

eForum

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National Care Service Updates

At the end of June, the Health, Social Care, and Sport Committee [received correspondence](#) from the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport, Maree Todd, with a package of documents as an update ahead of Stage 2 of the National Care Service Bill.

This includes:

- [The full text of amendments intended to be lodged at Stage 2](#)
- [A marked-up version of the Bill as introduced](#)
- [An updated Policy Memorandum](#)
- [An updated Explanatory Note](#)

The main changes to the Bill suggested through the proposed amendments are:

1. Creation of a National Care Service Board to provide national oversight and improvement to services that fall within the scope of the NCS.
2. Reformed integration authorities rather than Care Boards.

The updated Policy Memorandum notes that the reformed IJBs will be accountable to the National Care Service Board (NCSB) for any services delegated to them. The Policy Memorandum also states that the NCSB would have a role in place-based policy, including housing and homelessness, although the mechanism and details of involvement are not yet clear.

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has launched a consultation to allow engagement from the public and key stakeholders about the substantial amendments. The [Call for Views is open](#) for responses until Friday 30th of August.

The Future of Supported Housing as a Response to Homelessness in Scotland: Supported Housing Task and Finish Group Report Launch

Webinar 24th July, 2pm-3:30pm

The Supported Housing Task and Finish Group, appointed by the Scottish Government as part of the Homelessness Prevention Strategy Group will launch its final report on **24th July**. The work of the group has focused on settled supported housing options for people who experience homelessness.

The launch of the report is supported by a webinar on **‘The future of supported housing as a response to homelessness in Scotland’** with a panel discussion and Q&A including Housing Minister Paul McLennan. You can find more information and register for the webinar on the [Homeless Network Scotland website](#).

Early Release of Prisoners

In June, the [Scottish Parliament approved](#) the emergency early release of prisoners. The first three tranches have already taken place, and tranche 4 releases will take place on 17th and 18th July. The Scottish Prison Service has published [Emergency Release Operational Guidance](#). The guidance contains information on SPS ‘Pre-Release Consideration of Need’ (Annex E) with details of when community partners can expect to receive final confirmation of which individuals are due to be released each week.

The SPS local Single Points of Contact (SPOC) remain the best people to contact at a local level as they are responsible for liaising with local partners in the handling of any early releases under the process. If you need to information about the SPOCs for particular prisons you can email eilidh.shearer@ccpscotland.org. The Criminal Justice Voluntary Sector Form (CJVSF) attends the weekly Emergency Release Operational Leads group so please feed back any issues or observations you have; there will be a lessons learned session in August which the forum will feed into.

Release of Long Term Prisoners consultation: A Scottish Government consultation has been launched for proposals to change the release process for long-term prisoners. [The consultation paper](#) sets out the government’s intention to bring forward the point at which some long-term prisoners are released. CJVSF will liaise with Scottish Government colleagues to explore options for engagement with members, in the meantime if individual organisations wish to respond to the consultation [the link is here](#). Closes 19th August.

HSEU Response to National Outcomes Consultation

The Unit has responded to the [Consultation on the Review of the National Outcomes](#), welcoming the new proposed housing outcome.

The Housing Support Enabling Unit supported the previous joint call from Crisis, the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers, Chartered Institute of Housing and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations for a new outcome in the National Performance Framework focused on home and housing support:

‘We all have good homes we can sustain: Everyone has a home to live in that is good quality, affordable, and suitable to their needs, and can access the support they need to live in it.’

However, the current proposals may leave people who need support to maintain their own tenancy in a gap between the proposed housing and care outcomes. The Housing Support Enabling Unit recommends that the housing outcome includes explicit reference to the support required by some people to exercise their right to adequate housing. Housing support promotes the wellbeing of people by enabling people to live at home as independently as possible.

Clear links between the new proposed housing and care outcomes will be important for more effective joint working, and in order to support fair work across social care and housing. You can read the [full consultation response here](#).

SFHA Gain Exemption for Sheltered Housing to Short Terms lets legislation

Last week, Parliament approved amendments to short term lets legislation which frees up sheltered and specialist housing providers from the potentially significant burden of falling under the scheme. Sheltered housing is now added to the list of exemptions and guest rooms are defined as ‘.guest rooms in sheltered housing which are provided for the purposes of visiting residents of that housing.’ More information is available on the [SFHA website](#).

Changes to SSSC Registration

From 3rd June 2024, the SSSC made changes to registration. The categories in the Register have been simplified, so that the previous parts of the Register including support worker in a housing support service or manager of a housing support service now come under the category of social care worker. For people who had previously been registered on both the housing support and care at home parts of the Register, they will now only need to register on the social care worker part, although the SSSC will still need to know the services they are working in. [More information about the changes are available on the SSSC website](#).

Housing Coalition Open Letter

After the declaration of a housing emergency by the Scottish Parliament in May, a coalition of housing organisations have written an open letter to the First Minister calling on the Scottish Government to ‘change course’. The coalition included members of the Housing to 2040 Strategic Board and was comprised of the

Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers, Chartered Institute of Housing, Homes for Scotland, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and Shelter Scotland. [The open letter was accompanied by a National Housing Emergency Action Plan](#) with four priority areas to meet housing need:

1. Urgently increase the supply of new social homes,
2. Make maximal use of existing homes for people in need.
3. Fully fund local homelessness services.
4. Maximised affordability across all tenures.

HACT and TECH Evaluation

The Technology Enabled Care in Housing (TECH) programme supports housing providers, tenants, and customers, to explore, test and embed tech innovation opportunities. HACT has undertaken an in-depth analysis of three pilot TECH programmes:

- Rural Connectivity
- Healthier Homes
- Smart Monitoring

[The analysis](#) showcases how digital solutions are reshaping the landscape of housing services, empowering tenants to live independently and enhancing the efficiency of housing providers.

Budget Scrutiny 2025-26 Third Sector Funding Principles

The Social Justice and Social Security Committee has opened a call for views in response to concerns about funding challenges faced by the third sector. The Committee wanted to examine how the Scottish Government's approach to fair and efficient funding can contribute to the continued effectiveness of the third sector. The Committee wants to hear from both fund and funded organisations about what can be done now to make the funding process more efficient. [The call for views is open until Friday 16th August.](#)