Housing Rights

Consultation Response:

Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework

March 2021

when everyone has a *home*

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Housing Rights is Northern Ireland's leading independent provider of specialist housing advice. For over 50 years we have been helping people to find and keep a home. We believe that prevention is better than the cure, and work to prevent homelessness wherever possible. Housing Rights' policy work is based on the views and experience of the people who contact us for advice and aims to support the identification of evidence based, user informed solutions.

1.1   Draft Outcomes Framework

Housing Rights is supportive of the broad ethos of the Draft Outcomes Framework in that the focus is on outcomes, achieved by cross departmental working. As a charity working towards a vision of when everyone has a home, Housing Rights works daily to improve the wellbeing of our clients by preventing and alleviating homelessness. A high-level government commitment to policy design and delivery which is outcomes based is therefore welcome.

Housing Rights further welcomes the Executive's Office intention that "*the new Programme for Government (PfG) will bring a new focus to deliver lasting, real and positive change in people's lives*."[1] However, **Housing Rights believes that due to the lack of a specific housing outcome, the draft framework will fail to deliver lasting, real and positive change for those who need it most.** We therefore welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation document and to contribute to the debate which will allow the framework to be refined.

Housing Rights also believes the draft Framework fails to appreciate the complexity of housing as an issue and in particular the central role which having a safe and affordable home plays in making a real and positive difference to the quality of people's lives.

1.2   New Decade New Approach commitment to a specific housing outcome

Housing Rights welcomes the Executive Office's assertion that the new PfG will "*reflect the messages contained in New Decade New Approach*."[2] (NDNA) However, **Housing Rights is deeply disappointed about the failure to honour the NDNA commitment to a specific housing outcome** which stated:

*"The parties agree on the need for continued attention and priority to be given to housing within the Programme for Government 2020 and beyond. **The specific housing outcome and indicators, which will focus on ensuring every household has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home that is appropriate for its needs, will be supported by robust programmes and actions**."[3]*

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[1] Programme for Government (PfG) | Northern Ireland Executive
[2] Programme for Government (PfG) | Northern Ireland Executive
[3] 2020-01-08_a_new_decade__a_new_approach.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Since the publishing of the Draft Outcomes Framework, the Minister for Communities has reinforced her commitment to ensuring housing is included as a stand-alone outcome in the forthcoming PfG.[4]

Housing Rights strongly recommends that the NI Executive honour the commitment contained in the New Decade New Approach deal to include a specific housing outcome included in the Programme for Government (PfG). This was drafted as:

"*Every household has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home that is appropriate for its needs.***"[5]**

Whilst we believe this statement does provide a succinct high-level description of what the NI Executive should seek to achieve, we also recognise the importance of the wording of the Outcomes and **should alternative phrasing be considered necessary, we would welcome the opportunity to work with the Executive Office to refine this statement.**

2.0   ENGAGEMENT

Housing Rights further welcomed the NDNA commitment to develop the PfG through a process of engagement and co-design.[6] We note that the Draft Outcomes Framework document explains that its development "*has been informed by engagement with representative groups,*"[7] and that the PfG is "*intended to capture the range of things that experience and research suggest matter most to people.*"[8] **Housing Rights would therefore welcome clarity on the extent to which the housing sector or public have been engaged with the decision by the Executive not to fulfil the NDNA commitment to include a housing outcome.**

In 2016, together with CHNI, CIH and NIFHA, Housing Rights co-hosted a consultation event attended by practitioners, policy makers and government officials regarding the programme for government and the inclusion of a housing specific outcome. The roundtable discussion notes, outlining the views and experiences of over 20 organisation from the housing sector were provided to the Executive Office at the time and have been **included as Appendix A to this response. We hope the views recorded in Section 2 of this Appendix will aid TEO in reflecting the views and experience of the housing sector in any redrafting of the PfG outcomes.**

