

**Agenda for the consultative meeting of the
Housing Review Board
Tuesday, 11th October, 2022, 10.00 am**



Members of Housing Review Board

Members S Dawson, S Blake, Robinson, S Beer,
S Saunders (Vice-Chair), C Summers, I Hall,
H Parr, C Collier, G Pook, B Taylor and
S Chamberlain (Chair)

East Devon District Council
Blackdown House
Border Road
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EX14 1EJ

Venue: online via Zoom

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(or group number 01395 517546)
Friday, 30 September 2022

**Important - this meeting will be conducted online and recorded by Zoom only.
Please do not attend Blackdown House.**

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Until 31st October 2022, the Council has delegated much of the decision making to officers. Any officer decisions arising from recommendations from this consultative meeting will be published on the webpage for this meeting in due course. All meetings held can be found via the [Browse Meetings](#) webpage.

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Appointment of Vice Chair

3 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 10)

4 Apologies

5 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

6 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

7 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded. There are no items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

8 Housing Review Board forward plan (Pages 11 - 12)

9 Plan for Resident Involvement Strategy (Pages 13 - 51)

10 Update on Housing Task and Finish Forum (Pages 52 - 56)

11 Emergency winter housing plan (Pages 57 - 61)

12 Finance Report (Pages 62 - 69)

13 Self-Assessment against Ombudsman Code of Conduct - Complaints (Pages 70 - 89)

14 Tenant satisfaction measures (Pages 90 - 94)

15 Housing KPIs Quarter 1 (Pages 95 - 106)

16 Communication from Regulator of Social Housing- Regulatory context for Government announcement on draft legislative clauses (Pages 107 - 108)

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held at online via Zoom on 16 June 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.30 pm

1 Appointment of Chair for the meeting

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Sarah Chamberlain, the Board were asked to appoint a Chair for the meeting. With agreement of the Board, tenant representative Sue Saunders was appointed Chair for the meeting.

2 Public speaking

Co-opted tenant member of the Board, Steve Beer expressed his shock and sadness on the recent passing of Peter Sullivan and requested that a letter of condolence and appreciation of Peter's work be sent to his wife. Sue Saunders updated the Board that Peter's wife had requested that two rose trees be planted outside their home in his memory. An article would be included in the next Housing Matters magazine recognising Peter's work. The Housing Service Lead informed that Board that she had spoken to Mrs Sullivan and put some wording forward on behalf of the Council and would be attending Peter's funeral on 24 June, along with other EDDC representatives.

Co-opted tenant member Steve Beer also requested that expressing declarations of interest be made easier for tenants. In response to this he was advised that the Council had recently adopted a new code of conduct which all members of the HRB were bound by. Mr Beer was reassured that Legal and Democratic Services were available to provide guidance.

Councillor Dan Ledger, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities gave his thanks to Councillor Megan Armstrong for the fantastic work she had done over the years whilst she was in the role as Portfolio Holder. It was suggested that an article be included in Housing Matters.

3 Appointment of Vice Chair

In the absence of the Chair the Board agreed to appoint a Vice Chair for the current meeting only. It was agreed that Councillor Brenda Taylor be appointed Vice Chair for the meeting.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 April 2022 were received and accepted.

5 Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

6 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

7 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no confidential/exempt items.

8 Welcome to 3 new Housing Review Board members

The Chair introduced and welcomed three newly co-opted members to the Housing Review Board; independent community representatives Sara Clarke and Rob Robinson, and tenant/leaseholder representative Sue Dawson (who had given her apologies for the meeting).

She also gave the Board the sad news that Peter Sullivan passed away on 27 May. Peter had made an outstanding contribution to the housing service. In terms of the Housing Review Board, Peter was elected on to the district council in May 2011 and served on the Board from 2011-14. Following this Peter was co-opted onto the Housing Review Board as a tenant representative in 2017 and was vice chair of the Board from 2018, until he stood down in January of this year due to ill health. The Board agreed that Peter would be sadly missed.

9 Housing Review Board forward plan

The Housing Service Lead presented the forward plan and advised members that the forward plan acted as a reminder of agenda items to come forward to future meetings. Members were reminded that they could add further issues to the next forward plan by informing either herself or the Democratic Services Officer.

During the meeting it was noted that the following items were intended to be brought to the September Board meeting:

- Garage sites suitable for development.
- Review of Resident Involvement Strategy
- Review of downsizing.

It was also noted that in preparing for the Social Housing White Paper the service was undertaking an intensive self-assessment exercise.

A request was made to add the stock condition survey to the forward plan and this was endorsed by the Board.

10 Integrated Asset Management Contract

The Housing Service Lead updated the Board on the delivery of the Integrated Asset Management contract, as part of a regular update to the Board as well as a direct response to ongoing concerns raised regarding the delivery of some key functions of the contract. She reported the drive and focus had been on specific areas of concern. As a result the action plan had been revised and was included with the agenda papers for the Board's information. The tenant repairs review group would monitor the action plan going forward. A focus session had been held in which members of the HRB had been invited to for a face to face meeting. Representatives from Ian Williams had also attended the meeting of the Housing Review Board.

The Housing Service Lead drew the Board's attention to the key performance indicators (KPIs) included in the report and the fluctuations. In terms of responsive repairs, since January, six of the nine KPIs were moving in a better direction. The complaint KPIs had improved slightly. An area of concern was reactive repairs - overdue jobs. This was a key area that was driving dissatisfaction with the service.

Voids were another main area to focus on. The void fluctuations showed a worsening performance and work was focussing on this area. The situation with Ian Williams was mainly due to labour shortages which had contributed towards a backlog of work. The voids were also larger and typically requiring more work than originally anticipated in the contract, and a realistic price review was needed, as well as a review of void standards. The void costs were driven by the type of properties and the condition they were returned in. There had also been problems clearing previous debt left on meters which had caused a delay, but officers were in discussions with a third party provider (TSM) debt clearing service to resolve this. The intention was to start a trial of this service from 1 July 2022. It was noted that pre-void inspections were useful in identifying issues that might impact on void times. The Housing Service Lead reported that this was something that had always been done, but the Covid-19 pandemic had prevented this and she was absolutely committed to reviewing the process to ensure that it was put back in place.

The customer satisfaction KPIs were good and also provided helpful feedback data. Officers continued to drive forward the importance of the need for contractors to leave paper surveys in tenants' homes. The areas for improvement were all captured in an updated action plan that accompanied the report.

Overall the Housing Service Lead reported that there were encouraging signs that recent focus and interventions were paying off, but there was still a lot of work to be done to continue to drive improved performance. It was noted that the Housing Service's own staffing issues remained of concern. In light of this the Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Homes and Communities requested that the Property and Asset Manager not report at the next meeting of the Housing Review Board to allow him and his team to focus on delivering the day to day work of the service. This work would be kept under review by the Housing Service Lead, the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment and the Portfolio Holder – Sustainable Homes and Communities.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board:

1. notes the update on the delivery of the Integrated Asset Management Contract; and
2. recommends to Cabinet that the updated action plan is adopted, as set out in the report, to address ongoing performance concerns that relate to the Integrated Asset Management Contract.

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Climate change update

The HRB considered the report of the Senior Technical Officer (Asset Management and Climate Change) which provided information on retro-fit renewable measures and delivery to date, approach and current programmes, successful funding applications and continued delivery and bid planning for the future.

In 2020 EDDC was successful in bidding on a grant funding initiative for the installation of air source heat pump heating systems to 100 properties (this was delivered to 140 properties). The programme was further enhanced with other improvements, listed in the report. The enhanced element of the project was self-funded by EDDC.

In February 2022 EDDC was again successful in being awarded around £600,000 in funding through the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, which was part of a £1.5m commitment for delivery of a retrofit programme for 2022/23. A fabric first approach would be taken to delivery, focussing on external component upgrades and improved insulation measures to 50 properties having the worst energy performance rating.

EDDC were looking at other funding mechanisms and a collaborative approach to securing grant funds. Officers were carefully tracking all opportunities that existed for climate change and tenant home improvement opportunities. The Council's ambition was to be net zero by 2040 and it was recognised that the housing stock was a huge contributor to the carbon footprint. The housing service had excellent links to EDDC's Climate Change Officer and were working really positively with the team. Climate change and carbon reduction improvements would also be delivered through the planned works delivered by Ian Williams.

In response to a question about window replacements it was reported that a programme of works was being compiled and rolled out for window replacements and that the stock condition survey would better inform future programmes on a whole range of improvements/replacements and help with funding bids. The Council was committed to investing in and upgrading all of its stock.

The Housing Review Board endorsed the progress being made by the housing service to deliver on climate change objectives as set out in the EDDC Climate Change Action Plan and the Housing Service Plan 2022-2023.

12

Finance report

The accountant's report provided the Housing Review Board with current draft financial outturn figures for the housing revenue account and housing capital program for the 2021/22 financial year. The report also considered the implications of any forthcoming regulatory changes.

Producing a Housing Revenue Account had been a statutory requirement for Councils who managed and owned their housing stock for some time, and therefore a key document for the Board to influence.

It was noted that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was in a healthy position. The 2021/22 outturn surplus was £2.192m (£1.226m above final budget). The proposal for the allocation of this outturn surplus was:

- An increase of £1m in the planned maintenance/stock condition survey reserve (increasing it to £4.375m) taken from:
 - The £0.794m underspend within major repairs.
 - The £0.205m underspend in required revenue contribution to capital.
- The residual £1.191m to be placed into the capital development fund for future acquisition/development and climate change aspirations.
- There would be no change to the HRA balance, keeping it at the £3.1m adopted level.

In terms of capital expenditure and associated funding the housing accountant summarised that:

- A total of 11 acquisitions were completed within the year. There had been 12 right to buy sales, reducing the stock level by one property over the year.
- The £1.623m remainder of the additional borrowing taken out in March 2020 had been utilised in part funding the 2021/22 capital expenditure.

- The FRA capital works continued in 2021/22 and were solely funded by the associated earmarked reserve.

The Board noted the year end reserve levels which were contained in the report.

During Board discussion the following points were raised:

- There was an additional £1m in the planned maintenance reserve for the stock condition survey and catch up costs. There was also the option of borrowing for capital works that came out of this.
- £3.6m had been set aside for climate change acquisitions and it was also possible to borrow for this capital development.
- The Housing Task Force were looking at a huge variety of sites, both HRA owned and on the private market, to meet demand and the high priority ambition of the Council to increase its levels of housing stock. The Housing Task Force would be reporting progress to a future meeting of the HRB.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board note the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Finance 2021/22 year end outturn report is noted, and the recommend that the reserve recommendations are approved by Cabinet.

13

Tenant satisfaction survey

The Information and Analysis Officer's report explained that having information on tenant satisfaction was crucial to how the housing service was planned and monitored. Having accurate and up to date information on what tenants thought about the service enabled it to see how it was performing, and more importantly to ensure that informed decisions were made about how the service was shaped and planned for the future.

The last tenant satisfaction survey was carried out in 2020 and it was felt that it was timely to carry out another one. It was hoped to collect satisfaction data for all areas of the housing service and officers would also like to ask some additional questions around the cost of living as it was important to think and plan proactively on how best to support tenants who were affected by the current cost of living crisis. The Information and Analysis Officer also committed to ensuring that tenants have input in the creation of the survey in order to assist in what questions we asked and how they were asked. This will also be valuable in order to help us try and achieve good levels of engagement.

In response to a question about why tenants were leaving properties, the Information and Analysis Officer agreed to pass this information on. It was noted that information was also available on the number of voids in the quarterly housing performance indicator report.

The Board endorsed the housing service carrying out a housing satisfaction survey, within the existing budget of £5,000.

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Community Development: Food support

The Board received and noted an update on the vital work being done by the Community Development team to address food poverty across the district.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic the Community Development team had been working with FareShare Southwest to set up a local food hub to support existing food providers and fill gaps. During the pandemic the team mapped what was already in the district and identified gaps and overlaps, before starting something new. The report outlined all the

work undertaken and support provided from June 2020 until August 2021 when EastDevon Food Partnership deliveries finally started. The report gave some case studies and also explained how this food support fitted in with the EDDC Poverty Reduction Strategy, which included:

- Maximising incomes.
- Strengthening families and communities.
- Promoting an inclusive economy.
- Improving health.

The Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment stated that the Community Development team were the unsung heroes in housing. The food support initiative had helped so many people during a really difficult time. Having robust processes to support food poverty in place was great going forward during the cost of living crisis. It was noted that supermarket food donations were becoming harder to source and that the systems were working differently. However due to the links the Community Development team had created meant that the local hubs were doing ok and excess food was still being shared. It was also highlighted that the Community Development team were linking in closely with other areas of housing to ensure a one team approach was delivered. The Housing Service Lead pointed out the two case studies in the report that indicated the additional help that was being accessed by people coming forward for help with food.

15 Additional post - Data Officer (Property and Asset)

The Property and Asset Manager's report asked the Board to note the request for an additional post of Housing Data Analyst to provide accurate validated data in relation to the variety of work undertaken by the Property and Asset team to ensure the housing stock remained safe, compliant and that tenants could also feel safe in their homes. Accurate validated data was an important tool in the delivery of property and asset/asset management and would also assist in achieving value for money from contracts. It was noted that at present there was insufficient capacity within the Property and Asset team to take on this role.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board:

1. recommends to Cabinet the creation of the additional post of Housing Data Analyst to provide accurate validated data in relation to a variety of work undertaken by the Property and Asset team;
2. recommends to Cabinet to recommend to Council the additional budget of £40,000 to provide the post of Housing Data Analyst for the Property and Asset team.

16 Use of external consultants

The Property and Asset Manager's report requested that the HRB accept the recommendation to engage specialist/external consultants to support the delivery of key services/projects. The housing Property and Asset team was currently under resourced. The engagement of a specialist would assist in the delivery of key projects and essential services to ensure that the housing stock remained safe, compliant and that the tenants could feel safe in their homes.

The Property and Asset team was currently very short staffed, with 14 vacancies, many of which were technical/surveyor posts. Recruitment remained a real challenge and at

this point the recruitment journey was unknown. Although the preference was to self-deliver the housing services' own projects, this was not possible due to the lack of resource in the team. In light of the ongoing recruitment issues there was a need to explore other options in order to deliver the asset management service. At present there was very little other option than to use external consultants in the delivery of the service.

In order to maintain service and deliver on targets it was proposed to use specialist external consultancy support. It was also likely that external consultant support would be required to delivery programmes of work arising from the stock condition survey. The Housing Service Lead reported that the procurement frameworks already set up were excellent, the turn-around in terms of being able to get on with jobs was very quick, and she had great confidence in these groups. There was a lot of due diligence in relation to the procurement groups and the pricing and awards methods were entirely transparent and widely used by neighbouring authorities.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommends to Cabinet the use of existing budget to employ external consultants to support the Property and Asset Team to deliver planned works as required to ensure our housing stock remains safe, compliant and that our tenants can feel safe in their homes.

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Q4 2021-22 Housing performance indicator report

The Board noted the housing performance indicator report for quarter 4 2021/22 which detailed selected indicators measuring performance across the housing service. It was noted that this included figures for the number of evictions and void properties.

Attendance List

Board members present:

Sara Clarke, Independent Community Representative
Rob Robinson, Independent Community Representative
Stephen Beer, Tenant
Sue Saunders, Tenant (Chair for the meeting)
Councillor Brenda Taylor (Vice Chair for the meeting)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

M Armstrong
P Arnott
P Faithfull
M Howe
D Ledger
M Rixson
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Sophie Davies, Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager
Graham Baker, Property and Asset Manager
Natalie Brown, Information and Analysis Officer (Housing)
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing
John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
Rebecca Heal, Solicitor
Paul Lees, Senior Technical Officer (Asset Management & Climate Change)

Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager
Victoria Robinson, Community Development Officer
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
Rob Ward, Accountant
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Darren Hicks, Housing Allocations Manager
Yusef Masih, Interim Housing Services Manager
Michelle Williams, Housing Service PA
Kate Green – Ian Williams Ltd
Arron Kelly – Ian Williams Ltd

Councillor apologies:

Sue Dawson, Tenant
Cat Summers, Tenant
Councillor Ian Hall
Councillor Helen Parr
Cindy Collier, Tenant
Councillor Geoff Pook
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain

Chairman Date:

HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

This forward plan identifies reports and other agenda items for future meetings of the Housing Review Board. It is also intended to assist agenda management and act as a reminder of items to come forward to future meetings.

Report title	Meeting date	Author
Plan for Resident Involvement Strategy- a Presentation	September 2022	Interim Housing Services Manager
Update on Housing Task Force	September 2022	Housing Task Force Service Lead
Finance Report	September 2022	Housing Accountant
Self-Assessment- Complaints Code of Conduct (Ombudsman)	September 2022	Housing Service Lead
Social Housing White Paper- compliance	Future meeting	Housing Service Lead
Disrepair	Future meeting	Property and Asset Manager
Stock Condition Survey	Future meeting	Property and Asset Manager
Housing Decarbonisation Fund Bid	Future meeting	Property and Asset Manager
The Furniture Project- next steps	Future meeting	Housing Solutions Manager
Review of downsizing grant	November 2022	Housing Solutions Manager
Complaints Review	November 2022	Housing Service Lead
Quarterly performance reports and regular reports		
Integrated Asset Management Contract	Quarterly report	Property & Asset Manager
Letting of Council homes/voids	Quarterly report	Housing Solutions Manager
Devon Home Choice	Quarterly report	Housing Solutions Manager
Rent management	Quarterly report	Housing Services Manager
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Benchmarking survey	Annual report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	Democratic Services Officer

Board Members can propose agenda items during meetings/debates that can be included on the Forward Plan for future meetings, or outside the meetings with the agreement of the Chairman and Vice chairman.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 15th September 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Review of the Resident Involvement strategy 2019 - 2022

Report summary:

This report outlines a process to review the Resident Involvement Strategy and scopes the key issues and considerations to ensure that we maintain a fit for purpose approach to engaging our tenants in the management and maintenance of their homes.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Housing Review Board note the report, agree and approve the scope and methodology proposed.

