

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 APRIL 1999 AT 1000 HOURS
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD,
KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Kelly, Drew McIntyre, Gordon Cree, Douglas Reid, John Knapp, David Fulton, David Macrae, Kim Nicoll, George Smith, Jim Carmichael and Tommy Farrell.

ATTENDING: Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive; James Lavery, Director of Homes and Technical Services; Chris McAleavey, Head of Homes; David Mitchell, Principal Solicitor; Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer; David Morgan, Public Relations Officer; and Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gordon McCredie, Irene Reeves, Wilma Doyle, Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Jane Darnbrough, Alan Campbell, Robert McDill and David Sneller.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

1. The Chair introduced, and welcomed, to the meeting, James Lavery, the new Director of Homes and Technical Services who had taken up this post with effect from 12 April 1999.

He then made reference to the fact that certain Members of the Committee were not standing for re-election at the East Ayrshire Council Elections in May and thanked the Members concerned for their contribution to the work of the Committee and extended best wishes for the future.

DRAFT HOUSING SERVICE SPECIFICATION (Item 5, Page 3126)

2. There was submitted a report dated 1 April 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes which outlined the structure and contents of the new East Ayrshire Council Homes Draft Service Specification and advised of progress towards its completion.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the requirement for the Head of Homes to produce a Service Specification by 31 May 1999; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

GREEN PAPER ON HOUSING IN SCOTLAND

3. There was submitted a report dated 23 March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes on the contents of the recently issued Green Paper on Housing entitled "Investing in Modernisation - An Agenda for Scotland's Housing".

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Principal Solicitor would respond directly to Councillor McIntyre on the possible implications for the Council arising from the proposal contained within

the Green Paper for the introduction of a vendor's survey which would require house sellers to commission a survey and valuation and make this available to prospective buyers; and

- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

SCOTTISH HOUSING BEST VALUE NETWORK: BENCHMARKING FACILITATION

4. There was submitted a report dated 1 April 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes which advised of the remit of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network Group and the Department's membership within the Group; and requested funding to enable East Ayrshire Council to participate and fund the facilitation of benchmarking information between all Group members.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the remit of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network Group and the Department's membership of the Group;
- (ii) to note the requirement to provide and fund an external facilitator to provide the necessary benchmarking of statistical, performance and contextual information across all Network members;
- (iii) to approve the funding of £1,778 per annum for the two year project towards the project's five key objectives subject to agreement on the contract terms with all Group members; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

NEW HOUSING PARTNERSHIP: BID FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING (Item 1, Page 3746)

5. There was submitted a report dated 29 March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes on the outcome of the bid to the Scottish Office for further funding consents for the New Housing Partnership Initiative and to consider future action.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note that the Council's bid for additional funding under this heading had been unsuccessful;
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Homes and Technical Services to prepare a report for an early future meeting presenting housing development proposals that are regeneration orientated;
- (iii) to note comments made by the Director of Homes and Technical Services during discussion that the Council's bid for funding of £650,000 under the Empty Homes Initiative had been successful and that use of this funding may complement the approach to be pursued by the Council relative to (ii) above; and
- (iv) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

**EAST AYRSHIRE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP: TERMINATION OF GARAGE SITE
LEASES AT ALLANVALE, DUNLOP**

6. There was submitted a report dated March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes which sought authority to terminate the leases of 6 garage sites at Allanvale, Dunlop, prior to transfer to the East Ayrshire Housing Partnership as part of a larger site for housing development.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve termination of the leases of the garage sites in question; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

EAST AYRSHIRE GARDEN COMPETITION

7. There was submitted a report dated 24 March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes on proposed changes to the East Ayrshire Garden Competition for 1999.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that two representatives from the gardening community within East Ayrshire be invited to assist with the arrangements for the Garden Competition 1999 and to be involved in examining the possibility of establishing an East Ayrshire Gardening Club which could administer the Competition in future years with enabling support from the Council; and
- (ii) to remit to the Director of Homes and Technical Services, in consultation with the Chair, to finalise arrangements for selecting representatives from the gardening community and advertising and arranging the awards ceremony for the coming year's competition.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

8. There was submitted a report dated 22 March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes on the performance of the Department of Homes and Technical Services in relation to statutory key performance indicators during the period 1 April 1998 to 26 February 1999.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Homes and Technical Services would submit a further report on this matter to incorporate amendments to the presentation of information as discussed at the meeting, to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (ii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

RIGHT TO BUY: COST FLOOR RULES

9. There was submitted and noted a report dated 30 March 1999 (circulated) by the Solicitor to the Council on amendments to the "Cost Floor" rules applicable to tenants who wish to purchase their homes under the Right to Buy.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

10. 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 Paragraphs of Schedule 7A of the Act shown against each item.

STABLES COTTAGE, MOUNT HOUSE ESTATE, KILMARNOCK: PROPOSED DISPOSAL (PARA 2)

11. There was submitted a report dated 29 March 1999 (circulated) by the Head of Homes which sought approval to the disposal of Stables Cottage in the Mount House Estate, to facilitate full scale disposal of the Estate by Property Services.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to declare this property surplus to the requirements of the Homes and Technical Services Department, subject to re-housing of the existing occupant; and
- (ii) that the Head of Property Services be authorised to include the sale of the Cottage as part of the overall sale of the Mount House Estate.

LAND AT SPRINGHILL, KILMARNOCK (PARA 6)

12. There was submitted a report dated 30 March 1999 (circulated) by the Solicitor to the Council on a request that the Council enter into an Agreement in terms of Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 in respect of Council owned land at Springhill, Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to enter into an Agreement in terms of Section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, all as in terms of Paragraph 3.2 of the report; and
- (ii) to enter into a variation of the Minute of Agreement between Strathclyde Regional Council and Kilmarnock and Loudoun District Council relative to the land in question, all as in terms of Paragraph 3.4 of the report.

The meeting terminated at 1044 hours.