

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 JANUARY 1997
AT 1400 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Kelly, Drew McIntyre, Gordon Cree, Wilma Doyle, Provost Robert Stirling, Councillors Jane Darnbrough, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, George Smith, Jim Carmichael, Robert Taylor, John Smith and Tommy Farrell.

ATTENDING: John Hillis, Director of Housing; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing; Tom McHugh, Depute Director of Finance; Alan McKnight, Depute Director of Housing; Jim Maitland, Depute Director of Housing; Joan Kendall, Principal Solicitor; Bill Walkinshaw, Principal Administrative Officer; David Morgan, Public Relations Officer; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gordon McCredie, Douglas Reid, Alan Campbell, Robert McDill and David Sneller.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair

**CHAIR'S REMARKS: SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT
QUALITY AWARDS (Item 8, Page 1357)**

1. On the matter being raised by the Chair, the Director of Housing reported that one of the two projects submitted by the Department of Housing to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities for consideration within the Scottish Local Government Quality Awards, being in respect of the Council's joint Benefits Campaign, had been short-leeted through to the next stage of the Awards which had involved a presentation by Officers from the Housing and Social Work Departments to a panel of judges. The Director intimated that the presentation had taken place on Tuesday 7 January 1997, and that the outcome of the Panel's deliberations was expected to be announced on 27 February 1997 and would be reported to the following meeting of this Committee.

Noted.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT: SERVICE PLAN 1996-1999 (Item 17, Page 1415)

2. There was submitted a report dated 19 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing outlining the Housing Department's proposed Service Plan for the period 1996-1999, and seeking approval to the Plan.

At the request of the Director of Housing, who indicated that he would wish the opportunity to consider further the terms of the proposed Service Plan, it was agreed that this item be withdrawn from the Agenda.

**HOUSING DEPARTMENT DRAFT QUALITY POLICY
AND DRAFT QUALITY PLAN (Item 6, Page 1096)**

3. There was submitted a report dated 12 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing an update on the Housing Department's progress in developing a Quality Plan, and seeking endorsement of the contents of the Draft Quality Policy and the Draft Quality Plan, both as detailed in the report.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Housing Department's Quality Statement be henceforth formally known as "East Ayrshire Council Housing Department's Quality Statement";
- (ii) to approve the contents of the Housing Department's Draft Quality Policy, as detailed in Appendix I of the report; and
- (iii) to approve the contents of the Housing Department's Draft Quality Plan and associated implementation action plan, as detailed in Appendix II of the report.

DRAFT PARTICIPATION POLICY

4. There was submitted a report dated 12 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of the proposed framework for East Ayrshire Council's Draft Participation Policy, and seeking approval to the Draft Policy.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the Draft Participation Policy, as submitted; and
- (ii) that priority be given to those areas within East Ayrshire which were currently without tenant/resident association representation.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CCT STRATEGY

5. There was submitted a report dated 20 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing an update on the timetable for the introduction of Housing Management CCT; giving an overview of the Housing Department's preparations; and outlining the requirements of "Guidance on the Conduct of Compulsory Competitive Tendering" (Circular 6/96) in relation to consultation with the external market.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to affirm its commitment to the in-house delivery of housing services;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Housing to take the appropriate action to ensure compliance with the requirements of Circular 6/96 in respect of market consultation;
- (iii) to approve the setting up of a Housing Management CCT Team within the Housing Department, utilising seconded staff, as detailed in the report; and
- (iv) that reports be submitted to the Contracting Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee on progress in respect of the preparation of a Housing Management CCT strategy, with periodic up-dates on progress to be submitted to this Committee.

**ENERGY ADVICE PROJECT/JOINT ENERGY ADVICE CAMPAIGN
(Item 16, Page 1571)**

6. There was submitted a report dated 20 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing outlining the progress of the Energy Advice Project since its conception in October 1995 to the present day; indicating the plans of the Project for the future; and outlining proposals for a Joint Energy Advice Campaign with Scottish Power.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the proposed Joint Energy Advice Campaign between East Ayrshire Council and Scottish Power; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Director of Housing to report back on the outcome of the Campaign to a future meeting of this Committee.

**SCOTTISH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:
FINAL REPORT: "HOUSING AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR"**

7. There was submitted and noted a report dated 24 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing an update on the outcome of the investigations of the Scottish Affairs Committee on housing and anti-social behaviour.

