LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2012 – 2017

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

1.1 Provide comment on the feedback received from the Scottish Government on the findings of the Local Housing Strategy peer review process.

1.2 Agree to publish the finalised Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2012 – 2017.

2 Background/Discussion

2.1 In line with Scottish Government guidance the LHS has to be developed within the time period from when the Main Issues report from the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan is published and the Development Plan is submitted to Scottish Government for approval. Therefore the LHS has to be submitted to Scottish Government within the period May 2011 to December 2012.

2.2 The Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions contained within the draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2012 – 2017 was reported to and approved by this Committee on 14 June 2012. Approval was given to consult with stakeholders on the proposed strategic outcomes and key actions, as identified by Officers and supported by Members.

2.3 The LHS will be a web based document rather than providing paper copies, in line with the Council’s philosophy of being more sustainable and environmentally friendly. Hard copies will however be available in all Council offices and libraries.

2.4 The Strategy is structured as follows:

- Part 1, is the main LHS document
- Part 2, provides more detail on the themed Strategic Outcome Statements
- Part 3, Appendices

2.5 Part 1 is the main body of the Strategy. It sets the LHS in the context of National and Local priorities along with Community Planning and Partner relationships. Part 1 also sets out the Strategic Outcome Statements and the priorities in which resources will be targeted. It also states how the Outcomes will be measured in terms of success and the risks in not being able to deliver the expected outcomes. Finally it will describe consultation undertaken in not just developing the LHS but also what will be taken forward over the life of the LHS.
2.6 Part 2, is where the themed Strategic Outcome Statements are discussed in more detail. These chapters can be read as stand alone Strategies relating to that particular theme. The Chapters cover Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Fuel Poverty, Private Sector Housing, Particular Needs Client Groups and Minority and Ethnic Communities. There are also themes in relation to the role the Council has as a landlord and look at Asset Management, Housing Management and Tenant Participation.

2.7 Part 3, Appendices, include the templates for recording Outcomes in the LHS, an Integrated Impact Assessment, Glossary of terms and Reference documents.

2.8 An Executive Summary has also been prepared and is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

2.9 Consultation on the LHS included an online questionnaire as well as presentations to all Area Committees and main stakeholder groups. In developing the LHS questions have also been included in questionnaires sent to the Citizens Panel as well as discussions with Tenant Function Groups.

Peer Review

2.10 COSLA and the Scottish Government jointly agreed a peer review process for the LHS. A panel from Angus Council, Moray Council and Scottish Government assessed the LHS against 10 agreed criteria. The letter, within Appendix 2, sets out the key findings from the peer review process and highlights 7 areas of strength, two areas for consideration and no areas for improvement or development.

2.11 The panel commended the Council on the work undertaken to produce the LHS and on the overall quality of the Strategy. It notes in particular strengths in relation to

- its accessibility through a web based format,
- the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment was well referenced,
- the strong outcome based approach to the LHS,
- good referencing throughout the LHS to the Planning Framework,
- a very good understanding of the wider policy agenda (Inc. private rented sector, particular needs groups etc.),
- a succinct analysis of homelessness and welcomed the focus on the Housing Options approach to prevention and support,
- a good understanding of fuel poverty in the area.

2.12 Two areas for consideration were also noted in relation to stronger links to the Single Outcome Agreement and reference to Housing Market Areas.
2.13 At the time the LHS was written reference was made to the interim Single Outcome Agreement 2012-13 which had not identified any housing priorities which required to be addressed. The current SOA which cover the period from 2013-2023 has clearer references to housing priorities, such as affordable housing and fuel poverty and the LHS has been revised to reflect this.

2.14 Within Aberdeenshire reference is made to housing market areas where in fact there is only one functional housing market area which is the Aberdeen Housing Market Area. The remainder of Aberdeenshire although termed the rural housing market area does not operate as one housing market but as a collection of large and small settlements. This is recognised within the LHS and officers will be working on a study, jointly with Aberdeen City, to determine if there are in changes to the existing boundary and to look more closely at the rural housing market area. The outcome form the research will inform the next LHS.

2.15 The Head of Finance, the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development have been consulted on the contents of this report and any comments incorporated in the report.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

3.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above. It is included as Appendix 3 and the following impacts have been identified which can be mitigated as described:-

Younger People – Equity Loans Scheme that is coming into operation may negatively impact on younger people as the loans in practice can only be provided to those who are mortgage free. There will be few younger people who own their own property and are mortgage free. The council could not give loans (which were not first ranking securities) without requiring to be regulated as per the Consumer Credit Act 1974 and Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. This will be mitigated by officers exploring other funding opportunities such as Credit Unions.

