

Waverley Borough Council

Report to: Landlord Services Advisory Board

Date: 28 September 2023

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Community Wellbeing

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Report Status: Open ~~/Confidential/~~ ~~Part Confidential~~

Regulator of Social Housing Consultation on Proposed Consumer Standards

1. Executive Summary

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act received Royal Assent, on 20 July 2023. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) is now consulting on a set of four proposed consumer standards and a Code of Practice. The act has strengthened the RSH powers to proactively regulate and inspect social landlords.

The RSH are seeking opinions on whether:

- the consumer standards proposed would set the right expectations for landlords, and if
- the Code of Practice proposed gives helpful examples of how to meet the standards.

The Housing Service is seeking the Boards views and comments to inform Waverley's consultation response.

2 Recommendation to LSAB:

That the Board considers the RSH proposals and comments on the:

- proposed Safety and Quality Standard
- proposed Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- proposed Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- proposed Tenancy Standard, and
- proposed Code of Practice

3 Reason(s) for Recommendation:

To ensure the Board's comments are included in Waverley's consultation response.

4 Exemption from publication

No

5 Purpose of Report

To share the RSH proposals and seek Boards views. The Board has a role to ensure the Council meet the regulatory standards when implemented.

6 Strategic Priorities

The report supports the Council's Corporate commitment to promote *"Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups"* and aim to *"be the best council landlord in the South East and to be acknowledged so by our tenants."*

7 Background

7.1 The RSH have been given new powers to help improve the quality of housing and services for social housing tenants in a way that lasts. To help make this happen, the standards set expectations that social housing landlords have to meet.

7.2 The Code of Practice gives examples of the sorts of things landlords should think about to make sure they meet the standards. These standards are building on and replacing five existing consumer standards.

7.3 The RSH want to know what people think about the proposed consumer standards and Code of Practice. The proposed standards were circulated to the Board early August to give the opportunity to review the documents, over the summer.

7.4 The Board meeting is an opportunity to discuss and comment on the following standards:

- i Proposed Safety and Quality Standard including stock quality, decency, health and safety, repairs and maintenance and adaptations.
- ii Proposed Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard including fairness and respect, diverse needs, engagement with tenants, information about landlord services, performance information and complaints.
- iii Neighbourhood and Community Standard including maintenance of share spaces, local cooperation, safer neighbourhoods and domestic abuse.

iv Proposed Tenancy Standard including allocations and letting, tenancy sustainment and evictions, tenure and mutual exchange.

v Proposed code of practice

8 Consultations

With Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing, Tenants Panel, Housing Managers and LSAB.

9 Key Risks

9.1 Failure to input consultation will mean Council unable to raise any concerns with regulatory regime.

9.2 Failure to raise awareness of the new regulatory regime and requirement on social landlords to provide assurance that standards met.

Financial Implications

No current implications, actions to meet and evidence requirements to be considered with 2024/25 budget setting

Legal Implications

No current implications

Human Resource Implications

No current implications

Equality and Diversity Implications

No current implications

Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

No current implications

Summary of Options

- 15.1 no consultation response
- 15.2 rely on officer comments for consultation response
- 15.3 seek LSAB views to provide comprehensive consultation response

Conclusion

To provide a comprehensive consultation response and raise awareness of future standards the LSAB are asked to review standards and make comments on if they agree or disagree with proposals. Officers will arrange feedback to RSH by 17 October 2023.

Background Papers

n/a

Appendices

- 18.1 Annexe One [Consumer Standards Consultation](#)
- 18.2 [Proposed Code of Practice](#)

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	29/08/23 CK

Legal / Governance	
HR	n/a
Equalities	n/a
Lead Councillor	19/08/2023
CMB	n/a
Executive Briefing/Liaison	n/a
Committee Services	