
ORDINARY MEETING

OF

PŪRORO RANGARANGA - SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND
ECONOMIC

MINUTES

Time: 9:30am
Date: Thursday, 2 December 2021
Venue: Ngake (16.09)
Level 16, Tahiwī
113 The Terrace
Wellington

PRESENT

Mayor Foster
Deputy Mayor Free
Councillor Calvert
Councillor Condie
Councillor Day (Chair)
Councillor Fitzsimons
Councillor Foon
Liz Kelly
Councillor Matthews
Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Pannett
Councillor Paul
Councillor Rush
Councillor Woolf
Councillor Young (Deputy Chair)

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1. Meeting Conduct

1.1 Karakia

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 9:32am and invited members to stand and read the following karakia to open the meeting.

Whakataka te hau ki te uru, Whakataka te hau ki te tonga. Kia mākinakina ki uta, Kia mātaratara ki tai. E hī ake ana te atākura. He tio, he huka, he hauhū. Tihei Mauri Ora!	Cease oh winds of the west and of the south Let the bracing breezes flow, over the land and the sea. Let the red-tipped dawn come with a sharpened edge, a touch of frost, a promise of a glorious day
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1.2 Apologies

Moved Councillor Day, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

1. Accept the apologies received from Mayor Foster and Deputy Mayor Free for lateness.

Carried

1.3 Conflict of Interest Declarations

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes

Moved Councillor Day, seconded Councillor Matthews

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

1. Approves the minutes of the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee Meeting held on 2 November 2021, having been circulated, that they be taken as read and confirmed as an accurate record of that meeting.

Carried

1.5 Items not on the Agenda

There were no items not on the agenda.

1.6 Public Participation

1.6.1 Wellington Housing Action Coalition - Mary Hobbs, Ariana Paretutanganui-Tamati, and Warwick Taylor

On behalf of Wellington Housing Action Coalition, Mary Hobbs, Ariana Paretutanganui-Tamati, and Warwick Taylor addressed the meeting regarding item 2.1 Notice of Motion - City Housing.

1.6.2 E tū union - Rosey Ngakopu and Anaru Ryall

On behalf of E tū union, Rosey Ngakopu and Anaru Ryall addressed the meeting regarding item 2.1 Notice of Motion - City Housing.

1.6.3 IRRS 4 ALL Pōneke - Marlon Drake, Debbie, David Cook

On behalf of IRRS 4 ALL Pōneke, Marlon Drake, Debbie and David Cook addressed the meeting regarding item 2.1 Notice of Motion - City Housing.

1.6.4 Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand - Gina Lockyer

On behalf of Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand, Gina Lockyer addressed the meeting regarding item 3.1 Report of the Kāwai Whakatipu | Grants Subcommittee Meeting of 1 December 2021 – Living Wage for Events Fund Criteria.

1.6.5 Newtown Festival - Martin Hanley and Anna Kemble Welch

On behalf of Newtown Festival, Martin Hanley and Anna Kemble Welch addressed the meeting regarding item 3.1 Report of the Kāwai Whakatipu | Grants Subcommittee Meeting of 1 December 2021 – Living Wage for Events Fund Criteria.

(Deputy Mayor Free joined the meeting at 9:39am)

(Mayor Foster joined the meeting at 9:54am)

The meeting adjourned at 10:21am and resumed at 10:40am with all members present.

2. General Business

2.1 Notice of Motion - City Housing

Secretarial Note: Councillor Day proposed to alter the motion from the motion included in the agenda, the proposed altered motion is below. Any alteration to a notice of motion requires the agreement of the mover and the agreement of a majority of members present at the meeting under Standing Order 23.5. A vote to accept the alteration to the motion was put and a division was called for under standing order 27.6(b), voting was as follows:

For:

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, and Councillor Young

Against:

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Foon, Deputy Mayor Free, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Woolf, and Liz Kelly.

Majority Vote: 6:9

Lost

Proposed Altered Motion

That Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee agree:

1. That the affordable rent limit subsidy is available to all tenants who meet the criteria and apply for it.
2. That City Housing proactively communicate with tenants to ensure all tenants are aware of the affordable rent limit subsidy and provide support through the application process for those who choose to apply for the subsidy.
3. That City Housing does not collect bank statements from tenants to assess eligibility for the affordable rent limit subsidy.
4. That all information provided by tenants during the application process for the affordable rent limit subsidy is used only for this purpose and consistent with the Privacy Act 1993.
5. That the affordable rent limit is funded through existing operational funding.
6. To recommend to the Pūroro Maherehere | Annual Plan/Long-term Committee that a rent freeze is introduced for all tenants in 2022.
7. That information about access to interpreters is translated into Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Spanish, Samoan, Russian, Cambodian and Hindi with a specific reference to the availability of EziSpeak.
8. To recommend to the Pūroro Maherehere | Annual Plan/Long-term Committee that the tenants welcome pack is translated into Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Spanish, Samoan, Russian, Cambodian and Hindi.
9. That any upcoming consultation documents about possible changes to the structure or delivery of City Housing are translated into Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Spanish, Samoan, Russian, Cambodian and Hindi funded through existing operational funding.
10. To restate the long standing position of this Council requesting that Council tenants can access IRRS and support the IRRS 4 ALL Pōneke campaign.

Secretarial Note: With the leave of the meeting, the original motion published in the agenda was moved and seconded.

Moved Councillor Day, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons

That Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

- 1) Agree that City Housing investigates the following possible interim steps:
 - a. Amend the criteria for the Affordable Rent Limit Subsidy (ARL) to ensure all eligible tenants benefit from it, including by taking into account the impact of the ARL on the level of Accommodation Supplement
 - b. Rates fund the top up to the ARL fund
 - c. Create a discretionary hardship fund for tenants living in material hardship
 - d. Freeze all rent increases for 2022
 - e. Translate the Tenants Welcome Pack, Tenant Newsletter and all formal communication regarding tenancy changes of upcoming changes in the operation of City Housing into Te Reo Māori, Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Spanish, Samoan, Russian, Cambodian and Hindi.

Voting was taken part by part and divisions were called for under standing order 27.6(b), voting on which were as follows:

Clause 1.a.

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Councillor Young.

Majority Vote: 14:1

Carried

Clause 1.b.

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Deputy Mayor Free, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Mayor Foster, Liz Kelly and Councillor Young.

Majority Vote: 12:3

Carried

Clause 1.c.

For:

Councillor Condie, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Paul and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Rush and Councillor Young.

Majority Vote: 5:10

Lost

Clause 1.d.

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Liz Kelly and Councillor Young.

Majority Vote: 13:2

Carried

Clause 1.e.

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Liz Kelly, Councillor Rush and Councillor Young.

Majority Vote: 12:3

Carried

Clause 1

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush and Councillor Woolf.

Against:

Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 14:1

Carried

Secretarial Note: For clarity, the final resolution passed by the committee was as follows:

Moved Councillor Day, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons

Resolved

That Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

- 1) Agree that City Housing investigates the following possible interim steps:
 - a. Amend the criteria for the Affordable Rent Limit Subsidy (ARL) to ensure all eligible tenants benefit from it, including by taking into account the impact of the ARL on the level of Accommodation Supplement
 - b. Rates fund the top up to the ARL fund
 - d. Freeze all rent increases for 2022
 - e. Translate the Tenants Welcome Pack, Tenant Newsletter and all formal communication regarding tenancy changes of upcoming changes in the operation of City Housing into Te Reo Māori, Arabic, Tamil, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Spanish, Samoan, Russian, Cambodian and Hindi.

Carried

Attachments

- 1 WCC Tenancy Services Model Review Final Report Sept 2021

(Councillor Paul left the meeting at 9:58am)
(Councillor Paul returned to the meeting at 9:59am)
(Councillor Matthews left the meeting at 10:04am)
(Councillor Fitzsimons left the meeting at 10:04am)
(Councillor Fitzsimons returned to the meeting at 10:05am)
(Councillor Matthews returned to the meeting at 10:07am)
(Councillor O'Neill left the meeting at 11:10am)
(Councillor O'Neill returned to the meeting at 11:17am)
(Councillor Paul left the meeting at 11:49am)
(Councillor Paul returned to the meeting at 11:50am)
(Councillor Matthews left the meeting at 12:23pm)
(Councillor Matthews returned to the meeting at 12:25pm)

The meeting adjourned at 12:27pm and resumed at 12:40pm with all members present.

The meeting adjourned at 12:59pm and resumed at 1:33pm with the following members present: Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Woolf and Councillor Young.

(Councillor O'Neill returned to the meeting at 1:35pm)
(Mayor Foster left the meeting at 1:46pm)
(Councillor Fitzsimons left the meeting at 1:48pm)
(Councillor Fitzsimons returned to the meeting at 1:49pm)

2.2 Te Kopahou Track Network Plan

Moved Councillor O'Neill, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons the following motion

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic:

- 1) Receive the information
- 2) Adopt the Te Kopahou Track Network Plan (Attachment 1) and associated implementation plan (Attachment 2).
- 3) Note that the plan will be implemented over 15 years (2023-2038). The plan is not currently funded, and proposals for funding will be put forward for the 2023/2024 Annual Plan and subsequent Long-Term Plan (2024/2034). Attachment 2 outlines timeframes that will enable existing capital and operational funding priorities to remain in place while making progress on delivery of the Te Kopahou Track Network Plan over time and subject to new funding.
- 4) Note that there are opportunities for external funding and volunteer partnerships to implement the plan.

Moved Councillor Foon, seconded Deputy Mayor Free the following amendment

Resolved

- 5) Recommend that the Pūroro Maherehere | Annual Plan/Long-term Committee:
 - a. Agree to increase the capital budget for 2022/2023 by \$200,000 which would enable the investigation, route selection and specialist assessment reports for a number of the new tracks (the ones listed as first priority in the Implementation Plan) and the improvements to the Skyline walkway route (4 & 5).

Carried

Moved Councillor O'Neill, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic:

- 1) Receive the information
- 2) Adopt the Te Kopahou Track Network Plan (Attachment 1) and associated implementation plan (Attachment 2).
- 3) Note that the plan will be implemented over 15 years (2023-2038). The plan is not currently funded, and proposals for funding will be put forward for the 2023/2024 Annual Plan and subsequent Long-Term Plan (2024/2034). Attachment 2 outlines timeframes that will enable existing capital and operational funding priorities to remain in place while making progress on delivery of the Te Kopahou Track Network Plan over time and subject to new funding.
- 4) Note that there are opportunities for external funding and volunteer partnerships to implement the plan.
- 5) **Recommend that the Pūroro Maherehere | Annual Plan/Long-term Committee:**
 - a. **Agree to increase the capital budget for 2022/2023 by \$200,000 which would enable the investigation, route selection and specialist assessment reports for a number of the new tracks (the ones listed as first priority in the Implementation Plan) and the improvements to the Skyline walkway route (4 & 5).**

Carried

(Councillor Paul left the meeting at 1:50pm)
(Mayor Foster returned to the meeting at 1:52pm)
(Councillor Paul returned to the meeting at 1:52pm)

The meeting adjourned at 1:54pm and resumed at 1:58pm with all members present.