Reason for recommendation:

Consultation on the outline, scope and methodology of the review.

Officer: Yusef Masih – Interim Housing Services Manager. ymasih@eastdevon.gov.uk/ Sue Sanders Vice Chair of the Resident Involvement Management Group

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Medium Impact

The regulator requires EDDC to demonstrate the inclusivity of the diverse resident base in its engagement activities and how EDDC reaches out to those customers who do not engage.

EDDC are required to capture the diversity of its residents when recruiting to engagement activities, including diversity of property type and geography

An equality Impact assessment will be completed on development and delivery of the revised strategy.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: High Risk;

A key risk would be to fail to meet the regulators requirements and good governance principles regarding Governance and Consumer Regulation, in particular those on resident involvement and empowerment.

Links to background information

Link to Council Plan

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

The report will also be supported by a detailed presentation which members will be sent following the meeting

1. Background

1.1 The current Resident Involvement Strategy 2019 – 2022 (APPENDIX A) is due for review and this report outlines the scope of the review and the methodology we propose to use to ensure that we have a fit for purpose strategy going forward.

The strategy sets out our commitment to developing a range of ways and extent to which tenants and leaseholders can become involved in the housing service.

1.1.2 The Tenant involvement and empowerment standard

The current strategy sets out how we comply with the Social Housing Regulators Consumer standards that registered providers of social housing must meet. The tenant involvement and empowerment standard sets out the requirements for customer service, choice, complaints, involvement and empowerment and understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants.

1.2 The current strategy

1.2.1 The objectives of the current strategy have been to continue to improve our housing services for our residents with plans to:

- give everyone a chance to have a say
- building stronger, supportive, more connected communities through involvement
- work together to ensure the best service is provided
- work together to ensure services continue to improve, are effective and efficient

1.2.2 The strategy sets out the benefits of involving residents at different levels with the aim to ensure:

- we increase customer satisfaction
- policies and procedures that are fit for purpose
- continuous improvement in service delivery
- creating sustainable communities
- having a role in decision making, helping people gain a better understanding, why some changes are gradual and some happen overnight

1.2.3 The strategy outlines eight involvement principles:

- Open information
- Residents will decide their own depth and degree of involvement
- Everything in housing is open to influence
- Involvement is everyone's business
- Early enough influence
- Getting everyone involved
- Demonstrating that everyone's view have been taken into account and providing feedback
- Planning for successful involvement – keeping the plans on track

2. Key considerations for the revised strategy 2023 – 2025

The context for the review is based on government guidance; new legislation; the Social Housing Regulators' expectations; good practice, and tenants' expectations. It is timely to review our Strategy as the landscape has changed post Covid and we are keen to signal our intent to improve the ways in which we involve tenants in the delivery of the housing service, and influencing decisions that affect their homes. This will build on the work of the Housing Review Board and be undertaken in an open and transparent way, giving opportunity to contribute towards the emerging refreshed and revised strategy.

Our vision is that resident involvement involves all staff in the service and should be at the centre of service delivery and decision making. We will follow the Systems Thinking principles that considers What Matters to the customer and puts the service user first.

It is important that we review the current strategy and consider what has worked well; areas for improvement, and how we can build on our current strengths. We will need to consult with the current governance and involvement groups to ensure their views shape the revised strategy.

The review will also need to consider good governance; value for money; methods of communication, and the use of new technology.

2.1 The Charter for Social Housing Tenants: The Social Housing White Paper

In November 2020 the Government published the 'The Charter for Social Housing Tenants: The Social Housing White Paper' placing a renewed focus on engagement with customers and communities. The White paper has signalled changes to the way we are regulated and expectations on how we involve customers, implement customer feedback and involve customers in the development of services.

Our Regulator is clear it expects all landlords to act now and become compliant with these new expectations before they become law in the Social Housing Act 2023/24. There are tougher expectations on Boards to listen, understand and consider the voice of residents when reviewing Board direction and priorities. There is a particular emphasis on safety; listening; repairs; complaints, and respect. The Social Housing Act will bring a more proactive Consumer Regulator and Ofsted style inspections on consumer matters.

The strategy will need to capture the range of ways in which residents can influence the Housing Service and will support compliance with the SHWP when it becomes consumer regulation.

2.2 Impact of Covid 19 Pandemic

The Covid 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown placed unprecedented pressures on individuals and communities. Community engagement, involvement and consultation was limited during lockdown and we are now commencing the journey of relaunching community

involvement. The strategy will need to consider the impact of Covid and the emerging issues around food, fuel poverty, mitigating social isolation and supporting vulnerable people. It will also need to consider the ‘new norm’ as people’s behaviours and choices on how they wish to be involved may have changed.

2.3 The Communities Team

The pandemic and lockdown meant the closure of community facilities and greatly limited community development work. The review is timely as we are also now starting to emerge from the lockdown restrictions and can reengage with our communities.

Many providers are strengthening their community resources and teams in order to meet with expectations of the Social Housing White Paper and Consumer standards.

We have already responded to this by refreshing our Communities Team and the creation of a Communities Manager in order to ensure we have the focus, capacity and resources to deliver the regulator’s requirements.

The Strategy will be led by the Communities team supporting teams across the service.

3. Objectives of the review and strategy

- Set out our vision for involving, consulting, empowering communities, hearing and listening to the voice of our residents.
- Review the current strategy ensuring it meets with the Consumer standards and Social Housing White Paper and anticipated regulatory standards
- Consider areas for improvement; successes, and learning from the current strategy
- Review the resources and budgets
- Review the current tenant involvement groups to ensure they are required; supported; receive appropriate training, and have a Terms of Reference
- Create a workplace culture where resident views are seen to be critical to service delivery and development
- Place resident influence at the heart of decision making
- Improve the communication of outcomes as a result of customer engagement
- Encourage residents to volunteer their opinions in a variety of ways to influence services and make improvements, through the “Resident Voice”
- Display a broad menu of engagement opportunities for residents to share their voice in a variety of ways, including digital feedback, surveys, resident research and meetings
- Ensure a clear voice is heard from residents
- Grow our pool of ‘involved residents’ improving succession
- Ensure that tenants are empowered by providing reliable, timely and understandable information to support effective scrutiny of our service delivery and performance.
- Develop resilient communities working in partnership with statutory and voluntary stakeholders, and delivering projects as needed to improve health, wellbeing, financial wellbeing, self-help, personal development and community cohesion.

4. The review process

The review will be led by the Interim Housing Services Manager and the project Group. We will produce terms of reference for the group based on this report, if the recommendations are agreed by the Board. The following elements will be covered as part of the review methodology:

4, 1 Timescales

Review / consultation / development	Sep 22 – Nov 22
Consultation on draft strategy	Dec / Jan 22
Draft strategy design and communication	Jan / Feb 23
Approval of draft strategy and implementation plan	March 23
Communicate and launch strategy	March / April 23

4.2 Project group

- Yusef Masih Interim Housing Services Manager
- Sue Saunders Vice Chair of the Resident Involvement Management Group
- To be appointed - Communities Manager

4.3 Consultation on the draft strategy

- Housing Review Board
- Tenants Involvement Forum
- Joint Community Action Panel (JCAP)
- Repairs and Maintenance Group
- Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- Designated Tenant Complaint Panel
- Conference Committee
- Editorial Group
- Wider Consultation – Focus Groups
- All Tenant and Residents Associations
- Housing Staff

4.4 Implementation and monitoring

The development and ongoing reporting of progress against the strategy plan:

- Quarterly to the Resident Involvement Management Group
- Six monthly to the Housing Review Board
- Reporting of value for money and impact
- Reporting of agreed key performance indicators

4.5 Key Links

- Housing Services Plan
- Corporate plan
- Self Assessment Social Housing White Paper
- Self assessment Housing Ombudsmen complaints handling code
- Self assessment Regulators Consumer standards

4.6 Communicating the strategy and creating an identity

Strategic communication including a clear identity is required to help connect tenants to the housing service and residents to each other. Our activities need to be recognisable by all residents and clearly communicated. As part of the review we will need to establish how we communicate

Residents need to be able to recognise and identify with our activities helping us to engage with all our stakeholders.

The strategy should seek to enhance the reputation of the Housing service and EDDC.

5. Key Risks

A key risk would be to fail to meet the regulators requirements and good governance principles regarding Governance and Consumer Regulation, in particular those on resident involvement and empowerment.

The strategy will support compliance with the current RSH Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and will be subject to annual self-assessment by the Board.

The strategy also supports compliance with current Consumer Regulation and the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper (SHWP). The SHWP will become the Social Housing Act in 2023/24, which brings with it tougher expectations on Boards to listen, understand and consider the voice of residents when reviewing Board direction and priorities, in particular on safety, listening, repair, complaints and respect. The Social

Housing Act will bring a more proactive Consumer Regulator and Ofsted style inspections on consumer matters.

6. Conclusion

That the strategy is reviewed in line with the contents of this report and feedback from the Housing Review Board.

The draft Resident Involvement Strategy 2023-2025 will be presented to the March Housing Review Board for adoption.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications on which to comment at this stage.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment

Resident Involvement Strategy

2019 - 2022

DATE: September 2019

Version 4

East Devon – an outstanding place



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The tenant participation team and resident volunteers wish to thank the following groups for their invaluable comments, suggestions and support for the Strategy Review Consultation Exercise.

List of bodies consulted:

- Tenants Involvement Forum
- Joint Community Action Panel (JCAP)
- Repairs and Maintenance Group
- Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- Designated Tenant Complaint Panel
- Conference Committee
- Editorial Group
- Wider Consultation – Focus Groups
- Residents who attended training sessions
- All Tenant and Residents Associations
- Housing Staff

We want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who took the time from your busy lives to make comments regarding our priorities and targets for 2019 - 2022.

The tenant participation team appreciates and values these contributions, which are geared towards ensuring equal access and satisfaction of resident involvement for all people.

Without all your support, co-operation and contributions we would not have been successful in developing the priorities and targets to such a high standard.

Thank you.

This strategy sets out our commitment to developing the range of ways and extent to which residents (by which we mean East Devon District Council tenants and leaseholders) can become involved in the housing service. We constantly strive to develop and improve our services by involving our tenants.

The Resident Involvement Strategy is part of a suite of integrated housing documents that sit under the Regulatory Standards that registered providers of social housing must meet, which is regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>).

The two main standards are: [Economic standards](#), [Consumer standards](#)

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard – 2017 comes under the Consumer Standard and states the following:

Consumer service, choice and complaints:

Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:

- a) how tenants can access services
- b) the standards of housing services their tenants can expect
- c) how they are performing against those standards
- d) the service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices
- e) progress of any repairs work
- f) how tenants can communicate with them and provide feedback
- g) the responsibilities of the tenant and provider
- h) arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny.
- i) Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint

Involvement and empowerment:

Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:

- a. supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate
- b. supporting the formation and activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them
- c. the provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repair and maintenance budgets
- d. providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.

2.2.2 Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.

2.2.3 Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.

2.2.4 Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants:

Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants

Section 1

1.1 Introduction

This section explains:

- Why we have this strategy
- the Housing Service's Tenant Involvement Vision
- why residents are involved
- our involvement principles
- who our partners are

This strategy is produced in two versions; a plain language short brochure for all residents, and this detailed resource package for people who are, or who intend to become, involved.

Residents and officers have worked together to write the Resident Involvement Strategy which contains our strategy as well as an action plan for us to monitor together going forward, to make sure contents of the strategy are achieved.

Homes England, under the Regularity Framework, requires landlords to involve residents and has established standards for involvement. Also see 1.4

The information contained within this pack is built on a determination to work well and to make improvements together, to build mutual respect and a better future for housing and communities. A new structure for resident involvement is being implemented focusing involvement opportunities on achieving outcomes and improvement in service delivery.

The structure is aligned to the national regulatory framework standards and continues to provide an opportunity for information sharing and challenge at a variety of levels, including in depth reviews by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

More residents are involved in more activities than ever before, and we are determined to continue making progress as we plan to continue trying new involvement methods, while keeping the elements of the current structure that are working well to help residents influence and shape services. Plans will be actively

monitored and targets regularly reviewed. These will develop, becoming better and more ambitious over time.

1.2 The Housing Service believes customers' ideas make a difference

The Housing Service's way of working involves putting customers at the forefront of all we do. We currently offer residents a range of engagement opportunities for consultation, participation and involvement, along with details of our governance arrangements.

These standards for engagement are detailed in appendix 1.

We want to provide the kind of service that customers really need, but we can only achieve this with the help of residents and leaseholders living on council estates, who know better than anyone, the type of improvements needed in their homes and on their estates.

Before decisions are taken and changes are made, we need to know what people think. As a council resident or leaseholder, your opinions will be sought on a number of issues, in a variety of ways, and you may see that your good ideas make a positive difference. We will keep you informed with articles in our Housing Matters magazine which you receive three times a year and is on the East Devon District Council's website.

Our main objective remains to continue to improve landlord services for our residents. The plan for achieving this includes:

- giving everyone the chance to have a say
- seeing stronger, supportive, more connected communities through involvement
- working together to be sure the best service is provided
- working together to ensure services continue to improve, are effective and efficient.

1.3 Why do we involve you?

Our vision for the service is to deliver the best local authority Housing Service. We will achieve this by putting customers first and foremost.

Obtaining the views of residents and is vital in helping us to gain a better understanding of changing needs and aspirations leading to a constant improvement of services.

By involving people at whatever level they choose, there are many benefits for the Housing Service, residents and leaseholders. These benefits include:

- increasing customer satisfaction
- having policies and procedures that are fit for purpose
- continuous improvement in service delivery
- creating sustainable communities
- having a role in decision making, helping people gain a better understanding, why some changes are gradual and some happen overnight.

1.4 The Tenant Empowerment Programme

The Homes England's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012 sets out what a registered provider of social housing has to do and the standards that they must meet. See more at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-regulatory-framework-for-social-housing-in-england-from-2012>

1.5 Our eight involvement principles

1. Open information

Residents will receive regular magazines. They will also have, on request, access to information on all housing matters. We want people to have the information they need to give fully informed views on the service they receive.

2. Residents will decide their own depth and degree of involvement

The housing service would like to see residents involved at all levels, and in everything we do. But what residents get involved in will be up to them.

3. Everything in housing is open to influence

The council has certain statutory legal duties and, occasionally, things will be confidential. Beyond this, if something is of interest, residents can get involved. There are no topics or services that are off limits.

4. Involvement is everyone's business

While the council has a specialist tenant participation team, all sections and staff in the housing service have important roles to play in our partnership with residents.

5. Early enough influence

We aim to start *talking together before issues have been decided*. Members of the Service Review Groups and Focus Groups will have the opportunity to influence issues at the earliest stage, before any formal decisions are made.

6. Getting everyone involved

We want everyone to have a chance to take part and will take steps to encourage people who are not properly represented amongst our current volunteers.

We want to remove barriers which can slow or prevent the participation of young people, young families, gay/lesbian couples, trans-gender, members of black or minority ethnic and

faith communities, people with disabilities or with caring responsibilities.

7. Demonstrating that everyone's views have been taken into account and providing feedback

Local people need to know what happens next. We will provide feedback verbally, digitally, by letter or email and sometimes via newsletters. It is impossible to please everyone all of the time, but we will provide the outcome of consultations making sure recognition is given to groups/panels for their achievements.

8. Planning for successful involvement – and keeping the plans on track

Residents and the Housing Service will make and monitor joint plans. We want involvement to have a positive impact. Volunteers must feel their time and efforts are usefully spent.

Section 2

2.1 Opportunities for Involvement - Ways of Getting Involved

In this agreement when 'we' is used, our meaning is usually the Housing Service and residents, working together.

Any council resident or leaseholder living on council estates can get involved.

2.1.1. Ways of being involved

Getting involved can mean going to regular meetings, or becoming a committee member.

Many people find this method of involvement too formal or simply do not have the time or commitment for it.

These options involve meetings with differing degrees of formality, but we will offer digital options **as well** for those who prefer them. They are straightforward ways and means of getting your views heard and making sure they are taken into account.

We want to make your involvement easy, not create obstacles. We want you to be able to be involved at times that are suitable to you and are developing more opportunities, including by digital on our website and social media, thereby providing you with 24 hour access.

2.1.2. Our invitation to all residents to become involved

There is a 'menu' of involvement opportunities - different ways in which residents can, and do, influence and shape the Housing Service and make it better.

You can become involved by:

- reading the letters we write to you
- reading the regular articles in Housing Matters magazine
- visiting our website
www.eastdevon.gov.uk
- looking at our Facebook site by clicking on the link on our website, or searching East Devon Housing on your Facebook page: EDDC tenant participation
- reading or commenting on our Twitter feed: EDDC home & people
- making a suggestion

- taking part in telephone surveys
- filling in questionnaires and consultations via traditional methods and online
- coming to events and one off focus groups
- attending the Housing Review Board meetings held in public
- inspecting your neighbourhood
- coming to the residents' promotional events
- working with a local Tenants' and Residents' Association
- attending training courses
- coming to other housing-related meetings
- working with other voluntary agencies with a housing interest
- using the resident portal, email or via our website at
tenantparticipation@eastdevn.gov.uk

....simply telling us what you think.

