

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of SPECIAL MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 9 February 2016 at 10.00 am.

Present: Councillors DONALD MORRISON, JEANETTE GAUL, COLIN BROWN, BILL DUFF, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, ALEX KING, JIM HOUSTON, DAVID MAY, IAN MCLAREN, GLENNIS MIDDLETON, HELEN OSWALD and RONNIE PROCTOR MBE.

Councillor MORRISON, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Brian Boyd and Iain Gaul with Councillors Colin Brown and Alex King substituting respectively; and also on behalf of Councillors Mark Salmond and Ewan Smith.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were intimated.

3. REQUEST FOR A DEPUTATION

The Committee agreed to hear Ms Pat Millar, Arbroath on behalf of the Angus Council Tenants' Steering Group. She spoke in support of the proposals to be considered by the Committee, which would, she believed, achieve the maintenance of some of the lowest rent levels in Scotland, but not at the expense of quality of Council housing provision. Ms Millar also expressed the Group's appreciation of the support provided to tenants by the Council's housing staff.

Following the deputation, Ms Millar withdrew to the public benches.

4. HOUSING CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/2016

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 17 November 2015, there was submitted Report No 45/16 by the Head of Planning and Place, setting out the actual Capital and Revenue spend to 31 December 2015, together with projected outturns for the year to 31 March 2016 and any required updated Capital Funding proposals.

The Report advised that the actual spend achieved to 31 December 2015 was £4,189,000, equating to 58.1% of the monitoring budget of £7,216,000. It was projected at the current time that by the end of financial year 2015/2016, net expenditure would total £6,792,000.

The Committee agreed to note the projected year-end positions on Capital and Revenue expenditure as indicated in Appendices 1 and 3 of the Report; and the indicative funding proposals for the programme.

5. 2016/2017 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ESTIMATES INCORPORATING RENTS, CHARGES AND ST CHRISTOPHER'S SITE RENTALS

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of special meeting of this Committee of 10 February 2015, there was submitted Joint Report No 46/16 by the Head of Planning and Place and the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance, presenting estimates of income and expenditure on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2016/2017, and giving background for the review of rents and charges for the year.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note that the HRA was in a sound financial position, and could therefore continue to fund a comprehensive programme of improvements to current tenants' homes, and continue to build new homes, whilst maintaining lower than average rents;

- (ii) to approve the capital estimates as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report;
- (iii) to note, as set out in section 4 of the Report, the current position in the four year phased rent restructure which would result in a 3.4% average rent increase for all Council dwellings, including sheltered and dispersed accommodation, as approved by the Committee on 6 February 2014 (Article 4 refers);
- (iv) to approve sheltered and dispersed housing service charges for 2016/2017 as set out in section 5 of the Report;
- (v) to approve a rent increase of 0.9% for garages, garage sites and stores adjacent to garages, all as set out in section 5 of the Report;
- (vi) to approve a rent increase of 0.9% in relation to all pitches at the St Christopher's Travelling People site at Tayock, Montrose, as set out in section 5 of the Report;
- (vii) to approve the proposed Revenue Budget for 2016/2017 as detailed in Appendix 2, column 3; and section 9 of the Report; and
- (viii) to approve the Prudential indicators as shown in Appendix 3 of the Report in compliance with Prudential Code requirements.

6. LONG TERM AFFORDABILITY OF THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FINANCIAL PLAN

With reference to Article 5 of the minute of special meeting of this Committee of 10 February 2015, there was submitted Joint Report No 47/16 by the Head of Planning and Place and the Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance, summarising the outcome of an assessment of the long-term affordability of the Housing Revenue Account's 2015/2019 Financial Plan, over a 30 year period. The analysis was based on a number of assumptions which were considered to be robust, reasonable and prudent for the purposes of informing the Council's decisions. Critically, the analysis confirmed that the HRA Capital Spending Plans could be regarded as affordable, prudent and sustainable in line with the requirements of the Prudential Code.

The Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the contents of the Report and in particular the key assumptions underpinning the affordability analysis;
- (ii) to note that, based on the assumptions made, and the affordability analysis undertaken, the 2015/2019 Housing Revenue Account Financial Plan was considered to be affordable, prudent and sustainable by the Prudential Code;
- (iii) to note that the Business Plan and Affordability Assessment would be updated as necessary to assess the viability of future Housing Revenue Account Capital Project proposals; and
- (iv) to approve the long-term Affordability Assessment as the basis for taking forward capital investment planning for the Housing Revenue Account.