Whilst the Strategic Local Programme will deliver affordable housing it will not meet all identified housing need and this will include households who fall within the nine Protected Characteristics. The constrained economic and financial climate continues to adversely impact upon the availability of funding, both public and private. This reduced funding alongside the availability of suitable land constrains the delivery of affordable housing to meet identified housing need. This will be mitigated by maximising funding streams to optimise the delivery of affordable housing and continue to identify suitable land for the development of affordable housing.

3.2 There are no financial and staffing implications directly arising from developing the LHS.
3.3  Financial implications required to deliver actions within the LHS will be reported to Committee in the usual fashion.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Housing and Social Work

Report Prepared by: Janelle Clark, Housing Manager
DE 04 May 2013 version 5
Executive Summary

Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland
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I am pleased to present Aberdeenshire Council's Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017; Executive Summary.

The strategy describes an interesting and challenging time in addressing housing issues in Aberdeenshire. There is a clearly evidenced and substantial need for affordable housing across Aberdeenshire and the strategy has identified this as a key priority for action. I am also aware that the condition of housing, particularly in some parts of the private sector is also a significant issue. Effective partnership working between the council and various key stakeholders, including information sharing and co-ordination of resources and efforts, are accepted as being essential if we are to effectively implement the strategy.

I can give an assurance to partners, stakeholders and community groups that the council’s commitment to delivering this strategy is absolute. The council will work with others to implement the strategy in order to make a real difference in tackling housing issues within Aberdeenshire and to the benefit of local communities.

I am aware that many people have been involved in developing the strategy, including partners, community groups and other stakeholders as well as the council’s own employees. Thanks to all those who have been involved in this critical process for their contributions.

Chair of Social Work and Housing Committee

Karen Clark

Councillor Karen Clark
## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 4

2. ABERDEENSHIRE HOUSING VISION 5

3. MAIN CHALLENGES 6

4. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES AND KEY ACTIONS 8

5. RESOURCES 18

6. MEASURING SUCCESS 20

7. CONTACT 21
Chapter 1. Introduction

1.0.1 The law requires councils to undertake a comprehensive assessment of housing need and demand including housing conditions and to produce a Local Housing Strategy to tackle the challenges in their area.

1.0.2 Aberdeenshire Council with its strategic partners has carried out this assessment and has produced a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) to tackle these challenges for the period 2012-2017.

1.0.3 The council currently has a multi-equality scheme in place to ensure that no one is treated differently because of their age, disability, gender or gender reassignment, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, or their sexual orientation.

1.0.4 As required under equality legislation, the LHS underwent an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) with relevant parties in May 2013. This can be viewed following the link to Aberdeenshire Council Equalities.

1.0.5 The strategy covers not just council housing but housing of all tenures including owner-occupiers, housing associations and private rented sector. For Gypsies/Travellers, the requirement is not just for a house or flat but for a secure stopping site. The LHS will show how the housing circumstances of all households across all tenures will be improved.

1.0.6 A wide and varied consultation process was undertaken in order to get the views of the people who live here along with partners who will help deliver the solutions to addressing these challenges.

1.0.7 Consultation does not end with the production of the LHS but will continue through its life. Views will be welcome on the implementation of key actions identified and success on achieving strategic outcomes. For the LHS to be successful it is important to have widespread support and involvement of all communities and strategic partners.
The council working alone cannot meet the vision statement of the LHS 2012/2017. Therefore many of the priorities and key actions reflect how they will be delivered by all partners such as neighbouring councils, NHS Grampian, Housing Associations, Private Developers, Private Landlords, Scottish Government and Communities.

Working together to get housing right for everyone.

“We will work in partnership to provide the best quality of housing services and affordable housing for everyone in Aberdeenshire. To give people quality homes in healthy communities.”

We have adopted as our key values:

Quality, affordable, inclusive, sustainable and accessible.

We are committed to serving the people of Aberdeenshire by . . .

- acting to meet housing needs
- providing safe and warm homes
- listening to and involving our tenants in improving services

Our aims are . . .

- to build on our strengths
- to work in partnership
- to maximise customer satisfaction

serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea - the very best of Scotland
Chapter 3 . Main Challenges

3.0.1 From the evidence presented in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment there are a number of main issues which have to be addressed and form the basis on which the strategic outcome statements have been developed.

- **Growing number of older people**: The growing number of older people is predicted to increase substantially over the next 10 years. This will bring added pressure on the type of housing along with support and care needs.

