

North Lanarkshire Council Report

Housing Committee

Does this report require to be approved?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Ref: BL/CB/CR

Date 08/05/24

Transforming Places - Tower Strategy Update

From Brian Lafferty, Chief Officer (Housing Property Services)

Email barrca@northlan.gov.uk

Telephone MS Teams

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on current progress relating to the Tower Strategy, which sits within the Transforming Places Programme of Work, and key achievements in the last reporting period.

The report also provides advance notice to Committee of projects which are at risk of delay and projected overspends.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Housing Committee:

- (1) Acknowledge the progress of the tower demolition programme (Ambition)
- (2) Acknowledge the progress of the sprinkler installation & fire safety programme
- (3) Acknowledge the progress of major refurbishment projects
- (4) Acknowledge sections 2.3 - 2.5 and the delays/ overspends that are expected on the contracts listed and that a formal overspend report will be presented to a future committee.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities
Ambition statement	(1) Ensure a housing mix that supports social inclusion and economic growth
Programme of Work	Transforming Places

1. Background

- 1.1 Committee will be aware that in 2017 as part of the HRA budget motion, the council announced its intention to commence consultation with stakeholders regarding the potential re-provisioning of its tower estate over the next 25 years, with phase 1 of the re-provisioning programme granted committee approval in May 2018. Subsequently approval was given at May 2023 Housing Committee to commence the Phase 2 re-provisioning consultation. Significant progress has been made to date with several high/low-rise blocks now demolished.
- 1.2 Committee will also recall that in February 2018, the council approved proposals to develop and deliver a programme to introduce enhanced fire safety measures within high-rise towers that included retrofitting of sprinkler systems, improved fire compartmentation, emergency lighting and installation of fire-doors to properties.
- 1.3 Following committee approval in 2016 to undertake condition surveys including external cladding assessment, internal fabric condition and structural integrity, the findings have now been assessed with a strategic approach to remedial action in line with government legislation developed.

2. Report

Demolition/Ambition

- 2.1 The programme is progressing on schedule with 1458 (1668 including properties held for displaced citizens) from 1488 (1750 including properties held for displaced citizens) properties identified within phase 1 having been made vacant, although 200 have subsequently been re-purposed to support the Ukraine resettlement programme. Following extensive negotiation with private owners, only one now remains in-situ with the council exploring all options for purchase. Detailed breakdown of the phase one programme as of Feb 2024 is provided in table 1:

Table 1

Tower	Vacant Properties	Status
Northburn Low-Rise, Airdrie	27 (100%)	Complete
Holehills, Airdrie	138 (100%)	Complete
Burnside Court, Coatbridge	44 (100%)	Complete
Gowkthrapple Low-Rise	303 (99%)	On Site
Shawhead Low-Rise	176 (100%)	On Site
Coursington High-Rise	351 (100%)	On Site
Jackson High-Rise	192 (100%)	On Site
Allershaw High-rise	66 (94%)	Design Phase
Dunbeth High-rise	161 (87%)	Re-programmed
High Coats	Ukraine Resettlement	Re-programmed
Birkshaw High-rise	Ukraine Resettlement	Re-programmed

- 2.2 The contract to demolish the 19 low-rise blocks at Gowkthrapple, Wishaw was awarded in February 2023 and the contractor took possession in March 2023. Works are progressing well, although one private owner continues to remain present, and

negotiations are ongoing to purchase the property. This has resulted in a delay in service disconnections for the site and a subsequent delay in the projected completion. Works are in progress to put a temporary measure in place to reduce any delay and allow remaining works to be complete.

