surveillance in accordance with Appendix 1 to the report.

EAST RENFREWSHIRE CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROMISE 5TH ANNIVERSARY PROGRESS REPORT

1264. The Council considered a report by the Chief Social Work Officer highlighting the work undertaken by East Renfrewshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and the wider Children's Planning Partnership, the Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, in promoting The Promise.

The report highlighted progress with local implementation from 2020 to 2025, since the conclusions of the Independent Care Review has been published and The Promise had been made and launched at a national level. It had acknowledged that the care system in Scotland wasn't working and proposed transformational change over a ten year period in the interests of care experienced children and young people.

Having referred to a national report published in February 2025 by The Promise Oversight Board and related Call to Action considered by the local multi-agency Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People Partnership, it was confirmed that, where necessary, steps would be taken to make further progress locally and ensure areas of improvement were included in East Renfrewshire's *A Place to Grow* strategic vision and the Children's Services Plan.

Determination existed to deliver The Promise in East Renfrewshire by 2030, it having been acknowledged, in agreement with the national Promise Oversight Board, that there was not a moment left to waste, and that there was a need for all agencies to play their part in making this happen. The five year report illustrated the strength of commitment locally to do this. It was concluded that, ultimately, progress would be judged by children, young people and their families and carers as to how well the change needed had taken place,

Having referred to aims of The Promise and welcomed the good work done and progress made locally and nationally, Councillor Ireland referred to an issue raised by a local resident, regarding a Motion brought before the Scottish Parliament by an MSP condemning reports of the overuse of restraint and forced injections at Skye House Psychiatric House and seeking mandatory reporting in any associated legislative framework. More specifically, she asked if there was anything the Council could do to support the Motion, given The Promise and importance of this. The Chief Executive suggested that this was a matter for Glasgow City Council and HSCP to take forward, rather than the Council getting directly involved.

He added that, despite a lot of strong work done locally, complacency needed to be avoided, with a focus placed on local children and making further progress. Councillor Buchanan thanked the Chief Social Work Officer for the report and progress made, commending the active local approach taken to addressing the needs of looked after children. He welcomed that the local oversight Board would have a role overseeing further progress locally.

The Council agreed to note the:-

- (a) publication of the national Promise Oversight Board 5th Anniversary Report (2025); and
- (b) 5th Anniversary progress update on implementation of The Promise in East Renfrewshire as referred to at Appendix 1 to the report.

OUTLINE OF PRESSURES FACING HOMELESSNESS

1265. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 933, Item 942 refers), when the Council had declared a local housing emergency and agreed that an update of levels of homelessness within East Renfrewshire and measures being put in place to address the emergency be presented to the Council in six months' time, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment on these issues.

The report reiterated the position in September at which time it had been highlighted that the biggest challenge facing the Council as a result of the emergency was the provision of suitable temporary and permanent accommodation. Having presented a range of statistical information on levels of homelessness and related issues, the report itemised a range of actions and ongoing work led by the housing team over the past 6 months, and summarised the position on the provision on new permanent housing and associated matters. The report stressed the need for a multi-agency approach, referred to the multi-agency partnership established by the Housing Service which was helping to mitigate the emergency in various ways examples of which were provided, and clarified that the Council worked closely with all social housing providers, such as to ensure all social housing stock was used for those in most need.

It was concluded that the Council continued to face a local housing emergency and that, whilst there had been a small reduction in homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation, the emergency had not yet been addressed. The sustained increase in homelessness since 2019 continued, which the local housing market was not equipped to deal with, with action continuing to be taken to mitigate the position on this. Further updates could be provided at regular intervals.

Councillor Morrison considered the increase in the numbers in temporary accommodation in East Renfrewshire relative to other local authorities concerning, commenting on the removal by the Scottish Government of the requirement to have a local connection to an area and the Council's proximity to Glasgow City. In response to a query from him on comments made by a politician about the asylum system placing an undue burden on the housing crisis in Glasgow, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) clarified that responsibility for housing, temporarily or permanently, those classified as asylum seekers lay with the Home Office, rather than local authorities, until their asylum status was determined. Those granted leave to remain were then able to access homelessness pathways. Further in response to Councillor Morrison who commented on partnership working, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property) stated that he would be happy to have strategic discussions with Glasgow City Council on the homelessness crisis if they raised this, but that the problem was a challenging national one and the subject of regular conversations such as at COSLA.

Councillor Devlin, supported by Councillor O'Donnell, welcomed actions being taken to address the ongoing challenges associated with homelessness and, in particular, the reduction in the number entering bed and breakfast accommodation. He also referred to a contract being put in place with Barrhead Housing Association which would be helpful and, more generally, thanked the officers involved in work on addressing homelessness issues.

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The Council agreed to note the update provided.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 3 (DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME AND PARTICIPATION STATEMENT 2025)

1266. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 11 September 2024 (Page 933, Item 943 refers), when the Council had agreed to submit the Evidence Report for the next Local Development Plan (LDP3) to Scottish Ministers, the Council considered a report by the Director of Environment seeking approval to publish and submit the LDP3 Proposed Development Plan Scheme (DPS) and Participation Statement 2025 to Scottish Ministers.

It was clarified that the DPS formed an important and statutory part of preparing LDP3, setting a timetable for the preparation of the new Plan, and detailing how communities and other stakeholders could get involved in the process.

Councillor Ireland commented on the value of engagement in the community and related community events and activities for consultation at which many were keen to share views, seeking clarification on how many there would be, when they would take place, and if this would include schools to reach as many people as possible and ingather a broad range of views. The Head of Place confirmed there would be various stages of engagement, including some in local schools, which would continue in the proposed plan stage. She confirmed that there would be a significant number of events allowing people to give feedback before the LDP was finalised.

The Council agreed to:-

- (a) approve the Proposed Development Plan Scheme 2025 for publication and submission to Scottish Ministers; and
- (b) delegate authority to the Director of Environment to approve any minor inconsequential changes to the document, in line with Council policy, prior to its submission to Scottish Ministers.

PROVOST