

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 1998 AT 1000 HOURS
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD,
KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Kelly, Gordon McCredie, Drew McIntyre, Irene Reeves, Douglas Reid, Wilma Doyle, Provost Robert Stirling, and Councillors Kathleen Hall, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, David Sneller and George Smith.

ATTENDING: David Montgomery, Chief Executive; John Hillis, Director of Housing; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing; Alan McKnight, Depute Director of Housing; Anna F Gallagher, Assistant Principal Solicitor; Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer; David Morgan, Public Relations Officer; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gordon Cree, Jane Darnbrough, Alan Campbell, Robert McDill, Jim Carmichael and Tommy Farrell.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

HOUSING CAPITAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 6 MAY 1998**1.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were submitted and approved, both as a correct record and in respect of recommendations contained therein, the Minutes of the Housing Capital Sub-Committee of 6 May 1998 (circulated) as shown in Appendix I to these Minutes.

1.2 MATTERS ARISING**1.2.1 DISTURBANCE PAYMENTS TO TENANTS**

Arising from Item 4 of the Minutes, and having heard a verbal report by the Director of Housing, it was agreed that, in order to facilitate the processing of claims and in addition to the Home Loss Payment, a fixed rate disturbance payment of £250 be made to each of the tenants who would require to be re-housed to accommodate the demolition of properties within the problem house areas, in terms of their entitlement under the Land Compensation (Scotland) Act 1973.

1.2.2 AWARD OF TENDER: REPLACEMENT OF LEAD WATER PIPES

Arising from Item 2.3 of the Minute, and having heard a verbal report by the Director of Housing, it was agreed to authorise additional expenditure of £8,300 on the current year's Housing Capital Programme for the replacement of lead water pipes, over and above the allocation of £15,000 included in the programme for this scheme in order to enable acceptance of the lowest most suitable tender received to carry out the work involved in this scheme.

1.2.3 MAINTENANCE OF GARAGE CENTRES

Arising from discussion, it was agreed that the Director of Housing would submit to an early meeting a report on the future maintenance and/or improvement of Council owned garage centres within East Ayrshire.

**MEMBER/OFFICER WORKING GROUP ON SCOTTISH HOMES' STOCK
TRANSFER PROPOSALS (Item 7, Page 3024)**

2. There were submitted (circulated) and noted, Minutes of the meeting of the Member/Officer Working Group on Scottish Homes' Stock Transfer Proposals held on 28 April 1998.

NEW HOUSING PARTNERSHIP (Item 4, Page 3022)

3.1 PROGRESS AND FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

There was submitted a report dated 6 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which (a) advised of progress on expenditure under the "New Housing Partnership" heading during the current financial year and of the terms of a letter received from the Scottish Office regarding the Council's bid for "New Housing Partnership" funding; and (b) suggested the establishment of an ad hoc Housing Partnership Sub-Committee of this Committee.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to recommend to Council that an ad hoc Housing Partnership Sub-Committee be established with the undernoted membership, quorum, terms of reference and delegated powers:-

Membership - 7 Councillors (4 a quorum);

Terms of Reference - to consider and decide upon all matters relating to the establishment and Council participation in the Housing Partnership Company.

Delegated Powers -

- Establishment and composition of the board, including the number of Council Representatives.
 - Production of partnership business plan and financial strategies.
 - Demolition of existing housing in accordance with decisions taken by Housing Capital Sub-Committee.
 - Identification of appropriate sites and packages of sites.
 - Identification of site mix, ie house types and sizes.
 - Tendering exercises to identify developers, funders and managing agents.
 - Contractual agreements between the Council and the Partnership Company.
 - Expenditure of New Housing Partnership monies in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations.
- (ii) that the Council nominate Members;
- (iii) that the Council's Scheme of Delegation be amended accordingly; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

