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Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group on 16th July 2024

Agenda Item 8: Stock Condition Survey

Classification:	This report is Public
Report By:	Assistant Director of Housing Management & Enforcement

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 received Royal Assent in July 2023, and has introduced significant changes to the Social Housing Sector. It was introduced to improve the quality of social housing for tenants by tightening the regulations imposed on the social housing sector.

The Act has given increased powers to the Regulator of Social Housing to carry out inspections of Local Authority Registered Housing Providers, at least every five years to ensure they are meeting the consumer standards. The Regulator also has the power to issue unlimited fines to those that fall below the prescribed standard; fines of which, are uninsurable.

The Regulator for Social Housing has updated the Consumer Standards with effect from 1st April 2024. The Safety and Quality Standard requires Registered Providers know the condition of their stock. We must have an accurate record at an individual property level of the condition of homes. In addition, this information must be kept up to date and it is suggested that there be a minimum five-year rolling programme of stock condition surveys.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 also introduced “Awaab’s Law”. This will introduce two key requirements, the implementation of a specific timeframe and procedures for addressing hazards in the home and an implied term with the social housing tenancy agreements that Registered Providers comply with those requirements. It is proposed that Awaab’s Law is applied to all the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and not just damp and mould. It is further imperative that the Council has accurate data regarding its housing stock, whether there are any hazards under the HHSRS and the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings.

The last Council stock Condition survey was carried out in 2014 and covered approximately 70% of internal surveys and 100% of external surveys being completed. Where access was not granted, assumptions were made using similar

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local properties. Due to its age, the stock condition database has become unreliable and in need of refresh.

In June 2024, the Executive and Full Council agreed a budget to undertake a 100% stock condition survey. It is proposed the survey would capture the following information:

1. Physical Stock Control Survey to facilitate a 30-year investment programme.
2. Energy performance Certificates (EPCs) to be completed for all properties.
3. HHSRS assessment with emphasis on damp and mould assessment.
4. Tenant validation.
5. Decent Homes Standard assessment which can inform an assessment of stock viability.
6. Safeguarding issues (vulnerability of tenants, hoarding issues, untidy properties).
7. Photographs and floor plans to be provided.

At the end of the survey programme, together with the full dataset and photographs, the service provider will provide a report setting out the key information from the surveys and an updated 30-year outline asset investment. The intention would also be to receive the data in a format compatible with the Council's Housing Management System

The survey will mean the Council will have access to every property, providing valuable opportunity to capture up to date and accurate data about tenants and their households in terms of any vulnerabilities that the Council needs to be aware of and respond to.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members of the group note the Councils intention to commence a 100% Stock Condition Survey and provide comments on the communication needed to tenants explaining the purpose of the survey, to reach the 100% target.

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing
Ambition: Housing
Priority: Maintaining and improving property and housing management standards and ensuring that standards and living conditions in the district contribute towards better health outcomes for all

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Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing

Target HOU4: Work towards compliance with the Social Housing Consumer Standards, ensuring tenants' voice is key when developing new council housing policies, procedures, and improvements.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

**Appendix
No**

Title

Appendix No	Title