

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing and Health Committee

24 August 2016

National Report on Scottish Social Housing Charter and
Perth and Kinross Local Scrutiny Plan

Report by Director (Housing and Social Work)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report describes the process of regulation of housing services by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) and the requirement to submit a range of performance data as part of the Annual Review of the Housing Charter. It also summarises some issues raised by the Housing Regulator as part of wider Local Scrutiny Plan produced by Audit Scotland each year.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Under the Scottish Social Housing Charter, introduced 3 years ago, all social landlords are required to submit an annual return on performance across 69 indicators to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31st May each year. This significant number of indicators includes 37 charter indicators and 32 contextual indicators and is described as the ARC – Annual Review of the Charter. These are based around 16 Charter Outcomes.
- 1.2 Following this, the Scottish Housing Regulator publishes their Landlord Report on their website on 31st August with a summary of results for each landlord across 5 broad themes (homes and rent; tenant satisfaction; quality and maintenance of homes; neighbourhoods; and value for money) (see Appendix 1). Although information is therefore available to tenants and other service users through the website, landlords are also required to make this available in appropriate ways to all their tenants.
- 1.3 In Perth and Kinross, the housing service uploads this summary report onto the Council's website and Facebook on 1st September. Following this, staff work with the **SURE Team** (Service User Review and Evaluation Team (7 members) to develop the Council's Annual Performance Report to tenants, which summarises our performance in relation to other social landlords and previous performance and includes a selection of the indicators tenants said they wanted reported to them. Last year this annual performance report was 20 pages of information, indicators and assessment by the SURE Team on how they felt we had performed as their landlord, scored using 3 measures:-
 - 1 Good progress made in 2014/15 and the 2015/16 action plans continue to show how improvements will be made
 2. Evidence of progress and understanding but with more to do to achieve real impact
 3. Poor or underperformance

- 1.4 In 2015 the SURE team rated the performance across each of the 16 charter outcomes and awarded 73% as 'good progress made in 2014/15 and the 2015/16 action plans continue to show how improvements will be made' and the remainder as showing 'evidence of progress and understanding but with more to do to achieve real impact'. They did not award any areas as poor or underperformance.
- 1.5 Since the inception of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and the Annual Review of Performance, the Housing Regulator has published two national reports, the latest in February 2016 which summarises their assessment of the 2014/15 landlord returns. This gives overall summaries of key areas, and is summarised by individual landlord.
- 1.6 In addition, the Housing Regulator is one of the inspection bodies which publishes their assessment of performance on the local authority as part of the Local Scrutiny Plan produced annually by Audit Scotland in the first quarter of the year. The information for 2014/15, based on the ARC return for that year, was presented to Council in May 2016 and it was in this report that the Housing Regulator raised some issues about Perth and Kinross's housing service's performance.

2. PERFORMANCE

- 2.1 In the Local Scrutiny Plan for 2014/15, the Housing Regulator highlighted 7 (of 69) indicators for Perth and Kinross which were in the bottom quartile when compared to all social landlords, not just other local authorities. The service had previously submitted qualifying and contextual information which wasn't included in the report. The table in Appendix 2 shows the indicators the Regulator highlighted, with the contextual and explanatory information provided by the Council.
- 2.2 In addition, in relation to tenant satisfaction indicators, these are qualitative and subjective and based on different methods being applied by landlords. The Council's method is to carry out a full tenant survey (7,400 tenants) every 3 years which not all social landlords do. The last two surveys have seen a 10-12% (850 tenants) response rate and this year we had a 21% response (1,536 tenants, which is excellent). This was based on a postal and online survey.
- 2.3 As part of the contextual information provided to the Housing Regulator, the Council described some examples of excellent innovative tenant participation, engagement and scrutiny activity which have been recognised with national and local awards. These have involved, engaged and empowered tenants to scrutinise and evaluate housing services to improve them and to raise satisfaction levels across all tenant groups and some are listed below.
- 2.4 We work closely and very well with our **SURE team (Service User Review and Evaluation)** to scrutinise and improve our performance and to increase our level of tenant participation. They have completed their pilot scrutiny activity of the complaints handling processes and of the way we communicate to tenants about repairs and have just completed a review of our Anti-Social Behaviour policies.

