

# Report

Report to:	<b>Executive Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>4 November 2020</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>South Lanarkshire Local Housing Strategy Annual Review 2019/20</b>
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## **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide the Committee with an update on the progress made during 2019/2020 against delivering the agreed outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Executive Committee is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that the progress on actions for delivering the agreed LHS priority outcomes across the five chapters, be noted

## **3. Background**

3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to carry out an assessment of needs and demand for housing and related services, and to prepare and submit a five year Local Housing Strategy (LHS) to Scottish Ministers. The LHS is the main plan for all housing tenures in the local authority area.

3.2 The LHS 2017-2022 was developed in 2016/2017, building on the good work undertaken by the council and its partners under the previous LHS. The LHS works alongside the Council's Local Development Plan (LDP), to set the strategic framework for local housing development.

3.3 The Executive Committee approved the LHS on 30 August 2017 and noted the annual monitoring and reporting arrangements.

3.4 This is the third annual review of the LHS, with the 2018/2019 review reported to Executive Committee on 4 December 2019. Whilst the review covers the 2019/2020 financial year, part of the review process also looked to identify how progress in meeting the agreed actions and measures within the LHS would be impacted by the current Covid-19 pandemic. Further information on this can be found within section 7.

## **4. Context and wider policy changes**

4.1 A number of significant changes have taken place both locally and nationally since the last review of the LHS. A summary of these has been set out below:

- During 2019/2020, Energy Efficient Scotland completed a number of public consultations seeking to accelerate targets for energy efficiency standards of the three main housing tenures, including the private rented sector.
- Over the review year, the Council contributed to the second phase of the Scottish Government's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy Pilot programme. The South Lanarkshire pilot focused on expanding knowledge and understanding of energy efficiency improvements required within the private rented sector and off-gas grid rural properties. Following completion of the pilots, COSLA and the Scottish Government will introduce new guidance and legislation to support the roll out of Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies that will encompass a wide array of areas, including planning, economic development and housing.
- Following recommendations from the Scottish Building and Fire Safety Ministerial Working Group, the Scottish Government published updated fire safety guidance for high rise domestic properties and for specialist accommodation. This included a range of new standards required for properties within high rise domestic buildings, sheltered housing and care home facilities that aim to enhance the fire mitigation measures and standards already in place.
- COSLA and the Scottish Government jointly published the 'Improving lives for Gypsy/Travellers 2019-2021 Action Plan' which requires local authorities across Scotland to take a range of steps to improve outcomes for the Gypsy/Traveller community. This includes improving the quality of site provided and ensuring the wider needs of the local Gypsy/Traveller community are met.
- The South Lanarkshire Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR) was published in April 2019 that contributes the wider aims of the Community Planning Partnership. Housing and Technical Resources actively contributed to the development of the LCPAR, with the actions contained closely aligned to the LHS to tackle the main drivers of child poverty across South Lanarkshire.
- In conjunction with its housing, health and homelessness partners, Housing and Technical Resources developed the South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-2024 which was submitted to the Scottish Government in December 2018 and approved by the Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 23 January 2019. Now in its second year, the plan closely aligns to the homelessness outcomes within the LHS.

4.2 Housing and Technical Resources will continue to monitor national and local developments in all areas and ensure that significant changes are appropriately reflected within the LHS.

## **5. Annual Review 2019/20**

5.1 The LHS is structured around five chapters and nine priority outcomes. There are 97 indicators against which the council monitors progress including 65 actions and 32 measures. In line with wider reporting arrangements across the council, these indicators can be categorised into 'green', 'amber' and 'red' depending on the progress made against them.

- 5.2 In 2019/2020, 90% of the indicators were on target for completion within projected target periods. Table 1 outlines the 2019/2020 categorisation of the 97 indicators.

	Green	Amber	Red	To be reported later	Total
2019/20	87	3	1	6	97

*Table 1: Categorisation of LHS indicators 2019/2020*

- 5.3 One measure was categorised as 'red', below anticipated performance:

- M1.3 The number of long term empty properties

In 2019/2020 the total number of empty homes across South Lanarkshire was 1,289 which was approximately 0.8% of the total homes in South Lanarkshire. Although the actual number of empty properties is a slight increase on previous years, the proportion continues to remain lower than the Scottish national average of 1.6%.

To address the issue of long term empty properties, the Council has been working with the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership to set up an enhanced service to work with owners of empty properties. A new dedicated officer was appointed earlier this year and commenced work in July 2020. Key priorities for this service over the next year include:

- re-establishing an empty homes partnership group to co-ordinate activities
- enhancing the provision of support, information and advice for owners to help bring empty homes back into use
- promotion of the empty home service

In addition to the measure contained within the LHS, the South Lanarkshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) now also contains a target of bringing 15 empty properties per year back into use. This will be reported to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee as part of the agreed annual reporting arrangements.

- 5.4 The three measures/actions categorised as 'amber' were:

M2.1 Increase the number of accredited landlord properties	<p>Despite the continued positive engagement with private landlords through regular newsletters and the twice annual Private Landlord Forum, the numbers of landlords who chose to become accredited has remained static since 2018/2019.</p> <p>Accounting for the impact of Covid-19, services will continue to work with private sector landlords and utilise new methods such as virtual seminars to maintain high levels of engagement.</p>
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A6.3 Working with Community Planning Partners to further develop approach to supporting homeless people to access employment and training opportunities	Wider development of the Adult Employability Partnerships has resulted in Employability Services liaising with Housing and Technical Resources to raise awareness of education, training and employment opportunities as they become available. Best practice will continue to be monitored throughout 2020/2021 to ensure a new approach on sharing information can be taken forward.
A9.5 Update and develop the Pressure Analysis Toolkit for Housing (PATH) to inform area based planning.	Last updated in 2018, the Pressure Analysis Toolkit for Housing (PATH) provides an evidence base for SHIP site selection and other decisions around the provision of services for each area. Although no update took place in 2019/2020, work is now underway to refresh and review the toolkit to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Once complete, this local data set will also be used to contribute to the development of the next regional Housing Needs Demand Assessment.

Work to progress these areas will continue to be made throughout the remainder of the LHS.

- 5.5 The review demonstrated good progress has been made for 87 indicators. Key highlights within these have been provided for each of the five chapters below:

#### Housing Supply, Choice and Affordability

- To improve the availability of affordable housing in South Lanarkshire, a total of 284 additional affordable homes for social rent were delivered in 2019/20. This included 206 new build homes by Registered Social Landlords, 18 Council new build homes and 60 additional Council homes purchased through the council's framework for Open Market Purchase. A full update on progress of the SHIP will be presented to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 23 November 2020.
- Following the 2019/2020 additions, an additional 1,000 affordable homes for social rent have now been delivered by the Council and Registered Social Landlords across South Lanarkshire since this current LHS was approved and published.

#### Housing Quality and Energy Efficiency

- The proportion of homes meeting current EESSH standards continues to increase. In 2019/2020, 94.3% of the Council homes met this standard. The Council continues to work towards this target and through the Home+ programme will bring the remaining, non-exempt homes up to the standard, subject to sitting tenants granting consent to necessary works.
- The Council continues to support both the social and private housing sectors through the local administration of the Scottish Government's Home Energy Efficiency Programme: Area Based Scheme (HEEPS: ABS). To date, more than £8million in grant funding has been processed through this in South

Lanarkshire, funding a range of improvements to properties including the installation of internal and external insulation.

- During 2019/2020, Housing and Technical Resources completed a pilot Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy as a part of a national pilot programme. This sought to understand challenges and opportunities in improving the energy efficiency performance of both rural properties and those within the private rented sector and has provided a range of data sets to support targeted energy efficiency improvement works within the private sector.

#### Supporting Independent Living and Specialist Provision

- Of the 284 additional affordable homes for social rent delivered during 2019/2020, 118 (42%) were particular need/amenity properties. All new homes within the programme meet the housing for varying needs standard and are 'future proofed', meaning they are designed in such a way that they can be easily adapted to meet the specific needs of a wide range of customers, now and into the future.
- As part of the 2018/2019 annual review, following revised guidance from the Scottish Government, a target of 8% for wheelchair accessible housing as a proportion of new build social housing was introduced to the LHS. In 2019/2020, eight of the 18 new Council houses were categorised as wheelchair accessible with work continuing to effectively collate statistics for Registered Social Landlords properties.
- The Council and housing partners continue to promote the wide range of sheltered housing available across South Lanarkshire with revised published online guides on the accommodation and associated services available.
- During 2019/2020, in consultation with current residents of the Council's two Gypsy/Traveller sites, investment master plans continue to be developed and implemented which will see a range of improvements delivered across both sites during 2020/2021 and beyond. This includes the installation of new communal facilities, site reconfigurations and energy efficiency improvements to amenity buildings.

#### Addressing Homelessness

- The time spent in temporary accommodation has reduced by 7% from an average of 200 days in 2018/2019 to 187 days in 2019/20, the lowest level over the past three years.
- There has been a significant improvement in the number of homeless households waiting more than 12 months for permanent accommodation, with a 34% reduction noted throughout 2019/2020.
- The Council has continued to develop its Integrated Housing Options model, increasing resources over recent years dedicated to early detection of housing risk factors and interventions to prevent homelessness where possible. This has led to an increase in the Housing Options caseload from 753 cases during 2017/2018 to 933 in 2019/2020. The Housing Options approach also promotes the private rented sector as a viable option for the prevention of homelessness, with 80 cases resolved through this route in the last year.
- Housing Options and Homelessness awareness training continues to be provided to secondary schools across South Lanarkshire. Over the last year awareness sessions were delivered to 200 young people. Work is also underway with Education Resources to produce a film focusing on

homelessness and tackling poverty which will be included in the future school curriculum. The film will continue the theme of co-production and involve those with lived experience of homelessness.

