

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **HOUSING COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Thursday 13 March 2025 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors BETH WHITESIDE, JILL SCOTT, JULIE BELL, KENNY BRAES, LINDA CLARK, JACK CRUICKSHANKS, LYNNE DEVINE, HEATHER DORAN, ROSS GREIG, IAN MCLAREN, GEORGE MEECHAN, LLOYD MELVILLE, GAVIN NICOL, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE and LOIS SPEED.

Councillor WHITESIDE, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies intimated.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

There were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTES

(a) Previous Meeting

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 30 January 2025 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

(b) Special Meeting

The minute of Special meeting of this Committee of 11 February 2025 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. APPOINTMENT OF TENANT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE HOUSING COMMITTEE

With reference to Article 11 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 19 December 2024, there was submitted Report No 79/25 by the Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change advising members of nominations received from tenant representatives for appointment to this Committee.

The Report indicated that upon establishment of this Committee, it had been agreed to appoint three tenant representatives in a non-voting capacity, and in accordance with the Scheme adopted by the Council, a copy of which was provided at Appendix 1. Two nominations had been received from constituted groups and details were provided at Section 5.2 of the Report.

Having heard a number of members welcome the appointment of tenant representatives, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the Scheme adopted by the Council for the appointment of tenant representatives to the Committee, provided in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (ii) to note that following advertisement of the Scheme, two nominations had been received from tenant groups;
- (iii) to approve the appointment of Mr Michael Cameron and Mr Thomas O'Brien as tenant representatives to the Committee in a non-voting capacity, in accordance with the Scheme; and
- (iv) to note that one vacancy remained and that a Report would be brought back to this Committee for consideration if a further nomination was received.

At this stage in the meeting the Convener and the Committee warmly welcomed Mr Cameron and Mr O'Brien to the Housing Committee, at which point both tenant representatives joined the meeting.

5. HOUSING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Communities Committee of 11 June 2024 and Article 13 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 20 June 2024, there was submitted Report No 80/25 by the Interim Service Leader – Housing providing an update on the progress made in delivering the Housing Service Improvement Plan 2024/25 which aimed to address critical challenges within the housing service.

The Report indicated that the Housing Service Improvement Plan 2024/25 had been launched in April 2024 to address long-standing challenges within the housing service. Since the launch of the Housing Service Improvement Plan, progress had been made with the implementation of a Tenant Participation Strategy, the launch of a Customer Charter, and improvements in meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Despite progress in several areas, the service faced ongoing challenges in key operational functions however, the ongoing review of the current housing service structure would help ensure that staff resource was more effectively aligned to progress the improvement priorities in the housing improvement plan. The review had provided valuable insights that would guide future improvements and support the successful implementation of the improvement plan.

At this stage in the meeting (2.13pm), the Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting due to a technical issue, The meeting resumed at 2.14pm.

Following a number of questions and comments, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the commitment to complete the ongoing service review to refocus resources and align staffing with the areas most in need, ensuring improvements in voids, repairs, rent collection, and communication;
- (ii) to note the commitment to address the resource gaps identified in the housing service structure, particularly in relation to income management, void management, and repairs, by ensuring that the service review would lead to better resource allocation and clearer accountability;
- (iii) to note the commitment to enhance communication strategies within the service to improve tenant satisfaction, reduce complaints, and ensure more effective engagement with tenants;
- (iv) to note the commitment to strengthen training and development for staff in key areas such as performance reporting, data analysis, and customer service to ensure a more skilled and responsive service;
- (v) to note the commitment to fully implement and monitor the Performance Management Framework to ensure that progress against key performance indicators was consistently reviewed, and action plans were implemented to address any areas of underperformance; and
- (vi) to note the commitment to increase focus on digital solutions to streamline work processes, improve efficiency, and enhance data accuracy across the housing service.

6. FURTHER REVISIONS TO COMMON ALLOCATION POLICY

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of the Communities Committee of 1 October 2024, and Article 7 of the minute of meeting of Angus Council of 7 November 2024, there was submitted Report No 81/25 by the Interim Service Leader – Housing updating members of revisions to the Common Allocation Policy and seeking approval of the revised document.

The Report indicated that following the decision of Angus Council, further consultation had been carried out with applicants regarding the proposed revisions to the policy, as outlined in Appendix 4. Feedback from the consultation had been considered in the revised policy and necessary revisions made to ensure that the policy aligned with the Council's request for further changes. Details of the proposed revisions were provided at Section 6.1 of the Report.

Following a number of comments from members regarding the revised Policy, the Committee agreed:-

- (i) to note the previous reports considered by the Communities Committee on 1 October 2024 and Council on 7 November 2024 regarding the policy revisions, as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the Report;
- (ii) to note the decision of Council not to approve the revised Common Allocations Policy and to request that further revisions be considered;
- (iii) to approve the revised Common Allocation Policy as detailed in Appendix 3 to the Report, specifically highlighting changes to paragraphs 7.3 Suspending applications; 10.1 Housing Priority; and 11.3 Advert Criteria; and
- (iv) to note the consultation carried out with applicants regarding the proposed further revisions to the Common Allocation Policy as detailed in Appendix 4 to the Report.