

Joint Housing Policy and Delivery Group Meeting 9 – Draft Minutes

21 June 2017 – 0930-1300

MacDonald Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh

Members present:

Lesley Fraser	Director for Housing and Social Justice, Scottish Government (JHPDG Co-Chair)
Tom Barclay	RICS (JHPDG Co-Chair)
Rebekah Widdowfield	Deputy Director, Better Homes Division, Scottish Government
David Signorini	Head of Communities Analytical Services, Scottish Government
Ian Gilzean	Planning & Architecture Division, Scottish Government (<i>subs</i>)
Tony Cain	Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (Policy Manager)
John Wood	CoSLA
Diarmaid Lawlor	Architecture and Design Scotland
Annie Mauger	Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland (Chief Executive)
Ed Monaghan	Construction Scotland (Chair)
June Deasy	Council of Mortgage Lenders (Policy Consultant)
Lori McElroy	Existing Homes Alliance
David Bookbinder	Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Association (Director)
Peter Marshall	Heads of Planning Scotland. (Strategy & Policy Manager – Planning & Regeneration, Perth & Kinross Council)
Heather Fiskin	Independent Living in Scotland
Hugh McClung	Regional Network of Registered Tenants Organisations
George McGuinness	Regional Network of Registered Tenants Organisations
Malcolm Fraser	Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (Director – Halliday Fraser Munro Architects)
Craig McLaren	Royal Town Planning Institute (Director)
Ronnie MacRae	Rural representative - Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust
Ken Ross	Scottish Property Federation (Chief Executive, Ross Developments and Renewables)
Sarah Boyack	Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (<i>subs</i>)
Norman Kerr	Scottish Fuel Poverty Forum
Barry White	Scottish Futures Trust
Michael Cameron	Scottish Housing Regulator
Adam Lang	Shelter Scotland (<i>subs</i>)

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Sharon Donohoe Tenant Information Service (Development Director) (*subs*)

Others Attending:

Kevin Stewart MSP Minister for Local Government and Housing
 Jeane Freeman MSP Minister for Social Security
 Ann McVie Deputy Director, Social Security Policy, Scottish Government
 Angela O'Brien Scottish Government
 Catriona Mackean Scottish Government
 Owen Griffiths Scottish Government
 Andy Pope Scottish Government
 Susan Wills Scottish Government
 Merlin Kemp Scottish Government
 Andrew Mott Scottish Government (Secretariat)
 Bethany Wilson Scottish Government (Secretariat)
 Éilis Murray Communication Support

Apologies:

Deborah Smith Deputy Director More Homes Division, Scottish Government
 George Dodds NHS Health Scotland (Director of Health Equity)
 Professor Ken Gibb Professor in Housing Economics, University of Glasgow
 Graeme Brown Shelter Scotland (Director) (*subs Adam Lang*)
 Mary Taylor Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (*subs Sarah Boyack*)
 Nicola Barclay Homes for Scotland (Chief Executive)
 Caroline Elgar Scottish Association of Landlords
 John McNairney Chief Planner, Planning & Architecture Division, Scottish Government (*subs Ian Gilzean*)
 Ilene Campbell Tenant Information Service (*subs Sharon Donohoe*)
 Lesley Baird Tenant Participation Advisory Service (Chief Executive)
 Elaine McHugh Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers

Introductions, apologies, declaration of conflicts of interest, minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Paper: JHPDG 60

1. The meeting began with a minute's silence for the victims of the Grenfell Tower tragedy.
2. Lesley Fraser(LF) chairing, welcomed everyone to the ninth meeting of the Joint Housing Policy and Delivery Group (JHPDG), and noted apologies and attendees as above.
3. Members were invited to declare any specific conflicts of interest which might arise in the course of discussions. No conflicts of interest were flagged by any members with regard to the 21 June meeting.
4. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 7 February 2017, were agreed as read.
5. Action points 1 and 2 were completed, action point 3 was on-going, and information on Rental Income Guarantee Schemes (action point 4) was expected to be circulated shortly.
(Action Point 1)
6. LF briefly updated the Group on Scottish Government Strategic Developments.

Grenfell Tower

7. The Minister expressed his sympathies for all involved in the tragedy.
8. He briefly updated members on the on-going collection of information about housing stock in Scotland in the wake of the fire, and on the formation of the Ministerial Working Group. He emphasised Ministers' determination to ensure the safety of the public, and noted that he would be taking a personal interest in all correspondence on the Grenfell Fire.
9. Mr Stewart highlighted the importance of gathering accurate information, and asked members to continue to work with Scottish Government in this. Members advised the Minister about the work they had been doing. Sarah Boyack highlighted the information gathering and dissemination SFHA had been doing with their membership. John Wood offered support in gathering information from local authorities. Tom Barclay explained the efforts Wheatley Group had made to reassure tenants through face-to-face discussions. Generally, members and the Scottish Government were anxious to support each other in providing reassurance and gathering useful data to make informed decisions.
10. In response to a question from Sharon Donohoe, the Minister asked officials to confirm the scope of Fire and Rescue Service safety checks of buildings (what facilities they checked, e.g. dry risers).
(Action Point 2)

