

## ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **HOUSING COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 20 November 2003 at 4.45 pm.

**Present:** Councillors FRANK ELLIS, IAN ANGUS, STEWART McGLYNN, THE HON R J LESLIE MELVILLE, Provost BILL MIDDLETON, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, JOY MOWATT, PETER NIELD, GEORGE NORRIE, KITTY RITCHIE, BILL ROBERTON, JENNIFER SPEIRS, SHEENA WELSH and TERRY WOOD.

**Apology:** An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor IAN MACKINTOSH.

Councillor ELLIS, Convener, in the Chair.

### 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wood declared an interest in items 5 and 15 as a Council appointee to Angus Care and Repair and a Director of Dorward House respectively.

Councillor Norrie declared an interest in item 14 as a Director of Dorward House.

Councillor Ritchie declared an interest in item 15 as a Director of Dorward House, member of Forfarshire Society for the Blind and the Chairperson of the Families Project Partnership Group.

Councillor Angus declared an interest in item 27 as he was related to the owner of one of the companies that had tendered.

Councillor Mowatt declared an interest in item 3 as a member of the Board of Brechin Day Care Ltd.

Councillor Glennis Middleton declared an interest in items 5, 11, 14, 15 and 16 as a Director of Angus Community Care Charitable Trust (items 5, 11, 15 and 16) and a relative of a resident in Beechhill Court, Forfar (item 14).

Provost Bill Middleton declared an interest in item 14 as a relative of a resident in Beechhill Court, Forfar.

### 2. MINUTES

#### (a) Previous Meeting

The [minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 October 2003](#) was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

#### (b) Executive Sub-Committee

The [minute of meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee of 28 October 2003](#), a copy of which is appended hereto, was submitted and noted. **(APPENDIX 1)**

### 3. HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME - HRA BLOCK - 2003/2004

With reference to Article 3 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 October 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1256/03](#) by the Director of Finance setting out the latest position on the HRA Housing Capital Programme. The Report also detailed the latest estimate for the year and the actual spend figure to the end of September 2003.

The Report advised that the spend achieved to 30 September 2003 on the Housing Capital Programme was £1.362 million, which did not include internal fees to 30 September 2003.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to note the figures presented for the HRA Capital Programme.

#### **4. 2004/2005 REVENUE BUDGET**

There was submitted [Report No 1257/03](#) by the Director of Finance advising the Committee of the latest position with regard to the preparation of the Other Housing departmental 2004/2005 revenue budget and associated issues. Appended to the Report was a summary of the departmental provisional base budget for 2004/2005 as submitted to, and subsequently reviewed by, the Director of Finance.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report for its interest at this stage in the budget process; and
- (ii) to note that more detailed Reports with specific recommendations would be brought forward later in the budget cycle.

#### **5. ANGUS CARE AND REPAIR - REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN 2002/2003 AND BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES FOR 2004/2005.**

With reference to Article 16 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 20 November 2003, there was submitted [Joint Report No 1258/03](#) by the Director of Housing and the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison providing details on Angus Care and Repair's performance in 2002/2003 and giving details of the organisation's priorities for 2004/2005.

The Report concluded that Angus Care and Repair had become one of the largest Care and Repair organisations in Scotland and offered a wide range of initiatives to support people to remain at home. As a result of the activities carried out in 2002/2003, the quality of life of a significant number of people in Angus had been improved through the work undertaken by Angus Care and Repair.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the significant contribution made by Angus Care and Repair to enable older people and people with disabilities in Angus to remain at home in comfort and in safety in 2002/2003; and
- (ii) to note the organisation's priorities for 2004/2005 and the consequent funding requirements as detailed in the Report.

#### **6. TRANSFER OF THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT FUNDING IN ANGUS**

There was submitted [Report No 1259/03](#) by the Director of Housing which gave details of the research commissioned into the transfer of the management of development funding in Angus. A full copy of the Report entitled "An Approach to the Transfer of Development Funding in Angus" had been placed in the Members' Lounge and a copy of the Executive Summary was attached to the Report. A presentation by the consultants on the Report had taken place earlier this day.

