

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: a ship, top-right: a stag, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: an eagle), and a banner at the bottom with the motto 'A NE FOR A'.

Agenda Item 7

Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20- 2023/24

Falkirk Council

Title: Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20- 2023/24

Meeting: Executive

Date: 16 October 2018

Submitted by: Director of Corporate and Housing Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2019/20 to 2023/24 for submission to the Scottish Government. The report also seeks agreement to progress actions to support the delivery of additional Falkirk Council housing projects.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive:

- 1) Agree the SHIP 2019/20 to 2023/24 (Appendix 1) for submission to the Scottish Government;**
- 2) Authorises officers to enter into negotiations to transfer the land at Denny High School, Bainsford Day Centre, former Oakbank Home Polmont and Main Street Bonnybridge to the Housing Revenue Account;**
- 3) Notes that officers will adapt the SHIP in line with available resources in order to maximise the supply of affordable housing locally and provide updates to Members of any changes.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The core purpose of the SHIP is to set out strategic investment priorities for affordable housing over a 5 year period, in order to achieve the outcomes set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS). The LHS 2017-2022 identified an all tenure Housing Supply Target of 491 units per annum (368 private and 123 affordable). This equates to 615 affordable new build units over the 5 year life of the LHS.

- 3.2 Affordable properties can be provided through a combination of new build projects or by making better use of existing stock, e.g.: through Buybacks. A total of 418 additional affordable properties were delivered from 2013/14 to 2017/18.
- 3.3 In October 2017, Executive agreed the Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2017-2022. The plan set out proposed projects to deliver 1,310 units of affordable housing over the period 2018/19 to 2022/23. At that time, there was a grant funding shortfall of c£30m, despite increases in grant funding. As such, it was noted that the SHIP would be reviewed and work would be undertaken to maximise the supply of affordable housing locally. The SHIP 2019/20-2023/24 updates the previously reported position.
- 3.4 Scottish Government issued new draft guidance in July 2018 which highlighted that the SHIP is required to be produced and submitted annually covering the following five financial years. Guidance advises the SHIP should set out investment priorities for new affordable housing; demonstrate how these will be delivered; identify all resources required to deliver these priorities and enable the involvement of key partners.
- 3.5 The SHIP provides the basis for the development of the Strategic Local Programme Agreement (SLPA) between Local Authorities and the Scottish Government. The SLPA sets out the programme of housing projects which will be funded over the current year and is reviewed and updated annually to ensure delivery remains on track.
- 3.6 In line with SHIP guidance, potential projects for inclusion in the SHIP must be prioritised using a scoring methodology (set out in the SHIP Appendix 1) and agreed by developing landlords, including Falkirk Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). This methodology takes account of the following:
- Strategic direction from the Falkirk Council LHS and assessment of housing need;
 - Project deliverability and funding required;
 - Size, tenure and house type;
 - Number of accessible units;
 - Sustainability relating to energy efficiency.
- 3.7 Scottish Government guidance highlights that the SHIP is a corporate activity requiring close working between housing, planning, social work and other departments. The new draft guidance again highlights local authorities are expected to collaborate with RSLs, communities, developers, the Scottish Government and other stakeholders in the SHIP development process. As part of the SHIP review, the Scottish Government will comment on how stakeholders have been involved in developing and delivering the plan.

4. Considerations

- 4.1 Table 1 below details resources available to deliver affordable housing, comprising Scottish Government grant, referred to as Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA) and contributions made by the Council. It is important to note that these are minimum grant assumptions and may be subject to change. The Scottish Government allocated RPAs to local authorities in April 2018 for the 3 years to 31st March 2021. For planning purposes local authorities were advised in SHIP guidance to use their 2020/21 RPA as the basis for funding for the final three years of this SHIP period.

