Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (Technical)

May 2020

Offices of the Hebridean Housing Partnership in Stornoway

Introduction

This briefing paper contains an introduction and overview of the technical aspects of housing association finance in Scotland. We have also published briefing papers on the revenue and capital aspects of Housing Association finance in Scotland that may be of interest to readers.

Housing Associations in Scotland vary in size. Some are stand alone and some have group structures. They are governed by boards usually including tenant and independent members. The role of boards in finance is to take an overview, set strategic objectives and policies and to monitor the implementation of these objectives and policies.

Housing Charter and Legislation

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter sets sixteen standards and outcomes that all social landlords should be achieving for their tenants and other customers.

It is intended that the Housing Charter will help to improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide and will support the Scottish Government's long-term aim of creating a safer and stronger Scotland. It does so by:

- Stating clearly what tenants and other customers can expect from social landlords, and helping them to hold landlords to account

- Focusing the efforts of social landlords on achieving outcomes that matter to their customers
- Establishing a basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator to assess and report on how well landlords are performing. This assessment will enable the Regulator, social landlords, tenants and other customers to identify areas of strong performance and areas needing improvement.

The Charter has seven sections covering: equalities; the customer / landlord relationship; housing quality and maintenance; neighbourhood and community; access to housing and support; getting good value from rents and service charges; and other customers. It contains a total of sixteen outcomes and standards that social landlords should aim to achieve. The outcomes and standards apply to all social landlords, except that number 12 applies only to local councils in relation to their homelessness duties; and number 16 applies only to councils and registered social landlords that manage sites for Gypsies/Travellers.

The Housing Scotland Act (2010) reformed regulation and modified the 'right to buy'. The Housing Scotland Act (2014) abolished the 'right to buy' in Scotland.

The Scottish Parliamentary elections of 2016 resulted in the re-election of the Scottish National Party government. Before the election, the Scottish National Party had proposed to embark on a £3billion programme to build 50,000 new affordable homes over the next five years, at least 35,000 of which would be for social rent. However, in Holyrood, the First Minister pledged to go even further if possible and said that:

"These new houses will help to ensure that individuals and families across the country have access to good affordable homes. But they will also deliver economic benefits. Their construction will support around 14,000 full-time equivalent jobs a year and generate around £1.8billion in economic activity. We will also introduce a Warm Homes Bill, making use of existing powers to tackle fuel poverty and new powers over energy efficiency."

In 2018, the Scottish Government published a discussion paper 'Housing Beyond 2021' that considered challenges for housing beyond 2021, some draft principles for future interventions and proposals for housing supply beyond 2021. The paper stated that:

"Over the period to 2040, we will change the way we spend public money to support housing services and delivery. We will ensure that the economic and business environment supports housing investment and an efficient housing market. We will make our housing system fairer, especially for young people and others who do not currently own a home. We will explore new sources of funding for, and innovative ways of, building homes and providing care and other services at home. We will set new standards around accessibility, energy efficiency, quality and safety. Our homes will be connected, physically, digitally, culturally and economically, to their surroundings and promote healthy lifestyles and physical activity."

Regulation

The independent Scottish Housing Regulator was established on 1st April 2011. It regulates all of Scotland's social housing including registered social landlords and the landlord and homelessness services of local authorities. Their overall purpose is to regulate to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants of social landlords.

The Scottish Housing Regulator is an executive agency of the Scottish Government. They exercise independently the regulatory powers of Scottish Ministers in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Their purpose is to provide an independent external assessment of the effectiveness of housing service delivery and make recommendations to help landlords improve.

At the start of every inspection they ask the inspected organisation to provide them with information on it and how it is performing. Organisations provide this information by giving a completed inspection submission. Following inspection, they expect all organisations to respond effectively to their recommendations using their own improvement planning processes. They ask organisations that receive fair or poor assessments to prepare an improvement plan.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gave the Scottish Housing Regulator powers to step in or intervene in a registered social landlord where they need to protect the interests of tenants, service users, investors or other stakeholders. They can intervene by appointing a manager, a governing body member, a special inquirer or an auditor. They do not use these powers lightly or routinely. These powers were strengthened by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 with the addition of powers including those to set performance improvement targets, require the production of regulatory plans and to transfer assets to another organisation in cases of financial difficulty. They also carry out thematic assessments to analyse how landlords are meeting the conditions of the Scottish Housing Charter.

