

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HOUSING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 1997 AT 1000 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jim Kelly, Drew McIntyre, Gordon Cree, Douglas Reid, Wilma Doyle, Jane Darnbrough, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, Robert McDill, David Sneller, George Smith, Jim Carmichael, Robert Taylor and John Smith.

**ATTENDING:** David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing; Jim Maitland and Alan McKnight, Depute Directors of Housing; Douglas Campbell, Head of Public Relations and Marketing; Ian Arnott, Chief Accountant; Bill Walkinshaw, Principal Administrative Officer; Tom Litster, Energy Advice Project Co-ordinator (Housing); Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer and Jennifer McLatchie, Trainee Solicitor.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Gordon McCredie, Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Alan Campbell and Tommy Farrell.

**CHAIR:** Jim Kelly, Chair.

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL GARDEN COMPETITION 1997**

1. There was submitted a report dated 4 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of the details and results of the East Ayrshire Council Garden Competition 1997.

The Committee noted the terms of the report and the Chair presented the winner's trophy and prize to the Overall Winner for Best Garden in East Ayrshire, to Mrs Emily Moore, 19 Southcraig Holdings, By Kilmarnock.

Mrs Moore then left the meeting.

Arising from discussion, it was also agreed that the Director of Housing would submit to a future meeting for consideration a report on the arrangements to be adopted in future for the presentation of awards to the prizewinners of the Garden Competition.

**SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES**

2. There were submitted and approved both as correct records and, where appropriate, in respect of recommendations contained therein, the undernoted Sub-Committee Minutes (circulated) as contained in Appendices I to III to these Minutes.

**2.1 CHAIR'S SUB-COMMITTEE OF 16 OCTOBER 1997**

**2.2 HOUSING APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE OF 4 NOVEMBER 1997**

**2.3 HOUSING CAPITAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 11 NOVEMBER 1997**

**BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 10 OCTOBER 1997 (PERIOD 7)**

### 3.1 GENERAL FUND HOUSING

There was submitted and noted a report dated 31 October 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance advising of the current budgetary control position and the projected outturn for the financial year 1997/98 for the General Fund Housing Account for the period ended 10 October 1997 (Period 7).

### 3.2 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

There was submitted and noted a report dated 31 October 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance advising of the current budgetary control position and the projected outturn for the financial year 1997/98 for the Housing Revenue Account for the period ended 10 October 1997 (Period 7).

Councillor McIntyre joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

#### **BEST VALUE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - MEMBERSHIP (Item 3.1.19, Page 2664)**

4. As agreed at the Council meeting held on 6 November 1997, the Committee were asked to appoint a named representative from the Committee (together with a named substitute) to serve on the Best Value Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee and to advise the Director of Support Services accordingly.

It was agreed to appoint Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair (substitute - David Macrae, Vice Chair) to serve on this Sub-Committee.

#### **HOUSING DEPARTMENT: ANNUAL ACTION PLAN (Item 3, Page 1834)**

5. There was submitted a report dated 13 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the Housing Department's first Annual Action Plan.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which amongst other things explained that this first Annual Action Plan examined the continuing relevance of the Housing Department's Service Plan as previously approved by this Committee, by setting out objectives for the housing service and identifying new service initiatives, within the context of the Council's Corporate Strategies and recent decisions and new legislation;
- (ii) that the Annual Action Plan be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration; and
- (iii) that the Director of Housing would submit further reports on progress on the implementation of the Housing Department's Service Plan to future meetings.

#### **ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND INTERMEDIATE LABOUR MARKET (ILM) PROJECT: PARTNERSHIP WITH HEATWISE LTD (Item 3, Page 2012)**

6. There was submitted a report dated 19 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing information on progress in respect of the Energy Efficiency and Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) project which was being undertaken in partnership with Heatwise Ltd.

It was agreed to note:-

- (i) that, due to a delayed commencement date, a revised contribution of £200,000 would be made to the Project from the Housing Capital Programme for 1997/98 rather than £240,000 as had previously been anticipated; and
- (ii) the progress made on the Project thus far, as detailed in the report.

**ROUGH SLEEPERS INITIATIVE: SURVEY GRANT (Item 7, Page 2147)**

7. There was submitted a report dated 4 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising that the Scottish Office had allocated £3,000 to finance the cost of undertaking a detailed survey to establish the level of rough sleeping within East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the award of £3,000 for the implementation of a survey of rough sleeping within East Ayrshire;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing would submit a report on the outcome of the survey to a future meeting of this Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**SCOTTISH OFFICE EMPTY HOMES INITIATIVE (Item 5, Page 2553)**

8. There was submitted a report dated 11 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of the current position in respect of the bid submitted by the Council to the Scottish Office under the "Empty Homes Initiative".

