

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 MAY 1996 AT 0930 HRS
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS,
LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Kelly, Gordon McCredie, Drew McIntyre, Wilma Doyle, Provost Robert Stirling, Councillors Alan Campbell, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, Robert McDill, David Sneller, George Smith, Robert Taylor and Tommy Farrell.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing (Operations); Alan McKnight, Depute Director of Housing (Policy and Strategy); Jim Maitland, Depute Director of Housing (Support and Technical); Douglas Bulloch, Depute Director of Social Work (Community Care); Kate McZee, Head of Legal Services; Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer; and Christine Baillie, Administrative Assistant.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Douglas Reid, Jane Darnbrough, James Carmichael and John Smith.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

EXTENSION OF GARDEN MAINTENANCE SCHEME (Item 4, Page 738)

1. There was submitted a report dated 21 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing, on the progress achieved in extending the Garden Maintenance Scheme throughout East Ayrshire.

It was agreed to note the report which, among other things, indicated that so far 849 applications had been received from residents within the former Kilmarnock and Loudoun District for inclusion in the Scheme, 555 were from persons over the age of 70 years, 227 persons were under 70 years of age and the remaining 67 persons were under 70 years of age and registered disabled or in receipt of either Incapacity Benefit or Disability Living Allowance.

BENEFITS TAKE UP CAMPAIGN: UPDATE (Item 6, Page 489)

2. There was submitted a joint report dated 21 May 1996 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Social Work on the current position regarding the Council's Benefits Take Up Campaign.

It was agreed to note the report which, among other things indicated that, thus far, as a direct result of the campaign, 718 enquiries had been received resulting in the issue of 559 application forms with the balance of 159 enquirers having already been in receipt of the appropriate benefits.

GARDEN COMPETITION

3. There was submitted a report dated 21 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing proposing the introduction of an East Ayrshire Council Garden Competition

to promote interest in gardening amongst residents and to stimulate improvement in the general level of gardens within the Council's area.

It was agreed that:

- (i) East Ayrshire Council establish a Garden Competition on the basis of Local Committee areas, which would be open to all residents within East Ayrshire, irrespective of the tenure of the house which they occupied and would be judged by Local Committee with appropriate assistance
- (ii) the arrangements for the Competition as detailed in the report be approved, subject:
 - (a) to the inclusion in the competition of a category for best window box/planter/hanging basket within each Local Committee area; and
 - (b) to the panel of judges for each Local Committee area including, from 1997 onwards, the previous year's winner and runner-up from one of the other Local Committee areas.
- (iii) that all necessary arrangements be remitted to the Director of Housing.

MEMBER/OFFICER HOUSING WORKING GROUP ON HARMONISATION OF HOUSING ISSUES (Item 5, Page 489)

4. There was submitted a report dated 16 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing regarding the progress on the establishment of a Member/Officer Housing Working Group to discuss a range of harmonisation issues relating to housing.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the remit of the Working Group would be to discuss harmonisation issues relating to housing such as house letting, service charges, debt control, cash collection, tenant installations, garden competition, repair and maintenance, tenant participation and neighbour disputes; and to set general policy direction on these areas to enable reports to be brought forward to this Committee;
- (ii) that reports on progress made by the Working Group in terms of its remit be submitted to this Committee as and when appropriate; and
- (iii) that otherwise the report be noted.

TRIPARTITE MEETING: EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL, THE SCOTTISH OFFICE AND SCOTTISH HOMES

5. There was submitted a report dated 16 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing in respect of a request received from the Scottish Office for a tripartite meeting with representatives of the Council and Scottish Homes and advising of the

arrangements made in this connection to date.

Having heard the comments of the Depute Director of Housing (Policy and Strategy), who, among other things, explained that it was anticipated that the tripartite meeting would take place in mid September, it was agreed:

- (i) to note the terms of the report;

- (ii) to remit to the Director of Housing to make appropriate arrangements for the tripartite meeting; and
- (iii) to request the Council to determine the member representation at the tripartite meeting.

