

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL26 October 2017Report by Director of EnvironmentFINALISED DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LHS) 2017-2022**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To seek approval for the finalised 5-year Local Housing Strategy (LHS) (2017-2022) produced in line with Scottish Government guidance and through partnership and consultation with local tenants, residents, partner and community organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- (a) Approves the finalised East Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022; and
 - (b) Authorises the Director of Environment to submit the strategy and associated documents to the Scottish Government.

BACKGROUND

3. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to prepare, in accordance with guidance, a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which is a five-year plan setting out the strategic direction for housing and related services.

4. The Strategic Housing Need and Demand Assessment (SHNDA) provides the main evidence base for the LHS and for *Clydeplan* which is the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the Glasgow and Clyde Valley region which was published in July 2017.

5. The SHNDA identifies the requirements for affordable and private market housing over the medium and long term at the regional housing market area and local authority levels.

6. Work has been undertaken by Housing Services to update our understanding of the main issues affecting housing supply, house condition and related services locally in order to identify the priority areas which should be addressed by the new LHS. This supporting background evidence accompanies the finalised Local Housing Strategy.

7. A consultative draft LHS for 2017 – 2022 was approved by the Cabinet on 15th September 2016. This consultation was held from October 2016 to January 2017.

REPORT

8. The finalised LHS for 2017-2022 centres around 4 strategic housing priorities, with specific outcomes and targets linked clearly to the relevant Community Plan outcomes.

These are set out below:

Community Plan Outcome 3.4

“Residents live in warm, dry and energy efficient homes”

LHS Priority 1: Increase Access to Housing

- *Our residents are able to access a choice of suitable, affordable housing to meet their needs.*
- *Innovation is used to positively impact upon the available housing supply.*

LHS Priority 2: Thriving, Attractive & Sustainable Neighbourhoods

- *Residents live in communities that are safe, resilient and supportive.*
- *Residents live in warm, dry homes that are in good condition.*

Community Plan Outcome 5.1

“Older people are able to live as safely and independently as possible in the community and have control over their care and support”

LHS Priority 3: Facilitate Independent Living

- *Our vulnerable residents are able to live as safely and independently as possible in the community with appropriate care and support.*
- *Support is available to those who require it, to prevent housing crisis and find sustainable housing solutions.*

Community Plan Outcome 4

“East Renfrewshire residents are safe and supported in their communities and homes

LHS Priority 4: Improve Access & Participation

- *People can access the information they need about our services, to make informed choices about their housing options.*
- *Residents feel included and empowered to make a valuable contribution to their local communities, in the way that suits them best.*

9. Summary details of the action proposed in relation to these are attached.

10. Feedback received through the formal consultation reinforced that the focus should be on the 4 main priorities identified, and that there are interdependencies between all 4 critical to achieving improved local housing and services. The work identified in the LHS action plan and monitoring framework reflects that the Council’s five capabilities are important issues with customers.

11. There are a number of significant milestones and targets set out by the Scottish Government which the LHS must take into account. These are:

a) *Delivering at least 50,000 additional affordable homes nationally by 2021.*

The Scottish Government has placed critical priority on delivery of **50,000 affordable homes from 2016-2021**, to tackle the shortfall in homes which are affordable to rent and buy across the country. The **More Homes Scotland** initiative has come with direct investment of £422m in 2017/18 plus a further £1.754bn from 2018/19 to 2020/21 to deliver the 50,000 affordable homes, as well as increased subsidy levels, a new rural house fund and support for City Deals.

East Renfrewshire has a relatively small social rented housing stock locally, impacted by Right to Buy, and a significant shortfall of affordable housing which has been persistent over time. The commitment of the previous LHS to secure 150 affordable homes was exceeded with 238 achieved over the 5 year LHS period.

Based on needs identified in the SHNDA, the finalised draft LHS sets out a commitment to deliver 225 new affordable homes for rent by 2022, with a further 175 private homes to be built per year.

b) Continuing annual compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) for social rented homes, following the original target to meet this standard by 2015.

The SHQS is a standard set by the Scottish Government. All Scottish social landlords were to meet this by March 2015 and maintain it thereafter. The standard has a range of elements: energy efficiency; The Tolerable Standard; healthy, safe & secure; modern facilities; and free from serious disrepair.

