

Fife Housing Partnership Meeting

Date:	Wednesday 24th May 2023 (10am – 11.30am)
Venue:	Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Attendance:	<p>Partners: Cllr Judy Hamilton (Chair), Cllr Lesley Backhouse (FC), Bill Campbell (FFOTRA), Lucy Denvir (NHS), Nicki Donaldson (FHG), James Erskine (Rural Property & Business Association), Bruce McCall (GK), Gerry McDougall (Private Landlord) & Caryn Nicolson (FF), Ian Robertson (GARF) & David Steane (Scot Gov).</p> <p>Support: Tracey Drummond, Nigel Kerr, Robert McGregor, Fiona McKay, John Mills, Gavin Smith, Patricia Spacey & Lucy Turner, Helen Wilkie (FC).</p>
Issued:	31 st May 2023

Item	Agenda Items	Action
1.0	<p>Apologies Tom Barclay (Vice Chair) & Alistair Dee (Scot Gov).</p> <p>Support: Greig Henderson, Joan Lamie, Mhairi Mullen & Paul Short (FC).</p>	
2.0	<p>Note of Previous Meeting The partnership agreed the note of previous meeting.</p> <p>Action Note: BM provided an update on outstanding action point on private owner energy improvement statistics by confirming the referrals made to the Warmer Homes Scotland Scheme for Fife households in 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q1 – 215, Q2 – 314, Q3 – 327, Q4 – 415, Total in 22/23 – 1,271 <p>The referral rate is high and sits just behind the City of Edinburgh.</p>	
3.1	<p>FHP Review - Nomination of Voluntary Sector Representatives JM provided an update on the Voluntary Sector representative nominations received and proposed two representatives to fill the role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frontline Fife – Caryn Nicolson Cosy Kingdom – Jane Kell (St Andrews Environmental Network) <p>Action/Decision The Partnership agreed to approve both representatives.</p>	
3.2	<p>FHP Agreement Sign Off Once updated with the Voluntary Sector representative details, the agreement can be signed off by representatives.</p>	

	<p>Action/Decision Agreement to be updated to reflect decision on Voluntary Sector representatives.</p>	<p>LT</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Overprovision Policy</p> <p>Tracey Drummond, Business Change Manager, updated on the HMO Overprovision Policy in St Andrews which was reviewed by Cabinet Committee during May 2023. The policy was first implemented in April 2019 with ‘no further growth’ to HMOs in St Andrews agreed through Committee. The policy has been successful in maintaining no growth with 17 fewer HMOs now recorded. Consultation was conducted prior to Committee with residents and the community, students, private landlords, agencies and local businesses / organisations. 1,145 responses were received with views both supporting the continuation of the current policy and the removal of the policy. After considering the responses and additional views, the following three options were put forward to Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 1 – Maintain the policy at 0% with no further growth • Option 2 – Remove the policy – allow the market to determine growth levels • Option 3 – Recognise the flexibility within the ‘no growth’ position to allow for a targeted approach in relation to student homelessness. <p>The Cabinet Committee agreed option 3 which will allow for 15 additional HMOs in St Andrews to address student homelessness. This will not exceed HMO numbers as of April 2019 and policy exemptions will apply.</p> <p>Comments were raised on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What relationship do Fife Council have with the University of St Andrews? • Are there any plans in place for further student accommodation? • What growth was experienced in HMOs in the St Andrews area prior to the implementation of the policy in 2019? • Can the Partnership be kept informed on any consultations linking to Short-term Let Control Areas? • Kingsbarns Local Place Plan would be keen to work with the University to support families into the local community. <p>Fife Council meet regularly with the University of St Andrews and relationships have grown over recent years. Options to deliver more homes in the St Andrews area are being explored and the University plan to build further student accommodation, particularly to help alleviate student homelessness which has increased since the pandemic. TD will check HMO growth numbers prior to 2019 and circulate to the Partnership. An item on Short-term Let Control Areas can potentially be brought back to the Partnership in due course. This will be led by planning.</p> <p>Action/Decision Circulate figures on HMO growth in the St Andrews area prior to the HMO Overprovision Policy implementation in 2019.</p>	<p>TD</p>

