

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 AUGUST 1997 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, Robert McDill, David Sneller, Robert Taylor, John Smith and Tommy Farrell.

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gordon McCredie, Wilma Doyle, Provost Robert Stirling, Councillors Jane Darnbrough, Alan Campbell, Kim Nicoll, George Smith and Jim Carmichael.

CHAIR: Councillor Jim Kelly, Chair.

SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. There were submitted and approved, both as correct records and, where appropriate, in respect of recommendations contained therein, the undernoted Sub-Committee Minutes (circulated) as contained in Appendices I, II and III to these Minutes.
 - 1.1 **HOUSING CAPITAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF 30 JUNE 1997 - APPENDIX I**
 - 1.2 **CHAIR'S SUB-COMMITTEE OF 14 JULY 1997 - APPENDIX II.**
 - 1.3 **APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE OF 28 JULY 1997 - APPENDIX III.**

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT: EXPENDITURE POSITION AS AT 18 JULY 1997 (PERIOD 4)

2. There was submitted and noted a report dated 13 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance advising of the current budgetary control position in respect of the housing revenue account for the period ended 18 July 1997 (Period 4).

Councillor Knapp joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

**GENERAL FUND HOUSING: EXPENDITURE POSITION AS AT 18 JULY 1997
(PERIOD 4)**

3. There was submitted and noted a report dated 13 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Finance advising of the current budgetary control position in respect of the general fund housing account for the period ended 18 July 1997 (Period 4).

Councillor Knapp joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4. There was submitted a report dated 7 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing seeking approval for the carrying out of a Housing Needs Assessment of East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, explained (a) that, in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Office, the Housing Department would, by June 1998, prepare a Housing Plan for the period 1998/2003; and (b) that a comprehensive needs assessment of the housing system within East Ayrshire would represent a fundamental part of the Housing Plan process and would also inform the development of objectives and the formulation of appropriate policies by the Council;
- (ii) to approve the carrying out of a Housing Needs Assessment by external consultants at an estimated cost not exceeding £60,000, the Assessment to incorporate those matters detailed in the "Framework for Assessment of Housing Needs" as detailed in Appendix I to the report, including a Tenants' Satisfaction Survey;
- (iii) to remit to the Director of Housing to prepare and submit to a future meeting of this Committee a report on the outcome of the tendering procedure for the carrying out of the Assessment following the issue of the contract acceptance; and
- (iv) to meet the cost of the Assessment from the Housing Capital Account.

PROPOSED HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY (Item 7, Page 1519)

5. There was submitted a report dated 20 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing to enable the Committee to give further consideration to the proposed East Ayrshire Council Housing Allocation Policy.

It was agreed;-

- (i) to approve, in principle, the proposed Housing Allocation Policy as set out in Appendix A to the report, subject to (ii), (iii) and (iv) below;
- (ii) to make the proposed Housing Allocation Policy document available for consultation for an appropriate period of time prior to the next meeting of this Committee;
- (iii) in order to facilitate the consultation process, to authorise (a) the Director of Housing to arrange to circulate the proposed policy document to all Elected Members of the Council; and (b) the Director of Support Services in liaison with the Director of Housing to make arrangements for an appropriate press

release to be issued drawing attention to the availability of the proposed policy document for circulation to appropriate local organisations within East Ayrshire; and

- (iv) to remit to the Director of Housing to submit a report on the outcome of the consultation process as referred to in (ii) and (iii) above, to the next meeting of this Committee.

Councillor McIntyre joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

SHIRE HOUSING ASSOCIATION: NOMINATIONS AGREEMENT (Item 11, Page 1670)

- 6. There was submitted a report dated 12 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing on the proposed arrangements governing the nomination of prospective tenants by East Ayrshire Council to Shire Housing Association Limited.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the terms of the proposed nominations agreement between the Council and Shire Housing Association Limited, which amongst other things, provided that the Association would make available to the Council a minimum of 50% of all of their vacancies for nomination purposes; and
- (ii) to authorise the Director of Housing to conclude formal arrangements with Shire Housing Association Limited in respect of the establishment of the nominations agreement.

HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION SERVICES STRATEGY

- 7. There was submitted a report dated 8 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing detailing proposals for the provision of accommodation and ancillary support services for homeless people within East Ayrshire.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the management and supervision of the St Andrew's Street, Kilmarnock, temporary homeless persons complex would be undertaken by the Council's Housing Department; and
- (ii) that the Personnel Sub-Committee would be requested to approve the duties, gradings and salaries of the new posts required.

