

Highland Council

Why we are engaging with Highland Council (Highland)

We are engaging with Highland about its **services for people who are homeless**.

To assess the risks to people who are homeless we have reviewed and compared the data for all councils from the Scottish Government's 2017/18 national homelessness statistics, the Annual Returns on the Charter and information from our previous engagement with Highland. From this we identified areas where we require further information and assurance from Highland:

- how people access the service: in Housing Options cases, the low percentage of people Highland recorded as presenting for homelessness reasons for whom the council completed a homelessness application;
- temporary accommodation:
 - Highland did not make offers of temporary or emergency accommodation on around 10 occasions where it had a duty to make an offer;
 - Highland breached the unsuitable accommodation order on around five occasions;
- outcomes for people who are homeless:
 - the number of people waiting for more than one year for an outcome is above the Scottish average; and
 - the time it took to discharge its duties to people who are unintentionally homeless from application is above the Scottish average.

Three of Highland's four Gypsy/Traveller sites were compliant with the Scottish Government's minimum site standards by the June 2018 deadline. Highland had expected the remaining site to be completed by 31 March 2019 but was not fully compliant until June 2019.

What Highland must do

Highland will:

- provide us with assurance that it is delivering the necessary improvements to its homelessness service; and
- demonstrate to us it is complying with its duty to offer temporary or emergency accommodation and the unsuitable accommodation order.

What we will do

We will:

- review the progress Highland is making in delivering improvements to its homelessness service and determine what more we may require it to do;
- monitor Highland's compliance with its statutory duties in relation to offers of temporary or emergency accommodation and the unsuitable accommodation order;
- review Highland's performance in relation to the outcome for people who are homeless as part of our 2019/20 annual risk assessment; and

- review Highland's service quality performance for improvement with a particular focus on the following areas when it submits its next Annual Return on the Charter:
 - overall satisfaction;
 - tenants who feel the landlord is good at keeping them informed about services and decisions;
 - tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in landlords decision-making;
 - satisfaction with the quality of home;
 - complaints management; and
 - factored owners' satisfaction with the factoring service.

Regulatory returns

Highland must provide us with the following annual regulatory returns:

- Annual Assurance Statement;
- Annual Return on the Charter; and
- the return on the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

It should also notify us of any material changes to its Annual Assurance Statement, and any tenant and resident safety matter which has been reported to or is being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.



[Read more about Highland>](#)

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