

THE MORAY COUNCIL
MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2012

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors E. McGillivray (Chair), G. Alexander, J. Allan, G. Coull, L. Creswell, P. Gowans, M. Howe, B. Jarvis, J. MacKay, M. McConachie and C. Ralph.

Mr S. Christie and Mr B. Taylor (Tenant Representatives).

ALSO PRESENT

Councillors J. Divers and C.Tuke.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillors R Shepherd (Depute Chair) and S. Cree, and Mr D. Wood (Tenant Representative).

IN ATTENDANCE

The Head of Housing and Property, the Head of Development Services, the Housing Services Manager, the Housing Needs Manager, the Housing Strategy and Development Manager, the Asset Manager, the Corporate Policy Unit Manager, the Environmental Health Manager, Ms S. Wilson, Research & Information Officer (Anti Social Behaviour and Community Safety), the Equal Opportunities Officer, Mr P. Nevin, Senior Solicitor, Mrs L. Rowan, Committee Services Officer and Mr D. Westmacott, Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Mr Christie and Mr Taylor to their first meeting of the Communities Committee following their appointments as tenant representatives.

The Chairman clarified that the tenant representatives had full voting rights except where they have a direct financial interest.

2. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Councillor Jarvis declared that the Labour Group had discussed and come to a group decision on Item 13 on the Agenda 'Housing and Property Budget Monitoring – 31 August 2012'.

There were no other declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda, nor any declarations of Members Interest in respect of any item on the Agenda.

3. 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.

<u>Para No. of Minute</u>	<u>Para No. of Schedule 7A</u>
20	2

4. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

There were no written questions submitted at this meeting.

5. REVISED DRAFT EVICTIONS POLICY

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) presenting a revised draft Evictions Policy, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, for approval and seeking agreement to consult with tenants on the revised draft policy.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) proposed revisions to the Evictions Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) that the revisions to the Evictions Policy did not merit a full scale consultation and that discussions with tenants' groups be held in addition to the consultation being published on the Council's website; and
- (iii) that a further report will be presented to the Committee, following the consultation exercise in February 2013.

6. STRATEGIC LOCAL PROGRAMME (SLP) 2012 -15

Under reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of this Committee date 7 June 2012, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) presenting the Committee with progress on the development of the Moray Strategic Local Programme (SLP) for 2012-15.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) noted the Scottish Government's confirmation of programme agreements for projects included in the Council's SLP;

- (ii) noted the additional resources made available by the Scottish Government to fund the SLP;
- (iii) agreed to use the additional resources to include the Ferrylea Phase 2, Forres project in the SLP; and
- (iv) noted that details of further additional Scottish Government resources for the SLP will be presented at a future meeting of this Committee.

7. HOMELESSNESS IN MORAY – ANNUAL REVIEW 2011/12

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) presenting an analysis of homelessness in Moray during 2011/12 and comparing this with that of previous years. The report also set out future actions to address aspects of homelessness.

The Committee joined Councillor Gowans and the Chairman in commending the continued work of the Housing Support Team in Moray.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) commended the continued work of the Housing Support Team;
- (ii) noted the analysis of homelessness, as detailed in Appendix II of the report;
- (iii) agreed the future actions, as detailed in Section 7 of the report; and
- (iv) agreed to participate in any future multi-agency pilot to improve the outcomes of those made homeless due to domestic abuse.

8. COMMON HOUSING REGISTER - PROGRESS

Under reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of this Committee dated 7 June 2012, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) providing a progress update relating to the implementation of the Common Housing Register (CHR).

Following consideration, the Committee noted that:-

- (i) the Common Housing Register (CHR) went live from 8 June 2012;
- (ii) the public face of the CHR is working well and that the service is currently implementing a range of actions to resolve some back office issues; and
- (iii) a project completion report on the CHR will be presented to this Committee during 2012/13.

9. REVIEW OF REVISED APPROACH TO MEDICAL PRIORITY ASSESSMENT

Under reference to paragraph 10 of the Minute of this Committee date 17 January 2012, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) providing a review of the pilot medical assessment process, which was introduced with effect from 1 February 2012.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) noted the review of the pilot process, as detailed in Section 4 of the report;
- (ii) agreed the recommendations, as set out in Section 5 of the report, to address the issues identified in the review; and
- (iii) agreed that the pilot medical assessment process should now be adopted on a permanent basis.