Housing Rights would further welcome clarity about what the next steps in the development of the PfG are, and importantly what other opportunities there will be to engage and influence the content. **Housing Rights strongly recommends that the indicators included in the PfG are developed through a process of engagement and co-design – both with**

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[4] Plenary session NI Assembly 01/03/2021
[5] 2020-01-08_a_new_decade__a_new_approach.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[6] 2020-01-08_a_new_decade__a_new_approach.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[7] PfG draft Outcomes Framework consultation (northernireland.gov.uk)
[8] PfG draft Outcomes Framework consultation (northernireland.gov.uk)

organisations and, crucially, people directly impacted by the issues. Please see Section 4 of the roundtable discussion notes included in Appendix A which illustrate deliberations from the housing sector which have already been held on this issue. Housing Rights would welcome the opportunity to be part of this process going forward.

3.0   ABSENCE OF A HOUSING OUTCOME

The experience of Housing Rights' clients evidences the central importance of housing in improving wellbeing for all. Having reviewed the outcomes proposed in the draft Framework, Housing Rights shares the concerns expressed by many others regarding the absence of housing as an outcome.

3.1   Housing: a key component of wellbeing

Housing Rights further rejects the rationale given at a 2016 PfG consultation event that housing is an "*enabler*" for many other outcomes rather than a wellbeing factor in its own right. **We know from the collective experience of the people we work to support that finding a safe, secure and affordable home to live in is, like the other nine outcomes already included in the draft PfG, an end it itself which *"makes a real and positive difference to people's lives"*[9] and is a key component of wellbeing.**

Many of the families and individuals we work to support are living in unsafe, unsuitable and insecure accommodation. **Homelessness levels are unacceptably high and will rise as a direct consequence of the social and economic fallout from the pandemic. On December 31 2020 the social housing list stood at 42,665, over 10% higher than it had been on March 31 2020.** Around 70% of those on the list are in "housing stress" being in priority need.[10]

Having access to a safe and secure home is fundamental to a better future for everyone in NI. Indeed, the widely accepted psychological theory put forward by Abraham Maslow in 1943 which outlines the hierarchy of human needs, identifies shelter as a basic life need, without which, people cannot go on to have other needs met.[11]

3.2   Housing Rights Clients' experience

Housing can only act as an enabler for those who have access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home. Regrettably, our extensive and growing waiting lists for social housing and continuing high levels of homelessness demonstrate this not to be the case, notwithstanding those living in inadequate housing and those struggling to meet their housing costs. Without

[9] PfG draft Outcomes Framework consultation (northernireland.gov.uk)

[10] Luke Butterly, "Social housing waiting list 10% higher since start of pandemic," The Detail, 11 February 2021, accessed 15 February 2021, https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/social-housing-waiting-list-10-higher-since-start-of-pandemic

[11] Maslow, A.H. (1943). "Psychological Review 50 (4) 370–96 - A theory of human motivation".psychclassics.yorku.ca

a specific housing outcome in any forthcoming PfG, we will continue to fail those who do not have a home appropriate to their needs.

Last year Housing Rights provided direct help which prevented homelessness and improved the housing situation of around 11,500 families and individuals. People come to us with varied and wide ranging, often complex housing issues. Increasingly these relate to affordability, where they simply cannot afford to remain in their homes. For many others the issues relate to problems with private renting, difficulties accessing accommodation or maintaining it because of poor conditions or disrepair, as well as those who come to us in situations which place them on the cusp of homelessness.

Housing Rights witnesses daily the real difference which having a safe and affordable home can make for people in NI and all too often the acute and adverse impact on all aspects of the lives of those who do not.