HOUSING ADAPTATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (Item 6, Page 1356)

8. There was submitted a joint report dated 31 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing and Acting Director of Social Work advising of progress made to date on the operation of approved assessment and service provision arrangements for the adaptations service provided by the Council.

In this connection the Chair reported that, in the light of current progress on adaptations works, it was anticipated that all outstanding referrals which were being held in abeyance by the Housing Department would be dealt with by the end of January 1997.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, explained:-
 - (a) that since 1 April 1996, the Housing Department had registered a total of 1351 referrals for housing adaptations comprising Category A (extremely urgent) - 597; Category B (high priority) - 634; and Category C (recommended) - 120;
 - (b) that all Category A referrals received to date had been passed to the appropriate contractor for immediate action and that work had been authorised in respect of all Category B referrals assessed prior to 30 September 1996 and all Category C referrals assessed prior to 30 June 1996, with a balance of 54 Category B and 50 Category C referrals having been held in abeyance; and
 - (c) that the estimated committed expenditure on adaptations amounted to £565,357;
- (ii) to note the additional comments of the Director as referred to above;
- (iii) to note that the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Director of Social Work, was reviewing the assessment and service provision arrangements for

the adaptation service provided by the Council with a view to establishing a "one stop" approach for the benefit of applicants, and would report thereon in due course; and

- (iv) that the Director of Housing submit a report to the next meeting providing an analysis of the nature of the works carried out under the adaptations service during the current financial year.

THE NEEDS AND PREFERENCES OF OLDER PEOPLE FOR HOUSING AND RELATED SUPPORT

- 9. There was submitted a joint report dated 5 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing and Acting Director of Social Work providing an update of the findings of a Research Study commissioned by the Ayrshire Housing Forum and undertaken by Market Research Scotland, on "The Needs and Preferences of Older People for Housing and Related Support".

It was agreed:-

- (i) that it be remitted to the Director of Housing to arrange for a presentation on the findings of the Research Study, with particular reference to the East Ayrshire perspective, to be made to all Members of the Council by Market Research Scotland;
- (ii) that the Directors of Housing and Social Work take account of the findings of the Study in the preparation of the Housing Plan and the housing contribution to the Community Care Plan; and
- (iii) that the Director of Housing take account of the report in the preparation of the Council's new House Allocation Policy.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (I T) DEVELOPMENT

- 10. There was submitted a report dated 16 December 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing seeking approval, in principle, to the proposed Housing Department I T Development Plan which had been designed to support the departmental and corporate activities as detailed in the Housing Department's Service Plan.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve, in principle, the proposed Housing Department I T Development Plan, as outlined in the report;
- (ii) to note the proposals for the development of Housing Department I T, as outlined in the report, for consideration during the 1997/98 budget process; and
- (iii) that the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Head of Information Technology, prepare the necessary system specification and appropriate tender documents for the supply of an integrated housing management system.

TRANSFER OF SCOTTISH HOMES HOUSES (Item 3, Page 738)

11. There was submitted a report dated 8 January 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of the result of the transfer ballot of Scottish Homes properties in the Cumnock and Doon Valley areas and outlining certain of the implications for the Council.

The report indicated, amongst other things, that in respect of Ballot Area 1 (New Cumnock, Netherthird, Cumnock, Craigens, Auchinleck, Lugar/Logan, Drumbrochan, Catrine and Mauchline) and Ballot Area 2, (Patna, Dalmellington and Rankinston) the majority of the tenants participating in the ballot voted to transfer to Shire Housing Association and it was proposed that the formal transfer will take place on 28 February 1997.

The Director also reported that since preparation of the report, Shire Housing had, without consultation and prior to detailed discussions taking place on future Council nomination rights, advertised the introduction of direct waiting lists for applicants for Shire Housing accommodation.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report and the additional comments made by the Director; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Director of Housing to negotiate with Shire Housing in respect of the implications for the Council arising from the stock transfer, particularly in relation to nomination rights and the administration and payment of Housing Benefit to tenants of Shire Housing, and to report back to a future Meeting of this Committee on the outcome.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

12.1 EXPENDITURE POSITION AS AT 6 DECEMBER 1996

There was submitted and noted a report dated 8 January 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance advising of the current budgetary control position in respect of the Housing Revenue Account for the period ended 6 December 1996.

12.2 DRAFT ESTIMATES 1997/98 (Item 1, Page 1643)

There was submitted and noted a report dated 14 January 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance providing, for information, details of the Housing Revenue Account 1997/98 cost of the current levels of service Budget which had been approved at the special meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 January 1997.

The meeting terminated at 1445 hours.