

# Report

Report to:	<b>Housing and Technical Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>17 February 2021</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan – Funding Allocation and Staffing Resources</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Provide an update on the funding being provided by the Scottish Government to support the implementation of the South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)
- ◆ Seek approval to add posts to the establishment on a temporary basis.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that the content of the report, be noted;
- (2) that the proposal to extend contracts for 1 FTE Strategy Co-ordinator at Grade 3, Level 8 and 6.2 FTE Housing Officer posts at Grade 2, Level 3, be approved, and
- (3) that the proposal to add 1 FTE Team Leader post at Grade 3, Level 2 and 2 FTE Housing Support Officer posts at Grade 2 Level 3 to the establishment for a fixed period of 12 months, as detailed at section 6, be approved.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. In October 2017, the Scottish Government established the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to develop short-term and long-term solutions to end homelessness and rough sleeping across Scotland.
- 3.2. In June 2018, HARSAG produced a final report with recommendations that included a requirement for local authorities to each develop a five-year Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP). 'Rapid rehousing' is defined as a housing-led approach for people that experience homelessness with a focus on ensuring they reach a settled home as quickly as possible, whilst limiting the amount of time spent in temporary accommodation.
- 3.3. In June 2018, the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning wrote to all Scottish local authorities advising of the requirement to prepare a RRTP and submit it to the Scottish Government by 31 December 2018.
- 3.4. South Lanarkshire's RRTP 2019-2024, was developed in collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders and was submitted to the Scottish Government by the required timescale. The final plan was approved by Housing and Technical

Resources Committee on 23 January 2019 and reported to the Community Planning Partnership Board on 19 June 2019.

- 3.5. The good progress made in the period up to the end of March 2020, including key achievements, was detailed within the first annual review of the plan which was approved by Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 16 September 2020. The submission of the review was delayed due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and because the Scottish Government were keen for local authorities to include comment on the impact of Covid-19 on the delivery of RRTP objectives.
- 3.6. During the initial months of the pandemic, the Council and its partners focused resources on providing an emergency response and ensuring the delivery of critical services to vulnerable customers.
- 3.7. The Homelessness Strategy Group, a partnership of key stakeholders with strategic oversight of the plan, proposed the funding allocation for year two should mirror year one to allow for the plan to become embedded, while ensuring flexibility of objectives and actions in response to the pandemic, as reported to Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 16 September 2020.

#### **4. Scottish Government Funding**

- 4.1. In December 2018, the Scottish Government provided the Council with £105,000 to support the initial development and implementation of the RRTP. This funding was primarily used to fund the appointment of a Strategy Co-ordinator post with specific responsibilities for working with partners and co-ordinating the implementation of the plan. This post was appointed for an initial period of 18 months.
- 4.2. In July 2019, South Lanarkshire Council were awarded a further £461,000 from the Scottish Government's Ending Homelessness Together Fund to support the implementation of actions for the first year (2019/20) of the plan.
- 4.3. In December 2019, the Scottish Government confirmed £453,000 funding would be provided to support implementation of the RRTP in 2020/21. An additional £282,000 for use in 2020/21 will also be provided in March 2021 as part of the distribution of a further £5million from the Scottish Government to support the increased pace of work around local RRTPs as Scotland responds and recovers from the pandemic.
- 4.4. The Scottish Government has advised that the Council will receive a funding allocation of £445,000 for 2021/22, and has also confirmed that any underspend from funding allocated in 2020/21 can be carried forward into 2021/22
- 4.5. To continue to progress the key actions and priorities within the RRTP it is important to maintain current staffing levels and ensure the additional funding being allocated by the Scottish Government is used to obtain maximum value in working towards the wider objectives of the RRTP.
- 4.6. With confirmation now received of the actual level of funding for the third year of the plan it is anticipated that the initial staffing structure in place will continue to deliver the RRTP objectives.

#### **5. Progress and Future Priorities**

- 5.1. Funding provided has been used to progress a number of key priorities detailed in the plan, including:-

- ◆ Continuing to deliver the HomeStart service which supports people moving from homelessness, or who may be at risk of homelessness, to set up and sustain their home.
- ◆ Working on a partnership basis to further develop Housing First.
- ◆ Converting temporary tenancies to permanent homes, thereby allowing homeless households to remain within temporary accommodation in which they have settled.
- ◆ Providing starter packs to households who have experienced homelessness.
- ◆ Increasing prevention activity across all housing tenures
- ◆ Increasing availability of intensive support and enhancing support to those experiencing domestic abuse
- ◆ Further developing the partnership approach to preventing homelessness for individuals leaving prison.

5.2. A key aspect of the first annual review was to consider the appropriateness of the actions identified in the RRTP, with a particular focus on those to be progressed during the future years of the plan.

5.3. Detailed below is a summary of the key priorities being progressed during Year two of the plan (2020/21):-

- ◆ Ensure the supply of temporary accommodation is optimised to meet need and statutory responsibilities and continue the Council's long-standing compliance with the extended Unsuitable Accommodation Order (see section 6)
- ◆ Continue to deliver affordable homes for social rent in South Lanarkshire.
- ◆ Continue to reduce the number of children affected by homelessness and minimise the impact for those affected.
- ◆ Ensure links between the RRTP and Local Child Poverty Action Report 2020 are in place to support and improve outcomes for homeless households with children.
- ◆ Continue to reduce long-term homelessness.
- ◆ Prioritise the reduction in the use of Bed and Breakfast as emergency accommodation.
- ◆ Continue to update and enhance Partner Contribution Statements and work closely with Registered Social Landlord partners to ensure priorities are delivered.
- ◆ Ensure 'Directions' relating to homelessness are incorporated into the Strategic Commissioning Plan 2019-22 and implemented.
- ◆ Continue to support victims of domestic abuse and provide refuge through dedicated services provided by Women's Aid and other partners.
- ◆ Develop housing options approach for young people.
- ◆ Progress actions within the Ending Rough Sleeping Action Plan.
- ◆ Continue to implement approaches to assist homelessness prevention by providing financial assistance and support to Council tenants and tenants in the private rented sector exploring hardship.
- ◆ Continue to expand the Council's HomeStart service, with additional resources provided to increase support and assistance to new tenants.
- ◆ Continue to develop the Council's Housing First approach.
- ◆ Progress plans to convert temporary units to permanent accommodation.

