

Public Service Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

To promote openness and transparency across the public sector in Scotland, Section 31 (1) and (2) of the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 imposes new duties on public bodies listed in Schedule 8 of the Act to publish as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year a statement of any expenditure incurred on certain matters including:

- Public Relations;
- Overseas Travel;
- Hospitality and Entertainment;
- External Consultancy;
- Payments with a value in excess of £25,000; and
- The number of members and staff who received remuneration in excess of £150,000.

The Private Rented Housing Panel has made no payments in the above categories for the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11 with the exception of the following items:

TYPE OF COST	AMOUNT PER FINANCIAL YEAR (£)	
	2009/10	2010/11
Accommodation costs for Panel Office at 140 West Campbell Street	58,496	58,840
Hospitality in the form of tea and coffee at Committee Hearings and to visitors at the Panel Offices	462	128

In Terms of Section 32(1)(a) and (b) of the Act, the public bodies listed in Schedule 8 must publish a statement of the steps taken to (a) promote and increase sustainable growth, and (b) to improve efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the exercise of their functions.

During the year the Tribunal and its administration have made concerted efforts to reduce expenditure, improve efficiency, manage resources more effectively and cut down our ecological footprint. The following steps have been taken:

- The Panel has promoted the use of electronic systems with more use of email communication and scanning and sending of paper records and documents

- The Panel has increased the use of the Scottish Government and local authority venues for Hearings, provided it does not involve the need for participants to travel long distances
- The production of this Annual Report by prhp staff in-house, thereby avoiding professional printing costs. This report is produced in logo colours to reduce costs
- To improve Panel efficiency and make best use of members' time through doubling up hearings and avoiding where possible second hearings after re-inspections by considering parties written representations. The Panel is limited in this approach by the unpredictable geographical spread of cases and the contentious nature of some cases. The Panel will continue to explore ways of increasing productivity without compromising the rights of Panel users.
- To explore and encourage members and staff to make more use of public transport and car share options when attending hearings, inspections and training events. However, because of the extensive jurisdiction of the Panel which can often involve rural destinations, public transport to hearings and inspections is not always an option. The surveyor members of the Panel are normally the appointed drivers for a Committee if car-sharing is possible
- To recycle paper, print cartridges and other resources where possible
- To explore sharing of resources and specialist services among the Scottish based Tribunals of the Scottish Tribunals Service (STS)