

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL****HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 MARCH 2007 AT  
1000 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,  
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jimmy Kelly, Stephanie Young, Helen Coffey, Willie Coffey, Gordon Cree, John Weir, Drew McIntyre, John Campbell, John Knapp, Jim Raymond, Stuart Finlayson, George Smith, Tommy Farrell, William Menzies, Neil McGhee, Eric Ross, Elaine Dinwoodie and Elaine Stewart.

**ATTENDING:** William Stafford, Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; John Walker, Head of Building and Works; Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing; David McLellan, Financial Services Manager; Paul Whip, Financial Services Manager; Gerry Darroch, Housing Services Manager; Alan Paterson, Principal Quantity Surveyor; Anna Gallagher, Team Leader; David Morgan, Public Relations Officer; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Isabella Macrae and Eric Jackson.

**CHAIR:** Councillor Jimmy Kelly, Chair.

**BUDGETARY REPORTS****1.1 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TO 4 FEBRUARY 2007 (PERIOD 11)**

There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 23 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Head of Finance and the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised on the current budgetary control position of the Housing Revenue Account for the period ended 4 February 2007 (Period 11).

**1.2 GENERAL FUND HOUSING (INCLUDING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND SUPPORTING PEOPLE ADMINISTRATION) TO 4 FEBRUARY 2007 (PERIOD 11)**

There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 20 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Head of Finance and the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised on the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the year for General Fund Housing for the period ended 4 February 2007 (Period 11).

**1.3 BUILDING AND WORKS TO 4 FEBRUARY 2007 (PERIOD 11)**

There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 26 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Head of Finance and the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised on the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the year for Building and Works for the period ended 4 February 2007 (Period 11).

**HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2006/2007**

2. There was submitted a joint report dated 21 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services which advised on the current status of projects

within the Housing Investment Programme 2006/2007 and set out the current position in relation to financial monitoring and physical progress.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the modifications to the Housing Investment Programme 2006/2007, as detailed in Section 4 of the report; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the current position in relation to the Housing Investment Programme 2006/2007.

### **HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2007/2008**

3. There was submitted a report dated 20 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which sought approval to procure tenders for the Housing Investment Programme 2007/2008.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the updated five year Housing Investment Programme as detailed within Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) to approve the publication and distribution of the Housing Investment Programme, as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **PROPOSED DEMOLITIONS AT SOMERVILLE STREET, CATRINE**

4. There was submitted a report dated 27 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised of the poor condition of, and low demand for, Council properties at Nos. 17-25 Somerville Street, Catrine and recommended the demolition of this block of five properties.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to authorise the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to proceed with the demolition of the properties at Nos. 17-25 Somerville Street, Catrine in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE PROGRAMME**

5. There was submitted a joint report dated 21 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services which advised of the continuing changes to the Supporting People Programme, and the number of service users that benefit from Supporting People funding; and sought authority to implement revised financial arrangements and approval to re-designate sheltered housing in line with the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the 2.7% uplift for Supporting People funded services and the additional funding for services;
- (ii) to approve the new basic flat rate service charges for ex Housing Revenue Account funded services;

- (iii) to approve the revised arrangements for the administration of Service Charges;
- (iv) to note the re-designation of former sheltered properties as low needs supported accommodation/amenity housing; and
- (v) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Councillor McIntyre joined the meeting during consideration, but prior to determination, of the preceding item.

### **HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY UPDATE**

6. There was submitted a joint report dated 27 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which sought approval for proposed expenditure of the funding awarded by the Scottish Executive for 2007/2008 to assist in the delivery of Homelessness Task Force Recommendations; and advised of progress of the East Ayrshire Homelessness Strategy 2006/2009.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note progress in delivering the agreed Local Outcome Agreement 2006/2007, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) to approve the proposed Local Outcome Agreement 2007/2008, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **PROPOSED TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2006/2009 (Item 7, Page 2498, 03/07)**

7. There was submitted a report dated 26 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which (a) advised of the results of the consultation exercise on the proposed Tenant Participation Strategy 2006/2009, and sought approval of the Strategy; (b) informed of the progress in developing a Tenants and Residents Federation, and sought approval to establish a constituted Federation for East Ayrshire; and (c) sought approval to extend the contract with the Tenants Information Service for a further six months to facilitate the development of the Tenants and Residents Federation.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the proposed Tenant Participation Strategy and Communication Code of Practice appended to the report;
- (ii) to approve the establishment of a constituted Tenants and Residents Federation in East Ayrshire;
- (iii) to authorise extension of the existing contract with the Tenants Information Service for a period of six months, as suggested in paragraph 5.1 of the report; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME (DiGS) (Item 7, Page 1069, 03/07)**

8. There was submitted a report dated 26 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised of progress on the Deposit Guarantee Scheme.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to continue the Deposit Guarantee Scheme on the basis set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report, subject to available funding; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN EAST AYRSHIRE (Item 12, Page 2370, 03/07)**