- 2.3 The contract to demolish 11 no low-rise blocks at Shawhead, Coatbridge continues. The contract has experienced delays due to continued contractor under-performance. On 25th January 2024 the council terminated the contract with the main contractor and has subsequently engaged a new main contractor to complete the project. It is anticipated that the additional work previously reported as being required to complete the demolition as well as the time and cost to onboard to new main contractor will result in a delay to the project completion and additional costs resulting in an overspend.
- 2.4 Demolition of the three high-rise tower blocks at Coursington, Motherwell is underway with demolition of 12-14 Draffen street being completed first along with the surrounding structures. Careful deconstruction of the first tower superstructures is in progress with mast-climbers in operation and nearby residents are being notified of ongoing works. There have been high levels of previously unknown asbestos found within the structure. This coupled with delays caused by Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN) redirecting existing sub-stations located within the footprint of each tower has caused a substantial delay and is likely to result in an overspend on the contract. Delay caused by the additional asbestos has been assessed and an 18-week extension of time has been issued to the contractor. SPEN works are still ongoing. The potential for a further delay is also currently being considered due to the construction methodology used at the time of the towers being built resulting in an alternative method of de-construction now likely to be required. The impact of this new method on the programme is being finalised and will be reported to a future committee.
- 2.5 The contract to demolish Jackson Court, Coatbridge is progressing. Dialogue is ongoing with Virgin Media due to a trunk communications cable being located adjacent to the tower, which requires to be diverted. Initial discussions with Virgin Media suggested that cable protection would enable the contract to continue with minimal impact on the contract, however the updated masterplan for the site requires the cable to now be diverted. The impact of the diversion in terms of time and cost is currently being finalised and an update will be provided to a future committee.
- 2.6 A tender package for the demolition of Allershaw Tower, Wishaw continues to be developed. The last remaining tenants are due to vacate their homes in Quarter 1 2024/25, and following this the refurbishment and demolition surveys can be completed, with the findings included in the tender, scheduled to be issued in Quarter 2 2024/25.
- 2.7 With the consultation for the second phase of the demolition programme being complete and the identified blocks being put forward for reprovisioning, a programme is being developed to deliver these works. The programme contains a mixture of low-rise and tower blocks spanning several years. A report on the findings of the consultation exercise was approved at the Housing Committee in August 2023. It is expected that the vacating of the properties in this phase of the works will begin shortly and updates on the progress will be reported to a future committee.
- 2.8 High Coats, Dunbeth and Birkshaw Towers remain part of the phase 1 demolition programme with proposed dates for demolition to be confirmed in due course. A feasibility proposal for the demolition of Dunbeth Tower as a single contract is being developed for consideration.

Sprinkler / Fire Safety Programme

- 2.9 Phase 1 of the sprinkler installation programme at Burnside, Lodge & Doonside Tower, Motherwell has now reached the end of the defect's liability period.
- 2.10 Phase 2 of the sprinkler installation programme comprising of towers at Glassford, Woodside, Glen, Coltswood & Redbridge is approaching completion. All installation activities are complete, and the systems have been brought online for a monitoring period with the practical completion certificate expected in the coming weeks.
- 2.11 Phase 3 of the sprinkler installation programme is currently being developed and will be undertaken in 2024/25

Major Refurbishment Projects

- 2.12 Refurbishment of the tower blocks at Blairgrove/Merrystone (Lot 1) and Glen/Millbrae (Lot 2) is complete, snagging works continue.
- 2.13 Specialist consultants have been appointed to provide design services in relation to the recladding and internal refurbishment of Whifflet and Calder towers, Coatbridge. Detailed surveys are underway to feed into the overall design proposals. The preparations for a resident's consultation meeting is underway. Upon completion of the survey and consultation events the design team will proceed to develop the tender package and commence procurement of the contract.
- 2.14 In order to support displaced citizens affected by the war in Ukraine, North Lanarkshire Council committed to reinstate circa 200 properties on a temporary basis. The properties, located within tower blocks in Coatbridge (High Coats) and Wishaw (Gowkthrapple) are now refurbished and furniture fit out is complete.

3. Measures of success

- 3.1 The plans contained within this report will help to improve housing conditions and housing choice for our residents which contributes to addressing inequality.

4. Supporting Documentation

- 4.1 There is no supporting documents with this report.



Brian Lafferty
Chief Officer (Housing Property Services)

5. Impacts

5.1 Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2 Financial impact Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Any financial impact of the measures implemented will be contained within the HRA Capital Investment budget and will be drawn down via borrowing/CFCR as required and reported to committee.
5.3 HR policy impact Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4 Legal impact Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Statutory compliance with Building Standards and recent fire safety legislation.
5.5 Data protection impact Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

5.6	Technology / Digital impact Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
	Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.7	Environmental / Carbon impact Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?
	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
	Upgrading of external building fabric to current energy standards.
5.8	Communications impact Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?
	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
	Reprovisioning of towers and low-rise blocks must be included in regular corporate communications.
5.9	Risk impact Is there a risk impact?
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?
	Risks are considered, frequently reviewed and recorded on project-specific risk registers. Risks with an inherently high score are escalated to project board/service level.
5.10	Armed Forces Covenant Duty Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☐ No ☐