3.2 PROPOSED TRANSFER OF COUNCIL LAND TO PROPOSED NEW HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

There was submitted a joint report dated 6 May 1998 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Support Services which sought approval to action required to implement the transfer of Council land to the proposed New Housing Partnership and the implementation of advance work to prepare the ground for the Partnership.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to make application to the Secretary of State for consent to gift various sites within East Ayrshire, as listed in the Appendix to the report, to the East Ayrshire Housing Partnership for the purpose of housing development as required;
- (ii) to remit the joint report to the Policy and Resources Committee in respect of land held on the General Services Account which it was proposed to gift to the Housing Partnership;
- (iii) to authorise the Director of Housing, in consultation with the other Officials concerned, to proceed with the implementation of advanced work in connection with the Partnership, including the establishment of the Board and any appropriate matters to be considered by the proposed Housing Partnership Sub-Committee, at the earliest opportunity; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY: PROGRESS REPORT (Item 7, Page 877)

4. There was submitted a report dated 30 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of progress made in the field of health and safety within the Housing Department.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the Department's objectives in the field of health and safety for 1998/99, as detailed in the report;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing would submit further reports on health and safety issues to this Committee on a six monthly basis; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

ROUGH SLEEPERS INITIATIVE: PHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS AND DRAFT CHALLENGE FUND BID (Item 6, Page 2865)

5. There was submitted a report dated 30 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the outcome of the physical count undertaken to help in establishing the level of rough sleeping within East Ayrshire, and which sought approval to the steps taken by the Director to bid for challenge funding from the Scottish Office.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the results of the physical count of people sleeping rough within East Ayrshire, as detailed in the report;

- (ii) to approve the terms of the Rough Sleepers Initiative Challenge Fund bid submitted to the Scottish Office and that the Director of Housing contact the Scottish Office to confirm the terms of the bid; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

MANAGING ABSENCE

6. There was submitted and noted a report dated 30 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which provided an analysis of the incidents of absence within the Housing Department for the first quarter of 1998, and which indicated the action taken by the Department in relation to the management of absence.

HEATWISE EAST AYRSHIRE - ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND INTERMEDIATE LABOUR MARKET (ILM) PROJECT: PROGRESS REPORT (Item 6, Page 2694)

7. There was submitted a report dated 26 March 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of progress on the Council's partnership project with Heatwise Ltd.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing would submit to a future meeting a report on the success of trainees in gaining employment following their period of training with the project; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Councillor McCredie left the meeting following discussion of this item.

URBAN AID ENERGY ADVICE PROJECT: ANNUAL REPORT

8. There was submitted and noted a report (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of progress on the Urban Aid Energy Advice Project for the year 1997/98.

PROPOSED ANNUAL TENANTS' CONFERENCE

9. There was submitted a report dated 28 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of proposals to hold an Annual Tenants' Conference during the current financial year, and which requested the Committee to consider the options for planning the Conference.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the proposal to hold an Annual Tenants' Conference;
- (ii) that the format of the Conference would be as set out within Option 2 of Para 4.1 of the report, ie comprising one half day session with two speakers and one group session, and that the detailed arrangements be made by the Director of Housing; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT: KEY FINDINGS (Item 12, Page 2697)

10. There was submitted a report dated 30 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the key findings of the Housing Needs Analysis recently carried out within East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing take account of the information contained within the Housing Needs Analysis when preparing the Council's next Housing Plan; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Councillor McCredie rejoined the meeting during discussion of this item.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 1997/98: VOID CONTROL (Item 10, Page 3204)

11. There was submitted and noted a report dated 11 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the Council's performance in managing void properties in comparison with other Scottish Local Authorities.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing submit to a future meeting a report to enable the Committee to consider reviewing a range of activities which affect the Council's performance in managing void properties;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing submit, to the next meeting, a report on the issues relating to house letting within the Riccarton area of Kilmarnock; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

INTEGRATED HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (Item 3, Page 2863)

12. There was submitted a joint report dated 19 May 1998 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Support Services on the outcome of the tender evaluation process used to select a new Integrated Housing Management System and which recommended acceptance of an appropriate tender.

It was agreed to authorise acceptance of the tender submitted by Orchard Information Systems Limited in the sum of £233,400 for the supply and implementation of the Integrated Housing Management System subject to confirmation that the system to be supplied would be compatible with the Council's existing information technology networks.

