

Local Government and Communities Committee

Strategic Housing Investment Plans

Response from West Dunbartonshire Council

Dear Bob,

Consideration of Strategic Housing Investment Plans (SHIPs)

I thank you for your letter dated 31st May 2017 and note with interest both the comments contained and also the official report from the committee session of 10th May 2017.

I hope that the following response contained in the table below provides you with the necessary information that you require:-

- *How you decide on the number of specific house type, house sizes and tenures that will be delivered in your area (which may either be detailed in your SHIP or decided at a later date).*

House type, size and tenure is decided largely through reference to the Housing Need and Demand Analysis and more local demand information held by the Council and its strategic housing provider partners, for example local studies or waiting list information.

The Council invites submissions for projects which must complement the Local Housing Strategy and comply with the existing Local Development Plan.

Submissions are assessed against a scoring matrix to prioritise the projects and assist planning the affordable housing development programme.

The principal assessment criteria relate to:

- Local Housing Strategy objectives;
- Meeting the strategic priorities of the Council;
- Contributing towards meeting assessed housing need and demand;
- Meeting regeneration objectives;
- SIMD scoring;
- Affordability;
- Compliance with affordable housing design standard;
- Deliverability including site constraints;
- Level of grant subsidy required.

Local information has identified that given the ageing demographic, accessibility to current housing stock is a problematic issue and one which the new build programme should take steps to redress.

We also know that there is an imbalance between the available housing and the demand, with a particular shortage of 1 bedroom and larger family sized houses. This information informs the housing mix of projects being approved for the SHIP.

Given the 5-year timescale of the SHIP, often the projects will be of an outline nature with the details to be confirmed as the plan is progressed and issues such as ground condition clarified. For example it is sometimes difficult to detail the exact type of specialist housing required in a particular project or area, and in this case we would generally require a notional 10% specialist housing element in each project contained in the SHIP, with type of specialist provision being agreed at a later date.

We work closely with the West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership in developing the SHIP and determining specialist housing need requirements.

- *How you monitor and evaluate whether the SHIP, and the projects finally delivered, meets the requirements and needs of the local area and also contribute to the Scottish Government's target of 50,000 affordable homes by 2021.*

West Dunbartonshire Council fully supports the Scottish Government's drive to provide 50,000 new affordable homes over the next 5-years and accordingly we have branded our partnership approach to supporting this aim More Homes West Dunbartonshire as detailed in the SHIP. Maximising delivery of new homes through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme is a key objective of the recently published West Dunbartonshire Local Housing Strategy 2017 -2022 (November 2016).

As a contribution to More Homes Scotland, we have ambitious plans to deliver 1,000 new Council and RSL homes across West Dunbartonshire in the period of the SHIP, a figure significantly in excess of the Council's Housing Supply Targets.

The SHIP requires to demonstrate flexibility and consequently is subject to continual monitoring. Monitoring of performance is carried out through the Council's performance management framework, including key structures such as its More Homes Delivery Group, Housing Providers Strategic Forum, both of which have representation from the Scottish Government More Homes Division, and the Housing Improvement Board.

In addition, programming meetings take place between the Council, the Scottish Government and developing organisations to help progress projects in the SHIP and to identify further opportunities. The Local Housing Strategy /SHIP is also the subject of an annual review report to the Housing and Communities Committee of the Council (each February). These discussions provide an ongoing evaluation of the SHIP's performance in meeting local objectives and contributing towards the 50,000 target.

We are looking forward to delivering our ambitious More Homes West Dunbartonshire Delivery Plan across the local authority area providing the right types of homes in the right places.

I trust that the above will be of assistance to you and please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

John Kerr
Housing Development and Homelessness Manager
Housing Development and Homelessness
West Dunbartonshire Council