

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL****HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 1998 AT 1000 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Jim Kelly, Gordon Cree, Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Jane Darnbrough, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, Robert McDill, David Sneller, George Smith, Jim Carmichael and John Smith.

**ATTENDING:** David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Alex McPhee, Senior Depute Director of Finance; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing; Jim Maitland and Alan McKnight, Depute Directors of Housing; Anna Gallagher, Assistant Principal Solicitor; Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Gordon McCredie, Drew McIntyre, Douglas Reid, Wilma Doyle, Alan Campbell, Robert Taylor and Tommy Farrell.

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

**MEMBER/OFFICER HOUSING WORKING GROUP ON HARMONISATION OF HOUSING ISSUES (Item 2, Page 1517)**

1. There were submitted (circulated) and noted, Minutes of the meeting of the Member/Officer Housing Working Group on Harmonisation of Housing Issues held on 4 December 1997.

**BUDGETARY CONTROL SUMMARY STATEMENTS FOR PERIOD ENDING 7 NOVEMBER 1997 (PERIOD 8)****2.1 GENERAL FUND HOUSING**

There was submitted and noted, a report dated 5 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance on 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 7 November 1997 (Period 8).

**2.2 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

There was submitted and noted, a report dated 6 January 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Finance on the current budgetary control position and the projected outturn for the financial year 1997/98 for the Housing Revenue Account.

**PROCUREMENT OF INTEGRATED HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Item 4, Page 2553)**

3. There was submitted a joint report dated 11 December 1997 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Support Services on the progress made towards procurement of a replacement integrated housing management system.

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

- (i) that six companies had submitted tenders which were being assessed;

- (ii) that the estimated cost of acquisition and implementation of the new system was in excess of £250,000 to be phased over several years with the cost of the replacement of hardware to be met from the current financial year's budget; and
- (iii) that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee upon completion of the tender evaluation exercise.

**NEW HOUSING PARTNERSHIP: GUIDANCE FOR 1998/99 (Item 10, Page 2696)**

4. There was submitted a report dated 12 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on a letter received from the Scottish Office regarding the allocation of resources to support the development of New Housing Partnerships during the financial year 1998/99.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the terms of the report, which amongst other things explained:
  - (a) that legal and financial advisers to assist in developing a submission to the Scottish Office on the Council's vision for a public/private partnership initiative had been appointed, initially on a short term one month contract;
  - (b) that the Scottish Office had confirmed that a total sum of £35m would be made available to local authorities for the financial year 1998/99 to support New Housing Partnership initiatives; and
  - (c) that the Scottish Office had specified a closing date of 31 January 1998 for the submission of bids for funding under the New Housing Partnership heading for the 1998/99 financial year;
- (ii) to remit to the Director of Housing, after consultation with the Chair, to prepare and submit a bid for New Housing Partnership funding for 1998/99 to the Scottish Office by the closing date of 31 January 1998, and a report on this matter to be submitted to the next meeting of this Committee.

Councillor Sneller joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

**SCOTTISH OFFICE EMPTY HOMES INITIATIVE (Item 8, Page 2695)**

5. There was submitted a report dated 9 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the decisions made by the Scottish Office on the bids submitted by East Ayrshire Council under the Empty Homes Initiative.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Council had been allocated a total of £58,000 under this initiative for the current financial year, for which a sum of £8,000 would be used to employ an Empty Property Officer, and a sum of £50,000 would be used for grants to private owners to help bring empty properties back into use; and
- (ii) that the Director of Housing would progress negotiations with the Blue Triangle Housing Association, who had expressed an interest in using identified empty private properties as "follow on" accommodation for young single homeless people who had been living in supported accommodation.

**ROUGH SLEEPERS INITIATIVE: STATISTICAL SURVEY RESULTS  
(Item 7, Page 2695)**

6. There was submitted a report dated 12 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the outcome of the statistical survey undertaken to establish the level of rough sleeping within East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing submit a bid to the Scottish Office for the second phase of the Rough Sleepers Initiative Challenge Funding following completion of the physical count of people sleeping rough in known locations within East Ayrshire, as detailed in the report;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing submit a further report on the outcome of the Council's bid for funding under this heading, to an appropriate future meeting; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**NEW HOSTEL FOR THE HOMELESS AT 33 ST ANDREW STREET,  
KILMARNOCK (Item 10, Page 2813)**

7. There was submitted a report dated 22 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to proposals for the official opening and naming of the new hostel for the homeless at 33 St Andrew Street, Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the new hostel be named St Andrew Court; and
- (ii) that the official opening of the hostel would take place on Friday 6 February 1998 and be carried out by Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair, the detailed arrangements to be made by the Director of Housing.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

8. There was submitted a joint report dated 5 January 1998 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Social Work which sought approval for the outlined policy and procedures document relating to youth homelessness within East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to recommend approval, in respect of this Committee's interest, of the joint Housing and Social Work Department document entitled "Youth Homelessness Policy and Procedures", as circulated with the report; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**WEST OF SCOTLAND HOUSING ASSOCIATION: HOUSING PROJECT AT DEAN  
STREET/DEAN LANE, KILMARNOCK**

9. Arising from discussion on the foregoing item, it was also agreed that the Director of Housing would submit to a future meeting of this Committee a report on the operation of the West of Scotland Housing Association Housing Project at Dean Street/Dean Lane, Kilmarnock.