<p>5.0</p>	<p>Children in Temporary Accommodation Research</p> <p>Robert McGregor, Business Change Manager, provided an overview of research he recently carried out on Children in Temporary Accommodation. The number of children in temporary accommodation doubled during the pandemic. The research involved a literature and data review, a frontline staff workshop and interviews with 30 families in temporary accommodation. The main causal factors included: domestic abuse, relationship breakdowns and Notice to Quit served by private landlords. A large proportion of families were single parents, with numerous large families which included many young children and infants. The findings revealed living in temporary accommodation negatively impacts a child’s education, learning and development as well as mental health and wellbeing. A number of challenges were revealed through the study which Fife Council are considering responses to. Shelter Scotland are working with Public Health Scotland to deliver this research at a national level.</p> <p>Comments were raised on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the reasons for relationship breakdown revealed, as there is usually a cause behind this such as financial difficulties? • It’s difficult to identify poverty in rural or affluent areas as it’s often hidden. • More work needs to be done with regards to the services available. Lots of support is available but many people are not aware. • Findings are not a surprise, however, we need to agree how we will address these issues. • Were any of the children young carers? • How many children are in temporary accommodation? Statistics confirm 80% of households are single people. <p>Reasons for relation breakdown were not disclosed, however, findings were from the pandemic when there was more pressure on families being together. It is difficult to identify poverty where it is not highlighted in SIMD data. Research has been conducted in the past on rural poverty in Fife, RM will share reports. A Partnership approach is important for responding to challenges to ensure a pathway to support is provided. RM is not aware of any young carers being included in the research, however, some people are not aware they are providing this support. 519 children are currently in temporary accommodation, with 79% of households single people. The number of scatter flats has doubled in recent years.</p> <p>Action/Decision Circulate report from research on Rural Poverty in Fife.</p>	<p>RM</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Fife Council response to Dampness & Mould</p> <p>JM presented a report on tackling dampness and mould in Council houses which outlines the approach and actions for dealing with this. A similar report was agreed by Cabinet Committee on the 4th May. Following the death of Awaab Ishak and the publication of the Coroner’s Report, Housing Services initiated a review of the approach to tackling dampness, condensation and black mould. A number of review actions are already complete, with the remaining due to be complete by the end of summer. A</p>	

dedicated team between Housing Services and Building Services will focus on this area of work, looking to proactively deal with issues and urgently respond where repairs are required. Tenants will be supported with information, advice, and a single point of contact will be made available for complaints through a generic email address. Where a lack of heating is identified as the issue, a referral will be made to Cosy Kingdom for fuel poverty support. JM is keen to obtain comments on the approach and understand what other landlords in Fife are doing to tackle this.

Comments were raised on the following:

- How will those who are not digitally enabled make contact if the single point of contact is only available through email?
- Environmental Services previously provided support for private landlords by carrying out checks with a damp meter. Is this support still available?
- Tenants need to take some responsibility as the way of living is often a contributing factor.
- FHG have had an influx in tenants coming forward. They are revisiting any old jobs raised to ensure work was completed correctly. Moving forward, where there are concerns, and access is denied, an enforced entry will take place to carry out any work required.
- The Heat Trust have some local projects with very well-ventilated houses, and they are always happy to show people around if interested.

Options for a direct phone line alongside the email address are being explored. Once these are in place, details will be reported through Down Your Street. A small team from environmental services still provide this support and are happy to help. Education for tenants is all part of the process, however, often there is a root cause of the problem and property factors such as age, type and construction contribute significantly.

Action/Decision

No further actions or decisions.

7.0

Affordable Housing Phase 4

HW provided an overview of Affordable Housing Phase 4 which is intended to cover the 2024-29 period with a Partnership Agreement between the Council and Fife Housing Association Alliance to build 3,750 new properties. This target will comprise of 1,250 Council houses and 2,500 Housing Association houses. Through Phase 4, the aim is to continue delivering 30% specific needs properties with more bungalows for specific needs as well as more older person's housing. More larger family homes will alleviate overcrowding, whilst more opportunities will be delivered for single people. The development of more Town Centre projects will remain in focus. Five similar Town Centre projects are currently on-going from previous affordable housing programmes which includes the old Coop in Kirkcaldy. There are a number of challenges to work through for Phase 4, such as funding pressures, high construction costs, EESSH2, zero carbon, non-emission heating and education constraints.