We will always listen

2.1.3. Promoting the involvement message

This is an important message and an important part of our strategy is to ensure it is communicated effectively by:

- digital means: for example website and social media
- distributing copies of the Involvement Strategy brochure to every resident, and making copies available in all offices and community centres
- giving new residents information about involvement and its importance, when taking up their tenancies
- reinforcing the message in our publicity and promotions
- continuing to promote our message to all staff
- engaging with East Devon District Council's diverse communities. To help with this, we promote our message to agencies which work with all sections of the community in the district.

2.2. The parts of the service residents can become involved in

Examples of the housing services are listed on the following table and are open to resident involvement.
Some are already being shaped by residents' views.

Section 2.5 provides more information about some of the opportunities available. Suggestions of who will be involved and digital/consultation options are not exhaustive.

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Anti-social behaviour policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate Management Officers • JCAP (Joint Community Action Panel) • Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) • Housing Review Board (HRB) • Community Development Workers (CDWs) • Police • Social Services • Mobile Support Officers • Agencies • Residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Texts • Website • Facebook • Twitter • Meetings leave a lot to be desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCAP • Policies • Leaders • Community Impact Assessment • Neighbourhood consultation, some affected more than others, listen to those affected • Letters • Magazine • Consultation (open days/face to face) • Questionnaires • Need new group
Management of local housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Residents • HRB • JCAP • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • Texts • Website • Twitter • Meetings leave a lot to be desired • Magazine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback forums

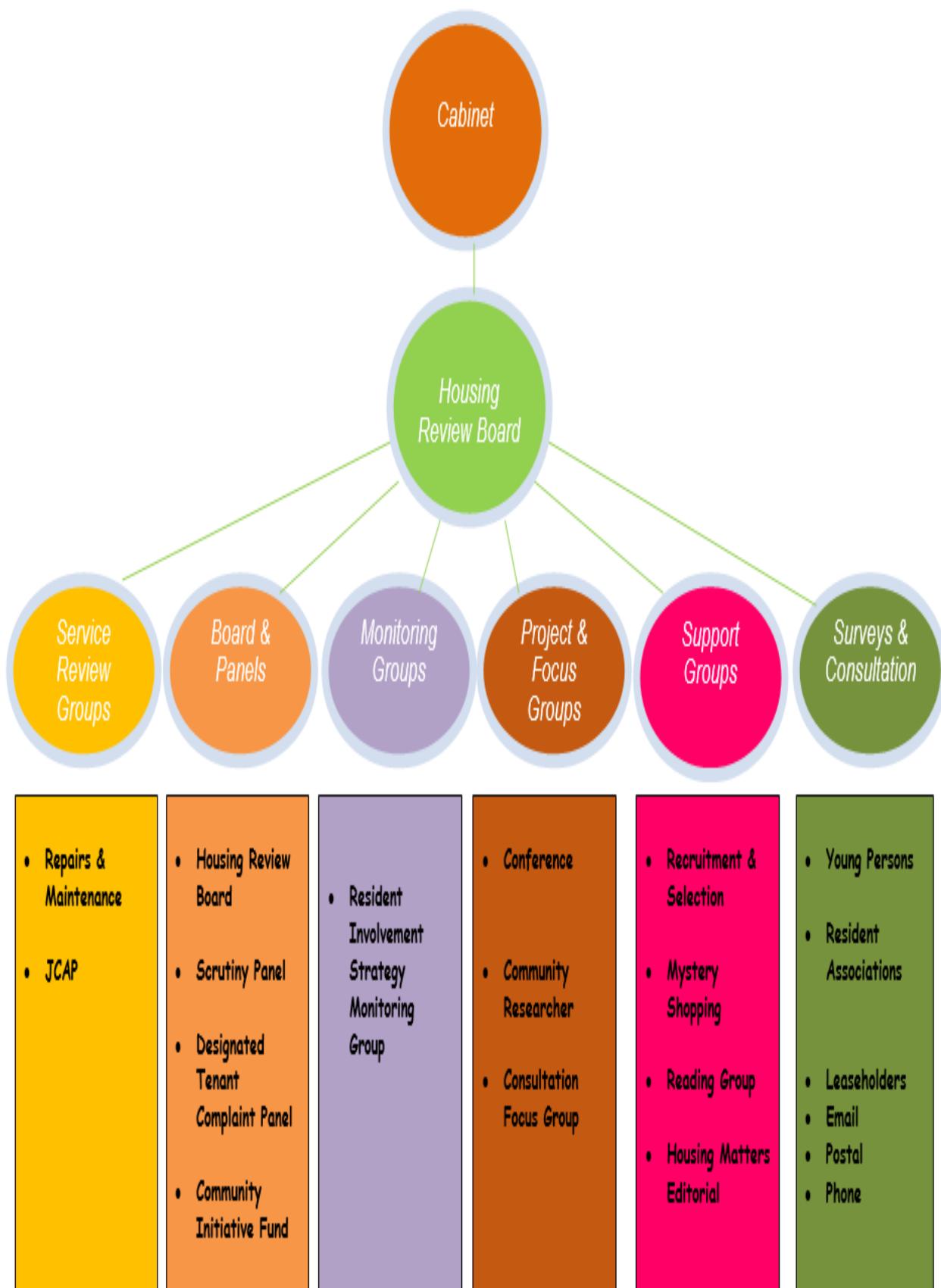
How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Policies and procedures for repairs and maintenance, rent collection and rent arrears, empty homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Review Group (SRG) • Staff • Residents • HRB • Focus Group 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with SRG's. • Encourage residents to report problems early. • Encourage residents to use Whistle Blowing policy if they suspect cheating.
Tenancy management and sustainability issues, tenancy agreements and conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG • Staff • Residents • HRB • TSP • Focus Group 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings – take on board residents' opinions/views & experiences. • Formalise resident meetings (minutes & voting) HRB
Housing benefits, debt prevention and recovery procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG • Rental team • Benefits team • Senior staff • HRB • Focus Group 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings • Cause and effect of debt in magazine (article) • Identify possible problem residents
Leaseholder issues and charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property & Assets team • Leaseholders • Finance team • HRB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magazine • Email • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up consultation with leaseholders
Supported housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCAP • Home Safeguard • Mobile Support Officers • HRB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with all groups. Listen to residents affected. • MSO's

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Housing services and performance strategies, including Best Value or continuous improvement, and arrangements for monitoring and reviewing performance, addressing shortcomings and remedial action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Lead • HRB • SRGs • Regular focus group • Staff • JCAP • Focus Group • TSP • External agencies • Service Lead • Residents 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Monitor Performance • Collection of data throughout the year. • Collection of data to highlight shortcomings • Other residents • Resident Inv. Action Group • Resident lead group • Ask residents what they think – magazine survey (data collection)
Setting, monitoring and reviewing services, performance standards and targets for housing management services. Ground maintenance, and cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Lead • SRG/forum • Streetscene • HRB • JCAP • Scrutiny • Focus Group 	Mystery Shoppers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need new SRG to cover Streetscene • Collection of data throughout the year. <p>Collection of data to highlight shortcomings</p>
Developing the council's housing policy and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Scrutiny Panel • Focus Group 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects and focus groups
Drawing up and appraising options for housing investments and improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCAP • SRG's • Focus Group 	Repairs SRG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants & Residents Associations (TRAs)
Drawing up the council's capital and renovation programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRB • TAFFS (Task & Finish Forum set by HRB) • Repairs SRG 	Repairs SRG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With other involved groups • SRG's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback forms

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Developing and implementing regeneration and improvement programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRB • Residents • Staff • SRG's • Focus Group • External (Grenfell recommendations to be implemented) 	Repairs SRG Digital Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific groups • Questionnaires • Consultation with residents – choice of products • TRAs consultation & choices
Budgets and finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRB • Focus Group • HRA 	Digital forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Group • Focus Group
Allocations and lettings policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRB • SRG's • Rental team • Focus Group 	Portal Bidding process online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTCP • Homeless people
Proposals to contract housing services to other providers including through partnering contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG's • HRB • Local residents • Focus Group – as new repairs contract 	Focus groups online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other groups • General needs & sheltered • New resident group • Question contractors – commitment to standards
Neighbourhood issues which affect residents' homes or the management of housing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCAP • Local residents • HRB • Agency involvement 	Website Facebook forum Twitter hashtag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need new group • Questionnaires • Face to face • Meetings with local residents
Customer care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG's • All staff • Residents • Every group • Everybody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Social media • E forum & surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting & consultation with managers • Keeping standards high, meeting obligations

How you can get involved	Structures for involvement (for council residents, leaseholders and where applicable, other local residents)		
	Who will be involved	Digital Options	Consultation Options
Environmental works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local residents • Estate management team • Local environment groups • JCAP 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JCAP • Focus Groups
Arrangements for providing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG proof reading of leaflets • TP focus group • TP team 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting SRG
Arrangements for resident consultation, involvement and influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP • Make every effort to include residents 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make consultation easy to take part in and inform those involved of the outcome of the consultation
Arrangements for complaints, comments and compliments with remedial action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DTCP • TP • Focus Group 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Matters magazine • Continue to encourage complaints and be seen to act on them. • Encourage residents to comment on issues and pay compliments where earned
Community Events, projects and social value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRG's • CDWs • Tenant Participation 	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The events themselves

2.3 Structure for resident involvement from consultation/review



2.4 Our structure for involvement

The previous diagram shows the current involvement structure, the groups available and the way they relate to local issues. As part of our regular monitoring and review, the diagram will be updated and modified from time to time in line with ideas brought forward by residents and staff.

Updates will be loaded onto the council's website for customers to download. They will also be available from the tenant participation team.

2.5 How the involvement structure works

Time Commitment

This section helps give you an idea of the minimum time and commitment that an activity can take, and how much influence your involvement can have on services. Some of these activities can lead to a wider involvement and time commitment. This is however, optional. Activities are split into those that require a monthly commitment, quarterly commitment, those that happen once or twice a year and the last section includes activities where you choose how often you get involved.

*If you prefer to get involved **from home** why not give the following a go?*

2.5.1 Community Initiative Fund Panel

Residents who have a project or an idea that benefits the residents of East Devon District Council can apply for a grant from the Community Initiative Fund. Each application is passed to the Community Initiative Grant Panel to approve or refuse. The applications are posted or emailed to panel members so this can be done from your home.

2.5.2 Annual Garden Competition

Each year we organise a garden competition that is open to council residents. There are a number of categories (for example, best overall garden, children's garden, containers and hanging baskets) with prizes awarded for each one. The competition is advertised

in the spring edition of the Housing Matters magazine. Judging usually takes place in July with a prize-giving ceremony in September.

2.5.3 Surveys

Sometimes we may contact residents to ask for their opinions of the Housing Service. It may be about the area or their homes. We may ask how the service has performed, or ask for ideas or views. Surveys are carried out digitally or by post, door to door, by telephone, at community events, online, via Facebook, Twitter or a survey link.

*If you don't mind **coming to meetings** and have a couple of hours available why not give the following a go?*

2.5.4 Resident Involvement Strategy Monitoring Group

We have drawn up an agreement and strategy with our residents setting out our commitment to resident involvement with the Housing Service. This group will be constituted and will meet quarterly to monitor the strategy.

2.5.5 Recruitment and Selection Panel

Be involved in recruiting new housing staff and acknowledge the resident perspective will help to recruit employees who are committed to customer focused services and resident involvement. Staff and residents on the interview panels are considered equal members of the recruitment process and receive the same training.

2.5.6 Focus Groups

Why not volunteer a little of your time for one off focus groups. We would call on you from time to time to help us improve and refine aspects of our services.

2.5.7 Designated Tenants Complaint Panel (DTCP)

This panel which tries to resolve resident complaints at a local level. The complaint panel also monitors formal complaints and makes suggestions on how to improve customer satisfaction. If a

resident remains dissatisfied with the council's response following stages one and two of the formal complaints procedure residents have the right to take their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, and/or to the DTCP in the meantime. This group reports directly to the Housing Review Board.

2.5.8 Housing Review Board (HRB)

The board was set up in 2006 and consists of five councillors, five resident and leaseholder representatives and two independent community representatives. The board considers matters relating to our landlord and housing management functions. It advises our executive board on housing policy and operational practice where this affects residents and leaseholders. It monitors service delivery and promotes good practice. The Board meets at least 4 times a year, during the daytime, with other interim meetings also possible.

2.5.9 Joint Community Action Panel (JCAP)

Reviews the work of the Estate Management and the Housing Support Services. Takes part and monitor estate visits to identify areas for improvement and reviews performance information. Produces a yearly plan of work for the group. They will consider value for money in these areas of the service. This review group is made up of both residents and staff.

2.5.10 Repairs and Maintenance Group

Reviews the work of the Property & Assets team including programmed work and the performance of the contractors. Be involved in the decision making process at the earliest opportunity, in the setting of the annual budgets to maintain value for money and identify areas for improvement. To be actively involved in the obtaining of goods (doors, kitchens, bathrooms etc.) and services and the choices available for all residents. This review group is made up of both residents and staff.

2.5.11 Tenant Inspectors

Tenant Inspectors help monitor the quality of workmanship and standard of the service provided by our day to day repairs contractors and work alongside officers to ensure agreed standards are maintained.

2.5.12 Join or start a tenants/residents association

A tenant/resident association is a group of people living in an area, block or street who have come together to take up issues of common concern in relation to their housing, community and general environment. As a resident living in your area you automatically qualify for membership.

The associations enable residents to have a say on housing and estate matters, to help towards building a friendly, caring community, to exercise choice in how services are delivered, and to find out more about how we work.

Some of the projects tackled by associations include the landscaping of communal areas, securing a community meeting place, improving shared lighting, fundraising for a children's play area, and car parking problems.

2.5.13 Editorial Group

The Housing Matters magazine is produced three times a year, three meetings for each edition, which is sent out to residents and leaseholders.

Residents, staff and councillors are asked to submit articles of interest to be included in the magazine. The magazines are put together and edited by an editorial panel made up of both residents and staff.

2.5.14 Conference Committee

Conference Committee organise a resident's conference once a year, open to all residents and leaseholders, which includes refreshments and a light lunch. Residents have an opportunity to meet staff and ask questions, take part in debates and share their views with managers.

Each year East Devon District Council residents hold a conference in a different area across the district. The committee

are involved in finding the right venue, catering and subjects for the conference. The aim is to find the right formula to encourage more residents to come along. If you have any ideas then we need you on this group.

*If you don't mind coming to meetings and **have a more hours available** why not give the below Scrutiny Group a go?*

2.5.15 Independent Tenant Scrutiny Panel

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is independent of other parts of the involvement structure and has its own Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct. The panel usually meet up once a week when working on a project. The Panel undertakes reviews to investigate areas of concern, take an unbiased view of services to drive up performance, and give advice and suggestions to influence standards and improve service delivery. This group make recommendations directly to the Housing Review Board.

2.5.16 Key Player Database

The Key Player register is a database, or record, of everyone who is interested in being consulted, or wants to be involved in resident involvement in some way. All

the Housing Service's residents or leaseholders are entitled to register. You choose the topics on which you want to comment and you choose how you want to be involved. You can choose which subjects you would like to be involved in from a list, on pages 11 to 13.

You can choose to be contacted about all of the above (and more), or just the one area that really interests you. The choice is yours. You can then decide how you would like to be consulted, from a range of options such as:

- questionnaires and digital or telephone surveys
- focus or working groups
- roadshows and events
- online or email surveys

You can choose to take part in one or more of the options available to you, by the Getting Involved form.

Residents who have registered on the Key Player Register will be contacted from time to time and asked for their views and opinions, regarding specific topics.

These views will be collated and will be passed on to project or focus groups to help the members of those groups make decisions.

So your views will, and do, make a difference.

Interested?

If you want to register to be part of the Key Player database, ring 01395 517453 and ask to speak to a member of the tenant participation team or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

Section 3

3.1 Involvement Priorities and Targets 2019 – 2022

Resident Involvement priorities following consultation

PRIORITY 1 Increase customer participation to support evolution of service provision			
	Aim	Target/s	How this is monitored/measured
1.1	Ensure structures are in place to allow residents to monitor performance of the housing service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident involvement framework provides a menu of opportunities for involvement • Performance feedback through magazine and website • Agreed performance indicators at Project and Focus Groups • Groups to expand their knowledge by the use of wider consultations • Providing opportunities for volunteers to benchmark performance with other housing providers and seek out best practice • Provide an annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of service changes and reviews recorded • through resident involvement • Number of residents who provide feedback through a resident involvement opportunity • Housemark benching information presented annually to Housing Review Board and customer surveys • Annual report • Performance information available via the web and resident portal • Agree performance indicators for every group
1.2	Ensure there are methods of involvement in place that allow residents to monitor the standard of estate management and safety in local communities	Develop with JCAP (add to their 12 month work plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of walks and actions issued. • Monitored JCAP. • Monitor new tenant visits • Monitor TRA's minutes • Monitor community development activities
1.3	Resident recruitment to resident participation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 promotional activities per year • Information to be given on sign up for new residents • Information left after new tenancy visits at 6 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% Information to be given on sign up for new residents • 100% Information left after new resident visits at 6 weeks
1.4	Provide support to Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to all TRAs of support available. • Provide all TRAs with an opportunity for an annual review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of TRAs accessing funding and support • Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey/impact assessments

PRIORITY 1 Increase customer participation to support evolution of service provision			
	Aim	Target/s	How this is monitored/measured
1.5	Ensure mechanisms are in place to feedback impact of resident involvement to active and non-active customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report • Articles in magazine • Residents' Conference 'Thank you' event • Feedback to be made through the following methods: rent statement, website, Twitter, Facebook or results of consultation published • Report to HRB annually 	Service Review Groups Focus Groups

PRIORITY 2 Provide support to individual residents and Tenants' and Residents' Associations to give them the necessary skills, knowledge, information and resources to enable effective involvement			
	Aim	Target/s	How this is monitored/measured
2.1	Provide support to individual Tenants' and Residents' Associations and all involved residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake training needs analysis of involved Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs) annually • Ensure that training is available to provide residents with Housing knowledge, legislation and policies and procedures • Assess all TRAs against the recognition criteria and where appropriate work with the committee to help them meet the criteria to enable them to access funding available • Provide training on Self Service Resident Portal and the new Councils website within local communities • Mandatory Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of training courses to develop an individual's personal skills and knowledge when required • Number of opportunities to network with other providers to increase their awareness and learn from others • 100% of all TRAs wanting to access funding are enabled and supported to do so • Number of people signed up to self service • Opportunities through Ian Williams social value activities • Monitor service plan

PRIORITY 3

Assess customer satisfaction, and seek feedback from a range of customers to ensure equality and diversity in all services.