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## **REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE REGULATION AND MONITORING OF NEW SOCIAL LANDLORDS IN SCOTLAND**

- 10.** There was submitted a report dated 10 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which provided a summary of the report completed by the Scottish Office Development Working Group on proposals for the regulation and monitoring of new social landlords acquiring local authority housing stock, and which made comments on the document.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing submit comments to the Scottish Office on the report of the Working Group emphasising particularly the issues referred to in paragraph 4.3 of his report and draw this matter to the attention of the local Members of Parliament; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

## **GRANT FOR EVACUEES FROM MONTSERRAT**

- 11.** There was submitted a report dated 9 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on a request from The Scottish Office for assistance from Local Authorities who were able to offer accommodation to Montserrat evacuees.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to register the Council's interest in making housing accommodation available for evacuees, if requested; and
- (ii) that the Director of Housing make any necessary arrangements in this connection and, if required, to submit an appropriate application for grant funding to The Scottish Office prior to the closing date of 31 January 1998.

## **HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS**

### **12.1 SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FRAUD) ACT 1997 (THE FRAUD ACT) HB/CTB CIRCULARS: F10/97, F11/97, F12/97, F17/97, A23/97 AND A48/97**

There was submitted a report dated 18 September 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which drew attention to important changes in benefit administration arising from the Social Security Administration (Fraud) Act 1997 (the Fraud Act), and which identified implications for the Council.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report and the implications for the Council as detailed therein; and
- (ii) to approve the additional costs involved, as detailed in Section 4 of the report.

### **12.2 HOUSING BENEFIT MATCHING SERVICE HB/CTB CIRCULARS: F8/97 AND F15/97**

There was submitted a report dated 4 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which provided details of the Department of Social Security's Housing Benefit Matching Service, outlined the implications for the Council and sought approval to accept the Department's invitation to join the Service.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report and the implications for the Council as detailed therein; and
- (ii) to accept the invitation from the Department of Social Security to join the Housing Benefit Matching Service, the detailed arrangements in this connection to be made by the Director of Housing.

#### **WEEKLY BENEFIT SAVINGS: PROGRESS REPORT**

13. There was submitted and noted a report dated 2 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising on the Housing Department's current performance in achieving weekly benefit savings targets.

#### **ADDITIONAL ITEM**

14. The Chair agreed that the undernoted additional item of urgent business be considered as an early decision was required.

#### **HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME: WINDOW REPLACEMENT AND CENTRAL HEATING CONTRACTS 1997/98 AND WINDOW REPLACEMENT TENDER LIST 1998/99**

15. There was submitted a report dated 12 January 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval (a) to extend existing window replacement and gas central heating contracts during 1997/98, in the light of additional resources which had become available; and (b) to the window replacement tender list for 1998/99.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the extension of existing window replacement and gas central heating contracts up to values of £100,000 and £160,000 respectively;
- (ii) that the following contractors be invited to tender for the work involved in the housing capital programme 1998/99 for the replacement of windows, on the terms detailed in the report subject to the necessary checks being carried out by the Head of Contracting and Technical Services, namely:-

Anglian Windows, Glasgow

Avonholm Windows Ltd, Glasgow

CR Smith Glaziers Ltd, Dunfermline

CR Window Systems Ltd, Lockerbie

Dee-Em Windows, Bellshill

East Dunbartonshire Council, Kirkintilloch

East Renfrewshire Council, Barrhead

Glasgow Glazing, Glasgow

J & S McFadyen, Carluke

MacSeal Windows, Glasgow

North Lanarkshire Council, Bellshill

Penicuik Aluminium Co Ltd, Penicuik

Pyramid Windows, Airdrie  
 Radbury of Ayr Ltd, Ayr  
 Regency Group Ltd, Glasgow  
 Roxburgh Windows & Doors Ltd, Hawick  
 Tayside Windows Ltd, Forfar  
 Thermashield Insulation Ltd, Glasgow  
 East Ayrshire Council, Kilmarnock; and

(iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

## **PROPOSED DISPOSALS OF GROUND AND PROPERTY**

### **16.1 CUMNOCK: LAND TO THE REAR OF 82 GLAISNOCK STREET**

There was submitted a report dated 9 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground extending to 78 square metres located at the rear of 82 Glaisnock Street, Cumnock.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the ground in question be declared surplus to requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to negotiate the sale of the property on suitable terms to the owners of 82 Glaisnock Street, Cumnock.

### **16.2 DARVEL: OLD SCHOOLHOUSE AT 2B WEST DONINGTON STREET**

There was submitted a report dated 13 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of the semi-detached property at 2B West Donington Street, Darvel.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the property in question be declared surplus to requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to negotiate the sale of the property on suitable terms to the owner of the adjoining premises.

### **16.3 GALSTON: LAND TO THE REAR OF 25/26 BLAIR CRESCENT**

There was submitted a report dated 17 November 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground extending to 29 square metres or thereby located at the rear of 25/26 Blair Crescent, Galston.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the ground in question be declared surplus to requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to negotiate the sale of the ground on suitable terms to the owner of the property at 22 Belvedere View, Galston.

### **16.4 LAND ADJACENT TO TRABBOCHBURN FARM, BY OCHILTREE**

There was submitted a report dated 9 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground extending to 0.705 acres adjacent to Trabbochburn Farm, by Ochiltree.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the ground in question be declared surplus to requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to negotiate the sale of the ground on suitable terms to the owner of Trabbochburn Farm.

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

- 17.** 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 item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

#### **HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1987: SALE OF COUNCIL HOUSE**

- 18.** There was submitted a report dated 2 December 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on an application to purchase a Council house in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the sale of the house concerned in the joint names of the applicant and her partner, both as identified in the report, in terms of Section 61(6)(b) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987; and
- (ii) that the Head of Legal Services complete the sale of the property with a date of settlement shortly after the date of the joint purchasers' marriage.

The meeting terminated at 1105 hours.