

4. HOUSING CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2022/23

The Council considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive seeking approval for the updated Housing Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23 and the proposed exemption for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework.

It was recommended that Council :-

1. Approves the updated 2020/21 to 2022/23 Housing Capital Investment Programme and related funding as detailed in the report; and
2. Approves the exemptions for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework, as outlined in section D.6 of the report

Motion

“West Lothian Council welcomes this Housing Capital Investment Programme which alongside the Housing Revenue Account budget, forms part of the council’s integrated approach to financial strategy, corporate planning, delivery of outcomes and performance monitoring.

Under the previous Labour Administration the Housing Capital Investment Programme delivered over £186.8 million of investment in both existing our stock and new build council housing.

Building upon these strong foundations this minority Labour Administration is determined to deliver further investment in both the existing stock of council houses and in the delivery of 3,000 new homes for West Lothian in the 10 year period ending 2022, with the majority of these new homes being new West Lothian council houses.

The five year Housing Capital Investment Programme agreed in February 2018 set out an ambitious programme to invest £154.887 million in housing capital projects over the five year period to 2022/23.

West Lothian Council therefore welcomes this updated three year Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23, which will see total investment of £100.703 million with significant resources invested in the creation of new homes and a strong focus on the maintenance of quality standards across the housing stock.

The updated three year programme will see continued investment to increase housing supply and deliver the 3,000 affordable homes programme by 2022. A total of £55.637 million will be invested in new supply over the period of the programme.

There will be significant investment in maintaining the existing housing stock to a high standard; the planned investment in energy efficiency measures will help reduce tenants’ energy bills and ensure that council houses meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by December 2020. In total, £45.066 million will be invested in maintaining

and improving the existing housing stock.

Council therefore agrees to approve the 2020/21 to 2022/23 Housing Capital Investment Programme and related funding as detailed in the report.

Council also agrees the updated exemptions for works under the terms of Best Value Framework, as outlined in section D.6 of the report”.

- Moved by Councillor George Paul and seconded by Councillor Andrew McGuire

The Provost invited the Head of Finance & Property Services to comment on the motion as required by Standing Order 15(7). He made no comment since the motion sought to approve the recommendations in his report.

Amendment

“The SNP Group are aware that the 3 biggest outlays facing our constituents are rent/mortgage, Council Tax and utility bills. This Council has total control over 2 of these and can influence the third, for the better, for our tenants. Accepting that this £13.740m from our loans reprofiling is additional and new money, the SNP Group propose that this is utilised to benefit our tenants, tackle poverty (including fuel poverty) assist towards facing our climate challenges, creates employment and adds more finance to the West Lothian economy.

The biggest issues facing our communities are Employment opportunity, Climate Change, Poverty including Fuel poverty and this Council has the opportunity to help tackle these issues if we look at our policies/initiatives being ‘joined up’. The proposals we are putting forward are based on these principles and for the benefit of our residents.

The SNP Group propose that we accept this “one off “ opportunity to ensure that we not only do something radical to tackle this housing crisis, but that we ensure that our tenants benefit financially and our commitment to tackle climate emergency and poverty are implemented and not just rhetoric. We have the opportunity to lead and show the political vision that West Lothian Council is determined to tackle the issues facing our communities.

The SNP Group propose that the Council agrees to seek the maximum opportunity from this ‘windfall’ funding.

Therefore, the SNP Group proposes to:

- **Approve the updated 2020/21 to 2022/23 Housing Capital Investment Programme and related funding, with the exception of the use of the Loans Fund Surplus detailed in Section D.3**
- **Approve the exemptions for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework as outlined in Section D.6**
- **Approve the additional £13.740M of projects outlined below,**

as outlined in the revenue report.

Utilise the £13.740M over the next 3 years to implement a programme of Environmentally Friendly improvements based around:

- 1) Retrofitting PV & Battery installation on our houses (approx. £4m) Unit £6250 (640)**
Labour – 16 hours i.e. 2 electricians one day. One team (2 electricians) could install 207 systems per year (continuous working)
- 2) Retrofitting Heat Source Pumps within our homes (approx. £4m) Unit £7500 (533)**
Contractors take 2 days per property to retro fit. This includes the upgrading/over sizing of the radiators and pipe work
Labour – 41 hours per installation i.e. plumbers x 2 – 28 hours, builder x 1 – 4 hours, joiner x 1 – 4 hours and electrician x 1 5 hours One team could install 115 installation per year (continuous working)
- 3) Modular Accommodation (approx. £5.740m) Unit £130,000 (44)**
Officers to prepare an urgent report (within 2 months) on the available ground within the HRA (and elsewhere), which allows an immediate start on a Modular Accommodation Programme, to help alleviate the issues around our Homeless situation. Officers to also include options for optimising grant funding for the Modular Builds.

The SNP Group notes that if the above proposals are implemented each household within each identified initiative would:

- 1) Save £250 per year and reduce their carbon footprint by 490kg. (£384K/754K Kg)
 - 2) Reduce their utility bill by an average 65% and carbon footprint by 60%
 - 3) Reduce our reliance on B&B, substantially (could save £1M per year).
 - 4) Create approximately 12FTE Jobs (excluding the Modular teams)".
- Moved by Councillor Diane Calder and seconded by Councillor Robert De Bold

The Provost invited the Head of Finance & Property Services to comment on the amendment as required by Standing Order 15(7). He made no comment.

A roll call vote was taken. The result was as follows :-

Motion

Alison Adamson
Stuart Borrowman
Tom Conn
David Dodds

Amendment

William Boyle
Diane Calder
Pauline Clark
Robert De Bold

Angela Doran
Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Peter Heggie
Chris Horne
Charles Kennedy
Tom Kerr
Dave King
John McGinty
Andrew McGuire
Dom McGuire
Cathy Muldoon
George Paul
Kirsteen Sullivan
Damian Timson

Jim Dickson
Carl John
Peter Johnston
Sarah King
Andrew Miller
Moirá Shemilt
David Tait

Decision

Following a roll vote the motion was successful by 18 votes to 11, with 4 members absent, and it was agreed accordingly.