- **Access to affordable housing**: Further pressure on affordable housing is attributed to both the growing number of households who require housing along with the constrained ability to increase the supply of housing. Public sector expenditure has been reduced substantially along with stricter criteria in the private finance and mortgage market. This will also impact on the number of households who present to the council as Homeless requiring permanent housing.

- **Addressing energy efficiency to improve house condition**: Whilst the majority of social rented housing in Aberdeenshire will meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015 there is still a significant number that will not meet the energy efficiency criteria. Likewise, within the private sector the percentage of properties with poor National Home Energy Ratings is high.

- **Alleviating fuel poverty**: The number of households living in fuel poverty in Aberdeenshire account for almost one in three. With the growing number of older people, who are more likely to have lower incomes and spend more on heating their own home, combined with housing with low levels of energy efficiency, fuel poverty is not expected to be eradicated.

- **Impact of welfare benefit changes**: The impact will be most felt for those households of working age and the subsequent ability to meet any shortfall in rent. Housing benefit changes may be a disincentive to private sector landlords to invest further in the private rented sector and they may choose to exclude those households who receive housing benefit. This will have an impact on the number of homeless households whose needs could be met in this sector.
Chapter 3 . Main Challenges

3.0.2 Other challenges include increasing the capacity of the private rented sector to address the growing number of households in housing need, through mid market housing options, along with meeting the diverse requirements of particular needs households such as gypsies/travellers and those with a learning or physical disability.

3.0.3 Within the council's role as a landlord there are particular challenges which require to be addressed in relation to letting and managing tenancies, improving and repairing houses, while ensuring rents remain affordable.
Chapter 4 . Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

4.0.1 Aberdeenshire Council along with its strategic partners have developed a series of strategic outcome statements which clearly outline their intentions in relation to addressing the main issues and challenges relative to housing in Aberdeenshire.

4.0.2 Although there are nine separate strategic outcome statements each cannot be considered in isolation as the success of one will impact on the ability to deliver another. In general terms all will be influenced by the following main issues; lack of affordable housing, poor energy efficiency in housing and the growing number of older people.

4.0.3 Increasing the supply of affordable housing will impact on preventing and alleviating homelessness, meeting the housing requirements of particular needs groups and minority ethnic communities. In terms of the council’s role as a landlord (and the role of other housing providers such as Housing Associations and estate owners) the impact will be felt on the pressure on waiting lists and the ability to provide mixed sustainable communities.

4.0.4 Improving the energy efficiency of housing will impact on the quality of private sector housing, council housing and that provided by Housing Associations. This in turn may assist in the aspiration to eradicate fuel poverty wherever possible.

4.0.5 The growing number of older people will have a major impact on the ability to provide appropriate housing, support and care for households in both private, council and Housing Association housing. As older households generally have lower incomes it will also impact on the number of households at risk of fuel poverty.

4.0.6 In summary, the nine strategic outcome statements are:
Chapter 4 . Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

Strategic Outcome Statement 1

Affordable Housing

People will have access to an increased supply of quality affordable housing.

Challenges

The growing number of households in housing need (that is households who cannot afford to address their housing need in the open market). Recent research has estimated that 540 new affordable homes, both for rent and sale, are required to meet the identified housing need. It also summarises that the growing numbers are mainly due to high house prices compared to low incomes and the ability of first time buyers being able to access a mortgage.

Key actions

New supply of affordable housing of which 60% is expected to be for social rented housing and 40% intermediate housing in line with findings from the Housing Needs and Demand Assessment.

2012-2013 200 units
2013-2014 200 units
2014-2015 200 units
2015-2016 400 units
2016-2017 400 units

Secure an additional 20 affordable housing units from existing stock; by bringing empty properties back into use, around 15 per year and through acquisition, around 5 per year.

1. Increase the supply of social rented housing.
2. Deliver intermediate housing tenure options such as mid market rent, shared ownership and low cost home ownership.
3. Identify new funding sources to support the delivery of affordable housing.
Chapter 4 . Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

Strategic Outcome Statement 2

Homelessness

To empower homeless people to transform their lives by:

- People at risk of homelessness will receive timely and clear information and support
- All unintentionally homeless will have access to good quality settled accommodation.

Challenges

There has been an upward trend in the number of homelessness presentations over the last 5 years with the exception of the last year where the introduction of prevention measures has started to see a reduction in the number of presentations (over 1,500 in 2011/12). The main reasons for homelessness in Aberdeenshire are the breakdown of family/partner relationship and action taken by landlords or lenders to repossess houses.

Key Actions

1. Address the root causes of homelessness through an integrated approach with all services and partners such as Social Work, Education and Job Centre Plus.

