

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held in the Council Chambers, Clydebank Town Hall, Dumbarton Road, Clydebank on Wednesday, 10 August 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillors Denis Agnew, Dennis Brogan, James Flynn, Douglas McAllister, Craig McLaughlin, Marie McNair, Martin Rooney and Andy White.

Attending: Tim Huntingford, Chief Executive; David McMillan, Director of Housing and Technical Services; Bill Clark, Acting Director of Social Work Services; John McKerracher, Head of Technical Services; Stephen West, Manager of Resources, Social Work Services; Moira Swanson, Research and Information Manager; Jeff Stobo, Strategy Manager; Margaret Caldwell, Manager of Housing Operations; Martin McKendrick, Team Leader (ASIST), Housing and Technical Services, Lewis Morrison, Policy & Development Officer – Disability Equality Strategy, Policy and Development Officer - Diversity and Craig Stewart, Administrative Assistant.

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

Councillor Martin Rooney in the Chair

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

6546 The Minutes of Meeting of the Social Justice Committee held on 11 May 2005 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL – DISABILITY EQUALITY STRATEGY

6547 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive setting out a Disability Equality Strategy and action plan for consideration by the Committee.

6548 After discussion and having heard the Chief Executive in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to approve the proposed Disability Equality Strategy on the basis outlined in the Appendix to the report.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES MONITORING

6549 A report was submitted by the Chief Executive presenting Equal Opportunities Monitoring Guidance to the Committee and recommending that this be agreed and implemented across the Council.

6550 After discussion, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the two pieces of guidance for Equal Opportunities Monitoring, namely Monitoring of employment processes and Monitoring service delivery; and
- (2) to support the implementation of more robust monitoring systems to enable the collection of the required information.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICE PLAN 2005-2009

6551 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services presenting the Social Work Service Plan for 2005-2009 to the Committee for approval.

6552 After discussion and having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to approve the priorities and objectives identified in the plan; and
- (2) to note that the Acting Director would provide regular reports on progress to future meetings of the Committee.

SOCIAL WORK BUDGETARY POSITION 2005/06 AS AT PERIOD 3 TO 15 JULY 2005

6553 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of the performance of the Social Work budget for the period to 15 July 2005.

6554 Having heard the Convener, Councillor Rooney, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2004/2005

6555 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of the performance of Social Work Services in 2004/2005.

6556 After discussion and having heard the Convener, Councillor Rooney, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the performance reported in the report;
- (2) to note that the Acting Director would submit reports to future meetings of the Committee in terms of meeting objectives of the Departmental Service Plan for Social Work Services; and
- (3) to commend the staff involved for their hard work and dedication in delivering an essential and valuable service to the community of West Dunbartonshire.

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF DAY CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN NORTH CLYDEBANK

- 6557 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of developments in the provision of Day Care for older people at Queen Mary Avenue Day Centre and proposing that the service currently provided at the Faifley Hub be amalgamated and moved to Queen Mary Avenue.
- 6558 After discussion and having heard the Acting Director of Social Work Services in elaboration and in answer to Members' questions, the Convener, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 6559 That the Committee agrees to the proposal that the day care service for older people currently located at Faifley Hub should move to Queen Mary Avenue.
- 6560 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Brogan, moved:-
- 6561 That full consultation should take place with all service users and staff before any decision was made in respect of this proposal.
- 6562 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE PARTNERSHIP (WDDAP)

- 6563 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of some of the achievements of the West Dunbartonshire Domestic Abuse Partnership (WDDAP) over the period 2001-5 and seeking support for the development of a financial framework, which would ensure the long-term future of the Partnership.
- 6564 After discussion and having heard Councillor McNair, Service Spokesperson for Equal Opportunities, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the achievements of WDDAP in successfully implementing West Dunbartonshire's Strategy on Domestic Abuse;
- (2) to support the attainment of WDDAP's long-term objectives beyond March 2005; and
- (3) to seek regular reports on the work of WDDAP and progress made in relation to securing long-term funding.

ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES

6565 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services providing an outline on service funding uplifts announced by the Scottish Executive, updating the report on Integrated Addiction Services presented to the Committee on 11 May 2005.

6566 The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

SOCIAL WORK GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

6567 A report was submitted by the Acting Director of Social Work Services advising of various grant applications received by Social Work Services from voluntary organisations seeking funding and making recommendations on the level of funding to be provided.

6568 After discussion, the Convener, Councillor Rooney, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-

6569 That the Committee agrees to approve the recommendations in relation to the various applications detailed in the Appendix to the report, a copy of which is appended hereto, with the exception of the grant applications for Focus and Mill of Haldane Breakaway Group who should be awarded the maximum amounts of £1,476 and £1,500 respectively.

