

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration

**Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
5 February 2014**

**Subject: West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016:
Annual Progress Report 2014**

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report informs committee on the progress made with the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016 (LHS) and also highlights new legislative and policy developments which may impact upon the delivery of the strategy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee:-

- i) acknowledge the progress made in meeting the aims and objectives of the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy and notes the contents of the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy Annual Progress Report 2013 (appendix 1); and
- ii) note that a further annual progress report be brought to Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee of February 2015.

3. Background

- 3.1** Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 local authorities are required carry out a comprehensive assessment of housing needs and conditions and to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) to address the issues identified. The West Dunbartonshire LHS was submitted to the Scottish Government on 29 November 2011 and covers the period to 2016.
- 3.2** The Scottish Government also requires local authorities to submit a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) indicating how investment in affordable housing will be directed over the 5-year period with a view to achieving the LHS outcomes.
- 3.3** Funding approval in the form of a Strategic Local Programme (SLP) has been agreed with the Scottish Government indicating where the Scottish Government issues all Scottish local authorities with a 3 year Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) to support the provision of new affordable housing.

4. Main Issues

4.1 The LHS Annual Progress Report 2012 (Appendix 1) report provides an update on progress on the five key themes contained in the Local Housing Strategy, namely:

- Housing Need and Demand;
- Promoting Good Quality Housing;
- Homelessness;
- Sustainable and Supportive Communities; and
- Addressing Particular Housing Needs.

4.2 This Progress Report summaries the main issues under each of the key themes and identifies new policy developments, both locally and nationally, which have arisen during the first year of the plan and which will impact on its future development.

4.3 Summary of the Key Issues

Housing Need and Demand

4.3.1 The number of new houses built across both private and social rented sectors did not reach supply targets during 2012/13. This reflected the ongoing difficulties in the housing market. The difficulties within the social sector have been addressed where the Council as the strategic housing authority has ensured through a more proactive and enabling role that the target in 2013/14 along with the shortfall from 12/13 will be achieved. This will ensure that the affordable housing supply target of 70 new social rented properties is met over the lifetime of this Local Housing Strategy.

The Council also has a key strategic ambition to deliver 5,000 new houses over a ten year period 2012-2022. This ambition is being pursued through two key pieces of initial work:-

- Council's disposal strategy

The Council have completed site condition and valuation surveys which will allow the sites to be take to the market

- Strategic Housing Partnerships.

The Council is at present considering submissions from potential partner organisations in respect of the strategic partnering arrangements to assist in the delivery of affordable housing across West Dunbartonshire for the next ten years and the outcome of which will be subject to a report to members in May 2014.

The new Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP) was published on 27 September 2013. West Dunbartonshire's Local Housing Strategy informed the development of the LDP. The LDP sets out the land use strategy, policies and proposals for the period and identifies opportunities for housing development.

The Housing (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 21 November 2013. The Bill includes a provision for the outright abolition of the Right to Buy in Scotland. As any such abolition is unlikely to become law until 2017. The impacts of this was reported to the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee in November 2013.

A further report highlighting that consideration is being given to introduce a Pressured Area Status designation for appropriate properties in West Dunbartonshire. This will be presented to Members of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee in May 2014.

Promoting Good Quality Housing

- 4.3.2** A full Housing Stock Condition Survey of the Council stock has been carried out and will inform future investment planning. It will also inform our work to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and ensure compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) which is planned for introduction this year.

In November 2013, the Council reported to the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee an increase in SHQS compliance rate to 70% for the first six months of 2013/14. It is anticipated that the Council will be in a position to report 75% compliance levels during the reporting period for Quarter 3 2013/14. This represents excellent progress towards achieving the end of year target of 75% and it is anticipated that the compliance level at 31 March 2014 will exceed this target.

The Council's new build programme has already successfully delivered two new housing projects within agreed timescales and costplans, with another on site and more in the pipeline. These new houses are being built to high energy efficiency and accessibility standards.

The Council has developed an Owner Engagement Charter (Multi Tenure Estates) and the owners' Scheme of Assistance is under review.

Homelessness

- 4.3.3** The new Homelessness Strategy 2013 -2016 was published in August 2013. The strategy builds on the Council's successful strategic preventative approach which has seen a 40% drop in homeless presentations. The strategy will be implemented during a period of economic uncertainty, when the impacts of welfare reform are likely to lead to increasing hardship among many members of our communities. The strategy commits the Council to working in partnership to provide advice and assistance to reduce the negative effect of welfare reform.

Sustainable and Supportive Communities

- 4.3.4** The new Scottish Social Housing Charter contains an outcome which reads: *tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe*. A series of indicators are being used to manage the process towards achieving this outcome with significant progress reported in developing joint working between ASB/Estates Services, local communities and Police Scotland.

Addressing Particular Housing Needs

- 4.3.5** Significant progress has been made in joint working between Housing Services and the West Dunbartonshire Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP), particularly in the area of housing for the elderly and shifting the balance of care.

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill requiring further integration of strategic planning between NHS health boards and social care services for adult health and service provision was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on May 28, 2013. It is anticipated that the finalised Bill will include proposals for greater integration of housing services in this area.

Work to progress the reprovisioning of the Council's older people's care homes is progressing with one relocation site agreed in Dumbarton and another close to agreement in Clydebank. In addition, within the private sector provision work will be commencing soon on the development of a new 60 bed care home in Alexandria.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no direct implications associated with this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** There are no direct financial implications in relation to this report, although the delivery of the LHS will require the bringing together of a number of resource streams from the Council and partner organisations.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The Strategy noted the prevailing volatile policy environment and difficult economic conditions, a position which is likely to remain unchanged at least in the short term. Welfare reform and the factors impacting on fuel poverty remain significant areas of concern.
- 7.2** Certain outcomes contained in this Strategy will continue to be dependent upon the ongoing resource commitments of a wide range of partners in both the public and private sector.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** An Equalities, Health and Human Rights Impact Assessment was carried out on the Local Housing Strategy and found no substantive negative impacts. The assessment is available on the Council's website

9. Consultation

- 9.1** The development of the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy was subject to widespread consultation. A copy of the consultation summary is available on the West Dunbartonshire Council website.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The ongoing implementation of the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy contributes greatly to all five strategic priorities but principally to the priority to improve local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure.

Richard Cairns

Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration

Date: 15 January 2014

Person to Contact: John Kerr - Housing Strategy Manager, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU, telephone: 01389 737889, e-mail: john.kerr@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Jamie Dockery - Housing Policy Officer, Garshake Road, Dumbarton, G82 3PU, telephone: 01389 737366, e-mail: Jamie.dockery@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendix: Appendix 1 - West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 -2016 Annual Progress Report, December 2013

Background Papers: West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016 November 2011
<http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy/local-housing-strategy/>

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee 19 January 2012: West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016

WD LHS Equality Impact Assessment November 2011

West Dunbartonshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan
2013 - 2018 June 2013

West Dunbartonshire Homelessness Strategy 2013 -2016
August 2013

Wards Affected:

All