Table 1 SHIP Funding:

RPA	SG grant (£m)
2019-20	£11,307
2020-21	£12,064
2021-22	£12,064
2022-23	£12,064
2023-24	£12,064
Total	£59,563

- 4.2 Details of the full list of projects, covering the full 5 years of the SHIP, are provided in Appendix 1. In summary, a total of 1,371 additional affordable properties are planned to be delivered from the projects listed (1,048 Falkirk Council properties and 323 other RSLs). Details of proposed Falkirk Council developments are outlined below:

Developer	Site	No of Units
Falkirk Council	Abbots Road, Grangemouth	14
Falkirk Council	Blinkbonny Road, Falkirk	43
Falkirk Council	Former Torwood School	23
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm, Falkirk	111
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School	200
Falkirk Council	Former Bainsford Adult Day Centre	17
Falkirk Council	Banknock South	103
Falkirk Council	Former Oakbank Home, Polmont	27
Falkirk Council	Main Street, Bonnybridge	25
Falkirk Council	Seabegs Road, Bonnybridge	35
Falkirk Council	Buybacks	450
	TOTAL	1,048

- 4.3 The Scottish Government grant typically covers approximately one third of the costs of a new build property, the balance requiring to be met from the Council or RSL's own finances. A total grant requirement of £71.6m is necessary to deliver all the projects detailed in the SHIP. There is therefore an estimated shortfall in grant funding of circa £12.0m over the next 5 years, to deliver all the projects listed in the SHIP. Although the total available funding is not sufficient to meet the full list of potential SHIP projects, discussions are on-going with the Scottish Government regarding the potential to secure additional funding and with partners on the scheduling and timing of individual projects. Changes to the programme or funding will be provided to Members through the annual review process.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government guidance recommends that a slippage factor is applied on an annual basis to the SHIP. Allowing slippage in projects, there are still sufficient projects set out in the SHIP to deliver the annual supply target of 123 new build units over the period of the LHS (2017-2022), as noted in para 3.1 above.
- 4.5 SHIP guidance also seeks to increase the number of wheelchair accessible homes. The current LHS has a target of 5-10% wheelchair accessible properties in new build developments. In the SHIP (2019/20 to 2023/24) approximately 504 (56%) are designed for older/ambulant, e.g.: properties on ground level or lift accessible and a further 132 (15%) built to an accessible standard.
- 4.6 The SHIP includes proposed Council projects at part of the former Denny High School, Bainsford Day Centre, former Oakbank Home Polmont, Main Street Bonnybridge and Seabegs Road. Delivering the Council's new build programme at these locations will require the sites to be transferred to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). A resultant capital receipt for the Council's General Services Capital Programme will be generated.
- 4.7 The Council's new build programme is moving towards targeting larger strategic sites, as well as continuing to develop some smaller infill development sites to meet specific housing needs. Targeting significantly larger sites will increase the overall supply of new council homes and provide increased security in the delivery of Council's house building programme going forward.
- 4.8 In 2016/17 the Scottish Government announced a five-year Housing Infrastructure Fund with up to £50m available nationally. Eligible works include physical infrastructure generally required to start a housing project, such as roads. Priority will be given to those projects delivering affordable housing within the next five years. Falkirk Council submitted a bid for three sites:

- North of Kilsyth Road, Banknock (planning reference M08);
- Kilsyth Road, Banknock (H07); and
- North of Glasgow Road, Dennyloanhead (H08).

4.9 All of the above projects relate to the M80/ A803 slip roads junction 7 upgrading. The total capacity of all three sites cannot be met unless the junction is upgraded. For the upgrade to go ahead it requires Infrastructure Funding for all three sites. Falkirk Council was awarded a grant of £1.543m in May 2018 to facilitate junction improvements.

4.10 In addition to the projects outlined in the SHIP, additional project proposals are regularly identified. Officers will continue to assess and evaluate these projects and, where applicable, progress potential additional funding considerations with the Scottish Government. We will continue to work with other Council services and external partners to identify future sites that could be suitable for new council housing projects, e.g.: town centre development. Additionally, the District Valuer has provided a valuation in relation to the Forth Valley College site, with a view to submission of a proposed site acquisition by the Council for new build housing. The submission is on a Head of Terms basis only at this time, with any subsequent formal purchase requiring approval by Executive. Any changes to the SHIP arising from further consideration of additional sites, will be advised to Members through update reports.

