

## National Assembly for Wales

### REPORT BY THE SOCIAL JUSTICE AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

#### Social Housing Ombudsman for Wales Regulations

1. The Committee considered the above Regulations at its 27 April 2005 meeting. The item had been remitted to Committee for scrutiny by the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration.

2. The Regulations make provision for the Social Housing Ombudsman for Wales (SHOW) to investigate complaints made against social landlords in Wales.

3. There were no proposals for amending the regulations but Members raised the following points:

- **How will the office of the Social Housing Ombudsman for Wales be publicised to tenants?**

**Response:** The Minister advised that she would update Committee on publicity arrangements for the SHOW in her next written report which would be available prior to the Plenary debate.

- **How would the Ombudsman be appointed?**

**Response:** The current Local Commissioner for Wales will take on the role as set down in the Housing Act 2004.

- **Would there be any budgetary savings for the Department when the role is transferred?**

**Response:** Budget provision has been in place for 5 years in anticipation of this role and would be transferred to the Ombudsman when the role is operational.

- **Would there be any provision to exclude frivolous and vexatious complaints?**

**Response:** Such provision does exist, but it will rely on the SHOW giving a written statement of the reasons for not carrying out an investigation.

- **The draft Regulations refer to grounds where a complainant has a remedy by way of proceedings in a Court of Law. Should the complainant be unable to afford the costs, would the case proceed?**

**Response:** This would be for the SHOW to decide on a case by case basis.

**Janice Gregory AM**  
**Chair, Social Justice and Regeneration Committee**