



Glasgow City Council

**Health and Wellbeing, Social Care and
Equalities Policy Development Committee**

Report by Director of Development and Regeneration Services

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Item 1(b)

3rd March 2010

Health Issues in the Local Housing Strategy

Purpose of Report:

To advise the Committee of the health issues being considered in the preparation of the Local Housing Strategy 2011-16

Recommendations:

The Committee is invited to comment on the issues raised and to indicate any other issues that should be considered.

Ward No(s): None

Citywide:

☐

Local member(s) advised: Yes

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No

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Consulted: Yes

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No

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Under s.89 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) must be prepared when required by Scottish Ministers. Scottish Government Guidance on the LHS was issued in June 2008 indicating a requirement for a new LHS. It indicated that it should be published after the consultation on the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) Main Issues Report and before submission of the SDP to Ministers (October 2011). It is likely that Glasgow's LHS will be considered by Committee for approval in June 2011.
- 1.2 The LHS Guidance indicates that the LHS should cover:
- the extent and type of housing need and demand
 - the strategic vision for the future of housing across all tenures, taking account of national priorities
 - how the standard of housing will be improved
 - clear strategic direction for housing investment
 - outcomes required to achieve the vision
 - specific commitment from the Council and partners to deliver the outcomes
- 1.3 A Consultative Draft LHS was approved by the Executive Committee on 28th August 2009 with a consultative period to 18 December 2009, which was extended to 31 January 2010. The Consultative Draft LHS can be found at www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/2D080A73-3EF3-49B8-BC1B-15EA81007CA1/0/ConsultativeDraftSep09updatedHD.pdf. A full report on the consultation is currently being prepared and will be presented to the LHS Stakeholder Working Group in April. The Stakeholder Group is the main consultative forum, meeting three or four times a year over the period of preparation of the LHS. The Consultative Draft LHS and draft Final LHS will also be considered by the Local Housing Forums.
- 1.4 This report on the health issues in the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) has been prepared in response to a request by the Convener of the Health & Wellbeing, Social Care and Equalities Policy Development Committee.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 The quality of housing stock in Glasgow has improved significantly since the last LHS 2003 which will have had a positive impact on health, as have joint working arrangements between housing providers, health services and Social Work Services. These developments are summarised below.
- 2.2 Since the Council took over the Management of Development Funding in 2003, there has been a higher proportion of funding spent on particular needs housing, from £9.794m in 2003/04 to £15m in 2008/09, enabling people to live in their own home and within communities.
- 2.3 There have been demolitions of some of the poorest condition socially rented stock, totalling 9,425 properties to March 2009, with approximately 5000 new build completions by March 2010 which will greatly contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of residents and communities.

- 2.4 The GHA investment programme to March 2009 has provided 45,483 new central heating systems which has greatly contributed to improving affordable warmth and reducing dampness. The largest single element of spending for the GHA's investment programme has been overcladding, totalling £60.5m, and this has substantially improved the thermal efficiency of housing.
- 2.5 Significant improvements to the energy efficiency of the existing social housing stock has meant that Fuel Poverty is now more prevalent in the private sector than in the social rented sector. The Council has been working with a number of agencies to reduce Fuel Poverty in the city through a number of interventions. In the south of the city at Cardonald and at Kingspark/Croftfoot/ Simshill, funding has been attracted through the Scottish Government's Home Insulation Scheme and the Energy Utilities Carbon Emissions Reduction Targets programme to offer loft and cavity insulation to over 14,500 households largely in interwar private housing. Seven Housing Associations in the city with large numbers of non-traditionally built houses are working to attract money to improve insulation and heating through the Community Energy Savings Scheme. Funding has also been obtained from a variety of sources to set up a fuel poverty advice team, to be known as G-HEAT (Glasgow Home Energy Advice Team), which will be operated by the Wise Group and link closely with the Energy Savings Scotland Advice Centre and the team delivering the Scottish Government's Energy Assistance Package. The team will also link closely with the GAIN network which delivers financial and debt advice as part of the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy
- 2.6 The main priority for improving the stock in the private sector is through the targeting of Below Tolerable Standard housing, with a particularly strong focus on Govanhill. The Council and its partners are developing a strategy for Govanhill, combining action on housing conditions with regulation of private landlords and other aspects of neighbourhood management.
- 2.7 Planned future housing investment will result in significant health benefits. Glasgow's Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) outlines site starts on over 7,200 new build or improved houses (including GHA's new build re-provisioning) over the period 2010-2015. The Commonwealth Games Village and the eight Transformational Regeneration Areas (Maryhill, Laurieston, Gallowgate, Sighthill, Red Road, Pollokshaws, Toryglen and East Govan/Ibrox) are key strategic regeneration areas aiming to improve health through major housing-led community regeneration.
- 2.8 The establishment of Local Housing Forums and Essential Connection Forums in Community Health and Care Partnerships (CHCPs) has strengthened the links and working arrangements between RSLs, Health and Social Work Services.

