

To: Cabinet

Date: 9 April 2025

Report/Comments of: Scrutiny Committee

Title: Scrutiny feedback to Cabinet – Regulatory compliance in housing

SUMMARY OF REPORT CONSIDERED	
Report Title:	Regulatory Compliance in Housing
Purpose/Description of Report:	The report provides an overview of the Council's current position in relation to regulatory compliance in its housing (landlord) services
Key Decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr M Brown, Scrutiny Committee Chairman
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Allnatt, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Landlord Services

1. Introduction and Overview

The Scrutiny Committee met on 20 March 2025 to consider a report on Melton Borough Council's regulatory compliance in housing.

The report also provides assurance of the progress made since the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) published its C2 Regulatory Judgement (following a programmed inspection) when assessing the Council against the Consumer Standards in 2024 as part of its proactive regulatory and inspection regime.

2. Summary of Feedback/Recommendations for Cabinet Consideration

- A Member commented that the tenant satisfaction rate of 63% is lower than expected, although it was noted that the national average is 68%. In addition, it was recognised that the service has been on a journey in relation and that improvements have been made.
- Concern was raised regarding the property that has not had an asbestos survey. In response it was noted that for certain checks, i.e. gas safety, the Council can get a court warrant to gain entry but for

asbestos it can't. It was noted that if the Council does gain access for checks, then it will be used as an opportunity to assess whether other checks can be carried out at the same time.

- A comment was raised as to whether it was worth completing asbestos surveys every five years because if it isn't disturbed then it isn't a problem. In response, it was explained the reason for testing every five years is to check on the condition and ensure that there isn't any damage.
- A Member queried the length of time it takes for repairs to be undertaken, in response it was clarified that the contractor has 28 days to complete the repair from when it is reported. It was also confirmed that that the cost to the Council of carrying out 10 repairs in one day is the same as carrying out 10 repairs across 10 days and therefore it is in the contractor's interest to carry out multiple repairs in the same call.
- When pushed, Officers clarified that the aim is to get every property to meet the decent homes standard by 2028. A query was then raised as to why it would take until 2028 to get 100% of the properties to a decent homes standard. It was clarified that that this is down to budgets and to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and resources throughout period.
- Following a query about the 100 homes not up to standard, assurance was given that there are a number of reasons why homes fall out of the decent homes standard including an aging kitchen. It is not the case that the homes are in a very bad state.
- The Committee were assured that when surveyors find hazards, the Council and its contractors would sort them out. The serious hazards are done more urgently and the less serious ones done when possible.
- A comment was raised about the tenant satisfaction survey and the participation rate. In response it was clarified that the aim is to have a sample size of 20% and that this year the target was exceeded. Although, it was noted that the Council will aim to engage with all tenants.
- Following a comment regarding benchmarking, Officers clarified that there is a lot of sharing with Councils across the country. Also, the Local Authority Inspection Outcomes shows that Melton Borough Council's stock is good and the housing service is performing well when compared with similar Councils.

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