In April 2012, Michael Cameron, Chief Executive of the Scottish Housing Regulator, wrote in 'Inside Housing' that:

"Our new powers give us the tools we need to regulate social landlords effectively. We will be confident in using them and swift and assertive when necessary to protect the interests of tenants and to protect the housing assets for future generations.

"Each year we assess the risk each registered social landlord presents to the interests of tenants and other service users and publish a regulation plan for those landlords we need more assurance from or where we want to see improvements. This year we have published regulation plans for 51 social landlords, just under one third of all those registered in Scotland.

"The main areas we are looking for assurance on through these regulation plans are financial health and stock quality issues, particularly progress towards meeting the Scottish Housing Quality standard by 2015.

"We've seen landlords improve their business planning and we'll look for this to continue, particularly given the continuing challenges in landlords' operating environment.

"We're also engaging with a small number of landlords to ensure their governance improves, and for some we plan to use our inquiry powers to scrutinise their performance in delivering services to tenants.

"We will also be particularly active with those landlords with the most exposure to the biggest risks. This means that if you are larger, more complex, have higher levels of debt and are engaged in growth – what we refer to as landlords of systemic importance – you'll see more of us."

The Scottish Housing Regulator implemented a new regulatory framework in April 2019.

The framework includes the publication of a new engagement plan for every registered social landlord in Scotland. According to the regulator, the main areas of engagement will be financial health, governance and delivery of services for tenants and service users.

The new framework also means that the regulator publishes a regulatory status for each landlord and requires them to publish annual assurance statements outlining their compliance with regulations.

The new framework is risk-based. The Scottish Housing Regulator assesses risk in landlords to determine what assurance is needed from them and what they may need to improve. The regulator will then:

- Focus on the most significant risks to tenants, people who are homeless and other service users.
- Continually assess each landlord to understand its performance and risks.
- Engage with landlords at different levels depending on their risk and performance profile.
- Engage with landlords in the least intrusive way possible to get the assurance needed.
- Be transparent about why and how they engage with landlords.
- Give landlords the opportunity to improve where there are problems unless there is a need to act quickly.
- Use powers in a proportionate way.
- Take decisive, effective action to safeguard the interests of tenants and other service users when a landlord does not have the capacity or willingness to improve.

The assessment of risk may not always be the same as a landlord's own detailed assessment of the risks it faces. Risk-based regulation is a way for the Regulator to prioritise resources and plan how to engage with landlords through further scrutiny, engagement and intervention.

The main risks considered are poor:

- Outcomes for tenants, people who are homeless and other service users.
- Quality of tenants' homes and investment failures.
- Financial performance and management.
- Governance.

The Regulator has published an Engagement Plan for each landlord. Each Plan sets out the information required from the landlord, what it needs to do, and how and why the Regulator will engage with it.

Michael Cameron, Chief Executive at the regulator, said that:

"We want to see well-run social landlords that deliver good services and good outcomes for tenants, people who are homeless and gypsy / travellers. And our new regulatory framework has been designed to promote openness, transparency and self-assurance. Landlords will soon be thinking about preparing their first annual assurance statements. These are due by October. We've published guidance and frequently asked questions to support landlords to do this. We will consider the annual assurance statements as part of our risk assessment in the coming year. We will publish a regulatory status for every Registered Social Landlord from April 2020."

Business Planning

The four main reasons for a Housing organisation to prepare a business plan are to:

- Assess the organisation's current position including its performance, resources and business environment
- Determine priorities and objectives for long- medium- and short-term
- Develop action plans and use resources to achieve time-specific aims
- Regularly monitor performance against plan

A Housing Business Plan will typically cover:

- Overview
    - Review vision and objectives
    - Map stakeholders
    - Analyse environment

- Conduct initial risk assessment
- Detailed Strategies
    - Marketing Strategy
    - Asset-based strategies
    - Human Resources
    - Information Technology
- Addresses
    - Cashflow, income and expenditure
    - Who will manage what in the future?
    - Where the organisation will get its money from
    - How much money is required to deliver promises to residents?

The business plan is a combination of assumptions and mathematics presented over a time-line. The assumptions include rents, service charges, reactive maintenance, decent homes and future major works and funding. The mathematics is the presentation of these assumptions in a presentable format over a timeline that is a period of thirty years. The business plan includes a 'risk register'.