9. There was submitted a report dated 28 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which (a) advised of the progress of the Building Strong, Safe and Attractive Communities (BSSAC) initiative in tackling anti-social behaviour between 1 April and 31 December 2006; the Scottish Executive's proposals to continue providing funding to tackle anti-social behaviour, linked to the Local Anti-Social Behaviour Outcome Agreement; the continuing review of Community Wardens' hours of duty; and the Scottish Executive's relaxation of the constraints on the deployment of the Community Wardens; and (b) sought approval to recruit four additional Community Wardens and an additional Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the recruitment of four additional Community Wardens and an additional Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator and the introduction of a mobile CCTV facility as detailed in Sections 6 and 7 of the report;
- (ii) that a series of Anti-Social Behaviour Roadshows be held throughout East Ayrshire, as detailed in Section 5 of the report; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**FORMER TENANT ARREARS**

10. There was submitted a report dated 26 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which sought approval for writing off those former tenant arrears which were no longer economically viable to pursue.

It was agreed to approve the write off in the current financial year of Former Tenant Arrears of £17,831.74, as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

**IMPROVING HOUSING REPAIRS SERVICE IN EAST AYRSHIRE (Item 10, Page 2202, 03/07)**

11. There was submitted a report dated 13 March 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which (i) sought approval to progress arrangements for a Best Value contract with Building and Works for Housing and Property Maintenance; and the procurement of a kitchen and bathroom replacement programme to be completed by the financial year ending 31 March 2013; and (ii) informed of progress on implementing the agreed plan to improve the Housing Repairs Service.

Councillor Kelly seconded by Councillor Cree moved:-

- (i) to approve the recommendations for the development and management of future building maintenance and kitchen and bathroom replacement contracts, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) to note that following conclusion of the experiment, a full report on the outcomes of the Vanguard Project be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee;
- (iii) to authorise the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services, in conjunction with the Head of Personnel, to submit the staffing proposals as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, for approval by the Corporate Governance Committee; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Councillor W Coffey, seconded by Councillor Weir moved as an amendment:

- (i) in view of the significance and longer term implications of the proposals which would more appropriately be dealt with by the new Council after the Local Government elections in May, to continue consideration to a future meeting of those recommendations for the development and management of future building maintenance and kitchen and bathroom replacement contracts and the associated staffing proposals, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, following a presentation/information briefing for members;
- (ii) to note that following conclusion of the experiment, a full report on the outcomes of the Vanguard Project would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

On a division by a show of hands, the motion was carried by 14 votes to 3.

#### **FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND**

12. There was submitted a report dated 6 March 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised on the amount of funding provided to external organisations in the current financial year 2006/2007.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the funding provided by the Housing Revenue Account to external organisations, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

#### **ABSENCE MANAGEMENT REPORT: QUARTER 4 (2006) FOR HOUSING AND BUILDING AND WORKS SERVICES**

13. There was submitted and noted a report dated 20 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which advised of absence rates for Housing and Building and Works Services in the Department of Neighbourhood Services for the quarterly period ended 31 December 2006.

### **LAND AT MACPHAIL DRIVE, KILMARNOCK**

14. There was submitted a report dated 28 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which requested that the Committee declare surplus to requirements an area of land adjacent to 46 MacPhail Drive, Kilmarnock extending to 364 sq.m. or thereby, and refer same to the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services for disposal on the open market as a residential development opportunity in accordance with the Council's policy for the treatment of surplus properties.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to declare the area of land in question surplus to requirements;
- (ii) to authorise the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services to advertise the land for sale on the open market for residential development purposes; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

15. It was agreed that under Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraph of Scheduled Act 7A of Act as shown against each item.

### **CHILD PROTECTION SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REVIEW (PARA 5)**

16. There was submitted a report dated 28 February 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services which advised of a significant Child Protection Incident within East Ayrshire and the subsequent review of the case that took place; and highlighted the main findings from the review and the action required to further strengthen child protection practice in East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the recommendations of the Significant Incident Review, as detailed in Section 3 of the report;
- (ii) to note the financial implications, as detailed in Section 7 of the report;
- (iii) to note that the report had also been referred to the Education Committee and the Social Work Committee; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **DISPOSAL OF LAND AT LITTLEMILL ROAD, DRONGAN (PARA 6)**

17. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2007 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services which requested that the Committee declare surplus to requirements an area of ground extending to 0.25 hectares or thereby, and authorise disposal of same to the party identified in the report.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to declare the area of ground in question surplus to requirements and to authorise disposal of same to the party identified in the report;

- (ii) to authorise the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services to finalise negotiations for disposal of the site;
- (iii) to note that in the event of the agreed capital consideration being above the delegated authority limit of the Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services, a report on the finalised negotiated terms and conditions would be submitted to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee or the Emergency Powers Committee for consideration; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1056 hours.