2. To develop and further implement a specific homeless prevention service.

3. To work in partnership with NHS Grampian to identify, address and remove any barriers to accessing health and wellbeing services.
Chapter 4. Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

Strategic Outcome Statement 3

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty to be eradicated for all households as far as is reasonably practicable by 2016.

Challenges

Fuel poverty, defined as spending more than 10% of disposable income in heating your home, is caused by three main factors; household income, cost of fuel and the energy efficiency of the home. Almost one third of households in Aberdeenshire are living in fuel poverty. Within the private sector 30% of all households are living in fuel poverty, 29% of all social sector households are also in fuel poverty.

Key Actions

1. To improve the energy efficiency of housing across Aberdeenshire by installing energy efficiency measures in social rented housing (council and housing association) and private sector housing.

2. To assist households to maximise their income each year through measures such as welfare benefit checks.

3. To reduce fuel costs for households across Aberdeenshire by providing in depth energy efficiency advice to households and providing social tariff referrals where appropriate.
Chapter 4. Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

Strategic Outcome Statement 4

Private Sector Housing

Private sector housing will be improved by addressing disrepair and enhancing energy efficiency.

Challenges

With circa 84% of properties being in the private sector, 73% owner occupied and 11% private rented sector (and with 24% and 48% respectively suffering from critical and urgent disrepair), the main challenge is to encourage owners to maintain and repair their properties. There are fewer than 1,000 properties which fall below the Tolerable Standard.

Key Actions

1. Improve the energy efficiency of private sector houses through the promotion of local and national energy efficiency schemes.

2. To provide information, advice and practical support and in some circumstances, financial assistance to homeowners and private sector tenants to help them repair, maintain, improve or adapt their homes through a Scheme of Assistance.

3. Improve houses to ensure elements of the Tolerable Standard (or Below TS housing) are addressed

4. Improve the management standards, engage with more landlords and provide support to tenants within the private rented sector.

5. Develop a mechanism for providing financial assistance to those homeowners who cannot afford to carry out repairs and maintenance to their homes through the use of equity release type loans.
Strategic Outcome Statement 5

Particular Needs Groups

People with an identified particular need will have access to appropriate affordable housing and support to allow them to sustain and improve their health to live as independently as possible.

Challenges

The main issue affecting this area of activity is the changing and growing demographic over the next 20 years. The number of older people who are age 75+ is expected to increase by 82% between 2012 and 2035. The population generally is also expected to see an increase of 23%. This in turn will see the number of individuals with a learning disability and or physical disability increase. This general increase and the policy of "shifting the balance of care" will see added pressure on housing support and the requirements for adaptations and equipment.

Key Actions

1. Ensure there is sufficient diversity in all housing, all sizes and tenures, to meet the changing needs of Aberdeenshire residents; by ensuring a minimum of 15% of new build affordable homes are developed each year and existing stock is reconfigured for those households with a particular need.

2. To best maximise existing housing stock, through the provision of equipment and adaptations, in order to reduce the number of households with an unmet particular housing need in the private and public sectors.

3. Identify current and future housing support needs and harmonise housing support services, including the use of telecare and self directed support, across Aberdeenshire.
Chapter 4 . Strategic Outcomes and Key Actions

Strategic Outcome Statement 6

Minority Ethnic Communities

Minority Ethnic Communities, including Gypsies/Travellers will have access to appropriate land, housing and support, encouraging social integration.

Challenges

The number of migrant workers coming to Aberdeenshire over the last 5 years has been reasonably consistent with over 1,500 each year. Although the housing issues faced by minority ethnic communities are similar to the general population in terms of access to affordable housing, the main issue stems from understanding the information and advice and being able to access this in a format and language which is easily understood.

The key issues affecting the Gypsy/Traveller community include the availability of suitable pitches; this has been supported by research which identified a shortfall of 12 pitches in Aberdeenshire and the increasing number of unauthorised encampments.

Key Actions

1. Identify the barriers to meeting the housing needs of the minority ethnic community, including migrant workers and provide appropriate housing information and advice.

2. Encourage all members of the community to report prejudice incidents.

3. General relations between Gypsies/Travellers and settled communities are improved with clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour established for both.

4. Provide one well maintained stopover site every 2 years that meets the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community and manage stopover and established sites effectively.
Strategic Outcome Statement 7

Asset Management

Council housing will be of high quality, energy efficient, healthy, safe and secure.

