

Report

Report to:	Housing and Technical Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 February 2024
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	Housing Allocation Policy – Local Letting Plans 2024/2025
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise on progress against the 2023/2024 letting targets
- ◆ request approval for the 2024/2025 letting targets
- ◆ request approval for the 2024/2025 local letting initiatives

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that progress against the 2023/2024 letting targets, be noted
- (2) that the 2024/2025 mainstream housing letting targets, attached as Appendix 1, be approved
- (3) that the 2024/2025 sheltered housing letting targets, attached as Appendix 2, be approved; and
- (4) that the Local Letting Initiatives attached as Appendix 3, be approved

3. Background

3.1. Local Letting Plans (LLPs) have been a key feature of the Housing Allocation Policy since 2009. During the review of the Housing Allocation Policy in 2018/2019, it was recognised that LLPs continue to provide an effective means for ensuring that a strategic and flexible approach is taken in the allocation of council housing in South Lanarkshire. Consequently, LLPs were retained within the revised Housing Allocation Policy, which came into effect in May 2019.

3.2. On an annual basis, LLPs are prepared for each of the housing management areas of South Lanarkshire. LLPs provide an overview of local supply and demand and set out:-

- ◆ annual letting targets for each of the 4 housing lists (in relation to mainstream and sheltered properties); and
- ◆ details of Local Letting Initiatives (LLIs) in operation within a local area

3.3. The targets and initiatives detailed within LLPs are subject to Housing and Technical Resources Committee approval. This is the fourth annual report on LLPs since the revised Housing Allocation Policy was introduced.

4. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan

- 4.1. The South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019 to 2024 sets out a number of objectives to address homelessness and limit the amount of time people experiencing homelessness spend in temporary accommodation. Identifying and reviewing letting targets contributes towards achieving the priority objectives set out within the RRTP.

5. Achievement of the 2023/2024 Letting Targets

- 5.1. The information provided in relation to the achievement of letting targets has been projected to the end of the financial year, based on data collated between 3 April and 10 December 2023. This approach allows letting targets and letting initiatives to be fully implemented from the start of the financial year.
- 5.2. Across each housing management area, letting targets are set within bands for each housing list to allow for a degree of flexibility when allocating properties. Full details of the projected outcomes in relation to the targets set for both mainstream and sheltered properties in 2023/2024 are set out in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 5.3. In relation to mainstream council properties, it is projected that across South Lanarkshire, performance in relation to the Urgent Housing Need List will be above the banded target. This can be attributed to the significant increase in homelessness experienced both locally and nationally. Consequently, lets directed to the Transfer and Waiting lists are projected to be below the target while lets to the Other Categories list within the target. A key focus for local housing teams is to increase lets to transfer applicants to help achieve the year-end target which will in turn increase turnover.
- 5.4. In relation to the targets set for sheltered properties across South Lanarkshire, it is projected that lets to all housing lists will be within target.

6. Letting Targets for Mainstream Properties during 2024/2025

- 6.1. The letting targets proposed for mainstream properties across South Lanarkshire and for each of the 4 housing management divisions are set out in Appendix 1.
- 6.2. The factors which have been taken into account when setting the mainstream letting targets for 2024/2025 are detailed below:-
- ◆ demand for social rented housing remains high – 13,431 applicants were on the HomeFinder housing register as at 10 December 2023
 - ◆ a continuing high demand from homeless households – between 3 April and 10 December 2023, 1,952 homelessness applications have been received. Assuming this trend continues, it is projected that 2,820 homelessness applications will have been received by the end of the financial year. This represents an increase of 13% on the 2022/2023 year end position and reflects a general increase in homelessness presentations being experienced nationally
 - ◆ the Council's statutory duty to homeless households – the number of applicants assessed as homeless and to whom the Council has a duty to provide settled accommodation remains high. As at 10 December 2023, there were 1,581 homeless applicants on the HomeFinder housing register, an increase of 20% (1,312) on the 2022/2023 year end position

