

Media Release

Thursday 23 December 2021

Mayoral Taskforce for Social Housing

In late October, Wellington Mayor Andy Foster announced the establishment of a Mayoral Taskforce for Social Housing.

The Taskforce has had its first meeting, which was scheduled to allow it to follow on from the recent tenant activity around their IRRS4All campaign (a tenant-led campaign to request government to enable WCC social housing tenants to access the Income Related Rents Subsidy (IRRS)).

At that meeting the Taskforce's objectives, scope and its schedule of activities were defined.

The Taskforce is made up of WCC elected members, tenants, and social services providers.

Other independent experts on social housing and provision of social housing developments will also be invited to attend the upcoming meetings.

Mayor Andy Foster says that 'It's the right time to ensure the views of tenants are clearly heard and for them to consider proposed interim and long-term solutions to meet the need of social housing tenants in the city.'

Stephen King, [co-vicar at St Peter's Anglican Church](#) and the chair of residents' group [Inner City Wellington](#) has been appointed to the Taskforce.

He says, 'Having the voices of tenants and supporting them to be heard is a key focus for the Taskforce, when navigating the complexities of the issues.'

Deputy Chair of the Taskforce, Cr Diane Calvert says, 'The 2007 Deed of Grant between the government and the council for the provision of social housing was innovative in its approach at the time. We need to take that same attitude as we work up possible solutions that support the current Deed.'

The Taskforce's next meeting is scheduled for late January, followed by further tenant-based discussions at meetings through late February/March.

Mayor Foster says 'This will allow for initial findings to be ready to feed into both Council planning and Government budgeting processes, if required.'

Media enquiries:

John Bullock – Office of the Mayor - 021 391 847

Cr Diane Calvert - 029 971 8944

Stephen King - 027 210 0780

Mayoral Taskforce for Social Housing

Terms of Reference

Overview

Wellington's Mayor Andy Foster has established the Taskforce for City Housing (the Taskforce), to assist Wellington City Council (WCC) in responding to the challenges of affordability, sustainability, additionality and quality of its housing portfolio and the needs of tenants.

The Taskforce has an external and tenant focus and complements the work underway by Wellington City Council officers, who are currently working with government officials on the future provision of the Council's social housing (City Housing) in the Deed of Grant obligations.

The Taskforce will access independent experts, social housing advocates and City Housing tenants to discuss the current challenges and potential solutions for both tenants and WCC.

Key findings and recommendations, including a series of tenant experiences and social housing provider opinions, will be referred to Council by May 2022.

Purpose

The Taskforce will:

- Bring together and articulate the perspectives and aspirations of tenants, decision makers and community members on Wellington's social housing
- Collate an agreed understanding of Wellington City's past and present social housing provision and future social housing need in Wellington
- Create recommendations for decision makers on how we should address social housing need in Wellington

Scope

The scope of the Taskforce is to:

- Collect quantitative and qualitative evidence from social housing tenants, providers, and housing experts
- Consider current and future social housing need in Wellington
- Explore preferred ownership and delivery models
- Consider the recent tenant-facing services review provided by Wellington City Council

Key Objectives for Wellington's Social Housing

1. Affordability

We need council housing to be affordable for all of our tenants. Social housing tenants should not experience inequality based on who their housing provider is.

2. Sustainability

We need Wellington City Council's social housing to be financially sustainable to ensure existing social housing stock is maintained and can continue to grow. City Housing will not survive in its current state without urgent Crown intervention/support.

3. Additionality

We need more social housing in Wellington. Families living in emergency accommodation, transitional housing, and those joining the growing social housing waitlists deserve a safe and secure home with appropriate access to social services that the private market is not providing.

4. Quality

We need all council housing to be of a healthy and secure standard with access to social tenancy management services. The housing upgrade programme and healthy homes standards must be met so that all tenants can live in warm, dry and safe homes. The type and level of tenancy management also needs to be fit for purpose and aligned to good practice.

Delivery Schedule

- **December 2021**
 - Agreed Terms of Reference and work programme

- **January 2022**
 - Plan for the collection of perspectives on City Housing
 - Explore interim options for tenants while negotiations with the Crown happen
 - Review tenant-facing services Review Report provided by City Housing

- **February/March 2022**
 - Targeted sessions to hear the views from tenants
 - Explore social housing aspects (delivery and provision) with service experts
 - Taskforce to provide recommendations to Council on interim relief for tenants
 - Explore social housing ownership models
 - Interim Report from the Mayoral Taskforce

- **April/May 2022**
 - Final report from Mayoral Taskforce including recommendations to key decision makers

Membership

- Mayor Andy Foster (Chair)
- Councillor Diane Calvert (Deputy Chair)
- Councillor Tamatha Paul (Tenant Liaison)
- Deputy Mayor Sarah Free (Alternate)
- Liz Kelly (Ngāti Toa Representative)
- Te Awa Puketapu (Taranaki Whānui Representative)
- Murray Edridge (Community Representative)

- Stephen King (Community Representative)
- Rosalina Ngakopu (Tenant Representative)
- Debbie Port (Tenant Representative) and Faiza Akbar (Tenant Representative)

Housing Experts (to be finalised)

Construction

Financing

Public Housing

Urban housing historian