#### Sustainable Places

- The Council continues to work in partnership with key stakeholders and partners to deliver 230 new social rented properties through the Whitlawburn Regeneration Masterplan, due for completion in 2022/2023.
- The Council and its housing partners continue to engage with communities within Clydesdale, experiencing low demand of social rented housing to develop housing-led local area action plans that promote housing sustainability.

5.6 Six actions were identified as 'to be reported later'. Four of these were as a result of the data not being available at the time the review was completed due to delays in reporting associated with Covid-19. The two outstanding actions will be commenced and progressed during the remaining term of the LHS.

### **6. Proposed revisions to LHS Performance Framework**

6.1 Taking account of the wider context and policy changes as detailed in Section 4, it has been necessary to review the performance framework against which progress within the LHS is measured. This is to ensure the performance indicators remain relevant and measurable.

6.2 Following the 2019/2020 annual review, it is proposed that no measures or actions are to be added or removed from the LHS.

### **7. Impact from Covid-19**

7.1 Whilst the review covers the 2019/2020 financial year, part of the review process looked to identify how progress in meeting the agreed actions and measures within the LHS would be impacted by the current Covid-19 pandemic. A summary of the two key areas that are anticipated to be the most significantly impacted is provided in the table below:

<b>Affordable housing supply programme</b>	<p>As a result of national lockdown, significant delays to construction projects have occurred. The Council and Registered Social Landlords are working with the Scottish Government and contractors to restart sites and make progress on existing and planned sites. Ensuring safe systems of work and securing materials amidst shortages are also factors that now need to be considered.</p> <p>A full update on both progress made to date and revised timescales within the South Lanarkshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan will be presented to Housing and Technical Resource Committee on 23 November 2020.</p>
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<b>Homelessness</b>	<p>Whilst there has not been a substantial increase in the number of homeless presentations made to the Council since the pandemic began, challenges have arisen relating to the throughput of temporary accommodation as a result of little movement in the housing market.</p> <p>The Council and its housing and homelessness partners continue to meet these new challenges, including through innovative approaches such as utilising empty student accommodation for homeless households and substantially increasing the percentage of lets to homeless households. Further issues are anticipated however, particularly when the current national ban on evictions comes to an end.</p> <p>The Council and its partners will continue to monitor and adapt to ensure support is provided to those who need it. This includes reviewing and contributing to national policy direction relating to homelessness and housing support.</p> <p>The first Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-2024 annual review presented to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 16 September 2020 provides further details of the required changes of approach by services to meet the new challenges presented in this area.</p>
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- 6.2 The full impact of the pandemic on the outcomes contained within the LHS and associated plans and strategies will be reported to Executive Committee as part of the 2020/2021 annual review.

## **7. Looking ahead**

- 7.1 2020/21 will be the fourth year of the LHS. In addition to the actions being progressed within the strategy, the Council and its partners will continue to take forward a wide range of other work, including:

- Contribution to the development of the Glasgow City Region Housing Demand Needs Assessment which will assist in the annual Strategic Housing Investment Plan submission and development of South Lanarkshire's next LHS.
- As part of the wider HNDA, development of a South Lanarkshire Gypsy/Traveller accommodation needs assessment will be completed in partnership with housing, health and education services to ensure the right numbers and types of accommodation options are available.

- 7.2 Further information on these, including how they each impact the current actions and measures within the LHS will be reported to the Executive Committee as part of the 2020/2021 annual review.

## **8. Next Steps**

- 8.1 The Council and its housing, health and homelessness partners have made good progress in 2019/2020 towards delivering on the current, agreed LHS Priority Outcomes. The findings of this review will be shared with the Scottish Government, as

recommended good practice, and a summary 'LHS 2017-2022 Annual Report' is being prepared and will be published on the Council's website.

8.2 The action plan and monitoring framework as set out in the LHS 2017-2022 will be updated to ensure the strategy continues to align with associated plans and strategies, as well as to reflect new national policy priorities as noted in Section 4.

8.3 The Council will continue to monitor, influence where possible and enact any national policy changes that relate to the LHS, including the associated impact and recovery from the current Covid-19 pandemic.

## **9. Employee Implications**

9.1 There are no employee implications as a result of this report.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

## **11. Other Implications**

11.1 The actions in the LHS link closely to the wider Rural Strategy, Strategic Commissioning Plan, Local Development Plan and Economic Strategy.

11.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening determination was completed as part of the development of the LHS 2017-2022.

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

## **12. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

12.1 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was completed as part of the development of the LHS 2017-2022. The EQIA identified that the LHS would be of particular relevance to individuals covered under the "protected characteristics" as defined in the Equality Act 2010 and would have a positive impact upon communities across South Lanarkshire.

12.3 The LHS is subject to ongoing consultation and engagement with key partners and stakeholders.

**Daniel Lowe**

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

4 November 2020

## **Links to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Improve later life
- ◆ 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**

- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 'Local Housing Strategy (LHS) Annual Review 2018/19', 4 December 2019
- ◆ Executive Committee Report, 'Local Housing Strategy (LHS) Annual Review 2017-22', 21 November 2018

### **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-24
- ◆ South Lanarkshire Strategic Commissioning Plan 2019-22

### **Contact for Further Information**

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

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