The Report outlined a number of options with regard to the transfer of the management of development funding. It concluded that the Research Report had greatly assisted in obtaining a better understanding of the overall process of development funding, and also in regard to the underlying processes which support the system. There had been ministerial commitment to some form of transfer of the management of development funding and consequently Angus Council should prepare for this. Given the relatively small size of the development programme in Angus, it was considered that the most appropriate way of managing the programme would be via the Tayside Partnership arrangement with Dundee City Council, Perth and Kinross Council and Communities Scotland.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to approve, in principle, Option D-ie the creation of a Tayside Partnership in which the Council would decide on the allocation of development funding to fulfil the objectives in the Local Housing Strategy, with project appraisal, grant payment and programme monitoring and adjustment being delegated to an appropriate managing agent;
- (ii) to approve the Director of Housing entering into negotiations with Dundee City Council, Perth and Kinross Council and Communities Scotland regarding the establishment of a Partnership and reporting back to an appropriate meeting of this Committee; and
- (iii) to approve a financial contribution of £1,500 towards a joint consultancy with the partners to provide a detailed blue-print on the operational arrangements for the Partnership.

#### **7. CONSULTATION ON EXTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS AT STONEYCROFT LANE AND MILLGATE LOAN, ARBROATH**

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1260/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding proposals for consulting tenants and owners of flats in Stoneycroft Lane and Millgate Loan, Arbroath, on the options for external improvements to the blocks of flats concerned, as outlined in the plan attached to the Report.

The Committee agreed to approve an exercise to consult the tenants and owners of the flats in the four and five storey blocks at Stoneycroft Lane and Millgate Loan, Arbroath, on the options for external improvements, and that the findings then be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee.

#### **8. RESURFACING OF CAR PARK AND ACCESS ROAD AT DUBTON TERRACE, HILLSIDE**

There was submitted [Report No 1261/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding proposals for re-surfacing the car park and access road which served the Council owned houses in Dubton Terrace, Hillside, Montrose, as detailed in the plan attached to the Report.

The Report advised that the car park had been deteriorating for some time, and in spite of attempts to infill potholes as they appeared, it was now in a serious state of disrepair and wholesale resurfacing was required. The track from the adopted road provided access not only to the car park, but also to Dubton House and other properties beyond the disused railway bridge. Although the Council did not appear to own this track, it had a duty to maintain the section as far as the bridge. It was therefore proposed that the first part of this track should also be resurfaced, but only as far as the entrance to the car park, as this section was used by Council house tenants.

The Committee agreed to approve the resurfacing of the car park at Dubton Terrace, along with the part of the adjacent track which provided vehicular access to the car park from the adopted road, at an estimated cost of £8,000.

#### **9. LOCK-UP GARAGES AT HILLRISE, KIRRIEMUIR – OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1262/03](#) by the Director of Housing advising members of the details of the initial outcome of the consultation on the future of the lock-up garages at Hillrise, Kirriemuir and giving details of the original options and cost estimates.

The Report advised that there had been a public meeting held in Kirriemuir on 22 October 2003, which had been attended by 5 tenants of the banks of lock-ups and their partners, along with 1 tenant of a semi-detached type lock-up, and the local elected member and the Council officers. All the alternatives outlined in the Report had been explored in some detail with the tenants, along with other related issues, and whilst the meeting had been very constructive, it was clear that the tenants would need further time to consider their options before a further meeting could be organised to discuss firm proposals.

The Committee agreed to note the initial outcome of consultation on the future of the lock-up garages at Hillrise, Kirriemuir, and to approve further discussions with the tenants, the results of which would be reported to a future meeting.

## **10. OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF TIMBER AND LOCK-UP GARAGE SITES**

With reference to Article 15 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 5 June 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1263/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding various options for the future of timber and lock-up garage sites on the Housing Revenue Account.

The Report advised that the Housing Revenue Account owned 90 lock-up and 66 timber garage sites and, to obtain an expert view, it was proposed that the Council's valuer, Lickley Proctor should be instructed to undertake an option appraisal, with the results to be reported to Committee in early 2004.