3. HEALTH ISSUES RAISED IN THE CONSULTATIVE DRAFT LHS AND HOUSING ISSUES REPORT

- 3.1 Housing and Health is a key section in the Housing Issues Report (August 2009) which formed the evidence base for the consultative draft LHS (www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C11E533E-BBBE-418C-B6EF-DBE13A13EB27/0/ConsDraftLHSIssuesreport.pdf) The Consultative Draft LHS and Housing Issues Report recognise the linkages between health, wellbeing, housing and the physical environment and already makes reference to many of the issues highlighted in consultation responses.

3.2 Key health issues highlighted in the Consultative Draft LHS and Housing Issues Report include:

- recognizing the linkages between lifestyle issues like alcohol and obesity, housing issues like housing quality, housing design, overcrowding, poorly heated homes, quality of indoor air and homelessness, and physical and mental health and wellbeing
- ensuring that the wealth of information and research available on housing and health issues is integrated into policy and practice, including the output from the GoWell research project, the learning from the Equally Well study areas, the recommendations from the Glasgow Health Commission, and independently published research, some of it arising from studies in Glasgow
- strategic housing and health linkages are made between the LHS, Council Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement, and between key partners through local liaison arrangements like the Local Housing Forums and Essential Connection Forums
- opportunities for improvement in health outcomes through major physical regeneration projects in which housing development plays a key role, like the Transformation Regeneration Areas and Commonwealth Games Village, and the acknowledgement that regeneration is as much about people and their involvement, as about the urban fabric
- importance of housing support to enable independent living, and of an effective homelessness service bringing together housing, health, social care, and employment/training services
- the positive effect of safe, attractive environments, good neighbourhood management, and greenspace on people's mental and physical health and wellbeing, and the role that access to local amenities and transport can have on recreational choices

4. HEALTH ISSUES RAISED IN THE CONSULTATION ON THE CONSULTATIVE DRAFT LHS

- 4.1 A set of consultation questions were included in the draft LHS, including one specifically on health, "How can the health impacts of housing investment and management be improved?" 40 responses were received to the LHS consultation. Of these responses, 23 either answered the specific question on health or made reference to health issues to varying degrees. These responses were from a variety of organisations including Community Health and Care Partnerships, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Housing Associations, Community Councils and City Council departments and partner organisations.

5. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Summaries of the consultation responses have been grouped together below under headings relating to the LHS document.

6. STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF THE LHS

- (i) A number of respondents commented on the key role of the Local Housing Strategy in improving health outcomes for communities.
- (ii) Although Housing is placed in the 'Vibrant' Community Planning theme, one respondent suggested that Housing should also appear in the 'Healthy' theme to acknowledge the true impact of housing on health.
- (iii) A number of respondents alluded to the important strategic links between the Local Housing Strategy and City Plan 3 development. In particular, reference was made to aesthetic design and the impact on community wellbeing, and the design of housing

and the wider environment which could pro-actively encourage more physical activity among residents.

- (iv) A number of strategies and plans were referred to by respondents as being important for further development of the LHS. These include the Glasgow Open Space Strategy, the Glasgow Access and Walking Strategy and the draft Glasgow Core Paths Plan.

7. VISION

- 7.1 “Our vision is that People will want to stay in and come to Glasgow, accessing a range of good quality, environmentally sustainable homes, at all market levels including affordable, that are warm, dry, appropriate to their needs and situated in a choice of attractive, well managed, neighbourhoods of differing character which inspire a feeling of safety and with convenient access to good jobs, education, shopping, leisure and cultural activities.”

- (i) Although health is alluded to in the Vision Statement in the LHS, it was suggested that Health should be explicitly mentioned in the housing vision for the city.

Aim A: To advance the regeneration of the city

- (i) It was highlighted by a few respondents that the major regeneration of areas provide an excellent opportunity to improve health outcomes for local communities. This includes the legacy from the Commonwealth Games Village.
- (ii) Several respondents from a variety of different organisations referred to the GoWell research project as already providing extremely useful information on regeneration and health, particularly in relation to BME communities, community engagement and lessons for wider regeneration activity, which should be used to develop policy and practice.
- (iii) The importance of planting, allotments and community gardens for exercise, for the provision of healthy food, and for their therapeutic benefits was highlighted as being a priority in area redevelopment.

Aim B: To raise the city’s housing in all tenures to satisfactory standards, maximising energy efficiency, with affordable costs, and to improve the quality of our neighbourhoods

- (i) Many consultation respondents highlighted the strong links between good quality housing and improved health benefits.
- (ii) Addressing Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) housing in all tenures was highlighted as a priority.
- (iii) Alleviating dampness in housing to help people with respiratory problems was identified as a key step to improve health.
- (iv) Linkages between poor condition, private renting, environmental and health issues were highlighted in localised areas. An area specifically referred to in this context was Govanhill.
- (v) The installation and effective use of efficient central heating systems was highlighted as of prime importance to healthy living.
- (vi) Eco-housing was suggested as a priority for the LHS as incorporating principles of health and comfort, affordability and reduced environmental impacts.

