

**LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2011/12**

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**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 The first annual monitoring report for the new Local Housing Strategy is annexed to this paper. It details the progress made against each of the four strategic outcomes over 2011/12, year 1 of the five-year planning period, and highlights remaining challenges. It also provides a summary of the actual spend achieved in that year and future resource assumptions for delivering the strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

**3 DETAIL**

3.1 The Argyll and Bute Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016 sets out a detailed monitoring and evaluation framework for reporting progress. This comprises a set of key indicators, a number of SMART targets, and the specific actions for delivering each of the four main housing outcomes or strategic aims.

3.2 This first annual monitoring report provides details of progress over 2011/12, year 1 of the five year planning period. It also highlights any areas of slippage and the remaining challenges to be addressed in future years.

3.3 The report also highlights amendments or revisions to the LHS action plan and targets, bearing in mind that the LHS is a continuous and iterative process rather than a one-off document produced every five years. Developments in local and national policy, changes in the local housing system and wider environment, and the actual impact of implementing the strategy itself on the ground, will all influence the direction and focus of the LHS in future years. At this stage, however, the proposed revisions are minor: a few actions have been merged or rationalised for the sake of clarity and focus, while a couple of targets have been revised to make them more meaningful and SMART in terms of their measurability against available data sources.

- 3.4 Some additional, contextual information, updating baseline data and analysis carried out for the original Housing Need and Demand Assessment in 2009/10 is provided. This is set out in the body of the report along with the key achievements and outputs for each outcome.
- 3.5 Section 2 of the report summarises the achieved spend in Argyll and Bute from public investment over 2011/12 and sets out the current resource planning assumptions for future years.
- 3.6 The report also records the results of the LHS Peer Review process which involved an appraisal of the original strategy by a panel of Scottish Government and local authority representatives. The peer review feedback was generally positive and noted a number of strengths in our submission and also suggested potential areas for further consideration as the LHS is developed and revised over time.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Over 2011/12, solid, positive progress has been achieved against a number of the original LHS objectives and targets. There is evidence that the 4 LHS outcomes have all been addressed albeit to varying degrees:

Strategic Aim	Summary 2011/12
1. Improving Access to & Increasing Supply of Affordable Housing	Despite some initial slippage in the delivery of the SHIP programme, the five year target of 550 new affordable homes across Argyll & Bute remains a realistic and achievable goal.
2. Reducing the Incidence of Homelessness	Excellent progress with a significant reduction in the number of homeless applications and successful achievement of the national 2012 target in respect of 100% priority cases.
3. Supporting Independent Living & Addressing Particular Needs	Mixed progress to date, with limited new development in Special Needs accommodation but increased provision of adaptations across all tenures, a sustained telecare programme, and the implementation of a restructured support service framework.
4. Improving Stock Conditions & Tackling Fuel Poverty	While this is the strategic aim that has seen least positive progress in terms of concrete outputs, Year 1 has seen a significant level of investment, particularly in manpower and time but also in actual financial input, into establishing the basic foundations and structures which will facilitate the delivery of actual outputs in future years. It should also be noted that this is the strategic outcome that is perhaps most at risk due to external factors and influences outwith the control of the LHS.

- 4.2 However, despite the relatively healthy position at this early stage in the LHS implementation process, significant challenges remain:

- the affordable housing supply has not increased sufficiently to meet demand;
- significant pockets of Below Tolerable Standard housing remain within the private sector and a significant proportion of

the RSL sector still fails to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard;

- fuel poverty is increasing due to a number of external factors;
- the welfare reform proposals will have substantial implications for tenants, landlords and homeless households;
- the needs of the ageing population and other households with particular needs have not been fully addressed;
- public sector funding remains severely constrained and new sources of private finance together with innovative business models for the delivery of affordable housing will be required if the LHS outcomes are to be fully achieved.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Policy** – None

5.2 **Financial** – The successful delivery of the LHS outcomes will have continuing implications for the administration of the Council's Strategic Housing Fund and other resources.

5.3 **Legal** – The development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the LHS is a statutory duty under the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2006.

5.4 **Personnel** – None

5.5 **Equal Opportunities** – The LHS supports and promotes the principles of equality and diversity in line with public sector duties.

5.6 **Customer Services** – The delivery of the LHS has a strong customer focus in line with council policy and national standards.

5.7 **Risk** – There are a number of risks associated with the future delivery of the LHS, primarily resource constraints, but also the impact of welfare reform and external factors driving fuel poverty, among others. Partners on the Strategic Housing Forum will continue to strive to address and mitigate these risks.

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**Annex: Local Housing Strategy Annual Monitoring Report 2011/12**