The Committee agreed that the Council's valuer (Lickley Proctor) should be instructed to carry out an option appraisal on all timber and lock-up garage sites on the Housing Revenue Account, as an estimated cost of £3,000.

## **11. SERVICE PLANS 2003/2007**

### **(a) Service Plans 2003/2007**

There was submitted [Report No 1335/03](#) by the Chief Executive advising the Committee of revised corporate service planning processes which had been implemented during 2003.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed:-

- (i) to note the revised service planning process;
- (ii) to welcome the progress which was being made to link the service planning and budgeting processes and to identify and plan the other resource/support requirements;
- (iii) to note that departmental service plans for the period 2003/2007 were being submitted to the appropriate committees; and
- (iv) to note that updates to each departmental service plan would be submitted annually in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

### **(b) Housing Department Service Plan 2003/2007**

With reference to Article 11(a) above, there was submitted [Report No 1267/03](#) by the Director of Housing seeking approval of the Housing Department Service Plan for the years 2003/2007, a copy of which was appended to the Report.

The Committee agreed to approve the four year service plan for the Housing Department, as attached to the Report.

## **12. PROVISION OF GAS FIRES IN COUNCIL HOUSES**

There was submitted [Report No 1264/03](#) by the Director of Housing seeking confirmation that the current policy of not allowing tenants to upgrade their gas fires should continue.

In this connection, and to further assist members, the Convener circulated to the Committee photographs of the two gas fires which were offered to tenants when choosing gas as their heating system. It was noted that these basic gas fires were efficient and many had been fitted in the past.

The Report advised that occasionally tenants requested an alternative gas fire, such as a "living flame" type which were non-standard. Whilst these fires were undoubtedly attractive, there were costs and maintenance issues to consider and the Council had a statutory

obligation under health and safety legislation to check all gas equipment in their houses annually and to carry out repairs on the Council's equipment as needed. It was noted that the living flame fires and other similar types were more complex to install and required different arrangements of flueing and that spare parts were more costly.

The Committee agreed to continue the current policy which limited tenants to accepting the standard gas fire installed by the Council, with no option to fit alternative gas fires, either at first installation or at any other time.

### **13. COUNCIL HOUSE SALES**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1271/03](#) by the Director of Finance detailing Council house sales for the period up to 30 September 2003.

The Report advised that up to 30 September 2003, the market value of houses sold was in excess of £158 million and that actual sale receipts were over £79.6 million, with the average discount being 49%.

Following discussion and having noted that only 25% of such capital receipts in 2003/2004, as in previous financial years, was available to finance capital expenditure, the Committee agreed to note the contents of the Report.

### **14. COMMUNITIES SCOTLAND – INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR ANGUS IN 2003/2004**

There was submitted [Report No 1266/03](#) by the Director of Housing which provided information with regard to Communities Scotland's investment programme for Angus in 2003/2004.

The Report advised that the Tayside Office of Communities Scotland had been successful in securing additional funding amounting to £1.760 million. This now meant that the projected outturn expenditure for Angus was £4.719 million.

The Report concluded that the financial investment to be made by Communities Scotland in housing activity in Angus during 2003/2004 would see a range of housing provided to meet different housing needs, thereby enhancing the quality of life for a substantial number of individuals and families.

The Committee agreed to note and welcome the significant investment to be made by Communities Scotland in enabling a range of housing to be provided in Angus.

### **15. JOINT COMMUNITY CARE PLAN 2003/2006**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 20 November 2003, there was submitted [Joint Report No 1304/03](#) by the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison and the Director of Housing seeking the approval of elected members to publish the Joint Community Care Plan 2003-2006, a copy of which had been circulated with the Social Work and Health Committee papers.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to approve the recommendations, as detailed in the Report.

### **16. DRAFT SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGIC PLAN**

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of the Social Work and Health Committee of 20 November 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1268/03](#), by the Chief Executive, the Director of Social Work and Health Liaison and the Director of Housing recommending approval of the draft Angus Council Supporting People Strategic Plan for the years 2003-2008.

The Committee, for its interest, agreed to approve the recommendations, as detailed in the Report.

