

Midlothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25**Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place****1 Purpose of Report**

This Report summarises the key points set out in Midlothian's Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 which details the priorities for the investment in new affordable housing in Midlothian.

2 Background

- 2.1** The Scottish Government requires that all local authorities prepare a Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) that identifies the main investment priorities for affordable housing. This is required on an annual basis as the Scottish Government requires greater detail on the Affordable Housing Supply Programme in each area towards meeting its target of supporting the development of 50,000 new affordable homes between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The SHIP sets out the Council's approach to promoting affordable housing investment and meeting housing supply targets identified in the SESplan.
- 2.2** The SHIP details that, since 2006, a total of 3,382 homes have been built or purchased as affordable housing, with most of this being housing for rent. Despite this significant level of investment there is still a shortage in affordable housing in Midlothian with 4,645 households on the Housing List.
- 2.3** To address this need for affordable housing the Strategic Housing Investment Plan details potential sites for 2,456 new affordable homes to be built between 2020/21 and 2024/25, of which:
- House types: 2,071 are general needs homes and 385 are specialist provision homes. This is a significant increase in the number of homes for particular needs and reflects demand for provision including extra care housing, amenity housing, wheelchair housing.
 - Built form: 2,370 will be new build housing; 80 will be 'off the shelf purchases' and 6 will involve construction works to existing buildings.
 - Tenure type: 1,299 homes will council housing, 402 will be social rent by an RSL, 494 homes have a provider yet to be confirmed, 213 for Mid Market Rent (MMR) and 48 for Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO). This reflects the fact that the affordable housing tenure with the highest demand is social rented housing. In addition there will be further low cost/subsidised home ownership

options available via three Scottish Government schemes that support home ownership:

- Help to Buy Scotland
- Open Market Shared Equity
- Deposit Scheme for First Time Buyers
- It should be noted that sites indicated are subject to change as some sites have not yet been approved by the developing organisation, received planning permission or land ownership has not been secured.

2.4 Section 6 of the SHIP shows that In order to meet the 50,000 homes target the Scottish Government has been increasing the allocation of grant funding in Midlothian. For example in Midlothian in 2014/15 the total level of grant funding for affordable housing was £3.78 Million. In 2020/21 it will be a minimum of £9.8 million and Officers are in discussion with Scottish Government colleagues in order that the funding allocation is increased.

2.5 The SHIP also refers to funding allocated by the Scottish Government in relation to implementing the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. So far a total of £310,000 has been allocated to Midlothian to support initiatives which help to achieve the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: The supply of permanent accommodation for homeless households has increased.
- Outcome 2: Bed and breakfast accommodation is no longer used as emergency accommodation for homeless households and the time households spend in temporary accommodation has reduced.
- Outcome 3: Homeless households with support needs are supported to access and maintain permanent accommodation.
- Outcome 4: Housing options and support is in place to prevent homelessness.

It is proposed that the funding that has been allocated is used for staff engaged in two specific projects. It is proposed that an external organisation with expert knowledge of providing housing support will be appointed to provide housing support for Housing First cases and an additional Temporary Accommodation Officer will be appointed on a fixed term contract to develop shared accommodation tenancies.

Table 1: Proposed Allocation of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Funding

Project	Funding
Housing support for Housing First cases	£238,936
Shared Accommodation for homeless households in temporary accommodation	£71,064

2.6 Officers are working in collaboration with Councils as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. There are specific actions taking place in relation to housing including:

- Supporting a 10 year affordable housing programme across the region with Scottish Government grant funding.

- Supporting local authority borrowing and share financing risk of infrastructure delivery for key development sites.
- Provision of a £50 Million housing infrastructure fund of predominantly private sector loans to be spent on projects that will unlock housing in strategic development sites across the region.
- Developing innovative approaches for increased use of offsite construction methods.
- The potential to establish a council-owned regional housing companies to deliver mid-market and private rented sector housing.

Report Implications

3.1 Resource

There are no additional resource implications arising from this Report.

3.2 Risk

If the Council does not support the development of new affordable housing, the level of housing need will increase with negative consequences for the community.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- X Adult health, care and housing
- X Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- X Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

This Strategy aligns with Midlothian's Single Outcome Agreement and with corporate priorities in the Health & Social Care Directorate.

3.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The SHIP supports the following Local Housing Strategy (LHS) Outcomes, these are:

- Households have improved housing options across all tenures.
- Homeless households and those threatened with homelessness are able to access support and advice services and all unintentionally homeless households will be able to access settled accommodation.
- The condition of housing across all tenures is improved.
- The needs of households with particular needs will be addressed and all households will have equal access to housing and housing services.

- Housing in all tenures will be more energy efficient and fewer households will live in or be at risk of fuel poverty.

3.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Setting out a programme for development in the SHIP enables the investment of affordable housing to be carried out in a balanced approach in order that any investment takes into account the needs of the community. This includes those with particular needs such as extra care housing for older people, wheelchair housing or those Complex Physical or Learning Disabilities where provision of suitable housing would require less resourcing in comparison to traditional models of care.

3.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Extensive consultation was carried out for the LHS involving the input of key stakeholders, including local organisations such as housing associations and private landlords as well as the wider community. During consultation, it was widely recognised that investment in affordable housing a key priority. All developing Housing Associations have discussed their development plans with Council Officers. Private sector developers were also given the opportunity to discuss their future development plans with Council Officers.

3.7 Ensuring Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the SHIP. No negative consequences were identified and specific actions within the SHIP are recognised as having positive outcomes for equality groups, such as those with a disability and the elderly.

3.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

An SEA Pre Screening was undertaken in respect of the Strategy, following this it is expected that a full screening will not be required. In addition, good practice in relation to energy efficiency and sustainability is highlighted in the document.

3.9 IT Issues

None

4 Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- a) Approve submission of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 to the Scottish Government.

- b) Approve the allocation of Scottish Government funding of £310,000 to support specific projects which support the implementation of Midlothian's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

Date: 21 November 2019

Report Contact:

Name : Stephen Clark, Housing Planning and Performance Manager

Tel No: 0131 271 3506

Email: stephen.clark@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25

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Title of Report: Midlothian Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 - 2024/25

Meeting Presented to: Council – 17 December 2019

Author of Report: Stephen Clark

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

- x All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Human Resources.***
- x All risk implications have been addressed.***
- x All other report implications have been addressed.***
- x My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.***

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Likewise, please advise the Council Secretariat if any report for Midlothian Council has an education interest. The Religious Representatives are currently entitled to attend meetings of the Council in a non-voting observer capacity, but with the right to speak (but not vote) on any education matter under consideration, subject always to observing the authority of the Chair