

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee held in the Council Chamber, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 6 August 2008 at 10.14 a.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Jim Brown, Geoff Calvert, Gail Casey, William Hendrie, Jonathan McColl, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair, David McBride and Jim Finn.

Attending: Elaine Melrose, Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development; Jim McAloon, Head of Housing & Regeneration Services; John McKerracher, Head of Property and Technical Services; Lynda McLaughlin, Manager of Commercial Operations; Kevin Neeson, Manager of Development Services; Jeff Stobo, Manager of Strategy; Angus Bodie, Manager of Roads, Waste and Transport; Jim Pow, Manager of Finance, Housing, Environment and Economic Development; Jack Stevenson, Section Head, Property Management; John Corcoran, Section Head – Architectural Services; John Kerr, Homeless Strategy Officer; William Gibson, Section Head (Estates); Nigel Ettles, Principal Solicitor and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services.

Councillor William Hendrie in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee held on 7 May 2008 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the following:-

With reference to the item under the heading 'Ownership, Moorings and Development Issues Concerning the River Leven' (Page 1118 refers), after hearing the Principal Solicitor it was noted that the advice of Counsel was still being considered in relation to this matter and it was anticipated that a comprehensive report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on 8 October 2008.

VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

After hearing the Chair, Councillor Hendrie, the Committee agreed to vary the Order of Business as hereinafter recorded.

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT – PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development providing information on the performance of services within the Housing, Environmental and Economic Development Department. The report contained information on:-

- (a) fourth quarter and year end figures of 2007/2008 for those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are monitored on a quarterly basis (Appendix 1);
- (b) Statutory Performance Indicators for the fourth quarter of 2007/2008 and un-audited year end performance figures where available (Appendix 2);
- (c) Statutory Performance Indicators which the Corporate Management Team identified in early 2007 as requiring improvement actions and regular monitoring (Appendix 2);
- (d) the programme of Best Value Reviews (Appendix 3);
- (e) fourth quarter information for corporate complaints received (Appendix 4); and
- (f) the current status of Departmental Actions to meet Departmental Objectives for 2007/2008, i.e. the Service Plan Report (Appendix 5).

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing the Chair, Councillor Hendrie, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a short period.

The meeting reconvened at 10.37 a.m. with all Members listed in the Sederunt in attendance.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2008 - 2013

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval of the West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2008 – 2013.

A presentation was given by the Homeless Strategy Officer and the Manager of Strategy on the various issues involved in tackling and preventing homelessness in West Dunbartonshire over the next five years. Following the presentation, a short question and answer session took place.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to acknowledge the work of the partner agencies in contributing to the development of the Homelessness Strategy;
- (2) to approve the West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2008 – 2013 and authorise its immediate introduction and publication;
- (3) to approve the Action Plan detailed in Appendix 1 of the strategy; and
- (4) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to work with partner agencies to implement the strategy and secure the outcomes as defined in the report.

SURPLUS COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of proposals received from housing associations in response to the Committee's invitation for detailed proposals relating to surplus Council Housing stock in the following areas:-

- (a) 31 – 139 Salisbury Place, Clydebank
- (b) 82 – 110 Lilac Avenue, Clydebank
- (c) 1 - 37 Melbourne Avenue, Clydebank
- (d) 2 & 4 Pennicroft Avenue, Dumbarton
- (e) 11, 13 & 15 Aitkenbar Drive, Dumbarton
- (f) 15 & 16 Auchenreoch Avenue, Dumbarton
- (g) 2, 4, 6 & 8 Carrick Terrace, Dumbarton
- (i) 11, 13 & 15 Muir Road, Dumbarton
- (j) 4, 6, 7, 8 & 10 Creveul Court, Alexandria
- (k) 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22 & 24 Hill Street, Dumbarton

ADJOURNMENT

After hearing the Chair, Councillor Hendrie, the Committee agreed to adjourn for a short period to allow the Principal Solicitor to ascertain whether the terms of a proposed motion by Councillor Calvert would require the suspension of Standing Orders in light of a previous decision taken by Council.

The meeting reconvened at 11.23 a.m. with all Members listed in the Sederunt in attendance.