In a Housing Association with a group structure, each entity in the group has its own business plan while the Group has a consolidated business plan. The consolidated business plan is delivered to the Scottish Housing Regulator annually. Funders are also presented with an annual funding business plan to support the loan requirements of the Housing Association. In practice, Housing Associations commonly produce two versions of the business plan – one to report to the Board and the other to report to funders. The version for funders shows a maximum funding requirement although it is planned to deliver investment and services by drawing down a lower level of funding.

The business plan is a thirty-year rolling programme. The funders do not necessarily expect to see loans repaid but do want to see that the Housing Association is able to pay them if required.

The business plan should sit within the strategic framework and corporate plan. Beneath the business plan should sit the operational policies, departmental action plans for each division of service and staff development plans for individual members of staff. Each level of plan should contain relevant key tasks and performance against these should be monitored and reported appropriately.

Housing associations sometimes merge; either when they consider that this would create more opportunities to develop homes or improve services; or where one of the partners finds itself unable to continue because of financial or governance issues.

Value for Money and Performance Management

Value for money and efficiency are often used interchangeably but they are not the same. Indeed, efficiency is not simply value for money it is but one element of it.

Value for Money has been defined as:

"*The correct balance between Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness. Value for Money… is considered… to be high when there is an optimum balance between all three, with relatively low costs, high productivity and successful outcomes in terms of service delivery to residents.*

Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness are defined as follows:

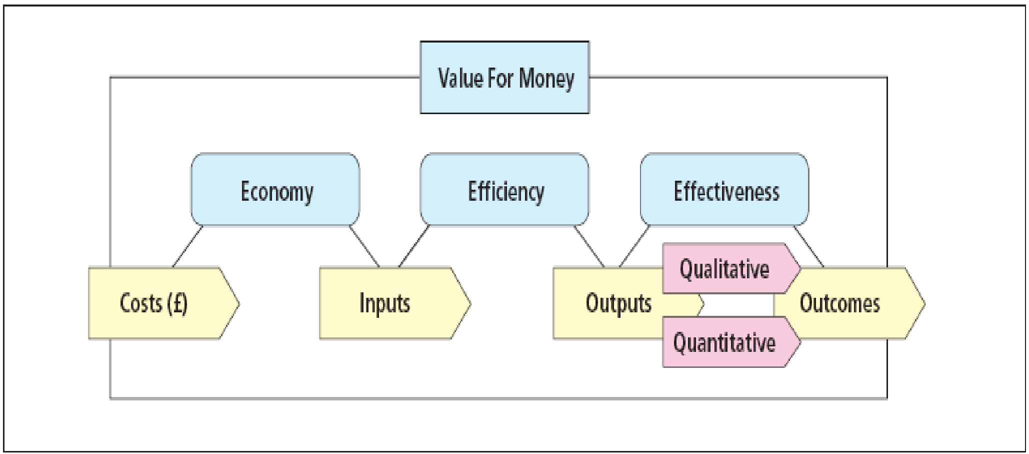
- Economy - This relates to minimisation of the costs of inputs (For example, reducing the salary costs of a staff team working in a call centre or the cost of a new Information Technology system).
- Efficiency - This is concerned with maximising the outputs produced from these inputs (For example, increasing the number of repairs completed by each operative every week, or the number of calls answered by a Call Centre worker)
- Effectiveness - This relates to achieving the desired outcomes. In the housing context these should be the outcomes desired by customers (For example, are residents happy that a call centre dealt with their query at the first time of asking or are repairs done to the customers satisfaction).

Inputs, Outputs and Outcomes are defined as follows:

- Inputs – These are the resources used to produce the actions that produce the outputs. Input measures are not just about quantity as the quality is just as important.
- Outputs – These are the goods or services, their quality, quantity or level, produced by an organisation. Output measures support the daily management of services
- Outcomes – These are the impacts of the organisation's actions. Outcome measures show how well the organisation is achieving its objectives and whether the underlying problems still exist or have changed. Outcomes can also refer to impacts of people's behaviour or attitudes so qualitative measures are also relevant. Outcomes can be hard to measure, or data hard to collect, especially where the impact is in the future or it is hard to quantify the organisation's contribution to changes in the environment.

