

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held in Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Newtown. St Boswells and via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 4th October, 2022 at 10.00 am

Present:- Councillors E. Jardine (Chairman), C. Hamilton, L. Douglas, J. Greenwell, S. Mountford, E. Robson, M. Rowley, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol
Apologies:- Councillors C. Cochrane, S. Hamilton, D. Parker and T. Weatherston
Absent:- Councillor J. Linehan
In Attendance:- Director Resilient Communities, Director Infrastructure and Environment, Chief Planning Officer, Lead Officer, Housing Strategy and Development, Democratic Services Team Leader, Democratic Services Officer (D. Hall)

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 13 September 2022.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chairman.

2. **STRATEGIC HOUSING INVESTMENT PLAN 2023 - 2028**

With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 June 2022, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Director, Infrastructure and Environment which sought approval of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2023-2028 prior to its submission to the Scottish Government by the deadline of 28 October 2022. The report explained that Local Authorities were required to submit a SHIP to the Scottish Government on annual basis. Scottish Borders Council, with the involvement of its key partners via the SHIP Working Group, had prepared the SHIP Submission. The SHIP articulated how the Council and its relevant Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners would seek to deliver the Border's affordable housing investment needs and priorities, as identified in the Council's Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 over a rolling 5 year planning horizon. Based on available Resource Planning Allocations from the Scottish Government and resource planning assumptions, RSL partner private sector borrowing and commitment from the Council's Affordable Housing Budget, approximately 165 new homes could be delivered during 2022/23 and potentially up to 1320 new affordable homes over the five-year SHIP 2023-2028 period. The latter figure assumed that all identified challenges and infrastructure issues were resolved in a timely manner, funding was available and that agreement was reached between all interested parties and the construction sector had capacity to deliver the identified projects. The Lead Officer, Housing Strategy and Development, Ms Donna Bogdanovic presented the report and responded the Members questions. In response to an issue raised regarding whether continued housing developments could negatively impact the unique small town character of the towns of the Borders, Ms Bogdanovic acknowledged the point, and highlighted that a diverse range of views were considered when producing the SHIP and Local Housing Strategies. Regarding delays to a housing development on Glensax Road in Peebles, Ms Bogdanovic undertook to brief local Members outside of the meeting. The Chief Planning Officer explained that with regard to housing developments in the Northern Borders, considerable challenges existed to reach consensus on and securing the right land and areas to develop, with a renewed focus on town centre regeneration. In response to a question regarding assumed levels of funding, Ms Bogdanovic explained that the SHIP was an extremely ambitious plan and she was had no concerns that the target of 128 homes per year would not be met. Additionally, Ms Bogdanovic explained

that the second homes council tax budget could be utilised in challenging circumstances to help assist the delivery of affordable homes. Regarding the publication of an impact assessment, Ms Bogdanovic informed Members that the assessment would be published online following the approval of the SHIP. Members highlighted the need to ensure that sufficient infrastructure, including bus routes, were ready in conjunction with new homes. Members thanked officers for their extensive report, highlighted the considerable amount of work that had taken place to produce it, and emphasised a need to ensure that negative connotations associated with affordable homes were tackled.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2023-2028 for submission to the Scottish Government – More Homes Division.

The meeting concluded at 10.40 am