Our regulation of social housing in Scotland
Consultation questions

We welcome your general feedback on our proposals as well as answers to the specific questions we have raised. You can read our consultation paper on our website at www.housingregulator.gov.scot Please do not feel you have to answer every question unless you wish to do so.

Send your completed questionnaire to us by **15 December 2023.**

By email @:   regulatoryframeworkreview@shr.gov.scot

Or post to: Scottish Housing Regulator
2nd floor , George House
36 North Hanover Street, G1 2AD

Name/organisation name

Aberdeenshire Council

Address

Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen

Postcode **AB16 5GB**	Phone 03456 081203	Email housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

How you would like your response to be handled

To help make this a transparent process we intend to publish on our website the responses we receive, as we receive them. Please let us know how you would like us to handle your response. If you are responding as an individual, we will not publish your contact details.

Are you happy for your response to be published on our website?

Yes ☒   **No** ☐

If you are responding as an individual …

Please tell us how you would like your response to be published.	*Pick 1*
Publish my full response, including my name	☐
Please publish my response, but not my name	☐

1. Do you agree with our proposed approach on specific assurance in Annual Assurance Statements?

> Aberdeenshire Council would welcome this addition. However, we consider it important that sufficient warning is given of any areas where specific assurance will be required. As a local authority landlord, we are required to meet committee dates and deadlines which means we may need a longer lead in time to give assurance to our elected members. Additional or changing requirements should not be added in through FAQs – changes and clarifications should be communicated clearly to all landlords and well in advance of any requirement for that year's submission. Ideally there should be a formalised review process that builds additional requirements into the following years submission.

2. Do you agree with our proposal to initiate a comprehensive review of the Annual Return on the Charter which we will consult on next year?

> Aberdeenshire Council agrees with this proposal. All indicators should ensure that performance is reported and comparable on a like-for-like basis so that tenants, service-users and landlords can make best use of the information. Some indicators in particular (e.g. Indicator 15 regarding antisocial behaviour) do not currently allow for meaningful comparisons to be drawn.

3. Do you agree with our proposed amendments to strengthen the emphasis on landlords listening to tenants and service users to include a requirement that landlords:
   a. provide tenants, residents and service users with appropriate ways to provide feedback and raise concerns, and
   b. ensure that they consider such information and provide quick and effective responses?

> Overall, we would support an enhanced focus on listening to tenants and service users (while acknowledging that landlords already have duties in this regard), and a clear definition of the Regulator's expectations would be helpful. However, Aberdeenshire Council would recommend that any changes or additions to how landlords interact with their tenants should be driven by consultation and feedback from tenants and service users to ensure it meets their needs, rather than a prescribed framework.

4. Do you agree with our proposed approach to Notifiable Events?

> Aberdeenshire Council supports the proposal to clarify the guidance around notifiable events and make more information available around them.

5. Do you agree with our proposed approach to regulatory status?

> As a local authority landlord, Aberdeenshire Council would not be directly affected by these changes, but we support the shift towards more direct language to improve clarity.

6. Do you agree with our proposed approach to Significant Performance failures?

> Aberdeenshire Council supports the proposal to improve clarity around significant performance failures for tenants.

7. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Annual Assurance Statements*?

> Aberdeenshire Council supports the proposed changes to the statutory guidance for the Annual Assurance Statement, and the provision for explicit assurance, subject to the comments above around timescales and how this will be communicated,

8. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Consultation where the Regulator is directing a transfer of assets*?

> We support the proposal to improve clarity and incorporate lessons learned within the statutory guidance.

9. Do you agree with our proposal to maintain *the Determination* at this time?

> Agree

10. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Determination of what is meant by a step to enforce a security over an RSL's land*?

> Agree

11. Do you agree with our proposal to maintain the guidance on *Financial viability of RSLs*?

> Agree

12. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Group structures*?

> Agree

13. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *How to request an appeal of a regulatory decision*?

> Agree

14. Do you agree with our proposal to maintain the guidance on *How to request a review of a regulatory decision*?

> Agree

15. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Notifiable events*?

> Aberdeenshire Council would support improved clarity and guidance

16. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Preparation of financial statements*?

> Agree

17. Do you agree with our proposal to maintain the guidance on *Section 72 reporting events of material significance*?

> Agree

18. Do you agree with our proposed changes to the guidance on *Tenant consultation and approval*?

> Agree

19. Would you like to give feedback on any aspect of our impact assessments? Are there other potential impacts that we should consider?

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback!