

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing and Communities Committee

15 May 2019

Annual Update on Perth and Kinross Local Housing Strategy 2016-2021

Report by Executive Director (Housing and Environment) (Report No. 19/143)

This report asks Committee to note progress in implementing the Local Housing Strategy for Perth and Kinross previously approved at Housing and Health Committee on 25 May 2016. It also seeks approval for the revised Action Plan for 2019/2020.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a Local Housing Strategy and provide regular progress updates. The strategy must set out its priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and housing related services over a five year period.
- 1.2 The Local Housing Strategy 2016-2021 was approved at Housing and Health Committee on 25 May 2016 (Report No.16/234 refers). The first annual progress update was reported to Housing and Communities Committee on 1 November 2017 (Report No.17/363 refers) with the second annual progress update reported to Housing and Communities Committee on 22 August 2018 (Report No. 18/255 refers). This report provides the third annual progress update in implementing the strategy.
- 1.3 Our Local Housing Strategy was developed through a series of themed workshops to discuss the main issues and agree priorities with key stakeholders. This included local communities and tenants, housing professionals, community care and health partners, specialists in other related disciplines and contractors. Follow on workshops have been held periodically to review progress and modify actions in the plan, where necessary.
- 1.4 A Local Housing Strategy Steering Group, comprising of Lead Officers for each of the themes within the Strategy, ensures the contribution of other Council services towards increasing the supply of affordable housing. This group meets quarterly and monitors progress towards the annual targets set in the strategy.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The annual progress report for 2018/19 is attached in Appendix 1. The Local Housing Strategy has the following four strategic objectives. Key areas of progress in delivering the outcomes include the following:

2.2 Supply of Housing and Sustainable Communities

Our aim is to create more affordable homes and manage existing stock to create homes in the size, type and location people want to live with access to suitable services and facilities which encourage community integration.

During 2018/19, **we have**:

- delivered a total of 191 social housing completions, 30 shared equity houses and 26 buy backs across the Perth and Kinross area.
- included, within our new build developments, a number of wheelchair adapted properties and homes were designed to facilitate independent living to meet the specific needs of households in the area.
- supported the completion of the Muirton Regeneration Programme led by Caledonia Housing Association, in partnership with Perth and Kinross Council and Fairfield Housing Co-operative, realising the long term regeneration objectives to revitalise the Muirton area.

The impact of these activities has been to meet housing need in the area, providing housing for a number of households. The additional social housing also enabled turnover within the overall stock. This has reduced waiting lists and met a range of housing needs in the area including overcrowding, alleviating homelessness and addressing medical need.

2.3 Housing and Homelessness

Our aim is to promote safe and secure communities for residents of Perth and Kinross with access to good quality, affordable accommodation with the necessary support in place to sustain them in their homes and prevent them from becoming homeless.

During 2018/19 **we have**:

- continued the successful delivery of Home First which has a considerable impact on outcomes for homeless people and has been recognised as sector leading. In December 2018, we submitted our Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan to the Scottish Government. In the feedback, they commented that “the outcomes of Home First have been very impressive to date”.
- continued to deliver efficiencies through our Repairs Transformation programme.
- undertaken extensive engagement and consultation with our tenants around their priorities and future rent levels.

- submitted our 2018/19 Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). This was our strongest submission since its introduction with strong levels of performance across all areas of service delivery.
- Perth & Kinross Council is one of only two Scottish local authorities where the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has advised that they do not require further monitoring and assurance activity in the current year. This reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering high quality housing services for tenants and homeless people.
- continued to deliver services to the satisfaction of our tenants. Four of the six tenant satisfaction survey indicators placed the Council as the top performing local authority in Scotland for tenant satisfaction.
- maintained our commitment to provide affordable housing to our tenants; our rent levels are around the 6th lowest in Scotland and the most affordable in Perth and Kinross. (Average rent: PKC £69.14; RSL £82.79; Scottish Local Authority £71.87)

The impact of these activities has been the delivery of a good performing, high quality value for money service for our tenants. We have minimised the impact, stigma and duration of homelessness on people in Perth and Kinross. Tenants indicate they are happy with the services we provide and feel we offer them a range of opportunities to participate in, and influence, our decisions.

2.4 Independent Living

Our aim is to support people to live independently at home for as long as possible with help from the community and local support networks.

During 2018/19 **we have**:

- undertaken extensive capital works within sheltered housing to improve the environment for residents.
- undertaken 308 medical adaptations to council homes (89 major and 219 minor), such as the installation of safety rails and ramps and more major property alterations.
- highlighted our contribution to the delivery of outcomes within the Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategic Plan in a report to the Integrated Joint Board on 15 February 2019 (Report No.G/19/11 refers) and Housing and Communities Committee on 20 March 2019 (Report No.19/78 refers). The report outlines the positive impact our services has made to the outcomes for people both in terms of health and wellbeing as well as enabling people to remain at home for longer.