Through the LHS we work to ensure that residents in East Renfrewshire live in homes that are warm, safe and in good condition. Within Council and Housing Association homes in East Renfrewshire, 97.2% and 100% of homes respectively meet SHQS at March 2017. The remaining 2.8% of Council homes are exemptions/ abeyances.

This is against a Scottish Council average of 89% of homes, and average for all Scottish social landlords of 92.6% of their homes meeting SHQS.

c) All social rented homes in Scotland must meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) by 2020.

A new and critical target for this LHS is ensuring Council and Housing Association homes in the area meet the ESSH target for improved energy efficiency by the year 2020. Year on year targets have been set out to work towards 100% compliance with the standard. By March 2017, 66% of East Renfrewshire Council's housing stock was compliant with ESSH, higher than the Scottish Council average of 64.8% but against a Scottish Social landlord average of 76.4%.

Although the SHQS already incorporates elements of energy efficiency within the home which had to be achieved by 2015, ESSH goes much further in its requirements. It accords with the Scottish Government priorities on reducing emissions and environmental impact, as well as reducing fuel poverty.

d) By December 2020, improvements in housing design and energy efficiency are expected to contribute to Scotland's commitments to reduce its energy consumption by 12% and greenhouse gas emissions by 43%.

Development of the LHS has been linked closely to the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy. As well as improving standards in Council and Housing Association sectors, the LHS contains the commitment to work with local residents and landlords to improve energy efficiency in private homes and support the most vulnerable households to be energy wise.

Within the Council new build programme a commitment has been made to achieving a “greener standard” of design and build features to ensure that the new homes will be as energy efficient as possible and have a reduced impact on carbon emissions. These standards will also be taken into account within the Housing Association developments built locally.

12. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 identifies the availability of appropriate good quality housing and housing services as making an important contribution to improving health and wellbeing outcomes. A requirement of the Act is the production of a Housing Contribution Statement which outlines how the housing sector can support delivery of integrated health and social care services and has been produced jointly with the Health and Social Care Partnership, and its recommendations reflected in the work commitments of the finalised draft LHS.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

13. The LHS has been developed in a context of continuing uncertainty about future public sector resources, and ongoing challenges in the wider economy. This has been taken into account as far as is possible in setting the finalised LHS outcomes and targets to ensure that delivery of the strategy will be challenging, but also realistic and achievable.

14. Considerable effort has been made to ensure that the finalised draft LHS is deliverable within current resources, as far as possible.

CONSULTATION

15. The process of developing the LHS has included the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders including elected members, partner departments and organisations, and members of the public.

16. A range of mechanisms have been used to ensure as constructive and inclusive an approach to consultation as possible. This has included public consultation using the Citizen Space online portal and direct surveying of staff and residents, as well as focus groups and discussions with community groups throughout 2016/17. The final draft strategy takes into account the key points to emerge from the consultation and is summarised in a consultation report which accompanies the LHS.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

17. This Local Housing Strategy has been developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders. The issues addressed by the LHS cover a range of housing and related services not all within the remit of Housing Services. Successful delivery requires sharing responsibility, knowledge and resources and pooling these to achieve the best outcomes possible for local residents.

18. Progress on delivering the LHS will be monitored and guided by the Housing Partnership Group, using the LHS Monitoring Framework and Action Plan. Work with local registered social landlords will be used to take forward key projects in relation to the SHIP programme and areas of shared concern in terms of housing management.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

19. The significant equality and sustainability implications associated with the LHS have been fully considered through the process of consultation and options appraisal, and the outcomes set out in the finalised LHS. An equality impact assessment has been completed to support the LHS.

20. The Council must also consider the environmental impact of the LHS, in line with the requirements of the Environment (Scotland) Act 2005. The LHS was screened to allow us to take steps to address any negative environmental impacts in advance of finalising the strategy. The detailed Environmental Assessment undertaken for the Local Development Plan is considered to address the major environmental impacts in relation to the development of new homes.

21. The LHS does not directly raise any significant new policy, property or IT issues.

CONCLUSIONS

22. Consultation on the Local Housing Strategy has provided the Council with the opportunity to shape with partners and the community, the priorities identified for the development of housing and related services over the next five years.

