

To: Cabinet

Date: 12 June 2024

Report/Comments of: Scrutiny Committee

Title: Scrutiny feedback to Cabinet – Regulatory Change in Housing

SUMMARY OF REPORT CONSIDERED	
Report Title:	Regulatory Change in Housing
Purpose/Description of Report:	Provide an update on the continued work being undertaken to prepare Melton Borough Council for the introduction of the new regulatory regime and upcoming inspection.
Key Decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr M Brown, Scrutiny Committee Chairman
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Cllr P Allnatt, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Landlord Services

1. Introduction and Overview

The Scrutiny Committee met on 25 April 2024 to consider a report on regulatory change in housing. As a part of this report a presentation was also received and Members considered the outcome of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023/24.

2. Summary of Feedback/Recommendations for Cabinet Consideration

- Officers were congratulated on the work they have done in this area.
- The query was raised as to whether the audit overlaps could be reduced, however in response it was explained that one Officer is responsible for Corporate Health and Safety and another Officer is responsible for Housing Health and Safety and that the audits for both roles do cover different elements. In addition to this there is Internal Audit who are responsible for carrying out a formal audit on the service and then there is External Audit who are independent of Council and

will conduct their own audits from time to time. Members were reassured that work was not being duplicated.

- Following a question about the new arrangements it was confirmed that the arrangements are focussed on the public/social sector and that there will be separate arrangements for private sector landlords.
- In response to a question about remuneration for tenants when they join the Landlord Assurance Board, Members were informed that the Council can't pay tenants a salary when they join the board but that training can be provided so that they can discharge their duties more effectively, and that expenses such as travel and child care can be reimbursed.
- In regard to the timetable for appointing to Landlord Assurance Board, it was noted that, whilst the first meeting was a few weeks prior to the meeting, Members were assured that tenants could be involved. Recruitment to the board would take between 2 to 3 weeks.
- When reviewing the responses and in particular the satisfaction about repairs, it was commented that the dissatisfaction isn't with the Council but with the contractor. However, it was explained that the Council are the landlord and therefore it is up to the Council to hold the contractor to account.
- A Member commented that statistics have to be handled with care and that the Council has to be mindful of those who aren't satisfied. In response, it was explained that the Council can benchmark against other landlords and compare how the Council is performing amongst similar sized organisations. The Council is able to do this as a result of it's membership of Housemark.
- The Committee agreed that from 2024/25, it would receive the Landlord Assurance Board's Annual Report.

Written by: Scrutiny Committee Chairman in consultation with Members of the Scrutiny Committee