2.3 Forward Programme

Moved Councillor Matthews, seconded Deputy Mayor Free

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

1. Receive the information.

Carried

2.4 Actions Tracking

Moved Councillor O'Neill, seconded Councillor Foon

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

1. Receive the information.

Carried

(Mayor Foster left the meeting at 2:23pm)

3. Committee Reports

3.1 **Report of the Kāwai Whakatipu | Grants Subcommittee Meeting of 1** December 2021

Moved Councillor Fitzsimons, seconded Councillor Matthews

Resolved

That the Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee:

1. Approve the criteria for the Living Wage for Events Fund, and
2. Note the processes for administering the fund, and
3. Delegate the power to make grant decisions for the Living Wage for Events Fund to the Chair of the Kāwai Whakatipu | Grants Subcommittee in consultation with the Chair of Pūroro Rangaranga | Social, Cultural and Economic Committee, when a decision is required between scheduled meetings.

Carried

Voting was taken part by part and divisions were called for under standing order 27.6(b), voting on which were as follows:

Clause 1 and 2

For:

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Woolf and Councillor Young.

Against:

Councillor Rush.

Majority Vote: 14:1

Carried

Clause 3

For:

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Mayor Foster, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Woolf and Councillor Young.

Against:

Councillor Calvert and Councillor Rush.

Majority Vote: 13:2

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 2:30pm and resumed at 2:35pm with the following members present: Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Deputy Mayor Free, Liz Kelly, Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Woolf and Councillor Young.

The meeting concluded at 2:45pm with the reading of the following karakia:

Unuhia, unuhia, unuhia ki te uru tapu nui	Draw on, draw on
Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua	Draw on the supreme sacredness To clear, to free the heart, the body and the spirit of mankind
I te ara takatū	
Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga	Oh Rongo, above (symbol of peace)
Kia wātea, kia wātea	Let this all be done in unity
Āe rā, kua wātea!	

Authenticated: _____

Chair



23 September 2021

Review of tenant support and tenant-facing services provided by City Housing

Wellington City Council Me Heke Ki Pōneke

RDC Group Ltd

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This report responds to Wellington City Council's request for an independent review of the Council's tenant support and tenancy services model.

1. Background

WCC has provided safe, secure and affordable housing in Wellington since the 1950's, and is the largest council social housing provider in New Zealand, and in Wellington, with 3200 tenants and 1927 units^{1,2}

The housing is organised in sixty-three complexes across Wellington, which range in size from 1 dwelling to 205 dwellings. While 64% of tenants live alone, there are many families, and the biggest single age group is 5 – 9 year-olds (250). Only 19% of tenants are over 65yrs which makes City Housing very different to most other Council housing across Aotearoa, which is predominately pensioner housing.

City Housing provides a range of additional services designed to support tenants with respect to their social, emotional and physical well-being. Some tenants have complex needs that require specialist services. City Housing works with external agencies to provide wraparound services and support for tenants who need them.

A major upgrade programme for the housing, supported by a \$220m grant from central government, commenced in 2008. Some 50% of the stock has now been upgraded³, and it is expected that the balance of the upgrade will commence in 2022. The Council commenced the work needed to meet the Healthy Homes standards in early 2021.⁴

City Housing is a self-contained business unit within the Council's wider operations which manages its social housing. Its revenue is provided only through rental income.

A meeting of the Council on 2 June this year considered the financial challenges facing City Housing. An operating deficit of \$7m is expected in FY 2021/22, and significant capital is required to complete the upgrade programme. Officers were directed to consider options for the future in response to the financial challenges, and are to report back in late September 2021. Council decisions on the future management of its social housing are expected at that meeting.

While these matters are out of scope for this review (see below), they provide important context.

2. Context and Purpose

The purpose of this review was to critically assess and consider how Wellington City Council provides support services for its tenants in City Housing. Importantly, we were asked to provide insights and help Council develop an understanding of any limitations to the services it currently provides under its tenancy services model which have an impact on the level of support services that it provides. We were also asked to identify and advise on

¹ P81, background papers for 2 June 2021 Council meeting. The 2007 Deed of Grant described social housing as "affordable residential rental accommodation owned by the Council and available for use by tenants of the Council and allocated to people in housing need".

² City Housing also provides tenancy services for 26 properties for Porirua City Council, 7 properties for Parks, Sport and Recreation. A further 52 properties at Te Kāinga Aroha are managed by Wellington City Council, separate from City Housing. As such they are outside the scope of this review.

³ P10, background papers for 2 June 2021 Council meeting.

⁴ Email communication 5 September 2021.

how current services compare to those delivered by other agencies to social housing tenants elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand.

As well as understanding the opportunities to improve services for tenants Council also wished to understand the opportunities there are to provide services that support effective and safe neighbourhoods and communities. Part of the context for this part of the review was the tragic death of a tenant who was killed in her home in one of Central Park Apartments.⁵ It should be noted that an internal review determined this tenant was receiving appropriate support and tenancy services up to the time of her unfortunate death.

Finally, the Review looked at the model for partnering with people and other agencies to support our tenants and make the homes and communities they live in safe and thriving.

The range of services and level of tenant support provided by City Housing is expressed through the current operational policy framework. This framework was intended to be reviewed as part of the existing City Housing work programme this year given the framework has been in place since 2010. Through this review Council wants to ensure that these services are fit for purpose, reflect good practice and are delivered well.

3. Scope

The Terms of Reference (see Appendix One) asked us to:

- Examine the tenancy support and management policies, practices and procedures at the Wellington City Council City Housing properties.
- Review and clarify the on-site support services provided by Wellington City Council to tenants in City Housing properties and compare these to the support services provided by other local government bodies who provide community housing services.
- Review how we City Housing partners and works with Central Government agencies, non-government organisations and iwi to provide support services to our tenants.
- Review the operational policies and procedures of City Housing and identify opportunities for how these could be improved on.
- Review the activities that support tenants to live in safe and thriving communities including activities designed to identify and respond to safety and community cohesion risks. Identify opportunities to enhance these.
- Review and research opportunities to improve the tenants experience noting our current limitations and operating/funding constraints.

The following areas were out of scope:

- WCC's building stock and asset management.
- The current funding model and financial challenges.

4. Review approach and limitations

The review's approach is set out in the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1) and was expected to include the review of documentation and interviews with relevant people. Appendix Two lists the documents reviewed, and Appendix Three lists the individuals interviewed (in the case of WCC) and the organisations whose representatives we interviewed.

⁵ <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/300285665/city-councillor-raises-concerns-about-supports-in-council-housing-after-woman-found-dead>

In relation to City Housing the documents we reviewed were those recommended by the key WCC staff with whom we liaised in the course of the review, and supplementary papers we requested as we went through our work.

Documents relating to other social housing providers were identified by us, and the providers, in the course of the interviews.

We undertook 21 interviews, of which 2 were group interviews (with tenancy advisors, and with tenant community volunteers within City Housing's complexes, most of whom are designated as kaitiaki).

In addition, two NGOs replied to an email questionnaire using the same questions as the interviews.

The interviewees were chosen by the key WCC staff with whom we liaised in the course of the review.

The interview questions focused on City Housing's tenant support and were designed to elicit opinions and judgements from the interviewees, based on their experiences, and their aspirations for the future. At a high level they were structured around three evaluative questions:

1. What works well
2. What doesn't work well
3. What improvements would you like to see.

And those questions were applied to three domains:

1. The support offered to tenants as individuals
2. The support offered to the tenant communities in their neighbourhoods
3. The way that City Housing and other key social agencies work together to support tenants.

The questions were modified, and extended, according to the circumstances, knowledge and experience of the interviewees.

The review approach, in other words, was qualitative. While the insights gained are important, and have some depth, they can't be generalised or validly aggregated. For example, the views of the tenant kaitiaki who met with us are their views, but can't be assumed to be the views of all kaitiaki nor of the tenants as a whole. (The results of the annual tenant surveys are very helpful in this regard, and are referred to in our report, although their focus is somewhat different from this review).

The questions used to guide the interviews with other social housing providers were designed to provide a picture of the way other broadly equivalent providers approach their responsibilities to their tenants, and to enable us to identify any lessons that can be learned from them.

5. Acknowledgements

This review is limited to assessing the City Housing's tenancy and tenancy support model and functions to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet the needs of tenants and Council's expectations now and into the future.

The review does not make any comment on the professional competence or general conduct of any individual or groups.

We would like to acknowledge the thoughtful, open and constructive input from the individuals, teams and organisations who contributed to the review. Everyone we met with was universally generous with their time, passionate about, and committed to the work they do to support tenants and the communities they live in.

6. How does WCC / City Housing approach its role?

The Council's strategic and operational policy framework for the work of City Housing was established in 2010⁶.

The policy document's opening paragraphs confirm the Council's commitment to the provision of social housing below market rent to households who experience barriers to affordable housing. Further, that rents are to be affordable and are to generate enough revenue to maintain the homes⁷.

Its vision, objectives, and principles are that:

- Vision – all Wellingtonians have access to accommodation that's fit for purpose. Council contributes by providing some social housing for people who would otherwise have barriers to accessing appropriate and affordable accommodation.
- Objectives – appropriate and affordable housing; safe and secure housing to a good standard; communities where people feel safe, have a sense of belonging and are proud [to call their houses] home; support for Council tenants to improve their quality of life and well-being and to contribute to and benefit from living in Wellington.
- Principles - work in partnership to improve the lives of tenants; ensure the housing portfolio is financially sustainable into the future and affordable for tenants; response to demand for social housing is equitable and efficiently [managed]; commitment to resilient and cohesive communities; provide a high-quality service to tenant.⁸

The policy commits the Council to working in partnership with Kāinga Ora (then HCNZ), with other government agencies, and with support agencies to improve tenant well-being. The Council committed to recognising and involving the expertise of community and government agencies.⁹

In relation to tenancy management, the policy commits WCC to three programmes whose aim is tenant support and community development.¹⁰

- i. Housing Plus – aims to increase the presence of tenancy managers on site, develop effective communications between tenancy managers and tenants, fostering agency partnerships, providing case management for high risk/high needs tenancies.
- ii. Community Action – goals of this programme are to provide opportunities for tenants to: improve their physical environment; create and participate in activities; increase their sense of safety and well-being; meet others and participate in community celebrations; develop leadership skills; get access to social and recreational programmes; develop creative expression through artistic endeavours; build confidence, self-reliance and a positive sense of identity; access primary health and wellness services and information; contribute to the regeneration of communities; access training and employment opportunities.

