

ARC (Annual Return on the Charter)

Submission to Scottish Housing Regulator

March 2014



Introduction

Welcome to the latest in a series of regular briefings prepared by the Housing Strategy team on the big issues concerning housing. These briefings will be shared with staff, tenants and elected members and keep everyone up to date with regards the ever changing policy context that we are operating within.

The Housing Strategy section is responsible for:-

- Supporting the development of a culture of continuous improvement in Housing services and to facilitate opportunities to excel;
- Developing and implementing effective strategies for Housing and Community Safety Services within West Dunbartonshire;
- Developing the Council's housing strategy to ensure that it supports the delivery of our strategic priorities;
- Performance management within Housing and Community Safety services; and
- Promoting effective management and the involvement of tenants across all aspects of Housing Services.
- Providing the Strategic Housing Authority Role within West Dunbartonshire and delivering the Affordable Housing Supply Programme throughout the area.

For further information on Housing Strategy please telephone 01389 737889 or e-mail: housing.strategy@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Briefing Note

ARC Submission to Scottish Housing Regulator

Background:

The Scottish Housing Regulator is the independent regulator of social landlords in Scotland and was set up by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. They regulate around 180 registered social landlords (RSLs) and the housing activities of Scotland's 32 local authorities.

Their statutory objective is to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants, homeless people and others who use services provided by social landlords.

The Regulator published their [Regulatory Framework](#) explaining how they will regulate all social landlords, with a main focus being landlord performance against the [Scottish Social Housing Charter](#).

Key Points:

All social landlords must achieve the outcomes and standards contained within the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

The Regulator will monitor, assess, compare and report on how we perform in relation to the Charter by using a specific set of indicators which have replaced Audit Scotland's Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) for the Housing sector. Our performance against these indicators will determine future immediate scrutiny engagement with the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Since October 2012 when the Charter Indicators were published, substantial preparation led by Housing Strategy has been undertaken to ensure that we are able to report accurate data relating to performance during 2013/14.

Steps taken include;

- A series of briefings outlining the steps that should be taken by service areas to ensure successful data capture for all Charter Indicators,
- Mid-year progress reports with further recommendations for action,
- A gap analysis, highlighting where risks existed due to data not being able to be provided,
- The development of Data Dictionaries for all Charter Indicators to promote accurate data gathering and provide an audit trail for future verification.

The Charter Indicators will be gathered by the Regulator using the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). The ARC will be submitted via a new web-based portal which the Regulator has developed and which will open for data submission on 1st April 2014.

In order to meet the deadlines set by the regulator the following ARC Submission timetable has been developed;

When	Who	What
31 Jan 2014	Service Managers	Officers identified as responsible for data collection provided
28 Feb 2014	Named officers (DD)	Technical information completed for all Data Dictionaries (DD)
01 April 2014	SHR	SHR opens ARC portal for data submission
01 April 2014	Housing Strategy	Data Dictionaries issued to named officers for completion and return
01 April 2014 - 18 April 2014	Named officers (DD)	Data Dictionaries completed (including data, templates and source reports)
02 April 2014	Housing Strategy	ARC Staff Briefing and Awareness session
18 April 2014 – 25 April 2014	Service Managers	Data Dictionaries reviewed and signed off.
25 April 2014	Service Managers	Data Dictionaries submitted to Housing Strategy
25 April 2014 – 02 May 2014	Housing Strategy/Named Officers (DD)	Internal validation and portal verification issues resolved
02 May 2014 - 09 May 2014	SHBVN	External validation of ARC
09 May 2014 – 16 May 2014	Housing Strategy/Service Managers	Issues identified by external validation addressed
16 May 2014	Head of Service/Housing Strategy Manager	ARC signed off and final submission

Whilst substantial preparation has already been taken to ensure a successful ARC submission, pilots undertaken by the SHBVN have highlighted numerous issues in relation to the accuracy of data and audit systems landlords were able to provide.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has also produced a [report](#) highlighting some of the challenges landlords face in relation to gathering and reporting accurate data and have highlighted specific indicators, particularly new indicators, where issues exist and which they expect landlords to be aware of.

What it means for West Dunbartonshire

It is recognised that a successful ARC submission will require substantial staff resource from all service areas and it is the responsibility of all Service Managers to ensure that this is achieved and deadlines within the ARC Submission timetable are met.

The previous staff briefings (below) have been communicated to staff through team briefings and it is important that all those involved are fully aware of what is required.

[.Housing Strategy Briefing Note 12-1 - New Scottish Housing Regulator.pdf](#)

[Housing Strategy Briefing Note 12-14 - Scottish Social Housing Charter - Indicators and Contextual Information.pdf](#)

[Housing Strategy Briefing Note 13 2 Scottish Social Housing Charter Tenant and Service User Satisfaction Indicators May 2013.pdf](#)

[Housing Strategy Briefing Note 13 8 Tenants Satisfaction Survey 2013.pdf](#)

[Housing Strategy Briefing Notes\Housing Strategy Briefing Note 13 9 SHBVN Benchmarking Report 2012~13.pdf](#)

In addition to this Housing Strategy briefing note; a briefing session on the **2nd April 2014 at 9.30am** will be held with managers, team leaders and other named officers with responsibility for data gathering. It goes without saying that it is essential that all relevant staff attend this session.

The aim of this session would be to;

- Reinforce the importance of a successful ARC submission,
- Ensure that any remaining identified risks have been fully addressed,
- Ensure that plans are in place in terms of staff resource to ensure that data can be collated, validated and submitted as outlined in the timetable above.

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