Challenges

The main issue identified is the difficulty improving the energy efficiency in some council houses. The cost to heat homes is rising, particularly for the 6,149 properties in rural areas that do not have access to mains gas, and even more so for 1,342 hard to treat properties within this group (22%). The hard to treat properties comprise of 739 non traditional system built houses and 603 with solid wall stone construction. This combined with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) which has greater emphasis on costly renewable technologies, is placing additional financial pressure on the ability to deliver these necessary improvements.

Key Actions

1. To develop an Asset Management Plan, taking a holistic approach to both management and investment decisions, by 2013.

2. To achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.

3. To meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by 2020, including the introduction of an affordable warmth criterion into the rent setting policy.
Strategic Outcome Statement 8

Housing Management

A high quality housing management service will be provided achieving high levels of customer satisfaction and sustainable communities.

Challenges: As a landlord, the council has a major challenge in addressing anti-social behaviour. A second challenge is to make best use of existing housing through the allocation process which is under pressure from an increasing housing waiting list. The third challenge is keeping rents affordable, providing new affordable housing and maintaining quality housing in a high cost environment. The last challenge relates to welfare reform which may impact on tenants ability to pay rent.

Key Actions

1. To provide safe housing areas and a high quality environmental neighbourhood where there is a strong sense of community including support to vulnerable and new tenants (and a role as property factor in mixed tenure estates).

2. Review house allocation policy to give reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need; making best use of available stock; provide applicants with information to allow informed choices; is responsive to local need and helps sustain communities.

3. Rent and service charges set in consultation with tenants and other customers, to strike a balance between affordability and improved service delivery. Provide clear information on how rent and other money is spent allowing the Housing Business Plan to be deliverable and sustainable.

4. Working with tenants; have an increased focus on costs to provide a proactive housing management service. Utilise new technology to assess current and projected costs and the key elements which influence management costs and target improvements.

5. The Scottish Social Housing Charter performance indicators will be a basis for monitoring service delivery. The indicators will be quality assured including engagement with tenants and tenant representatives to evaluate performance outcomes and seek improvements to service delivery.
Strategic Outcome Statement 9

Tenant Participation

Tenants and other customers are enabled and empowered to become involved (if and when they want, and at a level they feel comfortable with) in influencing decisions about the housing services provided. These opportunities should extend to those who are hard to reach or seldom heard.

Challenges

Aberdeenshire Council tenants are actively involved in tenant participation and make a huge contribution in how services are delivered. The main challenges facing tenant participation is to ensure there is equal representation from all household types including young people, families, those with a disability and minority ethnic communities. A further challenge is the geography of Aberdeenshire whereby tenants may have to travel large distances to discuss issues with other tenants and stakeholders.

Key Issues

1. Increase the number and geographical distribution of tenants actively involved in tenant participation activities, by increasing the opportunities for involvement across Aberdeenshire, with all electoral wards having some representative tenant involvement by 2015.

2. Develop means of involving housing applicants in the review and development of Housing Policy by having appropriate consultation mechanisms in place by 2015.

3. Develop a Sheltered Housing Tenant Forum by 2015 to enable and provide sheltered housing tenants with a means of contributing to the particular tenancy issues within sheltered housing.

4. Continue to support cross-landlord cooperation and sharing of resources for tenant participation, enabling tenants from councils and housing associations to meet to discuss mutual concerns and agree joint viewpoints on strategic housing issues. Attend and support 100% of relevant events and opportunities.
Chapter 5 . Resources

5.0.1 Resources are fundamental to delivering the strategic outcome statements and associated key actions.

5.0.2 Financial resources can come from a variety of sources but in general can be summarised into three distinct groupings. These are, council funding, Scottish Government funding and other funding, such as private borrowing or contributions from organisations.

Council Funding

5.0.3 Council funding can come from two sources; the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the General Fund.

5.0.4 The part of the HRA which funds the managing and maintaining of council housing is called the revenue budget and the funds which improve and build new council housing is called the capital budget. The capital budget also requires to borrow funds in order to build new council housing and carry out improvements to the houses, such as new roofs, kitchens, heating systems etc.

5.0.5 The General Fund is the budget which funds all other services provided by the council which is not council housing. In relation to the LHS this will include dealing with homelessness and private sector housing including addressing fuel poverty, particular needs and minority ethnic communities in the private sector.

Scottish Government Funding

5.0.6 The Affordable Housing Supply Programme is the main grant mechanism offered to the council and Housing Associations to assist with the development of new affordable housing.

5.0.7 The "Reshaping Care for Older People Change Fund" is a Scottish Government initiative that is intended to improve services for older people by shifting care towards anticipatory care and preventative spend.

