Angus Strategic Housing Investment Plan

Thank you for your letter dated 31 May 2017 regarding the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) and delivery of affordable housing to meet local need. Angus Council has an ambitious programme for new affordable housing and contribute to the Scottish Government’s target to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes within the lifetime of the Parliament. This will be delivered through the Council’s own new build programme and by our RSL partners.

The Consultative Draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-22 sets a target to deliver 120 new affordable homes per annum. The current SHIP projects that based on current funding levels, in the region of 402 units could be delivered within the lifetime of the programme. The Council projects that an additional 215 homes are capable of being brought into the programme over the lifetime of the SHIP should additional funding be made available.

While the provision of an RPA for the five year SHIP period has been helpful, greater certainty over levels of future funding would be welcome. Development of large scale housing projects requires significant lead in time and developers are often shaping their programmes a number of years in advance. The more certainty that can be given to local authorities about the scale of funding the better placed we will be to deliver at the scale and pace required to meet national targets.

Consultative Draft Local Housing Strategy 2017-22

The Consultative Draft LHS sets out the priorities for housing in Angus. The LHS is informed by a robust evidence base which underpins the assessment of the key issues and challenges.

The TayPlan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2014 identified that around 25% of the affordable housing need in Angus could be met through intermediate tenures such as mid market rent and shared equity. The Consultative Draft LHS proposed that this form part of the target to deliver 120 new affordable homes.

In conjunction with the Angus Health and Social Care Partnership the Consultative Draft LHS sought to undertake an assessment of the number of new homes required to meet a particular need such as for older or disabled people. It is proposed that around 20% of all new affordable homes should be delivered to meet particular needs and half of these should be developed to wheelchair standard.

While the Joint Improvement Team (JIT) published guidance on ‘assessing the housing related needs of older and disabled households’ in 2015 it is recognised nationally that shared evidence bases between housing and health and social care
partners are not sufficiently developed to fully support this process. It is understood the JIT is exploring what more is required to enable more robust assessments to take place and further guidance would be welcomed.

The Consultative Draft LHS also highlights the significant demand for smaller affordable homes as a result of demographic change and the impacts of welfare reform. At present over 60% of applicants on the Angus Common Housing Register require a one-bed property.

**Type, Size and Tenure**

In determining the house types, sizes and tenures to be delivered within specific developments the Council seeks to respond to the priorities identified within the LHS while taking account of the needs of the local area and other development activity taking place. Angus is made up of four Housing Market Areas which have distinct housing supply issues. This means at the point projects are prioritised in the SHIP it is often too early to make firm decisions about the housing mix.

The Council reviews waiting list demand to gain an understanding of the particular type and size of homes required to meet housing need. Local knowledge from the Community Housing Teams is also used to build up a picture of any particular issues which may impact on the housing mix. The Council also considers any site attributes which may affect the delivery options as well as the mix of other developments taking place in the area.

All this information is used to agree the type, size and tenure of units on each site. Not all sites will include intermediate tenures or particular needs housing as these targets are for the programme as a whole rather than individual development sites.

**Monitoring Delivery**

The Council has a robust framework in place to monitor its LHS including the targets for affordable housing. The LHS Implementation Group for Housing Supply and Placemaking will continually review these targets to ensure they remain in line with the housing needs and demands for Angus.

Should you or your Committee require further information about the delivery of affordable housing in Angus please do not hesitate to get back in touch.

Yours sincerely

Margo Williamson
Chief Executive