

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

PERSONNEL AND PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 SEPTEMBER 2000

FINANCE DEPARTMENT – PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO STAFFING STRUCTURE

Joint Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Finance

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the consequences for the Council of a transfer of housing stock by Scottish Homes to East Ayrshire Housing Partnership on 13 September 2000.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Scottish Homes currently manage approximately 1,000 tenancies in the East Ayrshire Council area. Around 800 of these tenants receive either full or partial Housing Benefit. Benefit administration for these cases is currently dealt with by Scottish Homes.
- 2.2 Following a transfer of the Housing stock to East Ayrshire Housing Partnership the Council will be required to administer the Housing Benefit for tenants and make payments to tenants of the Housing Partnership of amounts calculated.

3. IMPACT ON THE BENEFITS SERVICE

- 3.1 The transfer of these cases will result in an additional 800 rent allowance cases being administered through the Housing Benefits system. This represents a 35% increase in this type of caseload. Rent Allowance cases are the most onerous to administer and given that payments are made by cheque require careful monitoring and security controls.
- 3.2. It is intended to input data for these cases manually using data from both Scottish Homes Benefit reports and the Council's Council Tax records. Following this there is a requirement to review the bulk of these cases between October and December 2000 to ensure that the most up to date information is being used. It is understood that Scottish Homes carry out annual reviews and most of these cases were reviewed in October 1999.

3.3 Following this exercise the transferred cases will be dealt with in the same way as other Rent Allowance claims and will be subject to regular rolling reviews.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Scottish Homes have agreed that the level of subsidy administration grant to be passed to East Ayrshire Council for the period September 2000 to March 2001 will amount to £13,650.

4.2 Additional staffing resources required are one Benefits Assistant, graded GS3/AP1 (£11,898 - £13,305) and one Clerical Assistant, graded GS1/2 (£8,652-£11,685). The cost of these two posts in the current financial year is estimated at £12,000, including employers costs. The remaining £1,650 will be required for equipment, supplies and services. The full years cost, including employers costs of £27,034 will be fully met from the grossed up grant and income from DSS and there will be no overall additional administration cost to the Council.

5. TRADE UNION CONSULTATION

5.1 This proposal is subject to consultation with Trade Unions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that Members:

- a) note the transfer of responsibility for the administration of Housing Benefit from Scottish Homes to the Council;
- b) approve the use of resources transferred as indicated in Paragraph 4.1 above; and
- c) otherwise note the contents of this Report.

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/
Director of Corporate Resources

Alex McPhee
Director of Finance

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS NIL

Anyone wishing further information should contact Alex McPhee, Director of Finance, telephone 01563 576457.

AGENDA