- ◆ the number of properties becoming available for let – it is projected that by the end of the financial year, 1,825 mainstream properties will have been let. Whilst this represents an increase of 7% on the previous year, this figure is comparable with average turnover levels pre-Covid
- ◆ additional supply of housing – the number of Council new build properties and acquisitions planned for completion during 2024/2025
- ◆ joint working with partners – the contribution that HomeFinder partners and other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) make to meeting housing need, including the needs of homeless applicants and other priority groups, through agreed targets

7. Sheltered Housing Letting Targets for 2024/2025

- 7.1. Between 3 April and 10 December 2023, 112 sheltered properties became available for let. It is projected that by the end of the financial year, 162 sheltered properties will have been let, broadly comparable to the number let in 2022/2023.
- 7.2. There continues to be a high level of demand for sheltered housing with 1,159 applicants on the HomeFinder housing register as at 10 December 2023.
- 7.3. It is recognised that demand for sheltered housing varies across areas and individual sheltered housing developments and this has been taken into account in the letting targets proposed for 2024/2025.
- 7.4. The letting targets proposed for sheltered properties across South Lanarkshire and for each of the 4 housing management areas are set out in Appendix 2.

8. Letting Initiatives

- 8.1. The Housing Allocation Policy allows for the establishment of LLIs in areas where there are particular needs, issues or circumstances which require to be addressed.
- 8.2. During 2023/2024, there were 6 LLIs in operation across South Lanarkshire. To inform the development of the LLPs for 2024/2025, each of the letting initiatives have been subject to review to assess their impact and identify whether there is a need for the initiative to continue.
- 8.3. It is proposed that the existing 6 LLIs, set out in Appendix 3, be retained during 2024/2025.
- 8.4. In the previous Local Letting Plan report presented to Committee in March 2023, it was recognised that there are benefits to supporting tenants living in larger homes to downsize to a smaller property. Consequently, it was agreed that during 2023/2024, a proactive approach would be taken to support council tenants under occupying larger sized properties, to downsize to a smaller property, where they wished to do so.
- 8.5. During 2023, a review of council tenants living in 4-bedroom properties was carried out. The key aim being to consider the tenant's needs and application preferences, provide housing options advice and where appropriate, ensure their application was placed appropriately on the housing register to maximise their chance of being re-housed to a smaller property.

- 8.6. At the same time, a change in operational practice was also introduced to ensure that when a council tenant (living in either a 3 or 4-bedroom property) submits a new application for housing, specific consideration is given to application preferences and housing options advice provided to enhance the tenant's chance of being re-housed.
- 8.7. As a result of the review exercise and through the mainstream allocation process, 19 tenants have been rehoused in a smaller, more suitable property and 3 tenants have been made an offer of housing. In addition, through the right to mutual exchange, a further 20 tenants have also been rehoused from a larger property to a smaller home.
- 8.8. It is proposed that this approach will continue in the year ahead and expanded to include a focus on tenants living in 3-bedroom properties.

9. Next Steps

- 9.1. Implement 2024/2025 letting targets effective from Monday 1 April 2024.
- 9.2. Publish the 2024/2025 Local Letting Plans on the South Lanarkshire Council website.
- 9.3. Continue to monitor the impact of the Local Letting Initiatives throughout the year.

10. Employee Implications

- 10.1. There are no employee implications contained within this report.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1. There are no financial implications contained within this report.

12. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 12.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy which impacts on the natural environment, climate change or sustainability.

13. Other Implications

- 13.1. The content of this report will contribute to the evidence to support the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.
- 13.2. The risks associated with welfare reform have been included within the Resource's risk register and actions taken to mitigate these risks where possible.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 14.1. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on each LLI proposed for 2024/2025. The assessment is that the proposals do not have any adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics groups.
- 14.2. Consultation on the proposed letting targets and the LLIs has taken place with tenants and other customers at a meeting of the Tenant Participation Co-ordination Group.

