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**Report To:** Education & Communities Committee

**Date:** 12 March 2013

**Report By:** Head of Safer & Inclusive Communities

**Report No:**  
EDUCOM/32/13/DH

**Contact Officer:** Drew Hall

**Contact No:** 01475 714272

**Subject:** Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This progress report provides Committee with an update on the proposed regeneration of the Clune Park area of Port Glasgow.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Regeneration Plan for the Clune Park Area was approved by the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee in May 2011. The Housing Supply Division (HSD) has eventually responded to the plan by being supportive of the approach taken by the Council but is unable to provide additional funding to that for general housing investment.
- 2.2 The Regeneration Plan features prominently in the approved Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016 (the LHS) and is the number one priority in the associated Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2012-2015 (the SHIP).
- 2.3 Discussions have been held between Inverclyde Council and HSD officials to determine which projects in the SHIP 2012-2015 programme are to be undertaken. This has informed the Strategic Local Programme (SLP) for the Inverclyde Council area. Only one project in the SLP approved at the Committee in September will now provide reprovisioning of 85 housing units for the Clune Park residents. This will be at Lower Mary Street, Port Glasgow.
- 2.4 Work on the main survey is nearing completion on "closing" empty flats that fall below the Tolerable Standard. Once a sufficient number of Closing Orders are in place, it is the Council's intention to secure Demolition Orders over blocks of flats. Demolition Orders covering 24 flats at 3 separate close addresses have been served. The landlords owning 6 of these flats have submitted appeals against the Orders to the Sheriff Court.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee:
- a) Note current progress towards the regeneration of the Clune Park area;
  - b) Agree that further progress updates are submitted to future meetings of the Committee.

**John Arthur**  
Head of Safer & Inclusive Communities

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The Clune Park Area Regeneration Plan brings together all of the people-related and property-related issues that must be addressed in order to regenerate the area. The plan has been refined and developed in the light of the results of the Private Sector House Condition Survey (PSHCS) carried out in 2011 and of the PHP visits that have been completed to date. The revised plan was submitted to SG officials, as requested, and a written response was finally received in July 2012. Political and financial commitment has been given by Inverclyde Council to the approved Regeneration Plan and discussions with key partners on implementing the plan are now well advanced, as noted below.

## **5.0 ACTION TO DATE**

5.1 The Regeneration Plan proposes to rehouse existing residents off-site resulting in the separation of people and property. RSLs have expressed an interest in providing new housing and this has resulted in four projects being included in the SHIP 2012-2015.

5.2 Discussions have been held between Inverclyde Council and HSD officials to determine which projects in the SHIP 2012-2015 programme are to be undertaken. This has informed the Strategic Local Programme (SLP) for the Inverclyde Council area. The clear priority given to the Clune Park area in the LHS and in the SHIP has helped secure the regeneration of the area through the allocation of Affordable Housing Supply Programme funding to the SLP over the next three years. Only one project in the final SLP approved at the Committee in January provides reprovisioning of 85 housing units for the Clune Park residents. This will be at Lower Mary Street, Port Glasgow.

5.3 The Clune Park Area PSHCS included a physical survey of all 430 flats and this information is currently being updated to identify individual flats and entire blocks that can now be "closed" using existing housing legislation. The Regeneration Plan sets out the strategy for consolidating these "closed" flats into whole blocks that will ultimately be demolished using the same legislation. The service of appropriate Closing Orders and Demolition Orders is ongoing and is being co-ordinated by the Safer & Inclusive Communities Service. A total of 112 Closing Orders have been served to date and 3 Demolition Orders covering 24 flats at 3 close addresses. A further 10 properties as in the process of being subject of a Closing / Demolition Orders

5.4 Safer & Inclusive Communities recruited a temporary Environmental Health Officer dedicated to progress Closing Orders and Demolition Orders service at an accelerated rate. Arrangements have also been made with the District Valuer (DV) to progress valuations which follow on from the surveys by the new Officer. The first batch of flats requiring valuation for acquisition was sent to the DV at the end of August.

5.5 A Communications Strategy designed to ensure that the local populace and everyone with an interest in the Clune Park area are kept informed of developments is in place. A full explanation of the strategy as set out in the Regeneration Plan has been given to private landlords who own and manage properties in the Clune Park area and they will be kept apprised of progress as the plan is rolled out. The Communication plan has recently been reviewed and updated. A follow up information drop-in event for owner/occupiers and tenants is being planned for early next year.

5.6 An invitation was extended to Margaret Burgess, Minister for Housing and Welfare, as well as all main political parliamentary parties' Housing Spokespersons, to visit the Clune Park area to discuss the revised Regeneration Plan. A response confirming her

unavailability for the foreseeable future was received from the Minister.

