



**SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**WEST LOTHIAN LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2017-2022 UPDATE**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES**

**A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the panel on progress on the West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022

**B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the panel notes that good progress is being made implementing the Local Housing Strategy and that the main new issue which has emerged during the first year of the strategy is the need to prepare a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for West Lothian.

**C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I Council Values</b>	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
<b>II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	A Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screening report and Integrated Impact Assessment were carried out on the Local Housing Strategy
<b>III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	N/A
<b>IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	Performance indicators have been included in the Local Housing Strategy
<b>V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<p>Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.</p> <p>Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.</p> <p>We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.</p> <p>People most at risk are protected and supported</p>

to achieve improved life chances.

Older people are able to live independently in the community and with an improved quality of life.

We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.

We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.

**VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**

Resources will be required to implement the Strategy, primarily within the Housing Capital Programme.

**VII Consideration at PDSP**

An update on the LHS is reported to the PDSP annually.

**VIII Other consultations**

Consultation has taken place with Housing Associations operating in West Lothian, with Scottish Government More Homes Division, Planning Services and with Finance and Property Services.

**D. TERMS OF REPORT**

**D.1 Background**

The West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017 - 2022 was approved by Council Executive on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Since then a number of actions have been progressed and new actions identified. The report provides a summary of the key achievements and actions that have been progressed. The report also identifies a number of key challenges ahead. Appendix 1 is an updated action plan.

**D.2 LHS Themes and achievements**

**Housing Supply and Place Making**

Good progress has been made achieving the 3,000 affordable homes target over the 10 year period to 2022. At September 2018 1,469 homes had been completed, 628 homes were under construction and there is a pipeline of future council and RSL developments which will take place over the next few years.

Since April 2018, 255 new council homes have been completed and 12 RSL homes have been completed.

Sites for 250 new build council homes have been approved and the first completions are anticipated in 2020/21.

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2019-2024) was approved by Council Executive on 9 October 2018 and identifies sites for more than 2,000 affordable homes over the next five years in West Lothian to be built by RSLs, subject to funding being made available.

New Affordable Housing Supplementary Guidance has been approved so that it reflects the terms of the West Lothian Local Development Plan.

Agreement has been reached on setting up the Homes for West Lothian Partnership to engage with RSLs in West Lothian to increase the supply of affordable housing.

### **Preventing and Addressing Homelessness**

The council and its strategic partners have developed the first iteration of the West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP), which will be submitted to the Scottish Government by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. A report on the RRTP is being presented to this meeting of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

Feasibility work is being undertaken to develop accommodation that will specifically meet the needs of young people who are at risk of homelessness and require housing support.

### **Independent Living and Specialist Provision**

Sixteen new build council bungalows were completed in 2017/18 and a further 20 have been completed to date in 2018/19.

New specialist accommodation is being developed for people with complex care needs. Funding of £3 million has been approved in the General Services Capital Programme to support this project.

A review of the Scheme of Assistance is underway.

Housing's contribution to health and social care integration will be outlined in a new Housing Contribution Statement to be included in the Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

### **Private Rented Housing**

Monitoring of rents in the Private Rented Sector is ongoing. Local authorities are working together with COSLA to determine the evidence base that would be required to apply for a rent pressure zone.

The number of private rented registered landlords has increased from 5397 in October 2017 to 5412 in November 2018.

The approach to landlord registration and HMO licensing is being further developed to ensure landlords are aware of their responsibilities.

### **House Condition**

The Housing Capital Programme has identified £154.8 million of investment in existing housing stock and new build over the five year period to 2022/23.

Work is ongoing to ensure that WLC housing meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. At March 2018, 99.47% of WLC stock met the SHQS.

### **Fuel Poverty and Climate Change**

Through the Housing Investment Capital Programme and support provided by the Scottish Government the council continues to deliver energy efficiency upgrades to help tenants and residents living in energy inefficient housing to reduce their fuel

costs.

66.7% of WLC Housing stock meets EESSH (as March 2018). This is an increase of 19.3% from March 2017. The council is working towards being 100% compliant by the deadline of December 2020. £20.1 million has been identified for various measures in the Housing Capital Programme to ensure that council housing stock meets the EESSH standard.

### **D.3 Key challenges and actions 2019/20**

Progress the council new build housing programmes.

Work with RSLs through the Homes for West Lothian Partnership to increase the supply of affordable housing in West Lothian.

Begin to implement the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan for West Lothian.

Work with Social Policy to develop proposals for specialist housing for people with learning disability.

Engage with private landlords to raise awareness on responsibilities on house condition and tenancy matters.

Progress with measures which will increase the number of council houses meeting EESSH.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Overall good progress has been made on the actions in the Local Housing Strategy. A key area of activity over the coming year will be in relation to homelessness and developing a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. Increasing housing supply through close working with our RSL partners and the voluntary sector will assist with this. Improving housing quality is also important and this is being addressed through the housing capital programme and liaison with private landlords.

## **F BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council Executive 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017 West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022.

Council Executive 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018 West Lothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019-2024

Appendices/Attachments: 1

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