3.3   Impact of COVID-19

The importance of "home" and the impact of not having one has been brought into even sharper focus during the coronavirus pandemic. The key messages of 'Stay **Home**; Stay **Safe**; Save **Lives**' has served to reinforce how critical having access to a safe and secure home is in keeping not only individuals, but everyone in our community safe. Job loss and income reduction as a result of the pandemic has had a significant impact on our clients' ability to meet their housing costs. Since the beginning of the pandemic the social housing waiting list has risen by over 10%.[12] **Now more than ever, in order to turn the curve, it is crucial that housing and homelessness are prioritised by the Executive and we believe a specific housing outcome is the only way to drive the collaborative behaviour which will achieve this.**

4.0   COLLABORATIVE WORKING

The PfG Draft Outcomes Equality Impact Assessment, states that housing "*is not included as a standalone Outcome in the draft Framework as it is a single-issue subject that could unduly focus on the activity of building houses rather than on the benefits that flow from people having access to suitable housing.*"[13] Housing Rights rejects this rationale. This reasoning fails to appreciate the complexity of the factors which contribute to ensuring everyone has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home that is appropriate for its needs, which go well beyond the activity of building houses. With the right outcome and indicators, it would not be difficult to avoid an undue focus solely on the activity of building houses. **We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Executive Office on developing appropriate indicators in order to ensure the housing outcome captures these complex, cross-departmental issues**

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[12] Luke Butterly, "Social housing waiting list 10% higher since start of pandemic," The Detail, 11 February 2021, accessed 15 February 2021, https://www.thedetail.tv/articles/social-housing-waiting-list-10-higher-since-start-of-pandemic
[13] PfG draft Outcomes Framework Equality Impact Assessment Consultation Document (northernireland.gov.uk)

and provides a focus on the benefits delivered. For example such indicators could include:

Indicator: Addressing affordability

Potential indicator wording:
1. % of households spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs
or
2. % of households at risk of poverty after housing costs
Source: Family Resource Survey (NISRA)

4.1 Cross departmental co-operation

Housing Rights strongly believes that delivering on a housing outcome & eradicating homelessness in our community requires cross departmental and cross sectoral co-operation – working across traditional boundaries beyond the Department for Communities to Economy, Infrastructure, Health, Education, Justice and Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs.

4.1.1 Housing and health

It is well established, for example, that housing is one of the biggest determinants of the health of any population. In 2016 the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) reported that the cost to the NHS in dealing with 'Category 1 Hazards'[14] which are deemed to equate to 'poor housing,' was £39.5 million per year.[15] NIHE further reported that this cost to the NHS only represents 10% of total societal costs of poor housing, which are estimated to be £401million per annum.[16] Prioritising the prevention of homelessness and the improvement of homes therefore has cascading and multiple impact on our health and on the public purse. This inter-relation between health and homelessness has been brought into even sharper focus by the pandemic, as reinforced by the key messages of 'Stay **Home**; Stay **Safe**; Save **Lives.**'

4.1.2 The cost of homelessness

In addition to the cost of poor housing, homelessness has significant financial implications across the public sector, as the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) highlighted in their 2017 report on Homelessness in Northern Ireland.[17] Indeed the annual cost to the NI public purse of each homeless presentation was estimated in 2015 to range from £4,972.36 to £36,119.34 (depending on the complexity of the situation), with the average deemed to be £15,470.[18]

4.1.3 Housing and criminal justice

The impact of housing on criminal justice is also evidenced, a Ministry of Justice report in 2012 for example, identified that 37% of prisoners being released had nowhere to live; 79% reported being homeless before being reconvicted and

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[14] These include excess cold, damp & mould, and falls on stairs
[15] https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Documents/Research/HCS-2016-Additional-Reports/The-cost-of-poor-housing-in-Northern-Ireland-2016.aspx
[16] https://www.nihe.gov.uk/Documents/Research/HCS-2016-Additional-Reports/The-cost-of-poor-housing-in-Northern-Ireland-2016.aspx
[17] Homelessness in Northern Ireland Full Report_0.pdf (niauditoffice.gov.uk)
[18] "Calculating the cost of homelessness in Northern Ireland? A desk-based study of the range of costs relating to homelessness" Fiona Boyle, 2015