It was agreed to note the terms of the report which amongst other things, explained:-

- (i) that three bids had been submitted to the Scottish Office under this heading, in respect of a total sum of £734,279;
- (ii) that the bids were in respect of (a) the employment of an Empty Property Officer on a temporary one year contract; (b) funding to bring empty private sector properties back into use through the provision of grants to private owners; and (c) resources to facilitate the transfer of long-term empty Council housing stock to local housing associations; and
- (iii) that it was anticipated that the Scottish Office would make an announcement on the outcome of the bids in mid-December 1997.

**HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995: ENERGY STRATEGY 1997-2007:  
"BRIDGING THE GAPS" (Item 10, Page 1837)**

9. There was submitted a report dated 10 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing seeking the Committee's approval to the Energy Strategy 1997-2007 report entitled "Bridging the Gaps" prior to its submission to the Scottish Office by 1 December 1997.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the Council's Energy Strategy 1997-2007 as set out in the document "Bridging the Gaps" which outlines measures to improve energy efficiency over the next 10 years and beyond through the following measures, namely:-

- raising public awareness of the full range of environmental issues;
  - improving healthcare through warm, dry, healthy living conditions;
  - reducing poverty by providing advice to the fuel poor;
  - enhancing the field of employment by initiating further job creation projects through intakes of funding created by Partnership and European Social Funding;
  - reducing fuel bills;
  - reducing harmful emissions associated with the burning of fuels; and
- (ii) that the Director of Housing would arrange for the Strategy document to be submitted to the Secretary of State by the due date of 1 December 1997.

### **NEW HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS (Item 10, Page 2555)**

10. There was submitted a report dated 13 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of notification received from the Scottish Office regarding the allocation of resources to support the development of New Housing Partnerships and seeking approval to the intended partnership project to be submitted to the Scottish Office.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the information provided in the report which, amongst other things, indicated that the Scottish Office had confirmed that a sum of £10 million would be made available to Local Authorities in Scotland during 1997/98 in order to support the funding of housing projects which demonstrated a partnership approach involving local authorities, Scottish Homes, the private sector and other parties, but that no commitment had been made concerning the distribution of resources under this heading for 1998/99;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Housing to submit a bid to the Scottish Office outlining the Council's proposals in respect of New Housing Partnerships and seeking funding for this purpose of £240,000 on the General Fund Housing Account and £60,000 on the Housing Capital Account;
- (iii) that legal and financial advisors be appointed to assist in developing the new housing partnership, on the basis outlined in the report, the Directors of Housing and of Support Services to carry out a tender exercise for this purpose;
- (iv) that a two stage tender exercise be commenced with a view to identifying a partner with which the Council could work in promoting new housing initiatives, Stage 1 to be an open invitation to submit preliminary proposals and Stage 2 to involve the submission of detailed proposals by the three tenderers who submit the best proposals at the preliminary stage;
- (v) to enter into a partnership with Scottish Homes, Ayrshire and Arran Health Board and Horizon Housing Association to provide a housing development at an identified site in Kilmaurs consisting of five units for people with physical disabilities, one unit for respite care, one staff base and 20 general needs houses;

- (vi) to acquire the Kilmaurs site referred to above, subject to the provision of New Housing Partnership Funds and to meet the cost of the provision of the seven special needs units; and
- (vii) that, subject to New Housing Partnership funding being made available by the Scottish Office, the following matters be carried out namely:-
  - (a) the progression of discussions with a view to grant aiding the redevelopment of Brown's Institute, Newmilns; and
  - (b) the appointment of PFI co-ordinator.

Councillor Taylor left the meeting during discussion of the above item.

### **CONSULTATION ON EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL'S CHILDREN'S SERVICE PLAN**

11. There was submitted a report dated 6 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising, in respect of the Committee's interest, on the Council's statutory duty to prepare, consult upon and publish a Children's Service Plan.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the arrangements for consultation and the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Plan and on the Council's services to children and families, as outlined in the report; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

### **HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: TENDER EVALUATION AND SELECTION (Item 4, Page 2373)**

12. There was submitted a report dated 10 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising on the outcome of the tender evaluation exercise for the proposed Housing Needs Assessment.

It was agreed to note:-

- (i) the appointment of Market Research Scotland as the external research agency to carry out the Housing Needs Assessment;
- (ii) that the cost of the contract amounts to £58,825, which compared to the allocation for this purpose of £60,000; and
- (iii) that the Assessment would be undertaken during the period November 1997 to February 1998 in order to inform and facilitate the development of the new Housing Plan.

**DEMOLITION ORDER: WHITEHILL FARM, BY PATNA**

13. There was submitted a report dated 27 October 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Community Services asking the Committee to consider making a Demolition Order under Section 115 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, in respect of Whitehill Farm, by Patna.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to make a Demolition Order in respect of the property concerned and to authorise the Director of Community Services to make the appropriate arrangements in this connection; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the information provided in the report.

The meeting terminated at 1102 hours.