

ANGUS COUNCIL

**Housing Committee – 22 April 2004
Social Work and Health Committee – 22 April 2004**

**DIRECT ACCESS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION, ARBROATH
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

**REPORT by DIRECTOR OF HOUSING and
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH**

ABSTRACT

This report advises Committee of the progress in developing a direct access and temporary accommodation facility for homeless people in Arbroath.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members

- (i) note the progress to date,
- (ii) instruct the Director of Law and Administration to enter into a development agreement on behalf of the Council with Hillcrest Housing Association,
- (iii) instruct the Director of Social Work and Health to seek reassurance urgently from the Scottish Executive that pipeline funding to meet the revenue costs will be approved.

2. BACKGROUND

The Housing Committee at its meeting on the 5 June 2003 (Report 617/03) approved Angus Council's Local Outcome Agreement in terms of the grant allocated to local authorities by the Scottish Executive to implement new homelessness duties arising from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. At its meeting of 21 August 2003 (Report 877/03) the Housing Committee approved a strategy and action plan for temporary accommodation and support services. This report also noted that the successful implementation of the action plan would be dependent in part on securing Supporting People pipeline funding to meet the revenue costs of homeless projects.

Members will recall that fundamental to achieving both the local outcome agreement and our strategic objectives is the development of 16 direct access and temporary accommodation units in Arbroath by Hillcrest Housing Association. A significant proportion of the grant provided to the Council in terms of the 2001 Act was assigned to complement the grant from Communities Scotland and private finance being provided to Hillcrest to meet the capital cost of providing accommodation.

In June 2003 Angus Council was advised that the Scottish Executive approved in principle the pipeline submission for Supporting People revenue funding for this project but this was still to be confirmed by Her Majesty's Treasury. In February 2004 the Executive advised that all projects due for completion in 04-05 and 05-06 were subject to review and no commitment to revenue funding has been received.

3. PROGRESS TO DATE

Hillcrest Housing Association has secured capital funding for this project from private finance and has accepted an offer of grant from Communities Scotland. Planning permission and building warrant have also been approved. The development is due to commence on site in April with an expected completion date in the summer of 2005.

The Scottish Executive has indicated that an announcement will be made in the summer regarding the total allocation of Supporting People Grant for 04-05 and 05-06. There is no guarantee that this will be timely.

As this project meets many of the national and local priorities for implementing the Homelessness Task Force recommendations and Supporting People funding, it is hoped that pipeline funding will be approved. If Supporting People revenue funding is not forthcoming, Angus Council will require to assist Hillcrest find an alternative use for the accommodation or convert the accommodation to mainstream housing.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

A Steering Group comprising Housing, Social Work Criminal Justice and Children Services, Law and Administration and Hillcrest has recommended the terms, conditions and service specification for this project.

A Development Agreement with Hillcrest Housing Association and Communities Scotland will set out the terms and conditions for funding, developing, constructing and managing the facility including outline arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the project.

The Development Agreement will provide that Angus Council and Communities Scotland make available funding to Hillcrest and in exchange Hillcrest will design and build the accommodation to an agreed specification. The Development Agreement will contain a detailed management schedule, which will oblige Hillcrest to assist Angus Council tackle the complexities associated with homelessness thereby ensuring vulnerable single people and couples are provided with appropriate support and resettlement services.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

More than a quarter (£292,800) of Angus Council's total 2002-04 grant to implement the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and Homelessness Task Force final recommendations has been allocated to meet the capital costs of this project.

The outcome of the Supporting People review will determine whether or not revenue funding will be included in the Supporting People grant allocation for 2005-06. A further report will consider a range of options and associated costs, should this project fail to secure pipeline funding.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that in following the recommendations contained in this report, the Council would not be acting in any way that is incompatible with human rights legislation.

7. CONSULTATION

In preparing this report, there has been consultation with the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Law and Administration, and the Director of Social Work and Health

8. CONCLUSION

A partnership between Angus Council, Communities Scotland and Hillcrest Housing Association to develop a direct access and temporary accommodation project in Arbroath will enhance the range of accommodation and support available to vulnerable homeless people, help eradicate rough sleeping and increase the opportunities for successful resettlement, in line with local and national priorities. Scottish Executive funding and Communities Scotland Housing Association Grant has been allocated to meet 60% of the development costs.

Supporting People Pipeline funding will be essential to meet the revenue costs. It is regrettable that the Scottish Executive has not been able to confirm revenue funding within an acceptable timescale and every effort should be made to obtain an early decision.

Ron Ashton
Director of Housing

Robert Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

Note:- The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied upon to any material extent in preparing this report:

- **Housing Committee Report No: 877/03; Temporary Homeless Accommodation and Support Strategy; 21 August 2003**
- **Housing Committee Report No: 617/03; Housing Act Implementation Funding - Homelessness Local Outcome Agreement Progress Report; 5 June 2003**