Comments were raised on the following:

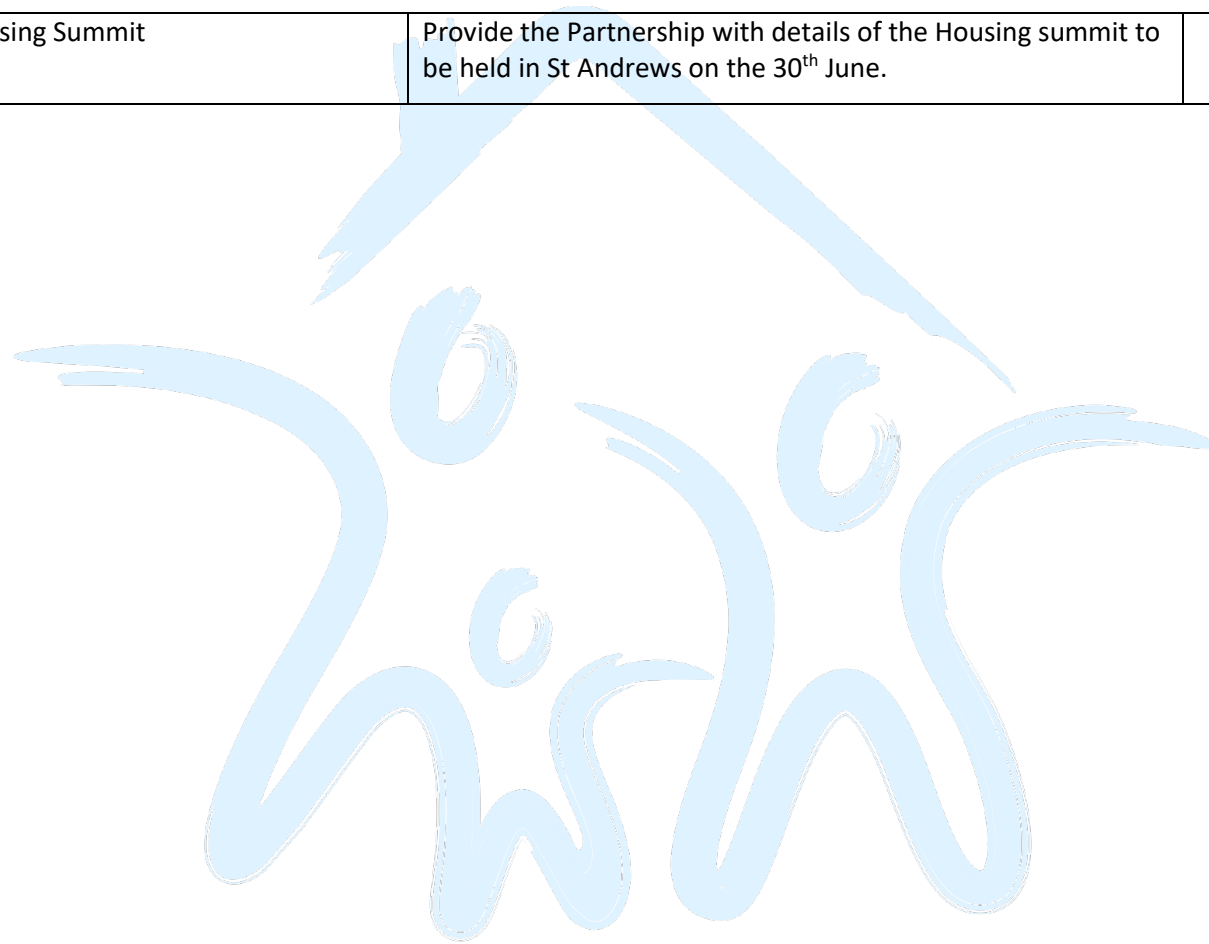
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be good to include rural housing communities in the programme, working with planning to address any tenure specific problems. • Over 800 new houses are to be delivered at Tullis Russell, Glenrothes. Were the education constraints considered as part of this development? <p>HW is happy to discuss rural communities and how we deliver this, however, to be considered as part of the programme, developments need to provide affordable homes. The Scottish Government are exploring how housing is delivered in rural areas at a national level. Funding is available, however, this is only for affordable projects. Education constraints in the Glenrothes area would have been considered by planning in relation to the Tullis Russell project prior to planning approval.</p>	
8.0	<p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership would like to explore how many members would be keen to get back to face-to-face meetings. LT to issue email checking all attendees' preferences. • The Scottish Government have now received Fife LHS 2022-27 for review. South Lanarkshire Council will carry out a peer review and DS will provide LT with timescales to inform the Partnership. • Willie Rennie recently highlighted a Housing summit which will take place in St Andrews on 30th June. Cllr H to circulate information on the summit to the Partnership. • An email from Scottish Housing Network highlights the grant funding available for debt up to £500. BM confirmed the Fuel Poverty Task Group are already aware and are exploring options to access this. 	<p>LT</p> <p>DS/LT</p> <p>Cllr H</p>
Next Meeting	Tuesday 29th August 2023 – 11am	

