

## **Scottish Building and Housing advisory group**

**Minutes 24 August 2017**

**Howden Park Centre, Livingston**

### **1. Introduction and welcome**

Cllr George Paul and Alistair Shaw of West Lothian Council welcomed all to the meeting, thanking everyone for attending their first meeting as the new Chair and Secretary of the Building and Housing advisory group.

### **2. Attendance and apologies**

Please see attached.

### **3. Minutes from previous meeting held on 21 April 2017**

The group agreed the previous minutes were a true and accurate record.

### **4. Matters arising from previous meeting**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

### **5. Update on the delivery of 1000 council homes and the Local Housing Strategy 2012-2017**

Alistair Shaw provided an update for the group on his previous presentation at the APSE Scotland Building, Housing and Renewables seminar 2015. Alistair gave an overview of West Lothian, which is one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland with high demand for social rented housing and a rapidly ageing population. Compared to the Scottish Average, owner occupied housing is 1.0% greater, housing rented from the Council is 4.3% greater, other social rent is 2.4% less and private rented housing is 2.7% less.

In addition to the 800 new build council houses built from 2009-2015, 1000 houses are being developed across 25 sites (13 brownfield) with Lovell Partnerships and McTaggart Construction. Alistair showed that West Lothian topped the charts for local authority new build completions for grant funded units between 2009/10 and 2016/17 with 920 (which is three times the amount produced by Edinburgh).

West Lothian Council have received national recognition for the programme at various awards ceremonies (UKHA, APSE, Scottish Home Awards, Homes for Scotland), and 94.4% of tenants stated that their new home was excellent.

Registered Social Landlords have also developed 804 houses from 2007/08 to 2016/17, and have identified sites for 640 homes for development between 2017-2022.

Alistair also provided information on their Rosemount Gardens assisted living complex, which comprises 30 x 1-bedroom flats and 16 x bedroom refurbished flats. The complex features a restaurant, café, hairdressers and laundrette, and is designed to wheelchair standards and is dementia friendly.

West Lothian Council have also invested £2 million for 10 additional units and improved assessment facilities at an existing homeless complex.

Alistair also provided information on their Open Market Acquisition Scheme (acquiring ex-council properties being sold on the open market) with 45 properties purchased between October 2016 and March 2017, with a further 21 under offer or concluded to date in 2017/18.

Alistair concluded by giving an overview of their Local Housing Strategy 2017-22 which has 6 key themes:

1. Supply of housing and place making
2. Preventing and addressing homelessness
3. Independent living and specialist provision
4. Private rented sector
5. House condition
6. Fuel poverty and climate change

## **6. Building Maintenance Clinic**

Discussions took place on a number of topics including: design and build, dealing with developers, building styles, the potential of collaborating on designing a standard “council house” that everyone could use, the longevity of new builds, standardising important components, buybacks, homelessness spend, procurement criteria, interest in craft apprenticeships across different Councils, cavity wall insulation and consolidated salaries.

Colin McInnes also asked the group about potential topics for the Performance Networks seminar clinic and the group suggested insulated panels and the issue with high rises, sprinklers in new builds, and life cycle plans / costing of projects.

## **7. APSE update**

Garry Lee provided an update on the current work of the Association, including the latest briefings, the recent APSE Scotland publication ‘Doing local politics in Scotland’, the APSE/ITN ‘Redefining Neighbourhoods’ programme, recent advocacy work, network queries, deadlines for Performance Networks data returns, upcoming APSE Energy and APSE Training events in Scotland, the work of APSE Solutions and upcoming Scottish and National seminars.

## **8. AOCB**

There was no other competent business raised.

## **9. Date and venue of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 25 October 2017, but the venue/location is to be confirmed.

## **10. Lunch**

## **11. Process benchmarking meeting including quarterly review**

It was decided to carry over the process benchmarking to the next advisory group due to low attendance.

## **Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Count</b>
Garry Lee	APSE	1
Richard Stewart	East Ayrshire Council	1
Derek Spence	East Ayrshire Council	1
Robert Fotheringham	Falkirk Council	1

Ross Grieve	Fife Council	1
Allan Barclay	Fife Council	1
Steve Anderson	Fife Council	1
James Thomson	Midlothian Council	1
Dougie McMillan	South Lanarkshire Council	1
Colin Miller	West Lothian Council	1
Alistair Shaw	West Lothian Council	1
Cllr George Paul	West Lothian Council	1
Duncan Macpherson	West Lothian Council	1
Richared Green	West Lothian Council	1
Marc Garland	West Lothian Council	1
Grant Taylor	West Lothian Council	1
Grant Walker	West Lothian Council	1

**Total**      17

### **Apologies**

Cllr Les Sharp	Clackmannanshire Council
Ronnie Dempster	Dumfries and Galloway
Steven Trotter	Dumfries and Galloway
Bruce Patrick	Dundee City Council
Kenny Gillespie	Falkirk Council
Stephen Kean	North Ayrshire Council
William J Andrew	South Ayrshire Council
Angela Gribbin	South Ayrshire Council
David Hailey	South Ayrshire Council
Heather Michael	South Ayrshire Council