⁶ A refreshed policy framework has been drafted for Council approval but is not (yet) adopted because the wider picture of financial sustainability needs to be resolved. Email communication, 17 June 2021

⁷ 2010 *A Policy for WCC's Social Housing Service*, p2

⁸ 2010 *A Policy for WCC's Social Housing Service*, p1

⁹ 2010 *A Policy for WCC's Social Housing Service*, pp 4,9

¹⁰ 2010 *A Policy for WCC's Social Housing Service*, p10

- iii. Tenancy representation – WCC recognises the Wellington Housing Association of Tenants. It was established to: represent tenants in Council housing; be recognised as the formal joint voice of tenants; negotiate with Council on behalf of tenants on matters of concern; promote communication among tenant groups; support the work of tenant groups; work towards tenants having control of their housing; promote processes to allow all tenants to have a say in decision-making.

The expectation was that the policy should be reviewed every five years, but while one or more reviews was initiated none was finalised.¹¹ Notwithstanding, there has been considerable detailed work done in 2020/2021 to refresh the overall housing policy, rent-setting policy, and tenancy operational guidelines. On our read of the draft policies, the vision, objectives and principles established in 2010 remain at the heart of the draft 2020/21 policies, with the possible exception of tenancy representation.¹²

In practice City Housing operationalises its commitment to provide support to tenants in two key domains: tenants who live in its dwellings, and as communities. These are discussed below in sections 7, 8 and 10.

7. Services to all tenants¹³

City Housing currently has a group of 12 tenant advisors, with further recruitment underway to fill a number of vacancies. They make sure new tenants are welcomed to their dwellings, administer transfers and oversee the ending of tenancies. The advisors undertake annual inspections of the dwellings, and provide advice and assistance to tenants as required, including responding to rent arrears, property damage, and facilitating the resolution of difficulties tenants experience with the company which is contracted to provide property and facilities management services.

Currently tenancy advisors have a portfolio of around 250 households, and is expected to be reasonably easily accessible to tenants on a weekly basis, often through making themselves available for 'drop in' meetings with tenants in the community rooms built into the larger complexes. The advisors are a key link in ensuring tenants access health and social services when needed, and in connecting tenants with City Housing's community development work.

Once the recruitment underway has been completed, it is estimated that there will be a reduction on portfolio size for tenancy advisors to an average of 170 households.

City Housing's recruitment of tenancy advisors aims to ensure diversity among advisors to reflect the diversity of tenants.¹⁴

The wider Council's 24/7 Contact Centre, and its business hours Service Centre, ensure that tenants can always access advice and assistance.

8. Services to enhance the well-being of tenants

8.1. City Housing provides a welfare service to support the wellbeing of tenants at the individual / household level.

This welfare service is provided through a dedicated staff member whose role is designated as a *tenancy case manager*. At the time of our interview with the tenancy case manager we

¹¹ Conversation with City Housing staffer 29 June 2021.

¹² The arrangements that applied at that time no longer apply - the tenants organisation (Wellington Housing Association of Tenants no longer exists).

¹³ This aspect of City Housing's service is the equivalent of the *Housing Plus* framing in the 2010 policy.

¹⁴ Interview with City Housing managers. They noted that despite best attempts, recruiting Māori tenancy advisers has proved very difficult.

were advised she had a caseload of 58, 20 of whom were described as being tenants with high and complex needs.

The case manager provides extra support to tenants who need it. She acts both to understand the special needs of tenants referred to her by tenancy advisors, Police, and others; and – where needed – to link them up with whichever of the many government and NGO agencies in the area is best placed to assist. Once services are set up and working, she moves away.

Information about her work with tenants is added to the existing tenancy management system so that tenancy advisors can see it, take it into account, and ensure that their engagement with the tenant complements the work of the case manager.

The role is a network one, working as a team with other City Housing staff (particularly the tenancy advisors) and with health and social service agencies. Its success depends on well-developed and well-maintained relationships across Wellington's health and social service providers, including active participation in the many multi-agency forums across Wellington designed to coordinate service provision.

8.2. Alongside services for individual tenants, City Housing provides a community development service¹⁵

This service is provided by a staff member whose role is designated as a Senior Advisor Community Development. Her role is to build relationships and networks with community agencies; and to support activities run by them and by tenants in City Housing's community spaces

Appendix Five describes the rationale behind the approach, the outcomes the activities are designed to contribute to, and the groups that participate in the programme. The advisor facilitates connections for tenants to services and groups in the wider community that promote a sense of belonging and wellbeing.

The community development work is supported by some 38 tenant community volunteers, who are trained and supported as tenant community leaders / kaitiaki. They promote community building by leading or supporting events, gardening and ongoing activities.

This aspect of City Housing's work has undergone a real shift in recent years. It was initially envisaged as a service to sustain communities of tenants whose properties were being upgraded, in recognition of the risk that social cohesion would be lost as tenants were moved out of their houses into temporary accommodation and then back into refurbished dwellings. Over time it also became a programme of activities organised by Council staff, albeit supported by volunteers.

A critical review of the programme¹⁶ prompted a rethink. City Housing staff now have much more of a facilitative role, looking to encourage the community's leadership and ownership of initiatives which are relevant to a specific community's needs, rather than the provision of activities by staff. Training for tenant community volunteers has been developed, as has a Code of Conduct.

This work relies on networked connections too, just like the work of the case manager. Key internal partners include the tenant advisors and the wider community development work of the City Council, which is focused on all Wellingtonians. To support the latter connections the senior advisor co-locates with that team for a day a week.

¹⁵ This aspect of City Housing's service is broadly equivalent to the *Community Action* framing in the 2010 policy.

¹⁶ Sonia Ogier *City Housing Operational Review – a Discussion Document* 30 October 2017

8.3. Communication to tenants from City Housing

These multi-faceted relationships between City Housing and its tenants are supported by multiple communications, including hard-copy newsletters, e-newsletters, and posters. These provide regular information on local events, and – from time-to-time – longer narratives backgrounding and explaining significant events. Recent examples include the death of a Central Park Flats tenant who was killed in her home in April 2021, and the recent decision of the Council to review the financial sustainability of City Housing (the 2 June 2021 decision to explore, among other things, the possibility of the Council's housing being managed by a registered Community Housing Provider).¹⁷

8.4. Tenant voice and satisfaction

When the WCC social housing policy was established in 2010, the Council supported the role of WHAT (the Wellington Housing Association of Tenants) and relied on it to provide the voice of tenants.¹⁸ Neither that organisation nor that relationship exist now.

The primary source of comprehensive information for City Housing, and for WCC more widely, about tenants' views, and tenant satisfaction (including whether the policy objectives¹⁹ are met) comes from the annual tenant satisfaction surveys.

Those surveys show stable, positive views across the six years 2015 – 2020 (inclusive). Preliminary results from the 2021 survey, shared with us for the purposes of this review, show stable or improving results. This includes overall satisfaction with services and facilities, with services provided by tenancy advisors, with the condition of their house or apartment, and their feelings of safety in tenant complexes after dark.

Managers expect the new Tenancy Management System, planned to be in place in the first quarter of 2022, to enable more informal and more frequent communication between City Housing and its tenants. This will include real-time collection of tenants' views. The system will support the implementation of a Tenant Complaints and Compliments Procedure, planned for introduction in early 2022, following consultation with tenants).

8.5. Reporting arrangements

City Housing is part of the large Customer and Community Group whose other operations include Arts Culture and Community Services, City Arts and Events, Community Networks, Community Services, Customer and Community, Parking, Parks Sport and Recreation, and Economic & Commercial services. Its head is designated as the Council's Chief Operating Officer.

Formal reporting arrangements at present comprise:

- Internal quarterly reports to the City Housing senior management team which provide comprehensive information on social and affordable housing supply and demand; tenancy demographics, welfare and satisfaction; a financial snapshot and updates on current projects.²⁰
- External quarterly and annual public reporting, which provides a short description of the major issues facing the service (including the second half of the housing upgrade programme); and the financial reporting on the service.²¹

¹⁷ <https://wellington.govt.nz/news-and-events/news-and-information/our-wellington/2021/06/city-housing-negotiations>

¹⁸ See "Tenancy Representation" above, para 6iii

¹⁹ Para para 6i and 6ii above

²⁰ Provided to the review team

²¹ See <https://wellington.govt.nz/-/media/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans-and-policies/quarterly-report/2020->

- The provision of significant information to the Council on an as required basis to support its strategic decision making (for example the suite of papers provided to the Council on 2 June 2021 to support its decisions on the future management of City Housing).
- City Housing doesn't however provide a regular status report or the like to the CE, and through the CE to the Council to support its governance responsibilities.

In addition, from time-to-time, tenants will approach Councillors for assistance with problems, and this gives the Councillors an opportunity to learn about the operation of the service, albeit through an anecdotal lens.

8.6. New initiatives

At the time of our review a number of new initiatives are under development or newly in place with the aim of improving tenant well-being. They include:

- In 2021 work commenced to ensure tenancies meet the Healthy Homes standards. A workshop for tenants to provide information is being considered to support this.
- Planning for the second phase of the Housing Upgrade Programme, expected to start in 2022.
- A project to provide new curtains to all the tenancies which have yet to be upgraded. We understand that the curtains project will be completed by the end of October and will result in over 400 households having new curtains.
- The new Tenancy Management System, planned to go live in April 2022. This will provide a tenant portal allowing tenants to see their own tenancy information in one place, to log a job, to provide feedback and complaints, and to see whether service level agreements are being met. The City Housing management expect the new system to provide a facility for two-way engagement between City Housing and its tenants.
- A new Tenant Complaints and Compliments Procedure has been signed off by the City Housing Leadership Team and is with the frontline staff for consultation. The aim – subject to feedback from consultation (including with tenants) and agreement – is to introduce it in early 2022. Councillors will be able to refer tenants to it if they are approached with concerns.
- A portfolio approach to the tenancy advisors work, where they're allocated a group of tenants rather than sharing a larger group with another advisor.
- Enhanced recruitment and induction of new City Housing staff (including minor improvements following an evaluation).
- Two new positions in the tenancy advisors team are soon to be established – a senior advisor (to support the Tenant Operations Manager) and a quality lead to provide assurance of consistency across tenancy advisors' approach to their work. Both positions will also provide a career path for tenancy advisors.
- Plans to appoint an additional staffer in City Housing's community development area.
- Ongoing work to improve the operation of the City Housing's facilities management service.
- City Housing managers have hosted an 'all-comers' meeting for health and social service agencies in Wellington to familiarise them with City Housing's work

- City Housing's managers have recently hosted a community spaces hui for WCC staff to enhance the connections between City Housing and the rest of the Council's services, and further similar cross-Council meetings are planned
- Enhanced communications capability and capacity which has enabled a refreshed communications plan focused on both internal and external communications
- New noticeboards in complexes that didn't have them.

In addition, City Housing has been part of the front-line response to tenants to support their well-being during the COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown which started on 17 August 2021.

Not all of these new initiatives were known to all respondents. Some which started 2-3 years ago (such as the new approach to the community development function), are only just realising the ambitions of those leading and managing the new approach. Some are still dependent on staff recruitment.²²

9. Other social housing models – Implications for City Housing

Our terms of reference required us to talk with other social housing providers throughout New Zealand, and we were directed to five of them. These interviews focused on how these providers deliver on their responsibilities, but did not ask them to make any comment on City Housing's service.

