

ACCOUNTS COMMISSION – HOUSING IN SCOTLAND – KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Key Point/Checklist/Recommendation	Council Position Yes/No	Action/Response:	Date for Implementation	Lead Officer
Ensure housing strategies and the associated plans and investment decisions are clearly based on evidence of local housing needs and are developed in conjunction with all relevant partners including RSLs and tenants.	Yes	In place & working well. Council has a good quality Local Housing Strategy (LHS) based on a robust & credible Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA) but the process needs to be revisited in light of revised Centre for Housing Market Analysis guidance due end of year/early 2014. For the future, need to review & align overall HNDA with community-level assessments. Good joint working partnerships in place at operational & strategic levels. Key Housing Market Partnership is the Strategic Housing & Communities Forum which includes RSL & tenant participation (Tenants Panel) as well as other key stakeholders.	Ongoing	Housing Services Manager
Review the way housing services are designed and delivered in light of the recent reductions in the number of people assessed as homeless and councils' duties to homeless people.	Yes	In place & working well. Reduction in homeless presentations is only one factor to impact on service delivery & does not necessarily equate to an overall reduction in casework/staff input or required staffing levels. Delivering effective Housing Options & preventative activity can actually mean that enhanced caseloads and staff input are required. Council has an effective approach to service planning and has just completed a rigorous review into service structures, delivery & budgeting.	Ongoing	Housing Services Manager
Review the differences in performance and long-term financial position of their housing stock and develop strategies, including rent strategies, to address future liabilities and maintain the value of the assets.	No	Not applicable. This Council transferred stock in 2006 & no longer has a landlord function.		
Clarify guidance on recording of spend through the HRA and the general account for housing to improve transparency to tenants and provide a clearer picture of council	No	As the Council no longer has an HRA all expenditure on homelessness is charged to the General Fund. There are separate cost centres set up to record		

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<p>spending on homelessness services.</p>		<p>costs on homelessness within the General Fund revenue budget and is therefore totally transparent.</p>		
<p>Work together to develop a clear understanding of the condition of private sector housing and what investment is required in the future.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Work ongoing but is an area for improvement. Evidence on private sector house condition is available from: Scottish House Condition Survey (limited sample at local level); Local House Condition Survey (covers admin areas but now dated); Recently conducted primary Research on private rented sector and developed an action plan to be incorporated into LHS (excludes owner occupied sector). Housing services also undertakes rolling programme of random surveys but these are not geographically comprehensive. Clear evidence of poor condition & energy efficiency across the private sector but need to improve & quantify understanding of actual investment requirements.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Housing Services Manager</p>
<p>Review the role their CPP plays in housing to ensure arrangements are clear and that the CPP is effective in bringing partners together.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In place & working well. The Strategic Housing & Communities Forum comprises a wide range of Community Planning partners. The LHS is directly aligned with CP & SOA and housing contributes to a number of key aims and outcomes, and will have a central role in delivering the revised priority/vision for Argyll & Bute – to ensure economic growth is based on an increased population.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Housing Services Manager</p>