

Local Government and Communities Committee

Housing (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill

Submission from North Ayrshire Council

Dear Sir/Madam

North Ayrshire Council welcomes the Housing (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill. The Council supported a motion in November 2016 which stated that:

"The Scottish Government have pledged to build 50,000 new homes over the term, an aim that the previous administration wholeheartedly supported. Central to this ambition is the support given by our Registered Social Landlords partners, something that is threatened by the decision of the Office for National Statistics to reclassify Registered Social Landlords as public bodies in the national accounts. If this reclassification stands all developments by Registered Social Landlords would count against Government expenditure, greatly endangering the building programme. Accordingly, this Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Housing minister expressing our support for the pledge to build 50,000 new homes, reassuring him of our determination to be a proud partner in that aim and assuring him of our support in his efforts to change the Housing Amendment (Scotland) Bill to reclassify Registered Social Landlords spending back to the private sector."

The Chief Executive wrote to the Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart MSP, on 17 November 2016, advising the Scottish Government of this position.

On 26 September 2017, the Council approved the Strategic Housing Investment Programme 2018-2023, which was subsequently submitted to the Scottish Government. This outlines our commitment to increase the Council and developing RSL partners' build programmes, in order to further contribute to the pledge to build 50,000 homes nationally. We remain of the view that the Bill's proposals to compel the ONS to reclassify RSLs as private sector bodies in the national accounts would reduce the risk of potential future constraints to delivery of RSLs' contributions towards that 50,000 homes target.

Regards,
David Hammond
Senior Manager (Housing Strategy & Corporate Sustainability)
North Ayrshire Council