

## SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on Wednesday, 17 January 2007 in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank at 9.13 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors Denis Agnew, Gail Casey, James Flynn, Marie McNair\*, Martin Rooney, James Bolland, Craig McLaughlin\* and Dennis Brogan.

\*Arrived later in the meeting

**Attending:** Bill Clark, Director of Social Work Services; Irving Hodgson, Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services); David Connell, Head of Finance; Margaret Caldwell, Manager of Housing Operations; James Pow, Manager of Finance, Department of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services; Don Findlay, Manager of Technical Services; Stephen West, Manager of Resources, Department of Social Work Services; Beryl Middleton, Section Head, Quality Assurance and Training; Tom Jackson, Joint Manager, Addiction Services; John Hepburn, Welfare Rights Officer; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor and Shona Barton, Administrative Officer.

**Apology:** An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Linda McColl.

## APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

- 11106 Having heard the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) it was noted that the Convener, Councillor McNair had been delayed. It was agreed that Councillor Agnew would chair the meeting until Councillor McNair arrived. Accordingly, Councillor Agnew took the chair.

## MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 11107 The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on 8 November 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

**MEASURED TERM CONTRACT FOR REPAIRS AND PLANNED  
MAINTENANCE OF WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S HOUSING  
STOCK – 2007/2010**

- 11108 With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on 8 November 2006 (Page 2807, paragraph 10573 refers), a report was resubmitted by the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services advising of tenders received for the Measured Term Contract for Repairs and Planned Maintenance of West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Stock – 2007/2010 and seeking approval to accept the most economically advantageous tender.
- 11109 Having heard the Head of Finance and the Manager of Technical Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report;
  - (2) to approve acceptance of the offer of the Housing Repairs and Maintenance Service to carry out the Measured Term Contract for Repairs and Planned Maintenance of West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Stock – 2007/2010; and
  - (3) to note that a report on the tender process would be submitted to the March meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee.

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2006/2007 – BUDGETARY CONTROL  
STATEMENT TO 15 NOVEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 7)**

- 11110 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the period ended 15 November 2006.
- 11111 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Spokesperson for Housing, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006/2007 – BUDGETARY CONTROL  
REPORT TO 15 NOVEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 7)**

- 11112 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) advising on the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2006/2007.
- 11113 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Spokesperson for Housing, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**HOUSING – NON HRA REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETARY CONTROL  
STATEMENT 2006/2007 TO 15 NOVEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 7)**

- 11114 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) advising on the financial performance of the Housing – Non HRA Revenue Account to the period ended 15 November 2006.
- 11115 Having heard the Manager of Housing Operations in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**NOTE:** Councillor McLaughlin entered the meeting during discussion of the above item.

**HOUSING MAINTENANCE TRADING OPERATION 2006/2007 FINANCIAL  
PERFORMANCE TO 15 NOVEMBER 2006 (PERIOD 7)**

- 11116 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) presenting the interim cumulative financial performance information for the period ending 15 November 2006 (Period 7).
- 11117 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Finance, Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services, in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Flynn seconded by Councillor Rooney, moved:-
- 11118 That the Committee agrees to note the contents of the report.
- 11119 As an amendment Councillor Bollan, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-
- 11120 That any surplus in this budget should be re-invested in the Housing Department HRA so that tenants get the return on the surplus.
- 11121 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

**NOTE:-** Councillor McNair entered the meeting during discussion of the above item.

### **ARRIVAL OF CONVENER**

- 11122 Having heard Councillor Agnew, the Committee agreed that since the Convener, Councillor McNair, had arrived during discussion of the previous item, it would now be appropriate for her to take the Chair. Accordingly, Councillor McNair assumed the Chair.

### **STATISTICAL INFORMATION: WAITING LIST, VOIDS, LETS AND HOMELESS**

- 11123 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing statistical information in relation to the waiting list for West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) houses, the reasons for termination of tenancies and the voids and lets position as at 30 November 2006.
- 11124 Having heard the Manager of Housing Operations in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

### **HOUSE SALES**

- 11125 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) providing information on West Dunbartonshire Council houses sold under the Right to Buy scheme between 1 April 2006 and 30 November 2006.
- 11126 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Spokesperson for Housing, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

### **HOMELESS UNITS**

- 11127 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services) advising of the breakdown of homeless units in each area.
- 11128 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Housing Operations in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the number of homeless units in each area; and
  - (2) that the Manager of Housing Operations would provide information to Councillors Casey and McLaughlin on the number of homeless units in their respective wards.

## ADJOURNMENT

- 11129 Having heard the Convener, Councillor McNair, the Committee agreed to a short adjournment to allow officers of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services to leave the meeting.
- 11130 The meeting resumed at 9.30 a.m. with all Members on the sederunt being present with the exception of Councillor McLaughlin.

## ADDICTION SERVICES – PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

- 11131 With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on 8 November 2006 (Page 2799, paragraph 10519 refers), a report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing an overview of the current Performance Framework for Addiction Services.
- 11132 After discussion and having heard the Joint Manager Addiction Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Rooney seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 11133 That the Committee agrees the recommendation in the report that is: to note the contents of the report and ongoing developments.
- 11134 As an amendment, Councillor Bollan seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-
- 11135 That in view of this report and the unacceptable waiting times for referral, that a review of addiction services is undertaken so that the service can be restructured to reflect the needs of the people who misuse drugs and alcohol within West Dunbartonshire.
- 11136 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

**NOTE:** Councillor McLaughlin re-entered the meeting during discussion of the above item.

## SOCIAL WORK BUDGETARY POSITION 2006/07 AS AT PERIOD 7 TO 15 NOVEMBER 2006

- 11137 A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services advising of the performance of the Social Work budget for the period to 15 November 2006.
- 11138 Having heard the Director of Social Work Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**SOCIAL WORK SERVICES – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
2006 – 2010**

- 11139 A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services providing information on the Social Work Service's Workforce Development Plan, and reporting on progress with introducing section based plans for specialist groups of staff.
- 11140 After discussion and having heard the Section Head, Quality Assurance and Training in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS**

- 11141 A report was submitted by the Director of Social Work Services advising on the contents of the Pre Budget Report 2006 and the implications and possible effects on the Council.
- 11142 After discussion and having heard the Welfare Rights Officer in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Rooney seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 11143 That the Committee notes the contents of the report.
- 11144 As an amendment, Councillor Bolla seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-
- 11145 That officers seek the appropriate Ministers, be they from the Scottish Executive or Westminster, to request that they attend this Committee to explain to us the consequences of these bills on the people that we represent.
- 11146 On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

The meeting closed at 10.19 a.m.