60% believed that a place to live was important in stopping them from reoffending.[19]

4.1.4 Housing and the economy

In the context of the Covid-19 outbreak and the subsequent economic impact felt by many communities and sectors, we believe that a real opportunity exists to focus on a housing-led economic and social recovery. **A specific housing outcome, with appropriate key priority areas and ambitious targets, has the potential to drive economic growth through construction and associated industries as well as to improve wellbeing through alleviating chronic housing problems of those impacted by them.** The newbuild programme provides a £1Bn economic multiplier effect each year for the regional economy, when we include the wider supply chain.[20]

Including a standalone housing outcome would therefore directly support the government's stated aim of "*building a strong and prosperous society by tacking disadvantage and achieving sustainable economic growth.*"[21]

4.2   Key Priority Areas and related strategies

4.2.1   Key Priority Areas, which are non-housing specific, and could be linked to a standalone housing outcome include:

- Better jobs
- Built Environment
- Care and Support
- Disability
- Early Intervention and Rehabilitation
- Green Economy
- Inclusion and Tackling Disadvantage
- Mental Health and Well Being
- Skills and Attainment
- Tackling Sectarianism, Building Respect and Identity
- Water and Wastewater Management

4.2.2   Key executive strategies, beyond specific housing strategies, which could be linked to a housing outcome to help drive collaborative working include:

- Anti-Poverty strategy
- Apprenticeship Strategy
- Children & Young Peoples Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Economic strategy
- Education and Skills strategy

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[19] The factors associated with proven re-offending following release from prison: findings from Waves 1 to 3 of SPCR (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[20] https://nifha.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NIFHA-Sector-Global-Accounts-2020-FINAL.pdf
[21] PfG draft Outcomes Framework consultation (northernireland.gov.uk)

- Energy Strategy
- Environment Strategy
- Fuel poverty Strategy
- Health & Well Being 2026: Delivering Together
- Investment strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- NIHE Draft Supporting People
- Prisons 2020
- Rural Affairs
- Strategy for Looked After Children

5.0   ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to Housing Rights' fundamental concern about the failure to include housing as a standalone outcome, there are a number of other comments we wish to make in relation to the consideration of housing within the document.

5.1   Housing as a Key Priority Area

In addition to the welcome inclusion of housing as a Key Priority Area (KPA), under Outcome 2,[22] Outcome 8[23] and Outcome 9,[24] **Housing Rights urges the Executive Office to also include housing as a KPA under each of the following outcomes:**

- **Outcome 1: Our children and young people have the best start in life**
- **Outcome 3: We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect**
- **Outcome 4: We all enjoy long, healthy active lives**
- **Outcome 5: Everyone can reach their potential**
- **Outcome 6: Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon- neutral**
- **Outcome 7: Everyone feels safe- we all respect the law and each other**

5.1.1 Outcome 8: We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives

Housing Rights welcomes the inclusion of housing as a KPA under Outcome 8, however the descriptor [25] fails to make reference to the prevention of homelessness, nor to the role of the private rented sector (PRS). The PRS in NI has grown significantly from 8% of all households in 2003 to 19% in 2019, [26] meaning more people now live in this sector than in social homes, and it is increasingly relied upon by low-income families with children. The issues that exist in the PRS with regards to standards, security, and affordability are

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[22] We live and work sustainably- protecting the environment
[23] We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives
[24] People want to live, work and visit here
[25]
[26] https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/system/files/publications/communities/frs-201819.pdf

evidenced in the fact that loss of rented accommodation is among the top three causes of homelessness in Northern Ireland.[27] Furthermore, the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on private renters, who made up almost three quarters of the COVID related calls we received to our helpline at the beginning of the pandemic.

