



FaCS HousingNSW

Social Housing – Outsourcing Tenancy Management

February 2015

The PSA and delegates met with Housing NSW Management in late December 2015. That meeting and various discussion papers have informed the following.

The discussion paper “Social Housing in NSW” highlights a number of areas of concern which the government and the PSA share. The government seeks better outcomes for clients (tenants). The PSA welcomes this but has queries surrounding how this is to be achieved. Management stated that the feedback they have been receiving is similar to that the PSA has made in prior representations.

The PSA considers there will always be a proportion of clients who are unable to achieve ‘better outcomes’, eg aged, infirm/disabled. A breakdown on the demographics of Housing’s client base would be useful - a concern from member’s perspective is the quality of service those disadvantaged will be provided under CHPs. (There is a concern that under the current system CHPs are enabled to ‘cherry-pick’ clients that are an easy fit into the services they provide and the manner in which they provide those services.)

Any outsourcing discussion has not dealt with the simple fact that the client base will remain the same – whether being dealt with by HousingNSW, CHPs or some combination of those agencies. If better outcomes for clients is a main thrust to outsourcing how will transferring the responsibility for social housing to CHPs provide these better outcomes? At this stage no model has been presented which enables this and Management agreed a new model would be required.

However, isn’t FaCS, as an entity, best placed to provide the range of holistic and integrated services that not only the disadvantaged, but also those with greater opportunity, require? The new “OneFaCS” as a model has only been deployed last year (2014). An aim of OneFaCS is to harmonise the services and service delivery models. There has been no opportunity to assess how this harmonisation will impact on clients, suggesting that in the near term it may be prudent to suspend any outsourcing action and assess client outcomes under OneFaCS. Management feel that under the current policy arrangements, all social housing providers are limited in how much impact they can make in the lives of their tenants, be they public or community housing providers.

PSA members in Housing acknowledge various shortfalls which have been described in the paper. The consensus here is that being given better tools would address these shortfalls ‘inhouse’. Further, any advantage in outsourcing is dubious given the static nature of the client makeup. In a similar role a CHP worker handles upwards of 200 clients while the same role within HousingNSW would handle upwards of over 400 clients. How can this be advantageous considering there is no change to the service delivery model when transferring to a CHP – how could delivery by a CHP effectively double this productivity? If this question could be answered why then couldn’t this change in model be adopted by Housing NSW?

Management advised that Housing Directors have been asked to consult with staff on the issue, stating that the consultative process is only beginning and there are no clear timeframes at this time. The PSA urge all members to actively voice concerns with the proposal and to voice any suggestions to improve internal processes.



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The PSA questions the Minister's comments that the system was designed for a different purpose, that it is unsustainable and unfair. It is the PSA's position that the government should be responsible for providing Public Housing to those disadvantaged for a multitude of reasons. Likewise, funds should be prioritised for this function and for proper maintenance of stocks and equity. What is unfair about this? Similarly to what occurred in the UK, there will be no better outcomes for clients, just a shift in responsibility from managing those clients from Government to Non-Government Organisations. The PSA is opposed to this. Overall we consider it a fallacious argument that outsourcing to CHPs will provide pathways for client independence, or make the system fairer, or make the system sustainable.