10. EQUALITY ACT 2012: GOOD PRACTICE PROGRAMME

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking Committee to note Stonewall Scotland's Good Practice Programme for implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duties and to consider applying to take part in the programme.

In response to a query from the Committee, the Chair confirmed that that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee detailing Stonewall Scotland's Workplace Programme and the implications involved in joining the scheme.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) agreed to approve the application, on behalf of the Moray Council, to join Stonewall Scotland's Good Practice Programme; and
- (ii) noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee detailing Stonewall Scotland's Workplace Programme and the implications involved in joining the scheme.

11. HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICE PLAN – PROGRESS QUARTER 2

Under reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of this Committee dated 7 June 2012, there was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) setting out the progress achieved in the implementation of the actions agreed within the Housing and Property Service Plan 2012/13.

Following consideration, the Committee noted:-

- (i) progress achieved in the implementation of actions within the Housing and Property Service Plan 2012/13, as detailed in the report; and
- (ii) that a further report will be presented to this Committee in February 2013.

Services) presenting budget monitoring for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Services Other Housing Budget for the period to 31 August 2012.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) noted the detail of the allocations to new build properties between 8 May 2012 and 30 September 2012, as set out in Section 4 of the report; and
- (ii) agreed that further reports on the Lettings Plan will be presented quarterly to this Committee.

15. CUSTOMER FEEDBACK – NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES – 1 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2012

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) providing Committee with details of the responses received in the customer feedback processes for anti social behaviour for the period 1 April to 30 September 2012.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) noted the levels of customer satisfaction, as detailed in Appendix I of the report; and
- (ii) agreed the improvement actions identified, as set out in Section 5 of the report.

16. TENANT SURVEY 2012

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) providing details and timescales of the tenant survey currently underway for Moray Council tenants.

Following consideration, the Committee noted:-

- (i) progress achieved in the tenant survey 2012, as detailed in Section 4 of the report;
- (ii) that a presentation will be made to Members, tenant representatives and senior managers on 6 December 2012; and
- (iii) agreed that a report on the survey results and potential improvement actions be presented to this Committee on 11 December 2012.

17. COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2012/13

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) providing Committee with an updates of performance against Community Safety performance indicators for the period from April to June 2012 and activity undertaken by the four Community Safety Groups in relation to tackling Community Safety priorities.

In response to a query by the Committee regarding the reporting of antisocial behaviour, the Chairman advised that all incidents should be reported to the local Community Warden and it was agreed that Community Warden's contact details would be circulated to all Elected Members for their information.

The Committee joined Councillor Ralph and the Chair in commending community groups involved in litter pick events across Moray.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- (i) welcomed performance against Community Safety indicators, noted as performing well;
- (ii) commended community groups involved in litter pick events;
- (iii) noted that Community Warden's contact details would be circulated to all Elected Members for their information; and
- (iv) noted the measures and activity being undertaken in relation to those requiring action, as set out in Section 6 of the report.

18. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR SERVICE CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) asking Committee to consider the customer satisfaction levels within the Antisocial Behaviour and Community Wardens Services as provided from within Community Safety.

Following consideration, the Committee noted:-

- (i) the outcomes in terms of customers' satisfaction in using the Antisocial Behaviour and Community Warden Services, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (ii) actions taken to improve the service as a result of the survey findings, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.

19. QUESTION TIME

Councillor Alexander queried as to what the current total housing stock in Moray was; what the annual amount of new builds being constructed was; what the current waiting list was and the expected figure over the next few years; and whether the 32 local authorities held statistics on how much their housing stock increase per year as a percentage compares to the percentage of their council housing waiting list.

In response, the Head of Housing and Property advised that the current total housing stock in Moray was approximately 5,800 and over the next 3 years, 122 new builds had been approved. By April 2013, the Head of Housing and Property advised that she expected the housing list, including homeless, waiting and transfer lists, to be approximately 3,000 applications.

The Head of Housing and Property confirmed that the publishing of the Housing Revenue Account Statistical Analysis was expected in the near future that would set out the stock figures for authorities across Scotland, however, advised that to compare with their housing waiting lists, separate statistics would be required and she could not confirm if they were currently available.

20. BUILDING SERVICES TRADING OPERATION BUDGET 2011/12 – BUDGET MONITORING [Para 9]

There was submitted and noted a report by the Corporate Director (Environmental Services) presenting the budget monitoring information for the period to 31 August 2012 for the Building Services Trading Operation.