	Aim	Target/s	How this is monitored/measured
3.1	Address barriers to involvement, working with under-represented groups	Identify and contact partnerships with other organisations to ensure representation	<p>All consultation activities are, as far as reasonably possible, representative of the customer profile data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer profile data from Natalie • Impact assessments from groups • Equality Impact Assessments • Measure digital involvement

PRIORITY 4

Monitor Resident Involvement Strategy 2019 – 2023

	Aim	Target/s	How this is monitored/measured
4.1	Monitor Involvement Strategy to continue partnership and to meet regulatory requirements	Review annually with impact assessments and update actions To improve standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Involvement Strategy 2023 approved by all parties • Report to leadership team quarterly. • Report to HRB annually
			<p>Monitor progress of the National housing federation</p> <p>Monitoring TP budget</p>

Appendix 1 - Standards for Involvement – How We Will Support You

1.1. Standards for getting everyone involved

We want all council residents to have the opportunity to take part and will take steps to encourage involvement from groups which to date are underrepresented such as young families.

We want to remove any barriers that limit or prevent the participation of young people, young families, members of black minority ethnic and faith communities, people with disabilities or caring responsibilities.

Most reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses will be reimbursed on production of a receipt, for example, a bus ticket. We will organise road shows and attend events in the community, carry out door knocking campaigns and continue to develop digital access to our services.

The Housing Service will undertake equality impact assessments for all housing policies, functions and procedures. These will identify any adverse impact on minority groups and make sure that all our services are accessible.

To ensure this, we will monitor who is accessing our services and their satisfaction with the services they have received. We want our developing experience in implementing resident involvement to contribute to this.

1.2. Reaching out to everyone

These include:

- carrying out tenancy visits by housing staff
- using only accessible venues
- providing people with information in a format which meets their needs on request and if practical
- accessing people in their groups and communities
- reimbursing reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses on production of a receipt, in line with the expenses policy
- offering relevant training, including the commitment to involve everyone as one of our core standards for residents' groups
- offering meeting times when people can attend (meetings have traditionally been between Monday - Friday 9 - 5pm). For example, holding evening meetings or digital options.

We will promote a positive 'can-do' message. We will ask people what they need to help them to become involved and assure them that we will do all we can to provide it.

1.3. Improving accessibility

To ensure equality in involvement we will

- set targets for involvement of under-represented groups
- monitor levels of involvement and representation by all groups to aim for no group being significantly under-represented
- develop procedures to make sure that all resident groups are encouraged, able to participate, and are inclusive
- develop training options for residents, staff and others to raise awareness of equal opportunity issues in housing
- seek to open communication channels with different community groups, to encourage their active involvement.

1.4. Standards for information

We will make sure we give our customers good quality, easy to understand information. This information may take many forms such as magazines, web pages, social media, personal discussion and explanation. The standards are explained in more detail below. Our standards for information on involvement will be adopted by all individuals or groups producing information for our customers. These include the tenant participation team, front line staff, other sections of the Housing Service and those resident groups which have an active role in providing information to residents.

1.5. Our standards in detail

Accessibility - information should be openly available and actively promoted.

Print size and clarity – Where practical all document text will be laid out no smaller than a 12 point type.

Documents may be available in alternative formats on request and where practical.

Expressed clearly - information will be written in plain English, avoiding jargon, racist, sexist or other inappropriate language that enables the reader to understand the message the first time they read it.

Appropriateness - information will be accurate, relevant and timely. Tailored to our customers' needs.

1.6. Examples of the type of information provided to residents

All council residents can receive information on the council's:

- housing strategies, policies and priorities
- housing investment options and plans
- arrangements for developing and implementing best value, including monitoring and reviewing performance and setting service standards and targets
- Equality and racial harassment policies

1.7. Standards for providing information to active residents

Active residents will naturally receive more information relating to the subjects or areas in which they are involved.

These residents may be encouraged to share this information, where appropriate, with other residents across the district. The Housing Service will assist resident groups in providing information to their members. This may include copies of information, design support or guidance and encouraging participation in training where appropriate.

1.8. Standards for residents' groups

Each year the tenant participation team will contact all groups to assess their progress and interests, to update and remind them about opportunities for involvement, and to explain the financial and other support available for groups.

At this point, their compliance with the standards for groups will be assessed. Only groups which comply with the standards for formally recognised resident groups will be eligible for annual support grant funding from the Housing Service.

The minimum standards are included below.

1.9. Recognition of Tenants' and Residents' Associations – minimum standards required

- approved written constitution
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- annual elections to committee roles
- open financial records, to account for all money received from the Housing Revenue Account and any other public resources

- regular meetings (minimum: one Annual General Meeting (AGM), one public and four committee meetings)
- publicised activities
- membership clearly open to all living in the area they cover
- a demonstration that a group is meeting its aims and objectives (e.g. a copy of an end of year report, or publications, minutes of meetings and surveys etc.)
- invitation to the tenant participation team to any AGM or public meeting.

1.10. Assessing efficiency and value for money

In both planning involvement activities and in monitoring the budget, the tenant participation team will regularly question the cost and value of activities.

We will ask such questions as

- how could this have been done differently?
- could the same result have been achieved with fewer resources?
- could we do this better by using an external provider?
- how could we have increased the reach and impact of this activity?
- has it made a difference to the service we provide?
- how can we improve the effectiveness of this activity?

We aim to develop a better understanding of the costs and benefits when weighing up different types of involvement activity. This will help to identify what resources are needed to support resident involvement.

The Government lays down clear rules about how councils can and cannot spend their rent income.

Increasingly, estates are populated by a mix of tenures and both residents and leaseholders are now being consulted on issues beyond housing.

It is important to consider who supports the costs for involvement. Where it is a housing-related matter and for the benefit of residents, it should be funded from the HRA (Housing revenue Account).

For consultation on non-housing issues, other council budgets may be more appropriate. This is increasingly important as the council develops wider consultation and participation initiatives in relation to best value and community planning.

1.11. Resources which encourage involvement

For some considerable time, we have provided start up and support grants for resident groups, paid for training, networking, visits, conferences, and independent advice.

We aim to target spending carefully to remove some of the barriers and the reluctance some people may feel about taking part.

We can help by:

- promptly reimbursing residents' reasonable travel and out of pocket expenses incurred in attending agreed activities
- making sure that disabled or vulnerable residents have a safe journey to and from events
- providing information in different formats when requested and where practicable.

1.12. Standards for effective meetings

Effective involvement requires clear communication and good feedback. We do all we can to ensure all meetings (whether of a residents' group, or between staff and residents) are as good for all participants as they can be.

We have established the following set of guidelines.

Those meetings which are part of the involvement structure will always follow them.

We also encourage others to adopt them.

1.13. Effective involvement meetings should have

- clear objectives
- a clear mandate, it needs to be clear what level of influence or decision making the meeting has
- friendly meetings with good conduct and be free from harassment
- meetings should be business-like and courteous
- a clear action plan to deal with matters arising
- arrangements for good quality and timely feedback to all those who took part.

1.14. Some examples of behaviour that may constitute harassment are (but not limited to):

- violence or threats of violence towards any person
- abusive, intimidating or insulting words or behaviour
- discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender or gender identity, transgender status, sexual orientation, age , disability, religious belief or health, including HIV/aids status
- unreasonable persistent insistence on the individual's own viewpoint at times when the group and/or chair have responded/decided and are clearly ready to move on with the agenda/meeting
- behaviour which unreasonably undermines the views of/or information provided by other attendees at a meeting or serves to belittle or try to belittle any attendee.

1.15. Involvement meetings should be

- publicised effectively - using appropriate methods which can reach everyone
- publicised in good time
- held at suitable times
- held in accessible places
- properly chaired
- conducted in a fair and democratic way
- open to all residents.

1.16. Standards for resolving disputes and disagreements

Comments, compliments and complaints about the Housing Service are a welcome and productive part of our involvement arrangements.

Disputes and disagreements are costly and unproductive, and we will work to avoid them wherever possible.

This section describes the approach we will follow should disputes and disagreements occur.

Any shortcomings in the performance and delivery of this agreement will be dealt with at the earliest stage.

We want people to feel encouraged to comment or complain if they feel the spirit of this agreement is not being adhered to.

1.17. Regular monitoring

We receive feedback on involvement activities.

This will consider

- different approaches to resident participation
- what other housing organisations and residents are doing and achieving
- how our approach and performance compares
- how we can change our approach to make sure it remains effective and efficient
- ensure resident representatives and groups are playing an effective role and all parts of our structure achieving this
- appraising equality of opportunity and levels of involvement by all groups, including ethnic minorities
- ensure we are reaching everyone – and that our message is effective
- the impact of involvement activity at every level.

1.18. Annual Monitoring

Groups will provide an update on their impact and future plans.

Key information will be reported to all residents within the annual report.

1.19. Monitoring the views and impact on all residents

Every year we will conduct the standard resident satisfaction survey. In addition, we will conduct our own monitoring on satisfaction assessment after each activity to enable us to continue to improve.

1.20. The views and experience of officers

Many involvement activities consist of officers working alongside volunteers. Resident involvement is a partnership between volunteers, officers and Councillors. All ideas for improvements and enhancements will be considered by the relevant body.

Appendix 2 - Support Information

2.1. Conditions of involvement in meetings and other involvement activities and enforcement

For meetings, and other activities, any actions undertaken under the following conditions will be transparent throughout the process, where confidentiality is not at risk.

Prior to, during and following the meeting or activity, a volunteer must avoid:

(i) Discrimination

There will be no discrimination. People who attend meetings have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, faith, or any other matter which causes people to be treated with injustice, nor will any discriminatory language be tolerated in discussions.

(ii) Conflicts of interest

Individual volunteers must disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, if they think it may affect or influence their approach to matters under discussion.

(iii) Relationship with other volunteers

Individual volunteers must:

- treat other volunteers with dignity and respect
- promote a friendly and harassment free environment for all.

(iv) Relationships with officers and contractor representatives

Individual volunteers must:

- treat all Council staff and contractor representatives with dignity and respect
- use the normal procedures for reporting repairs, complaints etc.
- not expect to receive more or less favourable treatment by staff because of their involvement with the Housing Service.
- not bring the authority or service into disrepute.

See section 1.14 for examples of harassment

(v) Confidentiality

Volunteers should respect the confidentiality of all individuals, whether present or not, and refrain from mentioning specific individual cases which may cause embarrassment or identification of an individual.

Resident volunteers, on occasion, may be provided with confidential information, for example, about the housing service and partner organisations. In such cases, they will be asked to sign confidentiality undertakings.

Any such information, provided to allow project/focus group to take place, must not be disclosed to anyone else.

(vi) Political affiliation

Individual volunteers may be affiliated to, or be members of, a political party but they cannot represent a political party in their role as a resident volunteer.

(vii) Capacity to participate

Volunteers cannot take part in any activities if they are under the influence of prescribed or other drugs, or alcohol, which may impair their capacity or endanger their own, or other people's safety.

(viii) Code of Conduct

Volunteers must agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for meetings and activities, failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct will follow the process detailed at 2.2.

(ix) Safeguarding and criminal offences

Consideration will be given to the level of involvement available to volunteers in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.

As administrators, the Council reserves the right to close a meeting/activity.

2.2. Code of Conduct for all involvement meetings and enforcement

A Code of Conduct is a set of ground rules which help ensure a meeting is run in an orderly and fair fashion.

All meetings and involvement activities, have agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct, which is available from the Tenant Participation team.

If the conditions for involvement are not met, and/or a complaint is received, the process shown at flowchart 1 will be followed.

A complaint can be made both verbally or written to a member of the Tenant Participation team.

Examples of penalties that may be imposed for breaking the Code of Conduct are as follows (this list is not exhaustive): -

- no action
- verbal warning
- written warning
- final warning
- suspension for length of time
- permanent exclusion
- referral to another agency.

If a volunteer does not follow the code of conduct, the Chair of the group concerned will issue a verbal warning. If there is a second breach, the Chair will give a written warning. If breaches continue, the Chair will suspend the meeting and the Chair and Vice Chair will decide whether to ask the volunteer to leave or terminate the meeting.

If a volunteer is expelled from a meeting or the meeting terminated due to their conduct, the Chair and Vice Chair will decide the next course of action.

This may be either no action required or to follow the complaint process as identified within the code of conduct.

If a volunteer breaks the code of conduct at an activity or outside of a meeting, the supporting Housing Officer will issue warnings in line with the Code of Conduct and if necessary terminate the activity. Following the activity, the issue will be escalated to the Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer).

If the Chair does not follow the Code of Conduct, the Chair will be given an opportunity to

Minor	Major
Banter	Abusive
Mischief (light-hearted causing disruption)	Discriminatory behaviour
Constant Interruptions during meetings	Harassment e.g. face to face, electronic etc.
Unnecessary gestures (visible irritation)	Bad language
Unwelcomed over familiarity	Assault
Poor personal hygiene	Threatening behaviour
Taking without permission i.e. milk cartons etc.	Victimisation
Behaviour aimed to disruption (not moving on)	Hazardous actions
Not sticking to the agenda (after repeated reminders).	Breaching confidentiality/data protection (when confidentiality agreed previously)
	Slander
	Unwelcomed physical contact
	Hijacking agenda for personal gain

explain the reasons for their conduct. If there is a second breach the Vice Chair will give a formal warning. If breaches continue, the Vice Chair will suspend the meeting and will decide whether to ask the Chair to leave or terminate the meeting.

If the Chair is expelled from a meeting or the meeting terminated due to their conduct, the Vice Chair and the Tenant Participation Assistant will decide the next course of action. This may be either no action required or to follow the complaint process as identified within the Code of Conduct.

If the Chair is expelled, appropriate measures will be taken to fill any vacancies for that meeting only.

For minor breaches, the Tenants and Communities Manager will agree a suitable resolution with all relevant parties.

For major breaches, the Landlord Services Manager will deal with officer or any other party complaints against volunteer/s. They will authorise any sanctions following the investigation.

For examples of major/minor breaches please see table below (this list is not exhaustive).

Once a complaint has concluded the process shown at below, the complainant/accused may progress through the appeals process shown at flowchart 1.

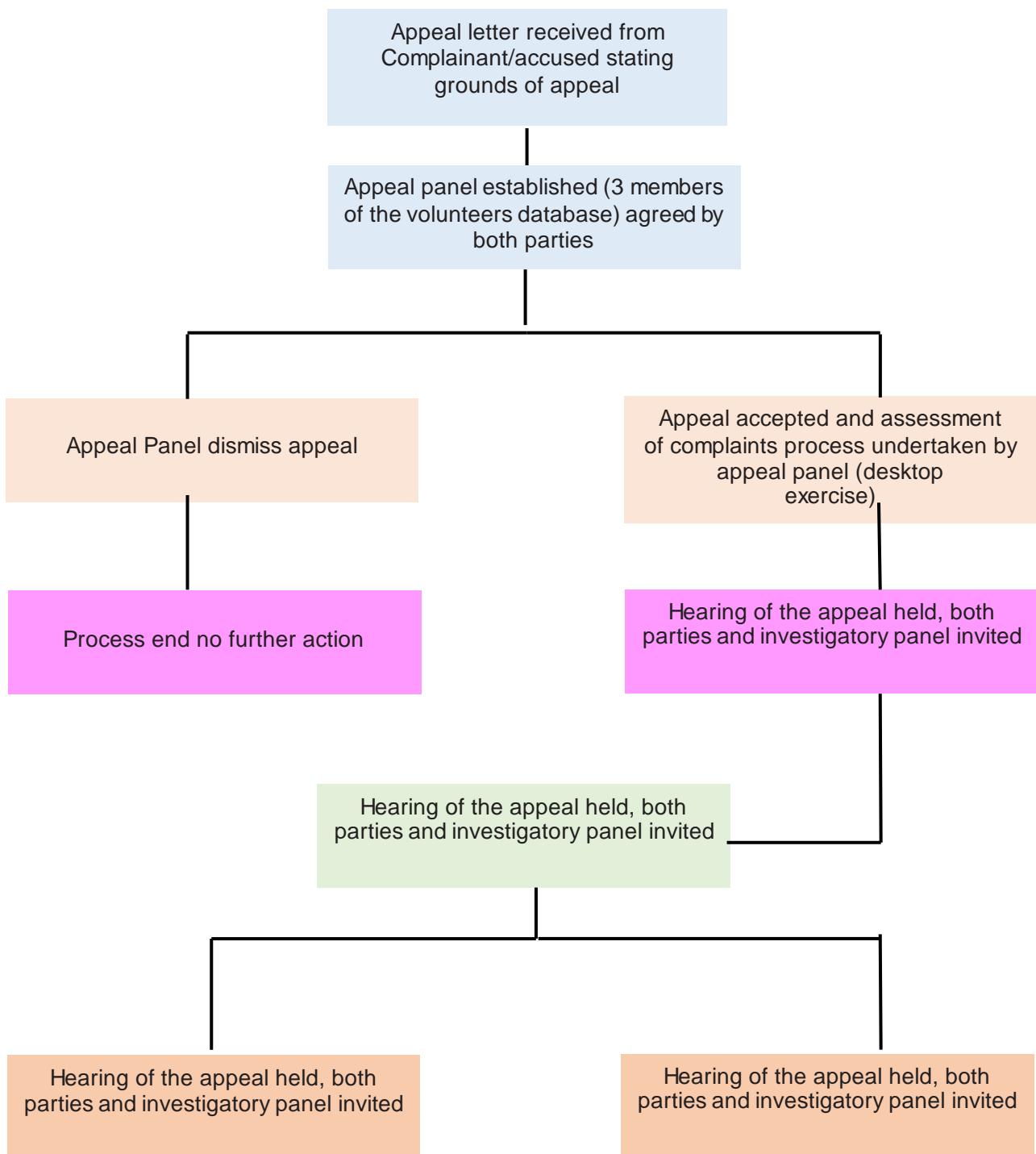
Upon conclusion of the appeals process, there will be no further right of appeal.