6570 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Brogan, moved:-

6571 That the 1.5% reduction in grants budgets be reinstated.

6572 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY
AND OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2005/08**

- 6573 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing details of West Dunbartonshire's Anti Social Behaviour Strategy and Outcome Agreement 2005/08 and seeking retrospective approval to submit the document to the Scottish Executive.
- 6574 After discussion and having heard the Director of Housing and Technical Services and the Team Leader (ASIST) in explanation and in answer to Members' questions, Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-
- 6575 That the Committee agrees:-
- (1) to approve the Anti Social Behaviour Strategy and Outcome Agreement;
 - (2) in view of the consultation timescale for responses, to give retrospective approval for the submission of the document to the Scottish Executive; and
 - (3) that a progress report on the Strategy be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee which would enable evaluation to be made, together with providing information on ways to address possible conflicts with homeless legislation.
- 6576 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Brogan, moved:-
- 6577 That the Committee notes the report and agrees that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee evaluating the Strategy and giving information on the effectiveness of the Community Warden Service together with providing information on how to address possible conflicts with homeless legislation.
- 6578 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

REDECORATION ALLOWANCES

- 6579 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services advising of the Internal Audit comment regarding redecoration allowances.
- 6580 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Service Spokesperson for Housing Services, the Committee agreed that the practice of paying redecoration allowances be extended to cover tenants in Alexandria and Clydebank and that the maximum level of payment be increased to £100.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL – PETS POLICY

6581 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services seeking approval to introduce a Pets Policy in respect of houses owned and managed by West Dunbartonshire Council.

6582 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Housing Operations, Councillor Flynn, seconded by Councillor Agnew, moved:-

6583 That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to approve the introduction of a West Dunbartonshire Council Pets Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) to approve the insertion of an Appendix into the West Dunbartonshire Council Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement identifying properties where the keeping of dogs will not be permitted, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (3) to approve the issue of Appendix 2 to existing tenants of houses specified in the Appendix as a variation to the terms of their existing tenancy agreements;
- (4) to approve the revised extract of the West Dunbartonshire Council Allocation Policy as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report; and
- (5) that the Director of Housing and Technical Services be requested to submit a further report to a future meeting of the Committee following consultation with West Dunbartonshire Council tenants.

6584 As an amendment, Councillor McLaughlin, seconded by Councillor Brogan, moved:-

6585 That the Committee agrees:-

- (1) to continue the report to a future meeting of the Committee pending full consultation taking place with residents affected by the policy;
- (2) that statistical information be provided on the likely number of households affected by the policy; and
- (3) that the legal position be ascertained in relation to the retrospective application of the policy in terms of existing tenancy agreements.

6586 On a vote being taken, 2 Members voted for the amendment and 6 for the motion which was accordingly declared carried.

HOUSING & TECHNICAL SERVICES – PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 6587 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing information on the performance of areas within the Department of Housing and Technical Services and, in particular, giving:-
- (a) information on Statutory Performance Indicators for 2004/05 (unaudited figures); and
 - (b) an update on the Department's programme of Best Value Reviews as outlined in the Appendix to the report.
- 6588 After discussion and having heard Councillor Flynn, Service Spokesperson for Housing Services, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to note the contents of the report; and
 - (2) that the Chief Executive be requested to prepare a further report which details how performance can be improved in Housing Benefit Recoverable Overpayments; Managing Tenancy Changes – Annual Rent Loss; Managing Tenancy Changes – Re-let Times; Rent Arrears and Homelessness.

DISPOSAL OF SITE AT 1-26 & 77-99 REDBURN, NEW BONHILL AND DEMOLITION OF PROPERTIES AT 351-363, 377-389 AND 364-376 PAPPERT, NEW BONHILL AND 1, 3, 5, 7 TURNBERRY PLACE, CASTLEHILL

- 6589 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services seeking approval:-
- (a) to dispose of the site of the former WDC houses at 1-26 & 77-99 Redburn, New Bonhill to Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd.;
 - (b) to demolish the tenemental blocks at 351-363 and 377-389 Pappert; and
 - (c) to demolish the tenemental blocks at 364-376 Pappert, New Bonhill and 1, 3, 5, 7 Turnberry Place, Castlehill (retrospective consent).
- 6590 Having heard Councillor Flynn, Service Spokesperson for Housing Services, the Committee agreed:-
- (1) to dispose of the site at Redburn to Dunbritton Housing Association at a price to be agreed between the Council's Estates Surveyor and the purchaser's agent subject to the following:-

- (i) the purchasers shall meet all the Council's legal fees, expenses, outlays, VAT, together with Stamp Duty and Registration dues;
 - (ii) the property enquiry certificates to be paid by the purchasers;
 - (iii) any disposal shall require the necessary Scottish Ministers' consent;
 - (iv) the purchase dates to be agreed between the WDC Estates Surveyor and the purchasers' agents;
 - (v) the purchasers shall meet all Estates Section fees and VAT; and
 - (vi) to seek the necessary Scottish Ministers' consents.
- (2) to give retrospective consent for the demolition of tenemental properties at 364-376 Pappert and 1, 3, 5, 7 Turnberry Place;
 - (3) to approve the demolition of the two blocks at 351-363 & 377-389 Pappert; and
 - (4) that the Council would meet any outstanding Home Loss and Disturbance obligations in respect of these demolitions.