Housing Rights therefore recommends that the descriptor of housing as a KPA under Outcome 8 be expanded to include reference to regulation of the private rented sector and prevention of homelessness by supporting people to maintain their homes. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the Executive Office to refine this descriptor.

5.2   Housing and Homelessness strategies

Whilst Housing Rights appreciates that the strategies under each of the outcomes are not an exhaustive list, we believe the **Housing Supply Strategy is a key document which, like the Anti-Poverty Strategy, is currently being developed, but conversely is not referenced anywhere in the document**. Furthermore, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Homelessness Strategy which provides strategic direction for addressing homelessness in NI, is not mentioned under any of the outcomes.

Housing Rights believes the Housing Supply and Homelessness strategies are key in delivering the PfG outcomes and should be explicitly referenced as strategies to help deliver the KPAs as follows:

Outcome 1: Our children and young people have the best start in life
  o   Housing Supply Strategy
  o   Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 2: We live and work sustainably- protecting the environment
  o   Housing Supply Strategy
Outcome 3: We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect
  o   Housing Supply Strategy
  o   Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 4: We all enjoy long, healthy active lives
  o   Housing Supply Strategy
  o   Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 5: Everyone can reach their potential
  o   Housing Supply Strategy
  o   Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 6: Our economy is globally competitive, regionally balanced and carbon-neutral
  o   Housing and Housing Supply Strategy
Outcome 7: Everyone feels safe- we all respect the law and each other
  o   Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 8: We have a caring society that supports everyone throughout their lives

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[27] Northern Ireland Housing Bulleting October-December 2020 (communities-ni.gov.uk)

   o Housing Supply Strategy
   o Homelessness Strategy
Outcome 9: People want to work, live and visit here
   o Housing Supply Strategy

6.0 CONCLUSION

Housing Rights strongly believes that if the PfG is to succeed in prioritising the things that matter most to people in NI, **it is essential that:**

- **A specific housing outcome is included in the PfG, honouring the New Decade New Approach commitment to an outcome with a focus on ensuring *"Every household has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home that is appropriate for its needs."***
- **The importance of getting the "*wording"* of the Housing Outcome right, does not preclude its inclusion. Should alternative phrasing be considered necessary, we would welcome the opportunity to work with the Executive Office to refine this statement.**
- **The housing sector, and people directly impacted by issues regarding poor housing and homelessness, are meaningfully involved in the ongoing development of the PfG.**
- **Housing is added as a Key Priority Area under Outcomes 1,3,4,5,6 and 7.**
- **Key housing strategies such as the Housing Supply Strategy and the NIHE Homelessness strategy are explicitly referenced under the relevant outcomes (see 5.2 above).**

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Housing Rights are grateful for the opportunity to respond to this consultation. For further information on this submission, please contact Housing Rights' Policy and Public Affairs Officer, Kerry Logan at kerry@housingrights.org.uk.

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Making housing matter

A Programme for Government
consultation event

Tuesday 5ᵗʰ July 2016

Summary of Roundtable discussions

1. **What do you think of the outcomes based approach and its use in the draft Programme for Government?**

Broad welcome for focus on outcomes

[Table 1] All broadly supportive of the approach .Liked wider perspective.
[Table 2] Outcomes based approach is/could be a better way forward, with caveats
[Table 3] Supportive of the broad ethos of the framework, but disappointed with the essential lack of housing. This is integral to several other outcomes, and as well as this, deserves an outcome of its own.
[Table 4] Aspiration to create a better society welcome
[Table 4] Generally welcomed move away from "departmental lines"
[Table 4] Opportunity to promote cross departmental and cross sectoral working.
[Table 5] Welcome emphasis on outcomes. Would predict that most people would agree that outcomes are all good things to aim for. It is good to get away from box ticking.

Risks identified

Too aspirational

[Table 2] How does this filter down? It's ambitious so how do you make sure the vision matches the delivery? It's a great idea but it needs to be more than a top level approach and there needs to be a whole system approach.

