

REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE 20TH AUGUST 2012

REPORT ON: CONSULTATION ON SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER INDICATORS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO: 282-2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Report contains the Council's response to the Scottish Housing Regulator's consultation on the Scottish Social Housing Charter Indicators.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee is requested to approve the response to the consultation, set out at Appendix 1, for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter came into effect on 1st April 2012. The charter sets standards and outcomes that describe the results that tenants and others who use their services can expect from social landlords.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 gives the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) the role to monitor, assess and report on how landlords are achieving the Charter's outcomes and standards and to intervene where landlords are not achieving them. The Act requires the Scottish Housing Regulator to consult on and set indicators that they will use to monitor landlords' achievement of the Charter outcomes and standards. Landlords are required to provide the Scottish Housing Regulator with good quality, accurate information on their achievement of, or progress towards, the Charter outcomes.

This consultation sets out the proposed indicators and information on the Charter the Scottish Housing Regulator will require landlords to provide each year. It also sets out proposals for reporting social landlords' performance to tenants, homeless people and others who use their services. The consultation document is available at:
www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/consultations

The framework of Charter indicators aims to:

- help tenants to understand their landlord's performance, and so help them to hold their landlord to account.
- allow the SHR to report on landlords' achievement of the Charter outcomes and standards.
- provide useful information for landlords and others to help them compare performance.
- allow the SHR to form a view of the risk for each landlord not achieving the Charter outcomes and standards.

4.1 Reporting

From 2013 in August each year the SHR will publish a report for tenants and other service users that sets out the indicators for each landlord. The aim is to make the report easy to access and easy to read and understand.

In addition to these reports, through their website the SHR will provide access to more detailed information on landlords and their performance. This will enable tenants and service users to compare their landlord with others and compare their landlord's performance over time.

4.2 Indicators

The SHR proposes to use a range of indicators and information to monitor landlords' achievement of the Charter outcomes. These will cover: equalities; communication; participation; quality of housing; repairs, maintenance and improvements; estate management and anti social behaviour; housing options and access to social rented housing; tenancy sustainment; homeless people; value for money and service charges and gypsies/travellers.

The Council's response to consideration of the issues and the questions within the consultation are set out in the consultation response contained in Appendix 1.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.

There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services, all other Chief Officers and Dundee Federation of Tenants Associations have been consulted on the preparation of this report. No concerns were expressed.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

DATE: AUGUST 2012

Appendix 1

Dundee City Council Response on the Scottish Housing Regulator Consultation on Scottish Social Housing Charter Indicators

What tenants and other service users can expect

Question 1

In general do you find the format for the report we are proposing to be clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The format includes a reasonable amount of information on relevant indicators. The visual indicators are a good way of representing stable, improving or deteriorating performance and ranking shows comparisons between landlords. Given the wide range of sizes and types of landlords across councils and RSLs it may be more relevant to show comparisons across relevant benchmark groups of landlords.

Question 2

Have we included the right indicators?
If not what alternative would you suggest?

The indicators included are relevant and contain a reasonable amount of information. However the indicator relating to factoring services is solely about collection which perhaps does not represent relevant performance. An indicator relating to satisfaction with factoring services may provide a more relevant indicator.

Question 3

Are there any other changes or improvements you would like to see?
If so, what are these?

Given the wide range of sizes and types of landlords across councils and RSLs it may be more relevant to show comparisons across relevant benchmark groups of landlords.

The Indicators

Question 4

Are there any indicators that you feel are not appropriate and, if so, why?

All indicators seem relevant.

Question 5

If you think that any of our proposed indicators are not appropriate, what alternatives would you suggest?

NA

Question 6

Is the proposed approach to reporting landlord spending sensible?

Yes. Providing information on the high level financial indicators on:

- repairing and improving tenants' homes;
- running the landlord's organisation;
- servicing and repaying loans; and
- other expenditure;

are similar to the ways in which landlords tend to report to tenants in annual reports and performance statements.

As highlighted it will be important for the SHR to collect this information in a consistent format to ensure accurate and consistent reporting.

Question 7

If not, what alternatives would you suggest?

NA

Contextual Information

Question 8

Is the contextual information we propose to collect appropriate?

The content of the 'Organisation details' is RSL focused and not relevant to local authorities, perhaps alternatives require to be set out for local authorities.

It is presumed that landlords will not have to provide information to the SHR on the same indicators in different submissions. For example given the comprehensive annual return made to the SHR each year on the SHQS indicators this information should be used by the SHR to populate.

Question 9

Are there any pieces of information we have identified that you feel do not need to be included or have been missed?

No.