

## **HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of the Housing, Environment & Economic Development Committee held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 3 December 2008 at 10.00 a.m.

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

**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; Alasdair Gregor, Planning Services Manager; Kevin Neeson, Manager of Development Services; Jeff Stobo, Manager of Strategy; Donald Findlay, Manager of Estates and Technical Services; Angus Bodie, Manager of Roads, Waste and Transport; Jim Pow, Manager of Finance, Housing, Environment and Economic Development; Ronald Dinnie, Head of Land and Environment Services; William Gibson, Section Head (Estates); Nigel Ettles, Principal Solicitor and Craig Stewart, Committee Officer, Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services.

\* Attended later in the meeting.

**Councillor William Hendrie in the Chair**

### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee held on 8 October 2008 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

### **INTERIM REPORT ON HOUSING PROGRESS – SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR**

A presentation was given by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development and the Head of Housing & Regeneration Services on various issues in relation to the above. Following a question and answer session, the Chair, Councillor Hendrie, thanked both officers for their informative presentation.

In this respect, a report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of the outcome of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Interim Inspection visit which took place in August 2008 and focused on those areas of Housing Management identified as significantly weak during the previous inspection.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor McColl, seconded by Councillor McLaughlin, moved:-

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to note the findings and recommendations of the Housing Regulator;
- (2) to acknowledge the progress made by the Housing Service to date;
- (3) to recognise the importance of achieving service improvements required within a short space of time both in terms of the re-inspection of the Housing service and the follow up Best Value Audit;
- (4) to support the improvement process outlined in the report as the mechanism for driving change;
- (5) that the Housing Remedial Action Plan Group and newly established bi-monthly tenants meetings should be the vehicle for monitoring progress;
- (6) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to implement fully the ongoing improvement programme in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders; and
- (7) that, where appropriate, regular updates be provided to this Committee.

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

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to note the findings and recommendations of the Housing Regulator;
- (2) to acknowledge the inadequate progress made by the Housing Service to date;
- (3) to recognise the importance of achieving service improvements required within a short space of time both in terms of the re-inspection of the Housing Service and the follow up Best Value Audit;

- (4) whilst supporting the improvement process outlined in the report as the mechanism for driving change, this Committee expects the Convener of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to ensure this change happens without more time being wasted;
- (5) that the Housing Remedial Action Plan Group and newly established bi-monthly tenants meetings should be the vehicle for monitoring progress;
- (6) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to implement fully the ongoing improvement programme in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders; and
- (7) that, where appropriate, regular updates be provided to this Committee.

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

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting reconvened at 11.10 a.m. with all Members listed in the Sederunt in attendance.

### **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2008/2009 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENT TO 15 OCTOBER 2008 (PERIOD 6)**

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 15 October 2008.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Finance in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the report.

### **HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009 BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT TO 15 OCTOBER 2008 (PERIOD 6)**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of the progress of the HRA Capital Programme 2008/2009.

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

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT 2008/2009 TO 15 OCTOBER 2008 (PERIOD 6)**

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 15 October 2008 (Period 6).

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development and the Head of Land and Environment Services in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the contents of this report.

#### **CLYDEBANK LEISURE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AND SALE OF PLAY DROME SITE**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development informing of the progress being made in relation to the marketing of the existing Play Drome site and progress made towards obtaining a further option on the site for the proposed new Leisure Centre at Queens' Quay.

After discussion and having heard the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development and the Head of Housing and Regeneration in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to continue consideration of the report to the next meeting of the Committee.

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

NOTE: Councillor Finn entered the meeting at this point in the proceedings.

#### **STRATHLEVEN CORRIDOR INITIATIVE**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of the intention to develop an outline business case for the Strathleven Corridor for submission to the Scottish Government.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the intention to progress towards the submission of an outline business case to the Scottish Government as a basis to attract development funding to progress the project to a detailed development design stage;

- (2) to note that the project programme, as detailed on paragraph 3.3 of the report, required to be undertaken to produce the outline business case and approve the allocation of funds to the identified projects; and
- (3) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to ensure that the most robust outline business case could be prepared for submission to the Scottish Government.

### **DUMBARTON TOWN CENTRE - TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PARKING**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development advising of the findings of detailed studies into the effectiveness of traffic management and parking arrangements in Dumbarton Town Centre and recommending a series of improvement actions.

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

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to note the contents of the MVA study into the traffic management arrangements and the results of the Citizens' Panel Survey of disabled people;
- (2) to note and authorise the resulting proposed actions to improve the current arrangements and infrastructure, with the exception that the High Street, Dumbarton should be opened to allow access by all vehicles without time restrictions being imposed; and
- (3) to seek a report by September 2009 to update the Committee on the effects of the actions from this report following a repeat car parking survey in summer 2009.