[Table 2] The framework is aspirational, but there has to be an element of deliverability in the outcomes and they might be just a little bit too top level.

[Table 2] A lot of the outcomes are aspirational and need to be hardened up.

Unclear

[Table 5] The indicators are not clear. For example, 'suitable' housing, 'preventable' deaths – how are these defined? Who decides what is suitable/preventable?

[Table 1] Is there a clear indicator for success or failure

Accountability

 [Table 3] It was felt that there was a danger of the focus of the framework, in practice, bypassing "outcomes" and "indicators" and going straight down to "measures" level. Ultimately the Senior Responsible Officers will be held to account by these measures, not higher-level indicators or outcomes.

[Table 5] Would like more information on the Senior Responsible Officers. Who are these people? Do they work outside of departments or will they still have responsibility to a department?

[Table 5] There is less to measure so concerned that there would be less accountability. Would like to see more specific actions and a plan to achieve this.

Choosing the right emphasis is critical

[Table 4] High stakes – critical outcomes chosen are right ones and not driven by personal or political agendas. Effective communication between decision makers & community (population) is essential

[Table 4] Over concentration on numeric targets can fail to capture complexities of people's lives – qualitative data also important.

[Table 4] Emphasised values need to underpin OBA otherwise could drive poor practice at implementation.

[Table 4] Danger that outcomes etc. driven by data which is available, there needs to be a recognition that the best data may not be available- identification of a data development agenda.

Practical issues

[Table 1] Consultation process not comprehensive enough

 [Table 2] The outcomes based approach works well if everyone understands what that means.

[Table 2] One threat is that there are no real targets, and will a 'turning the curve' approach suffice? If there is a small increase in performance, will this be taken to be success?

Cross Departmental working

[Table 2] It's very laudable in theory and the strong emphasis on collaboration is welcome. However cross departmental working within a department is difficult enough without looking across departments.

[Table 3] Given the emphasis on cross-Departmental working in the approach of the Framework, it is surprising that there is no specific outcome *on* joined-up government/cross-Departmental working specifically.

[Table 1] In practice can it do what it is set up to do? Are we measuring the right things in the right way.

[Table 5] "Are we jumping the gun?" Not convinced that the structures in government are capable of delivering this model. Not concerned regarding the will to collaborate but are there the resources available to work collaboratively? Will there be cross department funding?

Resources

[Table 4] Documents should include a fiscal philosophy.
[Table 2] Framework has to be taken in the context of a finite budget, how will outcomes be delivered if the budget for a relevant action is cut?

Impact of/on other developments

[Table 5] The PfG doesn't exist in isolation. How will existing and pending strategies be linked to this PfG? Will all future strategies be linked under the outcomes framework, how will they 'speak' to it and other strategies? For example, should the Housing Executive stop working on their Homelessness Strategy until the PfG is fixed?

[Table 5] With 'Brexit' do we need to revisit the entire process of developing a PFG?

Is government equipped to work this way successfully?

[Table 1] Last programme didn't deliver – will this?

[Table 4] Structures and culture of public services may not easily support this model in practice – would require significant change in working practices within government and between sectors.

[Table 4] Danger that outcomes etc. driven by data which is available, there needs to be a recognition that the best data may not be available- identification of a data development agenda

[Table 5] Government indicating that action plans will be developed which will be flexible – suggested that if the plan was not working, the Executive could change the plan to make it a better fit. This does not work in practice and is not our experience of how government work. You cannot change a plan midstream.

2. Should the Programme for Government have a housing outcome?

Need for housing outcome

[Table1] Yes there should be a housing outcome. The housing outcome needs to be clearly articulated with a statement of intent which is clear

[Table 2] Consensus, bar one, that housing should be an outcome – person who disagreed thought housing was more of an enabler than an outcome, including an economic driver, and there was a risk that housing as an outcome risks boxing it into a stand-alone role. While it's possible for housing to be an enabler as well as an outcome, not all outcomes are about specific outcomes and it can be argued some are enablers e.g. references to jobs and employment.