The complainant will not be informed of the details of any sanctions imposed where this would breach the data protection rights of the volunteer against whom the complaint was made.

The following timeframes are suggested for the process

	Aim	How this is monitored/measured
1.	Complaint received	
2.	Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer) to assess suitability of the process to deal with the complaint	Within five working days
3.	Start of complaints process or refer to another agency	
4.	An independent investigatory panel established	
5.	Notification of complaint to be made to both accused and complainant	
6.	Desktop exercise undertaken by panel members, to establish minor or major breach	Within five working days
7.	Invite all parties involved to investigatory interviews.	
8.	Investigatory interviews held	
9.	Statement of investigatory interview to be circulated to all interviewees for amendments/signing as an accurate record five working days following the interview	
10.	Statements to be returned for final decision five working days from receipt	DTCP to determine and advise timeframe based on nature of complaint
11.	Final decision to be made to uphold/dissmiss complaint within 15 working days of investigatory interview and letter sent to complainant and accused with decision made. Offer of appeal to be made which must reach the Tenants & Communities Manager (or delegated officer) within ten working days of receipt of the outcome letter	
12.	Appeal letter received	
13.	Letter of acknowledgement sent to both parties	
14.	A specific Appeal Panel (consisting of three independent members of the volunteer database) will be established. These must be accepted by both parties and must not consist of initial investigatory panel members	Within five working days
15.	Appeal panel to consider if suitable grounds to proceed with appeal	
16.	If appeal is dismissed, No further action	
17.	Appeal accepted / appeal panel to undertake assessment of complaints process previously followed (desktop exercise)	
18.	Hearing of the appeal held interviewing both parties and the investigatory panel	Panel to determine and advise timeframe
19.	Conclusion of the appeal to uphold/dissmiss to be confirmed by letter	
20.	If appeal upheld, investigatory panel to reconsider decision	

Flowchart 1



4.0. The Housing Service's minimum standards for constitutions

For a residents' group or association to become recognised by the Housing service, its constitution must contain a number of key features. It will:

- guarantee the rights of members to voice their views and vote on issues which affect them
- protect the interests of members if the organisation runs into difficulties
- provide assurance that the group is open, democratic and responsible for the actions of its members.
- set out a commitment to equal opportunities
- detail how funding will be raised, how the funding can be used and its accountability.

The Housing Service can offer further advice and support to groups wishing to develop a constitution.

4.1. Training opportunities, new initiatives and the current programme

The Housing Service is committed to assessing training needs and providing training for members of groups, residents associations and individuals.

Training is also offered on issues relating to housing services, business planning and the strategic development of the Housing Service. Training provision is both in-house and via external providers, where appropriate. The training offered aims to provide residents and residents with the knowledge and skills to enable them to develop their involvement.

The cost of training will be met by the Housing Service, provided funds are available. Joint training with council officers and elected members will be provided where possible and appropriate.

Mandatory Training

All members will follow the East Devon Council policies and have completed the mandatory resident training programme once every 2 years, consisting of the following:

- Data Protection
- Equalities & Diversity
- Effective Meetings
- Safeguarding

Failure to attend any of the above courses will result in the resident leaving the group/panel until the training has been undertaken.

In addition to the above opportunities, individuals or groups can request specific training from the housing service at any time during the year. This can be done by contacting the Tenant Participation on 01395 517453 or email

tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

Training is open to individual residents and resident groups. An annual training budget is allocated from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

4.2. Course availability

The Tenant Participation Assistant will evaluate and prioritise training in line with the budget available and on how many residents request training for that subject.

Availability of courses is always subject to resources.

The tenant participation team will keep groups informed of training opportunities. This information will also be provided through articles in the magazine sent out annually in April, August and December.

Previous courses have included:

- equalities awareness - a course for all resident groups committee members and involved residents
- chairing a meeting - basic skills on how to run effective meetings
- minute taking - basic skills on how to write minutes of meetings
- General Data Protection Regulations learning how to look after personal information
- Safeguarding
- Complaints Workshop
- First Aid and Food Hygiene

5.0 Resources for resident involvement 2019 – 2022

5.1 Budgets and other resources

The budgets that support resident involvement can be found in the Housing Revenue Account (the budget which accounts for all spending paid for by residents' rents).

The highest spending at present is the cost of salaries for the staff who support resident involvement followed by the Housing Matters magazine.

As the Housing Service has adopted a culture of resident involvement, all housing staff have an important role in making resident involvement work.

5.2. Resident expenses

If you are attending a prearranged meeting by the Housing Service, payment will be made to cover out of pocket expenses for mileage at the current rates are 45 pence per mile plus 5 pence per mile per passenger. All claims should be made at the end of each month, or if this is not possible the claims must be made within 3 months of the first event.

A lunch allowance is available in the amount of £6 per person, if a resident is attending a full day meeting and where a free lunch is not provided.

All claim forms must be completed and signed. Electronic signatures are acceptable. We cannot accept details over the phone. Mileage claims are verified by using the AA route planner online website.

Housing Review Board members have their expenses paid through the Council's payroll system.

For more information contact the tenant participation team on 01395 517453 or email tenantparticipation@eastdevon.gov.uk

The resident expenses policy is reviewed annually by the Tenants and Communities Manager.

5.3. Funding levels for recognised resident groups

Recognised tenant and resident associations are entitled to apply for the following grants:

- one-off start up grants (£100)
- annual funding grants (£100 to £250)**
- additional support grants using the Community Initiative Fund application form*.

*Application forms for grant funding are available from the tenant participation team.

**Copy of association annual bank accounts are required.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting September 15th 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release NA



Housing Task Force (HTF) Update

Report summary:

To inform the board of the Housing Task Force's progress to date and to outline future plans for the delivery of affordable and social housing across the district

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Housing Review Board recommends to Cabinet, that approval be given for the Housing Task Force Service Lead, to complete discussions with the South West Procurement Alliance (SWPA) and ZedPods, for the purpose of procuring a contract to develop new housing on behalf of EDDC

Reason for recommendation:

The Housing Review Board requested regular updates on progress made by the new HTF toward its singular aim of delivering new housing for EDDC

To furnish the HTF Service Lead with the required approvals to undertake negotiations and procurement processes, to support members aspirations to deliver new housing across the district

Officer: Jo Garfoot – Housing Task Force Service Lead; JGarfoot@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Report for noting only

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: report for noting only

Links to background information

Link to Council Plan

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
-

Report

Background

The Housing Task Force was instigated as a result of the Social Housing Task and Finish Forum (TAFF). During discussions at the TAFF it became clear that members had an aspiration to increase our social and affordable housing portfolio and that resources should be allocated to achieve this.

As we know EDDC has lost a significant amount of homes since the inception of the Right to Buy scheme. The aim of HTF is to redress this balance by delivering a pipeline programme of directly delivered housing developments, maximise the relationships we have with development partners such as Registered Providers (RPs), Community Land Trusts (CLTs) and pushing for adherence to Section 106 agreements in place with volume builders, amongst other things. The team are exploring any and all opportunities we have available to us to deliver members aspirations

The Task Force went live in Mid-February of this year and at this point work is picking up pace

This report is an update on progress so far and sets out some of the options we are exploring

1. Recruitment

- i. As with other areas of the business recruitment has been a challenge for us.
- ii. However, I am pleased to report that we will shortly have 3 members of the team in place. We have successfully recruited into the Development Surveyor role, with the successful candidate's wealth of knowledge and experience he will be a huge asset to the team and we cannot wait to welcome him on board in September
- iii. The second Enabling Officer role remains vacant, but, we are hopeful this will be filled in time
- iv. We will hopefully be recruiting a part time Project Officer to support the emerging work streams

2. Exploring Opportunities

- i. Initially we have been focussing on land that is within our ownership. Member's laudable aspiration is for us to expedite the building of new homes and make them available to tenants as quickly as possible, to reduce the Devon Home Choice waiting list and our reliance on external temporary housing. This is obviously easier to achieve if we are in control of the development sites. We have been out and about in our communities assessing potential sites. This is ongoing and encompasses garage sites, carparks, green spaces and in fill sites amongst others
- ii. We are also exploring council sites (rather than housing owned) with potential to be transferred into the HRA for future housing use. These include depo's, carparks, closed toilets and other sites that could otherwise be offered for disposal outside of the council. This is proving to be an interesting discussion and colleagues across the business have

- been supportive. I'm hopeful it could lead to a very beneficial recycling of wider EDDC assets to provide future housing
- iii. Obviously we want to explore as many delivery options as possible, so we have publicised our desire to acquire development sites externally with land and estate agents. This does need to be handled sensitively or we run the risk of a conflict of interest, with our developing RPs and CLTs. We definitely need to be fostering and supporting those relationships rather than putting ourselves in competition with them
 - iv. We have made an informal offer on a small piece of land in Axminster, that, should we proceed to purchase, could facilitate a larger development in the future. However as with all developments this site is not without its issues and risks. So, we are currently completing our due diligence so that informed decisions can be made. There is of course also the issue of the Natural England embargo which prevents any building in the Axe Valley, until sufficient mitigations are in place to protect the watercourse. Colleagues in planning tell us this could take a number of years
 - v. When our development surveyor joins us we are intending to complete a new review of our garage sites, taking into consideration the new construction methods available to us today. Our hope is that this may increase the number of sites that will be suitable for redevelopment into housing
 - vi. We are keeping a spreadsheet of all opportunities. Following options appraisal and viability exercises these will either go forward on to the Development Pipeline Programme or be archived. We currently have 9 sites on this list and it is steadily growing as new avenues and opportunities present themselves

3. Stock and Estate Regeneration

- i. The Stock Condition Survey is now underway and there is an expectation that this will highlight areas within our portfolio that would greatly benefit from a stock regeneration programme.
- ii. We will be working closely with our colleagues in Property & Asset to analyse this information and put a strategy in place to manage any such schemes
- iii. This will be a huge area of opportunity for us to build better quality, sustainable, carbon neutral homes in higher density, allowing us to maximise the land resource we have available.
- iv. Many of our tenants really struggle to maintain the huge gardens that come with a significant number of our post war homes. We can utilise this land to provide additional new housing whilst ensuring that all homes have gardens (houses) or access to beautiful green spaces (flats etc)

4. Development Models and Methods of Delivery

- i. As EDDC is new to direct housing delivery and development, we recognise the need to start small in order to manage the associated risks. This will enable us to build with competence and confidence in this very complex area of business. We are also mindful that working with a development partner to deliver schemes on our behalf will be hugely beneficial to our learning, whilst also achieving meaningful outcomes for tenants and communities quickly and effectively
- ii. With this in mind we have highlighted 3 garage sites in Honiton that we believe have potential for redevelopment into housing. In order to maximise the potential of these small sites we are looking at using a modular building method known as Volumetric MMC (Modern Methods of Construction). There are several reasons for exploring this relatively new building method, below are just a few;
 - The homes are built under factory conditions ensuring quality is extremely high and waste very minimal
 - The whole build cycle has a much lower carbon impact than standard construction

- We can build on previously ‘unsuitable’ sites due to innovative ground work and foundation models
- We can safely build on garage or carpark sites and retain the parking beneath the dwellings, thereby mitigating the risk of increasing parking issues in our communities
- The homes have a very low energy usage, due to being super insulated, solar PV etc, so the running costs for tenants are greatly reduced and in many cases zero for heating
- The components (windows, kitchens, external finishes etc) used have a very long lifecycle, thereby reducing the ongoing maintenance burden for the council
- The disruption for anyone living around the development site is greatly reduced as the ‘on-site’ build is much more rapid than in standard construction
- The company we are in discussion with (ZedPods) has a proven and highly praised record of carrying out really meaningful community engagement throughout the process of all its developments
- They have an excellent record of delivering innovative, carbon neutral schemes with sister local authorities both locally and nationally
- This build method supports several of our corporate strategies; Climate Change, Carbon Reduction, Poverty

We are in the early stages of discussions with procurement professionals and ZedPods, so this report seeks approval for the Housing Task Force Service Lead to continue those discussions/negotiations, undertake procurement processes, agree contract terms and report on progress at future meetings

5. Options Appraisal & Financial Modeller

- i. We are in discussions with two companies who provide specialist options appraisal and financial modelling software packages for use in social housing development. In simple terms these modellers enable us to enter all the variables and costs associated with a given development, so we can gauge its financial viability, it gives us the working budget, the rent levels once completed, the length of time it will take to repay any loans etc. The information will also greatly assist in our submissions for funding to Homes England and others
- ii. These documents form a fundamental part of our internal due diligence, risk management and financial monitoring for every opportunity we explore and / or take through to development

6. Business as Usual

The team continues to do all the tasks that transferred over to it from housing such as; working with RPs to deliver Affordable Housing (180+ units this year) Right to Buy Acquisitions, the spending of Right to Buy receipts and commuted sums, supporting Community Land Trusts, Section 106 agreement reviews, commenting on planning decisions etc etc

As a team we have some really exciting months and years ahead of us. Many opportunities for the development of new housing across the district have already been discovered and I’m sure many more will present themselves in the coming months and years. The Pipeline Programme is obviously in its infancy (as is the team) and will continue to grow, but within the year we will have converted many of the ‘potentials’ into ‘live schemes’ and be working up timelines for delivery

Having said all of that, I would just like to try and manage expectations. Housing Development is a ‘long game’, it does not happen quickly and there are many months, often years, where it appears nothing much is happening, but I assure you this is not the case. With development the vast majority of the work is frontloaded into the preparation phases, the actual building of new homes takes a fraction of the time it takes to get schemes through feasibility, design and planning etc. This is the whole premise of the Pipeline Programme, once it’s up and running we will have schemes on site and others in various stages of preparation and on it runs!

Financial implications:

A reserve of £500k has been set up to fund the housing task force taken from additional business rates income as advised and agreed previously at Cabinet and Council with minimal amounts drawn down to cover expenditure within the 21/22 financial year. Budget will be allocated from this reserve each year to cover the revenue expenditure incurred by the service.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment. To note that Legal Services will support on any procurement process.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 11th October 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Emergency Winter Housing Plan

Report summary:

This report outlines our plans to respond to the cost of living crisis and our commitment to support our vulnerable tenants throughout the winter period. Given the dramatic increases in gas and electricity prices, and the sharp rising costs of many essential items for many the cost of basic survival needs will exceed household income.

The report proposes the adoption of a series of short-term measures to be implemented this winter and the creation of a Housing Winter Pressures Hardship Fund to help combat the worst impacts on vulnerable households.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

- (1) That the Housing Review Board recommend to Cabinet and Council the approval of a budget of £50,000 to allocate towards delivering this project and to designate as a Housing Winter Pressures Hardship Fund.
- (2) To give delegated Authority to the Strategic Lead- Housing, Health and Environment and the Housing Service Lead to approve the detail and criteria of the hardship fund and the grounds on which funds will be allocated to households.
- (3) To approve the other actions highlighted in the report that will deliver housings contribution to the EDDC Winter Pressures Plan.

Reason for recommendation:

To respond quickly to the worsening affordability crisis being faced by housing tenants. We wish to support and attempt to mitigate the worst effects of the increasing cost of living crisis by ensuring that at risk households can access affordable food, housing, warmth and meet other basic needs.

Officer: Yusef Masih – Interim Housing Services Manager. ymasih@eastdevon.gov.uk/

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment

- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Medium Impact

An equality Impact assessment will be completed on development and delivery of the project.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: High Risk; Not responding to the cost of living crisis places our tenants at serious risk, including the risk of not being able to access food and warmth.

Links to background information

[Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 05/10/2022 18:00 \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](https://eastdevon.gov.uk/documents/public-packs/agenda-document-for-cabinet-05102022-1800)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

1. Background

1.1 A report on the cost of living crisis and EDDC winter pressures plan will be presented to Cabinet on the 5th October 2022. This report considers the cost of living crisis in the context of our Poverty Strategy and alongside our commitments to support our vulnerable residents. The report will propose the adoption of a series of short-term measures to be implemented this winter and to be incorporated into a Winter Pressures Plan to help combat the worst impacts on vulnerable households. Cabinet are likely to adopt the Winter Pressures Plan set out in the report and the implementation of the actions designed to mitigate some of the factors impacting on vulnerable households and to avoid them going into poverty (this will be confirmed at the meeting) . The proposals outlined within this report set out our response to the objectives deliverable by the housing service within the Winter Pressures Plan:

- Exercise discretion when providing welfare support and advice to support those people who could potentially go into crisis.
- Utilise Council resources set aside for poverty relief towards hardship payments and advice on debt relief.
- Maximise partnership working and coordinate efforts with our partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors towards poverty prevention.
- Promote affordable warmth, insulation and energy saving schemes, to improve heat retention and better insulated homes.
- Liaise with others including Devon County Council and local NHS organisations to help maintain and support residents in good physical and mental health, including

engaging in community-led health & wellbeing initiatives, volunteering and socialising via local initiatives.

