

ARGYLL & BUTE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY (LHS) 2016/17 – 2020/21

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the arrangements for submission of the finalised Local Housing Strategy (LHS) for approval by Scottish Ministers, in accordance with the council's statutory duties under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, subsequent legislation, and the latest revised guidance issued by the Scottish Government in 2014.
- 1.2 The new LHS 2016-21 builds on the positive achievements of the previous strategy for 2011-2016, and sets out a vision for housing across all tenures over the next five years, which is:
- “To deliver a housing system in Argyll and Bute that makes a strong contribution to thriving and sustainable communities and supports economic growth.”**
- 1.3 The summary strategy is attached as an appendix to this report and the full document with supporting materials are available on the Council website and hard copies have been lodged with Member Services for information.
- 1.4 The Report recommends that the Community Services Committee:
- a) approve the strategy for submission to the Scottish Minister.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The LHS is the local authority's sole strategic document for housing in its area. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce an LHS which sets out its strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services. The Act also states that the LHS must be supported by an assessment of housing provision and related services, that it must be submitted to Scottish Ministers, and that local authorities must keep their LHS under review. Local authorities should build on their existing strategies and are encouraged to demonstrate this continuity when setting out the new LHS for its area.
- 2.2 Increasing the supply of homes is a national performance indicator and a high profile policy objective for the Scottish Government. The achievement of this objective is at the heart of the housing planning framework. The LHS should set out the joint and strategic approach of the local authority and its partners to delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures, to meet identified need in its area. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) is a key part of the evidence base for both the LHS and Strategic and Local Development Plans, and should form the basis for setting the Housing Supply Target (HST).
- 2.3 The LHS also has a key role to play in contributing to the effective integration of health and social care. It should set out clearly the contribution that housing can make in support of this agenda, through the design and delivery of housing and housing related services, that are capable of responding to the needs of individuals as and where they arise.
- 2.4 The LHS should also set out a local authority's approach to meeting its other statutory housing responsibilities. These include fuel poverty, house condition, and homelessness; as well as its strategic response to national outcomes, and national housing priorities such as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, Town Centre living, housing's contribution to the reduction of carbon emissions, improving environmental and design standards, and supporting the development of sustainable communities.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) approve the strategy for submission to the Scottish Minister.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a duty on all local authorities in Scotland to:
 - Carry out an assessment of local needs and demand for housing and related services; and
 - Prepare and submit a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which sets out how the Council and its partners will address these identified needs over the next 5 years.
- 4.2 This LHS sets out the housing vision of Argyll and Bute Council and our strategic partners for the future of housing across all tenures and types of accommodation, taking account of national priorities as well as local needs. It must be based on a “robust and credible” Housing Needs and Demand Assessment and should:-
 - Set out a shared understanding of the need and demand for all types of housing, and for related services such as housing support, now and in the future;
 - Set out actions and targets to improve the standard and condition of housing;
 - Provide clear strategic direction for housing investment;
 - Focus on the outcomes required to achieve the vision; and
 - Identify specific commitments by all key partners to enable the delivery of outcomes as shared priorities.
- 4.3 There are a number of statutory requirements that need to be addressed in the LHS. The LHS is expected to show how actions will support and contribute to achieving the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Targets, including those set out in the Housing and Regeneration Outcomes Framework. It is important that the LHS supports and helps to deliver national outcomes and targets, whilst reflecting the needs and priorities of the local authority area.
- 4.4 The LHS is required to set out housing supply targets for both affordable and market housing and indicate how the Council will contribute to the national priority of increasing housing supply. It should be developed in conjunction with a local Housing Market Partnership, which in the case of this authority comprises the members of the Argyll and Bute Strategic Housing Forum. The strategy should reflect both the national performance framework for housing and regeneration and the local Single Outcome Agreement; as well as being aligned with the Local

Development Plan(s) and other key strategic documents, such as economic development and regeneration plans, and the Health and Social Care integration plans.