Processes are the actions that create or deliver outputs. Process measures can help to identify how well actions contribute to outputs; where problems are developing, targets are not being met and how resources could be targeted better.

These concepts are illustrated diagrammatically below:



Performance Management is a process by which organisations align their resources, systems and employees to strategic objectives and priorities. It Includes activities that ensure that goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner. It can focus on the performance of an organisation, a department, employee, or processes that build a product or service.

Procurement can be defined as:

- The acquisition of goods or services so that the goods/services are appropriate and that they are procured at the best possible cost to meet the needs of the purchaser in terms of quality and quantity, time, and location
- Processes intended to promote fair and open competition for their business while minimizing exposure to fraud and collusion.

Asset Management

Asset Management has been defined as:

"Taking a comprehensive approach to managing… physical assets with the aim of achieving particular objectives, usually to make best use of the housing stock and achieve value for money. It covers the construction, operation, maintenance, modification, replacement and disposal of housing and other buildings.

"Asset Management is about understanding and managing the performance of, and risks presented by, a landlord's assets. An Asset management strategy therefore provides a framework for landlords to manage stock pro-actively and support business plan objectives. It is used by social landlords to link knowledge of their stock, the need for housing in response to local demand and customer aspirations, and what is affordable in the business plan."

The Asset Management Plan is often considered to be the foundation of the business plan. It should therefore be kept under review. In particular, the:

- Identification and analysis of housing and non-housing assets including their condition and future maintenance needs.
- Achievement and Maintenance of the Decent Homes Standard and other agreed local standards including:
    - The Stock Condition Survey
    - The Replacement of components linked to Depreciation
- Appraisal of assets to inform consideration of Demolitions, Disposals and Renewals
- Potential for Regeneration schemes and New Build.

Traditionally, asset management has focused on maintaining the standard of the stock. A study by the Chartered Institute of Housing in 2011 found that:

"This has meant that asset management strategies have often been based on the assumptions that:

- *Properties will normally remain in social housing forever.*
- *The social landlord which built the property will be the right landlord to manage it.*

"Strategies have consequently focused principally on the delivery of works programmes rather than actively managing the asset."

Since 2011 there has been a trend towards a different approach to asset management. Landlords have started to take a more dynamic view of using their resources to maintain and develop homes and services. This requires a full understanding of the long-term financial value and performance of assets in terms of new investment, retention or disposal of stock, the type of rental product offered (market, affordable or social rents; type of tenure) and the range of activity the landlord will engage in with the community.

The Asset Management Strategy therefore needs to direct the best use of resources to ensure a value for money organisation. There is therefore a need to assess the potential to manage assets to release resources to fund objectives including considering:

- The range of products to be offered based on local needs and markets.
- Stock rationalisation through disposal of stock if it is no longer fit for purpose or is inefficient to manage; transfer of stock to better placed landlords (small scale transfers) or the acquisition of new stock.
- Future investment in new homes and / or sustainable neighbourhoods.
- Analysis of performance issues such as voids and turnover rates.
- Level of revenue that needs to be generated from asset management for development purposes.
- Appropriate targets for energy efficiency improvements in the existing stock.

To do this there is a need to understand the long-term performance of the property portfolio and those properties or assets that exceed or fail to meet performance thresholds.

There is also a need to ensure enough funding for the necessary work and to balance expenditure on revenue repairs and maintenance with capital investment. To do this there needs to be a clear understanding of property costs and market conditions. This requires a strategic planning process involving systematic gathering of information, clear organisational strategy and good understanding of risk.

There is a need to monitor asset performance. This includes sustaining demand; investing in improvements and redevelopment; and disposals especially of high value assets, high cost assets and low-density dwellings. It is sometimes said that:

"The secret to survival is knowing what to throw away and knowing what to keep."

Some studies have concluded that implementing modern asset management standards can result in a 20% reduction in the lifetime costs of assets. To achieve this, three things need to be borne in mind:

- Assets are not simply stock. Landlords also need to consider the residents and the communities in which they live. The need is to use assets to achieve the aims of the organisation and to add value.
- There needs to be a common asset management 'vision' in the organisation to ensure best use of the skills, motivation and direction of those involved in asset management.
- Asset Management is a long-term project that requires long-term financial plans rather than annual budgets driven by short-term pressures rather than long-term objectives.

