

Report on	Strategic Community Development Update
Date of Meeting	Thursday 12 th May 2022
Reporting Officer	Claire Linney, Assistant Director of Development
Contact Officer	Martina Totten

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>To update members on a number of key areas of delivery under Strategic Development for social development.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Response to NIHE Supporting People's Strategy Consultation 2. Letter of support regarding Department for Economy's proposals to raise threshold limits for entry to Draft Relief Scheme
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Response to NIHE Supporting People's Strategy Consultation</p> <p>The aim of the public consultation is to ensure that the plan reflects the strategic direction of the Supporting People Programme, aiding recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, working to close the gap between need and supply, and contributing to the achievement of positive housing outcomes for all.</p> <p>The plan considers existing needs and emerging demands on Housing Support Services. It has been informed by and is in support of other strategies, including the Housing Executive Homelessness strategic Plan and the wider strategies of Health and Criminal Justice, and aligned to outcomes identified in the Draft Programme for Government. It has also been informed in part by a strategic, evidence-based, assessment of need which was completed in Sept 2020.</p>
2.2	<p>Letter of support regarding Department for Economy's proposals to raise threshold limits for entry to Draft Relief Scheme</p> <p>Legislation has been made in England and Wales to increase the limits on the total debts and the property which a debtor can have to be eligible for a debt relief order. The purpose of the consultation is to seek views as to whether the corresponding limits for being eligible for a debt relief order in Northern Ireland should be similarly increased.</p>

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>Response to NIHE Supporting People’s Strategy Consultation</p> <p>Please see attached Appendix 1</p>
3.2	<p>Letter of support regarding Department for Economy’s proposals to raise threshold limits for entry to Debt Relief Scheme</p> <p>A letter of support to the increased threshold limits for entry to the Debt Relief Scheme has been sent by the Chair of the Council stating,</p> <p><i>Mid Ulster District Council is committed to addressing poverty in our District and alleviating its impact on our residents. Evidence clearly shows, those in poverty are more likely to experience the burden of debt and the pandemic and cost of living crisis has put even more pressure on people financially struggling. Many of the other underlying drivers of debt that pre-existed the pandemic have been exacerbated, with a significant number of households entering the crisis financially vulnerable.</i></p> <p><i>Mid Ulster District Council therefore, welcomes the proposed increases to the Monetary Eligibility Limits for Debt Relief Orders in Northern Ireland, creating parity with the other regions. This necessary increase will provide a more realistic assessment of debt and allow more vulnerable households in debt crisis to access the scheme.</i></p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial & Human Resources Implications</u> None</p> <p><u>Professional Support</u> None</p>
4.2	<p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u> None</p>
4.3	<p><u>Risk Management Implications</u> None</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>To note an update key areas of delivery under Strategic Development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Response to NIHE Supporting People’s Strategy Consultation 2. Letter of support regarding Department for Economy’s proposals to raise threshold limits for entry to Draft Relief Scheme

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Appendix 1 Response to NIHE Supporting People's Strategy Consultation