5. Consultation

5.1 Consultation on the development of the SHIP has taken place with other Council Services and also with the Scottish Government and Registered Social Landlords. Consideration of the SHIP will also take place with the Housing Contribution Statement Group which is taking forward housing's role in health and social integration. The SHIP has also been discussed with the Resident and Tenants' Forum. In addition, consultation has also taken place with Scottish Water.

5.2 A partnership approach also takes place through a Joint Officer Working Group which considers best use of Council assets, including the potential for affordable housing.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 Negotiations are on-going with the Scottish Government on securing additional grant funding to deliver all the affordable housing projects outlined in the SHIP.
- 6.2 The Scottish Government grant typically covers approximately one third of the cost of a Council new build property, the balance requiring to be met from the Council's Housing Investment Programme. The total estimated cost of the Council projects within the SHIP is £127m, with £46m grant. The balance of c£81m will be considered as part of the Council's annual Rent and Housing Investment Programme budget setting process. The shortfall for RSL projects will be funded from their own financing arrangements.
- 6.3 The acquisition of sites at the Denny High School, Bainsford Day Centre, former Oakbank Home Polmont, Main Street Bonnybridge and Seabegs Road will generate a capital receipt for the Council's General Services Capital Programme. The site valuation will be determined independently by the District Valuer. This will be funded from the Council's Housing Investment Programme.

Resources

- 6.4 The report to Falkirk Council in January 2018 in relation to the Housing Investment Programme, identified the need for additional resource in terms of staffing to deliver the programme. The current temporary arrangements now in place will require to be extended to October 2021 to complete the new build programme. An additional 6 temporary posts covering the same period will also be created to further support the project. All associated costs will be met from the HRA Housing Investment programme budget.

Legal

- 6.5 There are no legal implications.

Risk

- 6.6 Unforeseen development and funding constraints may restrict the number and size of proposed projects, reducing the number of affordable housing units delivered. This could impact adversely on meeting housing need.

Equalities

- 6.7 A full Equalities & Poverty Impact Assessment was carried out for the LHS 2017-2022 and no significant equality issues were identified.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.8 A screening of environmental impacts has been carried out for the LHS 2017-22 and identified that there was no likelihood of significant environmental impacts.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This report provides information on the SHIP 2019/20 – 2023/24. This is influenced by the housing supply targets set in the LHS and Local Development Plan. The SHIP demonstrates the potential to deliver 1,371 affordable housing units. After taking account of slippage, there are sufficient projects included within the SHIP to fully utilise and exceed the current allocated grant funding over the next 5 years.
- 7.2 Although a shortfall of £12, 025, 650 in funding has been identified over the next 5 years, officers will continue to review and manage the SHIP to maximise the amount of available funding from the Scottish Government, in order to deliver the maximum number of locally available affordable properties.
- 7.3 The SHIP includes projects that will require the HRA to purchase Council sites at the former Denny High School, Bainsford Day Centre, former Oakbank Home Polmont, Main Street Bonnybridge and Seabegs Road.

Director of Corporate and Housing Services

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Date: 2 October 2018

APPENDICES

1. Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 - 2023/24

List of Background Papers:

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:



Falkirk Council

Corporate & Housing Services



Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2019/20 to 2023/24



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1. The role of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan

The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) is prepared in line with Scottish Government guidance and influenced by housing supply targets set out in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and Local Development Plan.

The SHIP sets out key strategic affordable housing investment priorities to support the delivery of these targets. It also sets out plans for the supply of housing across other tenures, where appropriate, over a 5 year period.

The Council's new build programme is moving towards targeting larger strategic sites. However, it will continue to develop some smaller infill development sites to meet specific housing needs. Targeting significantly larger sites will increase the overall supply of new Council homes. It will also provide increased stability in the future delivery of the Council's house building programme.

2. Content of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan

2.1 Links to the Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022

The LHS sets out the strategic policy approach to delivering housing and related services to meet housing need. The LHS was approved by Executive on 15 August 2017 with final sign off by Scottish Government in March 2018.