Risk Management

Risk management has been defined as follows:

"Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully execute its strategies. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled".

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy has advised that:

"The financial planning horizon can now be thirty years… When considering the assumptions used in the financial plan a small variation in the early years will mean a much larger variation by year thirty. This illustrates the need for a thorough assessment of the risk in these variations over the period of the plan and the need for constant re-evaluation. The sensitivity analysis carried out as part of the business plan will evaluate the impacts."

Stress testing goes a step beyond sensitivity analysis in that it considers what combination of risks would 'break' the business plan if they all occurred at once.

Risk management is an integral part of good governance and is a process whereby:

- There is shared awareness and understanding within the authority of:
    - The nature and extent of the risks it faces.
    - The extent and categories of risks regarded as acceptable (the authority should formulate a sound policy on its threshold to risk).
    - The likelihood and potential impacts of the risks materialising; and
    - Its ability to reduce the incidence and impact on the organisation of risks that do materialise.
- There is regular and ongoing monitoring and reporting of risk including early warning mechanisms.
- An appropriate assessment is made of the cost of operating controls relative to the benefit obtained in managing the related risk.
- The authority conducts, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control in place; and
- The authority reports publicly on the results of the review and explains the action it is taking to address any significant concerns that it has identified.

The process should be ongoing, embedded in the culture of the authority and have the potential to re-orient the whole organisation around performance improvement. It is not about eliminating risk but about understanding risk and managing it more effectively. It includes identifying, quantifying, managing and re-assessment of risks. Re-assessment should be carried out based on new information, actions taken and changes in the environment. Following assessment, risks should be mitigated and then the success of the mitigation strategy should be tested.

Risks can be positive or negative. Inaction may be riskier than action, especially in a changing world. There is a need to anticipate risks, but detailed plans often must be developed as the risks emerge – there is a need to plan at the correct time. Furthermore, not all risks will be identified in advance so there is a need to be prepared to make a rapid response.

Financial risks can be managed by:

- An active Treasury Management Policy and procedures to manage interest rate risk.
- A suitable level of balances or reserves maintained in the HRA as a contingency against risks on inflation and income, bad debt increases as well as investment risk factored into the business plan.
- Performance Management Frameworks, effectively enforced, to manage the risks of poor performance in voids, income collection and investment scheme delivery.
- Using the five-year transition period to evaluate and manage the impact of componentisation in the calculation of depreciation.

There is a hierarchy of risks from organisational, strategic, high level risks managed at council / board level; through functional risks managed at senior management team level; operational risks managed at manager level; to working risk assessments for premises, fire, activities and other key documents.

The consequences of risks can be financial, reputational or regulatory. Risks can cause:

- Unbudgeted costs that at best force reductions in expenditure elsewhere and at worst threaten the viability of the organisation
- Damage to reputation
- Adverse reporting from regulators and auditors

The key components of a risk management strategy include:

- Assurance Map / Plan
- Risk Assessments
- Risk Map / Register
- Audit Committee / Scrutiny arrangements / Board

There is a need to take a holistic approach to risk. Organisations should not just concentrate on: Insurance, Health & Safety and Asset Management.

Many organisations prioritise their risks using a matrix such as that which is shown below:

Catastrophic		**High Impact, Low Likelihood Consider Action and have a Contingency Plan**		**High Impact, High Likelihood Immediate Action is Needed**
Impact				
Minor Dis-turbance		**Low Impact, Low Likelihood Keep under Periodic Review**		**Low Impact, High Likelihood Consider Action**
		Very Unlikely		**Very Likely**
			Likeli-hood	

This approach categorises risks according to how likely they are to occur and how catastrophic they would be. There are therefore four categories of risk:

- High Impact, high Likelihood – where immediate action is needed.
- High Impact, Low Likelihood – where there is a need to consider action and to have a contingency plan.
- Low Impact, High Likelihood – where there is a need to consider action.
- Low Impact, low Likelihood – where there is a need to keep under periodic review.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy has identified that in practice housing organisations will face the following major risks:

- Interest Rates
- Inflation
- Income recovery rates
- Void levels
- Rent policy
- Stock changes (new build, regeneration, right to buy)
- Investment programmes
- Debt
- Supporting People Grant
- Depreciation and Impairment

They have also identified the following as the key sensitivities to address in the business plan:

- Inflation increase or decrease
- Cost inflation not synchronised with the Consumer Prices Index
- Right to Buy levels and receipts
- Rent arrears and the impact of benefit changes
- Interest rate increases

- Performance decline, such as void levels and increase in cost and volume of responsive repairs
- Local issues, such as tendering of Supporting People or other services and reduction in Supporting People Grant
- Alternative rent policies adopted by the authority

Increased tenant poverty is often identified as a risk. It is caused by reduced employment, reduced real incomes, reduced benefit entitlements, increased costs, reduced access to services and reduced aspirations. Its effect is to reduce the ability of tenants to pay rent on time and to sustain their tenancies. Typical responses that are made by local authorities include money advice, employment initiatives, reduced costs in use and community support.

Attention should be given to the 'perfect storm' where several adverse risks are faced at the same time producing a serious threat to the organisation. For example, what would happen if the following were all to occur at the same time?

- Reductions in benefits for the under-25s and the over 65s
- A gas explosion in a flat where the tenant has refused access
- Increased interest rates

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy has identified that risks can be opportunities as well as threats:

"Risk is not all bad; it can present opportunities for the service to innovate and change. The full understanding of risk can enable new ideas to be progressed in a managed environment. The failure to take risks at the opportune moment can also in itself be a risk to the success of the service."

The Scottish Housing Regulator considers that the risks to the financial health of registered social landlords remain considerable. They consider that a key risk relates to rents and rent levels. In particular, they consider that it is clear from registered social landlords own financial information that most intend to continue to increase rents at a rate that is above inflation and that many would face serious financial challenges if this policy could not be sustained. In addition, they consider that familiar issues such as welfare reform, pension finance and diversification remain as risks for many within the sector.

Against that background the Scottish Housing Regulator considers that there is a vital role for governing bodies to be aware of the risks to the registered social landlord and to assure themselves that these risks are being managed effectively. This is particularly important at a time when the Scottish Government will be looking to registered social landlords to help it to deliver its targets for new social housing. Notwithstanding the recent rise in grant rates the proposed increase in new construction is likely to mean an increase in financial gearing for some registered social landlords and the Scottish Housing Regulator considers that this will require the highest standards of management and governance.

The Economic Impact of Housing Associations

In April 2016, the Eildon Group published an independent report that concluded that they make 'a very significant and on-going contribution to the social and economic life of the region and Scotland as a whole'.

The independent evaluation of the economic impact of Eildon's activities found that the organisation's day to day operations are estimated to have supported 250 full time jobs in Scotland in 2014/15 and to have contributed almost £10.4million to Scottish income. Most of this impact was in the Scottish Borders where 230 jobs and £9.4million of income were generated.

The Eildon Group, that comprises Eildon Housing Association Ltd and Eildon Enterprise Ltd, commissioned independent experts Optimal Economics to undertake the evaluation. To independently assess the economic impact of the Eildon Group, Optimal Economics considered three 'channels of impact': 'operations', 'capital investment' and 'community impact'. They then added these factors together to conclude the total economic impact of the Eildon Group.

Statistics quoted in the reports include:

- Employment – Eildon is one of the largest and most important employers generating 250 jobs in the Borders, 340 in Scotland
- Eildon's activity generates £13million a year of income in the Borders and £16.9million in Scotland
- By housing people with needs, reducing demand for health services and care homes means a saving of up to £2million annually
- Eildon's Award-Winning Care & Repair Service saves over £1million of public spending annually
- Eildon helps to maintain population levels in over 35 rural communities and owns homes in nearly fifty communities across the Borders region.

The report said that:

"The Eildon Group Strategy is focussed on further sustainable growth in its activities, and with further excellent partnership working and financial support, will be able to maintain and increase this economic contribution in the years to come. As a 'not for profit' charitable organisation, all of this economic impact is generated for the benefit of the community as a whole."

Welcoming the evaluation, Eildon Group chief executive, Nile Istephan, urged the incoming politicians at Holyrood to assist housing associations to continue their positive work and said that:

"This independent report demonstrates the significant and on-going contribution that the Eildon Group makes to the economy of the Scottish Borders and also the wider Scottish economy. Along with our fellow Housing Associations across the country, our activities are hugely significant in both social and economic terms, and we are very proud of the difference we make to the lives of countless families and individuals through our work.