The clearest theme that comes through is the recognition that leading and managing social (sometimes called 'community') housing is a lot more than just being a responsible and conscientious landlord. The providers we spoke to looked back to a time when the transactional good landlord's role was the essence of their services, and looked forward to a more relational approach to their dealings with tenants, focused on tenant well-being. There was a strong commitment to 'holding on to' tenants who might otherwise have stretched the tolerance of a landlord, minimising the need for evictions, and recognising the key role that quality housing plays in good life outcomes for tenants.

Some providers preferred to disaggregate the tenant advisor / landlord roles from the welfare or well-being roles; others saw them sitting comfortably within the one position.

The clear expectation of providers was that they were not set up to provide the social and health services that their tenants need, nor had they any desire to move in that direction. Rather, that their responsibilities were to navigate the services on offer with their tenants and make the connections needed. And that maintaining the relationships with service providers is key to tenants' well-being.

More than one provider emphasised that many of their tenants preferred to live an independent life and rarely if ever required assistance.

A clear message from all is that rental income alone has not proved sufficient to support the services needed; and that either support from rates (in Dunedin City Council's and Nelson City Council's case) or from central government's Income Related Rent Subsidy has proved essential.

Improving tenant satisfaction was a source of pride to all the providers; one told us that an advisory group had been established to provide the voice of tenants to the Trust and that that has worked well.

Detail of those organisations we interviewed is in Appendix Four.

²² Comment in interview with City Housing managers

10. What people told us about the tenant support provided by City Housing

10.1. Services to all tenants, including tailored services to enhance the well-being of tenants

We asked tenants, Councillors and staff, and external service providers to tell us what they thought was working well, what was not, and what could be done to improve tenant support.

The key, and most positive, insight provided to us by our interviews is City Housing's commitment to doing a good job:

"By and large WCC is a humane and responsible landlord" and "we're a Council that really values our social housing – it was housing issues that brought me into Council".

"The most important thing is that we have established processes for working with tenants. There's a lot of pro-active front-foot work, not just waiting for things to go wrong".

"City Housing is a good landlord, balancing the requirement to provide support with letting people live their own lives".

Interview with Councillors

And that the service is modernising its approach:

"Historically we were just seen as a moaning and whining landlord. Now they [tenants] know when we call there's a justifiable reason. That's good – our tenants benefit."

Staff interview

Further, that there is much about the way City Housing delivers on its obligations that works well for tenants, for its staff, and for the health and social service agencies who provide support to its tenants as needed. Responding to the question 'what works well' interviewees said:

"Tenant advisors are very good on site, more engaging ... they visit people when we have concerns and we have issues.... The [facilities management] log-a-job system works well"

Tenant interview

"The holistic tenant-focused model, the people-centred culture, and the autonomy we have to be responsive and provide for needs [works well]."

Staff interview

The case manager's work was widely supported both within City Housing and by outside agencies, as was her collaboration with tenancy advisors to provide referrals to health and social service agencies, and to ensure connections were maintained over time.

A number of problems were identified across all our interviewees, best summarised as when it works well it works well, but it's not consistent. For instance, some tenants told us that they experienced difficulties with inconsistent and unreliable service from tenancy advisors, and from the facilities management's log-a-job service. While it's not possible to generalise with confidence, it seemed that these problems were associated with smaller complexes.

This was echoed in our interviews with health and social service agencies: one representative noted high turnover among City Housing advisors, and thought that meant their knowledge of their tenants' needs was sub-optimal, including when their tenancies were becoming 'wobbly':

"There's not a lot of consistency [over time] in the people who are employed in tenancy support services. That means relationships aren't well-sustained. It's going to be hard for staff to notice deterioration [if there's high turnover] ... [and] you have to know people to challenge them around behaviour and be caring as well. At the core of our work is 'slow and steady'."

There was a comment made by an iwi provider that stood out in our interviews. Its expectations were based on its long history as a provider of housing solutions and social support services, including being funded as a Housing First²³ provider – supporting people with high and complex needs at risk of homelessness. It was in essence a view that City Housing – despite its focus on providing and facilitating support to its tenants – could not be considered to be a true social housing provider. Such a provider would, in the interviewee's view, provide wrap-around, enduring support to people, and would continue to house people even where their tenancies are ended. She said in her organisation the tenants all have kaimahi to provide this support.

City Housing does not accept that it could not be regarded as a social housing provider simply because it doesn't provide the same level of intensive support that other community housing providers may be able to provide under intense support contracts, like the Housing First programme funded by central government. City Housing notes that it is in the same position as other councils that operate social housing and that, while a community housing provider can bid for support contracts, City Housing cannot.

City Housing managers acknowledged the views of the iwi provider, but noted that its kaupapa and funding require, and enable, more intense wrap-around services. They reiterated their deep commitment to resolve problems which might lead to tenancies being terminated, and told us that it's very rare for City Housing to terminate a tenancy. They explained that this is only done as a last resort when all opportunities to resolve problems have been exhausted. We were advised that in the last 12 months, City Housing has only sought the termination of three tenancies. These were for behavioural reasons. Two of these related to serious threats against staff, and the other related to serious threats against neighbours.

The sharpest negative views from tenants surfaced when they talked about common facilities, common areas – such as problems in complexes' laundries, about Council staff's work in the complexes' gardens, and about general problems with noise control. These problems were reflected in difficulties experienced by some tenancy advisors in getting other parts of the Council's operations to respond to their requests.

The improvements sought by our interviewees in this area naturally reflected the things they felt weren't working well. That is – for example – more consistent good practice across the role of tenancy advisors, better engagement across the Council to ensure coordination between the needs of City Housing tenants and the services from the balance of the Council that meet the needs of all Wellingtonians.

The City Housing managers were asked for their thoughts on key issues raised. Their focus in the interview was on the comprehensive programme of improvements – through programmes and initiatives – already underway in City Housing²⁴. It was clear in our interviews with them that these initiatives are intended to transform and modernise how City Housing works with tenants.

One challenging issue was raised several times. Our interviews with some of the City Housing staff, and the health and social service agencies revealed an interest in being able to access information on services used by tenants so that City Housing could directly liaise with support services and vice versa. As one agency said: *"[because] we are quite often called in when things are really bad"*. The agency noted that Kāinga Ora asks their tenants if

²³ <https://www.hud.govt.nz/community-and-public-housing/addressing-homelessness/housing-first/>

²⁴ See section 8.6 above

they can share information with other service providers, and would like City Housing to do the same.

We asked the managers for their thoughts on the potential for enhanced information sharing about tenants' use of social services. The managers support a holistic approach to health and well-being. However, they are constrained by the requirements of the *Privacy Act 2020*, including the requirements for express permission to share personal information unless, in their words, there is "a threat to life or property". They added that requests to share information:

"Can be scary for tenants – wondering whether information they disclosed would be shared with IRD or MSD" (and) "throughout tenants' lives, they may have disclosed and it may have backfired, and in the past tenants may have experienced a punitive response from authority or support organisations when they disclosed information about personal problems"

They pointed out that information can be shared from time to time as events require, but that enduring permission over time would be unlikely to be acceptable to tenants.

10.2. City Housing's community development service

Again, we asked tenants, Councillors and staff, and external service providers to tell us what they thought was working well, what was not, and what could be done to improve tenant support.

City Housing's community development services were well-regarded by the people we interviewed, where they knew about them. (Not all of the health and social service agencies did.)

The tenants we interviewed had leadership roles as tenant community volunteers, and so had direct experience and understanding of the service. Several had held roles as volunteers for a number of years. They were positive about the service, about its support for tenant-led community events in the complexes (such as the celebrations for Matariki and the Chinese New Year) and about the staff member currently engaged to lead it.

Their key dissatisfactions, and their suggestions for improvements, revolved around a desire for more volunteers, for better structure and support around kaitiaki roles (including financial support of get togethers, for example morning teas), and more City Housing staff to support volunteers²⁵. They pointed to the comparative ease of organising activities and events in large complexes, as against smaller complexes without meeting rooms.

Improvements sought by the health and social service agencies that had contact with this programme focused on the use of City Housing facilities (community meeting rooms etc), the need for knowledgeable tenancy advisors, and for kaitiaki being readily available in all the complexes where they hold their activities.

Other interviewees expressed regret that the Council's community development work (focused on the city as a whole) wasn't well-integrated with City Housing's community development work, and that these two key programmes of work were siloed within the Council.

They explained this partly by reference to history (the genesis of the City Housing's community programme in the need to protect social cohesion across City Housing's major upgrade programme), and by comparing the Council's support of the Council's community development programme through rates, and the funding of City Housing's community development programme through rental income, and the reluctance to mix these two funding streams.

²⁵ At the time of our interview the tenant community volunteers we interviewed didn't know about the decision to appoint an additional staff member

Some were concerned that the two parallel programmes reinforced barriers within the wider Wellington community. These quotes capture some of those concerns:

"Our (community development) work feels a bit contained rather than people feeling they're part of a wider community. For example, Central Park [is better because] other people from the local community use the meeting room. The more we encourage other groups to use those facilities the better"

"We have community work going on in the wider community [which] doesn't seem to be integrated with community work with tenants In my head we've created a community connected because they're struggling. [This is] not necessarily the best environment – in some ways we need better integration...."

"The ring fence is created as a 2-way ring fence. We shouldn't be doing that. We're not acknowledging that some people will move in and out. What we're doing doesn't support that movement."

Our interviews with the City Housing managers, and with both community development staff, told us very clearly that their aspirations for improvements in the programme aligned with those of the other interviewees – that this programme is still developing. The words of the City Housing community development advisor sum this future orientation up well:

"I think about people as a whole. What they want to do together ... Building peoples' networks and connections, building community resilience. I use a social capital model When it comes to groups, I'm not running them. I try to make them sustainable"

"Previously [this work was] only for tenants. Now for example there are two mental health groups, and neighbours have been invited to be part of the group that [an NGO] runs. Libraries have come in, developing relationships with the tenant communities".

And talking about how she could see it being improved:

"There are lots of further opportunities ... I would like to do a proper consultation process – strategically by neighbourhood – be physically present, talking to everyone, forming a plan, not just activitiesIf they have ownership it will be much better"

10.3. Communication and engagement

We heard a lot about the value of, and need for, enhanced modern communication and engagement. This is to be expected in a human service that relies on relationships for its operational success in providing safe and secure tenancies for a large group of Wellingtonians. Our interviews touched on communication and engagement between:

- tenants and City Housing (whether as groups within complexes, and as individuals)
- communication and engagement between City Housing and other Council businesses
- City Housing and the health and social agencies in Wellington
- City Housing and the Councillors.

This is not to say that there is no communication and engagement – quite the opposite. But rather, that more and better communication and engagement was sought. For example, tenants told us they want to see up-to-date newsletters and refreshed noticeboards; managers and staff are eagerly waiting for the new tenancy management system with its interactive portal to arrive; tenants and staff said they sometimes struggle to engage effectively with other Council business units to deal with, for example, parking and garden issues; external agencies told us that they want to hear in more detail, and much earlier, about tenant problems and that they rely on consistent, timely information from staff; and

Councillors told us that they find themselves relying on anecdotes and complaints to give them insights into how well City housing is performing for its tenants.

