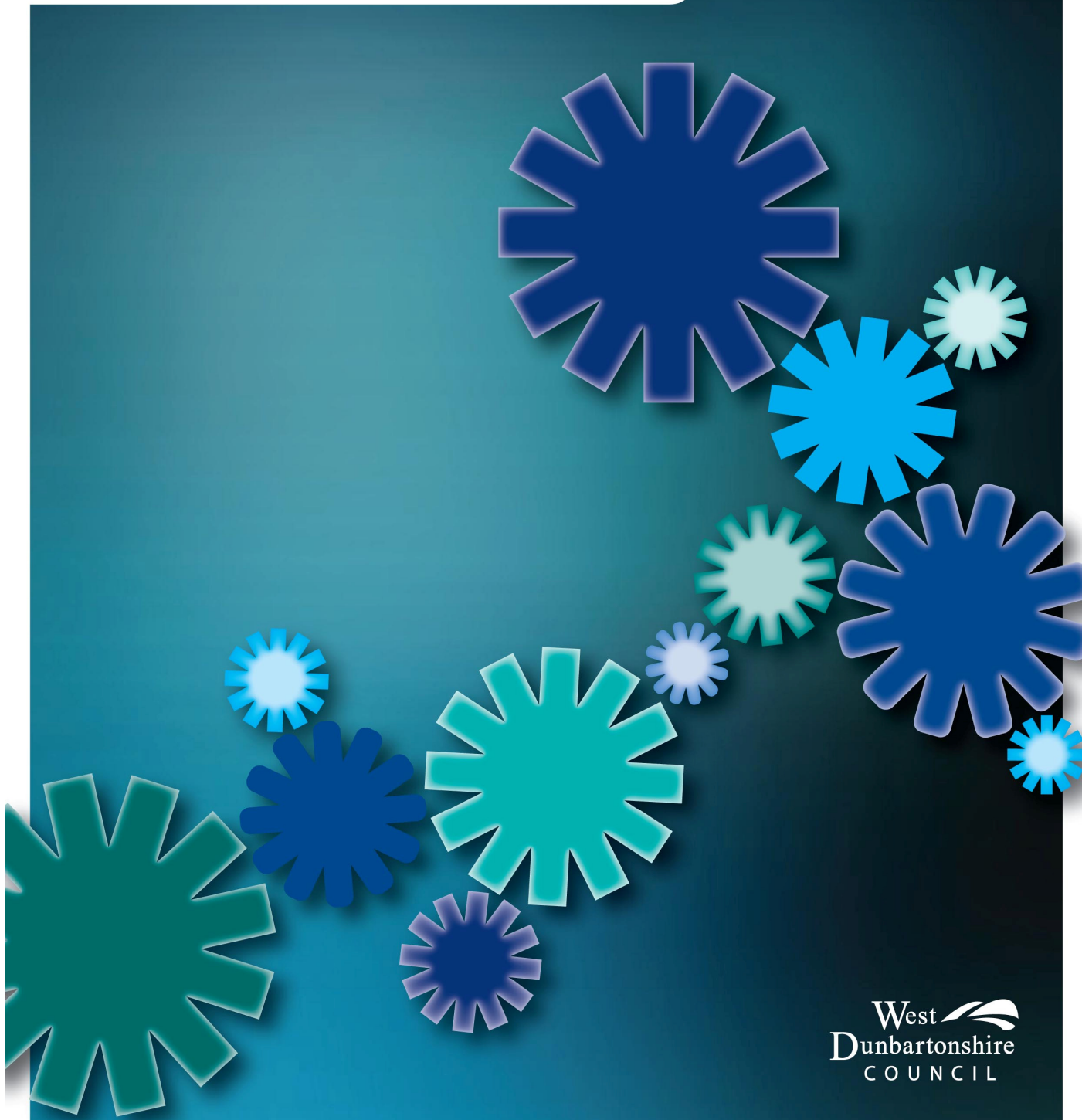


**Public Bodies (Joint Working) Act and  
Implications for Housing Services  
July 2014**



## 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.

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

## Background

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act was given royal assent in April 2014. This Act requires NHS health boards and local authorities to integrate strategic planning and service provision arrangements for adult health and social care services (as the minimum required by law) within new Health & Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs). This report provides an update on the report made to HMT in November 2013 on the implications for Housing Services.<sup>1</sup>

The Act provides for Scottish Ministers to put in place a number of Regulations and Orders, and during its passage through Parliament Scottish Ministers committed to consult widely on these.