The 6 priorities of the LHS are:

1. Increasing Housing Supply
2. Creating Sustainable Communities
3. Improving Access to Housing
4. Providing Housing and Support to Vulnerable Groups
5. Tackling Fuel Poverty, Energy Efficiency and Climate Change
6. Improving Housing Conditions

2.2 Housing Supply Target

The LHS sets the Housing Supply Target (HST). It takes the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) estimate as a starting point and looks at a range of factors such as resources and land availability. The HST only considers new build units which will be delivered within the LHS period.

The all tenure HST was set at 491. This is broken down into 368 private units and 123 affordable units each year. This equates to 615 affordable new build units over the LHS period.

Affordable housing options available are:

- New build provided by Council and RSLs
- Buying Back former Council and RSL owned properties
- Scottish Government Open Market Shared Equity Scheme (OMSE) which relates to properties for sale on the open market available to first time buyers and priority groups¹
- Scottish Government Help to Buy² scheme to help first time buyers/existing homeowners to buy an affordable new build home from a participating home builder
- Discounted Sale without subsidy which has successfully delivered 15 units in a local site which was subject to the Affordable Housing Policy
- Mortgage to rent to help people whose homes are at risk of being repossessed, to stay in their homes by Council or RSL buying and renting back to them.
- Empty property sold on the open market without subsidy but within the local maximum price ceiling³ set by Scottish Government for OMSE

2.3 Project Scoring Methodology

A project submission form and scoring methodology was developed and agreed by Falkirk Council's Strategy and Development Team, Council New Build Team and RSLs. This demonstrates the commitment by all parties to partnership working. The methodology is attached (Appendix 1) and takes account of:

- The LHS 2017-2022 outcomes
- Areas of high demand as identified by the HNDA
- Deliverability
- Bedroom sizes
- Tenure and house type
- Number of accessible units
- Grant funding requirement
- Sustainability relating to energy efficiency

The Council is keen to focus on a pragmatic programme to deliver projects in the SHIP. Measures have therefore been taken to mitigate potential development constraints including early discussions with Planning to ensure that potential delivery constraints are identified early in the process. In addition, consultation has also taken place with Scottish Water, to identify potential barriers to project developments.

2.4 Strategic Housing Investment Plan Projects

The use of the methodology described in 2.3 allowed projects to be scored and included in the SHIP. These are shown below detailing the number of projects and planned units each year.

¹ People over 60, social renters, disabled people, members of the armed forces, veterans who have left the forces within the past 2 years, partner of service personnel up to 2 years after partner died whilst serving

² Further details on Scottish Government web site

³ <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/open-market-shared-equity-omse-administrative-procedures-9781788513555/pages/17/>

Table 1 – Proposed SHIP projects				
Developer	Project	Units	SG Grant	Score
2019/20 - Year 1				
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	90	£2,250,000	730
Falkirk Council	Abbots Road	14	£826,000	680
Falkirk Council	Blinkbonny Road	43	£2,573,000	710
Kingdom	Allandale	40	£2,880,000	700
Link Group Ltd	Castings	3	£58,950	720
Link Group Ltd	Williamson Street	37	£3,320,593	740
Link Group Ltd	Former Whyteside Hotel	32	£2,873,837	560
Paragon	Buy Backs	5	£125,000	620
Annual Total		264	£14,907,380	
2020/21 - Year 2				
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	90	£2,250,000	730
Falkirk Council	Former Torwood School	23	£1,357,000	660
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm (111 total units)	35	£6,549,000	630
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (200 total units)	50	£11,800,000	510
Falkirk Council	Bainsford Adult Day Centre	17	£1,003,000	590
Link Group	North of Glasgow Rd, Dennyloanhead (H08)	30	£2,670,000	470
Link Group	North of Kilsyth Rd Banknock (M03)	30	£2,670,000	470
Link Group	Vellore Road, Maddiston	34	£2,994,795	510
Weslo	King Street	23	£1,694,939	600
Weslo	Carradale Avenue	29	£2,290,536	600
Paragon	Buy Backs	5	£125,000	620
Cairn	Etna Road	40	£2,942,000	560
Annual Total		406	£38,346,270	
2021/22 - Year 3				
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	90	£2,250,000	730
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm (111 total units)	51	Incl Above	630
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (200 total units)	50	Incl Above	510
Falkirk Council	Banknock South (103 total units)	50	£6,077,000	590
Falkirk Council	Former Oakbank Home	27	£1,593,000	600
Falkirk Council	Main Street, Bonnybridge	25	£1,475,000	540
Paragon	Buy Backs	5	£125,000	480
Annual Total		298	£11,520,000	
2022/23 - Year 4				
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	90	£2,250,000	730
Falkirk Council	Woodend Farm (111 total units)	25	Incl Above	630
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (200 total units)	50	Incl Above	510
Falkirk Council	Banknock South (103 total units)	53	Incl Above	590
Falkirk Council	Seabegs Road, Bonnybridge	35	£2,065,000	560
Paragon	Buy Backs	5	£125,000	620
Annual Total		258	£4,440,000	
2023/24 - Year 5				
Falkirk Council	Buy Backs	90	£2,250,000	730
Falkirk Council	Former Denny High School (200 total units)	50	Incl Above	510
Paragon	Buy Backs	5	£125,000	620
Annual Total		145	£2,375,000	
SHIP Total		1,371	£71,588,650	

