

THE MORAY COUNCIL
MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE HOUSING SUB- COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2007
COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors E.M. McGillivray (Chair), B. Jarvis, A. D. McDonald and R.H. Shepherd.
Tenant Representatives Ms H Anderson, Mr S Christie, Ms M Ettles, Mr C French and Mrs A Murray

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors G. S Coull, J.S. Cree, G. Leadbitter, J McKay, I.R. Young and Ms E Martin (Tenant Representative)

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Housing Officer, Principal Solicitor (Commercial & Conveyancing), Capital Programmes Manager, Senior Area Housing Manager, Mr G Dobney, Area Housing Manager, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, Housing Strategy & Policy Manager and Committee Services Officer as Clerk to the meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS AND MEMBERS INTERESTS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct 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 nor any declarations of Members Interest in respect of any Item on the Agenda.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

In terms of Standing Order 25, the meeting agreed to vary the order of business set down on the Agenda and take item 11 "Tenants Survey" following the presentation.

3. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

There were no written questions.

4. KITCHEN PROGRAMMING & DECORATION CHOICES

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services informing the Housing Sub Committee on the current position of the Kitchen Replacement Programme, seeking agreement on the process for identification of future replacements and revising the current decoration choices offered under the kitchen upgrading programme.

Following a comment by Ms Ettles, the Chief Housing Officer advised that an Investment Strategy had been agreed and it was anticipated that approximately 400 kitchens would be done each year over the next few years.

Following consideration the Sub Committee agreed:-

- (i) the proposals for the identification of future kitchen programme replacements; and
- (ii) the proposals to revise decoration choices offered to tenants as part of the kitchen replacement programme.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET MONITORING 2007/08

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services presenting the budget monitoring information for the period to 31 August 2007 and the budget process for 2008/09 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Other Housing.

6. HOUSING INVESTMENT 2007/2008

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services informing the Housing Sub Committee of the position to 31 August 2007 for the Housing Investment Programme for 2007/08 and noting progress achieved in developing the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

7. HOUSING QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – 2ND QUARTER 2007/08

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services outlining the performance of the Housing Service for the period 1 July to 30 September 2007.

Further to a question from Councillor Jarvis in respect of average re-let figures, the Chief Housing Officer explained the differences between the “Not Low Demand” and “Low Demand” properties. There are very few properties which are deemed “Low Demand” but if a property is refused three times then Audit Scotland regard them as “Low Demand”.

Following consideration the Sub Committee agreed to note the actions being taken to seek improvements where required.

8. TENANT PARTICIPATION – QUARTERLY UPDATE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services updating the Housing Sub Committee on tenant participation activity in Moray from 1 July to 30 September 2007.

Further to a question from Ms Ettles, the Chief Housing Officer advised that she would look into why New Elgin Forum had been omitted from Appendix 1 and would ensure they were included in the next report to the Sub-Committee.

Following consideration the Sub Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

9. CARE COMMISSION INSPECTION – SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services providing the Housing Sub Committee with the details of the Care Commission’s inspection report on the Council’s sheltered housing service.

Following consideration the Sub Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Care Commission reports on the sheltered housing service;
- (ii) to note the improvement plan developed to address recommendations arising from the report; and
- (iii) that a further progress report on the implementation of the Improvement Plan be presented to the Sub Committee in March 2008.

10. IMPACT OF RIGHT TO BUY SALES 2004/5, 2005/6 AND 2006/7

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services providing the Sub Committee with details of the effects of the Right to Buy (RTB) legislation with regard to Council house sales over the period April 2004 to March 2007.

Further to a question from Mr French, the Chief Housing Officer advised that notwithstanding the level of sold properties, the Housing Business Plan completed in March 2005 indicated that the

Council would continue to carry out its landlord role, within a context of affordable rents and meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

11. MORAY COUNCIL TENANTS CONFERENCE 2007

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services regarding the outcome of the Moray Council Tenants' Conference held on 13 September 2007 and the preparatory work for a Tenants' Conference in 2008.

The Chair thanked the Tenant's Forum for organising the conference and advised that it had been appreciated by everyone who had attended. Mr Christie also thanked members of the Housing Team for their help in the organisation of the conference.

12. CASH COLLECTION REVIEW - UPDATE

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services advising the Housing Sub Committee of consultations currently being carried out regarding cash collection arrangements and that a further report will be presented to Policy Committee on 19 December 2007.

13. QUESTION TIME

There were no questions raised at this meeting.

14. PRESENTATION BY CRAIGFORTH CONSULTANTS

The meeting noted the presentation given by the Amanda Britain and Chris Thornton of Craigforth Consultants on the Tenant Survey 2007. Thereafter the representatives from Craigforth Consultants responded to questions from members and tenant representatives.

The Chair on behalf of the Sub Committee thanked Amanda Britain and Chris Thornton of Craigforth Consultants for their presentation.

15. TENANT SURVEY 2007

There was submitted and noted a report by the Director of Community Services presenting the findings from the Tenant Survey carried out during 2007 and the proposal that an Improvement Plan be developed to address the issues identified in the findings which would be presented to the Sub Committee for approval in early 2008.