11. Comment / Findings

Some 3200 Wellingtonians access social housing, through City Housing, which is designed to take account of their modest financial circumstances and of other needs that they have, including disability, illness, and experiences as refugees. The mere fact of this housing is a key support for tenants.

All of the housing was, or will be upgraded as a result of the Council's commitment to modern, safe and secure housing. Since the beginning of 2021, the Council has been moving to ensure that all of its housing complies with the Healthy Homes standards. Again, these programmes provide very important support to tenants.

On 2 June 2021 the Council's Social, Cultural and Economic Committee considered the future of its social housing portfolio in the context of its operating deficit and capital funding shortfall. It will consider advice from its officers at the end of September 2021 on future options.

This is the context for our comments and recommendations about tenant support.

11.1. Services to all tenants

When we looked at the approach to tenant support of other major social housing providers in Aotearoa New Zealand, and compared that with City Housing's approach, we saw a shared commitment to being a responsible and conscientious landlord. But not one which took a transactional approach where the essence was the exchange of rent for use of a dwelling, but one focused much on a relational approach focused on tenant well-being. We saw a shared commitment to "holding on to" tenants who might otherwise have stretched the tolerance of a landlord, minimising the need for evictions, and recognising the key role that quality housing plays in good life outcomes for tenants.

All of the providers provided for a mix of 'landlord' functions and 'welfare' functions, sometimes combined in a single role, but more often – as with City Housing – separated into two different but integrated roles. All of the tenancy advisors/managers were expected to get to know the tenants they dealt with. (This included care and time taken to ensure that tenants were well-introduced and well-settled into their dwellings.) In one – Kāinga Ora – this was extended to data-informed segmentation based on need with a range of different caseloads depending on client need.

All relied on health and social service agencies in their area to provide services to tenants when needed, through referrals from either the tenancy staff or the welfare staff. Providers all recognised that the success of these arrangements depends on good relationships with health and social service providers.

City Housing's case manager has worked hard to establish wide and deep relationships with health and social service agencies, and her work is widely respected. Insights from tenant community volunteers and from health and social service providers alerted us to the need for consistently high-quality engagement with tenancy advisors, whose contribution to tenant support is crucial. City Housing managers told us that they have recently reviewed and refreshed the recruitment and induction of tenancy advisors to support improvement in their work – and the tenancy advisors told us that they can see opportunities for improvement in their work with tenants through having an allocated caseload.

Comment One

The services provided to all tenants are designed and delivered using a broadly similar approach to other large- and medium-scale social housing providers.

Those services are, and will always be enhanced by committed, well-trained and well-supported staff.

On our observations, and those of most others we interviewed, we think these services are supporting tenants well and are meeting the aspirations of the 2010 policy programme "Housing Plus".

We were impressed by the work done by Kāinga Ora to segment its client base according to data-informed analysis of need and risk, and to tailor its tenancy staff's workload in response. No doubt all providers do this to a greater or lesser extent, if only to respond to demands, but this struck us as worthy of consideration by City Housing, whose tenant base is of a similar size to Kāinga Ora. This kind of segmentation might, for example, provide a sound basis for more frequent inspections on tenancies than the current 1/year visits. And this in turn might help to ensure early identification of problems that might otherwise stay hidden for up to a year.

Our recommendations cover this issue.

11.2. Community development service

City Housing's community development services are less common in other providers.

It's a service that had its genesis in the large-scale housing upgrade programme starting in 2008 and that has had to reposition itself following a critical review in 2017 – and by all accounts the change in direction was abrupt. It has a clear sense of direction, is well supported by tenant community volunteers, supports a wide range of tenant community activities, and enables a range of agencies to provide activities in City Housing's complexes' community rooms.

Its relationship with the City Council's wider community development is developing, and it has reasonably well-developed relationships with the other key staff we interviewed from City Housing.

Comment Two

The community development service is an important contributor to the social capital of tenant communities, and contributes to social cohesion in the City Housing complexes, particularly the larger ones which have built-in common spaces like meeting rooms. There's a sense of purpose and optimism amongst those involved in the service. There is clear ambition for further growth and development.

While other social housing agencies support activity programmes of various kinds for tenants, City Housing's seems to be the most varied, and is clearly tailored to the diverse communities amongst the tenants.

On our observations, and those of others, we think these services are supporting tenants well and are meeting the aspirations of the 2010 policy programme "Community Action".

11.3. Relationships with health and social service agencies

As with the other health and social service providers we interviewed, City Housing's support for its tenants with problems affecting their welfare depends on facilitating support from health and social service agencies. This is consistent with the other social housing providers we interviewed.

The case manager's relationships with the agencies are clearly working well; and both she and the agencies emphasised the importance of the tenancy advisors work in ensuring that tenants' problems (such as hoarding) are identified early.

There are several joint-agency forums that meet regularly in Wellington, particularly focused on homelessness and at-risk tenancies and Council staff attend at least one of these.

We heard from several different sources (including from Council staff) that the welfare of tenants who experience problems of various kinds (such as mental illness) would be enhanced if City Housing could share – with or without tenants' permission – information about the tenants' relationships with health and social service agencies. Then if an emergency on some kind occurred, it would be easier to make connections in the interests of the tenants' welfare.

This is a difficult issue – involving the rights of the individuals to personal privacy. We were told that several Wellington (government and non-government) agencies use Memoranda of Understanding to allow and govern the exchange of personal information. This isn't an area we explored further, but given the number of times it was raised with us our recommendations refer to this.

Comment Three

Relationships between City Housing and health and social service agencies are working reasonably well and, we were told, are enhanced by goodwill all round. They reflect the approach of social housing providers across Aotearoa New Zealand - that the providers don't and should not provide welfare services to their tenants, but rather have a responsibility to stay alert to emerging problems amongst tenants and, as needed, facilitate connections between tenants and agencies as and when needed.

11.4. Communication and engagement in changing times

City Housing is operating in a changing environment – an urgent response is needed to its financial problems, a major upgrade programme is about to commence affecting about half of its dwellings, and work is underway to ensure its dwellings meet the Healthy Homes standards. Enhanced connections between its operations and those of other Council business units are expected. A significant programme is underway designed to improve its performance including the introduction of a modern tenant management system, and refreshing policies for City Housing's operations. Partner organisations across Wellington are hoping for continued improvement in City Housing's work with them.

In times of significant change frequent, well-planned and consistent communication makes a difference to tenants' trust and confidence in their accommodation arrangements, and to their peace of mind. Providers of essential services to the complexes and to the tenants will need reassurance that their relationships with City Housing are continuing throughout change. Staff, so important to City Housing's support for tenants, will be looking for reassurance about their job security and about expectations for their performance. Councillors and senior management will be looking for assurance about business-as-usual and about change management.

Communication can be thought of as one-way – for example the provision of information through media releases, tailored newsletters, briefing meetings, corporate reporting and so on. Or as two-way, with feedback-sought from such communication.

In our experience, this approach to communication is necessary, but not sufficient to sustain the good relationships so necessary to deliver good tenant support, to retain tenants' trust and confidence.

Engagement is needed too, dialogue which allows new insights to be explored in real time, which allows for misunderstandings to be aired and corrected, which enhances the sense that 'we're in this together, we're working together to make sure things improve for current and future tenants. Which builds trust and confidence across all the multiple relationships which are needed to ensure tenant support works well.

Our interviews with the managers of City Housing told us that they're acutely aware of the importance of communication and engagement. Our comments, and our recommendations, are intended to respect that, and build on it.

On the basis of our interviews with Councillors, and our review of the existing reporting arrangements, we think there's room for improvement through using summaries and highlights from the existing internal (i.e. within City Housing) quarterly reports to 'tell the story' of City Housing's work with tenants, its thinking about implementing its improvement strategies, and to provide context for times when things go awry for individual clients or for groups of tenants. We think that where possible this should involve face-to-face meetings between senior City Housing staff and those Councillors who have particular responsibility for, or interest in, City Housing's work. Absent this, there is a risk that Councillors' views of City Housing's work will be driven by complaints, anecdotes, and the focus of media. All these are of course legitimate ways of looking at the services provided, but all require well-understood context, at a point in time and over time.

On the basis of our interviews with tenants, and with staff and managers, and our review of documentation, we understand the importance that's placed on communicating with tenants, and of listening to tenants' views, whether through the annual surveys, through daily interactions, and – in the future – through the interactive portal of the planned tenant management system. These are all necessary to ensure tenants feel they have a voice, and to ensure the workings of key tenant supports are understood and improved as needed. But again, we consider that there is room to improve these. We looked back at the 2010 policy framework, and we are not confident that the current communication and engagement arrangement with tenants are meeting the aspirations of the 2010 policy programme "Tenancy Representation". The days of the Tenants' Union, which was in place in 2010, have passed, but it seemed to us that there is room for a mechanism to allow all tenants to have a say in decision-making, particularly now that so much change is underway. The advisory group established by Ōtautahi Community Housing Provider may provide a useful model.

On the basis of our interviews with staff, tenant community volunteers, and external organisations who use City Housing's facilities and connect with tenant networks, it seems to us that the communication and engagement around City Housing's community development work between all parties is working well, and that the goodwill between all involved will ensure progress continues.

On the basis of our interviews with health and social service agencies, we think there are real opportunities to build regular engagement between City Housing's senior and operational staff, and the agencies, to share thinking on plans for improvement (such as initiatives to enhance the role of the tenancy advisors), to explore difficult issues together (such as access to tenant's personal information at times when their need for support peaks), and to update agencies on all of the major change programmes underway. A recent briefing by City Housing managers for all Wellington's agencies was well-attended and well-received, and can readily be built on.

Final comment

Overall, our view is that tenant support is working well. City Housing's approach is consistent with that of other, broadly equivalent providers across Aotearoa New Zealand. All those involved are committed to a high standard of support. Tenants report good levels of satisfaction with their houses, their complexes, and with services provided by their tenancy advisors.

But there are significant opportunities for improvement, particularly around the communication and engagement needed to sustain and build trust and confidence through a period of significant change.

Our recommendations reflect this.

12. Recommendations

In the context of the findings and comment we have made we recommend that the Wellington City Council note and consider implementing the following recommendations:

12.1. While the tenancy services and tenant support arrangements are broadly fit for purpose there are opportunities to further enhance existing arrangements

- The review confirms that the tenant support arrangements in City Housing are carefully focused on the needs of all tenants, alongside the needs of those tenants who require additional support; and that they align well with equivalent services provided by other like social housing providers in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- We note that City Housing's leaders and managers have a significant programme of initiatives underway - and more are planned - which will improve how City Housing supports and improves the well-being of tenants.
- The review confirms that City Housing's renewed community development work has been growing at pace over the last two years, and that the review team is confident this will continue.