2.5 Energy Efficiency

The SHIP scoring methodology explores energy efficiency issues. This is based on the SG Resource Technical Handbook 2011 Domestic Sustainability which notes the specified level of sustainability for a dwelling. The three main standards are:

- Bronze or Bronze Active
- Silver or Silver Active
- Gold

Only one project in this SHIP will not be delivered to Silver or above standard. The ability to deliver Gold Standard is restricted due to the additional costs of building to a higher standard specification and associated funding constraints. However, we continue to monitor delivery of such properties nationally to identify good practice for consideration in future plans. The delivery of Silver standard links directly to LHS priorities 5 and 6.

3. **Resource Planning Assumptions**

The Scottish Government advised of Resource Planning Assumptions for grant until 2020/21 and advised in guidance to use the year 2 figure for the remaining three years of the SHIP.

The table below considers all potential resources to deliver affordable housing including grant, 2nd homes Council tax and developer contributions.

Table 2: SG Grant, 2nd Homes and Developer Contributions					
	RPA	SG grant (£m)	2ND homes council tax (£m)	Developer Contributions (m)	Total
Year 1	2019-20	£11.307	£0.262	£0.204	£11.773
Year 2	2020-21	£12.064	£0.262	£0.204	£12.530
Year 3	2021-22	£12.064	£0.262	£0.204	£12.530
Year 4	2022-23	£12.064	£0.262	£0.204	£12.530
Year 5	2023-24	£12.064	£0.262	£0.204	£12.530
	Total	£59.563	£1.310	£1.020	£61.893

Source: Scottish Government & Falkirk Council

4. **Housing Infrastructure Fund**

The Scottish Government Housing Infrastructure Fund is available for the delivery of housing sites where the scale and nature of infrastructure costs would prevent the site from being supported through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP).

Falkirk Council submitted an application to the fund for sites in Banknock, Dennyloanhead where unit numbers were constrained because development works were required at Junction 7 of the M80. A firm offer of grant of up to £1.543m from Scottish Government was made in May 2018 to facilitate the junction improvements.

Table 3: Housing Infrastructure Fund		
Site Location	Owner	Number of Units to be delivered by 2021
Site to the north of Kilsyth Road, Banknock (LDP site reference M03) - Cannerton	I&H Brown Ltd	30
Site to the north of Glasgow Road, Dennyloanhead (LDP site reference H08)- Broomridge Farm	Mactaggart & Mickel/ Bellway	30
Site to the South of Kilsyth Road, Banknock (LDP site reference H07)	Falkirk Council/ JB Bennett	103

Falkirk Council, Registered Social Landlords, Scottish Government and developers for these sites are in discussion to progress affordable housing on these sites.

