

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee held in Meeting Room 3, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton on Wednesday, 4 August 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bolla, Jim Brown, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, Jim Finn, William Hendrie, Jim McElhill, Craig McLaughlin and William McLaughlin.

Attending: Elaine Melrose, Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development; Ronald Dinnie, Head of Land and Environment Services; Jim McAloon, Head of Housing and Regeneration Services; John McKerracher, Head of Property and Technical Services; Jim Pow, Manager of Finance, Housing, Environment and Economic Development Department; Janice Lockhart, Section Head of Homeless and Allocations; Fin McElhinney, Service Manager, Stock Transfer; Sally Michael, Principal Solicitor and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor John Millar.

Councillor William Hendrie in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of Meetings of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee held on 5 May 2010 (Ordinary) and 29 June 2010 (Special) were submitted and approved as a correct record.

VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Having heard Councillor Hendrie, Chair, the Committee agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

PROPOSED LEASE OF LAND AT WHITEFORD AVENUE, BELLSMYRE TO THE BELLSMYRE COMMUNITY GARDEN ASSOCIATION

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of a proposal to establish a Community Allotment and Garden site at Whiteford Avenue, Bellsmyre and seeking approval for the associated lease of land.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to the development of a 30 year lease agreement between Bellsmyre Community Gardens Association and West Dunbartonshire Council, for the land shown hatched on Appendix A to the report, at the sum of £1 per annum.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2010/2011 TO 30 JUNE 2010 (PERIOD 3)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing, Environmental and Economic Development Department to 30 June 2010 (Period 3).

After discussion and having heard the Head of Land and Environment Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of this report.

PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (PSIF) IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development informing of the HEEDS Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) self assessment and the Departmental Improvement Plan.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the Department's PSIF Improvement Plan and that continuous improvement had now been embedded in the Department's service planning and performance management system; and
- (2) to note that progress on Year 1 Priorities would be monitored through existing performance management frameworks.

SALE OF VACANT FIRST FLOOR PREMISES AT 82 MAIN STREET, ALEXANDRIA

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval to sell the vacant first floor premises at 82 Main Street, Alexandria on the open market for residential purposes.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development be authorised to sell the vacant first floor property at 82 Main Street, Alexandria on the open market, subject to a closing date for residential use; and
- (2) that the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services be authorised to conclude the transaction subject to such legal conditions that are considered appropriate.

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION FUND AND PROJECTS UPDATE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on Town Centre Regeneration Fund (TCRF) projects.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Housing and Regeneration Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note progress made with regeneration projects in town centres throughout West Dunbartonshire; and
- (2) to note that whilst TCRF funded works would no longer take place within the Artizan Centre, the Council had successfully managed to secure the funding for a number of key projects in Dumbarton town centre which had received wide support from the local community and businesses.

HOUSING: FRESH THINKING, NEW IDEAS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development on the Government's new discussion paper "Housing: Fresh Thinking, New Ideas".

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development and Service Manager, Stock Transfer in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the publication of the discussion paper and the response process outlined in the report; and
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development in consultation with Councillor Hendrie, Chair, to provide the response on behalf of the Council.

HOUSING INSPECTION IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising that the Scottish Housing Regulator has approved West Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Inspection Improvement Plan which was submitted in response to the Regulator's Re-Inspection Report published on 8 April 2010.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note and acknowledge that the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan had been approved by the Scottish Housing Regulator;
- (2) to approve the monitoring arrangements for progressing the Housing Inspection Improvement as outlined in Section 3.3 of the report; and
- (3) to note the requirement to submit an update to the Scottish Housing Regulator, in June 2012, on the progress in taking the Housing Inspection Improvement Plan forward.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER 'HOMESEARCH'

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on progress in the development of the Common Housing Register (CHR) in partnership with local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development and Section Head of Homeless and Allocations in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress to date in the development of the CHR;
- (2) to note that the Executive Director would arrange to provide Members with an indication of the revised project timescale; and
- (3) otherwise to note that a further report on the ICT options would be brought to a future meeting of Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee for consideration.

HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/2011 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2010 (PERIOD 3)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising on the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2010/2011.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2010/2011 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT TO 30 JUNE 2010 (PERIOD 3)

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on the financial performance of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the period ended 30 June 2010.

The Committee agreed to note the contents of this report.

PERSONAL MEMORIAL SCHEME

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an outline of proposals for a personal memorial scheme within West Dunbartonshire.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Land and Environment Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to the introduction of the scheme for personal memorials, outlined in the Appendix to the report, which would be administered by the Department of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development.

UNAUTHORISED USE OF DALMUIR GOLF COURSE

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing an update on actions being taken to assist in the prevention of unauthorised use of Dalmuir Golf Course.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Land and Environment Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to the introduction of the additional measures outlined in this report which were designed to minimise the problem of unauthorised use of Dalmuir Golf Course; and
- (2) that officers take no action with regard to the proposal contained in paragraph 3.5 of the report concerning the possible introduction of a reduced payment ticket for those not wishing to play a full round of golf.

The meeting closed at 10.50 a.m.