 [Table 3] There was broad agreement that there should be a specific outcome on "homes" (as distinct from "houses"), as this is a starting point for delivery of so many broader outcomes.

[Table 4] Yes
- Fundamental human need (shelter)
- Much more than an enabler - end not means.
- Decent housing comes first & also provides central platform to achieve many of other outcomes.

[Table 5] Unanimously, yes. Housing is a basic need. Shelter and Maslow's Hierarchy of social needs. People cannot move on to further aspirational needs without their basic needs being met. Identifying outcomes based on this hierarchy would be more successful approach.

[Table 2] One person felt that housing as an indicator almost felt like an afterthought. Another thought that housing as an outcome will help housing to not be treated as a political football. Housing, private rented, social housing and sustainability of existing stock are such vital areas that housing must be an outcome. Housing is a human right. Housing should be added to shared space and economic driver objectives.

[Table 3] The group felt that if there is no specific PFG housing outcome, there would be little scope or likelihood of any cross-Departmental working on the issue. Also suggestions that the relative absence of housing could have trickle-down impacts on funding levels for housing and the housing sector more generally.

[Table 4] Important role of housing as a contributor to other outcomes is also recognised – would not want to lose this.

[Table 3] It was highlighted that good housing has positive "multiplier effects", in both individual and broader senses.

What should a housing outcome look like?

[Table 4] Group like suggested wording " We have good quality affordable homes for everyone"

[Table 2] Housing outcome should be "we have good quality, affordable homes for everyone in sustainable communities"

[Table 5] Liked suggested wording of "We have good quality affordable homes for everyone". Cautioned affordable needs to be carefully defined – related to income. A housing outcome should also include the words:
- o Secure
- o Suitable
- o Sustainable

Additional thoughts on outcomes:

[Table 4] Why is "Quality of Public Services" an outcome - is this not a means to an end rather than a "desired state"?

[Table 4] What about an outcome "caring for people in crisis"?

3. What do you think of the proposed housing indicator /measure?

Inadequate & unsuitable

[Table 3] The group strongly felt that the existing indicator and measure were not adequate.

[Table 4] Totally inadequate

[Table 5] Disappointed. Too narrow. Restrictive.

[Table 2] No one felt reducing housing stress was the best measure.

[Table 5] Sounds like they have developed this without talking to people working in the sector.

Needs to be improved

[Table 2] People felt the housing indicator either wasn't right or there was a need for additional housing indicators. 'Suitable' may be well meaning but the problems could be defined, still in simple terms.

[Table 4] Suitable" – very subjective – would need additional clarification on how this is to be defined/measured (current measure appears only to relate to public housing)

[Table 3] There is plenty of other data available to supplement simply "housing stress" figures.

[Table 3] The measure does not measure, in any sense, the supply of "suitable" housing referred to in the indicator.

[Table 1] Needs to be stronger and more challenging. Only building half of what we need.

Data concerns

[Table 3] Housing Selection Scheme itself is likely to change over the next Assembly mandate; within this, the definition of "housing stress" is therefore also likely to change.

[Table 3] Another member pointed out that "latent demand" – whereby households in housing stress do not formally apply for social housing, as they don't see any point as there is little/no supply in their area – is a major concern in this regard.

[Table 5] Danger that people will play the numbers game, intentionally or unintentionally, e.g. may be tempted/pressured to not accept clients in housing stress.

[Table 5] Using such narrow, qualitative data is risky. Numbers can be manipulated.

[Table 5] There is a need for accompanying qualitative data.

Other concerns

[Table 5] Measure proposed has no relevance to some of the outcomes it is listed under i.e. how will the number of people in housing stress show us anything about government progress under outcome re long healthy lives. In this example, a measure relating to fitness would be much more appropriate.