5.0.8 The Scottish Government offers several ways to assist households on low incomes to make their home more energy efficient such as the Energy Assistance Package and through the introduction of "The Green Deal". The emphasis will shift from direct subsidy from the Government to promoting and assisting private households to carry out their own energy efficiency measures through the provision of technical advice and access to loans.
Other Funding

5.0.9 Other funding sources include planning gain contributions received where it is not appropriate to deliver affordable housing within the overall housing development. These will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

5.0.10 Private finance would generally include private loans which housing associations require in order to build new affordable housing. Other private finance would come in the form of mortgages individuals would require to purchase an affordable house for sale.
In summary, over the next five years the LHS wants to achieve the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the LHS wants to achieve</th>
<th>Strategic Outcome Indicator</th>
<th>Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of affordable houses available from all tenures.</td>
<td>% change of households in housing need.</td>
<td>Increase number of affordable homes from all tenures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent homelessness where possible or provide settled accommodation when required.</td>
<td>% change in proportion of applicants who are homeless and remain so for 6 months or more.</td>
<td>Number of households in temporary accommodation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve the energy efficiency of all housing.</td>
<td>% change of households who are fuel poor.</td>
<td>Number of homes where National Home Energy Rating (NHER) is improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the quality of private sector housing.</td>
<td>% change in critical disrepair private housing improved.</td>
<td>Number of private housing assisted to improve quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate housing options for older people and those with a disability.</td>
<td>% change in number of Particular Needs applicants requiring alternative accommodation (number of housing list applicants).</td>
<td>Number of applicants needs being addressed (relets &amp; adaptations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide appropriate housing options including stopover sites for Gypsies/ Travellers and minority ethnic communities.</td>
<td>% change in number of Minority Ethnic applicants requiring alternative accommodation (number on housing list and number of unauthorised encampments).</td>
<td>No. of applicants needs being addressed (relets, adaptations and encampments adhering to code of practice including number of new stop over sites).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All council housing meets Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and prepares to meet the Climate Change Standard.</td>
<td>% of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home.</td>
<td>All council housing meets SHQS and % meeting Climate Change Standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To continue as landlord of council housing providing a high quality service.</td>
<td>% tenant satisfaction with Housing Service.</td>
<td>35% key performance indicators to be within top quartile of the Scottish Benchmarking Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All tenants and other customers can participate in how services are managed and improved.</td>
<td>% increase in tenants who feel involved in decisions.</td>
<td>Number of tenants who participate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 7 . Contact

7.0.1 This document is an Executive Summary of the Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017. It summarises how the council and strategic partners will meet identified challenges through delivery of key actions and in meeting identified strategic outcomes.

7.0.2 If you feel you need help with this document please contact:

Tel: 0845 6081207

Email: housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

7.0.3 A full copy of the Local Housing Strategy and Supplementary Reports can be accessed from the following link:

http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/about/departments/housing.asp

7.0.4 The number of paper copies has been limited to reference copies at Aberdeenshire Council offices and public libraries. A PDF version is available should you wish to print a copy.
Dear Janelle,

Aberdeenshire Council’s Local Housing Strategy 2012 - 2017

Thank you for submitting Aberdeenshire Council’s Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2012-2017 which we received on 19th December 2012. I am pleased to be able to feedback to you the findings of the LHS peer review process.

As you are aware, COSLA and the Scottish Government have jointly agreed a peer review process for LHS. A panel of Shirish Patel, Angus Council; Fiona Geddes, Moray Council; Keith Fernie, the Scottish Government and myself reviewed the LHS against the 10 jointly agreed criteria.

This letter sets out the key findings from the peer review process, but more detailed feedback is contained in the separate LHS criteria template. The panel would like to commend the Council on the work undertaken to produce the LHS and on the overall quality of the Strategy. It is the aim of the panel to identify areas of strength and good practice and to highlight those areas which you may wish to develop further.

Areas of Strength

1. The panel agreed that the LHS is very well written and has a clear vision. And although, it’s a lengthy read and is maybe a bit too long for a non-housing person, it has been designed as a web-based document, making it more versatile and accessible to a wider audience.

2. The panel welcomed the fact that the HNDA was well referenced in the LHS with clear evidence from the HNDA supporting the main outcomes.
3. The panel acknowledged the strong outcome based approach to the LHS and welcomed the use of separate appendices to set out clearly, using indicators and targets, how the outcomes will be measured.

4. The panel noted that there is good referencing throughout the LHS to the Planning Framework with a strong read across to and clear linkages made with the Development Plan process.