5. Other Affordable Housing Provided with Affordable Housing Supply Programme Assistance

5.1 Buy Back Scheme

The Council introduced a buy back scheme in 2013 buying back 1 and 2 bedroom ex-council properties sold under Right to Buy. This was to increase the amount of social rented housing in the area. Executive agreed on 20 October 2015 to widen this commitment to include the purchase of houses with 3 or more bedrooms, to help met demand for larger properties.

On 22 February 2017 the Council approved a further 3 year commitment to this scheme by allocating £6m per annum in the Housing Investment Programme for the period 2017-2018 to 2019-2020.

Table 4 sets out the number of properties purchased to date.

Table 4: Buy Back Statistics	
Years	Number of properties bought
2013-14	69
2014-15	77
2015-16	97
2016-17	80
2017-18	95
Total	418

Source : Falkirk Council

The SG provides a grant of £25,000 per property to purchase former Council properties. In 2017-2018 the average cost of a buy back was c£70,000.

The Buy Back scheme links to the empty homes project. On occasion former long term empty Council properties have been purchased as buy backs. This assists to return empty properties into use. It also creates sustainable communities.

The LHS notes both Falkirk Council and Paragon Housing Association have blocks of flats in mixed ownership where there can be challenges carrying out communal work required for Energy Efficiency Standard in Scottish Social Housing (EESSH) and to bring properties up to the

Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

Buy-backs also support the provision of additional social rented housing in areas where there is limited site availability for new build e.g.: over 50 buy backs have been purchased in the Larbert/Stenhousemuir/Rural North sub-areas.

5.2 Affordable Housing Policy (AHP)

The Council's policy for affordable housing ensures new housing developments of 20 or more units make a contribution towards affordable housing. This assists the Council to achieve diversity of house types and tenures to create integrated communities. The types of affordable housing covered are:

- Social rented housing
- Mid-market or intermediate rented accommodation
- Shared equity
- Subsidised low cost sale
- Entry level housing for sale (unsubsidised)

Table 5 shows the percentage requirement for affordable housing in the Council area.

Table 5: Percentage Affordable Housing Requirement		
% Requirements	25%	15%
Housing settlement areas	Larbert/Stenhousemuir/Rural North Polmont/Rural South	Bo'ness Denny /Bonnybridge Falkirk Grangemouth

Source: Falkirk Council Revised Supplementary Planning Guidance Note

While the Council maintains a first preference for the provision of affordable housing in the form of socially rented housing by the Council or RSLs, it will consider any of the aforementioned options as contributing towards meeting affordable need, depending on local market circumstance.

Early discussions will take place between the Council and private developers to determine the specific requirements, likely funding availability and appropriate delivery mechanism.

The sequential approach below is applied to the delivery of affordable housing:

- On-site provision
- Off-site provision
- Commuted sum payment

Table 6 shows sites which are subject to the AHP which may be considered during the period of this SHIP.

Table 6: Sites Subject to AHP programmed to come forward in 2018-2023		
Sub-Area	Number of Sites	Potential Unit Numbers
Bonnybridge/ Denny	5	90
Falkirk	4	51
Larbert/Stenhousemuir /Rural North	2	12
Polmont/Rural South	4	66

Total	15	219
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Source: Falkirk Council Development Services

Although there is a preference to provide social rented housing on site, it should be noted this will be dependent upon the availability of grant and local market circumstance. To deliver all of the above as social rent it would take up to an additional £15.768m of grant funding. Options for delivering the required homes through the affordable housing policy will therefore be explored on a site by site basis taking account of available grant, housing need, demand and local supply for each site.

5.3 Additional Contributions

On January 15th 2018 Falkirk Council approved housing investment requirements for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21. This included £10.4 million for Council new build and £6 million for Council buy backs.

6. **Council Tax on Empty and 2nd Homes**

Table 2 demonstrates a total of £1.313m in second homes council tax. This is currently used to support affordable housing and fund an Empty Homes Officer. Future options for this funding are currently being explored.

7. **Developer Contributions**

As demonstrated in table 2 commuted sum funding expected during the period of this SHIP is £1.020m. Options for this funding are currently being explored. The use of all developer contributions are monitored and agreed by the Planning Obligations Group.

