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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b> 10 September 2013
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Safer &amp; Inclusive Communities</b>	<b>Report No:</b> EDUCOM/61/13/DH
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Drew Hall</b>	<b>Contact No:</b> 01475 714272
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report</b>	

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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 existing and the proposed Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2013-2018 (the SHIP).
- 2.3 The SHIP programme informs the Strategic Local Programme (SLP) for the Inverclyde Council area. The SLP approved a project at the Committee in May at Lower Mary Street, Port Glasgow to provide re-provisioning of originally 84 housing units for the Clune Park residents. This is currently under review due to land availability and the number of units is likely to reduce to around a maximum of 46 units.
- 2.4 Work on the main survey for the "closing" of empty flats that fall below the Tolerable Standard is now complete. Demolition Orders covering 24 flats at 3 separate close addresses and a Demolition Order on a single property have been served. The landlords owning 6 of these flats have submitted appeals against the Orders to the Sheriff Court. The Sheriff in a written judgement on the appeals for 2 flats in 2 of the close blocks has found in favour of the Council's position and the Demolition Orders remain effective. A further hearing is to be arranged for the 4 remaining flats in the same close block.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee:
- Note current progress towards the regeneration of the Clune Park area;
  - Agree that further progress updates are submitted to future meetings of the Committee.
  - Agree that a report on a review of the Clune Park Regeneration Plan be submitted to the next meeting.
  - Agree to grant delegated authority to the Corporate Director Education, Communities & OD to instruct Property Services to negotiate to acquire flats to enable demolition.

**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.
- 5.2 Discussions have been held between Inverclyde Council and HSD officials to determine which projects in the SHIP 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. The SLP approved a project at the Committee in May at Lower Mary Street, Port Glasgow to provide reprovisioning of originally 84 housing units for the Clune Park residents. This is currently under review due to land availability and the number of units is likely to reduce to around a maximum of 46 units.
- 5.3 The Clune Park Area PSHCS included a physical survey of all 430 flats and this information has been 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 102 Closing Orders have been served to date and 4 Demolition Orders covering 129 properties in total.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 The District Valuer (DV) valuations report on Clune Park Street has been received. The DV valued property significantly higher than his original desk top assessment and significantly more than values that have come through the Council's own market value/sales studies

## **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 defended the Appeals in Court on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2013 for 2 flats in 2 close blocks and in the written judgement the Sheriff found in favour of the Council's position. The appeal for the 4 remaining flats in a single close block has been continued and a date is still to be set for this. These Orders remain in force, but the Council cannot act on outstanding case until the appeal is heard and a decision is issued by the Sheriff.

- 6.2 The District Valuer's assessment of the value of flats in Clune Park Street is significantly higher than his original desk top assessment and significantly more than values that have come through the Council market value/sales studies. Although the valuations for the Owner/Occupied properties are not far away from what was expected, some of the Landlord owned properties have been given values much greater than these. The DV has been challenged on the valuations and the DV's response did not address the Officers' concerns. The valuations would have resulted in a major increase in the required budget outlined in the Clune Park Area Regeneration Plan approved in May 2011. The Council has no obligation to accept the DV's Valuation. Property Services will now take forward the valuation and negotiations for the acquisition of flats to enable demolition.
- 6.3 Further survey work of the external condition of the properties has been delayed, however it will be completed in time to inform a report reviewing the Clune Park Regeneration Plan that will be submitted to the next Committee meeting.
- 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 14 Flats where works have been carried out or have been advised that 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:

## Financial Implications - One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend	Virement From	Other Comments
Clune Park Regen.	EMR C/f	2012/13	£1,281,000	General Fund Reserves	
Clune Park Regen.	Council tax Receipts from Second Homes / Empty	2013/14	£165,000		Estimate
Capital Fund	Clune Park Regeneration	2014/15	£1,000,000		Budget proposal approved February 2012
TOTAL			£2,446,000		

## Financial Implications - Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### 7.3 Human Resources

Currently being met within existing and temporary staffing.

### 7.4 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.

### 7.5 Equalities

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

### 7.6 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
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, March 2013. EDUCOM/32/13/DH
  - Clune Park Regeneration: Progress Report – E&CC, May 2013. EDUCOM/47/13/DH