5. The panel was impressed that the LHS showed a very good understanding of the wider policy agenda (Inc. private rented sector, particular needs groups etc.) and a commitment to help towards progress in meeting the national policy targets.

6. The panel also acknowledged that the LHS contained a succinct analysis of homelessness and welcomed the focus on the Housing Options approach to prevention and the support provided to homeless households.

7. The panel agreed that the LHS showed a good understanding of fuel poverty in the area, including the extent and main causes of fuel poverty, the groups most at risk and the links to the energy efficiency agenda. There is good analysis on the extent of fuel poverty and recognition of those groups most at risk of falling into fuel poverty.

Areas of Consideration

1. In terms of presentation, the panel would welcome more clarity on the different housing market areas and for this to be done early on in the main body of the LHS. For example, developers may find it easier to quickly reference the extent of housing need and where supply is targeted across these areas at a quick glance.

2. The panel agreed that the linkages to the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) could have been demonstrated more clearly. A brief statement is provided on links to the SOA, but it is not so clear on how this is addressed in the LHS or if the two strategies have shared outcomes.

We hope that you will find these comments useful.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Maureen Esplin
Housing Supply Division Manager
The Scottish Government
### Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity ("activity" is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Housing &amp; Social Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Strategic Planning &amp; Delivery Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of the activity etc.</td>
<td>Aberdeenshire Council Local Housing Strategy 2012-217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims of the activity</td>
<td>The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires Councils to undertake a comprehensive assessment of housing needs and condition and to produce a Local Housing Strategy to tackle the problems in their area. Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken this assessment of housing needs and condition in Aberdeenshire. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) has been produced to tackle the problems across Aberdeenshire for the period 2012 – 2017. The Strategy covers not just Council housing but housing of all tenures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s) &amp; Title(s)</td>
<td>Janelle Clark, Housing Manager (Strategy), Elaine Reid, Team Leader (Affordable Housing), Mel Booth, Team Leader (Private Sector) and Liz Hamilton, Strategic Housing Officer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.

| Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints) | Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (2011)  
Strategic Housing Investment Programme (2012-2015)  
Strategic Outcome Statements and Action Plans (2009 -2013)  
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Internal consultation with staff and other services affected | Aberdeenshire Council Website (June to August 2012)  
Arcadia (June to August 2012)  
Housing & Social Work Newsletter (2012)  
Planning for the Future Tenant Group (7th June 2012)  
Tenant Participation Promotion Team  
Ward Pages (June to August 2012) |
### External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils)

- Scottish Government
- Private Developers
- Registered Social Landlords
- As part of the planning process consultation process was carried out with:
  - Strategic Outcome Groups (comprising of internal and external partners)
  - Local community groups
  - Housing Strategy Group, Citizens Panel, Tenants, Tenant/officer working groups
  - Minority Ethnic Working Group, Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group,
  - Integrate Aberdeenshire, Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group, Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership
  - Castlehill Housing Association
  - Grampian Housing Association
  - Langstane Housing Association
  - Tenants First Co-operative,
  - Social Work & Housing Committee
  - Six Area Committees (Banff & Buchan, Buchan, Formartine, Garioch, Kincardine & Mearns and Marr)
  - Banffshire Rural Partnership
  - Buchan Rural Partnership
  - Formartine Rural Partnership
  - Garioch Area Partnership
  - Kincardine & Mearns Community Council Forum
  - Marr Area Partnership
  - Aberdeenshire Council Citizens Pane
  - Community Councils
  - Registered Tenant Organisation
  - Disability Access Panels

### External data (census, available statistics)

- Scottish Government
- Census

### Other (general information as appropriate)

---

### Stage 3: Evidence Gaps

| Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold? | There is awareness that there are hard to reach groups and some groups of people will not engage. |

### Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps

| What measures will be | Measures: | Timescale: |
The Tenant Participation Strategic Outcome Statement will aim to address this gap enabling and empowering tenants and other customers to become involved, if and when they want, and at a level they feel comfortable with, in decisions about the housing service provided. These opportunities should extend to those who are hard to reach or seldom heard. This is included in the Tenant Participation Action Plan.