Stephen Gibson
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

11 January 2024

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent

Previous Reference

- ◆ Housing and Technical Resources Committee – Local Letting Plans, 15 March 2023

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Local Letting Plans 2023/2024

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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SLC Proposed Letting Targets for Mainstream Properties 2024/2025**South Lanarkshire**

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	55-65%	1382	75%	55-65%
Transfer	15-25%	202	11%	15-25%
Waiting	15-20%	166	9%	15-20%
Other Categories	0-5%	88	5%	0-5%
		1838	100%	

Cambuslang/Rutherglen Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	55-65%	290	80%	55-65%
Transfer	15-25%	14	4%	15-25%
Waiting	15-20%	18	5%	15-20%
Other Categories	0-5%	39	11%	0-5%
		361	100%	

Clydesdale Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	45-55%	222	60%	45-55%
Transfer	20-25%	48	13%	20-25%
Waiting	20-30%	85	23%	20-30%
Other Categories	0-5%	16	4%	0-5%
		371	100%	

East Kilbride Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	60-65%	334	85%	60-65%
Transfer	20-30%	29	8%	20-30%
Waiting	5-15%	17	4%	5-15%
Other Categories	0-5%	13	3%	0-5%
		393	100%	

Hamilton Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	60-65%	536	75%	60-65%
Transfer	15-25%	111	16%	15-25%
Waiting	10-20%	46	6%	10-20%
Other Categories	0-5%	20	3%	0-5%
		713	100%	

SLC Proposed Letting Targets for Sheltered Properties 2024/2025**South Lanarkshire**

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	15-30%	35	22%	15-30%
Transfer	40-50%	71	44%	40-50%
Waiting	25-35%	54	33%	25-35%
Other Categories	0-5%	1	1%	0-5%
		161	100%	

Cambuslang Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	15-20%	9	69%	15-20%
Transfer	35-45%	3	22%	35-45%
Waiting	35-45%	1	9%	35-45%
Other Categories	0-5%	0	0%	0-5%
		13	100%	

Clydesdale Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	15-20%	7	26%	15-20%
Transfer	35-45%	6	22%	35-45%
Waiting	35-45%	13	48%	35-45%
Other Categories	0-5%	1	4%	0-5%
		27	100%	

East Kilbride Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	20-30%	10	17%	20-30%
Transfer	30-45%	27	45%	30-45%
Waiting	30-40%	23	38%	30-40%
Other Categories	0-5%	0	0%	0-5%
		60	100%	

Hamilton Division

Housing Need List	2023/2024	2023/2024 Projected Lets		2024/2025
	Target	Number	%	Target
Urgent Housing Need	25-35%	9	15%	15-25%
Transfer	45-50%	35	57%	50-55%
Waiting	15-25%	17	28%	20-30%
Other Categories	0-5%	0	0%	0-5%
		61	100%	

Proposed Local Letting Initiatives for 2024/2025

Management Area	Details of LLI	Area covered by LLI	Property types/sizes	Duration of LLI
Clydesdale	Priority for housing will be given to applicants who have a social or economic connection with the area. To encourage tenancy sustainment, discussions will take place with prospective tenants to ensure that they fully understand the context to living in a rural location.	Forth East Douglas Douglas Water Glespin Rigside	All property types/sizes	1 year
Hamilton	Reasonable priority for housing to be given to applicants with an assessed mobility need.	Almada Tower Wyler Tower	1 and 2 bedroom multi storey flats	1 year
Cambuslang	Reasonable priority for housing to be given to applicants with an assessed mobility need.	Rosebank Tower Sherry Heights Standford Hall Logan Tower Springhall Court	2 bedroom multi storey flats	1 year
Cambuslang	Priority for housing to be given to Transfer list and Waiting list applicants who have a local connection.	Cathkin Braes Tenant Management Co-operative area	All property sizes and types	1 year
Cambuslang	Priority for housing to be given to Transfer list and Waiting list applicants who have a local connection.	Whitlawburn	All property types and sizes	1 year
Rutherglen	Restrict lets to the Urgent Housing Need list up to 45%.	Greenhill Court	All 1 and 2 bedroom properties	1 year