Homelessness and Housing – Motion dealt with, after division.

15 Councillor Siddique, seconded by Councillor McDougall, moved

"Considering the current housing shortage in Glasgow, increasing homelessness and the scale of the predicted housing demand increased by accelerated decision making process for asylum applications.

The Council agrees to establish a Glasgow Homelessness and Housing Taskforce, led by Council Officials and representatives from Wheatley Group and other RSLs, the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), City Building, West of Scotland Housing Forum, and other relevant Third Sector Partners. This Taskforce should prepare a Homelessness Action Plan to be presented to the relevant Policy Committee in early 2024. Its remit should include evaluating the effectiveness of the joint working arrangements and procedures operating between housing associations and the HSCP Homelessness section, with a view to learning lessons to potentially optimise the process for current and future demands.

Action Plan to include a feasibility study to explore alternative forms of temporary housing which could be utilised as an alternative to the current reliance on bed and breakfast providers. This could include looking at good practice elsewhere in the UK, including the consideration of relocatable, modular, and prefabricated buildings and other forms of temporary housing given the scale of potential demand. Also, to include sourcing, costing and identifying sites.

Council notes the decision made by the Scottish Government to modify local authority powers under Section 33 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, removing the need for a homelessness application to have a local connection to be successful. This has not been adequately funded by the Scottish Government.

It would be unacceptable for the UK Government and the Scottish Government to expect Glasgow to bear the additional projected pressures alone.

The Council calls on the Chief Executive to write to the UK Home Secretary and to the Scottish Government urging both Governments to work together with the local authorities affected and urgently look at how both governments can assist local authorities and HSCPs to secure the additional funding and support required."

Councillor Casey, seconded by Councillor McLean, moved as an amendment that:-

(1) at the first paragraph delete "considering" and replace with "Council understands";

(2) the second paragraph be deleted and replaced with the following:

"Council understands that there are regular meetings between Council officers, HSCP officers, the third sector and RSLs to discuss the ongoing challenges in the housing and homelessness sectors. Council notes the range of papers relating to Homelessness which have been presented to Councillors

including the Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Strategy presented to the Integrated Joint Board on 27th September 2023.

Council draws attention to sections 2.6 and 2.7 of that paper which outline that stakeholder engagement has been undertaken, and that our Temporary Homelessness Strategy will be reshaped. Council draws further attention to section 2.11 which outlines key aims of the strategy that city partners have agreed to, section 2.12 which talks about the workshops which took place to develop the strategy and to section 2.13 which outlines agreed governance.

Council also understands that the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan has been regularly presented to the IJB. Council understands that the Governance group around the RRTP includes cross-sector representation from the HSCP as well as other city partners including Homeless Network Scotland, The Wheatly Group and The West of Scotland Housing Forum.

Council agrees that the best use of officer's time is to continue to engage in these forums which already exist rather than to create new structures which will add little to our understanding of the issues, and will require to be resourced and which therefore will detract from the work that is already taking place to update our homelessness services to deal with the emergency at hand.

Council asks that the IJB bring forward a future paper outlining discussions with these relevant groups, and any updated actions that may be required to these strategies to reflect the current situation.

Council agrees to undertake a feasibility study to explore alternative forms of temporary housing which could be utilised as an alternative to the current reliance on bed and breakfast providers. This could include looking at good practice elsewhere in the UK, including the consideration of relocatable, modular, and prefabricated buildings and other forms of temporary housing given the scale of potential demand as well as looking at sourcing, costing and identifying sites."; and

(3) at the end of the fourth paragraph insert the following:

"Council notes that the City Convener has raised this issue with the Scottish Government, and that this issue was raised as part of the SOLACE paper Housing in Scotland: Current Context and Preparing for the Future which was published in July. Council understands the Scottish Government are considering these issues around funding."

Councillor Wardrop, seconded by Bailie Carroll, moved as an amendment that:-

(a) the first 3 paragraphs be deleted and replaced with the following;

"Council notes that we want to end homelessness and create a sustainable, affordable housing sector that Glasgow can be proud of. Council supports the updating of the legislative framework and rolling-out the Housing First

approach. Where people who do not have access to a safe, secure and permanent home they should be offered permanent tenancies and tailored wrap-around support services.

Glasgow's current Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028, which was adopted in May 2023, has priority 5 which aims to improve housing options, affordability and sustainability for tenants and owners to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Council acknowledges that in June 2023, UK Government announced a streamlined asylum process to address the significant backlog of asylum decisions and to reduce the numbers of asylum applicants in contingency and dispersed accommodation.

Council also notes that the Home Office is proposing to make an estimated 2,500 asylum decisions in Glasgow by the end of 2023 and this is expected to result in an additional 1,386 homelessness applications with 1,026 of those households requiring temporary accommodation.