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting “yes” in the applicable box/bottoms below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age – Younger</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age – Older</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion or Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender – male/female</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy and maternity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage and Civil Partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)</th>
<th>Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item: 13
Page: 32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Minority Ethnic Strategic Outcome Statement enables Minority Ethnic communities including Gypsies/Travellers to be able to access appropriate land, housing and support and encourages social integration</th>
<th>Younger People – Equity Loans Scheme that is coming into operation may negatively impact on younger people as the loans in practice can only be provided to those who are mortgage free. There will be few younger people who own their own property and are mortgage free.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Minority Ethnic Strategic Outcome Statement: Provision of well maintained permanent and stop over sites that meet the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller Community. Identify and meet the housing needs of minority ethnic people including migrant workers.</td>
<td>Whilst the Strategic Local Programme will deliver affordable housing it will not meet all identified housing need and this will include households who fall within the nine Protected Characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Private Sector Housing Strategic Outcome Statement aims to assist older people to live in their homes that are free from repairing issues and will promote their independence. This policy promotes equalities and has a positive impact, especially on older people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Particular Needs Housing Strategic Outcome Statement aims to enable people with an identified particular need to have access to appropriate affordable housing and support to allow them to sustain and improve their health to live as independently as possible. This policy promotes equalities and has a positive impact especially people with disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Affordable Housing Strategic Outcome Statement provides opportunities for first time buyers, who typically are younger households, to purchase new build properties at a discounted fixed price through low cost home ownership schemes and shared ownership schemes.</td>
<td>Providing affordable housing for those in need including those who fall within the nine Protected Characteristics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.
### Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?

If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?

Extensive consultation took place with the Housing Strategy Group, Citizens Panel, Tenants, Tenant/officer working groups, Minority Ethnic Working Group, Gypsy/Traveller Officer Group, Integrate Aberdeenshire, Gypsy/Traveller Intergency Group, Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership, Strategic Outcome Groups which will include people falling within the nine protected characteristics.

### Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mitigating Steps</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Housing Service will continue to maximise funding streams to optimise the delivery of affordable housing; this may include preparing bids to Scottish Government for further funding, using alternative funding models where appropriate and providing other affordable housing tenures to address housing need.</td>
<td>Ongoing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Housing Service will continue to identify suitable land for the development of affordable housing through discussions with stakeholders both internal and external, for example Property Estate, Planning, other public bodies and private developers.</td>
<td>Ongoing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Housing Service will explore other options of providing access to funds, such as Credit Unions, that will assist those homeowners who have debt secured on their property but still require financial assistance with repairs and maintenance.</td>
<td>2013 / 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.

### Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?

These should be included in the action plan.

The LHS aims to create mixed and sustainable communities which will promote good relations and encourage integration and equalities.
Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?

As above.

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?

| These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires). | A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is in place for each Strategic Outcome Statement. This has a section which details service delivery, to ensure we have effective and efficient delivery of processes - developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with Service Users and other Stakeholders. Inclusion, Equality and Fairness. Improving the quality of services to stakeholders |

Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No negative impacts have been identified – please explain.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2 | Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated – please explain.  
* Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen. |

The Housing Service will continue to maximise funding streams to optimise the delivery of affordable housing; this may include preparing bids to Scottish Government for further funding, using alternative funding models where appropriate and providing other affordable housing tenures to address housing need.

The Housing Service will continue to identify suitable land for the development of affordable housing through discussions with stakeholders both internal and external, for example Property Estate, Planning, other public bodies and private developers.

The Housing Service will explore other options of providing access to funds, such as Credit Unions, that will assist those homeowners who have debt secured on their property but still require financial assistance with repairs and maintenance.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain.  
* Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen |
*Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.

The LHS will show how the housing circumstances of households across all tenures will be improved.

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Service and Team</th>
<th>Strategic Planning &amp; Delivery Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) Title of Policy/Activity</td>
<td>Aberdeenshire Council Local Housing Strategy 2012-217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Authors:</td>
<td>I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: Janelle Clark</td>
<td>Name: Mel Booth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position: Housing Manager</td>
<td>Position: Team Leader (Private Sector)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Strategy)</td>
<td>Date: 17.05.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: 17.05.13</td>
<td>Date: 17.05.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: Liz Hamilton</td>
<td>Name: Elaine Reid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position: Strategic Housing Officer</td>
<td>Position: Team Leader (Affordable Housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: 17.05.13</td>
<td>Date: 17.05.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Consultation with Service Manager</td>
<td>Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service</td>
<td>Name: Douglas Edwardson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position: Head of Housing</td>
<td>Position:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: 22.05.13</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.

Date:

7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire

Date:
(Equalities team to complete)
Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the Strategic Outcome Statement for each theme in the Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Strategy – Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Fuel Poverty,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sector Housing, Particular Needs Groups, Minority and Ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities, Asset Management and Housing Management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the Action Plan for each theme in the Local Housing Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the M&amp;E Framework for each theme in the Local Housing Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the Resource Statements for each theme in the Local Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy – as above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>