23. The LHS will shape decisions on investment in new housing and the direction that housing and related services will take locally. It will also influence the identification of land for housing through the new Local Development Plan 2 as we go forward, in order to meet identified need and demand for new housing across all housing tenures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

24. It is recommended that the Cabinet:

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Director of Environment

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October 2017

BACKGROUND PAPERS

People. Homes. Brighter Futures: East Renfrewshire's Local Housing Strategy 2017- 2022 (Finalised Draft)

Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 – Infographic Summary (Appendix 1)

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Community Plan Outcomes

Intermediate Outcomes

Community Plan Outcome 3.4

“Residents live in warm, dry and energy efficient homes”

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Housing Priority 1: Increase Access to Housing 59

What you said

"More low cost home ownership options"

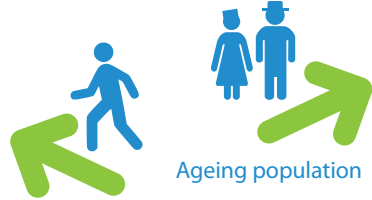
"Build more houses – less flats"

"Lack of appropriate housing for single people and larger families"

"Build more Council houses"

"Lack of first time homes in Eastwood"

Challenges



Rising population

Ageing population



82%
Owner occupied homes

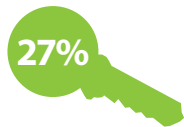


£213,353
East Renfrewshire

£142,233
Scotland



Growing private rent market



Social rented homes in Levern Valley comprise 27% of all homes



Social rented homes in Eastwood comprise 6% of all homes



in 2015/16
Available
2000 on social waiting list, 245 council properties becoming available each year

Our Solution



Tackling long term empty homes



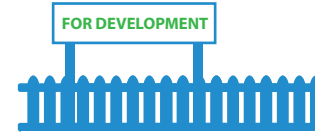
Let houses more efficiently



Buy homes on the open market to boost supply



Deliver 120 new Council homes



Assemble future sites for council housing



Build 178 private and 45 new affordable homes per year for the next 5 years



What you said

“Extend factoring service”

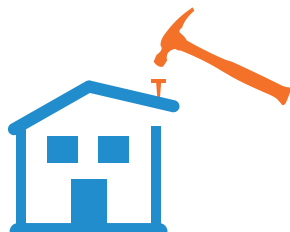
“Visible difference in upkeep of private homes”

“Fully inform tenants of upcoming work”

“Community pride improves with housing investment”

“More investment in housing repairs”

Challenges



Repairs required in ex-right to buy stock



Ageing stock requiring investment



34% of homes yet to meet EESSH 2020



30% of owners in fuel poverty

Our Solution



Help improve homes in poorest condition



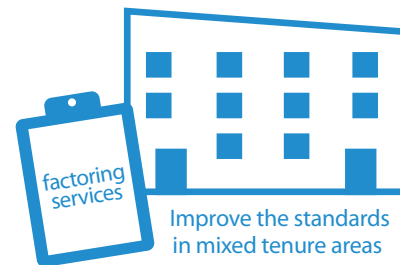
Reinforce owners' responsibilities to maintain their homes



Improve neighbourhood inspections



Install 1,300 new central heating systems over the next 5 years



Improve the standards in mixed tenure areas



Target energy efficiency improvements



Housing Priority 3: Facilitate Independent Living 61

What you said

"More support for the elderly at home"

"More 'retirement' and 'downsizing' options"

"Better housing for disabled people"

"Causes of homelessness need to be tackled"

"Improve accessibility in new and existing homes"

"Plan ahead for an ageing population"

Challenges



The very elderly population (85+) is set to grow at a higher rate than nationally




29% learning disabled live in supported accommodation



The number of people with dementia is set to double between 2011 and 2031



154 'Looked After Children' supported at home



27% of population have at least one long term condition

Our Solution



To ensure at least 10% of new homes are, or can be made, accessible



Partnership working with Housing and HSCP



Prioritise grant funding for disabled adaptations



Improve tenancy sustainment for vulnerable households



Effective housing solutions for young people



Monitor the impact of welfare benefit changes on Council tenancies



Housing Priority 4: Improve Access & Participation

What you said

"More use of volunteers and community groups"

"Support people in the local area"

"Encourage resident participation in consultations"

"Provide clear information on available housing options"

"Frontline staff provide a good service"

Challenges



Making information accessible to everyone



Modernise access to services



Remaining barriers to internet access



Tenants & Residents Groups not in all areas; others hard to reach e.g. young people

Our Solution



Develop online services



Shared advice and signposting with HSCP



High quality, responsive housing advice



Digital capacity in new social rented homes



Support ongoing 'community conversations' on housing



Direct messaging for ERC customers