- 2.5 The SURE Team also had (and has) a key role in the development of our Annual Performance Report to tenants. They contributed to this report by assessing the performance of Housing Service's' achievement of the 16 Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes. Their comments and validation were included in the report, which was circulated to all tenants in October 2015. They are in the process of preparing for this year's report and a series of workshops with managers are underway to present and share information.
- 2.6 We have also implemented an improvement plan based on findings from our Mystery Shopping Project which focused on the delivery of our Customer Service Standards. Our Homeless Services have also undergone scrutiny from its service users, with an improvement plan being implemented for Greyfriars Hostel.
- 2.7 The very innovative and successful work summarised above and the work undertaken with tenants and service users to develop our scrutiny activities has been recognised through a national award scheme. The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) **National Excellence Awards** shortlisted our submission in the Tenant Led Scrutiny category and we are very proud to report that Perth and Kinross Council was the only local authority landlord to be shortlisted for any of the 9 awards presented at the ceremony.
- 2.8 In April 2016, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) Scotland contacted the service to say that they wanted to include PKC as a **best practice example** in their publication under the following heading: '**To enable constructive feedback to help review and challenge performance.**' This **best practice guide** is on developing effective tenant scrutiny, in association with HouseMark Scotland and the Scottish Government and is funded by Scottish Govt as part of the [Stepping Up to Scrutiny](#) programme and is due for publication in early Summer 2016.
- 2.9 In addition, it is important to note that in the summary of performance published by the Regulator in August 2015, the Council performed above the Scottish average on the following indicators:
- Homes meeting the SHQS standard (housing quality standard)
 - Average time to complete emergency repairs
 - % appointments for repairs that were kept
 - % tenant satisfaction with repairs or maintenance carried out
 - Cases of anti-social behaviour
 - % cases these resolved within target
 - % rent due to void (empty properties)
 - Average days to re-let void (empty) properties

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 The issues raised by the Regulator in the Local Scrutiny Plan was based on 2014/15 data. The Council has since submitted the return for 2015/16 performance on 31st May 2016 and this will be published by the Regulator at the end of August, after which the process described in Section 1 will be undertaken by tenants and staff.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's housing service has developed a robust system for completing and reporting the 69 indicators across 16 outcomes for the Housing Regulator's Annual Return on the Social Housing Charter. This includes the development of data dictionaries for each indicator, external validation of each indicator, and the inclusion of all charter indicators in the Performance Management Frameworks (PMF) for each area of the service.
- 4.2 The tenant SURE team is fully involved in this process and in any improvement actions identified. They carry out their own evaluation of the service's performance and undertake a range of detailed work to scrutinise and help improve services.
- 4.3 Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and the work undertaken to monitor, scrutinise and continuously improve housing services.

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013 – 2018 lays out five outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. The report relates to the following:-

- (i) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (ii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iii) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (iv) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 As above.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 N/A

Workforce

2.2 None

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 None

3. Assessments

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

(i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only and the Committee are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

Sustainability

3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:-

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes
- in a way that it considers most sustainable

The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

3.4 None

Risk

3.5 None

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 None

External

4.2 The Tenant Committee Report Panel was consulted on this report. Their comments were 'we appreciate that the figures reflect all of the Scottish social landlords, but Perth and Kinross Council should not lose track of their own performance figures and become complacent.'