- Liaise with others to support access to food and nutrition, including healthy eating exercises/initiatives, organising a community garden to grow produce, setting up of a Community Larders or providing extra support to local food banks to meet unmet need.
- Prepare for a possible ‘rent shock’ or increased Council Tax arrears as households in the district may prioritise between heating and eating instead of paying their rent or council tax.
- Increase capacity to provide housing advice that focuses on tenancy sustainment and preventing homelessness.
- Utilise Housing Community Centres as community facilities that support residents and communities combat cost of living threats.
- Working with Team Devon, Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector to explore the warm places project and how that can be delivered in East Devon.
- Assist tenants in furnishing and providing white goods in their new homes and avoid furniture poverty.

2. Emergency Winter Housing Plan

The proposals outlined within this report set out more specifically a series of measures that will form housings contribution to the Winter Pressures Plan.

2.1 Project Officer

We are in the process of recruiting a fixed term (6 months) Project Officer to lead on, consult, co-ordinate and deliver the housing services response to the Winter Pressures plan. We intend to fund this via staffing cost savings within the Housing Revenue Account that have arisen due to vacant posts. This approach was approved via SMT+ who recognised the need to press ahead at pace with developing this project in order to ensure we are able to support people quickly as winter approaches.

2.2 Project development

Due to the immediate need to create this project, the details of how we will actually deliver this on the ground are still very much emerging but the actions below are areas that we are now working on. We intend to run this project through to March 2023.

The Project Officer will:

- Consider what additional measures can be put in place to support tenants through the coming months; consulting with residents, the voluntary sector as well as our Corporate Financial resilience and support team.
- Set up a hardship fund to deal with immediate support that residents may need, and design an appropriate policy, procedure and a process for it. This may target our properties that are the most poorly insulated as we recognise the higher risks to tenants that reside in these properties.
- Risk assessing and opening Community centres to provide warmth, social interaction, broadband access and hot drinks, this may extend into providing additional food provision.
- Promote the work of the project both internally and externally, ensuring timely and relevant press releases, information and leaflets are produced; the information on the website is relevant and social media is used to best effect
- Work with other teams to deliver support services at the Community Centres including benefit maximisation, financial advice and resilience, foodbank, energy efficiency

- Co-ordinating external and internal support to ensure it reaches those people who need it.
- Design and deliver a toolbox talk for contractors entering our properties to help them identify signs and concerns that tenants may not be coping and how they should liaise with us when they come across these properties.
- Consider an extension of the current food poverty work we already undertake.
- Monitor outcomes of the project, this will be reported on a monthly basis to the Housing Leadership Team.

2.3 Consultation with involved and not involved tenants

We have consulted with tenants both involved and not involved by holding a workshop to discuss this topic, this happened on the 27th September 2022. The outcome of the consultation was that tenants would like the project to consider:

- The provision of scarves, socks, gloves and blankets
- We ensure areas where we only have a small number of properties are not excluded
- The provision of draft excluders
- Ensure we consider the needs of tenants who cannot easily walk to community centres
- The provision of energy efficient light bulbs
- Communication of where the foodbanks / community larders and how they can be accessed.
- Consider including the provision of pet food
- Provide utility support advice to tenants with electrical equipment that supports their health
- Hardship telephone number to be able to immediately access support
- The consider funding groups already in place so that they can provide hot drinks / warm places and snacks (libraries, pubs other groups, Parish halls)
- The recruitment of good neighbours with boundaries who could support and help
- Information packs for tenants
- Volunteers helping at community centres with opening / closing
- Enhanced cleaning / provision of toilet rolls in centres
- Provide reasons / activities for people to come to the centres
- Special winter newsletter with details of support that can be accessed.
- Educate tenants to keep warm
- Consider support for younger members of the household
- Provide support to tenants who cannot manage money

The Project Officer will consider the above to look how these measures can be incorporated into the project. The session was extremely beneficial and has helped us to develop current proposals as well as given us new ideas that could be quick to implement.

2.4 Further considerations.

The day to day work of the housing service touches on much of the work outlined in this report and there are further areas that we are developing that will have an added benefit to tenants and will contribute to what we are trying to achieve with this project;

- Review of the void standard to consider whether we let properties to a higher standard- example- carpets in every property?
- Identify properties with low energy efficiency ratings / in receipt of Household Support Fund and within the poverty index and explore how we can support them (repairs / financial)
- Review of the Furniture Recycling project

- Tenant profiling which will help us understand the different needs of our tenants. In relation to the equality standards, tenants with additional support needs and how tenants wish to communicate with us.

2.5 Resources

The Project Officer will be managed by the Interim Communities Manager and the wider team will also support the project. The Project Officer will work with other managers / officer in order to deliver the agreed projects. They will also seek to identify and enable volunteers to help deliver the projects

It is proposed that the Housing Review Board agree an initial fund of £50K to support the project, this will also include the creation of a Housing Winter Pressures Hardship fund that can be used to directly allocate financial support to tenants.

2.6 Delivery / monitoring / reporting

The Project Officer will report progress to the Housing Leadership Team monthly. A full report on the project will be presented to the Housing Review Board in May 2023.

Financial implications:

There is a recommendation for a supplementary budget of £50k, if approved this will be met from the HRA Balance.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment. (GSalter 29/09/2022)

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 11th October 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release NA



Housing Revenue Account Finance Update to End July 2022

Report summary:

The report provides the Housing Review Board with current year to date and draft forecast financial outturn figures for the housing revenue account for the 2023/23 financial year. The report will also consider the implications of any forthcoming regulatory changes.

Producing a Housing Revenue Account has been a statutory requirement for Councils who manage and own their housing stock for some time, and therefore a key document for the Board to influence

The report also makes reference to the recent Government launched consultation on the social housing rent cap and invites Members to debate the topic in order for us to capture information that we can put forward as part of the consultation process.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That the Housing Revenue Account update is noted.

Reason for recommendation:

To give the Housing Review Board an opportunity to contribute towards the review and planning of all landlord service related finances.

Officer: Rob Ward, Accountant, rward@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change High Impact

Risk: Low Risk; .

Links to background information [Financial information 2022/23 - East Devon](#)

[Rent cap on social housing to protect millions of tenants from rising cost of living - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

- 3.1 The following table shows the original budget set for the year and any supplementary estimates approved to date affecting the HRA position.

In year variances have been identified and commentary provided within Appendix 1.

Budget monitoring will continue throughout the year with the outturn position being reported early in the new financial year along with any recommended reserve movements.

HRA (Surplus)/Deficit	£000
Original Budget surplus (Council 21/2/22)	208 (F)
Predicted net (under)/overspend to year end	579 (F)
Predicted Budget (Surplus)/Deficit HRA	787 (F)

- 3.2 The original approved budget generates a surplus of £0.208m in 2022/23. This sum and any additional surplus is due to be added to the Capital Development Fund for future investment

- 3.3 The most notable risks to the above outturn position, which will be kept under review, are;
- Employee costs due to the uncertainty around the 22/23 pay award and the ongoing consultant pay review.
 - Income – the current high levels of income received may be at risk due to the increase in cost of living

- 3.4 Inflationary pressures are also a concern and will be reviewed prior to and considered during the 23/24 budget preparation process with scenarios considered varying the four main drivers;

- Income – currently set at CPI + 1%, June being the latest release which would mean an increase of 11.1% and is likely to go higher.
 - Interest Expense – currently fixed, however, refinancing will be required at the end of the year of £2.9m with interest rates rising.
 - Employees Costs & Overheads – currently 28% as a proportion of income received, pay awards for 23/24 will need to consider inflationary pressures.
 - Premises related costs – the remaining balance once all above assumptions are made to be reinvested into our stock.
- 3.5 There has been very little in capital spend to date within the HRA with the acquisition of 42 Berry Close being the only material item.

4. Social Housing Rent Cap Consultation- 31st August 2022

- 4.1 On the 31st August the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities released a consultation document setting out a rent cap for social housing tenants as part of measures to protect tenants from further impacts of the cost of living crisis.
- 4.2 Under the current policy, rent is increased in line with the consumer price index (CPI) plus 1% which would currently mean a potential increase of 11% from April 2023 onwards. The consultation suggests a rent cap is imposed that will sit at either 3%, 5% or 7% and the Government are asking for views from the sector.
- 4.3 From a financial perspective, we will undertake relevant scenario planning under each option to understand the consequences on service delivery and budgets, taking into account our rising costs in a number of areas- namely responsive repairs.
- 4.4 As an initial assessment of introducing rent caps the impact on rental income is illustrated below, with the rent increase being calculated at 10.8% (August CPI of 9.8% + 1% (September CPI will not be available until mid-October)) with comparisons to imposing different rent cap levels.



This image cannot currently be displayed.

As can be seen the difference between the 10.8% rise compared to other scenarios is significant on income levels:

- 3% cap is a reduction in income of £1.473m a year
- 5% cap is a reduction in income of £1.095m a year
- 7% cap is a reduction in income of £0.717m a year

It also needs to be borne in mind that this income is not lost in just year one but will not be in the base income year after year.

- 4.5 Although the increase and implications on tenants affordability to meet this increase will and should be a key consideration of the Board and the Council, the cost of maintaining the housing stock will be increasing with inflation and by not keeping pace with increase income levels will necessary result in a reduction in available resources to meet current plans to maintain and improve stock.
- 4.6 Consultation with involved and not involved tenants

We have consulted with tenants both involved and not involved by holding a workshop on the 27th September 2022. The outcome of the consultation was:

- There was no definite answer in relation to the question on the rent cap as the tenants overwhelmingly felt that there was not enough information provided to be able to make an informed decision.
- In order to take an informed decision they would require:
 - The amount of additional funding required to maintain the current level of service delivery as they understand the costs would have increased and they not wish the current service levels to deteriorate any further.
 - The impact on major / cyclical works delivery based on the levels of increase.
 - Whether any Health & Safety works are required by regulation / legislation which are non-negotiable
 - The rent charged by other providers in Devon
 - The effect on residents claiming full and partial benefits and the numbers that would be effected.
- They felt that management of repairs and contract management could be greatly improved and this would lead to additional funding without impacting rent levels.

- 4.7 **Appendix 1** sets out a useful summary, Members are encouraged to also follow the link at the start of this report to access more detailed information on the consultation. We have until the 12th October to respond and would encourage input and contributions from particularly our tenant members of the Board.

Financial implications:

Contained within the report

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications

Appendix 1: HRA Commentary

Year to Date			4Cast Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff	Actuals	Budget	Diff
-6,002,651	-6,203,100	200,449	Gross Property Rents	-18,620,556	-18,609,260
-87,082	-72,050	-15,032	Garage Rents	-202,965	-215,990
-198,786	-206,400	7,614	Other Income	-611,735	-619,600
-6,288,519	-6,481,550	193,031		-19,435,255	-19,444,850
					9,595

Year to Date			4Cast Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff	Actuals	Budget	Diff
1,431,035	1,023,460	407,575	Repairs And Maintenance - General	3,718,845	3,070,580
60,993	441,270	-380,277	Repairs And Maintenance - Special	929,727	1,323,750
4,003,305	2,372,750	1,630,555	Supervision And Management	7,048,393	7,119,670
93,789	92,320	1,469	Other Expenditure	185,357	277,360
4,327,380	4,373,530	-679,750	Capital Charges & Bad Debt	4,327,380	5,007,130
9,916,502	8,303,330	979,572		16,209,702	16,798,490
					-588,788

4Cast Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff
Financing & MIRS	2,438,140	2,438,140

4Cast Outturn		
Actuals	Budget	Diff
Surplus	-787,413	-208,220
		-579,193

Commentary

1 No material variations in rents currently being experienced or forecast versus revised budget for 22/23.

2 Electrical inspections, PPP Exclusions & Non PPP property repairs currently trending higher than originally budgeted (£300k, £270k and £80k respectively based upon a 6 month average projection). A transactional level review is currently underway, jobs will either be reallocated to existing budget lines or budget will be reallocated to cover overspends from Major repairs expenditure underspends.

3 Various underspends across compliance and adaptations, currently £60k spend versus expected £440k year to date. Projections based upon historical data set.

4 Salary savings across the service, predominantly within Property and Asset as recruitment into vacant roles continues, which have been partially offset by fees for agency workers equating to a net forecast saving of £528k. A £500k increase has been included for the impact of the inflationary salary increase, which is yet to be agreed and the council wide salary review which is underway - the impact of which is also unknown.

5 Lower levels of spending in various areas such as Tenant Engagement, Change of Tenancy/Downsizing and sewerage provision.

6 Underspends across all major repairs categories, provision has been made to cover the overspends in General Repairs and Maintenance with the residual budget expected to be placed into the planned maintenance reserve.

7 It is expected that the entire £800k that has been allocated as a contribution to capital will be utilised in year for the next phase of the Green Homes works. No other variations are expected at this time.

Appendix 2

Rent cap on social housing to protect millions of tenants from rising cost of living

Under the proposals being consulted on, a cap on social housing rent increases would be put in place for the coming financial year, with options at 3%, 5% and 7% being considered.

From:

[Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) and [The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP](#)

Published

31 August 2022



- Social rent cap proposed to support tenants with cost of living
- Move could save households £300 per year and provide financial stability for 4 million families
- Part of government's efforts to support most vulnerable households

A [consultation](#) has been launched today (Wednesday 31 August) to invite views from social housing tenants and landlords on a proposed rent cap to understand how best to support households with the cost of living.

Under the proposals, a cap on social housing rent increases would be put in place for the coming financial year, with options at 3%, 5% and 7% being considered.

The move would prevent rents for council and housing association houses from rising significantly, saving tenants an average £300 per year and providing stability as inflation rises.

The government regulates how much social housing rents can increase each year. Currently this is set at up to the consumer price index (CPI) rate plus 1% – meaning potential increases next year of 11% in line with recent Bank of England forecasts.

The proposed new cap will help support the most vulnerable households in the face of cost-of-living pressures. This comes on top of our existing £37 billion support package, which includes a £150 council tax rebate, a £400 energy bill discount to support households over the coming months and the most vulnerable 8 million households receiving support of at least £1,200.

Housing Secretary Greg Clark said:

We must protect the most vulnerable households in these exceptional circumstances during the year ahead. Putting a cap on rent increases for social tenants offers security and stability to families across England.

We know many people are worried about the months ahead. We want to hear from landlords and social tenants on how we can make this work and support the people that need it most.

The rent cap would be temporary and would apply from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The consultation also seeks views on whether to set a limit for 2024-25. The government understands this will impact social housing landlords and is engaging fully with the sector.

Following the consultation, a final decision will be announced later this year, to make sure social housing landlords have enough time to factor this into their rent decisions for April 2023.

The government is also committing to reviewing social rent policy beyond 2025, via a separate consultation due to be launched next year.

Today's announcement is part of measures the government has put in place to support the most vulnerable households with the cost of living.

This is in addition to the £11.5 billion investment to build more affordable, quality homes through the Affordable Homes Programme.

Geeta Nanda OBE, Chair of the G15 group of leading housing associations and Chief Executive of MTVH, said:

We are deeply concerned by the impact cost of living pressures are having on the people we provide homes to. G15 members have increased support for residents, including providing additional funding for vital crisis support, on top of the work we are doing to bring down people's energy bills by improving the energy performance of the homes we provide. The support government has announced for energy bills is welcome, but it is clear that further assistance is urgently needed.

All G15 members recognise the current high rates of inflation and are considering the impact of this on residents and the essential work we do carefully. To maintain and improve existing residents' homes, as well as continuing to build much needed new affordable homes, significant investment each year is essential. Rental income is critical to supporting this work. Housing associations have already seen costs for vital materials for repairs and maintenance work increase by as much as 16.8% this year, and the cost of constructing new homes has grown by more than 11% as well.

In getting the balance right on rent setting, we are committed to maintaining affordability for residents. We welcome the government's consultation and the opportunity to discuss these important issues further.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 15th September 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Self-Assessment of complaints procedure against Housing Ombudsman code.

Report summary:

The Housing Ombudsman has updated its complaints handling code taking effect from April 2022. It is a requirement for us to assess our approach to complaint handling against the Complaint Handling Code annually and to report this to our governing body.

The EDDC complaints team, in consultation with the Housing Service have assessed the current procedure against the new code. This report summarises the findings of the self-assessment which confirms that our current procedure complies with the new requirements.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That HRB note that the council have undertaken an assessment of the Corporate Complaints Procedure against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code of practice, and that a review of the procedure for handling housing service complaints is planned with tenant involvement.

Reason for recommendation:

The attached self-assessment form and report demonstrate EDDC compliance with the revised code.

Officer: Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Housing Service Lead, agilbert-jeans@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; Failure to comply with Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code may ultimately lead to the council being issued with a Complaint Handling Failure order.

Links to background information

[The Housing ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](http://housing-ombudsman.org.uk); [Complaints procedure - East Devon](#)

Link to Council Plan

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
-

Report in full

1. Background

- 1.1 The Housing Ombudsman has a complaints handling code that all members of the Ombudsman scheme are required to abide by.
- 1.2 Each year, we are required to carry out an assessment of our own complaints policy to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Ombudsman's code.
- 1.3 Our corporate complaints team have taken the responsibility to ensure continued compliance through the self-assessment process.
- 1.4 In 2020, in response to the Social Housing White Paper, the Housing Ombudsman introduced a new complaint handling code, coming into effect in April 2021.
- 1.5 In consultation with the housing service, the EDDC complaints team have now assessed our current corporate policy to ensure that it complies with the code.
- 1.6 Members should note that the purpose of this self-assessment is solely to check our current policy complies with the new ombudsman code. A separate internal review of the approach the Housing Service takes to complaints is planned, which will involve further tenant involvement.

