

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Strategic Lead, Housing and Employability

Housing & Communities Committee: 14 August 2019

Subject: Delivering New Housing in West Dunbartonshire - Strategic Housing Partnerships

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the establishment of further Strategic Housing Partnerships to recognise the role of Caledonia Housing Association, Clydebank Housing Association and Dunbritton Housing Association in assisting West Dunbartonshire Council to achieve its aim of developing new affordable housing to meet housing need and to assist in the regeneration of our communities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Housing and Communities Committee:
- (i) approves the Strategic Partnerships with Caledonia Housing Association, Clydebank Housing Association and Dunbritton Housing Association to assist in the delivery of the Council's strategic housing objectives including new housing for rent; and other affordable housing solutions.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) sets out the funding priorities for new affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire for the next five years, 2019/20 – 2023/24. This was approved by Housing and Communities Committee on 7 November 2018. It complements the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 – 2022 (LHS) approved by Council and submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2016.
- 3.2** We are approaching the final 2 years of the Scottish Government's *More Homes Scotland* approach to increase the supply of new affordable housing across the country. This initiative sees £3 billion being committed to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes by April 2021, 35,000 of these being for social rent. The SHIP details how the Council and local Housing Associations will assist in meeting this target through the delivery of more than 1,000 new social rented homes in West Dunbartonshire.
- 3.3** Although the majority of focus is currently upon the 2021 target, it is important to forward plan and formalise the Council's ambition to have an Affordable Housing New Build Programme for West Dunbartonshire beyond 2021. The Council are currently working on this in partnership with developing Housing Associations.

- 3.4** The West Dunbartonshire LHS is a key corporate plan which provides the strategic direction for housing across all tenures and provides the framework for investment in affordable housing and related service.
- 3.5** West Dunbartonshire's LHS places an emphasis on regeneration reflecting the recognition of the need to improve many of our neighbourhoods and to provide affordable housing which meets the changing requirements of our communities. Alongside this aim the Council is keen to increase the housing supply more generally across West Dunbartonshire particularly in terms of affordable housing for rent.
- 3.6** West Dunbartonshire Council in its role as the strategic housing authority has the responsibility to develop and deliver a Strategic Local Programme (SLP) which will deliver the provision of new affordable housing to meet local need. This includes detailing both Council and Housing Association development projects
- 3.7** The Council is committed to working with Housing Associations who wish to develop affordable housing and since 2015 has had a strategic partnership with the Wheatley Group.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** As mentioned above the Council has been in a Strategic Partnership with the Wheatley Group since 2015. This was a recognition of the key role that the Wheatley Group had in working with the Council to meet our strategic housing priorities. Since this time, the Housing Associations noted at 1.1 have also played and continue to play a key role in the provision of affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire.
- 4.2** All three housing associations have contributed greatly to the provision of new affordable housing in West Dunbartonshire since the announcement of the Scottish Government's More Homes Scotland initiative and significantly feature in Affordable Housing Development Plans going forward.
- 4.3** It is proposed that the Strategic Housing Partnerships between the Council and the three housing associations would have the clear main strategic objectives:-
- to assist in the delivery of the Council's strategic housing objectives;
 - to facilitate the delivery of a minimum 5 year housing development programme;
 - to support the Council's housing and wider regeneration activities;
 - to ensure that Resource Planning Assumptions (RPAs) are fully maximised to meet affordable housing supply targets; and
 - to assist in the delivery of new build housing for social rent in areas identified through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan to address housing need (including particular needs).

4.4 While, work to develop the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan is ongoing we would anticipate in excess of 800 new homes being delivered in the West Dunbartonshire area through the new strategic partnerships over the next 5 year period.

4.5 This anticipated investment will not only fund much needed affordable housing but will generate much needed construction jobs, training places and apprenticeships through all the organisation's approach to community benefits within their development contracts.

5. People Implications

5.1 There is a requirement for ongoing Housing input into this project.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications within this report. However the effective development of the strategy will have a positive financial impact on the Council through increased council tax revenue

6.2 There are no procurement implications as a result of this report.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 There is a risk that the outputs set out in the LHS will not be met, including the affordable housing supply target. This has been mitigated by the additional powers local authorities have in terms of their role as the strategic housing authority through the delivery of the Scottish Governments Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP).

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An Equality Impact Screening did not indicate any further action required in relation to any recommendations. The provision of modern, adaptable social housing enhances the Councils provision for disadvantaged groups

9. Consultation

9.1 There is continuous consultation and information sharing for the Affordable Housing Programme through various internal mechanism and on a project by project basis through pre planning consultation sessions, drop in sessions, newsletters etc.

9.2 The proposals contained within this report have also been discussed in detail with the Scottish Government.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 Having considered all the Council's strategic priorities, this report and the provision of new supply social housing for rent contributes greatly to all five strategic priorities.

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Date: 30 July 2019

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy
EIA Screening, June 2019

Wards Affected: All