DISPOSAL OF SHOPS AND FLATS AT 17-29 BROWN STREET, MILL OF HALDANE AND LAND AT 1 CARMONA DRIVE, MILL OF HALDANE

6591 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services seeking approval:-

- (a) to transfer the commercial premises and associated Council owned flats at 17-29 Brown Street, Mill of Haldane at nil value to Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd.; and
- (b) to dispose of the site of the former maisonette block at 1 Carmona Drive, Mill of Haldane and the grassed area to the north, to Cube Housing Association Ltd. at a price to be agreed between the purchaser and the Council's Estates Section.

6592 After discussion and having heard the Director of Housing and Technical Services, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to dispose of the shops and associated flats at Brown Street, Haldane to Dunbritton Housing Association Ltd. at nil value;

- (2) to dispose of the site at Carmona Drive, Haldane to Cube Housing Association Ltd. at a price to be agreed between the Council's Estates Surveyor and the purchaser's agents subject to the following conditions:-
- (i) the purchasers shall meet all Estates Section fees and VAT;
 - (ii) the purchasers shall meet all the Council's legal fees, expenses, outlays, VAT, together with Stamp Duty and Registration dues;
 - (iii) the property enquiry certificates to be paid by the purchasers;
 - (iv) any disposal shall require the necessary Scottish Ministers' consent;
 - (v) the purchase dates to be agreed between the Council's Estates Surveyor and the purchaser's agents; and
 - (vi) all demolitions shall be carried out by the purchasers entirely at their expense and to the satisfaction of the Director of Housing and Technical Services.

VOIDS AND LETTINGS

- 6593 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing:-
- (a) details of void houses and their status (i.e. with repairs, with allocations, etc.) as at 24 June 2005;
 - (b) an analysis of all void houses by type and by area (i.e. Clydebank, Dumbarton and Vale of Leven) as at 24 June 2005;
 - (c) details of the number of void houses by Ward in the Clydebank area as at 24 June 2005;
 - (d) details of the number of void houses by Ward in the Dumbarton area as at 24 June 2005;
 - (e) details of the number of void houses by Ward in the Alexandria area as at 24 June 2005; and
 - (f) an analysis of houses let on a quarterly basis between July 2004 and June 2005 together with comparative figures for 2004/2005.
- 6594 The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 6595 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing an update on Housing and Council Tax Benefit performance for the financial year 2004/2005.
- 6596 The Committee agreed to note the continuing improvement in Housing and Council Tax Benefit Performance.

RENT ARREARS

- 6597 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing an update on the performance of rent arrears for the financial year 2004/2005.
- 6598 After discussion and having heard the Manager of Housing Operations in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed to note the progress made in rent arrears performance.

WAITING LIST FOR WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL HOUSES

- 6599 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing a breakdown of the number of applicants on the waiting list for West Dunbartonshire Council houses and their present circumstances. In this respect, the information indicated the position as at 30 June 2005 and figures for the same period in 2004 were also provided for comparison.
- 6600 The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOUSE SALES

- 6601 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing information on West Dunbartonshire Council houses sold under the Right to Buy scheme between 1 April and 30 June 2005.
- 6602 The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

HOMELESSNESS

- 6603 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing information on the number of persons who applied to West Dunbartonshire Council as being homeless, or threatened with homelessness, between 1 April 2005 and 30 June 2005.
- 6604 The Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

**PERFORMANCE OF THE HOUSING MAINTENANCE SERVICE DURING
2004/2005 AGAINST KEY BUSINESS OBJECTIVES AS OUTLINED
WITHIN THE HOUSING MAINTENANCE DLO BUSINESS PLAN 2004-2007**

- 6605 A report was submitted by the Director of Housing and Technical Services providing an update on the performance of the housing maintenance service against desired outcomes and objectives as detailed within the Housing Maintenance DLO Business Plan for the years 2004-2007.
- 6606 The Committee agreed to note the progress made to date in meeting the key business objectives as detailed within the Housing Maintenance DLO Business Plan for 2004-2007.

COMMUNITY LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AND GUIDANCE STRATEGY

- 6607 A report was submitted by the Director of Education and Cultural Services providing an update on progress and developments relative to the Community Learning Development (CLD) and Guidance Strategy in West Dunbartonshire.
- 6608 Having heard Councillor Agnew, Service Spokesperson for Education and Cultural Services, the Committee agreed to note the progress and developments in CLD and the production of a five year Community Learning Development and Guidance Strategy for the area.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.