

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 16 March 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: New Local Housing Strategy - Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress in the development of the new Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy in relation to recent early consultation and stakeholder engagement activity, as well as setting out the next steps in the strategy development.
- 1.2 A summary of the consultation responses is attached as appendix 1.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Board:
- (i) notes the progress in the development of the new Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy and the summary of consultation responses included in appendix 1.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires that local authorities prepare a five-year Local Housing Strategy, which is informed by an assessment of housing provision, need and related services in the area.
- 3.2 The Local Housing Strategy sets out the strategic vision for housing and housing-related services in Renfrewshire and seeks to provide a clear direction for strategic housing investment.

3.3 The Local Housing Strategy links with a number of other key plans and strategies for Renfrewshire including, the Local Development Plan, Renfrewshire's Economic Strategy (2019), Renfrewshire's Community Plan 2017-2027 and the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan.

4. New Local Housing Strategy development: early engagement activity

4.1 As outlined in the report to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 27 October 2020, work has commenced to shape and inform the development on the next Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy.

4.2 The development of this new Strategy requires extensive engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including housing partners and local communities across Renfrewshire.

4.3 This first stage of consultation and engagement was undertaken between 16 November 2020 and 25 January 2021.

4.4 Due to Covid-19 restrictions this initial engagement activity focused on the completion of an online questionnaire. Email and social media platforms were used as the primary contact methods.

4.5 The questionnaire was hosted on the Renfrewshire Council website and was promoted using the Council's social media platforms, as well as press releases in the Paisley Express and Paisley Gazette in November 2020 and an article in the tenant's newsletter: 'The People's News' in December 2020. Staff were also encouraged to participate in the questionnaire and it was featured in the Council's Staff Weekly News: 'Take 5' publication.

4.6 There was in excess of 2,000 views on the Local Housing Strategy webpage during the consultation with just over 700 on the launch day itself.

4.7 101 questionnaire responses were submitted during the consultation. Responses were made by a wide range of stakeholders including Registered Social Landlords, Tenants and Residents Associations, Community Councils, people in temporary supported accommodation, Council tenants as well as other local residents.

4.8 Responses covered a wide range of topics including:

- the delivery of more affordable homes;
- improving the physical condition of homes;
- reducing homelessness;
- regeneration of local areas; and,
- an increase in energy efficient homes.

4.9 The majority of respondents agreed that the strategic outcomes of the current Local Housing Strategy remain appropriate. A summary report on consultation responses is contained in Appendix 1.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Taking into account the views and comments made during this initial consultation and engagement opportunity, the new Local Housing Strategy will be prepared with continuing input from key partners including local communities, housing associations, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership and other Council services.
 - 5.2 The draft Local Housing Strategy will be presented to the Board later in the year. Following consultation over a 12-week period, the Local Housing Strategy will then be finalised and presented to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board for final approval.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - None.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving – Actions within the Local Housing Strategy will help improve housing conditions and enable more affordable homes to be built, encouraging people to live and stay in Renfrewshire.*
 - *Our Renfrewshire is well – Actions within the Local Housing Strategy will help support older and disabled residents to live healthier, for longer, in their own homes.*
 - *Our Renfrewshire is fair - Actions within the Local Housing Strategy will help to prevent homelessness and ensure vulnerable people get the advice and support they need.*
 - *Building strong, safe and resilient communities – Significant regeneration programmes are being progressed through the Local Housing Strategy.*
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.
 9. **Procurement** – None.
 10. **Risk** – None.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not applicable.
 13. **Climate Risk** - The Local Housing Strategy sets out a strategy and actions to help deliver sustainable development and places, warm and energy efficient homes and adaptation to climate change.
-

Appendix 1

Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy – Consultation Summary

The contact officer within the service is Sharon Marklow, Strategy and Place Manager, 0141 618 7835, email: Sharon.marklow@renfrewshire.gov.uk

*Author: Sharon Marklow, Strategy and Place Manager, 0141 618 7835,
email: Sharon.marklow@renfrewshire.gov.uk*

APPENDIX 1

Renfrewshire Local Housing Strategy - Consultation Summary

The development of the new Local Housing Strategy requires officers to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including housing partners and local communities across Renfrewshire.

The first stage of consultation and engagement was undertaken between 16 November 2020 and 25 January 2021.

In total 98 responses were received for the customer engagement questionnaire and a further 3 responses from Registered Social Landlords to the key stakeholder questionnaire.