2. Review findings

- 2.1 The self-assessment form has been attached as an appendix to this report for your information and a link has been provided to the Housing Ombudsman Code.
- 2.2 The EDDC complaints procedure is compliant with the Housing Ombudsman code in all but one area.
- 2.3 Section 5.1 of the code relates to Stage 1 formal complaints. It requires landlords to respond to the complainant within 10 working days of the complaint being logged. It does

allow a further 10 days in exceptional circumstances as long as a clear timeframe for when the response will be received.

- 2.4 Under the EDDC corporate procedure, the response time for Stage 1 and stage 2 complaints is 20 working days. This applies across all service areas of the council and the council has been advised that, where compliance in particular areas is not appropriate, an explanation of this within the self-assessment is acceptable. The Housing Ombudsman recognises that local authorities generally operate a complaints procedure which is consistent across all service areas.
- 2.5 This timeframe allows sufficient time for a thorough investigation, queries from the complaints team, drafting of a response and approval by the relevant officer.
- 2.6 Having a separate complaints team to take charge of the formal complaints process adds a layer of scrutiny to ensure that all aspects of a complaint are considered in the response and that complaints are dealt with consistently across all service areas.
- 2.7 For tenants, there may also be added comfort in knowing that their grievance is being handled by an independent team.
- 2.8 It should also be noted that the 20 working day timescale is a maximum time. Where complaints can be resolved quicker, they will be. The additional time allows for unforeseen circumstances such as staff shortages or illness.

3. Conclusion and next steps.

- 3.1 Our assessment is that our current complaints policy complies with the new Housing Ombudsman Code, taking into account the clarifications stated in paragraphs 2.5 to 2.8 above.
- 3.2 The finalised self-assessment document will be put on our website by 1st October 2022 in line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman.
- 3.3 A broader review of how the Housing Service responds to complaints and service issues will be beginning shortly, with an initial consultation session due to take place at the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel (DTCP) meeting in September.

4. Changes to the role of designated person

- 4.1 Changes to the Housing Ombudsman scheme, taking effect from 1st October, include the removal of the “democratic filter” which means that, if complainants remain dissatisfied at the end of the formal complaint process, they will no longer have to refer their complaint to a designated person or wait 8 weeks before referring to the Housing Ombudsman. The Ombudsman considers this to be a positive change which will make it easier for residents to access their service.
- 4.2 Currently, complainants can refer their complaint to one or more of three designated “persons” – a councillor, MP or the designated tenant complaint panel. If they choose not to do so, they are unable to refer their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman until a period of 8 weeks has passed from receiving their final response from the council. Now complainants will be signposted directly to the Housing Ombudsman in the council’s final stage 2

complaint response. Relevant guidance and information provided to complainants will be updated accordingly.

- 4.3 After 1st October, complainants can still contact their local MP, Councillor or tenant panel but the designated person role will not be part of the formal Housing Ombudsman complaint process. As a result of this change, the Housing Ombudsman is expecting an increase in complaint referrals and they will be addressing any resulting resourcing issues.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That HRB note that the council have undertaken an assessment of the Corporate Complaints Procedure against the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code of practice, and that a review of the procedure for handling housing service complaints is planned with tenant involvement .
 - 5.2 That HRB note the changes in the designated person role from 1st October 2022
-

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications on which to comment.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment.

Appendix B – Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	Section 8 of complaints procedure sets out the information we need in order to take a complaint from a representative
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	Section 4 of complaints procedure sets out what is not generally considered as a formal complaint

1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Section 4
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Yes	

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request , where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	Contact is triaged by the complaints team and anything which is considered can be more quickly and efficiently resolved at service level, is treated as a service enquiry. The customer is always made aware of their right to complain
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Yes	If feedback was received which amounted to a formal complaint, all staff are aware of the complaints procedure and can advise accordingly

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Complainants are encouraged to complain using our online form as this ensures that all relevant detail is captured and follows the corporate approach to channel shift and preventing unnecessary contact. However, complaints will also be accepted by email, in letter form or over the phone
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	A copy is published online and can be printed and made available in paper form, on request
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Complaints procedure - East Devon
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	Section 18 of complaints procedure Complaints procedure - Equalities - East Devon Equalities monitoring form to be published online
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.		Self assessment and code will be published online. Link to complaints procedure will be included in regular communications with tenants – via tenant newsletter

2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Complainants are provided with Housing Ombudsman details in initial acknowledgement and in their complaint response
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Yes	Where a customer makes contact with the council via social media and raises matters which should be dealt with as a formal complaint, our Customer Services and Communications Team will respond to advise of relevant contact details/weblink for the complaints procedure.

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer".	Yes	Information and Complaints Team
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	Objective approach as not employed by any frontline service

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.3	<p>Complaint handlers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	<p>Excellent working relationship between complaints team and all frontline service areas Many years combined experience for two complaints officers Reporting to /overseen by Monitoring Officer</p>

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	<p>Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.</p>	Yes	<p>Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days at both stages</p>

4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complaints on their merits • act independently and have an open mind • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest • consider all information and evidence carefully • keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. 	Yes	
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	
4.12	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out their position • comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. 	Yes	
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	If no response within stated time limit, resident is entitled to request escalation to stage 2 or to ombudsman
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints	Yes	We do sometimes ask residents to let us know what they are dissatisfied with when escalating to stage 2 so that the stage 2 investigation is correctly focused and not simply recovering the same ground

	procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.		
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	<p>Procedure for dealing with unacceptable customer behaviour</p> <p><u>Policy for unreasonable customer behaviour and vexatious requests - East Devon</u></p>

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	Our acknowledgement will outline what we can and cannot investigate
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	Appropriate remedies are considered at stage 1
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	<u>Section 4 of complaints procedure</u>
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	

4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	Staff members are not named by the council – unless specifically named in a complaint by the resident so, for example, if the subject of the complaint is officer conduct
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	Update offered where deadline likely to be missed
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	Optional complaint monitoring form online
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	Managers are informed where a member of staff is complained about to ensure adequate support
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	All decisions made under the unreasonable customer behaviour policy are made by Monitoring Officer with due regard for equality considerations Specific reference to this will be made in all relevant correspondence

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	No	All complaints are handled in accordance with our corporate complaints procedure and responses are provided within 20 working days at both stages
5.5	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Complaints Team works closely with contract manager to ensure completion of all agreed actions

5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 	Yes	

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	
5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	

5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	For housing – stage 1 complaints are considered by relevant service officers and then are referred to a member of the leadership team if the complaint progresses to stage 2. Responses are then reviewed by the complaints team before sign-off by Strategic Lead for Housing, Health and Environment (Stage 1) and by Monitoring Officer (Stage 2)
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three • if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations

5.17	<p>Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.</p>	Yes	
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5.20	<p>Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied 	N/A	
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Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	Complainants are advised where the 20 day deadline may be exceeded and given reasons for this
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	N/A	Our timescale for response at both stages is 20 working days, in line with our corporate complaints procedure
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response		

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	N/A	
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	N/A	

Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	Learning points identified in twice yearly report to SMT Complaints procedure - Reporting and learning from complaints - East Devon
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.		Where a resident has an alternative means of resolution, such as a legal right of appeal, this would not normally be considered as a formal complaint

Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	Yes	Twice yearly report to SMT Annual report to Cabinet Complaints procedure - Reporting and learning from complaints - East Devon

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	Yes	Designated members for complaints
7.4	As a minimum, governing bodies should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge.	Yes	Annual Cabinet report Quarterly performance monitoring report for Housing Review Board

7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	Twice yearly report to SMT
7.6	<p>Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 	Yes	

Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	
8.3	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 	Yes	Report annually to HRB

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 11 October 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Publication of Final Tenant Satisfaction Measures by the Regulator for Social Housing

Report summary:

The new Tenant Satisfaction Measures as proposed in the Social Housing White Paper have been finalised and published by the Regulator for Social Housing. This report summarises our readiness to comply with the new standards.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. That members note the publication of the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures by the Regulator and the requirement for us to ensure compliance of the submission of the data required.
2. That members approve a review of the structure and distribution of the Annual Report in partnership with the Tenant Involvement Management Group with a view to providing a proposed approach at a future Housing Review Board that meets the standard required.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure Members are aware of the changes in Regulation from April 2023 and to provide assurance to the Board that we will be compliant.

Officer: Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead – Housing agilbert-jeans@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Failure to comply with the new standard could result in negative perceptions of the Housing Service, and potential penalties could potentially be applied

Links to background information [June HRB report \(p. 62\)](#); [TSM Technical requirements](#);

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1. Background

- 1.1 In December 2021, the Regulator of Social Housing published a consultation on the Introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). This consultation closed on 3rd March 2022.
- 1.2 The Regulator has now published their response to that consultation and has now confirmed the final measures and standard. This will come into effect on 1st April 2023. For clarification, this is the start of the reporting period for the new standard, meaning that our first annual report using the new measures will be in Summer 2024 (reporting on performance over the 2023/24 financial year). The exact method and timing of the annual report are not yet confirmed.
- 1.3 The new measures are split into two areas. The first requires us to produce an annual tenant perception survey. The survey must include specifically worded questions that will enable the regulator to assess our performance against other providers. The second uses management information, again specifically measured to allow for direct comparison across the sector.
- 1.4 This report summarises what this means for the Housing Service and what steps we have taken and will take to be in a position to comply with the new standard. The technical requirements document has been attached to this report for your information. The full consultation documents can be found here: [Consultation on the introduction of tenant satisfaction measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

2. Preparations

- 2.1 When the draft measures were published in December 2021, we reviewed our current reporting mechanisms to determine our readiness for the new standard.
- 2.2 The new standard will come into force from April 2023.
- 2.3 **Tenant Survey** – We are on track to have this in place in good time ahead of the new standard being introduced. We have already carried out extensive work to prepare a tenant perception survey, initially based on the draft measures. Members were informed of progress at the HRB meeting in June 2022 (link provided above). There have only been minor changes to the proposed questions since then and these will be applied to the survey accordingly. Table 1 shows the measures to be collected from the survey. The detail of the questions required can be found in the attachment “TSM Technical requirements”.
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Table 1: TSMs collected from tenant perception surveys

- TP01 Overall satisfaction
- TP02 Satisfaction with repairs
- TP03 Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair
- TP04 Satisfaction that the home is well maintained
- TP05 Satisfaction that the home is safe
- TP06 Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
- TP07 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them
- TP08 Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect
- TP09 Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints
- TP10 Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
- TP11 Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
- TP12 Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour

- 2.4 Once responses have been received, the results will be analysed in order to establish the proportion of tenants responding to each question who were satisfied each aspect of the service provided by their landlord. It is this figure that is reported to the regulator. Tenants will then be able to compare that figure with other local authorities and social housing providers.
- 2.5 **Management information** - As with the tenant survey, we had already begun preparations following the issuing of the draft measures. However, there are some areas where work is still needed to ensure compliance from April 2023. Table 2 lists the requirements, but more in depth information can be found in the attachment "TSM Technical Requirements".

Table 2: TSMs generated from management information

- CH01 Complaints relative to the size of the landlord
- CH02 Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales
- NM01 Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord
- RP01 Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard
- RP02 Repairs completed within target timescale
- BS01 Gas safety checks
- BS02 Fire safety checks
- BS03 Asbestos safety checks
- BS04 Water safety checks
- BS05 Lift safety checks

- 2.6 For the majority of the measures, we already collect the information required.

- 2.6.1 Our corporate complaints team already holds the information on formal complaints that relate to CH01 and CH02.

- 2.6.2 We have the capacity to record cases of anti-social behaviour on our OPENhousing system. It should be noted that following consultation, it is now a requirement to separate out cases of Anti-social behaviour that relate to “hate incidents” in this measure (NM01). Work has begun to determine if our housing system does allow us to specify this, and we will need to establish if additional training is required to ensure that this information is accurately recorded. We are confident that we will have a robust system in place in time for the implementation of the new standard.
- 2.6.3 Our stock condition survey specification includes establishing whether a property meets the Decent Homes Standard. This work is due to be completed before the end of the 2023/24 financial year, ensuring compliance with measure RP01 for the first year’s submission. For subsequent years, a regime of property visits will need to be implemented to check that our homes continue to meet the standard.
- 2.6.4 The information required for RP02 is collected as part of the contract with Ian Williams.
- 2.6.5 Measures BS01 – BS05 are already collected via a number of contractors. Our compliance manager is working with the housing systems team to standardise the reporting of this information to streamline the process of reporting going forward.

3. Reporting to tenants

- 3.1 As well as reporting these measures to the Regulator, we are also required to provide an annual report to tenants to show our results and how they compare to other organisations.
- 3.2 Our current annual report is published in the Housing Matters magazine each year in December. The introduction of the new standard presents an opportunity to review the content and method of distribution of this annual report.
- 3.3 It is suggested that the matter is discussed with the Tenant Involvement Management Group at a future meeting, with a proposed approach presented to the Board in the new year.

4. Summary and recommendations

- 4.1 Overall we are confident that we will be in a position to comply with the new measures from April 2023, although we recognise that more work is required in a few areas, particularly around measures RP01 (Decent Homes Standard) and NM01 (Anti-social behaviour cases).
- 4.2 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.
- 4.3 It is recommended that Members approve an investigation of the structure and distribution of the Annual Report in partnership with the Tenant Involvement Management Group with a view to providing a proposed approach at a future HRB meeting.

Financial implications:

No direct financial implications raised. As previously report an existing budget of £5,000 exists to cover costs.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment. (GSalter 29/09/2022)

Housing Service

Quarterly Performance Indicator Report

Quarter 1 2022/23 Financial Year

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Background Information

Performance against 2021/22 quarter has been included to provide some context to the statistics.

	Performance is worse than 2021/22 quarter figure by over 5%
	Performance is within 5% of 2021/22 quarter figure
	Performance is better than 2021/22 performance figure

0.0 Summary

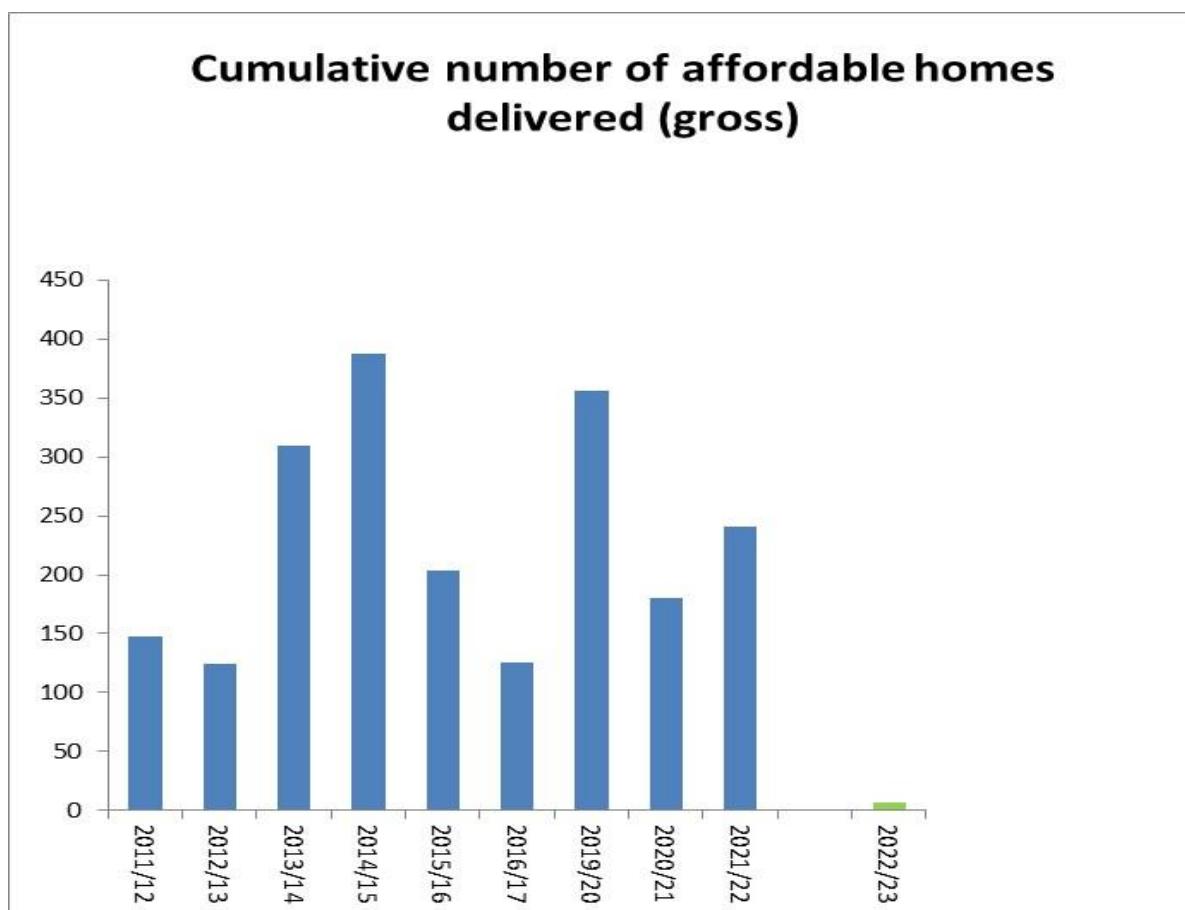
Description	2021/22	2022/23					Progress against 2021/22 quarter 1
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
Total supply of social rent housing and intermediate housing	241	7					7
Total New ASB Cases	272	6					6
No. of stage 1 complaints	119	35					35
All Housing Calls answered under 1 minute (%)	54.6	58.3					58.3