12.2. While the engagement between City housing and other agencies providing additional services and tenant support works well, there may be an opportunity to strengthen the model with a more formal framework

- We note that the review confirms that City Housing's approach to the delivery of tailored welfare services – facilitating the delivery of those services by both government and NGO agencies - is consistent with that of other like social housing providers, and is generally respected by both the government and NGO agencies we spoke to. In many instances the effectiveness of these engagements is down to the relationships developed at an operational level.
- We recommend that City Housing and its Wellington health and social service agency partners explore how they might strengthen and support the way they work together through codified processes, commitments, channels and approaches to working together. This might include regular scheduled meeting/engagement to inform and update partners and briefings from City Housing.
- We suggest that the first of these engagements could occur after the October 2021 decisions on the future governance and operating structure of City Housing have been taken, presuming there will be 'proposals' that will be consulted on). Discussions and agreement between City Housing and partner agencies about the future model for engagement, frequency, focus, etc, could also occur at that point.

12.3. While there is good use made of information about tenants' needs across City Housing and its partner providers on a case-by-case basis, there is an opportunity to take a more systematised approach

- We note that there was a high level of interest in improving preventive and timely services to tenants through better sharing of information, governed by Memoranda of Understanding, as is already applied widely within Wellington's social service agencies.
- We recommend that the merits of moving to more formal mechanisms for collecting and using information about tenants and their communities be explored by City

Housing leading a discussion with its own staff and external partner agencies.

- We note that Kāinga Ora has adopted a deliberate, administrative data-informed approach to segmenting its tenant community to enhance its prioritisation of services to those whose need is greatest.
- We recommend that City Housing investigate this approach to determine whether it could be adapted for City Housing's use, particularly to inform workload allocation to tenant advisors.

12.4. A refresh of its communications and engagement approach would help strengthen engagement between tenants and City Housing and City Housing and its stakeholders

- We have noted that feedback suggested that more and better communication and engagement was an opportunity for improvement. We note that there are examples in other jurisdictions and across New Zealand that may offer insights into what a fit for purpose model for City Housing might look like.²⁶
- We also note that City Housing has established a Tenant Communications Project in conjunction with the Council's communications team. We understand that this project will review all communication channels, from tenant letters, welcome packs, noticeboards etc.
- We recommend that City Housing undertake a project to refresh its communications approach and engagement strategy. A refresh of the communications and engagement approach should engage tenants and stakeholders to determine what tenants and stakeholders want to be engaged on, how they want to be engaged, what channels they want to use and who within City Housing has overarching responsibility for oversight and delivery of the strategy and plan.
- City Housing and its tenants may want to explore different ways of allowing the voice of tenants' to be heard. For instance, exploring the Ōtautahi model of a tenant advisory group.
- We note that a new Tenant Complaints and Compliments Procedure has been approved by City Housing management and is now with staff for consultation. We recommend that interim changes occur to allow regular reporting as part of the strengthened engagement between City Housing, Wellington City Council managers and officers and Councillor(s) as detailed in recommendation 12.6.

12.5. There is an opportunity to improve on how Wellington City Council and City Housing plan for and undertake their respective community development activities

- We found that there has not always been coordinated planning and delivery of community development activities between Wellington City Council and City Housing. This was an unintended by-product of the 'financial ring fencing' of City Housing's funding.
- We note that this problem is currently being addressed by staff and managers from the two business units.
- We recommend City Housing and Wellington City discuss and agree how they can

²⁶ Microsoft Word - FHDC_Tenant_Engagement_Strategy 2021 with amendds (folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) tenant-engagement-strategy-2018-2019.pdf (linkhousing.org.au) tenant_engagement_communications_strategy_action_plan_2021_1.pdf (ochilviewha.co.uk)

enhance the speed with which they integrate and co-ordinate their respective community development planning and delivery work.

12.6. There is an opportunity to strengthen reporting and engagement between City Housing, Wellington City Council senior leadership and Councillors

- Effective governance depends on governing bodies receiving regular reports that provide a clear and objective view of an organisation's (or project's) performance. Governing bodies need to be provided with enough detail to support performance management and decision-making, while avoiding unnecessary details about operational matters. The governance framework should confirm and make accountabilities clear to everyone in the organisation.
- We recommend that appropriate City Housing and Wellington City Council managers and officers meet regularly with Councillors responsible for the Housing portfolio. These meetings should be supported with regular reporting and briefings on the key performance and risk metrics for the portfolio. There should be a cascading of the level and type of information provided depending on the level within Council the information is being reported.
- We recommend that City Housing initiate an engagement with relevant Councillors, Wellington City Council Senior Leadership to discuss and agree what these reporting and engagement arrangements could look like and what further work is needed to give effect to this recommendation.
- We recommend that the engagement and interface between the Councillor with responsibility for the Housing portfolio and the Manager, City Housing continues to be built on and strengthened to ensure an effective governance and management relationship is maintained.

12.7. The Council's Housing Policy is critical to the strategy, policy and operational framework for the delivery and operations of community housing for the City. Updating the policy is important in setting the direction for City Housing and the Council's long-term intentions.

- We note that the current housing policy is out of date and that an updated policy has yet to be approved.
- We recommend that the Housing Policy be approved as a matter of priority to provide clarity and certainty for City Housing and tenants.

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Terms of reference

Review of tenant support and tenant-facing services provided by WCC City Housing

Context

City Housing owns 1927 properties. We also manage 26 properties for Porirua City Council, 7 properties for Parks, Sport and Recreation and a further 52 properties at Te Kāinga Aroha. In total we provide homes for over 3000 tenants. We lease a number of our properties to Kāinga Ora and other Wellington community housing providers.

We provide housing to over 3000 tenants. While 64% of our tenants live alone, we have many families, and our biggest age group is 5 – 9 year-olds (250). Only 19% of our tenants are over 65yrs which makes us very different to most other Council housing which is predominately pensioner housing.

City Housing provides a range of additional services designed to support our tenants with respect to their social, emotional and physical well-being. Some of our tenants have complex needs that require specialist services. City Housing works with external agencies to provide wraparound services and support for our tenants who need them.

Background and Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to critically assess and consider how Wellington City Council provides support services for its tenants in City Housing. Importantly, we want to gain an understanding of any limitations to our services model that impact the level of support services that we provide and how our services compare to those delivered by other agencies to social housing tenants elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand.

As well as understanding the opportunities to improve services for tenants we also wish to understand the opportunities there are to provide services that support effective and safe neighbourhoods and communities.

Finally, we want to review our model for partnering with people and other agencies to support our tenants and make the homes and communities they live in safe and thriving.

The range of services and level of tenant support provided by WCC City Housing is expressed through our current operational policy framework. This framework was intended to be reviewed as part of the existing City Housing work programme this year given the framework has been in place for several years. Through this review we want to ensure that these services are fit for purpose, reflect good practice and are delivered well. As such, these terms of reference focus on these areas.

Scope and Limitations

Review scope:

- Examine the tenancy support and management policies, practices and procedures at the Wellington City Council City Housing properties.
- Review and clarify the on-site support services provided by Wellington City Council to tenants in City Housing properties and compare these to the support services provided by other local government bodies who provide community housing services

- Review how we partner and work with Central Government agencies, NGOs and Iwi to provide support services to our tenants.
- Review the operational policies and procedures of City Housing and identify opportunities for how these could be improved on.
- Review the activities that support tenants to live in safe and thriving communities including activities designed to identify and respond to safety and community cohesion risks. Identify opportunities to enhance these.
- Review and research opportunities to improve the tenants experience noting our current limitations and operating/funding constraints (see below).

Out of scope

- **Our building stock/asset management**

In partnership with the Crown, City Housing is half-way through the 20-Year Housing Upgrade Programme aimed at improving the quality of existing housing stock. There is also the Strategic Housing Investment Plan which contains workstreams relating to the redevelopment of a limited number of sites and some divestment of underperforming properties. The issues surrounding this stock, the future upgrade programme and the funding issues surrounding it are well understood with options being developed to address them, and as such, are out of scope in this review. Papers related to Social Housing Policy and the sustainability of the business are to be considered by Councillors early June 2021.

- **Current funding model and financial challenges**

City Housing is "ring fenced" and receives no direct Council funding. All of the services provided are funded solely from the income it receives from rental income. Currently City Housing tenants pay 70% of market rates in rent. As a result, City Housing runs an operating deficit each year. For example, in year one of the draft Long-Term Plan, the deficit is approximately \$8.7M and projected to grow over the LTP period.

Most of our tenants receive government assistance with their housing costs via the Accommodation Supplement. However, City Housing tenants do not receive Central Government funding via the Income Related Rent Subsidy (IRRS).

City Housing's financial model is unsustainable and currently running at a loss. We are currently in discussion with the Crown on how we might work together to remedy this situation. As such, funding and financial matters are largely outside the scope of this review.

It is however important to understand the funding challenges the service faces when considering our levels of tenant support.

- **Performance**

City Housing's financial model is unsustainable and currently running at a loss. We are currently

Review Approach

The approach to the review is expected to include the review of documentation and interviews with relevant people:

Documentation

Relevant documentation of the arrangements currently in place and any proposed improvements including:

- City Housing operational policy framework, including any supporting policy or practice guidelines that focus on tenant advice, support or well being
- Relevant information and documentation outlining partnerships with other providers
- Relevant information with regards to tenant facing services and procedures
- Process and system documentation
- Information from partner agencies and other councils as required.

People and Organisations to be engaged

Without limiting who the Reviewer speaks to, it is anticipated the following will be engaged with as part of the review:

- City Housing team
- Elected representatives who have responsibility for the city housing portfolios
- Relevant Staff and management from partner or support agencies who work with City Housing and tenants and providing service at City Housing properties e.g. Kahungunu Whānau Services, DCM and other to be determined in the planning.
- Tenants and onsite kaitiaki-tenants who coordinate activities in each community
- A sample of other Councils across Aotearoa New Zealand who providing social housing services
- Relevant staff in Kāinga Ora and Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
- Mana Whenua.

May 2021

Appendix 1-Key Review Questions

The following questions are not intended to to be strictly adhered to, but are a guide as to the matters the Council are seeking to understand through this Review:

1. Given its mandate and function, are the support services that City Housing provide to tenants adequate and fit for purpose?
2. How do our support services compare nationally? Are our support systems and processes appropriate and meet the needs of our tenants?
3. Are we sufficiently resourced to provide the support services that are expected by our tenants?
4. Are there any issues or barriers with the way that support services are delivered?
5. How can we improve the ways that we identify any gaps in our service and how they can be remedied? Is monitoring of the quality and impact of our services adequate?
6. What specific action can we take to improve the tenant experience?
7. What outcomes could we expect to see from any improvements?
8. Do the support services represent good practice on a national scale?
9. Does City Housing have an adequate understanding of the well-being of its tenants? Could improvements be made?

10. Are systems and procedures adequately set up for understanding, reporting and taking appropriate action when acute changes to tenants' wellbeing occur?
11. Is information about the level of knowledge of individual tenant's circumstances held by City Housing adequate
12. Are systems and procedures adequate to record and report changes to the circumstances of tenants including acute issues of tenant well-being such as threats to safety?
13. Is information about tenants' circumstances and the broader circumstances relating to community wellbeing and safety appropriately collected, shared (where appropriate) and used to manage wellbeing and safety risks for tenants, their families and the community they live in?