5. Communication

5.1 None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Key Indicators for the Landlords' Report

Appendix 2: Summary and Context of Key Indicators

Appendix 1: Key Indicators for the Landlords' Report

Landlord profile:-

Context 14	Total number of houses
Indicator 30	Total rent due in the year
Context 17	Total number of each apartment size and average weekly rent for each
Context 21	Percentage average weekly rent increase to be applied
	Satisfaction
Indicator 1	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service
Indicator 3	Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and outcomes
Indicator 6	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord's decision making processes

Housing Quality and maintenance:-

Indicator 7	Percentage of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard
Indicator 11	Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs
Indicator 12	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs
Indicator 13	Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time
Indicator 14	Repairs appointment system Y/N If 'Y' Percentage of repairs appointments kept
Indicator 16	Percentage of tenants who have had repairs and maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the service

Neighbourhood and community:-

Indicator 19	Number of cases of anti-social behaviour reported in the last year
Indicator 19	Number of cases resolved within locally agreed targets in the last year

Getting good value from rents and service charges:-

Indicator 35	Average length of time taken to relet properties in the last year
Indicator 34	Percentage of rent lost through properties being empty in the last year
Indicator 30	Rent collected from tenants as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year

Appendix 2: Summary and Context of Key Indicators

	Indicator	PKC 14/15	All LAs 14/15	Comparison with other local authorities	All social landlords 14/15	PKC 15/16 (initial figures)	Comment
1	<u>% rent collected</u>	96.1%	99.2%	x	99.5%	98% March 107% April ✓	This continues to be an area of high priority, with key initiatives introduced, (including cash collection pilot), new processes in place, increased formal action, increased repayment plans and regular rent campaigns targeted at tenants.
2	[SHR issue – bottom quartile] <u>Gross rent arrears</u> [SHR issue – bottom quartile]	9.28%	5.9%	x	5.3%	9.8% (April)	
3	Average length of time to complete <u>non-emergency repairs</u> [SHR issue – bottom quartile]	9.11 days	9.9 days	✓	7.9 days	13.26 Days (Apr-June 2016 =	The PKC performance reflects our policy which is to focus resources on emergency repairs, so may continue to be below the Scottish average. The increase in 2015/16 was due to outstanding long term works order issued to two external contractors which have now been completed.
	<i>The average number of <u>reactive repairs</u> completed per occupied property</i> [PKC context]	3.35	3.8	✓	3.6	3.27 ✓	<i>We also continue to perform well against the Scottish average for the number of reactive repairs per property</i>
	Average length of time to complete <u>emergency repairs</u> [PKC context]	3.29 hours	6.5 hours	✓	5.9 hours	3.74 hours ✓	<i>We continue to perform very well against the Scottish average time taken to complete emergency repairs.</i>
	% tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service [PKC context]	90.4%	87%	✓	89.3%	90.1% ✓	<i>Repairs satisfaction remains high during 2015/16. And was higher than other LAs and overall Scottish average in 2014/15.</i>

	Indicator	PKC 14/15	All LAs 14/15	Comparison with other local authorities	All social landlords 14/15	PKC 15/16 (initial figures)	Comment
4	Tenants satisfied at being <u>kept informed about services</u> and <u>outcomes</u>	80.2%	80.4%	✓	90.1%	82.5% ✓	Last year we had the same performance as other local authorities and improved in 2015/16.
5	Tenants feeling they have <u>opportunities to participate</u> [SHR issue – bottom quartile]	62%	69%	- ✓ For 2016	79.5%	74.4% ✓	We significantly improved our performance for this indicator during 2015/16.
6	Tenants satisfied with quality of home when moving in [SHR issue – bottom quartile]	57.4%	81%	x ✓ For 2016	86%	81.4% ✓	We significantly improved our performance for this indicator during 2015/16.
7	% properties meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) [SHR issue – bottom quartile]	92.3%	90.4%	✓	91.0%	94.6% ✓	We performed above the Scottish average for this indicator last year and have continued to improve.

It is important to note that when compared with other local authorities, PKC has improved or similar performance in 8 of the 10 indicators.