"However, there is much more that we wish to do to increase this contribution to address the substantial on-going need for housing, care and support services across our communities. We call on (politicians of all parties) to recognise this work and to commit to prioritising the activities of our well-established, innovative 'not for profit' sector."

Eildon Housing Association was founded in 1973 by a small group of far sighted individuals with a vision to improve the lives of the people of the Scottish Borders. Since that time, the organisation has steadily grown in both size and reach so that today it is one of the leading housing and care organisations in Scotland and a significant part of the social and economic landscape of Borders' life.

Adrian Waite
May 2020

About 'AWICS'

'AWICS' is a management consultancy and training company. We specialise in providing support in finance and management to clients in local government and housing in England, Scotland and Wales. We are well known for our ability to analyse and explain complex financial and management issues clearly.

Our mission statement is 'Independence, Integrity, Value'. We therefore provide support to clients from an independent standpoint that is designed to help the client to achieve their objectives. We are passionate about working with the utmost integrity. We believe that we offer the best value for money that is available today!

For more information about our services and us please visit our website at www.awics.co.uk or contact Adrian Waite at Adrian.waite@awics.co.uk. Services that we offer include:

- Management Consultancy – http://www.awics.co.uk/ManagementConsultancy.asp
- Interim Management – http://www.awics.co.uk/interimmanagement.asp
- Regional Seminars - https://awics.co.uk/seminars-2020
- In-House Training - http://www.awics.co.uk/inHouseCourses.asp
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- Independent Residents' Advice – http://www.awics.co.uk/IndependentTenantAdvice.asp
- Technical Books - http://www.awics.co.uk/publications.asp
- Information Service - http://www.awics.co.uk/aboutUs.asp

Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland – Webinars

We are holding webinars entitled 'Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland' in May 2020. These webinars give an introduction and overview of this important subject and are fully up to date with all developments.

There are three webinars:
- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (revenue) - 13th May 2020 at 2pm
- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (capital) - 14th May 2020 at 2pm
- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (technical issues) - 18th May 2020 at 2pm

Each webinar will last about an hour and costs £30 plus value added tax (a total of £36).

These webinars are comprehensive and are designed for people who are not experts in housing finance, but who need to understand the basics and achieve an overview of what is going on. They are suitable for councillors, housing managers, tenant representatives, finance staff who have limited experience of housing association finance and others who realise that an understanding of housing finance can place them at an advantage!

- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (revenue) refers to: Trends in Scottish Housing Association Finance; Statements of Comprehensive Income (formerly known as Income & Expenditure Accounts); FRS102 and Component Accounting; Cash Flow; Rent policies, plans, trends & affordability; Bad Debts & Arrears; Service Charges; Management & Maintenance costs; Remuneration & Pensions; Major Repairs; Capital Financing costs; Supporting People; Housing Benefit & Universal Credit; United Kingdom Government's Welfare 'Reforms'; Devolution of welfare to Scotland.
- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (capital) refers to: Statements of Financial Position (formerly known as Balance Sheets); Capital Programmes; Scottish Housing Quality Standard; Development & New Build; Asset sales; the end of 'Right to Buy'; Affordable Housing Supply Programme; Housing Infrastructure Fund; Rural and Islands Housing Fund; Building Scotland Fund; National Housing Trust; Innovative financing models; Private Loans including availability and conditions; Gearing; Treasury Management; Borrowing Strategies; Regeneration; Stock Transfer.
- Introduction to Housing Association Finance in Scotland (technical issues) refers to: The Political, Economic, Social & Technological Context; Financial Structures & Governance; Housing (Scotland) Acts 2010 and 2014; Housing Beyond 2021; Role & expectations of the Scottish Government & Scottish Housing Regulator; the Economic Impact of Social Housing and links with health; Business & Financial Planning; Mergers; Value for Money; Performance Management; Risk Management, Sensitivity Analysis and Stress Testing; Asset Management; Performance Management; Roles of Board Members.

The presenter will be Adrian Waite, who is well known for his ability to explain complex financial matters clearly. It is possible to ask questions during and after the webinar. Each webinar is also accompanied by a very useful briefing paper that will be emailed to participants after it has finished alongside a copy of the presentation used. A recording of the webinar is also available after it is completed.

For further information or to make a booking, please click here: https://awics.co.uk/introduction-to-housing-association-finance-in-scotland