Appendix 2 – Documents reviewed

Author	Title	Date
Controller and Auditor-General	<i>Using information to improve social housing services</i>	19 December 2017
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Agent or advocate form</i>	nd Provided to the review team 4 August 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Central Park Incident Report (near final draft) (and some associated emails)</i>	nd Provided to the review team 3 September 2021; and 19 July 2021 (emails)
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community activity flyers etc</i>	Various dates (2021) Provided to the review team 17 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community engagement Strategy: Task breakdown (Document for internal use by the City Housing team)</i>	nd Provided to the review team 17 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community Room: Health and safety protocol; Booking form</i>	nd Provided to the review team 26 July 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community Volunteers – Code of Conduct (and associated training material)</i>	July 2019
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community Volunteers – Induction Training</i>	nd Provided to the review team 17 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Community Volunteers – Role Description</i>	nd Provided to the review team 17 June 2021

Author	Title	Date
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Communities in Action Fund: Terms of Reference</i>	April 2019
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Concerns, complaints and Compliments Procedure (draft)</i>	nd Provided to the review team 17 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>City Housing organisational chart</i>	6 August 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Kaitiaki data (anonymous)</i>	nd Provided to the review team 13 August 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Overview of City Housing Community Engagement</i>	nd Provided to the review team 26 August 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Presentation" External Agencies Hui</i>	3 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Quarterly City Housing Newsletter</i>	24 July 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Quarterly Report April – June 2021</i>	July 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Stakeholder list</i>	1 January 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Tenancy management process documents</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community rooms (23 December 2015)</i> • <i>Complaints (23 July 2016)</i> • <i>Customer service (23 December 2015)</i> • <i>Managing Tenant Support Advisor Business Actions in Northgate Housing (July 2009)</i> • <i>Mediation for tenancy issues (23 December 2015)</i> • <i>Tenant welfare visits (23 December 2015)</i> 	Various
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Tenancy Management Process Review</i>	1 October 2019

Author	Title	Date
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Tenancy Management System Steering Committee: Terms of Reference</i>	nd Provided to the review team 17 June 2021
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Tenancy Operational Guidelines (Draft)</i>	January 2020
City Housing (WCC)	<i>Tenant satisfaction surveys</i>	2015 - 2020
City Housing (WCC)	<i>City Housing Tenants Survey (draft report)</i>	August 2021
Dominion Post	<i>"Council says tenants better off elsewhere" and "NZ's two-tier social housing"</i>	22 July 2021
Dunedin City Council	<i>Community Housing Newsletter #8</i>	Summer 2020
Kainga Ora	<i>Customer Programme</i>	nd Provided to the review team 30 July 2021
Ministers of Finance and Housing	<i>Deed relating to Grant for Wellington City Council's Social Housing</i>	19 July 2007
Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust	<i>2019 AGM presentation</i>	nd Provided to the review team 16 August 2021
Puroro Rangaranga – Social Cultural and Economic (WCC)	<i>Ordinary meeting - Minutes</i>	2 June 2021
Puroro Rangaranga – Social Cultural and Economic (WCC)	<i>Papers for meeting</i>	2 June 2021
Sonia Ogier	<i>City Housing Operational Review – discussion document</i>	30 October 2017
Author	Title	Date
Strategy and Policy	<i>Social Housing Policy (proposed)</i>	12 March 2020

Committee (WCC)		
WCC	<i>A Policy for Wellington City Council's Social Housing Service</i>	May 2010
WCC	<i>Housing Upgrade Project Work Programme: 2008 to 2029</i>	19 June 2008
Wellington City Libraries	<i>Central Park Little Library Project Principles: Letter to City Housing</i>	nd Provided to the review team 29 July 2021

Appendix 3 – List of Interviews

Wellington City Council	
Andy Foster	Mayor
Councillor Fleur Fitzsimons	(immediate past housing portfolio leader)
Councillor Jill Day	(current housing portfolio leader)
Wellington City Council Staff	
John McDonald	Manager, Housing Development - Build Wellington
Jenny Rains	Manager Community Services and Emergency Welfare
City Housing Staff	
Angelique Jackson	City Housing Manager
Angela Hewitt	Service Development Manager, City Housing
Gabriela Montane	Tenancy Operations Manager (Acting), Tenancy Case Manager (substantive role)
Jamie Shackleton	Senior Adviser, Community Development
Tenancy Advisers	Group interview with 12 advisors
City Housing Tenants	
Kaitiaki	Group interview with 14 kaitiaki
Government health and social service providers	
Capital and Coast DHB, Mental Health Services –	two interviewees
Non-Government health and social service providers	
Age Concern Pathways	Responded to email survey (Surveys were sent to three other NGOs, and there was no response.)
Downtown Community Ministry	three interviewees, including a past Director
Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust	
Kahungunu Whanau Services	
Other Social Housing Providers	
Dunedin City Council	
Haumarū Housing (Auckland, a community housing provider)	
Kāinga Ora	two interviewees
Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust (Christchurch, a community housing provider)	

Appendix 4 – The work of other social housing providers across Aotearoa New Zealand

Dunedin City Council (DCC)

DCC has 937 units (about half of City Housing's number) and caters to the housing needs of people aged 55 years and over with modest assets and income. Most tenants are single people.

DCC describes its role as a provider of "community" housing rather than social housing, and in doing so pointed out that its eligibility criteria don't include complex needs such as discrimination and mental illness. The Council has recently made a long-term commitment to retain its community housing role and to support its work through modest rate support.

Its service model is similar to that of City Housing, with a team of tenancy managers who each have a caseload of around 300 households. Inspections are carried out once a year. The manager of the Community Housing team deals with complex issues in the first place, and refers cases as needed to local social service providers. There isn't currently a community development function within the housing team itself.

Aspirations for the future include reducing tenancy managers' portfolio sizes to enable a broader focus on the social needs of the tenants²⁷. Some thought is being given to enhancing community development, perhaps through strengthening the links between DCC's housing function and its community development work, currently managed separately.

DCC provides a regular e- and hard copy- newsletter for tenants.

The manager has well-developed relationships with service providers, and is considering proposing regular meetings between agencies at a senior level.

Tenant satisfaction is measured annually.

See also https://www.dunedin.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/801676/Annual-Report-2019-20-22-12.pdf

Haumaru Housing LP

Haumaru Housing is a registered Community Housing Provider, owned by Selwyn Foundation (51%) and Auckland Council (49%). It was established on 1 July 2017.

It manages 1446 units across 62 complexes, and all its 1556 tenants are aged 65+. Its waiting list is managed by the Ministry of Social Development. The land and housing are owned by Auckland City, but the management of the property (including maintenance and development) and tenants is the responsibility of Haumaru.

Like City Housing it has a team of (nine) community managers (with a ratio of 1:160), a property team (with the majority of maintenance outsourced) and a 24-hour phone-in service to respond to inquiries. It has a tenancy quality manager who is a health care professional.

²⁷ The community housing function is currently located within the Council's general property portfolio which has meant – in the past – a relatively singular focus on its role as a landlord rather than a focus on the wider well-being of tenants. That is currently under active review.

The community managers provide health and safety assurance, and both provide and link people to welfare services for tenants. They are in the complexes at least once a week for "clinics", and undertake "tenant well-being visits" twice a year, along with regular visits to tenants on a tenant needs basis. A wide range of government and non-government organisations provide services to tenants, and Haumarū Housing has active relationships with these providers and links tenants to these services.

Tenant satisfaction is measured annually, and has shown significant improvement since 2017.

See also <https://www.haumaruhousing.co.nz/media/7459/haumaruhousing-annual-report-2019-2020.pdf>

Kāinga Ora

The interview with Crown entity Kāinga Ora focused on its Wellington operations (not including the Hutt and Porirua), which cover some 1600 tenancies, housing 3500 people. Nationally, the most common household composition is a single parent family.

Kāinga Ora is currently redesigning its operating model, aiming – among other things – to reduce tenancy churn. The approach has been dubbed "sustaining tenancies".

The organisation is working to bring down the ratio of tenancy manager: tenants to 1:100 for medium-high needs tenants, and to 1:220 for tenants with lower needs. This will need to be underpinned by needs-based segmentation of tenants; informed by a combination of customer data held on Kāinga Ora's system, outbound calling during Covid-19 lockdowns, and anonymised data from the Integrated Data Infrastructure managed by StatisticsNZ.

There is a clear focus on ongoing relationships with tenants rather than "matching a person to a house, giving them the keys and wishing them luck!".

Tenancy managers have weekly "cafes" with tenants in the larger Kāinga Ora complexes; and in some areas share facilities with WCC.

The staff are talking much more than before to tenants about their needs, their well-being. The approach was described as carrot rather than stick, avoiding the threat of, or need for, evictions.

Like other providers, the emphasis is on navigating people to social services when they're needed, rather than providing those services directly.

Tenant satisfaction is measured quarterly, and has shown significant improvement since 2018.

While performance measures for the new operating model have yet to be developed, early indications of reduction in churn are very positive.

See also <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Annual-report/KO100-Annual-Report-2020-v20.pdf>

Nelson City Council (NCC)

Nelson City Council no longer provides social housing – it sold its entire stock to Kāinga Ora in March 2021. This action was driven in part by the looming cost of future upgrades.

It had 142 pensioner houses, and housed 150 people. The housing was available to people aged 55+ and of modest means.

Prior to the sale to Kāinga Ora, and since 2017, its social housing was managed by a registered Community Housing Provider, the Nelson Tasman Housing Trust.

This decision was driven by the need to offer stronger social support to its tenants. NCC knew that the Trust had very good relationships with social service agencies. The arrangement specified by NCC for the Trust included a minimum of two visits annually to the tenants to monitor tenant well-being (and as needed to link tenants to service providers), six-monthly tenant newsletters, and annual tenant surveys.

It was driven too by NCC's recognition that – because the housing stock was small - housing was not 'core business' for it; and that it was the core business of the Trust.

In an unusual move for NCC, rates, in addition to rental income, were used to fund the Trust's services.

After two years of that arrangement, NCC used an registration of interest process to test future options for ownership/management which would retain social support - and chose Kāinga Ora.

See also file:///C:/Users/Mary%20Slater/Downloads/NTHT%20-%202020%20Signed%20Audited%20Accounts.pdf and <https://our.nelson.govt.nz/media-releases-2/nelson-city-council-transfers-community-housing-to-kainga-ora-for-19-8m/>

Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust

Ōtautahi Community Housing Trust is a registered Community Housing Provider, formed at the instigation of Christchurch Council to manage its social housing stock. The Council capitalised the Trust with a transfer of \$50m assets (circa 430 homes) while retaining ownership of 1860 homes. The Trust has built 160 new homes.

