

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

**MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 FEBRUARY 1996 AT
1400 HOURS IN THE LONDON ROAD CENTRE, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

- PRESENT:** Councillors Jim Kelly, Gordon McCredie, Drew McIntyre, Gordon Cree, Wilma Doyle, Robert Stirling, Alan Campbell, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, David Sneller, Jimmy Carmichael, Robert Taylor, John Smith and Tommy Farrell.
- ATTENDING:** David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Jim Maitland, Depute Director of Housing; Chris McAleavey, Depute Director of Housing; Alan McKnight, Depute Director of Housing; Donald McVicar and Anne Fairbairn, Support Unit.
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors Douglas Reid, Jane Darnbrough, Kim Nicoll, Robert McDill and George Smith.
- CHAIR:** Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

**MINUTE OF HOUSING CAPITAL SUB-COMMITTEE
OF 25 JANUARY 1996**

1. There was submitted Minutes (circulated) of the Housing Capital Sub-Committee of 25 January 1996

The Director of Housing referred to a decision regarding Housing Capital Receipts 1996/97, and confirmed that representation had been made to the Scottish Office Development Department regarding the unrealistic stock transfer estimates of £0.727 million and that a reply had been received from the Scottish Office indicating that East Ayrshire Council's views would be taken into account when the decision on the Council's HRA Capital Allocation was made.

The Committee noted the position and otherwise approved the minutes as shown in the appendix to these Minutes.

AFFILIATION TO POSITIVE ACTION ON HOUSING

2. There was submitted a report dated 8 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing in response to a request which had been received from "Positive Action on Housing" requesting that East Ayrshire Council affiliate to the organisation.

It was agreed to recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that the Council affiliate to "Positive Action on Housing".

SCOTTISH HOMES - STOCK TRANSFERS

3. There was submitted a report dated 8 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing details of correspondence with the Scottish Office and Scottish Homes following the Secretary of State for Scotland's apparent willingness to consider local authorities as potential Landlords of Scottish Homes housing stock.

The Director outlined the report and Councillors comments in respect of:

- (a) the Scottish Office's failure to take cognisance of tenants opinions on freedom of choice in relation to Local Authorities being considered as alternative Landlords;
- (b) that the Secretary of State for Scotland had failed to take cognisance of the view held by the Secretary of State for Wales that additional local authority funding be provided in respect of local government reorganisation transition; and
- (c) progress made by Scottish Homes in relation to their stock transfer initiative.

It was agreed that there should be made:

- (i) further representations to Scottish Homes and the Scottish Office requesting the suspension of any stock transfer initiative within East Ayrshire until the outcome of the consultation exercise was known;
- (ii) representations to the Secretary of State in respect of additional funding for local authorities in respect of reorganisation issues;
- (iii) a report to the Housing Committee by the Director of Housing on current Scottish Homes stock transfer initiatives in East Ayrshire Council.

HOMELESSNESS POLICY MODEL

4. There was submitted a report dated 2 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the outcome of the Homelessness Working Group and recommending a Homelessness Policy Model which was required to ensure effective service delivery from 1 April 1996.

It was agreed:

- (i) that Kilmarnock and Loudoun and Cumnock and Doon Valley District Councils' policies on homelessness be harmonised; and
- (ii) to approve the Policy Model appended to the report as East Ayrshire Council's Homelessness Policy.

**TENANCY AGREEMENT/GUIDE TO REPAIRS
(HSG COMM 12/12/95, PAGE 379)**

5. There was submitted a report dated 2 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing details of the results of the consultation process on the Tenancy Agreement and seeking approval of the appended Tenancy Agreement and Guide to Repairs for adoption by East Ayrshire Council.

It was agreed:

- (i) that a Working Party on housing policies, procedures and related issues consisting of five Elected Members of the Administration and appropriate Officers be established;
- (ii) that it should be built into future repairs contract specifications that telephone contact numbers should not be mobile phones to ensure least cost to tenants; and
- (iii) that the Tenancy Agreement and Guide to Repairs as detailed in the Director's report be adopted by East Ayrshire Council for houses let on or after 1 April 1996.

Councillor Farrell joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

BENEFIT TAKE-UP CAMPAIGN

6. There was submitted a joint report (circulated) by the Directors of Social Work and Housing providing details of a proposal to mount a Benefit Take-up Campaign and seeking approval for this.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the first Benefits Campaign by East Ayrshire Council be in relation to Housing Benefit and Council Tax; and
- (ii) to instruct that the Director of Social Work and the Director of Housing to implement the campaign and report to Committee on the outcome.

**HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT
(HB/CTB) CIRCULAR A33/95**

7. There was submitted and noted report dated 8 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on HB/CTB Circular A33/95 which outlined the new arrangements from April 1996 on extended HB/CTB payments for the long-term unemployed and a new scheme for "fast-tracking" HB/CTB claims which would be introduced in tandem from 1 April 1996.

TENANTS' CONTENTS INSURANCE SCHEME

8. There was submitted a progress report dated 8 February 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing in respect of discussions with the Council insurance advisers concerning the introduction of a Tenants' Contents Insurance Scheme.

It was agreed to extend the existing Kilmarnock and Loudoun Home Insurance Scheme across East Ayrshire in accordance with the Council's insurance and risk assessors' advice.

The meeting ended at 1440 hours.