

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**HOUSING COMMITTEE****MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 1998 AT 1000 HOURS IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Jim Kelly, Drew McIntyre, Irene Reeves, Gordon Cree, Wilma Doyle, Jane Darnbrough, Kathleen Hall, John Knapp, Kim Nicoll, Robert McDill, George Smith, Jim Carmichael and Tommy Farrell.

ATTENDING: John Hillis, Director of Housing; Barbara Haughan, Director of Support Services; Chris McAleavey, Senior Depute Director of Housing; Jim Maitland and Alan McKnight, Depute Directors of Housing; Anna Gallagher, Assistant Principal Solicitor; Alistair Gardiner, Senior Accountant; Julie Armstrong, Senior Administrative Officer; David Morgan, Public Relations Officer; and Melanie Macleod, Administrative Officer.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gordon McCredie and Douglas Reid, Provost Robert Stirling and Councillors Alan Campbell, David Fulton, David Macrae and David Sneller.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

HOUSING CAPITAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 16 SEPTEMBER 1998

1. 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 16 September 1998 (circulated) as shown in Appendix 1 to these Minutes.

BUDGETARY CONTROL SUMMARY STATEMENTS FOR PERIOD ENDED 11 SEPTEMBER 1998 (PERIOD 6)**2.1 GENERAL FUND HOUSING**

There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 24 September 1998 (circulated) by the Acting Director of Finance and the Director of Housing on the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the financial year 1998/99 for the General Fund Housing Account for the period ended 11 September 1998 (Period 6).

2.2 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

There was submitted and noted a joint report dated 24 September 1998 (circulated) by the Acting Director of Finance and the Director of Housing on the current budgetary control position and the projected out-turn for the financial year 1998/99 for the Housing Revenue Account for the period ended 11 September 1998 (Period 6).

SINGLE PERSONS FLATS: BARSHARE ROAD, CUMNOCK

3. There was submitted a report dated 24 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which identified issues being raised concerning the part-furnished and

furnished flats in Barshare Road, Cumnock and which examined options for addressing the concerns of the existing tenants.

Councillor McIntyre, seconded by Councillor Farrell, moved that consideration of this matter be continued to a future meeting of the Committee pending consultation with tenants.

Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor McDill, moved as an amendment:-

- (i) that all service charges be removed from the flats at Nos 116-146 (inclusive) Barshare Road, Cumnock;
- (ii) that all furnishings currently enjoyed by the existing tenants of these flats be transferred from the Council's ownership to the existing tenants, at no charge; and
- (iii) that the Director of Housing enter into detailed consultation with the current tenants with a view to obtaining their consent to the proposed variation to their existing tenancy agreements to accommodate the changes referred to in (i) and (ii) above.

On a division by a show of hands, the motion was carried by 8 votes to 4.

MANAGEMENT OF VOID PROPERTIES (Item 12, Page 3616)

4. There was submitted a report dated 24 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which reviewed a range of activities considered to affect the Council's performance in managing void properties.

It was agreed:

- (i) that pre-allocation should be introduced for all properties becoming available for re-let to ensure that, whenever possible, all new tenancies are "signed up" immediately upon expiry of the previous secured tenancy;
- (ii) that only those repairs identified as posing health and safety risks should be carried out prior to a new tenant moving in to a house, with all other works deemed necessary to be treated as new tenant work for completion within 14 days of the date of occupation;
- (iii) that arrangements be introduced to ensure contractors' compliance with agreed performance targets;
- (iv) that arrangements to monitor client performance be reviewed on implementation of the new integrated housing management system;
- (v) that the current practice of elected member notification be discontinued;
- (vi) that the existing decoration voucher scheme be extended to provide additional assistance to prospective tenants accepting tenancies of identified "difficult to let" properties;
- (vii) that a report on the organisation and management of the house letting function within the Department of Housing be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- (viii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

RICCARTON WEST, KILMARNOCK: HOUSE LETTING ISSUES

5. There was submitted a report dated 30 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the issues relating to house letting within the Riccarton West area of Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, outlined the measures taken to address the problems within the Riccarton West area;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing prepare and submit a report to an early meeting of the Committee on the options available for further action within this area; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the content of the report.

