

**North East Derbyshire District Council**

**Services Scrutiny**

**19 November 2024**

**Regulator of Social Housing Inspection Outcome**

**Report of the Director of Finance and Resources (S151 Officer)**

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Jayne Dethick, Director of Finance and Resources (S151 Officer)

Contact Officer: Jayne Dethick

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**PURPOSE / SUMMARY**

To provide an update on the recent inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Services Scrutiny Committee note the report

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**IMPLICATIONS**

**Finance and Risk:** Yes  No

**Details:**

There are no financial implications arising from this report

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

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**Legal (including Data Protection):** Yes  No

**Details:**

There are no legal implications arising from this report

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

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**Staffing:** Yes  No

**Details:**

There are no staffing matters arising from this report

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**DECISION INFORMATION**

<b>Decision Information</b>	
<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>NEDDC:</b> <b>Revenue - £125,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £310,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	Click here to enter text.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) details:</b>	
<p><b>Stage 1 screening undertaken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed EIA stage 1 to be appended if not required to do a stage 2</li> </ul>	Yes, appended
<p><b>Stage 2 full assessment undertaken</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed EIA stage 2 needs to be appended to the report</li> </ul>	No, not applicable.
<p><b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Cabinet</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SMT</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Yes  Details:

<b>Links to Council Plan priorities;</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A great place to live well</b></li> <li>Protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.</li> <li>Ensure residents have safe and good quality homes.</li> <li>Increase the number of homes for rent in the district.</li> <li>Reduce the environmental impact of housing in the district</li> </ul>

## REPORT DETAILS

### 1. Consumer Standards

1.1 In April 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) launched a new, proactive consumer regulation regime, assessing landlords more routinely for compliance. The new inspection regime focuses on delivery of outcomes in line with the **Consumer Standards**.

1.2 In summary, the four proposed Consumer Standards are:

#### **1. *The Safety and Quality Standard***

Landlords must provide their tenants with safe, good quality homes and effective services. The Standard has five main requirements – quality, decency, health and safety, repairs, and adaptations.

#### **2. *The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard***

To improve tenant-landlord relationships, tenants need to get relevant information, be listened to, and have their views acted upon. The Standard has seven main requirements – fairness and respect, diverse needs, engagement, information about services, performance, complaints, and self-referral.

#### **3. *The Neighbourhood and Community Standard***

Part of a landlord's role is to work with others to help with the upkeep and safety of neighbourhoods and communities. The Standard has four main requirements – maintenance of shared spaces, local cooperation, domestic abuse and safer neighbourhoods.

#### **4. *The Tenancy Standard***

Landlords are required to allocate and let homes fairly and set expectations for how tenancies are managed and ended. The Standard has four main requirements – allocations and lettings, tenure, tenancy sustainment and evictions, and mutual exchange.

1.3 Registered Providers are required to comply with the Standards, and this applies both where the service is delivered directly or through another organisation. This means that for Councils with external delivery partners such as us, we remain responsible for complying with the Standards and therefore need assurance that they are being met.

1.4 Having a delivery partner (Rykneld Homes in our case) provides an additional layer of governance to in house delivery due to the addition of an external board structure but it does make the relationship between the two organisations critical to the success. This is something that we have both worked hard to develop and embed over last two years and we believe that the relationship between the two organisations is strong, collaborative, inclusive and transparent.

## 2. RSH Inspection Gradings

2.1 The grading system for local authorities focuses solely on consumer standards, registered providers are also graded on governance and viability.

The grading system for local authority housing providers is:

Grade	Description
C1	Overall, the landlord is delivering the consumer standards outcomes. The landlord has shown that it identifies when issues occur and puts plans in place to remedy them and help prevent them happening again.
C2	There are some weaknesses in how the provider is delivering against the consumer standards outcomes and some improvement is needed.
C3	There are serious failings in how the provider is delivering against the consumer standards outcomes and significant improvement is needed.
C4	There are very serious failings in how the provider is delivering against the consumer standards outcomes. The provider must make fundamental changes to that improved outcomes are delivered.

## 3.The Inspection Process

3.1 At the end of March, the RSH contacted us to advise that we would be inspected in quarter 1 of 2024. A context document was sent followed by a data request for evidence to demonstrate how we were meeting the consumer standards. Over the next four weeks this data was collated and submitted to the RSH ahead of their site visit which was planned for early May. As our housing delivery partner, Rykneld Homes (RHL) played a key role in collating the evidence requested by the RSH and throughout the whole inspection process.

3.2 The RSH inspectors were on site for 3 days in May. During this time, they observed RHL's tenant scrutiny meetings to see how residents' voices are heard, attended a board meeting and a joint involved tenants conference, reviewed documentation and spoke with officers and elected members at both the council and RHL.

3.3 Following the site visit a period of quality assurance took place before the RSH met with us to advise of the outcome.

## 4. Outcome

- 4.1 We were granted a C2 grade after the RSH considered all four of the consumer standards. The judgment highlighted several areas of good practice as well as a couple of improvement areas including stock condition surveys and categorising and learning from complaints.
- 4.2 Standards require landlords to have an accurate record of the condition of every home that is based on property checks, set clear timelines for repairs and maintenance, and give tenants opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord.
- 4.3 In addition, landlords must provide tenants with information about their rights and how to make complaints. They must publish new tenant satisfaction measures to make it clear how residents feel their landlord is performing.
- 4.4 The judgement document states that we:
- have appropriate systems in place to manage its health and safety responsibilities,
  - are managing the risks associated with damp and mould,
  - offer tenancies which are compatible with the needs of individual households and sustainability of the community,
  - adopt a respectful approach to tenants and understands their diverse needs,
  - deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants,
  - offer a range of meaningful opportunities for tenants to hold it to account,
  - regularly provide a range of relevant and accessible information to tenants
  - handle complaints effectively and promptly,
  - provide effective oversight of anti-social behaviour cases and hate incidents and takes prompt and appropriate action in partnership with relevant organisations.
- 4.5 The outcomes of the recent inspection demonstrate our shared commitment to make sure our housing stock is safe and in good condition for our residents. It reflects the determination and dedication of our teams to ensure all our tenants live in safe decent homes and feel heard and supported.

## 5. Next Steps

- 5.1 We are working in partnership with RHL and the RSH to deliver the improvements identified in the judgement. RHL had already started working on many of these prior to the inspection and our shared aim is to undertake the required changes to achieve a reassessment upgrade to C1, the highest grade awarded, in the next 18 months.

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Regulatory Judgement for North East Derbyshire

**Background Papers** (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet, you must provide copies of the background papers)

**None**