



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Ariane Burgess MSP

Convener

Local Government, Housing & Planning Committee

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

Dear Ariane,

Scottish Housing Regulator

We wrote to you on 23rd June 2023 raising concerns regarding the Scottish Housing Regulator and have met with you on two occasions to discuss these concerns in depth. It is disappointing that a year on, we are unfortunately no further forward with regards to action being taken to review the actions of the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Our initial letter encouraged the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee to consider instigating a review of the Scottish Housing Regulator and its role in asset transfers of community-controlled housing associations to large national housing groups that have taken place in recent years including potential ramifications of these transfers, such as that faced by Reidvale Housing Association, could be avoided in the future.

Unfortunately, to date we have not been made aware of the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee's intention to bring forward such a review. As such, we write to you today to request that a full inquiry be carried out into the role and actions of the Scottish Housing Regulator.

We believe that the inquiry must cover the following elements:

- The role of the Scottish Housing Regulator in relation to their statutory objective, functions, duties and powers as set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, including any over-reach.
- Review actions of the Scottish Housing Regulator against the Scottish Regulators Strategic Code of Practice.
- Review of the policies of Scottish Housing Regulator with regards to interventions and how these are conducted, instigated and the costs incurred by housing associations and the taxpayer.
- Review of the policies of Scottish Housing Regulator with regards to conducting mergers of social landlords and housing associations, including what consideration is made to performance of the housing association, staff welfare and best value for tenants.

- The use of consultants and how these are selected by the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- Explore allegations of bullying, harassment and intimidation by the Scottish Housing Regulator by current and former housing professionals.
- Take evidence from current and former housing professionals regarding their experiences of interventions by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the impact of the actions of the Scottish Housing Regulator on their mental and physical wellbeing.
- Review what recourse is available to hold the Scottish Housing Regulator to account should allegations of improper actions be made.
- Review the level of parliamentary scrutiny and oversight of the Scottish Housing Regulator and whether this is sufficient.

We believe this inquiry would require at least three committee sessions to allow outside witnesses that have made complaints to give evidence and it is likely that some sessions would need to be in private for those who want to remain anonymous.

As you will appreciate, this would be a complex inquiry and we believe that a Kings Counsel led inquiry would be required to ensure full scrutiny of the legal framework and provide an independent view.

We have significant concerns that without robust action via an inquiry the Scottish Housing Regulator will continue to act with impunity. As the issue was raised with you over a year ago progress needs to be made. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Paul Sweeney MSP

Glasgow Region

Scottish Labour & Co-operative

Evelyn Tweed MSP

Stirling Constituency

Scottish National Party