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

This Committee notes the opinions of MVA Consultancy in that it does not believe that traffic management and parking are factors adversely affecting the performance of the retail operations in the town centre and that there are many other factors.

Furthermore, this Committee notes that MVA has concluded that the detailed proposals from Business in Dumbarton are neither desirable nor possible and that the proposed changes to bus operations they suggest, would be contrary to the Scottish Government's national transport policy.

On a more positive note, MVA states that, in line with the potential success of Markets within other town centres, there is potential for a Market in Dumbarton. At a local level, Clydebank is a fine example of how a market can bring benefit to businesses within the local retail sector.

This Committee believes that the stimulus a Market would bring to the vibrancy of Dumbarton is an opportunity that must not be overlooked.

Therefore, in addition to the recommendations in paragraph 8.1 of the report, this Committee agrees that:-

- (1) a market day be established in Dumbarton on a weekly basis on Thursdays, so as not to conflict with the Wednesday market in Clydebank, with effect from the beginning of April 2009;
- (2) a report be brought to the next HEED Committee outlining the costs, e.g. for road closures etc., to the Council to instigate this exciting initiative; and
- (3) the Committee makes budget provision for such costs within its financial budget for 2009/10.

On a vote being taken, 3 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion, which was accordingly declared carried.

### **LEISURE SERVICES CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval of the Leisure Services Child Protection Policy.

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

- (1) to approve the Leisure Services Child Protection Policy attached as Appendix A to the report; and
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to take appropriate steps to implement the policy as soon as practicable.

### **ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development on various issues arising from the introduction of legislation relating to the requirement to have Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) available, and prominently displayed in certain cases, in Council properties.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Property and Technical Services in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the implications of the Act and the establishment of a short life corporate working group to agree procurement issues and compliance for Council properties affected by the European Directive 2002/91/EC;
- (2) to instruct the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to ensure that the financial implications outlined in the report form part of the considerations for 2009/2010 budget process; and
- (3) that a letter be written to the local Members of the European Parliament seeking a financial contribution to the costs that will be incurred.

#### **DISPOSAL AND ACQUISITION OF GROUND AT CASTLE STREET, DUMBARTON**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval for the disposal of 3,568 square metres (sq.m.) or thereby of ground at Castle Street, Dumbarton to Vico Properties Scotland Ltd. (Vico) in exchange for 2,668 sq.m. or thereby of ground at Castle Street, Dumbarton being acquired from Vico by the Council.

The Committee agreed:-

- (1) to authorise the proposed disposal of 3,568 sq.m or thereby of ground at Castle Street, Dumbarton to Vico in exchange for 2,668 sq.m or thereby of ground at Castle Street, Dumbarton being acquired from Vico by the Council; and
- (2) that the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development be authorised to refer the proposed disposal and acquisition to the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services to conclude these transactions subject to such legal conditions as are considered appropriate and completion of the appropriate title searches.

#### **SERVITUDE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO NORTH LODGE, AUCHENTOSHAN ESTATE, CLYDEBANK**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval to grant a Servitude Right of Access from Mountblow Road, through Auchentoshan Estate, to North Lodge, Great Western Road, Clydebank.

After hearing the Chair, Councillor Hendrie, the Committee agreed, contrary to the recommendation of the Executive Director, to refuse the grant of a servitude right of vehicular access from Mountblow Road, through Auchentoshan Estate to the rear of North Lodge, Great Western Road, Clydebank.

## **SALE OF LAND AT LEVEN STREET, ALEXANDRIA**

A report was submitted by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development seeking approval to dispose of the site extending to 0.558 hectares (1.38 acres) or thereby at Leven Street, Alexandria, as shown on the plan attached, to Dunbritton Housing Association Limited.

After discussion and having heard the Planning Services Manager in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Bollan, seconded by Councillor McColl, moved:-

That consideration of the report be continued to enable consultation to take place with the local community.

As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Finn, moved:-

That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) that the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development be authorised to sell the land extending to 0.558 hectares (1.38 acres) or thereby at Leven Street, Alexandria to Dunbritton Housing Association Limited for £500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Pounds Sterling) and subject to the conditions contained within paragraph 3.3 of the report; and
- (2) that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Administrative and Regulatory Services, to conclude the transaction subject to such legal conditions that are considered appropriate.

On a vote being taken, 6 Members voted for the amendment and 2 for the motion. The amendment was accordingly declared carried.

## **COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON**

The Chair, Councillor Hendrie, wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting closed at 12.48 p.m.