Draft Scottish Statutory Instruments to accompany the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 have been developed in collaboration with stakeholders and have been published for consultation in two sets<sup>2</sup>.

The draft Regulations include those functions listed in the Schedule of the Act relating to services for adults and these include “housing support services and aids & adaptations”<sup>3</sup>.

Closing dates for the two stage consultation are 1 August and 18 August 2014. All integration arrangements must be in place by April 2016.

## Main Issues

The goal of integration is that by 2020 everybody should be able to live longer, healthier lives at home or in a homely setting.

The cross sector Housing Coordinating Group, which includes ALACHO and CIH Scotland, has been leading the housing response to the process.<sup>4</sup>

The focus currently is on health and social care services for adults and older people and now also extends to certain “housing” functions. The Act sets out functions that ‘may’ be delegated and those that should be made mandatory through regulations requiring that they ‘must’ be delegated.

Key issues for the housing sector are:

1. the scope of integration of housing with health and social care;
2. national outcomes relative to peoples’ homes;
3. Governance arrangements to ensure aligned planning;

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<sup>1</sup> See Report to HMT Public Bodies(Joint Working) Bill and Implications for Housing Services – 29 November 2013

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0044/00449845.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> ANNEX 2(A)

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED FUNCTIONS THAT MUST BE DELEGATED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES RELATING TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (JOINT WORKING) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014 (Section 1(7)) CONSULTATION PAPER

<sup>4</sup> The Housing Coordinating Group has issued a FAQ Guide for housing practitioners.

4. strategic planning arrangements, in particular alignment between health/care strategies and the LHS, and
5. locality planning including housing as a key partner.<sup>5</sup>

### **What it means for WDC Housing**

- The Council supports the direction of travel in respect of the integration agenda, a process that is well advanced in West Dunbartonshire.
- The Act contains proposals for inclusion of some housing services within the developing integration arrangements particularly in the areas of support for homeless people and in the provision of aids and adaptations. It will, for example, be at the discretion of the Integrated Authority as to whether the duty to assess and provide for the housing support needs of homeless people falls within their scope.
- The draft regulations list the Housing- related functions which “may” and which “must” be delegated. More clarity is needed on what falls into each category, and this should come in the forthcoming guidance.
- In WD we have made good progress in recent times in taking forward joint working between Housing Services and the CHCP. Housing needs to ensure that it is fully involved in discussions going forward. CHCP are responding to the consultation(s) and are welcoming input/ response from housing services to be reflected in the broader response (s)
- Set two of the regulations lists those who must be consulted in preparing Integration schemes. The current wording is not clear but is expected to be clarified to specifically include local authority housing services.
- It is the responsibility of the Integrated Authority to develop locality planning arrangements. In West Dunbartonshire there will be two localities: Clydebank and Dumbarton/Vale
- ALACHO is leading for housing in these strategic developments. We need to continue to be engaged with these discussions.
- There is likely to be an increased emphasis on Housing Contribution Statements in future Joint Strategic Commissioning Plans (JSCPs).
- And, critically, what will be the financial implications for Housing?
- The Act and Regulations will be supported by a suite of guidance, which will be issued in draft form for consultation over the next few months.

### **For further information contact:**

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<sup>5</sup> SHBVN Homelessness and Housing Support Group: Practice Exchange Forum May 2014 – presentation by Amanda Britain, JIT