Description	2021/22	2022/23					Progress against 2021/22 quarter 1
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr - Dec	Apr- Mar	Cumulative Total	
% of rent due collected from current & former tenants (property (incl garage) is occupied & not including all arrears brought forward & prepayments) - Year to date	99.5%	94.1%					
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	81.7%	78%					

1.0 Affordable Housing Completions

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23				2022/23	Progress against 2021/22 quarter 1
	Cumulative Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA)	230	7				7	7
EDDC Acquisitions	11	0				0	0

Source: SPAR.net



2.0 Anti-social behaviour

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23				2022/23	Progress against 2021/22 quarter 1
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	
No. of new ASB cases							
Alcohol related (H)	1					0	
Child behaviour*	3					0	
Communal Fire*	2					0	
Communal Garden*	14					0	
Communal Internal*	3					0	
Communal Open Space*	12					0	
Condition of Garden*	22					0	
Condition of Property*	54	2				2	
Criminal Behaviour (O)	17					0	
Dangerous Animal	0	1				1	
Domestic Abuse (I)	4					0	
Drugs, substance misuse, dealing (G)	17					0	
Garden Nuisance (L)	15	1				1	
Harrassment*	4					0	
Hate Related (C)	1					0	
Illegal Occupation, Squatter*	7					0	
Litter, Rubbish, Fly Tipping (K)	8					0	
Misuse of Communal Areas (M)	0					0	
Noise (A)	38	2				2	
Nuisance from Vehicles (F)	0					0	
Parking Dispute*	7					0	
Pets & Animal Nuisance (E)	10					0	
Physical Violence (J)	7					0	
Prostitution, Sex Acts (N)	1					0	
Untaxed Vehicle*	0					0	
Vandalism & Damage to Property (D)	4					0	
Vehicle Nusiance*	4					0	
Verbal Abuse (B)	17					0	
Total New ASB Cases	272	6	0	0	0	6	

Source:OpenHousing

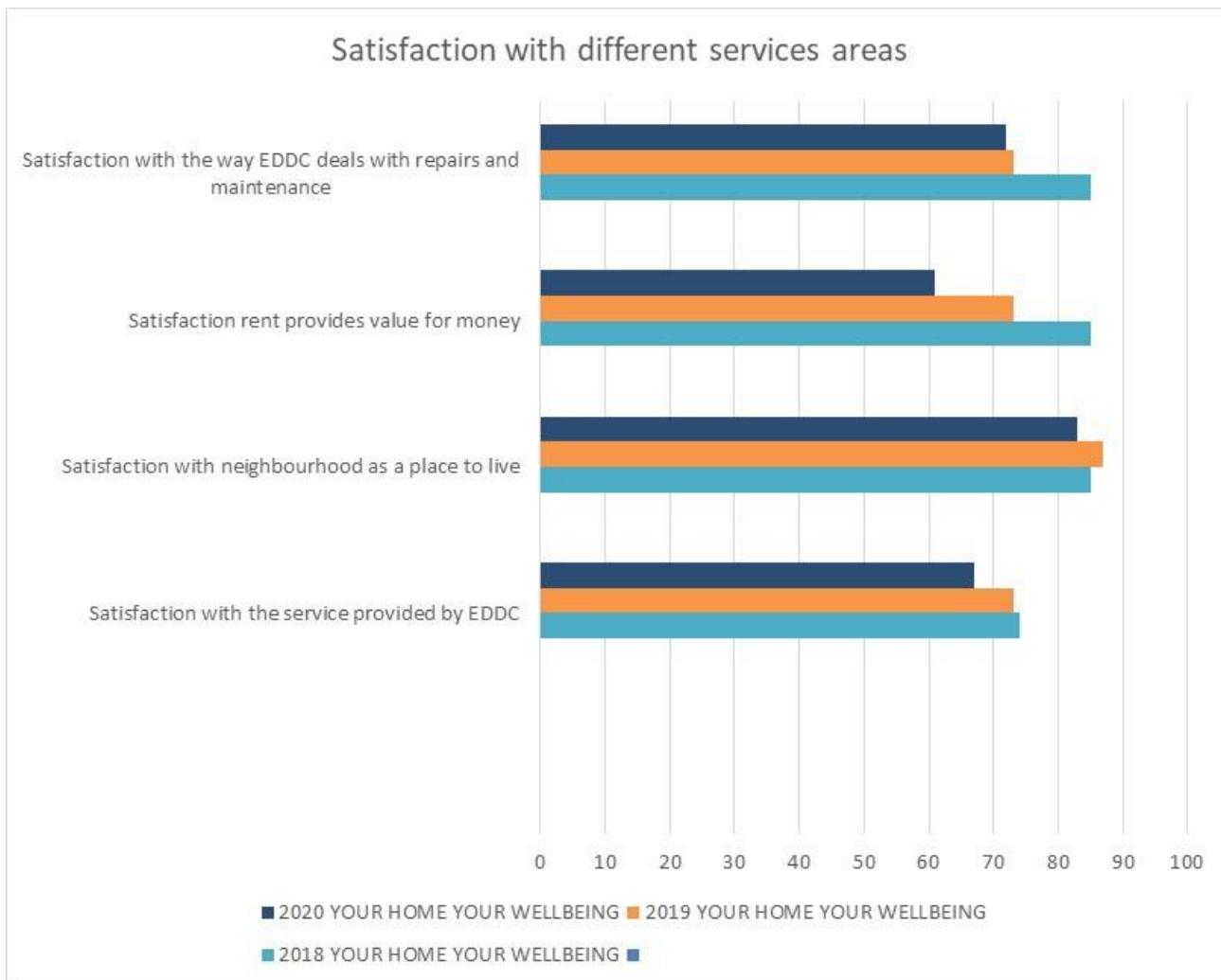
3.0 Complaints

Description	2021/22	2022/23				2022/23	Progress against 2021/2 quarter 1
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
No. of stage 1 complaints	119	35				35	35
Allocations complaints	6	5				5	
ASB complaints	9	2				2	
Estate services complaints	7	5				5	
Tenancy management complaints	2						
Rents and service charges complaints	1	1				1	
Repairs and maintenance complaints	84	17				17	
Staff & customer service complaints	1						
Other complaints	9	5				5	
Average time in calendar days to issue full response to all Stage 1 complaints	25.2	30.41				30.4	30.4

* – This figures includes those complaints that are still open but may change if the complaints are downgraded to a service request

4.0 Customer Satisfaction

Description	2018 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2019 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2020 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING
Satisfaction with the service provided by EDDC	74	73	67
Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	85	87	83
Satisfaction rent provides value for money	85	73	61
Satisfaction with the way EDDC deals with repairs and maintenance	85	73	72



Source: STATUS and STAR surveys and Your Home, Your Wellbeing Survey (2018,19,20). NB: The STAR results are based on valid responses only, STATUS on non-valid and valid responses – they are therefore not directly comparable.

5.0 EDDC Stock

Stock	2021/22	2022/23								
Housing Type	Cumulative Total	April- Jun		Jul-Sep		Oct - Dec		Jan - March		Cumulative Total
		GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	
Bedsit	42	25	17							42
Bungalow	977	195	782							977
Flat**	1178	644	534							1178
House***	1983	1961	14							1975
Maisonette	6	6								6
Room*	14	14								14
Total	4200	2845	1347							4192

Source: Open Housing

* 14 Morton Road and 102 St Andrews Road

** Includes 10 St Andrews Road flats

***Includes 4 PSL properties

6.0 Homelessness

Performance Indicator	2021/22	2022/23					
		Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	Cumulative Total
Approaches: Number of people who indicate that they are homeless or about to become homeless	1006	146					146
Acceptances: Number of people who EDDC have accepted as homeless	32	10					10
Succesful Prevention Outcomes	276	62					62
Successful Relief Outcomes	113	30					30
Verified rough sleeper count*	#	9					#
No of households living in temp acc at the end of the quarter*	#	49					#
No of households placed into temp acc in the quarter*	164	58					#

Source: Jigsaw

7.0 HomeSafeguard

New system – awaiting reports

Source:HomeSafeguard

8.0 Lettings

Performance Indicator	2022/23			
	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Total number of units vacant at the end of the period	140			
Number of voids started in period	73			
Number of voids completed in period	53			
The average re-let time in days General Needs for voids completed in period*	#			
The average re-let time in days Sheltered Housing for voids completed in period	#			
Total number of lets at end of quarter (incl mutual exchanges)	51			
*Void times are being reconciled by the teams				
** Void time is time from void start to void end (incl allocation process and any repairs etc) in quarter				

Source: OH

9.0 Number of Households on the East Devon Housing Waiting List

Performance Indicator	End of Year Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Apr-Mar
Band A - Emergency Housing Need	2	4			
Band B - High Housing Need	320	297			
Band C - Medium Housing Need	694	694			
Band D - Low Housing Need	1205	1271			
Band E - No Housing Need	2326	2433			
Total	4547	4699			

Source: Devon Home Choice

10 Rental

Performance Indicators	2021/22	2022/23			
	Apr-Mar	Apr-Jul	Apr-Sep	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar
Debit less voids	£18,919,135.00	£4,295,813.13			
Voids	£629,648.00	£196,522.13			
Adjustments	£87,092.04	£26,819.08			
Court Fees	£2,032.50	£849.00			
Less write offs	£2,127.45	£5,041.53			
Total to collect	£19,548,783.00	£4,492,335.26			
Arrears Cfwd	£340,097.00	£366,881			
Housing Benefit	£7,252,867.97	£1,654,901.99			
Income	£11,784,522.14	£2,573,497.64			
Prepaid B/Fwd	£363,362.20	£470,567.87			
Prepaid C/Fwd	£640,157.70	£380,051.25			
Total credit (minus adjustments)	£18,950,298.07	£4,201,580.55			
% Rent Collected (without arrears)	100.2%	94.1			
% Rent Collected (with arrears)	95.3	87			
Total number of evictions due to rent arrears year to date	2	0			
Number of tenancies at the start of the period	4131	4108			
Number of tenancies at the end of the period	4108	4089			

As at 30th May 2022, of the arrears £142,791.27 is from tenants on UC compared with in 2021 when it was £58,430.94. This is an increase of **£84,360.33**. Since May 2021 there has been increase of 77 UC claimants.

Month	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Apr	519	936	1109
May	531	953	1030
June	555	967	
July	543	975	
Aug	514	1000	
Sept	514	1017	
Oct	859	995	
Nov	892	1014	
Dec	863	1019	
Jan	887	1030	
Feb	906	1035	
March	927	1041	

Source: OH, Rental Team *Please note collection rates may differ depending on when date data is extracted.

12 Repairs

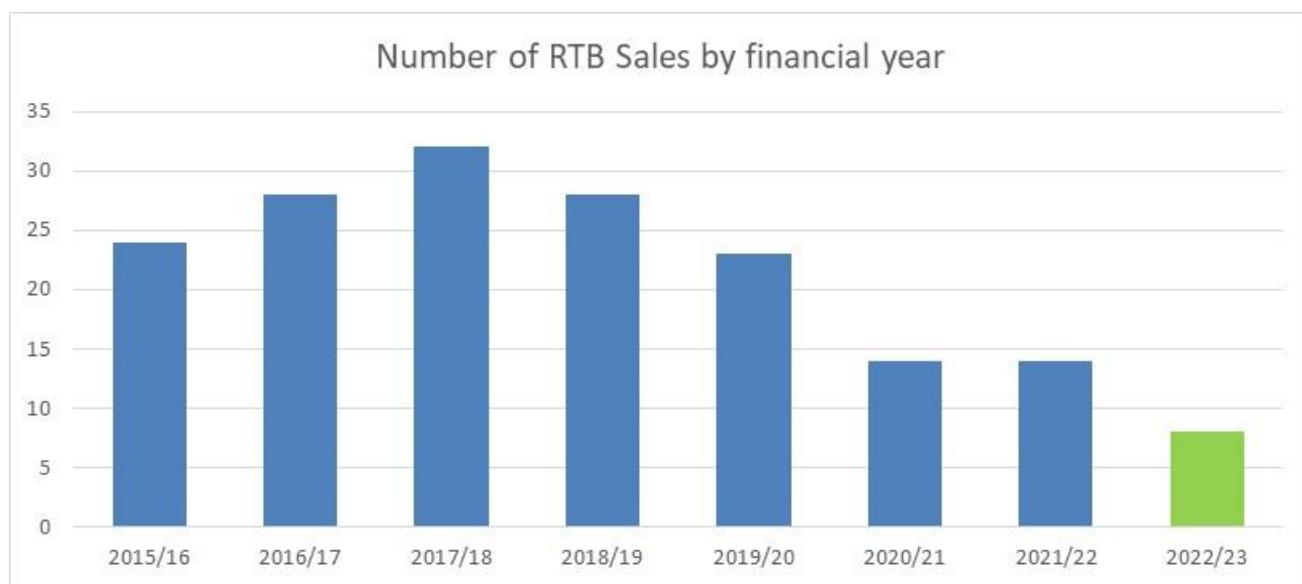
Performance Indicator	Cumulative Total 2021/22	2022/23					Progress against 2021/22 quarter 1
		Apr-Jun PP	Jul-Sep PP	Oct-Dec PP	Jan-Mar PP	Cumulative PP	
		#	#	#	#	#	
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date	2385	472				472	#
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	2338	465				465	#
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target time - Year to date	98.1%	99.0%				99.0%	Green
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date	10657	2643				2643	#
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	8705	2061				2061	#
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	81.7%	78.0%				78.0%	Red
The percentage of properties, requiring a landlord gas safety record, that have a valid landlord gas safety record	100.0%	100.0%	100.00%	100%	100%	100.0%	Green

Source: Open Housing

*Jobs include OOHours, PPEXCL, HANDPERS, PPP & NONPPP

13 Right To Buy

Performance Indicators	2021/22	2021/22				2022/23
	Cumulative	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Number of completed RTB sales	12	8				8



Source: Open Housing



7 April 2022

Dear Chief Executive

Regulatory context for government announcement on draft legislative clauses

The Government has recently published some of the [draft clauses](#) that it is expecting to include in legislation to implement the Social Housing White Paper. I am writing to underline the importance of the [forthcoming changes](#) and to share some of the regulatory context around them. I would be grateful if you could share this letter with your Boards or councillors.

The world has changed significantly since there was last major legislation on social housing. We welcome the opportunity that legislation will present to update the current statute and to make some important changes.

Across the country the pandemic has underlined the importance of home for everyone. This has particular resonance for our sector as collectively, social housing providers are the custodians of 4.4 million homes up and down the country. Having a safe, secure, and decent home improves lives and is the foundation for better outcomes in education, employment and healthcare. Social housing is about ensuring access to a good home.

Over recent years, there has, rightly, been a significantly increased focus on building safety. And when we talk with tenants, they tell us that getting repairs services right and fixing problems that tenants identify is also of fundamental importance to them. The day-to-day services you provide are the core of the landlord function and getting that right requires a real understanding of how things are working for your tenants, taking into account their diverse needs.

There have been recent examples which have rightly drawn attention to some tenants having been let down by their landlords. In these cases, individual tenants or groups of tenants have been waiting too long for issues they raise to be resolved, and as a result people have been living in poor quality homes. It is vitally important that your tenants know how to report repairs, have a range of ways to access your services, and that they have confidence that when they do so, you will take appropriate and effective action. Without that confidence, people are more likely to feel the need to circumvent existing systems, which can be inefficient for everyone involved.

It is the job of landlords to get this right.

Proactive consumer regulation is part of the solution. It will help drive up standards and tackle poor performance. We set out our initial thinking about how we will put in place changes to consumer regulation in our publication [Reshaping consumer regulation: our principles and approach](#) and we welcome the publication of draft clauses now.

The address for service of any legal documents on RSH is:
Level 1A, City Tower, Piccadilly Plaza,
Manchester M1 4BT



Where change is needed, it requires a culture change within the relevant registered providers. The quality and safety of the homes you provide, your ability to maintain them, and the quality of your services to tenants are vitally important. Where these are not as they should be, you should act now; before we proactively assess whether you meet the new consumer standards. Leadership and good governance from Boards, councillors and management teams are the key to getting this right. Boards and councillors should be challenging management teams now about whether homes and services need improving and whether tenants are able to bring problems to their attention effectively.

Understanding whether [standards](#) are being met needs to be informed by effective communication and engagement with tenants. Boards, councillors and management teams should be considering what insight they might be missing and find ways of filling information gaps.

We recognise that the current economic realities increase the challenge and complexity of the situation, and that responding appropriately will not always be straightforward. But registered providers need to adapt to the world as it is now. This means improving the quality of your service where necessary and being clear, particularly with tenants, about your priorities and any trade-offs you need to make.

In addition to changes outside the sector, the types of organisations that provide social housing have also changed and we have seen new business models for social housing enter the market. This has included a growth in for-profit providers, both in terms of numbers of registered providers and the number of homes they provide, as well as rapid growth of lease-based models of supported housing.

We set the same consumer standards for all providers, and that will remain the case when we introduce revised consumer standards following legislation. We expect all registered providers to comply with the standards, including the economic standards for private registered providers, and to be able to provide assurance that they do so, regardless of their business model – providers cannot contract out their responsibility for meeting the standards.

However, we need to have the right tools in place to continue to maintain confidence in a changing sector. New forms of provider mean that our powers need updating to continue to regulate effectively. This is why, alongside the draft clauses on consumer regulation, the Government has also published draft provisions relating to economic regulation. These draft provisions are intended to refine the existing economic regulation framework, so that we are able to continue to play our part in ensuring social housing providers are well governed and financially viable. This in turn, will better protect tenants and public money, as well as helping to enable new supply.

I look forward to the upcoming introduction of legislation, and to working with you, and with tenants and other stakeholders, to shape the future proactive consumer regulation framework over the coming months.

Yours sincerely



Fiona MacGregor
Chief Executive, Regulator of Social Housing