

FC52. REFERRAL FROM SPECIAL MEETING OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of the Housing and Social Services Committee held on 3 December 2007 (Paragraph HSS25 refers), there was submitted Report (circulated) dated 4 December 2007 by the Director of Housing and Social Work Services relating to Housing Allocations.

Councillor Goldie, seconded by Councillor McNeill moved the recommendations contained within the Report considered by the Special Meeting of the Housing and Social Services Committee with the following additional recommendation:-

That Council authorise the Convener of the Housing and Social Services Committee to write to the relevant Cabinet Secretary conveying the Council's concern that the duties placed on Councils in relation to homelessness are not matched by sufficient funding or the ability to provide new build accommodation.

By way of an amendment, Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Meiklejohn moved that the recommendations to the Report be substituted with the following:-

Members note the work of the Allocations Review Group and the management decision to temporarily increase by 38 properties the Council's stock of temporary accommodation to homeless applicants with some concern. Previous reports approved by Council and committee and practices undertaken by the department have always contained consultation with the Local Member as well as a commitment to evenly spread the burden across geographical areas. Council noted with disappointment that not only were Local Members not consulted on this exercise but were not even informed of the outcome. Council agrees that this is unacceptable and in breach of previous agreements and the principal of openness and accountability.

Members agree to the following steps:

- i. Call on officers to bring forward a report within 6 weeks outlining the impact on the housing of homeless applicants with an increase of points within the existing system.
- ii. The number of offers made to existing applicants remains at its current level.
- iii. The level of Social Points be awarded to large families to reflect the number of bedrooms deficient within an application to be the equivalent of the removal of the cap on the amount of Overcrowding Points Due.
- iv. Applicants be able to change their top five areas at any time.

Council notes that the Allocations Review Group, unlike the previous Allocations Review Group does not contain any Elected Members. Council recognises the important role that members play in their community and agrees that the Allocations Review Group contain cross party representation of groups represented within the Council membership.

The remit of the group will be to:

- Review the findings of the Communities Scotland Report when this becomes available.
- Review best practice and guidelines in relation to housing allocations
- Consult with the relevant stakeholders including Elected Members.

- Take account of local housing needs and affordability issues.

Once the extended review group has concluded, specific proposals will be presented to a seminar organised for all Members before being placed on an agenda for the Housing and Social Work Committee.

In terms of Standing Order 21.4 (i) a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 30 Members present with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (18) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black, Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Fry, Goldie, Gow, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Nimmo, Patrick and Waddell.

For the Amendment (12) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, H Constable, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, Meiklejohn, Oliver and Thomson.

Accordingly, **RESOLVED:-**

- (1) to authorise the Convener of the Housing and Social Services Committee to write to the relevant Cabinet Secretary conveying the Council's concern that the duties placed on Councils in relation to homelessness are not matched by sufficient funding or the ability to provide new build accommodation;
- (2) From 1 Jan 2008 for a period of six months or until a revised allocations framework is implemented, allocations be made only to applicants in "reasonable preference" groups as set out in Section 4.1 of the report;
- (1) The number of offers made to all applicants be reduced to 2 offers;
- (2) Social Points be awarded to large families to reflect appropriately the degree of overcrowding experienced, and
- (3) Applicants be permitted to change their Top 5 areas at any time.