- (vii) The impact of noise, particularly from transport infrastructure, and the need for noise reduction, were identified as important planning and housing issues.
- (viii) Fuel poverty advice with money advice and advocacy, and targeting of these to the most vulnerable can assist in providing good health outcomes. RSLs were suggested as organisations suited to providing these services or disseminating relevant information.
- (ix) A number of respondents highlighted the importance of amenities near housing including shops that sell everyday goods, including healthy food, which will encourage people to walk to local shops.
- (x) The importance of open and green spaces which are of meaningful size and are aesthetically pleasing was mentioned by a number of respondents as being a priority for the LHS. These kinds of environmental improvements were proposed as a priority for existing and new housing areas. It was suggested by one respondent that quality landscaping, particularly mature planting, can add value, enhance property values and improve the perceived quality of life in urban areas.
- (xi) The central role of residents as being at the heart of neighbourhood management was highlighted.
- (xii) Active play areas for children in and around housing were identified as a priority for physical and mental wellbeing.
- (xiii) The linkages between improved mental health and participation in green space activities were mentioned in responses by a number of organisations. Recent research by Greenspace Scotland was quoted as showing that every pound invested in a green space returned £7.63 in community benefits, including reduction in antisocial behaviour and improved health benefits for children.

Aim C: To meet people's changing needs for housing and promote independent living through housing support where needed

- (i) One respondent highlighted the need to create environments in and around the dwelling which feel safe and secure for residents, therefore, enabling independent living and encouraging more walking in neighbourhoods.
- (ii) The further development of the Essential Connection Forums within CHCPs and Local Housing Forums was highlighted as a way to enable greater discussion on local health and housing needs between health and housing professionals.
- (iii) The importance of the type and level of low level housing support to health and wellbeing, and to tenancy sustainability for those in mainstream tenancies, was highlighted by many respondents as a priority which may be forgotten in the current financial climate.
- (iv) One respondent indicated that there needs to be more explicit discussion of how Telecare/ Smart Technology links in with supporting people to live in their own homes. Specific support services mentioned included the importance of befriending services, which help in combating isolation particularly for the elderly.
- (v) Specific types of supported housing needs mentioned in consultation responses as being required included alcohol rehabilitation and supported housing for people continuing to drink.

- (vi) The work on linking capital and revenue (housing support) funding for Social Care Housing Investment projects through the joint work of DRS, SWS and CHCPs is in place. However, it was suggested by one respondent that there is a need for a broader range of housing support related information in the LHS.
- (vii) The need for remodelling of some sheltered housing complexes was identified, including the incorporation of facilities for visiting services and new technologies.
- (viii) A respondent identified the need for the continuation of funding for specific housing projects in the city as services must meet standards required by the Care Commission.

Aim D: To prevent and alleviate homelessness through the delivery of effective services

- (i) Many of the comments included above in relation to Aim C, particularly relating to housing support, are also important considerations in terms of homelessness.
- (ii) In addition to those comments above, one respondent highlighted the importance of a spread of services across CHCP areas and that RSLs should meet the challenge of providing good quality, sustainable move-on accommodation to help free up supported accommodation places.

Aim E: To promote equality of access to appropriate housing and housing services and to monitor relevant processes effectively

- (i) One respondent stated that they would welcome the LHS adopting the Glasgow Health Commission's recommendations particularly in relation to community engagement in housing development.

Aim F: To promote the effective delivery of housing services in the city including housing information and advice

- (i) Many respondents identified the potential scope to improve policy and services, increase efficiencies, and to prevent problems escalating by making better linkages between housing, the police, health, social work, education, transport and others.
- (ii) The Statements of Best Practice, jointly developed by Housing, Health and Social Work Services, and taken forward by Essential Connection Forums can provide the structure to develop training to improve service delivery.

8. HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY

- 8.1 DRS Housing Strategy and Corporate Policy are currently developing a health impact assessment (HIA) for the new LHS. The purpose of the HIA will be to ensure that issues of health, wellbeing, and health inequality are incorporated in to the final LHS.
- 8.2 The HIA process will provide a good opportunity to develop better links between housing, health and other professionals, and to build on community involvement in the development of the strategy. This is likely to take the form of workshop sessions later in 2010. The consultation responses will provide a sound basis for these workshop sessions.

9. SERVICE IMPLICATIONS|

Financial: None

Legal: None

Personnel: None

Service Plan: This report furthers the DRS service-level objective to develop, promote, and maintain a robust policy base and related action programmes, and a cohesive regulatory framework that supports sustainable social, economic, environmental and cultural developments.

Environmental : None

Development and Regeneration Services
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