[Table 3] The group noted that this indicator & measure is completely ignorant of the ongoing TBUC strategy and its aspirations.

[Table 3] The group noted that this indicator & measure doesn't align with the pre-Election manifestos of the relevant parties.

[Table 4] Need to have cross tenure indicators – the programme should not just be about social housing e.g. fitness standards

[Table 2] A better, new measure should be used that covers more types and tenures of homes – reference to reliance on existing data.
[Table 5] Why are those in the private rented sector not represented when it represents such a large proportion of people's housing situations in Northern Ireland?

[Table 1] Need a basket of measures – affordability, quality.

[Table 5] Then work that organisations represented already do, demonstrates outcomes. Propose that housing organisations could provide more helpful data that moves away from a restrictive numbers game and reflects the current climate more accurately.
Propose that there should be short, medium and long term measures to prevent the recycling of clients.

[Table 1] Housing is only one of 42 indicators – given the complexity and diversity of the issues, should be at least 3 indicators.

[Table 4] Services for people in crisis not covered

[Table 1] Supporting People – connects out of the SILOS

[Table 4] Focus only on quantity & "supply" – "quality" of homes also has to be captured.- must include basic issues of safety/security

[Table 4] Inclusion of additional indicators would also permit additional housing related measures to be devised

[Table 5] We are an aging population. This is not addressed in the PfG. Meeting older people's housing needs is vitally important. There should be a push for 'Homes for Life'.

[Table 1] Adapting houses to the changing needs as population get older

4. What other indicators/measures would be suitable for housing?

Homelessness

[Table 3] The group expressed concern at the absence of anything referring to the reduction and/or prevention of homelessness. This should be captured in any proposed indicator/ measure.

[Table 3] Eradication of homelessness
[Table 4] Rates of Homelessness

[Table 2] Something around homelessness should be an indicator – reduction of FDAs should be the measure

[Table 1] Homelessness isn't mentioned or supported housing. Reducing Homelessness – statistical basis already exists

[Table 5] Homelessness is our society's "social cancer". We should be looking for a cure, not merely to reduce the need. Emphasis should therefore be on ending homelessness, not merely reducing it.

[Table 4] Tenancy sustainment

Fitness

[Table 3] Something regarding the fitness and sustainability of homes

[Table 4] Fitness standards?

[Table 5] Housing fitness standards – currently being changed and one option is to link housing and health in the measurement of fitness – could work well for PFG.

[Table 1] Quality of housing measure – across all tenures

[Table 1]Percentage of housing – new fitness standard.

Increasing supply

[Table 3] Supply targets (for social, PRS *and* private housing)

[Table 4] Number of new homes (across all sectors)

[Table 4] Reduction in empty homes

[Table 2] Meeting the 'housing growth' indicators could be a good one for supply.

[Table 1] Improve suitable housing – focus on greatest need

Affordability

[Table 4] Affordability ratios (income/housing costs)

[Table 5] Affordability – Welfare Reform is going to have a huge impact, where is it in all this?

[Table 1] Affordability – private, co-ownership, social

Other comments

[Table 3] Security of tenure (however this is to be defined)
[Table 3] Shared housing targets

[Table 2] Tenant and community element should be an indicator – 'better involved, well informed, engaged communities' or similar could be the measure. Point that measures can be softer, less tangible things that still lead to societal outcomes.

[Table 2] Other potential indicators could cover sustainability and affordability, with a caveat that they could be too narrow e.g. tenancy sustainment may be too narrow, but something about access and support, and quality that crosses all tenures could be covered, as could security for those who want it. Something around "safe, secure, sustainable housing solutions." 'Solutions' is embedded in community and finding the best option for the individual.

[Table 4] What about considering a "Housing Index"???

[Table 5] Some of the other measures have not yet been developed, is the decision to choose measures based upon what is readily available or what is appropriate?