

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Infrastructure and Regeneration

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee: 7 May 2014

Subject: Council House New Build Progress Report

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report informs the Committee of the progress of the Council's new build house programme.
- 1.2** The Council's new build programme which involves the development of 122 new build homes for social rent which will be delivered by March 2015. The programme has already delivered 48 new homes for rent.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
 - (i) note the content of the Report and the progress made to date with the Council's new build programme; and
 - (ii) approve the amendment to the unit capacity at the Hill Street development from 38 units to 37 units to facilitate a large wheelchair property to meet a specifically identified need.
 - (iii) note the changes to the financial profile outlined in section 6.1 which have been adjusted to reflect the change in unit numbers.

3. Background

- 3.1** Following a successful application in September 2011, for £2,250,000 innovation and investment grant funding to build 75 new build homes, the Council has now completed 2 of the 3 projects and the final project is underway. An update on the progress is detailed below at Section 4.
- 3.2** The Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee approved the Strategic Local Programme for 2012-15 in August 2012. This included Council new build projects at Brucehill and a further phase at Central/Radnor Park. An update on the progress of all new build projects is detailed in Section 4.
- 3.3** The Council House New Build Project Team along with external partners continue to prioritise the new build projects in order to ensure that West Dunbartonshire Council deliver new Council homes within the agreed budget and timescales.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The Council's new build programme now comprises of 5 new build projects as we move from IIF Funding projects to Affordable Housing Grant projects - progress on each is summarised within this section. Two projects at Haldane and Central/Radnor Park have now completed within the target timescales delivering 48 new council homes for rent.

New Build Project	Completion Target
Granville Street (Phase 1)	July 2013 (completed July 2013)
Miller Road	January 2014 (completed October 2013)
Granville Street (Phase 2)	January 2014 (completed Jan 2014)
Central Bellsmyre	January 2015
Hill Street	March 2015

Central Bellsmyre (36 units)

- 4.2** The main contractor Robertsons went on-site on 17 March 2014. Work on concrete foundations, piling and drainage is progressing well and on target to complete mid-January 2015.

Granville Street Phase 2 (9 units)

- 4.3** Phase 2 completed on 17 March 2014 with all tenants now occupying the 9 new flats.

Hill Street, Brucehill (37 units)

- 4.4** Planning consent was granted during the 2nd week of March 2014. The Design team are continuing to progress the detailed drawings and will submit a revised planning application to cover the reduction by 1 property to facilitate a large wheelchair property over one level specifically for a family with a high level of need.
- 4.5** The Brucehill Community Working Group has been updated on planning consent and the next steps. Consultation will continue as work progresses. The Community will have the opportunity to make decisions on internal specifications such as kitchen units and floor coverings.
- 4.6** In addition, the Design Team is working closely with Greenspace to consult with the community over what type of community garden they wish to see. This will also closely involve Brucehill nursery and an interactive event is being planned to get the nursery children to choose the materials that will be used in the garden.
- 4.7** Tenders are being returned during April 2014 and a site start date is programmed for mid May 2014.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** The new build project team involves staff within Housing Strategy and Development, Consultancy Services, Legal and Finance and as this moves forward the Project Team will engage with other Departments.
- 5.2** The Council house new build project team were recently awarded 'Team of the Year' at the employee recognition awards. This demonstrates the commitment of some 40 members of staff across a large range of departments to ensure that new build council properties are successfully developed.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1** The impacts of the Council's new build programme will be continually reviewed and assessed through the Council's HRA Business Plan model and there are currently no negative impacts.

Current New Council House Build Programme

Project	Units	Estimated Cost	Grant	Borrowing
Bellsmyre Central	36	£3,925,909	£1,080,000	£2,845,909
Hill Street, Brucehill	37	£4,180,000	£1,850,000	£2,330,000
Totals	82	£8,105,909	£2,930,000	£5,175,909

- 6.2** As previously outlined there may be potential additional cost savings that can be made due to the nature of the SCAPE Framework and these will become clearer as the project develops. In addition, as the Hill St Project progresses to tender, there are also potential cost savings. These will be reported to a future Committee.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** Each project has its own risk register which highlights risk within and outwith the project team's control. These are maintained and adjusted on an ongoing basis.
- 7.2** There is a risk that as Cost Plans develop, further borrowing may be required. Any additional borrowing requirements, or conversely, cost savings will be reported to future meetings of the Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee. However, this risk is mitigated by good project management arrangements outlined in 7.1.
- 7.3** A condition of the Scottish Governments grant funding is that all projects have to be completed by March 2015. The risk to the projects not currently onsite not completing by then is low and will be monitored.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** The proposal does not alter any existing policy or pattern of service delivery and so is not considered to require an equalities impact assessment.
- 8.2** All new build Council housing is compliant with Housing for Varying Needs.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Public consultative events have been held with regards the Granville Street and Miller Road developments. A similar event is also planned for the Bellsmyre development. These two events attracted over 80 members of the local communities and received strong community support to plans and development of new council housing for rent. In addition, all three new build developments were the subject of an information stand at the Tenants Information Day held on 15 October 2012, in Dumbarton. Additional consultation methods for the new project at Hill Street are outlined in 4.5 and 4.6 of this report.
- 9.2** The Strategic Local Programme was drawn up in consultation with the Scottish Government and all the RSLs operating in West Dunbartonshire. The Local Housing Strategy and SHIP were both subject to earlier extensive consultation processes. As these projects are taken forward, further consultation events will be undertaken with local communities.
- 9.3** The Council House Build Project Team comprises of officers from various Council departments and continues to meet on a regular basis to ensure that the projects are delivered on time and meet the needs of the West Dunbartonshire communities.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** The Local Housing Strategy is the overarching document setting out the strategic direction for housing across all tenures and informs the future investment in housing and related services across West Dunbartonshire.
- 10.2** Having considered the Council's strategic priorities, this report and the provision of new supply social housing for rent contributes greatly to all five strategic priorities and significantly to improving local housing and environmentally sustainable infrastructure.

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Date: 22 April 2014

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 26 May 2011: Bid Submission to the Innovation and Investment Fund for New Council House Building

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 2 November 2011: New Council House Building - Innovation and Investment Fund

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 11 January 2012: New Council House Building

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 6 June 2012: New Council house Building Progress Report

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 7 March 2012: New Council House Building Planning Committee Report 7 February 2012: DC11/257 and DC11/255

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 15 August 2012

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 14 November 2012

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 13 February 2013

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 8 May 2013

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee Report 6 November 2013

Housing, Environment and Economic Development
Committee Report 5 February 2014

Wards Affected: 1, 2, 3 and 5