BENEFITS SECTION BACKLOG - PROGRESS REPORT (Item 1.1, Page 3612)

6. There was submitted and noted a report dated 24 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of progress in dealing with the backlog of work within the Benefits Section of the Housing Department.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

7. There was submitted a report dated 28 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the performance of the Housing Department in relation to statutory Key Performance Indicators for the period from 1 April to 14 August 1998.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Director of Housing submit to the next meeting of the Committee a further report; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the content of the report.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT: EXTENDED POWERS OF EVICTION

8. There was submitted a report dated 3 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of new extended powers of eviction created by Section 23 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 due to come into effect on 1 December 1998 and of the Scottish Office's draft guidance for the implementation of these new powers.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the Director of Housing submit a report to the Committee on a six-monthly basis, detailing evictions carried out;
- (ii) that the Director of Housing liaise with the Head of Public Relations and Marketing to issue a press release giving details of the new legislation giving extended powers of eviction; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the content of the report.

EAST AYRSHIRE GARDEN COMPETITION 1998 (Item 7, Page 3203)

9. There was submitted a report dated 17 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which appraised the Committee of the current situation in respect of the Garden Competition 1998 and provided a list of the prize winners.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Chair, finalise arrangements for the civic function for the presentation of awards to the competition prize winners; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the content of the report.

Councillor Darnbrough joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

**REQUEST TO LEASE PREMISES AT 5B AND 5D TOURHILL ROAD,
KILMARNOCK: THE AVENUE PROJECT**

- 10.** There was submitted a report dated 23 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of a request from The Avenue Project to lease two additional properties at 5B and 5D Tourhill Road, Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:

- (i) to lease the properties at 5B and 5D Tourhill Road to The Avenue Project;
- (ii) that the discounted rental payment be set at 5% of the normal rental value of the properties; and
- (iii) that Head of Property make the necessary arrangements in connection with this matter.

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF GROUND/PROPERTY

11.1 STEWARTON: PROPERTIES AT 11, 13 AND 15 MAIN STREET

There was submitted a report dated 23 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which advised of the current situation regarding the above properties which were held on the Housing Account and invited the Committee to consider options for future use.

It was agreed:

- (i) to declare the properties in question surplus to departmental requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property (a) to undertake a trawl of other Council Departments to determine whether any Department would wish to make use of these properties; and (b) failing any positive response to the trawl of Departments, to make arrangements for the properties to be sold on the open market.

11.2 GALSTON: GROUND ADJACENT TO 36-44 HENRIETTA STREET

There was submitted a report dated 16 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval for the sale of an area of ground located adjacent to 36-44 Henrietta Street, Galston.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the area of ground in question be declared surplus to departmental requirements; and
- (ii) that it be remitted to the Head of Property to negotiate the sale of the ground on suitable terms to Mr White of Barrmill Road, Galston.

11.3 KILMARNOCK: GROUND ADJACENT TO 1 MACEWAN PLACE

There was submitted a report dated 4 September 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground extending to approximately 53m², located adjacent to 1 MacEwan Place, Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the area of ground in question be declared surplus to departmental 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 MacEwan Place, Kilmarnock.

11.4 KILMARNOCK: GROUND AT REAR OF 30 WOODSTOCK PLACE

There was submitted a report dated 31 August 1998 (circulated) by the Director of Housing which sought approval to the sale of an area of ground extending to 28m², located at the rear of 30 Woodstock Place, Kilmarnock.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the area of ground in question be declared surplus to departmental 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 30 Woodstock Place, Kilmarnock.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

12. The Committee resolved 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 ground that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

ADDITIONAL ITEM

- 13.1 The Chair agreed that the following item of urgent business be considered as an early decision was required.

13.2 ADAPTATION OF COUNCIL DWELLING IN KILMARNOCK

The Director of Housing requested that consideration be given to adapting a council dwelling in Kilmarnock, to make it suitable for use by a family which included a young person with severe physical impairment.

It was agreed to authorise the Director of Housing to commission the necessary adaptation work at an approximate cost of £36,000, to be met from within the existing housing capital budget.

The meeting terminated at 1055 hours.