## 6.0 FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED

- 6.1 3 Landlords have submitted appeals against the service of Demolition Orders for 6 of the 24 flats. They have also issued undertakings to the Council to bring the flats up to the Tolerable Standard to request that the Council Issue a Suspension Order to suspend the effect of the Demolition Order. These requests have been rejected as this will conflict with the Council approved plan for the area and it was not considered viable to upgrade individual flats in isolation from the rest of the building. The flats have been unoccupied and subject to closing orders for some time and there was no confidence that the work proposed would actually be carried out and would bring the flats up to the Tolerable Standard The Council will defend the Appeals and the full hearing at Court was scheduled for 5th February 2013, however the hearing has now been postponed until 16th April. The Demolition Orders remain in force until the appeal is heard and a decision issued by the Court
- 6.2 The Survey programme for all tenements in the Clune Park area to be visited and assessed against the Tolerable Standard (TS) was completed on 5th December. However approximately 50 flats, where access was difficult, still remain and these are being pursued. The service has completed all the surveys. A few flats which may have deteriorated since being surveyed are being re-assessed.
- 6.3 The District Valuer has assessed the first batch of above Tolerable Standard flats for acquisition to enable demolition will be made over the next months.
- 6.4 The Service has noted significant activity by landlords in the area. The Council has received requests from Landlords to revoke Closing Orders for 9 Flats where works have been carried out. These will be assessed and may be subject to a future report to Committee

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Strategic

The progression of the regeneration of Clune Park, through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2012-2015 and the forthcoming SLP, will make a valuable contribution to several strategic aims and objectives as set out in the:

- Inverclyde Alliance Single Outcome Agreement;
- Community Plan; and
- Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy 2011-2016.

### 7.2 Financial

The progression of the regeneration of Clune Park requires external funding. Further reports on funding will be submitted to Committee as the plan develops. The Council's current financial commitment to the Clune Park Area Regeneration Plan is as follows:

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend	Virement From	Other Comments
Clune Park Regen.	Clune Park Regeneration	2011/14	£482,000	General Fund Reserves	Approved February 2011

Clune Park Regen.	Receipts from Second Homes	2010/11	£94,000	General Fund Reserves	
Clune Park Regen.	Receipts from Second Homes	2011/12	£106,000	General Fund Reserves	
Clune Park Regen.	Receipts from Second Homes	2012/13	£100,000	General Fund Reserves	Estimate
Clune Park Regen.	Receipts from long term empty Homes	2012/13	£72,000	General Fund Reserves	Estimate
Clune Park Regen.	Receipts from long term empty Homes	2013/14	£72,000	General Fund Reserves	Estimate
Scheme Of Assistance	Regeneration enabling	2012/13	£379,000		Approved January 2012
Capital Fund	Clune Park Regeneration	2014/15	£1,000,000		Budget proposal approved February 2012
TOTAL			£2,305,000		

### 7.3 Legal

Legal and Democratic Services will be asked to provide advice and guidance on the roll out of the Regeneration Plan to ensure that all possible remedies are pursued and that actions are taken in compliance with appropriate legislation. The Regeneration Plan is based upon existing legislation however the Service is reviewing the changes in legislation previously discussed with SG officials and noted in earlier reports to Committee.

### 7.4 Equalities

When delivering services to our customers, full cognisance is taken of equality and diversity processes and procedures.

### 7.5 Repopulation

This plan is intended to help remove an area of housing blight in Inverclyde and therefore improve the overall area.

## 8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1
- Robert Street Area - Housing Options Study: June 2006
  - Robert Street Area – Housing Options Study, Environment & Regeneration Committee, January 2007. ECP/HOU/BB07MSB/010
  - Robert Street Area – Regeneration Strategy Steering Group Update, SSCC, June 2007. ECP/HOU07WR/032
  - Robert Street Area – Regeneration Strategy Steering Group Update, SSCC 25 October 2007. ECP/HOU/WR07/046
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, March 2011. ECP/Plann/WR10/008
  - Clune Park – Proposed Regeneration Plan – Special SSCC May 2011.

- SCS/64/11/AH/DH
- Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, August 2011.  
SCS/65/11/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, January 2012.  
SCS/85/12/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – SSCC, March 2012.  
SCS/94/12/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, June 2012.  
EDUCOM/01/12/AH/DH
  - Affordable Housing Investment – Strategic Local Plan – E&CC, September 2012.  
EDUCOM/16/12/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, September 2012.  
EDUCOM/18/12/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, October 2012.  
EDUCOM/38/12/AH/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, January 2013.  
EDUCOM/01/13/DH