**17. HOMELESS MONITORING GROUP**

The Committee noted that the Convener, Councillor Frank Ellis, had been invited by the Minister for Communities, Margaret Curran MSP, to join the Ministerial Homeless Monitoring Group to oversee and monitor the Scottish Executive's homeless activity and, in particular, the Homeless (Scotland) Act 2003. This was a personal invitation to Councillor Ellis and was separate to his position as Convener of the COSLA Homeless Task Group. It was a singular honour for both Councillor Ellis and Angus Council as membership was by personal invitation of the Minister to work with a select group from both statutory and voluntary agencies in pursuing this important agenda to the benefit of the people of Scotland and Angus. The cost of this activity could be met from within the Department's existing COSLA budget and there would be no impact on existing resources.

The Committee congratulated Councillor Ellis on his invitation to join the Ministerial Homeless Monitoring Group.

**18. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee resolved, in terms of Standing Order 27(2), that the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items so as to avoid the disclosure of information which was exempt in terms of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, paragraphs 1, 4, 6, 8 and 9.

**19. IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

With reference to Article 13 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 October 2003, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1124/03](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport detailing applications for improvement grants totalling £78,426.14, which had been approved under delegated authority.

**20. REPAIR GRANT APPLICATIONS APPROVED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

With reference to Article 14 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 October 2003, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1125/03](#) by the Director of Planning and Transport detailing applications for repair grants totalling £35,781.01, which had been approved under delegated authority.

**21. DISPOSALS****(a) 66 Hillrise, Kirriemuir**

There was submitted [Report No 1269/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding the disposal of an area of ground at Hillrise, Kirriemuir, as outlined in the plan attached to the Report.

The Committee agreed that, subject to Section 12 consent being received from Scottish Ministers and planning permission for change of use being granted, the ground be sold to the applicants on appropriate terms and conditions, including the purchasers meeting all of the Council's legal and survey costs.

**(b) 17 & 21 East Sunnyside, Forfar**

There was submitted [Report No 1270/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding the disposal of an area of ground adjacent to 17 and 21 East Sunnyside, Forfar, as outlined in the plan attached to the Report.

The Committee agreed that, subject to Section 12 consent being received from Scottish Ministers, the ground be sold to the applicants on appropriate terms and conditions, including the purchasers meeting all of the Council's legal and survey costs.

**22. CLOSING ORDERS**

There was submitted [Report No 1310/03](#) by the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection regarding two properties which failed to meet the “tolerable standard” as described in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

The Committee agreed to make Closing Orders in respect of the undernoted properties:-

- (i) Hunters Path Cottage, Arbirlot, by Arbroath; and
- (ii) 11 Ponderlaw, Arbroath.

**23. REVOCATION OF CLOSING ORDERS**

There was submitted [Report No 1311/03](#) by the Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection regarding revocation of Closing Orders made by Angus District Council and Angus Council.

The Committee agreed that the Closing Orders in respect of the undernoted properties be revoked following works having been undertaken to bring the properties up to the tolerable standard as described in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987:-

- (i) 70 Keptie Street, Arbroath;
- (ii) 11A Ponderlaw, Arbroath; and
- (iii) detached cottage, namely, “The Gida at Arniefoul”, Glamis.

**24. COUNCIL HOUSE SALES - QUARTERLY SCHEDULES**

With reference to Article 24 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted and noted [Report No 1265/03](#) by the Director of Finance which detailed individual Council house sales for the second quarter of 2003/2004.

**25. APPROPRIATION OF DEN OF LEUCLAND, BRECHIN TO LEISURE SERVICES**

With reference to Article 29 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1272/03](#) by the Director of Housing seeking approval to transfer the land known as the Den of Leuchland, Brechin to Leisure Services, as outlined in the plan attached to the Report.

The area of land was surplus to Housing Revenue Account purposes and should be appropriated to Leisure Services as it benefited the wider Brechin community.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the transfer of the land known as the Den of Leuchland, Brechin to Leisure Services;
- (ii) to note the appropriation amount of £2,600 by the Council's approved surveyor; and
- (iii) to note that the Housing Department would upgrade the land before transfer and contribute to 20-year maintenance costs.