**ST ANDREW'S STREET, KILMARNOCK
PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE - (Item 1, Page 737)**

6. There was submitted a report (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the outcome of discussions regarding a possible private finance initiative for the proposed St Andrew's Street, Kilmarnock, development.

It was agreed to remit this matter to the Policy and Resources Committee.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY (Item 5' Page 613)

7. There was submitted a report dated 16 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing seeking endorsement of the proposed Housing Department's Health and Safety Policy Statement and associated Safety Manual.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the contents of the report; and
- (ii) to approve the Housing Department's Health and Safety Policy as referred to in the report.

HOUSING ADAPTATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (Item 8, Page 739)

8. There was submitted a joint report (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Social Work on the detailed operating assessment and service provision arrangements for the adaptations service previously approved by the Council.

The Committee agreed, in respect of its interest:

- (i) to authorise the Directors of Housing and of Social Work to implement the detailed operating assessment and service provision arrangements for the adaptations service as set out in the report;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Social Work to conclude operational arrangements with Housing Associations consistent with this framework; and
- (iii) to remit to the Directors of Housing and of Social Work to submit further reports on the operation of the adopted arrangements, to future meetings of this Committee as appropriate.

NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES

- 9 There was submitted a progress report dated 21 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on work being carried out in relation to neighbour disputes and recommending the extension of the out of hours neighbour disputes response service.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the neighbour disputes service pilot scheme, which at present operated within the former Kilmarnock and Loudoun District, be continued for a further period of three months, pending full evaluation of the range of options for addressing neighbour disputes;
- (ii) that the Director of Personnel Services make arrangements to extend the existing contracts of the Officers currently involved in providing the neighbour disputes response service within the former Kilmarnock and Loudoun District, for an additional period of three months;
- (iii) that it be remitted to the Director of Housing to prepare and submit to an early meeting of this Committee, a report on the range of options, with recommendations, for addressing the problem of neighbour disputes; and
- (iv) that otherwise the report be noted.

SCOTTISH HOMES' ESTATES: GROUND MAINTENANCE (Item 3, Page 738)

10. There was submitted a report dated 21 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the discussions taking place concerning the future maintenance of ground currently maintained by Scottish Homes.

It was noted that this particular matter was currently being examined by the Leisure Sub-Committee of the Community Services Committee.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

11. 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 items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Schedule 7A of the Act shown against each item.

ADAPTATION GRANT: REF: CON/H/OONF/AC (PARA 3)

12. There was submitted a report dated 15 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on a request to waive repayment of an adaptation grant made by the former Strathclyde Regional Council in respect of works carried out to a house within the Council's area for the benefit of a disabled occupant.

The Minute of Agreement and Standard Security in connection with the grant required the applicants to remain within the property for a period of 10 years, failing which the grant (or part thereof) could be recovered by Council.

It was agreed:

- (i) to waive repayment of the grant monies in this case and to discharge the Standard Security over the property, subject to the applicants meeting the

Council's reasonable legal expenses in connection with the Discharge; and

- (ii) to remit to the Director of Support Services, in consultation with the other Directors concerned, to prepare, a proposed amendment to the Council's existing scheme of delegation which would allow similar requests to be dealt with at the discretion of the appropriate Officer of the Council.

**REQUEST TO POSTPONE DISCOUNT STANDARD SECURITY:
REF: CON/TR/OONF/GM (PARA 6)**

13.1 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Macrae declared a non pecuniary interest in terms of the National Code of Local Government conduct and left the meeting at this point.

13.2 Consideration of Item

There was submitted a report dated 15 May 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on a request to grant a Deed of Postponement to allow a new Building Society loan to rank before the outstanding balance of the client's Discount Standard Security relative to a house in the Council's area.

It was agreed to refuse in terms of Section 72(5)(b) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 to allow the applicant's remortgage Security to rank prior to the Council's Discount Security.

The Meeting terminated at 1025 hours.