

THE MORAY COUNCIL
MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 17 AUGUST 2010

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors E. McGillivray (Chair), J.S. Cree, J. Hogg, B. Jarvis, G. Leadbitter, M McConachie, J. Mackay, I Ogilvie, J. Russell, R. Shepherd and D. Stewart.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors F. Murdoch and J. Sharp.

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor G McIntyre and A. Wright (ex-officio)

IN ATTENDANCE

Head of Housing and Property, the Head of Financial Services, Home Improvements Services Manager, Housing Programmes Manager, Housing Support Manager, the Community Planning & Development Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator, Mrs A Scott, Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing), and Mrs S Kennedy, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 the meeting noted that there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Meeting agreed, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, that the public and media representatives be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of the Items of Business appearing at the relevant paragraphs of this Minute as specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para No. of Minute

Para No. of Schedule 7A

17

9

3. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Committee noted that no written questions had been submitted.

4. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING DISABLED ADAPTATIONS GRANTS

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services seeking approval for the Private Sector Housing Disabled Adaptations Policy. This policy is to support the Scheme of Assistance for Home Owners and Private Tenants in Moray.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) approve the Private Sector Housing Disabled Adaptations Grants Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (ii) note that performance will be reported to Committee on a quarterly basis.

5. NEW BUILD COUNCIL HOUSING

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services informing the Communities Committee of the outcome of the bid submitted to the Scottish Government for financial assistance for a further phase of new build council housing. This report also provided a progress report on Phase 1 of the council house new build programme.

Prior to consideration of this item the meeting noted that there was an error with regard to Item 6 on the Agenda "New Build Council Housing" and that the figures at paragraph 3.4 of the report should read £3720m for Scottish Government Grant and £9570m for Prudential Borrowing.

During discussion the Committee agreed to the suggestion by the Chair that the Housing Minister be invited to open the new development project on completion in January 2011.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee congratulated the staff involved in the bid process.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) welcome the funding awarded to the Council for 124 units of new build council housing;
- (ii) note the progress achieved on Phase 1 of the new build programme;
- (iii) note that the further reports on progress will be presented to the Committee: and

- (iv) that the Housing Minister be invited to open the new development project in January 2011 on completion.

6. CARE COMMISSION INSPECTION – OUTREACH & RESETTLEMENT SERVICE HOUSING INSPECTION

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services providing the Committee with the details of the Care Commission's Inspection report on the Outreach and Resettlement Housing Support Service.

The Chair on behalf of Committee thanked all staff involved in the Care Commission Inspection for their work.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the Care Commission report on the Outreach and Resettlement Service Housing Support; and
- (ii) welcome the significant improvements achieved since the earlier inspection in March 2009.

7. ALLOCATIONS POLICY ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2009/10

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services presenting the annual performance in relation to the operation of the Council's Allocations Policy in 2009/10.

Following consideration the Committee agreed:

- (i) to note the report;
- (ii) the allocation quotas for 2010/11 as detailed in paragraph 10.5 of the report;
- (iii) that a further report would be submitted to Committee on incentives for tenants to move to smaller properties as detailed in paragraph 10.6 of the report;
- (iv) that a further report would be submitted to Committee on the proposal to consult on the interim charges to the Allocations Policy 2011 as detailed in paragraph 10.7 of the report;
- (v) that a further report on the Common Housing Register would be presented to a future Committee as detailed in paragraph 10.8 of the report; and
- (vi) that progress in developing housing options for young people leaving care would be presented to a future Committee as detailed in paragraph 10.9 of the report.

8. SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER EVENT

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services bringing to the attention of the Committee an event to be held in Inverness to enable discussion on the development of a Scottish Social Housing Charter. The report also sought the nomination of two elected members to attend, in addition to the proposed attendance by three officers.

Following consideration the Committee agreed

- (i) that Councillors Cree and Leadbitter attend the Scottish Social Housing Charter event on 23 August 2010; and
- (ii) to note that further reports will be presented to the Committee as the development of a Scottish Social Housing Charter progresses.

9. 'FRESH THINKING' DISCUSSION PAPER

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services informing Committee of the recently published discussion paper 'Fresh Thinking' and proposed development of a Council response to the paper.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) invite members to pass any comments to the Head of Housing and Property by 23 August 2010; and
- (iii) authorise the Head of Housing and Property, in consultation with the Chairman of the Communities Committee, to submit a response to the Scottish Government by 31 August 2010 in respect of the 'Fresh Thinking' discussion paper.

10. FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND – DEVELOPING POVERTY INDICATORS IN MORAY

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking Committee to note the progress around the production and use of the Scottish Indicators of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in producing local indicators of poverty. The Committee was also asked to note proposals for the next phase of undertaking qualitative research to complement the SIMD analysis.

Following consideration the Committee agreed to note the positive use being made of the local SIMD quantitative analysis and approve the next phase of qualitative research around developing Moray indicators of poverty.

11. GREEN DOG WALKERS INITIATIVE TO TACKLE DOG FOULING

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking Committee to consider the rolling out of the 'Green Dog Walker' (GDW) initiative across Moray to assist in tackling the persistent problem of dog fouling in Moray.

During discussion the meeting noted that in regard to the issue of replacement of the arm bands issued to the volunteers that investigation into commercial sponsorship for these is being undertaken.

Thereafter, the Committee agreed to roll out the 'Green Dog Walkers' initiative across Moray and recognised the pilot project results to date.

12. HOUSING BUDGET MONITORING – 2010/11

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services presenting budget monitoring for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period to 30 June 2010 as detailed in Appendices I & II of the report.

13. HOUSING INVESTMENT 2010/11

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services informing the Committee of the Housing Investment Programme for 2010/11 as detailed in Appendices I, II, III, IV, V, VI and VII of the report.

14. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR SERVICE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking Committee to consider the customer satisfaction levels within the Antisocial Behaviour and Community Wardens services as provided from within Safer Communities.

Following consideration the Committee noted the outcomes in terms of the customers' satisfaction in using the antisocial behaviour and community warden services and the actions taken to improve the survey as a result of the survey findings as detailed in Appendices 1 & 2 of the report.

15. QUESTION TIME

Councillor I Ogilvie asked if there was any further information with regard to dates for public meetings in respect of Gypsy Travellers/Halting Sites.

In response the Head of Housing and Property intimated that the meetings would be held in early September and that Community Councils had been contacted re possible venues

Councillor M McConachie asked why Community Associations in Speyside had not been contacted with regard to the dates for the public meetings in respect of Gypsy Travellers.

In response the Head of Housing and Property advised that she was aiming to hold public events in early September and notification had been sent to Community Councils around potential venues and once a date had been set she would then contact the wider forums. She also advised that these were the “surgery events”. This would be followed by public meetings at the end of September in respect of Arradoul and Forres. She further advised that consultation had only taken place in respect of areas affected; hence this was the reason that Speyside Community Association had not been contacted.

16. TRIBUTE TO HOUSING PROGRAMMES MANAGER

The Meeting joined the Chair in thanking Mr Terry, the Housing Programmes Manager for his contribution to Housing Services in Moray and wished him well on his early retirement from the Council.

17. BUILDING SERVICES TRADING OPERATION BUDGET 2010/11 – BUDGET MONITORING (Para 9)

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services presenting the Building Services Trading Operation Budget monitoring position as at 30 June 2010 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.