After discussion and having heard the Principal Solicitor confirm that, in his opinion, there was no conflict with a previous decision taken by Members at a meeting of Council, and therefore no requirement to suspend Standing Orders, it was agreed on the motion of Councillor Calvert, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin:-

- (1) to note the responses received for the development of surplus stock sites and that the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development be instructed to report further to the Committee on the financial implications and other factors referred to in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 of the report;
- (2) to recognise that substantial Master Planning, as referred to in paragraph 3.4 of the report, had already been carried out, for example, in the production and agreement of the Alexandria Town Centre Masterplan. The Committee was not supportive of duplication of effort and was committed to build on the outcomes of existing Master Plans;
- (3) to that end, to request the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to bring forward potential projects for consideration, based on existing Master Planning work, involving the 10 priority areas for regeneration already identified and in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Quality Standard, that could be consulted upon without delay, to the October meeting of the Committee;
- (4) to note that inaccurate and misleading information regarding the development of the Council's strategy for regeneration of housing stock had been circulated to the Press and community organisations. The effect of this inaccurate and misleading information had been to cause unnecessary confusion and upset to residents and was undermining the Council's reputation with its strategic housing partners; and
- (5) to instruct the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to send out full and accurate information to all strategic partners, community and tenants organisations and the Press to ensure that the misinformation that was being spread was corrected.

Councillor Bollan, having failed to obtain a seconder for a proposed amendment, asked that his dissent be recorded.

EMPLOYEE COSMOPOLITAN FITNESS SCHEME – DISCOUNTED PARTNER MEMBERSHIP PILOT

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development updating the Committee on the outcome of the six month pilot which extended the WDC Employee discount scheme to include immediate family members (defined as civil partners/spouses).

After discussion, Councillor McColl, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to note the success of the pilot scheme which operated during February through July 2008;
- (2) to approve continuation of the discounted membership scheme for partners/spouses of employees resident within West Dunbartonshire under the terms and conditions previously approved; and
- (3) to congratulate the officers involved for their hard work in ensuring that the pilot scheme was a success and that appropriate arrangements be made to advertise the continuance of the scheme, including advertising in employee pay slips, etc.

As an amendment, Councillor Calvert, seconded by Councillor McBride, moved:-

That the Committee agrees to approve the continuation of the discounted membership scheme for partners/spouses of employees resident within West Dunbartonshire under the terms and conditions previously approved, subject to a further report being submitted to a future meeting of the Committee giving an update on the position in six months time.

On a vote being taken, 4 Members voted for the amendment and 5 for the motion, with one abstention. The motion was accordingly declared carried.

SINGLE TRADE MEASURED TERM CONTRACTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development informing on progress with the tendering procedure for single trade measured term contracts and seeking approval to further extend one of the two lift maintenance contracts to 30 June 2009.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the progress made with the tendering procedure for single trade measured term contracts; and
- (2) to approve the proposed extension of the contract presently with Lift Maintenance Ltd. to 30 June 2009 for the reasons outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

LIFT UPGRADE WORKS AT WEST BRIDGEND – ARRANGEMENTS FOR TENANTS

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of access arrangements and procedures to be implemented for the benefit of tenants as a result of the forthcoming lift upgrade works at the three multi-storey blocks of flats at West Bridgend, Dumbarton.

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

- (1) to note and endorse the arrangements that had been planned for the safe access and egress of tenants during the forthcoming lift replacement contract;
- (2) to note the concerns expressed by Members particularly in respect of access arrangements for elderly, infirm and disabled residents during the times that the upgrade works were in operation; and
- (3) that the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development would arrange for an officer to be nominated for liaison purposes and for keeping residents informed during the period of the works, which would include working closely with colleagues in Social Work and Health to ensure minimum disruption and inconvenience to affected residents.

MANAGEMENT OF DUMBARTON HARBOUR

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development:-

- (a) highlighting the duties and powers required of West Dunbartonshire Council in relation to Dumbarton Harbour and seeking approval for the appointment of Clydeport Operations Ltd. as Agents to the Council to offer advice and assistance in delivering the Harbourmaster service; and
- (b) advising that it was necessary to confirm formally the Executive Director's role as Harbourmaster of Dumbarton Harbour.

After discussion, it was agreed:-

- (1) to acknowledge the responsibility of West Dunbartonshire Council as Harbour Authority;
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to act as Harbour Master;
- (3) to acknowledge that a Harbour Policy, funding requirements and potential income streams, would be reported back to a future Committee meeting; and

- (4) that it would be helpful to have an Information Seminar on the issues involved prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

SALE OF LAND AT CROSS COTTAGE, WILLIAM STREET, DUNTOCHER

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval to sell the landlord's interest in land extending to 711 sq.m. or thereby at Cross Cottage, William Street, Duntocher, as shown hatched in black on the plan appended to the report, to the sitting tenant.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) that the Executive Director of Housing , Environmental and Economic Development be authorised to sell the Council's interest in the land extending to 711 sq.m. or thereby at Cross Cottage, William Street, Duntocher to Miss T. McCafferty for £10,000 (Ten Thousand Pounds Sterling) subject to the conditions contained within paragraph 3.2 of the report; 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.

The meeting closed at 11.58 a.m.