8. **Wheelchair Accessible Target**

8.1 Background to Wheelchair Accessible Target

Guidance highlighted a wish to see an increase in the number of wheelchair accessible homes being delivered. The Fairer Scotland for Disabled People Action Plan recommends Councils set a realistic target within their LHS for the delivery of wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures. As a first step in this process Councils are asked to include a position statement in the SHIP noting the requirement for:

- Wheelchair accessible housing in the area
- Any information gaps
- How to address need across all tenures

8.2 Evidence from Housing Need Demand Assessment

The current evidence base is the Falkirk HNDA. This was agreed as robust and credible by the Scottish Government Centre for Housing Market Analysis in August 2016. It identified an all tenure need for between 300- 510 wheelchair accessible properties. Full details on how this has been identified can be found on page 100 of the HNDA using the link below.

[Housing Need and Demand Assessment](#)

We carry out analysis at a local level annually considering data from rents, house prices, waiting lists etc. and consultation with operational staff and through this approach we will continue to explore need and demand for wheelchair accessible housing.

8.3 Links to Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022

The LHS includes the following actions to address identified need across all tenures:

- Provide specialist advice for older people and those with disabilities
- Build more homes which meet people's changing needs
- Agree with partners specifications standard for new build housing
- Work in partnership to explore standard specifications for specialist housing built through the SHIP
- Increase the supply of specialised housing funded through the SHIP

The LHS has set a target that 5% to 10% of new build properties will be built to wheelchair standard where viable.

8.5 Actions to Address Future Provision of Wheelchair Accessible Housing

Current building standards provide details on enhanced accessibility and adaptability standards for new build housing.

We acknowledge that a planning review is ongoing and anticipate this will provide comment on the future role of the LDP in relation to wheelchair accessible housing across all tenures.

In the meantime the Council will continue to work with planning colleagues and developers to explore the possibility for the provision of wheelchair accessible housing across tenures.

8.5 Provision of Affordable Wheelchair Accessible Homes Provided in this Strategic Housing Investment Plan

A total of 893 new build affordable properties are planned to be delivered within this SHIP period and will be built to housing for varying needs standard. This includes 504 (56%) older/ambulant and 132 (15%) accessible properties.

9. **Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan**

Falkirk Council is undertaking work to develop a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by December 2018. This plan will cover a 5 year period or longer to allow development of this new approach to end homelessness in Scotland. The content of this plan will be included in future SHIPs.

10. **Consultation and Collaboration**

The Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) is delivered via partnership working between the Council, RSLs and the SG Housing Supply Division. At a strategic level Housing Services meets on a 3 monthly basis with SG officials and RSL partners. These meetings demonstrate commitment from all partners to successful project completions to ensure potential issues are

addressed timeously.

The Housing Planning Liaison Group also takes place quarterly and consists of Falkirk Council Housing and Planning Officers. It reviews progress with meeting the HNDA, LDP, SHIP projects and new builds private developments subject to the affordable housing policy. It seeks to ensure that all affordable opportunities are explored for local residents. This group discusses SHIP projects and sites which are likely to have an Affordable Housing Contribution.

The Planning Obligations Group considers how affordable housing contributions are used to increase affordable housing units.

A Corporate Group has been set up to explore best use of Council assets to maximise the number of affordable housing being delivered.

The Strategic Housing Group meets on an annual basis. Members of this group include housing, planning, social work, representatives from the voluntary sector, SG, Homes For Scotland and local RSLs.

The LHS Working Group meets quarterly to discuss progress of actions noted in 8.4.

The SHIP was also considered by the Tenant and Resident Forum in August 2018.

The SHIP was discussed at the Adapting for Change Steering Group. This group is responsible for streamlining the procedure for disabled adaptations. The provision of new wheelchair and older/ambulant properties are of interest to this group as an alternative option when disabled adaptations are not viable in existing accommodation.

The SHIP will also be discussed at the next Housing Contribution Statement Group. This group progresses housing's role in health and social care integration. It includes representation from Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership, RSLs and housing services.

This SHIP has been developed in consultation with Scottish Water who has advised on all proposed projects in relation to potential issues relating to water and sewerage issues which could impact on unit delivery.