Councillor Nicoll left the meeting during consideration of this item.

**COUNCIL HOUSE SALES: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1997/98
(Item 4, Page 2013)**

13. There was submitted a report dated 6 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services on the performance in Council House Sales for the financial year 1997/98.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, indicated that the average time taken to process the sale of a Council House during the financial year 1997/98 was 22.8 weeks compared to the recommended Scottish Office target of 26 weeks;
- (ii) to note that income from Council House Sales for the financial year 1997/98 totalled approximately £6.6 million as reported verbally by the Assistant Principal Solicitor, rather than £5.6 million as stated in Paragraph 4.1 of the report; and
- (iii) to remit the report to the Policy and Resources Committee for information.

**RIGHT TO BUY: SCOTTISH OFFICE CONSULTATION PAPER: CHANGE TO
COST FLOOR RULES**

14. There was submitted a report dated 7 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the terms of a Consultation Paper recently issued by the Scottish Office on proposals to change the "Cost Floor" rule for tenants with the Right to Buy and the preserved Right to Buy; and which indicated that the Council's response to the paper had been submitted by the due date of 15 May 1998.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to confirm support for the proposals contained within the Consultation Paper to (a) change the period to which the "Cost Floor" applies from five to ten years; and (b) to include some repair costs within the "Cost Floor" calculation, subject to some concerns at the additional administration work involved and particularly the need for authorities to easily access accurate information regarding improvement works and also works of repairs and maintenance over a ten year period; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

Councillor McIntyre left the meeting during consideration of this item.

PROPOSED DISPOSALS OF GROUND/PROPERTY

15.1 KILMARNOCK: 15 CUTHBERT PLACE

There was submitted a report dated 30 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which invited the Committee to consider the options for the future of the property at 15 Cuthbert Place, Kilmarnock.

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 make arrangements for the property to be sold on the open market.

15.2 DRONGAN: GROUND ADJACENT TO 1 TAIGLUM PLACE

There was submitted a report dated 29 April 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground located adjacent to 1 Taiglum Place, Drongan.

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 1 Taiglum Place, Drongan.

15.3 AUCHINLECK: GROUND ADJACENT TO 25 BARBIESTON ROAD

There was submitted a report dated 5 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground located adjacent to 25 Barbieston Road, Auchinleck.

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 25 Barbieston Road, Auchinleck.

15.4 SORN: HOUSE AT 11 MAIN STREET

There was submitted a report dated 5 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of the house at 11 Main Street, Sorn.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the house in question be declared surplus to requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to make arrangements for the house to be sold on the open market.

15.5 MUIRKIRK: GROUND ADJACENT TO 2A LOVEDALE CRESCENT

There was submitted a report dated 19 May 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the disposal of an area of ground located adjacent to 2A Lovedale Crescent, Muirkirk, to the owner of this property.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the area of ground in question be declared surplus to requirements;
- (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 2A Lovedale Crescent, Muirkirk; and
- (iii) that appropriate compensation be made to the owner of 2A Lovedale Crescent in respect of an error which had occurred in the sale of the house at 4A Lovedale Crescent whereby the owner of 2A Lovedale Crescent was deprived of land which she had previously enjoyed.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

16. 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 6 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

KILMARNOCK: OWNERSHIP AND PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTIES

17. There was submitted a joint report dated 15 May 1998 (circulated) by the Directors of Housing, of Development Services and of Support Services on the ownership and possible redevelopment of properties within Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that it be remitted to the Directors of Housing and of Development Services to enter into discussions with Scottish Homes, Historic Scotland and other appropriate bodies for joint funding for the proposed redevelopment of the properties concerned;
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Development Services and Head of Property Services to proceed with voluntary negotiations with the owners of the properties concerned with a view to acquisition, and in the event of failure to reach agreement with the owners through this mechanism to proceed with Compulsory Purchase Order procedures, all on the basis that no acquisition would proceed until satisfactory funding arrangements were in place;
- (iii) that a further report on progress on this matter be submitted to a future meeting as and when appropriate; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1135 hours.