

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee:
11 January 2012

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the final version of the West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and to advise that it was submitted on schedule to the Scottish Government on 29 November 2011.

2. Background

2.1 Scottish Government LHS guidance requires that the new-style strategy has a clearer focus on strategic outcomes for housing and related support needs. The LHS feeds into, and supports, the local authority's Single Outcome Agreement.

2.2 The LHS is covers the following areas:

- the extent and type of housing need and demand;
- the local authority's strategic vision for the future of housing across all tenures, taking account of national priorities;
- how the standard of housing will be improved;
- clear strategic direction for housing investment;
- the outcomes required to achieve this vision; and
- specific commitments made by the local authority and key partners to enable the delivery of outcomes as shared priorities.

2.3 The scope of the new LHS has been broadened. The LHS is a key corporate planning activity for the local authority and the overarching strategic document on:

- housing,
- homelessness,
- housing support services and
- fuel poverty.

The new style LHS helps facilitate the effective integration of strategic planning on these closely-related issues.

- 2.4** The LHS sets out a vision for the future shape of the housing system in West Dunbartonshire and how this will be achieved through clearly stated aims and objectives
- 2.5** The development of the Strategy is underpinned by West Dunbartonshire Council's commitment to promoting and sustaining equality and inclusion, and equality and diversity principles. The plan has been developed within the context of the Council's overarching vision of improving prosperity and inclusion for all citizens, delivering better and more efficient services, and improving West Dunbartonshire as a place to live, work and visit.

3. Main issues

- 3.1** This Strategy is the result of a wide ranging consultation process which commenced in May 2011 and concluded on 25 November 2011.
- 3.2** A consultative draft of the Strategy was presented to Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee on 2 November 2011 where it was decided to:
- i) note the issue of Consultative Draft and its content;
 - ii) agree that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Development to submit a final version to the Scottish Government by the end of November 2011, having regards to further comments made in the consultation exercise; and
 - iii) agree that the submitted final Local Housing Strategy be reported to the January 2012 Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee for ratification.
- 3.3** The LHS was duly submitted to the Scottish Government on 29 November 2011 following consideration of representations up to 25 November 2011. The Scottish Government Housing Supply Division has indicated that they will commence the review process and issue a final response to the Council around week commencing 5 March 2012.
- 3.4** The submitted version of the LHS will be available in Members Lounges and is available on the Council's website.

4. People Implications

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

5. Financial Implications

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

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** The Council has now met its statutory responsibility to publish a Local Housing Strategy.
- 6.2** The Strategy has been drawn up in a volatile policy environment and one where there is a great deal of economic uncertainty. The Strategy will be the subject of annual review to ensure that any relevant local or national changes are incorporated.
- 6.3** The outcomes contained in this Strategy will be dependent on the ongoing resource commitments of a wide range of partners in both the public and private sector.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried in regards to this Strategy and is available on the Council's website.

8. Strategic Assessment

- 8.1** The Council has identified four main strategic priorities for 2011/2012, namely Social & Economic Regeneration, Financial Strategy, Asset Management Strategy; and Fit for Purpose Services.
- 8.2** The LHS 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.
- 8.3** The LHS places regeneration at the heart of local outcomes contributing greatly to all four of the Council's main strategic priorities for the communities of West Dunbartonshire.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1** The draft Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016 sets out our understanding of the housing issues facing West Dunbartonshire and indicates how the Council and our partners intend to address them.
- 9.2** The LHS has now been submitted to the Scottish Government within the planned timescales and will be subject to review by them.
- 9.3** The outcome of the review of the Strategy is expected to be known by March 2012.
- 9.4** The Committee is invited to note the content of the final version of the Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016.

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Date: 8 December 2011

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development to Housing, Environment and Economic Development Committee 2 November 2011: Consultative Draft West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2011 - 2016

Wards Affected: All