## **6 Staffing Resources Required to Support RRTP**

6.1. Supported by the RRTP funding from the Scottish Government, a RRTP Strategy Coordinator was appointed in January 2019 to oversee the development and implementation of the plan. Given the continuation of the funding for the delivery of the plan into 2023, it is proposed that the contract for the Co-ordinator be extended for a

period of 17 months to continue to develop pathways between key partners, oversee the continued implementation of the plan, and to lead on a further annual review.

- 6.2. Also supported by the RRTP funding, a number of specialist posts are in place to progress the actions relating to particular vulnerable groups. These include supporting those experiencing domestic abuse, leaving care, or being released from prison, and to promote tenancy sustainment by providing support to settle into permanent accommodation. To be able to progress these strategic priorities during 2021/22 and 2022/23, it is proposed that these temporary posts continue, with the contracts of 6.2 FTE Housing Officers extended for a further period of 12 months.
- 6.3. To support the further development of the Housing First approach, it is proposed that two additional Housing Support Officers are appointed on a fixed term basis, for a period of 12 months, to increase the pace and scale of Housing First, in line with HARSAG recommendations.
- 6.4. To further support the transformational change of the homelessness service, it is proposed that one additional Team Leader be appointed on a full-time basis for a fixed period of 12 months to lead a newly formed central homeless Reception Service. This new service has been established from existing resources, to ensure core and statutory services are delivered and maintained. while building resilience into the model of service provision. This Team Leader post will facilitate the continuation of the centralised reception service while the service model is further developed during 2021/22.

## **7. Next Steps**

- 7.1. Subject to approval by the Housing and Technical Resources Committee, the recruitment process for the additional Team Leader will commence and contracts for the Officers and the Strategy Co-ordinator will be extended.
- 7.2. A full review of progress made in implementing the RRTP in 2020/21 will be presented to this Committee on 30 June 2021.
- 7.3. The Homelessness Strategy Group will continue to meet regularly throughout the year to ensure that RRTP priority actions are being delivered and to monitor and report on progress made.
- 7.4. The impact of Covid-19 will be closely monitored, and strategic approaches and priorities will be adjusted to reflect emerging issues and requirements. This will be reported as part of the next annual review process.

## **8. Employee Implications**

- 8.1. It is proposed that 1 FTE Team Leader is added to the establishment on a temporary basis for a 12 month period, as detailed below.
- 8.2. It is proposed that 2 FTE Housing Support Officers be added to the establishment on a temporary basis for a 12 month period, as detailed below.
- 8.3. It is proposed that contracts are extended for a further 12 months for 6.2 FTE Housing Officers, and a further 12 months for 1 FTE Strategy Co-ordinator, as detailed below.

Post Title	No. of Posts (FTE)	Grade SCP	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary (excluding on costs)	Total costs/Officer (including on costs)	Total Cost
Team Leader	1.0	Grade 3, Level 2 SCP 63-65	£18.08 - £18.60	£32,994 - £33,943	£42,991 - £44,227	£42,991 - £44,227
Housing Support Officers	2.0	Grade 2, Level 1-3 SCP 34 -48	£11.78 - £14.48	£21,497 - £26,424	£28,001 - £34,431	£56,002 - £68,862
Housing Officers	6.2	Grade 2, Level 1-3 SCP 34 -48	£11.78 - £14.48	£21,497 - £26,424	£28,001 - £34,431	£170,836 - £210,029
Strategy Co-ordinator	1.0	Grade 3, Level 8 SCP 79 - 80	£22.89 - £23.24	£41,771 - £42,410	£54,428 - £55,261	£54,428- £55,261

## 9. Financial Implications

9.1. The proposed posts will be fully funded through the Rapid Rehousing Transition funding received from the Scottish Government.

## 10. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

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

## 11. Other Implications

11.1. The content of this report will contribute to the evidence to support the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.

11.2. There are no additional risks associated with this report.

## 12. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

12.1. An equality impact assessment was carried out on the RRTP. The assessment confirmed that the plan will make a positive contribution to the promotion of equalities.

12.2. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening determination was completed as part of the development of the RRTP 2019-24. There is therefore no requirement for a separate SEA to be carried out in relation to the proposals contained within this report.

12.3. The RRTTP was developed and co-produced with a range of key partners and stakeholder groups. These groups have confirmed their commitment to work together to ensure the delivery of the priority outcomes. Discussions have taken place with the Homelessness Strategy Group regarding the continuation and establishment of the posts as detailed at section six the group have confirmed their support in relation to the proposals.

**Daniel Lowe**

**Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)**

**Paul Manning**

**Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)**

**11 January 2021**

#### **Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives**

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ Deliver better health and social care outcomes for all
- ◆ Improve the quality, access and availability of housing
- ◆ Work with communities and partners to promote high quality thriving and sustainable communities
- ◆ Support our communities by tackling disadvantage and deprivation and supporting aspiration

#### **Previous References**

- ◆ Housing and Technical Resources Committee, 23 January 2019
- ◆ Housing and Technical Resources Committee Report, 16 September 2020

#### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-24
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Annual Review 2019-20

#### **Contact for Further Information**

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

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