FIFE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

No.	D.O.M	Action Points	Action	Lead	Deadline	Complete
1	30/08/22	Ofgem Price Cap	Circulate slides on the Ofgem price cap to FHP.	LT	Sept 22	✓
2	30/08/22	Wind Farms	Clarify if there are any community benefits from wind farms and if this is incorporated into planning applications. Shona provided update – circulated email to FHP 08/11/22.	SC	Nov 22	✓
3	30/11/22	Strategic Housing Investment Plan	Share the EQIA and link to the SHIP with FHP.	CK/LT	Dec 2022	✓
4	21/02/23	FHP agendas and minutes	Arrange for the publication of agendas / minutes for all future FHP meetings. Now all published and available at Fife Housing Partnership Fife Council	LT	May 2023	✓
5	21/02/23	FHP membership / Voluntary Sector	Discuss the possibility of adding the Voluntary Sector as a signatory member of FHP. Meeting held to discuss options. Voluntary Sector nominations received. Appointment of representatives to be discussed at 24th May meeting.	JH, JM & LT	May 2023	✓
6	21/02/23	Empty Homes / Energy Efficiency	Develop a joint working approach to identifying empty homes with a low EPC rating and identify any funding streams available to address this. 16.05.23 – initial meeting has been held to discuss joint working. JS will help distribute information on energy projects to Empty Home Owners with properties in current and future project areas.	ID, HM & JS	May 2023	✓
7	21/02/23	Energy Improvement Loans	Explore and share statistics on private owner energy improvement loans. 24.05.23 – BM confirmed in 22/23 the following referrals were made to the Warmer Homes Scotland Scheme for Fife households:	BM	May 2023	✓

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 – 215, Q2 – 314, Q3 – 327, Q4 – 415 • Total in 22/23 – 1,271 			
8	21/02/23	LHEES Engagement / Private Landlord Forum	Provide details of the Private Landlord Forum to HM for LHEES engagement.	MM	Mar 2023	✓
9	21/02/23	LHEES Engagement / Greener Kirkcaldy Customers	Explore options to carry out LHEES engagement with fuel poverty customers. 12.05.23 - Engagement currently ongoing with Fuel Poverty Task Force and Cosy Kingdom. Public engagement due to commence in August and Cosy Kingdom have been included in discussions around assisting with consultation promotion.	BM/HM	May 2023	✓
10	21/02/23	EESSH2 delivery plan	Circulate summary of key points for FHP comments to assist with Committee report preparation.	ID	Mar 2023	✓
11	24/05/23	FHP Agreement	Update agreement with details of the agreed Voluntary Sector representatives.	LT	Aug 2023	✓
12	24/05/23	HMO Overprovision	Circulate figures on HMO growth in the St Andrews area prior to the HMO Overprovision Policy implementation in 2019. 30.05-23 – figures provided by TD and circulated to FHP: 2015: 906, 2017: 968, 2019: 1,046, 2023: 1,029	TD	Aug 2023	✓
13	24/05/23	Rural Poverty	Circulate report on research conducted on rural poverty in Fife. 30.05.23 – report on ‘Lone parent poverty in rural Fife’ circulated to FHP	RM	Aug 2023	✓
14	24/05/23	Future Meetings	Issue survey to all members / attendees to check preferred method of meeting (virtual or face-to-face) for the future.	LT	Aug 2023	✓
15	24/05/23	LHS 2022-27	Provide timescales for the Scottish Government conducting the Fife LHS 2022-27 review and circulate to the Partnership. 30.05.23 – Partnership informed the review is expected to be concluded by the end of July.	DS/LT	Jun 2023	✓

16	24/05/23	Housing Summit	Provide the Partnership with details of the Housing summit to be held in St Andrews on the 30 th June.	Cllr H	Jun 2023	✓
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