Part 1 of this report provides a summary of the customer engagement questionnaire responses, with Part 2 summarising the responses from Registered Social Landlords to the key stakeholder questionnaire.

Part 1: Customer Engagement Questionnaire

Responses received

- Overall number of questionnaires submitted: 98
- Number who responded as an individual: 89
- Number of responded on behalf of an organisation: 9

Q1. What do you think are the main issues affecting housing in Renfrewshire?

Responses to question = 93

Key themes of responses received:

- Supply and availability of social housing across all areas of need, in a range of types and sizes to meet demand from young people, older people, people with disabilities and mobility issues, families, those wishing to downsize or relieve their overcrowding;
- Affordable tenure options in Renfrewshire's towns and villages;
- Balance of newbuild private homes against new affordable housing;
- Property condition in particular areas of Renfrewshire and investment work;
- Estate management and anti-social behaviour;
- Impact on existing infrastructure, services, and amenities when new homes built;
- Availability of local amenities for communities;
- Heating and energy efficiency measures in council stock.

Q2. The current Local Housing Strategy for 2016-2021, set out seven strategic outcomes, do you think that these outcomes are still relevant today and what changes (if any) would you make to them, or would you replace them with?

Responses to question = 73

The majority of respondents agreed that the strategic outcomes were broadly still relevant today

Key themes of responses received:

- Investment to improve the quality and condition of existing social housing;
- Increase the supply of affordable housing to meet local needs, including the supply of housing for older people and people with mobility issues/disabilities;
- Access to social housing;
- Affordability of housing, ensuring energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty;
- Addressing homelessness.

Q3. The Scottish Government outlines a focus on particular key areas within the Local Housing Strategy. These areas are noted below.

From these areas, what should be given greater priority in the Local Housing Strategy?

Responses to question = 98

Key areas	Number of selections:
Housing supply and delivery	61
House condition	61
Preventing and addressing homelessness	36
Fuel poverty, energy efficiency and climate change	35
Housing, health and social care integration	35
Specialist provision housing which includes wheelchair accessible or adapted housing, housing for older people, specialist housing to meet the needs of Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Show people	24
Placemaking and communities	18
Other	5

Q4. What are the top 3 priorities that should be focussed on in the new Local Housing Strategy?

Responses to question = 97

Priorities	Number of selections:
Building more affordable homes of the right size, type and tenure	70
Improving the physical condition of properties across tenures	56
Regeneration of local communities and making sustainable places to live	41
Meeting the housing needs of older people and other people with particular needs	25
Housing homeless people more quickly	24
Building houses for people with particular needs such as wheelchair users	24
Reducing fuel bills by making homes more energy efficient	20
Improving conditions in the private rented sector, in terms of management, maintenance, quality and standards	10
Supporting people to sustain their social rented tenancies	5
Helping residents embrace low carbon behaviour to help tackle climate change	4
Other	3

Q5. Is anything else we should consider including in our Local Housing Strategy.

Responses to question = 51

Key themes of responses received (listed in no particular order):

- Stock condition, repairs and improvement work to existing Council stock;
- More affordable housing options across tenures;
- Increase the provision of social housing, including more larger family homes and housing for people with physical disabilities and older people;
- Increase local amenities including parks, play areas and local facilities;
- Addressing homelessness;
- A joined up partnership approach to address issues and opportunities for communities to be involved in decisions about their area.

Part 2: Key Stakeholder Questionnaire

A key stakeholder engagement questionnaire was emailed to the 15 Registered Social Landlords currently operating across Renfrewshire.

The questionnaire sought views from housing association partners in terms of the relevance of existing Local Housing Strategy outcomes and associated priorities to determine what should be carried through to the new draft Local Housing Strategy, as well as what should be added in terms of potential new outcomes and priorities.

Responses received

The responses received were broadly supportive of retaining the existing outcomes and most of the existing priorities.

There was support for more detail around particular issues.

These include:

- Tackling climate change and zero carbon emissions;
- Increased focus on energy efficiency, fuel poverty and income maximisation;
- Prevention and alleviation of homelessness;
- Building a range of property sizes and types to meet differing housing need;
- Design standards that reflect working from home more and home schooling;
- Continuation of mixed tenure developments that reflect local need;
- Regeneration to consider amenities and infrastructure in addition to building new homes;
- Focus on estate management, including bins parking, lighting etc;
- Focus on improving tenemental stock;
- Embracing new technology and the 'Internet of Things' to support independent living and digital living.