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**REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 2 APRIL 2019**

**SUBJECT: LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2019 – 2024**

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

1.1 The report provides the Committee with the results of the public consultation on the Consultative Draft Local Housing Strategy 2019-2024.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III G (11) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the preparation and implementation of strategic housing plans.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Communities Committee:**

(i) **notes the results of the public consultation carried out from 6 February to 15 March 2019; and**

(ii) **approves the Local Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024 for publication and implementation.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires local authorities to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) supported by an assessment of housing need and demand.

3.2 On 5 February 2019, the Communities Committee approved the Consultative Draft LHS 2019-24 for public consultation (paragraph 12 of the draft Minute refers). The consultation ran from 6 February to 15 March 2019.

**4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 Extensive consultation has been carried out with stakeholders and partners throughout the LHS development period, particularly with colleagues in Community Care and in Health and Social Care Moray, Development Planning colleagues, local Registered Social Landlords and Housing Strategy Group partners. These discussions have resulted in a high level of correlation

between the outcomes of the LHS and those of the emerging Moray Local Development Plan 2020 and the Health and Social Care Moray Joint Commissioning Plan.

- 4.2 The consultative draft LHS was issued to all Housing Strategy Group members and Community Councils on 5 February 2019 with comments invited by 15 March 2019. A reminder was sent on 6 March 2019. This resulted in minor comments from some Housing Strategy Group members, which have been incorporated into the final LHS.
- 4.3 A public consultation was launched on 5 February 2019 and ended on 15 March 2019. This took the form of an online questionnaire. The consultation was publicised via the Council's Facebook page, website, Twitter, and intranet. For each LHS action, the questionnaire sought an approval rating for that action, additional comments on that action, and ideas for "what else could we do?" Responses were anonymous but respondents were invited to indicate their age, town and tenure to aid analysis of the results.
- 4.4 The public consultation resulted in 15 online responses. This low response rate is similar to the last two LHSs.
- 4.5 Although the number of responses is too low to allow any statistically robust conclusions to be drawn, the responses were generally positive. 12 out of 15 respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the LHS priorities proposed.
- 4.6 The strongest support expressed by respondents was for increasing the supply of accessible and extra care housing, and for making the best use of existing housing through social landlord Allocations Policies and Downsizing Incentive schemes.
- 4.7 Several comments received referred to constraints on public sector spending as an obstacle to delivery of LHS outcomes.
- 4.8 Comments and suggestions mainly related to the detail of how LHS actions might be implemented, rather than suggesting alternative actions. For this reason, no substantial changes to the consultative draft LHS previously considered by Committee are proposed. Comments received will be valuable as the LHS Action Plan is implemented.

## **5. LHS PUBLICATION**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the LHS is published on the Council's website, and implementation begins with immediate effect.

## **6. LHS PEER REVIEW**

- 6.1 In 2009, the Scottish Government and COSLA published a new approach to supporting the development and improvement of local housing strategies. The approach was endorsed by both the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO) and reflects a primary focus on promoting good practice and supporting improvement, a strong emphasis on partnership working given

the new relationship between central and local government and a commitment to streamlining of processes.

- 6.2 The Council submitted the consultative draft LHS to the Scottish Government on 5 February 2019, during the consultation period. The Scottish Government will make arrangements for a Peer Review to be carried out by a panel of officers from the Scottish Government and other local authorities. The findings of the panel are intended to be learning opportunities. The Council is not required to make further changes to its final LHS as a result of the Peer Review process.

## **7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

### **(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))**

The Moray Council's priorities for National Outcome 10 of the Single Outcome agreement include:

- The volume and quality of housing throughout Moray will increase
- People assessed as homeless will be provided appropriate accommodation.

The Local Housing Strategy focuses on a set of outcomes that contribute to the achievement of Single Outcome Agreement priorities.

### **(b) Policy and Legal**

It is a requirement of the 2001 Housing (Scotland) Act that local authorities have a Local Housing Strategy. Detailed guidance has been produced by the Scottish Government.

### **(c) Financial implications**

There are no direct resourcing implications associated with this report.

### **(d) Risk Implications**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

### **(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

### **(f) Property**

There are no property requirements/implications arising directly from this report.

### **(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact**

It is a statutory requirement that equality issues should be addressed in the LHS. Data and evidence about the particular housing and support needs of equalities groups has been gathered as part of the Council's Housing Need and Demand Assessment. The LHS will set out how the Council intends to address these needs. The LHS includes an Equalities Impact Assessment. Equality groups were consulted as part of the preparation of the LHS.

**(h) Consultations**

Consultation on this report has taken place with the Corporate Director (Economic Development, Planning And Infrastructure), Acting Head Of Housing And Property, Head of Development Services, Head of Environmental Services, Gary Templeton (Principal Planning Officer), the Head of Community Care, Head of Health and Social Care Moray, Deborah O'Shea (Principal Accountant), Legal Services Manager, Corporate Policy Unit Manager, Equal Opportunities Officer, Caroline Howie (Committee Services Officer), and senior managers within Housing and Property Services.

**8. CONCLUSION**

**8.1 This report provides the Communities Committee with details of the results of consultation on the consultative draft Local Housing Strategy 2019 - 2024. The report seeks approval to publish and implement the final Local Housing Strategy.**

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