11. Procurement

In the context of public services reform the Council aims to develop collaborative approaches to procurement and shared services with RSLs and other providers.

The Council achieves best value in terms of delivering their new build housing programme by implementing the most cost effective design solutions for each development site. This is achieved after completing a thorough design evaluation of the site to maximise the development potential. It incorporates in the detailed design the most effective and efficient construction methods including prefabrication, combined with material specifications, plus mechanical and electrical system meeting current technical standards.

12. Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 provides a range of protection for nine protected characteristics which include age, religion and belief, race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and gender reassignment.

The Council strives to ensure equality of opportunity and the LHS and SHIP plays a significant role in promoting the equalities agenda. A comprehensive Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment was undertaken for the LHS 2017-2022 and is available on the Council website. This identified age, disability, sex and ethnicity as the main protected characteristics which have an impact on housing need and demand.

Priorities, actions and indicators detailed in the LHS, along with consultation on the needs of these specific groups, has been designed to ensure adequate housing is in place to meet the continuous demand for affordable housing in the area.

13. Strategic Environmental Assessment

A pre-screening Strategic Environmental Assessment for the LHS 2017-2022 was sent to SEA Gateway in September 2015. Confirmation being received in October 2015 that a full SEA would not be necessary for the LHS 2017-2022.

14. Monitoring

The implementation of the SG Housing and Regeneration Programmes system went live in September 2017. This system will be used by Councils to submit their SHIP and will enable project monitoring for all projects SHIP.

Tripartite meetings between Falkirk Council, SG and RSLs also ensure the SHIP is regularly monitored.

The SG expects the SHIP to be monitored against the LHS and Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIP).

The purpose of this is to identify how LHS policies are being translated into operational delivery of affordable housing.

The key LHS priorities linked to this SHIP are:

- Increasing housing supply
- Providing housing and support to vulnerable groups

Locally, the LOIP is known as the Single Outcome Local Delivery Plan (SOLD). Table 7 demonstrates the links between the LHS and SOLD. It also provides information on SOLD outcomes.

Table 7: Links between the LHS and SOLD		
LHS Priority	SOLD Priority	SOLD Outcome
Increasing housing supply	Maximising job creation and employability	Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live

	Addressing the impact of poverty on children	We will grow our economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment
Providing housing support to vulnerable groups	Improving mental health and wellbeing	People will live independent and positive lives within supportive communities

Locality planning is communities working together with public and third sector organisations to improve residents' lives and areas where they live. Locality planning by the Council will encourage public and community participation in services and decisions which affect local communities. Improvements could be for:

- Local services
- Public buildings and facilities

The three localities in the Falkirk Council area are:

- East Locality (Bo'ness and Blackness, Grangemouth and Upper Braes)
- Central Locality (Falkirk North, Falkirk South and Lower Braes)
- West Locality (Denny and Banknock, Bonnybridge and Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst)

Each locality has around 50,000 residents. Locality planning is underway in the east of the District. Senior officers from a range of community planning partners oversee the process. An East Locality sub group has been set up which will consider housing issues.

The West Locality sub group will be set up over the autumn period. It is anticipated that future SHIP's will be influenced by Locality Planning Partnerships.

The LHS annual update will monitor the delivery of affordable housing and will be published on the Council's website.

15. Summary

The SHIP is influenced by the housing supply targets set in the LHS and LDP. It considers constraints in public expenditure and takes account of the SG policy set out in Homes Fit for the 21st Century, UK government Welfare Reforms and recognises the Scottish Government More Homes Scotland approach. The SHIP demonstrates the potential to deliver 1,371 affordable housing units.

The SG Guidance expects Councils to over-programme for the first 2 years of the SHIP period to 31 March 2021. It also recommends a 25% slippage for year 1 and 2 of the SHIP. After applying this there remains sufficient projects to fulfil the RPA allocated.

Although there is insufficient grant to meet the full commitment in the SHIP, there is sufficient funding to deliver the annual target of 123 new build properties required in the Housing Supply Target set out in the Council's LHS 2017-2022. We will continue to explore grant funding opportunities with the Scottish Government.

