

To: HOUSING AND SOCIAL WORK SERVICES COMMITTEE	Subject: TOWER STRATEGY 2017 - 2020	
From: HEAD OF HOUSING SOLUTIONS		
Date: 2 February 2017	Ref: EMch/PH	

1. Purpose of Report/Introduction

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the implementation of the updated tower strategy and associated action plan.

2. Background

2.1. North Lanarkshire Council has 4,078 properties in 48 multi storey blocks, comprising approximately 11% of the council's total housing stock. The council's multi storey flats are therefore a valuable resource in helping meet the housing needs of the area. It is however recognised that managing and maintaining multi storey flats can be more resource intensive than other types of stock and demand in general is not as high as it is for other house types. It is therefore important that the council continues to review and update its strategy for the management and maintenance of its multi storey blocks to help ensure they are safe, secure and attractive to current and prospective tenants.

2.2. The council developed a Tower Strategy in 2012 and in January 2013 the committee approved the associated Action Plan which included specific actions around the following 5 key objectives:

- To ensure that all the tower blocks are as safe and secure as possible
- To ensure that all the tower blocks are maintained in a good condition and are as energy efficient as possible
- To ensure the blocks and common areas are effectively and efficiently managed
- To ensure the blocks are sustainable and attractive to both current and future tenants
- To improve the health and wellbeing of tower residents

3. Proposals/Considerations

3.1. Since the original Tower Strategy was developed there has been significant progress made in implementing the action plan, including:-

- A review and enhancement of tower caretaking and cleaning services in the Motherwell area and introduction of new CCTV arrangements;
- On-going investment in the towers, including completion of the over-cladding programme and progression of kitchen, bathrooms and heating programmes;

- A range of initiatives have been progressed with Lanarkshire NHS Public Health team to improve the health & well-being of tower residents and this provided the catalyst for strengthened and improved joint working on a more general basis;
 - Continued work with Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue and partner agencies to provide a co-ordinated and targeted approach to addressing anti-social behaviour within towers;
 - Tenant walkabouts are now established for each tower twice per year and prove to be very popular;
 - A number of blocks have now been designated for older people. Plans are underway to enhance facilities within these towers, including upgrading infrastructure to enable use of Wi-Fi based technology that can support vulnerable people and improving communal areas. The first phase of work is planned at Allershaw Tower where there will be a range of community space for tenants and the wider community as well as meeting space and consulting rooms for health and social care staff.
- 3.2. Overall turnover in the towers has reduced slightly since the original strategy was developed in 2012. As part of the strategy going forward further analysis of demand and the future investment requirements of the tower stock will be undertaken and a full option appraisal completed to ensure the long term sustainability of each block, prior to any major investment decision being made.
- 3.3. The Tower Strategy has now been updated and a new action plan has been developed following consultation with the North Lanarkshire Federation and tenant representatives from the towers. A copy of the strategy is available on request and a copy has been placed in the Members' library. The Action Plan is attached at Appendix 1. The new Action Plan will be regularly monitored and reviewed in partnership with the North Lanarkshire Federation Tower Sub Group.

4. Financial / Personnel / Legal / Policy / Equalities Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) approves the Tower Strategy Action Plan that is attached at Appendix 1.



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Head of Housing Solutions

For further information please contact Pamela Humphries on tel 01698 274174

Appendix 1

TOWER STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: To ensure that all the tower blocks are as safe and secure as possible			
Action		Timescale	Lead
1.1	Undertake quarterly fire safety inspections of all blocks and any subsequent works as required.	Quarterly	Housing Property
1.2	Ensure asbestos management plans for all common areas are updated annually	Annual	Housing Property
1.3	Continue to work with community safety partners to provide a co-ordinated, targeted approach to addressing anti social behaviour within towers	Ongoing	Housing Solutions
1.4	Continue to review operation of security arrangements – concierge / CCTV / doors / gates	Ongoing	Housing Solutions / Housing Property

Objective 2: To ensure that all the tower blocks are maintained in a good condition and are as energy efficient as possible			
Action		Timescale	Lead
2.1	Develop proposals to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by 2020 where practical	Ongoing	Housing Property
2.2	Complete bathroom programme within tower blocks	2018/19	Housing Property
2.3	Complete condition surveys of all tower blocks, including structural survey, to inform future investment strategy	2017/18	Housing Property

Objective 3: To ensure that all tower blocks are sustainable and attractive to both current and future tenants			
Action		Timescale	Lead
3.1	Encourage tenant participation and formation of residents groups within blocks, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant walkabouts twice per year • Establish North Lanarkshire wide Tower Strategy Tenants Forum 	Ongoing	Housing Solutions
3.2	Review Tower Service Standards in relation to management of tower blocks in consultation with tenants	April 2017	Housing Solutions
3.3	Undertake bi-ennial tenant satisfaction survey for towers	April 2017	Housing Solutions
3.4	Undertake further analysis of reasons for tenancy terminations and explore options to improve tenancy sustainment	2017/18	Housing Solutions
3.5	Undertake option appraisals for blocks where high level of investment is required and/or demand is low	Ongoing	Housing Solutions / Housing Property
3.6	Review existing towers which are designated for people over 60 years of age and consider other towers where new lets could be designated to over 60's	By April 2018	Housing Solutions / Housing Property
3.7	Continue to positively promote towers as safe, secure and attractive places to live.	Ongoing	Housing Solutions / Housing Property
3.8	Complete upgrading of common rooms and actively promote their use for the benefit of residents.	September 2017	Housing Solutions / Housing Property
3.9	Implement technology infrastructure in Older People Towers to enable a range of wi-fi based technology supports. Phase 1 – Allershaw.	February 2017 (Phase 1)	Housing Property

Objective 4: To improve the health and well-being of tower residents			
Action		Timescale	Lead
4.1	Continue to develop opportunities to improve Health & Wellbeing of tower residents'	2017/18	Health Promotion / Housing Solutions
4.2	Complete planned improvement works within Allershaw Tower to provide a range of community space for tenants and the wider community as well as meeting space and consulting rooms for health and social care staff.	2017/18	Housing Property