11. Members were invited to share relevant information with other JHPDG members via the Knowledge Hub, or to contact Scottish Government officials directly if required.
(Action Point 3)

Draft annual report and reflections on the last year

Paper: JHPDG 62

12. The Minister reflected on his first year in office and took questions from JHPDG members. Members welcomed the review of planning and the announcement of the resource planning assumptions for local authorities up to March 2021, and reiterated their concerns around welfare reforms, homelessness, specialised housing needs, the importance of joined-up thinking around training and apprenticeships, and challenges in housing delivery around planning, infrastructure and utilities. The Minister asked members:
 - to let him know about any specific issues with Scottish Water;
(Action Point 4)
 - to make sure that he had the opportunity to meet apprentices on site visits, as he appreciated this (and had been impressed with the approach taken at the SFHA conference); and
 - to make sure that community benefits featured prominently in contracts (including apprentices) and cited the regeneration area in Pennywell as a good example where this had been done well.
13. In the light of time constraints, it was agreed that colleagues would submit their comments on the draft Annual Report to the secretariat by email.
(Action Point 5)

Revised remit, subgroup and working group structure

Paper: JHPDG 64

14. Due to time constraints, it was agreed that members would submit any comments on the revised remit, subgroup and working group structure to the secretariat by email.
(Action Point 6)

Update on social security changes

15. Ann McVie gave an update on the upcoming changes to social security in Scotland, and took questions and comments from members.

Housing welfare reform: discussion in break-out groups

Paper: JHPDG 63

16. Members discussed the implications of housing welfare reform in four break-out groups.

Plenary feedback to Jeane Freeman MSP, Minister for Social Security

17. Representatives from each of the four break-out groups fed back to Ms Freeman and the plenary group on the main points of their discussions. (A summary of these points is available separately on the Knowledge Hub and the Scottish Government website.)

Thoughts and reflections from Ms Freeman

18. Ms Freeman set out her thoughts and reflections in response to the discussion points shared by the groups.
19. She shared members' concerns around the difficulties with the current UK welfare system, and emphasised the need for comprehensive local advice services and joined-up thinking regarding social security in a Scottish context. She emphasised that Scottish Ministers would continue to request that the UK Government paused the roll-out of Universal Credit until the current practical problems had been addressed. She acknowledged that there was still work to be done in communicating information about upcoming social security changes in Scotland to individuals and organisations.
20. Ms Freeman wanted to ensure that all communications with individuals as part of the delivery of social security in Scotland made it clear "who did what" in terms of which agency / authority was responsible for each benefit. The new social security agency in Scotland would have locally-based staff who could offer pre-claims advice and support on Scottish benefits. They would also link clients in to other relevant agencies and advise on any other benefits to which they might be entitled.

Report on the Disabled People's Housing Summit

21. Heather Fiskin (HF) presented the Report of the Disabled People's Housing Summit, 'Our Place, Our Space', to the Minister for Social Security, and asked her to share it with Ministers.
22. HF also invited JHPDG members to be involved in upcoming roundtable discussions concerning the possible solutions put forward in the report.
23. Ms Freeman reiterated the Scottish Government's commitment to the actions set out in the Scottish Government's Disability Delivery Plan, 'A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People', and urged JHPDG members to also use their collective knowledge and experience to bring about solutions. She asked officials and members to pay close attention to the findings of the report; it was everyone's

responsibility to hear about the barriers faced by disabled people and then work to remove them.

(Action Point 7)

24. Ms Freeman encouraged Heather Fiskin to invite Mr Stewart to the roundtable discussions on the follow-up to the report.

Any other business

25. There was no other business brought forward.
26. Members were invited to submit suggestions for key issues to be discussed in future plenary of subgroup meetings to the secretariat.
27. More information on the election for the next co-chair will be sent to plenary JHPDG members ahead of the November plenary meeting.
(Action Point 8)
28. Date of Next Meeting:

Afternoon of 23 November 2017, Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh

**Scottish Government
August 2017**

Action Points

Action Point 1: Consideration of a possible 'Investing in Scottish Housing' event in 2017 to continue (*November 2016 – AP 7*) **Ongoing**.

Action Point 2: Secretariat to confirm to members the scope of Fire and Rescue Service safety checks of buildings (what facilities they checked, e.g. dry risers).

Action Point 3: Members to share relevant information about responding to issues raised by the Grenfell Tower tragedy with other JHPDG members via the Knowledge Hub.

Action Point 4: Members to advise the Minister about any specific issues with Scottish Water.

Action Point 5: Members to any comments on the draft Annual Report (JHPDG 62) to the secretariat by email by 30 June.

Action Point 6: Members to submit any comments on the revised remit, subgroup and working group structure (JHPDG 64) to secretariat by email by 30 June.

Action Point 7: all to pay close attention to the findings of the Report of the Disabled People's Housing Summit and to work to remove the barriers faced by disabled people.

Action Point 8: Secretariat to write out to members on the election of the co-chair in time for the November meeting.