It was reported to the Emergency Committee on 12th October that this streamlined asylum process will result in a significant impact on council services including potential costs to the Health and Social Care Partnership of £53.4m, but that the UK Government has indicated that no additional financial support is available to dispersal areas who are impacted."; and

(b) the following be inserted at the end:

"Council agrees that the Leader of the Council and the Council's Chief Executive continue to explore all available routes in escalating these matters to the Home Office and UK Government, as well as the Scottish Government including any legal avenues given the wider financial, reputational and economic implications.

Council agrees that an update will be provided regarding the work of Priority 5, action 2 of the Local Housing Strategy, on analysis about acute housing needs in response to increasing homelessness, to the relevant policy committee.

Council requests a committee report on actions being taken, in response to this streamlined asylum process as well as the removal of the need for a homelessness application to have a local connection, and this is provided to the next appropriate meeting of the City Administration Committee."

During the debate Councillors Casey and Wardrop, with the agreement of their seconders, agreed to combine their amendments as follows:-

"Council notes that we want to end homelessness and create a sustainable, affordable housing sector that Glasgow can be proud of. Council supports the updating of the legislative framework and rolling-out the Housing First approach.

Where people who do not have access to a safe, secure and permanent home they should be offered permanent tenancies and tailored wrap-around support services.

Glasgow's current Local Housing Strategy 2023-2028, which was adopted in May 2023, has priority 5 which aims to improve housing options, affordability and sustainability for tenants and owners to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Council agrees that an update will be provided regarding the work of Priority 5, action 2 of the Local Housing Strategy, on analysis about acute housing needs in response to increasing homelessness, to the relevant policy committee.

Council requests a committee report on actions being taken, in response to this streamlined asylum process as well as the removal of the need for a homelessness application to have a local connection, and this is provided to the next appropriate meeting of the City Administration Committee.

Council understands that there are regular meetings between Council officers, HSCP officers, the third sector and RSLs to discuss the ongoing challenges in the housing and homelessness sectors. Council notes the range of papers relating to Homelessness which have been presented to Councillors including the Homelessness Temporary Accommodation Strategy presented to the Integrated Joint Board on 27th September 2023.

Council also understands that the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan has been regularly presented to the IJB. Council understands that the Governance group around the RRTP includes cross-sector representation from the HSCP as well as other city partners including Homeless Network Scotland, The Wheatly Group and The West of Scotland Housing Forum.

Council agrees that the best use of officer's time is to continue to engage in these forums which already exist rather than to create new structures which will add little to our understanding of the issues and will require to be resourced and which therefore will detract from the work that is already taking place to update our homelessness services to deal with the emergency at hand.

Council asks that the IJB bring forward a future paper outlining discussions with these relevant groups, and any updated actions that may be required to these strategies to reflect the current situation.

Council agrees to undertake a feasibility study to explore alternative forms of temporary housing which could be utilised as an alternative to the current reliance on bed and breakfast providers. This could include looking at good practice elsewhere in the UK, including the consideration of relocatable, modular, and prefabricated buildings and other forms of temporary housing given the scale of potential demand as well as looking at sourcing, costing and identifying sites.

Council also notes that the Home Office is proposing to make an estimated 2,500 asylum decisions in Glasgow by the end of 2023 and this is expected to result in an additional 1,386 homelessness applications with 1,026 of those households requiring temporary accommodation.

It was reported to the Emergency Committee on 12th October that this streamlined asylum process will result in a significant impact on council services including potential costs to the Health and Social Care Partnership of £53.4m, but that the UK Government has indicated that no additional financial support is available to dispersal areas who are impacted.

Council agrees that these plans are an unwarranted attack on the wellbeing and welfare of asylum seekers, refugees and all people experiencing homelessness. Council supports efforts to force the UK government to urgently change course and pause its damaging plans in favour of a properly managed and humane asylum decision process; and fully backs calls for the immediate provision of adequate resources to Glasgow, and all other asylum dispersal authorities.

Council agrees that the Leader of the Council and the Council's Chief Executive continue to explore all available routes in escalating these matters to the Home Office and UK Government, as well as the Scottish Government including any legal avenues given the wider financial, reputational and economic implications.

Council notes the decision made by the Scottish Government to modify local authority powers under Section 33 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, removing the need for a homelessness application to have a local connection to be successful. This has not been adequately funded by the Scottish Government. Council notes that the City Convener has raised this issue with the Scottish Government, and that this issue was raised as part of the SOLACE paper Housing in Scotland: Current Context and Preparing for the Future which was published in July. Council understands the Scottish Government are considering these issues around funding.

The council calls on the Chief Executive to write to the UK Home Secretary and to the Scottish Government urging both Governments to work together with the local authorities affected and urgently look at how both governments can assist local authorities and HSCPs to secure the additional funding and support required."

On a vote being taken by calling the roll 43 members voted for the combined amendment and 35 for the motion.

The combined amendment was accordingly declared to be carried.

Suspension of Standing Order 5 (12) agreed.

16 The Council agreed to suspend the provisions of Standing Order No 5 (12) in order that at least one further motion would be heard from the Green Group but that no new speeches would be heard on any formal motion after 1630 hours other than any remaining proposals, amendments and summing up.