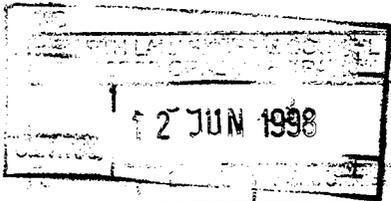


AGENDA ITEM No. **2**

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT

TO: SHOTTS AND HARTHILL AREA COMMITTEE		SUBJECT: GARDEN ASSISTANCE SCHEME  
FROM: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING		
DATE: 5 June 1998	REF: GW/RM/BS/EW	

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee on the level of complaints received regarding the quality of the work in respect of the maintenance of gardens by the Council's newly appointed contractor, Brophy Grounds Maintenance, and to advise on the action taken to remedy the situation.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Following a competitive tendering exercise in respect of the Garden Assistance Scheme, the Housing Committee of 8 March 1998 agreed to award both contracts, which are for a three year period for the Central and South districts, to Brophy Grounds Maintenance.
- 2.2 Experience in recent years in relation to carrying out this type of work has demonstrated that initially at the start of the growing season problems could be anticipated, particularly where there was such a short lead-in time from the award of the contracts to actual commencement of work on site. These difficulties relate mainly to the employment of a suitable labour force, the need to secure appropriate plant and vehicles and plan the most efficient routes.

**3.0 Level of Complaints Received for the Shotts and Harthill Area**

- 3.1 Notwithstanding the above mentioned factors, the scale of complaints received has been unacceptable and to date the Area Housing Manager has advised that 40 formal complaints have been received within the Shotts and Harthill area and it is acknowledged that there is fairly widespread concern regarding the quality of service.

**4.0 Actions Taken to Remedy the High Number of Complaints**

- 4.1 As a result of the level of complaints received from all ten local area housing offices and of complaints made by elected members, I arranged a meeting with the contractor at which it was stressed that the current level of complaints was unacceptable. The Convenor of the Housing Committee also attended the meeting.
- 4.2 The contractor's representative acknowledged that there was scope for a great deal of improvement in the delivery of this very important service and outlined an action plan designed to rectify matters. Assurances were given that the implementation of this action plan will see a marked reduction in the level of complaints by the end of the second cyclic maintenance cut which is programmed for May/June 1998.

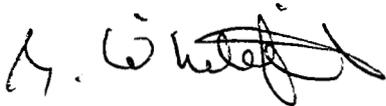
4.3 The contractor's performance will continue to be closely monitored to ensure that the planned improvement in service is achieved and maintained over the remainder of the growing season.

**5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 It is recommended that the Area Committee notes the contents of this report.

**6.0 Background Information**

6.1 Background information is available within the Housing Department.



Gavin Whitefield  
Director of Housing