Drivers to establish the Trust included the Council's reluctance to use rates to supplement rental income, and the ability of a registered Community Housing Provider to access central government's Income Related Rent Subsidy. The Trust's governance arrangements have 3 Council appointed trustees, 4 independents and an independent chair.

The housing stock was originally elder persons' housing when the bulk of the stock was built in the 1950s-1960s, Since 2013 the Council housed people of all ages. Some 90% of the tenants used to be over 60 but that has shifted to about 45%. There are some larger dwellings, and the Trust plans to build more family homes.

The operating model for the Trust has changed over the last year. When the Trust was established the model was a traditional tenancy management approach. While initially the Trust undertook four visits a year it moved to two visits in year two. The portfolio size at the Trust on establishment was 220 compared with 340 properties when managed by Council.

In 2019 the Trust actively contacted and maintained contact with tenants as part of its response to the first national Covid-19 lockdown. After lockdown, tenants expressed enthusiasm for continued, regularised contact with the Trust.

As a result, the Trust changed the way in which its staff are organised to support tenants' wellbeing and enhance business support, as the Trust had grown significantly in 4 years.

The Trust has brought its maintenance work in house and has established its own call centre.

The Trust has identified the need for a comprehensive tenancy management system provided by international social housing information specialist Civica. The product, Cx Housing, was described by our interviewee as "the glue to hold the system together".

The Trust has adopted a new approach to community development. The Council had a community development service with activities officers, which took tenants to activities they liked such as mini-golf. The Trust is now focused on developing its volunteer-run Tenant Advisory Group, which is formed to represent the broad tenant cohort and it is empowered

to organise tenant events as-well-as contribute to OCHT projects and advise the Trust on matters important to tenants. The Trust is pursuing projects to improve tenants' digital capability, including the employment of a Digital Coach to support digital connection and capacity for tenants.

At its latest Annual Review meeting, the Trust reported enhanced tenant satisfaction and employee engagement.²⁸

²⁸ The Trust's annual reports for 2019 and 2020 were not available at the time this report was prepared.

Appendix 5 - Overview of City Housing Community Engagement

City Housing supports community activities that are run by tenants and external groups in our community spaces, and we facilitate connections for our tenants to services and groups in the wider community that promote a sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Our approach to community engagement contributes towards two of the four City Housing objectives for social housing. Wellington City Council (WCC) aims to provide:

- communities where people feel safe, have a sense of belonging and are proud to call home; and
- support for Council tenants to improve their quality of life and well-being and to contribute to and benefit from living in Wellington.

This work also aligns with Outcome 4 of Wellington City Council's Housing Strategy for our 10 Year Plan:

Our housing system supports sustainable, resilient and connected communities. Housing is key to enabling connections and social inclusion within and across communities. We will engage with housing stakeholders and the wider community to ensure that:

- housing supports wellbeing (economic, physical, social, cultural), particularly for the most vulnerable
- housing supports connected communities and better placemaking.

City Housing is committed to facilitating holistic approaches to social housing, acknowledging that a roof over one's head is only the first step towards an improved quality of life and sense of belonging to the wider Wellington community. Our approach aims to leverage existing Council and other community stakeholder services to work alongside tenants to achieve tenant-led goals, creating sustainable partnerships that build stronger communities. We put relationships at the forefront of how we work, prioritising the goals that tenants choose to pursue for their community and addressing the barriers and resources needed as much as possible for tenants to lead their own community building. This approach is based on community development frameworks and best-practice approaches used successfully overseas and in New Zealand. Our team is committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, building strong relationships with Māori tenants and community partnerships.

Rather than provide community supports internally through City Housing, we develop partnerships with services that specialise in the interests of our tenants and work with all residents in the community. This aligns with our Council value of mahi ngātahi, collaboration, which builds more social capital, avoids duplication of services, and challenges the stigma that suggests that residents who live in social housing need to be somehow separate from everyone else. City Housing, as a part of WCC, is funded solely by tenant rent income and we are unable to access funding for providing community or social services, so it is also important for us to responsibly prioritise our budget towards tenancy and asset management while maximising external social supports that are already funded to cover everyone eligible, including our tenants.

Many of our tenants have significant challenges to accessing these services, and we have over 30 volunteers (Kaitiaki) who have various skills and backgrounds - and all have a passion and commitment for supporting community building in their community. To overcome these challenges and to provide the right supports for Kaitiaki to lead community

building, our City Housing team provides the promotion and referral for all tenants to existing activities (sometimes this involves an in-person introduction), consultation with tenants to prioritise what they want for their community, and liaison connecting Kaitiaki to the local groups, organisations and skills training in the community that can support them to achieve their own goals. Many community groups partner with us to run activities that tenants want in our community rooms and other spaces across our portfolios, which helps address transport and access barriers as well as provides a hyper-local approach to place-based community building.



Current Partnerships for Community Development

Notes:

- Approximate number of participants in brackets
- Activities are weekly unless stated otherwise
- The City Housing Welfare Case Management Service works with some of the agencies below, along with other agencies and groups, in a separate capacity to provide individual supports

Community Group/ Agency	What they do	Where
Age Concern	Monthly coffee groups for seniors (5-15)	Marshall Ct, Newtown Park, Central Park
	Support with monthly Primetimers group-seniors aged 80+ (25)	All properties

Capital Mosaic	Annual Neighbourly event (200+)	Central Park, Berkeley Dallard, Pukehinau, Etona
	Weekly Kaibosh (free rescued food) (40+)	
	Community Sports Bank and Little Library coordination (new- starting 14 Aug 2021)	
	Kaitiaki capacity building support	
Changemakers Resettlement Forum	Support for the Karen youth group (10)	Based at Rintoul St
	Support for refugee background Kaitiaki	Newtown and Kilbirnie
	Activity promotion to refugee tenants	All properties
Digital Inclusion Alliance Aotearoa	3 Computer and Digital Literacy Groups (5 participants each group)	Newtown Park, Hanson Ct, Central Park
	Access to affordable internet	
	Free devices (laptops or tablets)	
Emerge	Mental health and wellbeing support groups (weekly), (about 10 participants per group)	Newtown Park and Central Park
Free Store	Food donations (coordinated by CH staff and Kaitiaki) (20+)	Lyndhurst and Heath
Kaibosh	Rescued food (in partnership with local community groups and Kaitiaki) (180)	Hanson, Rintoul, Granville, Central Park, Duncan, Kotuku
Koha Clothing (Auckland-based)	Clothing for free or koha (40+ people, random frequency alongside Kaibosh)	Central Park, Berkeley Dallard, Pukehinau, Etona
Newtown Union Health Service	Nurse weekly and GP monthly, health appointments for tenants	Newtown Park
Salvation Army	Bread donation and delivery (Kaitiaki and Tenancy Advisors coordinate) (15 each)	Rintoul and Hanson Ct
Saint Vincent de Paul	Kilbirnie volunteer chapter support with Kaibosh and connections to supports for tenants (100)	Duncan
	Community gatherings (40-50)	

Shia Muslim Association	Arabic classes for youth (20)	City wide - based in Mt Cook
Sustainability Trust	Free access to gardening workshops, garden coordinator and compost support	All gardens- ongoing
Tēpu mō tātou	Community development and Kaitiaki capacity building (20 hours FTE)	Rintoul and Granville (Berhampore)
	Kaibosh (40) and Fruit & Vege Coop coordination	Rintoul and Granville
	Youth group coordinator (10 participants)	Rintoul
Urban Vision	Women's Group (10-15 participants)	Newtown Park
	Social English (6)	Rintoul
	Playgroup (5)	
	Gardening and event support (casual)	
WCC Libraries	Little Library support and monthly activities run by a librarian (new) - children & youth	Central Park, Berkeley Dallard, Pukehinau, Etona
	Monthly adult literacy and games group run by a librarian (5 participants at a time)	Heath St
WCC Parks Sport and Recreation	Community Sports Bank (new as of 14 August 2021)	Central Park, Berkeley Dallard, Pukehinau, Etona
	Support with play activities at events and supporting Kaitiaki to run them at other times	All CH complexes
	Community gardening support	
WCC Tip Shop and Waste Minimisation	Tip Shop items donated to The Fixery	Granville
	Free compost grant	All active CH gardens (13)
	Waste minimisation and composting training and support	All properties
WCC Community Services	Funding for 2 part-time Community Development roles with Tēpu mō tātou, specifically based in City Housing	Rintoul and Granville
	Support with community connections, neighbours day plans, seeds for gardeners, compost and food sustainability support	All properties

Tenant-led Groups for Community Development

Group Name	Community Group Supporting?	Where
Tai Chi for arthritis (5) twice weekly	No	Berkeley Dallard
Tai Chi for everyone (40)	External Chinese community volunteer supporting, Chinese senior tenants leading	Central Park
Community Cuppa/Café Sessions (10-15)	No	Heath St, Central Park, Newtown Park
	Tēpu mō tātou	Rintoul and Granville
Women's Only Nights (30-40)	Urban Vision	Newtown Park
Chinese Choir (30)	External Chinese community volunteer supporting, Chinese senior tenants leading	Central Park
Japanese Dance (10)	No	Central Park
Chinese Reading and Dance group (15)	No	Hanson Ct residents using Central Park's room
Muslim Women's Group (10)	No	Kotuku
Creative Writing (5)	No	Newtown Park
Seniors games nights (6)	No	Pukehinau
Choir (10-12)	No	Rintoul
Somali School Holiday Programme (10)	No	Te Ara Hou

There are currently about 50 ongoing activities that meet at least monthly or more often (most are weekly) across the city. Prior to our first lockdown in 2020, there were about 40. Some of those previous activities never restarted after lockdown ended, and other groups ended as well while other new ones started up - it is constantly changing but room usage is steadily increasing.

Some examples:

Community networks are organic and it is often difficult to capture all the ripple effects and benefits of having an activity, and the connections and offshoots that come from it. An example would be how Capital Mosaic, an external community group based in Brooklyn, started holding an annual neighbours' day at the City Housing complex near where they

lived, Berkeley Dallard, in 2016. They started getting to know tenants there who helped with the organising and promotion, and after getting to know tenants were able to know that there was enough interest and trust with their group for them to run a weekly Kaibosh food distribution. From that they have built further on relationships to support another agency to come sporadically to offer free high-quality clothing, and they recently started to support play activities for youth and a new Little Library, connecting in with our other Council Business Units and supporting more tenant volunteers for support and resources.

Another example would be how a community volunteer supporting Chinese senior tenants across the city linked in with us to organise Chinese New Year celebrations every year since at least 2012. She enabled Chinese seniors to first start up a choir in 2019, which led to them later being able to lead a weekly Tai Chi group starting in 2020: seniors who do not speak English are able to share their skills in teaching Tai Chi to everyone in the community. The Tai Chi group connected to mana whenua who are tenants that attended Tai Chi, who then invited the choir to perform a song in te reo Māori at the Matariki celebration that mana whenua had organised in partnership with our team. One of the Māori volunteers spent every week for months teaching the Chinese choir Māori pronunciation which has led to ongoing friendships and connections for future community activities.