

# HOUSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13 March 2000 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Byrd (Chair); Councillors Boad, Cleaver, Cockburn, Doody, Dray, Evans, Mrs Evans, Gifford, Golby, Harris, Jackson, Kent, Kohler, MacKay, Wooller.

Councillor Mrs Compton (Chairman of the Council)

Councillor Short (Vice-Chairman of the Council)

Mr J Roscoe ) - Tenants and Leaseholder User Group

Mrs J Atkins )

## 715. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2000, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### PART I

(Matters not the subject of powers delegated to the Committee by the Council)

NIL

### PART II

(Matters delegated to the Committee by the Council)

## 716. HOUSING DEPARTMENT

The Chair referred to the fact that this was the last meeting of Housing Committee as the new Committee structure would come into effect in May. The Committee expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Head of Housing and his staff for all their hard work and extended their best wishes to the department for the future.

## 717. REVIEW OF MULTI-STOREY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT - FIRST APPROACH TO BUSINESS PLANNING

The Committee considered a written report from the Heads of Housing and Property Services and Commissioning Director on proposals to appoint consultants to assist the Council to consider the future options for the Crest Estate - in particular the three multi-storey blocks of Eden, Southorn and Ashton Courts.

The report identified several options which could be investigated further by the consultants in accordance with a draft brief which was attached to the report. A proposed Schedule of Consultants (who could be approached) was also attached to the report. It was suggested that tenders for the work be sought with the successful tenderer not being chosen on price alone but on the detail of their submission. The estimated cost of this exercise was £10,000 which could be found from within existing resources.

The Head of Housing reported at the meeting that all residents concerned had been advised of the content of this report.

**RESOLVED** that the consultants identified in the Schedule to the report be approached to undertake a review of the options for the Crest Estate multi-storey blocks in accordance with the draft brief.

#### 718. **ASYLUM SEEKERS - UPDATE**

The Head of Housing gave a verbal update on the numbers of asylum seekers, particularly in the West Midlands area, and the situation regarding accommodation and assistance to asylum seekers. Chris Docherty from Warwickshire County Council's Social Services Department also attended the meeting and addressed Members on this issue.

**RESOLVED** that the Head of Housing be requested to continue to monitor the situation regarding asylum seekers and update the appropriate Committee when necessary.

#### 719. **TENANT COMPACT**

The Committee considered a written report from Housing on the Tenant Compact aims and action plan which was agreed at the meeting of tenants, Officers and Members on 26 February 2000 and a copy of this was appended to the report. The main feature of the action plan was the establishment of a Compact Working Group comprising four Members, four Officers, and eight members from the District Wide User Group and the Tenants Federation (Federation 2000). This group would examine and agree the content of the Tenant Compact. A final consultation with all tenants and leaseholders would take place in September and it was proposed that the Compact would be formally signed later in the year. It was suggested that transport be provided to and from meetings for those members of the Tenant Compact Group that required it, and also to offer a child/adult care allowance at a standard rate. It was anticipated that this would be covered within the existing budget.

The Government had provided this Council with £15,800 for this year and a similar sum for next year to help the Council and its tenants introduce new

Tenant Participation Compacts, after which the funding would cease. The report suggested that a Tenant Participation Assistant be employed to assist the Tenant Development Officer and undertake administrative and organisational work and produce information for tenant participation. This post would be subject to fundamental review and budgetary review after two years, when Government funding ceased. It was reported at the meeting that the post could be funded from within the £15,800 Government money.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the Aims and Action Plan agreed at the Tenant Compact Event on 26 February 2000 and the associated provision of transport and care allowance, where appropriate, be endorsed;
- (2) the four Housing Group Spokespersons be appointed to serve on the Compact Working Group (Councillor MacKay would substitute for Councillor Jackson when necessary); and
- (3) the post of Tenant Participation Assistant be created to support the launch of The Tenant Compact and be subject to a budgetary review after two years.

720. **GENERAL REPORT**

(A) HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

Members considered a written report from the Housing Services Manager on the implications of the Human Rights Act for housing which would come into force on 2 October 2000.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) approval be given to the "health check" work to be completed by Housing, in consultation with Legal Services; and
- (2) all Housing staff be briefed of the Human Rights Act.

(B) HOMELESS STATISTICS

The Housing Needs Manager submitted a written report which provided homeless statistical information for January and February 2000.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Officers be congratulated on the reduction of the number of persons occupying bed and breakfast accommodation.

#### (C) PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Members considered a written report from Housing which appraised them of the contractors' performance for the year to date on key performance indicators and the comments made by the Tenants and Leaseholder User Group on that performance.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

#### (D) CANOPIES AND PORCHES

The Committee considered a written report from Property Services on proposals for the replacement of canopies/porches to designated elderly person dwellings in Warwick at an estimated cost of £16,000.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals as set out in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Property Services be authorised to seek tenders for the work and that he, in consultation with the Chair of Housing Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest tender.

#### (E) ENERGY CONSERVATION WORKS - EXTERNAL CLADDING

The Committee received a written report from Property Services on proposals for improving the thermal insulation to dwellings on the Cape Estate in Warwick at an estimated cost of £190,000.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals as set out in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Property Services be authorised to seek tenders for the work and that he, in consultation with the Chair of Housing Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest tender.

(F) REPLACEMENT OF KITCHEN FITTINGS AND/OR BATHROOM/SANITARY WARE 2000/2001

Members considered a written report from Property Services on proposals to continue the replacement of kitchen and sanitaryware on the Shrubland Hall Estate.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals as set out in the report be approved;
- (2) authority be given to the seeking of the necessary planning permission; and
- (3) the Head of Property Services be authorised to seek tenders for the work and that he, in consultation with the Chair of Housing Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest tender.

(G) RE-ROOFING PROGRAMME 2000/2001

The Committee considered a written report from Property Services on proposals for the continuation of the re-roofing programme with the inclusion of 12 flats in Finham Road, Kenilworth at an estimated cost of £17,500.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals as set out in the report be approved; and
- (2) the Head of Property Services be authorised to seek tenders for the work and that he, in consultation with the Chair of Housing Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest tender.

(H) REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

Members considered a written report from Property Services on proposals for the replacement of windows to dwellings in Leamington Spa at an estimated cost of £28,000.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the proposals as set out in the report be approved;
- (2) authority be given to the seeking of the necessary planning permission; and

- (3) the Head of Property Services be authorised to seek tenders for the work and that he, in consultation with the Chair of Housing Committee, be authorised to accept the lowest tender.

(I) HOUSING PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT FOR 1999/2000

Members considered a written report from Property Services on information relating to housing major works schemes currently managed by the Property Services Unit.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

721. **KEVIN ROBERTS**

The Chair informed the Committee that Kevin Roberts would be leaving the Council in April to take up a new post. Members expressed their thanks to Kevin for the work he had undertaken as the Committee's Accountant and wished him all the best for the future.

(The meeting ended at 7.50 pm)