**26. SERIOUS ARREARS CASES - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TENANTS**

There was submitted [Report No 1273/03](#) by the Director of Housing regarding serious arrears of rent in respect of 26 Council house tenants, as detailed in the Appendix to the Report.

The Committee agreed that all 26 cases be monitored and that approval be given to evict if regular payments to reduce the arrears were not received.

**27. HEATING REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME 2003/2006 - BULK PROCUREMENT CONTRACT 3 - FORFAR AND KIRRIEMUIR - TENDER REPORT**

With reference to Article 19 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 12 November 2002, there was submitted [Report No 1274/03](#) by the Director of Property Services on tenders received for the Heating Replacement Programme 2003/2006 - Bulk Procurement Contract 3 - Forfar and Kirriemuir.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise acceptance of the lowest tender for Heating Replacement Programme 2003/2006 - Bulk Procurement Contract 3 - Forfar and Kirriemuir, that of C F M Building Services Limited, Carluke in the amount of £2,173,867.50;
- (ii) to approve the estimated total cost of £2,448,596;
- (iii) to note that allowance of £2,696,000 had been made for this project in the HRA Capital Programme; and
- (iv) to note that the additional revenue expenditure arising from this project (first full year 2006/2007) was £226,700 per annum in respect of loan charges calculated over 20 years.

*Councillor Angus left the meeting at this stage.*

**28. KITCHEN REFURBISHMENTS AT LANGLEY AVENUE, WESTWOOD WALK AND LITTLE NURSERY, MONTROSE, CONTRACT 03\_KITC\_M1 - TENDER REPORT**

With reference to Article 23 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 April 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1275/03](#) by the Director of Property Services on tenders received for kitchen refurbishments to 38 properties in Langley Avenue, Westwood Walk and Little Nursery, Montrose.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise acceptance of the lowest tender for the several works, that of W W Pert & Co, Montrose in the amount of £129,712.75;
- (ii) to approve the estimated total cost of £150,997 (at out-turn prices); and
- (iii) to note that this project would be funded from allowances made for kitchen replacements of £650,000 in the HRA Repairs and Maintenance Programme and £1,325,000 in the 2003/2004 HRA Capital Programme.

**29. KITCHEN REFURBISHMENTS AT KNOWEHEAD AND THRUMS GARDENS, KIRRIEMUIR AND CRIEFF TERRACE, DRUMCLUNE, CONTRACT 03\_KITC\_K1 - TENDER REPORT**

With reference to Article 23 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 1 April 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1276/03](#) by the Director of Property Services on tenders received for kitchen refurbishments to 51 properties in Knowehead and Thrums Gardens, Kirriemuir and Crieff Terrace, Drumclune.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise acceptance of the lowest tender for the several works, that of R S Hill, Joiners & Building Contractors, Douglstown, Forfar in the amount of £180,104.92;
- (ii) to approve the estimated total cost of £208,688 (at out-turn prices); and
- (iii) to note that this project would be funded from allowances made for kitchen replacements of £650,000 in the HRA Repairs and Maintenance Programme and £1,325,000 in the 2003/2004 HRA Capital Programme.



**30. ANNUAL SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE OF GAS HEATING INSTALLATIONS, CONTRACTS 1 & 2 - EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING CONTRACTS (1 JANUARY 2004 TO 31 DECEMBER 2005) - TENDER REPORT**

With reference to Article 32 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 August 2003, there was submitted [Report No 1277/03](#) by the Director of Property Services on tenders received for the Annual Servicing and Maintenance of Gas Heating Installations, Contracts 1 and 2.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to authorise acceptance of the negotiated tender for Annual Servicing and Routine Maintenance of Gas Heating Installations, Extension to Contract 1, that of W R B Gas (Contracts) Limited, Dundee in the amount of £1,017,450;
- (ii) to authorise acceptance of the negotiated tender for Annual Servicing and Routine Maintenance of Gas Heating Installations, Extension to Contract 2, that of Saltire Facilities Management Limited, Airdrie in the amount of £200,317.39; and
- (iii) to approve the estimated total cost of £1,217,767.