



City of Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 19.10.23

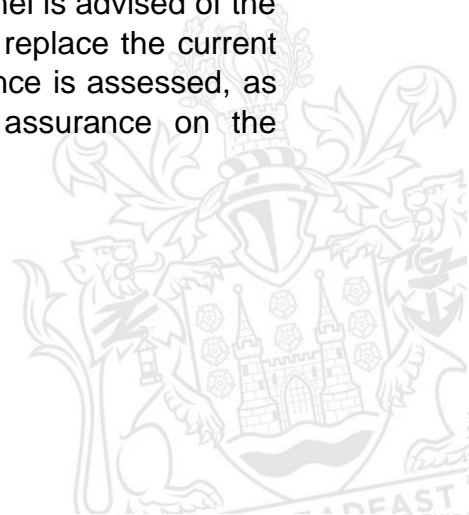
**To: The Chair and Members of the
Regeneration & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

**Report Title: THE NEW REGULATORY REGIME FOR SOCIAL HOUSING AND
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL**

Relevant Member(s)	Cabinet	Wards Affected	Key Decision?
Cllr G Jones		All	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In April 2024 a new regulatory regime for social housing comes into force, based on the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The new regime includes periodic inspections of all social landlords undertaken by the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH). The inspection will focus on the ways in which the council delivers its services in accordance with prescribed Consumer Standards. As such CDC will need to demonstrate that the services delivered by itself and St Leger Homes on behalf of CDC meet the consumer standards and that CDC has sufficient assurance and oversight of SLHD's performance to ascertain that the standards are being met.
2. The Government is currently consulting on proposed new Consumer Standards which cover several aspects of housing service delivery. Part of the Safety and Quality Standard is the provision of adaptations to Council housing tenants. This service, which is provided by the Council, will also be included in an inspection.
3. The Government has also defined new Tenant Satisfaction Measures which will form part of the appraisal process for landlord performance.
4. It is important that the Regeneration & Housing Scrutiny Panel is advised of the new regulatory requirements, which in some instances will replace the current Key Performance Indicators against which SLHD performance is assessed, as the Panel plays a role in providing the Council with assurance on the performance of its landlord



EXEMPT REPORT

5. This is not an exempt report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. That the Panel notes the information provided about the new regulatory regime for social housing.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

7. The Council has just under 20,000 affordable rented homes across the borough, offering safe, good quality places to live for many households. The external inspection of the performance of the Council and SLHD against the new standards will help to ensure that tenants receive good quality services from their landlord.

BACKGROUND

8. In April 2024 a new regulatory regime for social housing comes into force, based on the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. The Council is a registered provider of social rented homes which are managed on its behalf by the arms length management organisation St Leger Homes Doncaster (SLHD), which is wholly owned by the Council. The Regulator of Social Housing's (RoSH) inspection will consider not only the performance of the Council and SLHD as a provider of landlord services, but also the arrangements the Council has in place to assure itself of performance in service delivery and meeting statutory requirements.
9. The new regulatory regime will see all registered housing providers inspected by the Regulator for Social Housing (RoSH) every four years. It is not known at present when the first inspection of the Council and SLHD will take place.
10. The Government is currently consulting on proposed new Consumer Standards which cover aspects of housing service delivery. These set standards for the Safety and Quality of homes, Transparency, Influence and Accountability to tenants, Neighbourhood and Community and Tenancy. Part of the Safety and Quality Standard is the provision of adaptations to Council housing tenants. This service, which is provided by the Council, will also be included in an inspection. Further information about each of these standards will be provided in a presentation for Panel on 19 October.
11. The Government has also defined new Tenant Satisfaction Measures which will form part of the appraisal process for landlord performance. The list of new TSMs will be included in the presentation to Panel. The TSMs are already in operation and feedback has begun to be gathered against them.
12. Work is underway by the Council and SLHD to ensure that we are regulation-ready by April 2024. To assist in this preparation expert assistance has been

commissioned from Savills, who will assess current service and assurance arrangements and provide us with critical friend feedback our position against the Consumer Standards.

- The Government is currently consulting on a proposed fee regime for the new regulatory regime including the periodic inspections. The proposed costs for the Council would be circa £140-160k p.a., which would have to be met from the Housing Revenue Account.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED




- Brief the Regeneration & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel on the new social housing regulatory regime – the new regime is mandatory for all registered housing providers, and it is therefore essential that the Panel is briefed about its requirements. This is the preferred option.


REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

- To ensure that the Panel is briefed on the new regulatory requirements and can over time fulfil its role in the assurance processes for housing service delivery.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

16.

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change	✓			
Comments: Several elements of the proposed Consumer Standards are relevant to ensuring that Council housing is maintained in good condition and is energy efficient				
 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work				✓
Comments:				
 Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs				✓

Comments:				
 Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all	✓			
Comments: Good quality homes and effective two-way communication with tenants helps to ensure good wellbeing for all households renting homes from the Council				
 Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs	✓			
Comments: The Consumer Standards set out expectations for landlords to work in co-operation with other local partners in neighbourhoods, including improving neighbourhood safety				
 Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough	✓			
Comments: A secure, good quality affordable home is one of the foundations of a child and family friendly borough				
 Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future				✓
Comments:				
 Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities				✓
Comments:				
Fair & Inclusive	✓			

Comments: The requirements in the new Consumer Standards around transparency, influence and accountability emphasise the importance of listening to and learning from all tenants' experiences of living in their homes and neighbourhoods. This should help to ensure that all voices and needs are acknowledged and responded to

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. No legal implications have been sought for this report. Further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues raised by the Panel.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. No finance implications have been sought for this report. Further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues raised by the Panel.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

19. No human resources implications have been sought for this report. Further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues raised by the Panel.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

20. No technology implications have been sought for this report. Further specific advice can be provided in relation to any issues raised by the Panel.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

21. There is a potential risk that failure to brief the Regeneration & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel adequately on the new regulatory environment means that the delivery of the housing services covered are not scrutinised appropriately as part of the Council's over-arching performance assurance framework. This briefing, and further briefings as appropriate, is designed to help ensure that this risk is mitigated.
22. There is also a risk that the Council and SLHD fail to prepare sufficiently for the new regulatory regime. This report is part of a preparation process which includes a range of work being undertaken by Council and SLHD officers, and expert advice being provided by Savills over the next 3-4 months.

CONSULTATION

23. The Chief Executive of SLHD has been consulted on the content of this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

24. None

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- TSM - Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- SLHD – St Leger Housing Doncaster
- RoSH - Regulator of Social Housing

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