BEST VALUE IN HOUSING MANAGEMENT

8. There was submitted a report dated 13 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing outlining developments within the housing profession for ensuring Best Value and requesting authorisation to become a Scottish Office/Chartered Institute of Housing pilot authority.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, explained
 - (a) that the Scottish Office had commissioned the Chartered Institute of Housing to undertake a review of the preparation of Housing Management Plans for the Housing Service in order to ensure that such plans contributed effectively towards ensuring Best Value in Housing;
 - (b) that a Working Group, upon

which East Ayrshire Council are represented, had been established to carry out the review; and (c) that the Working Group would report its findings towards the end of October 1997 following which the new regime would be piloted within four authorities; and

- (ii) that the Council would participate as one of the four pilot authorities, the detailed arrangements in this connection to be made by the Director of Housing.

FOYER PROPOSALS FOR EAST AYRSHIRE

9. There was submitted a joint report (circulated) by the Directors of Housing and of Development Services seeking the Committee's approval, in respect of its interest, to jointly fund, in partnership with Scottish Homes, East Ayrshire Business Partnership, Kilmarnock College and Enterprise Ayrshire, a feasibility study to (a) examine the need for a foyer style development within East Ayrshire; (b) recommend an appropriate model to meet identified needs; and (d) develop a Business Plan in order to detail the finance required, and its sources, to develop and implement the scheme.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the terms of the report which, amongst other things, explained:-
 - (a) that a foyer is an educational pathway for 16-25 year old people to achieve meaningful personal development and independent living through experiencing life skills training, vocational and academic education, health care promotion, career guidance and social interaction
 - (b) that it is proposed that a three stage phased process of establishing an area based foyer service would be examined in order to minimise the likelihood of depopulation as follows:- Phase 1 - Kilmarnock; Phase 2 - Cumnock; and Phase 3 - Other population centres;
 - (c) that a Steering Committee would be established, membership of which would reflect the interests of the partnership organisations and other organisations deemed essential for the establishment and continued success of the project.
- (ii) to approve the joint funding of a feasibility study to examine the need for a foyer style project in East Ayrshire and the production of fully costed Business Plan and Development Strategy for the project at an estimated total cost of £20,000;

- (iii) that a contribution of £5,000 be made by East Ayrshire Council to the total cost referred to in (ii) above, to be shared between the Departments of Housing and Development Services; and
- (iv) that membership of the Steering Committee should also include an appropriate representative of young people within East Ayrshire, this matter to be dealt with in detail by the Director of Housing in liaison with the Directors of Development Services and Education.

Councillor Fulton left the meeting during discussion, but prior to determination, of this item.

**HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS: HB/CTB CIRCULAR A21197:
SINGLE ROOM RENT FOR PEOPLE AGED 25-59 (Item 11.2, Page 2150)**

10. There was submitted and noted a report dated 4 July 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing advising of the Government's decision, set out within HB/CTB Circular A21/97, to revoke the relevant regulations introducing the extension of the single room rent to people between 25 and 59 years of age.

PROGRESS ON ENERGY ADVICE CAMPAIGN (Item 6, Page 1668)

11. There was submitted a report dated 11 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing providing an update on progress with Phase I of the Joint Energy Advice Campaign launched in May 1997 as part of the new Concordat with Scottish Power; and setting out proposals for Phase 2 of the Campaign.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the progress made in respect of Phase I of the Campaign, as detailed in the report;
- (ii) to approve the proposals for Phase 2 of the Campaign which would be conducted through a number of local area joint awareness roadshows attended by representatives from the Housing Department, Scottish Power and the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre who would provide advice and information on energy related matters, it being intended that the roadshows would tie in with the Council's proposed local open days; and
- (iii) that the Director of Housing would submit a report on the outcome of Phase 2 of the Campaign to a future meeting of this Committee.

PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF GROUND AT NORTH LONGPARK, KILMARNOCK

12. There was submitted a report dated 20 August 1997 (circulated) by the Director of Housing requesting agreement in principle to dispose of an area of ground at North Longpark, Kilmarnock.

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 make the necessary

arrangements for the disposal.

The meeting terminated at 1050 hours.