

#### **4 LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2013/2018 (AN81-2013)**

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2013 – 2018 was submitted to Scottish Government on 18th March, 2013. We have now received feedback on the findings of the peer review panel.

COSLA and Scottish Government jointly agreed a peer review process for the LHS, the panel consisted of representatives from South Ayrshire Council, Dumfries & Galloway Council and two representatives from Scottish Government.

The peer reviewers identified a number of strengths in the strategy and these are outlined below:

- There are clear links set out in the LHS to community planning and the Dundee Single Outcome Agreement. There is a clear aspirational outlook taken by Dundee City Council to ensure that delivering better housing options links into, and contributes to, wider community needs such as impacting on community safety, poverty and other social issues.
- The LHS is well presented, easy to read and set out in a logical and practical way.
- There is clear commitment to tackling the issues of homelessness and the panel welcomed the focus on the Housing Option approach and activity of the Homeless Prevention Team to ensuring that a supportive and preventative approach is being taken forward.
- The panel welcomed the inclusion of a section relating to Welfare Reform, this provides an insight into the proactive approach being taken by the Council to tackle this issue and its impact on wider social inclusion and poverty issues.
- The panel also agreed that Climate Change was well covered in the LHS, demonstrating an understanding of the issues and a clear approach to tackling these, with relevant facts included.
- The panel agreed the Council has a lot of positive messages related to tackling Below Tolerable Standard properties.

The letter also identified areas that could be improved these are outlined below:

- Include a statement making it clear the methodology used to reach the target for the Housing Needs requirement.
- More coverage of the requirements of Section 10 of the 2006 Housing (Scotland) Act (Council's Scheme of Assistance).
- The LHS would benefit from using the Housing Needs Demand and Affordability Study (HNDA) evidence to provide a percentage indication of the population relevant to the different groups mentioned, e.g. mental health and learning disability, to help understand the scale of the issues facing the council.

The improvement suggestions will be considered when the LHS is updated in November 2013.

Committee is requested to note the contents of the letter.