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Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Housing Liaison Board on 22nd April 2025

Agenda Item 3: Regulator of Social Housing - Improvement Plan

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

This report summarises the progress made under the Councils Improvement Plan following the C2 Grading by the Regulator Social Housing.

Background

The Regulator for Consumer Standards revised Consumer Standards were effective from 1st April 2024, and were designed to protect tenants and to ensure they receive high quality services.

The Social Housing Regulation Act, which also came into effect from 1 April 2024, gave the Regulator Social Housing enhanced powers to inspect social landlords to ensure that they comply with the consumer standards.

The council was one of the first to be inspected under the new inspection regime, received a C2 Grading. C1 being the highest achievable level with C4 the lowest.

The inspection, which took place in May 2024, considered how well the authority was delivering the outcomes of the Consumer Standards. As well as observing a Customer Services Scrutiny Meeting, Tenant Participation Development and Review Group and internal councillor and officer meetings, the Regulators met with tenants, officers and elected members. They also reviewed a wide range of documents.

The C2 grade recognises the council has provided assurance and met the consumer standards in many areas, but identifies some areas where improvement is needed.

The Regulator recognised the council understands where it needs to make improvements and was assured work is already underway to improve these areas, including the full stock condition survey which is about to commence.

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Improvement Plan

Following the C2 Grading we have devised a comprehensive Improvement Plan to show how we will drive improvement and demonstrate to the Regulator that weaknesses have been addressed so that outcomes for our tenants are improved.

The key areas of focus identified by the regulator and which we will continue to update the HLB members off are;

- Completing the full Stock Condition Survey and using this data to meet the requirements of the Decent Homes Standards. The results will show where we need to make improvements to our housing stock and will drive future capital spend.
- Delivering fair and equitable outcomes to tenants – We need to recognise and understand the individual and whole tenant base. We then need to use this data to shape the services we provide to benefit all our tenants. By understanding our individual and whole tenant base we can make sure the services provided are what our tenants need and ensure services are accessible.
- Complaint handling - We need to ensure the complaint process is accessible assess the outcome of complaints in more depth, recognise lessons learned, and where we have made changes to process and procedure, ensure these are explained to tenants.
- Performance - It is important that tenants can hold us to account and to do that they need to know how we are performing. Therefore, we need to publish information in an accessible way and in several different places. We will be working with the Tenant Groups to establish how tenants want to receive this information.

We have met the Regulators on three occasions since our inspection and will be meeting with them again on 22nd April 2025.

Appendix 1 has a summary of progress to date on these 4 key areas. Since the last update in January 2025, the Stock Condition Survey has been completed and we have agreed various performance pro formas with Tenants.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members of the Board note the judgement in appendix 1 and confirm agreement to the proposed Improvements.

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

Ambition: Customers

Priorities:

- *Continuous improvement to service delivery through innovation, modernisation and listening to customers*
- *Improving the customer experience and removing barriers to accessing information and services*
- *Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting and involving vulnerable and disadvantaged people*

Ambition: Housing

Priority:

- *Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and being a decent landlord*

Target HOU04: 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
1.	Regulator Social Housing Bolsover District Council Improvement Plan