The impact of these activities has been to enable many households to access housing or remain in their homes, with support or adaptations and services that are suitable for their current and future needs, enabling them to live independently for longer.

2.5 House Condition, Fuel Poverty and Climate Change

Our aim is to support residents of Perth and Kinross to live in warm, dry, energy efficient and low carbon homes which they can afford to heat.

During 2018/19 **we have:**

- invested over £9 million in our housing stock including renewals of windows, doors, kitchens and bathrooms, central heating and secure door entry systems.
- continued to deliver our external wall insulation programme.
- supported a range of local engagement events to promote grant funded initiatives to improve home energy efficiency levels for private owners and landlords.
- continued to work with SCARF to deliver our Home Energy Advice Team (HEAT) service, providing free and impartial energy efficiency advice to households.

The impact of these measures ensures that our tenants' homes meet the SHQS and are well maintained. In addition, many owners and private tenants are benefiting from more energy efficient homes.

2.6 While good progress is being made towards delivering our outcomes, a number of challenges continue. These include:

- the geography of the area presents some specific challenges in relation to the availability of land for new housing. This requires a strong focus on collaboration with partners to develop new housing.
- changing demographics as 45% of our tenants are 65 or over. National and local projections indicate a significant increase in our older population over the next 20 years. This will require close working with Health and Social Care colleagues to plan ahead to meet these future demands.
- in June 2018, we moved to "full service" Universal Credit (UC), presenting challenges around rent collection and arrears levels. Ensuring we maximise collection rates is directly linked to our ability to continue to deliver high quality services to our tenants.
- there is a significant challenge faced by all services and communities in tackling and mitigating the impact of poverty. High housing costs can be key driver of poverty, with 1 in 5 of our children estimated to live in poverty and 30% of households classed as fuel poor. Mitigating the impact of poverty will be a key priority for the year ahead.

- 2.7 We have consulted with professional stakeholders on the key priorities and actions for the strategy in the coming year. All feedback has been reviewed and the new action plan for 2019/2010 is attached in Appendix 2.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Significant outcomes have been achieved throughout 2018/19 in delivering the key outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy. Working collaboratively with all our stakeholders has been key to the delivery of our success. This will be further enhanced as the Service play its part in the development of the emerging Perth and Kinross Offer.

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- I. notes the progress made during 2018/19 towards achieving the outcomes set out within the LHS (Appendix 1).
- II. approves the revised action plan for the implementation of the Local Housing Strategy (Appendix 2).

Author(s)

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	
Community Plan/ Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Single Outcome Agreement for Perth and Kinross has five outcomes which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resource allocation. The following are reflected in the LHS:

- *Giving every child the best start in life;*
- *Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;*
- *Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;*
- *Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives;*
- *Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.*

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The new strategy reflects the Council's corporate plan objectives listed above.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 Funding for the developments in this report come from the Council's new build housing programme, use of the second home Council Tax Fund and Developer Contributions for affordable housing.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out the 2016/2017 HRA and General Fund budgets. Budgets for 2017-2021 are subject to future budget decisions by the Council.

Workforce

- 2.3 There are no workforce implications.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.4 Resource implications of this report relate to the local authority new build housing programme and the use of land currently in Council ownership.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

A report is has been prepared using the online integrated appraisal toolkit, available at <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/EqIA>

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

A report is has been prepared using the online integrated appraisal toolkit, available at <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/EqIA>

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
- in a way that it considers most sustainable.

A report has been prepared using the online integrated appraisal toolkit, available at <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/EqlA>

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 The Head of Legal and Governance has been consulted and there are no direct legal implications in this report.

Risk

- 3.5 The Housing and Environment Senior Management Team regularly review capital monitoring reports that highlight individual project progress and risk.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council, Perth and Kinross Executive Officer Team, Senior Management within Perth and Kinross Council and all staff of Perth and Kinross Council were consulted on the draft strategy.

External

- 4.2 The following organisations were consulted on the draft LHS for 2016-2021:
- Community Councils
 - Community Planning Partnership
 - Registered Social Landlords
 - Local Estate Agents
 - Registered Private Landlords
 - Scottish Government
 - Neighbouring Local Authorities
 - National Parks
 - Equalities Groups
 - Registered Tenant Organisations
 - Perth and Kinross Interested Persons Database
 - Housing and Community Care Working Groups
 - Homes for Scotland
 - Private Landowners and Developers
 - Residents of Perth and Kinross
 - Other Partners Organisations within the Private, Public, and Third Sector

- 4.3 Internal and external partners were involved in reviewing the priorities and challenges to be addressed by the Strategy in 2019/2020 and an updated Action Plan has been developed.
- 4.4 The Tenant Committee Report Panel were consulted on this report. The panel found this report well laid out and easy to understand. They commended the Council on their forward thinking with reasonable targets set.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communications plan has been prepared to work with operational teams on delivery of the outcomes within this strategy.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Progress Update for 2018/19 on Local Housing Strategy 2016-2021.

Appendix 2 – Revised Action Plan for 2019/20.