- 4.5 The new strategy should build on the previous LHS and also address a number of additional key issues as set out in the revised guidance issued by the Scottish Government in 2014.
- 4.6 Additional requirements include:
- **A summary of the local context** - progress made with the previous LHS; and the option appraisal/prioritisation process;
 - **Consultation** - outlining the inclusive stakeholder engagement underpinning the development of the strategy;
 - **Community Planning** - clear links with the SOA;
 - **Action Plan** - outcomes, actions, baseline, targets, responsibilities, timescales, milestones, indicators/measures.
- 4.7 **Impact Assessments** - The strategy includes an equalities statement and a detailed Equalities Impact Assessment has also been completed. The Council has also carried out an initial pre-screening of the consultative draft LHS in respect of the 2005 Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act and we have determined, in consultation with the SEA Gateway, Historic Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, that the strategy is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. Within the hierarchy of plans and strategies relating to the LHS, the key documents requiring full SEA are the Local Development Plan and the SoA and Council's Corporate Plans.
- 4.8 Given the extent and scope of these requirements, the final LHS document is not particularly succinct and therefore an accessible summary has also been prepared. All documents and supporting materials will be available on the council website and can also be requested in hard copy from Housing Services.
- 4.9 In particular, the LHS should state how the local authority will draw on housing supply, place-making and housing related services to promote good outcomes across a range of social and economic factors, noting that good housing promotes health, education, employment, community safety, social connectedness and community resilience.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Argyll and Bute LHS 2016/17-2020/21 has been developed over the last three years and has been informed by detailed partnership engagement and extensive stakeholder consultation. A consultative summary draft LHS was then issued in January–March 2016 and a collated version submitted for peer review and government appraisal in September 2016. Feedback throughout the development process and

formal consultation periods has been positive and supportive with strong agreement on the strategic vision, priorities, aims and outcomes, objectives and actions.

- 5.2 In summary, the new Argyll and Bute LHS details how the Council and its partners will address the challenges and issues within the local housing system over the next five years in order to achieve our strategic vision:

“To deliver a housing system in Argyll & Bute that makes a strong contribution to thriving and sustainable communities and supports economic growth”

- 5.3 To achieve this vision four overarching outcomes have been identified as strategic investment priorities:

- **To facilitate access to sufficient, suitable and affordable housing across all tenures**
- **To promote individual housing options to meet housing need**
- **To enable people to live independently in their own homes**
- **To regenerate communities through improving the quality, condition and energy efficiency of housing**

- 5.4 Members are asked to note that the final draft of the LHS analyses the operation of the housing system down to the level of 9 distinct local housing market areas. The LHS has been prepared to reflect national housing policy objectives and local requirements. It sits within the local planning framework and in particular, the context set by the Argyll & Bute Community Planning Partnership. It has been fully endorsed by our partners on the Strategic Housing Forum. The plan forms a strategic framework for partnership working and will be subject to annual updates and monitoring reports. It will also provide the crucial basis for future bidding for resources to support improvements to the local housing system.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 **Policy:** The LHS sits within the framework of national policy objectives and local requirements. It also relates to the outcomes contained in the Argyll & Bute Community Plan, the Single Outcome Agreement, the Council’s Corporate Plan, the Argyll & Bute Local Development Plan, and the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Local Plan, among others. It also reflects and supports policy in relation to regeneration, sustainability, economic development, community care, health and well-being.

- 6.2 **Financial:** Nil

- 6.3 **Legal:** The development of the strategy and ancillary documents fulfils the council's statutory duties under the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 and 2006
- 6.4 **Personnel:** Nil.
- 6.5 **Equal Opportunities:** The document has been prepared to promote equal opportunities and principles of inclusion and diversity. It will have positive benefits for older persons, young people, those with disabilities and particular needs, and ethnic or cultural groups such as Gypsies/ Travellers, among others. A full Equalities Impact Assessment is available. No negative impacts have been identified.
- 6.6 **Risk:** Nil.
- 6.7 **Customer Services:** Nil

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24 October 2016

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APPENDICES: Summary LHS 2016/17 – 2020/21