

# Housing Service Plan 2024

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## Introduction and Strategic Context

At Melton Borough Council, we are committed to delivering **high quality council homes, supported by accountable and enabling landlord services**, a commitment firmly embedded in our [Corporate Strategy \(2024-2036\)](#) and building on the Council's focus on housing and landlord services since 2019.

Theme 2 of our Corporate Strategy refers specially to high quality homes and landlord services and makes a number of commitments over the next five years (2024-2029):

### Theme 2: High quality homes and landlord services

We wish to continue providing high quality services to our tenants, improving our engagement with and working together to reach positive outcomes.

Focus Area	Key actions
Housing quality and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure the Council is prepared for new housing regulations and achieves a positive outcome through inspection</li><li>• Deliver the HRA Business Plan</li><li>• Deliver the Housing Management Asset Plan to improve the condition of the Council homes</li><li>• Establish private rented sector capacity to support improved quality of homes and bringing empty properties into use</li><li>• Improve customer journey for housing repairs</li></ul>
Tenancy support and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure the Council is prepared for new housing regulations and achieves a positive outcome through inspection</li><li>• Develop and enhance the approach to tenant involvement, scrutiny and engagement.</li><li>• Complete review of housing support and implement revised arrangements that support independent living</li><li>• Stabilise and continue to improve income recovery arrangements</li></ul>

Our **Housing Service Plan** directly supports accountable delivery of these commitments and draws together the key things that will support the Council's continuous development as a landlord, ensuring that our approach is data led, is compliant with the regulatory requirements for the social housing sector and that tenants' voices and views shape what we do.

Supported by our service plan, we will ensure that we:

- **Know our stock.**
- **Know our tenants.**

## Service and Policy Context

There have been a number of **notable achievements and improvements** over the last two years that are directly supporting the council's continuous development and improvement as a landlord. Some of these are outlined below:

**HRA Business Plan 2022-2052:** Approved in July 2022, informed by externally assessed stock condition data, evidence and tenant views and setting a long-term plan for council homes. Continues to show a financially sustainable housing revenue account.

**Housing Asset Management Plan:** Initially approved in 2023 (covering the period 2023-2028) and last updated through a planned annual refresh in 2024 (now covering the period 2024-2029). This sets out the Council's delivery plans for investment and improvement in council homes and details a rolling five-year capital programme. Capital programme delivery is being supported by the successful procurement and delivery of a number of new contracts, which are monitored closely by the Housing Asset Management Team.

**Stock Condition Information:** As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, the Council has stock condition data covering 93% of its housing stock. The stock condition survey is carried out by external experts and includes a Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment for each property. Having undertaken a large-scale stock condition survey in 2022, the Council now operates an annual programme of review to ensure data remains up to date, with 20% homes scheduled to be surveyed per year. This is a strong position across the housing sector and is enabling confident asset management and investment planning and delivery.

**Decent Homes:** As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, the Council has a decent homes figure of 95.7% with this continuing to improve. The Council is on track to achieve 100% decent homes by 2028. We will consider any changes arising from the Government's plans to review the decent homes standard and will adjust our Asset Management Plan accordingly.

**Landlord Health and Safety:** The Council continues to demonstrate strong performance on landlord health and safety. Compliance performance monitoring and management arrangements are in place and show consistently high levels of health and safety compliance is being maintained. Performance is also reported to tenants through the annual report to tenants and information is included on the council's [website](#). External validation of the Council's management controls and compliance with landlord health and safety requirements is carried out through an annual Internal Audit Review.

**Affordable Housing Development Plan:** This plan, approved in 2022, created a framework to support the Council in its plans and decisions to acquire and develop new council homes. Since its approval, acquisition of 6 homes has taken place using Section 106 funding, Right to Buy receipts and funding from the Government's Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF). Further negotiations are underway.

**Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Framework:** This plan, approved in 2022, created a framework to support the Council in its plans to change and develop its approach to engaging with tenants, and to embed a strong ethos that tenant engagement is not just one person's job. From this, the Council has made a number of changes to change the way it communicates with tenants, and to enable tenants to have a stronger voice and opportunities to hold the council to account. The Council has also become and has maintained its membership of TPAS, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service. There is more information about tenant engagement on our [website](#) and in our most recent annual [report to Cabinet](#) (June 2023). This service plan sets out how we will now review and further evolve and strengthen our tenant engagement arrangements, supported by TPAS.

**Policies and Procedures:** A number of operational policies, procedures and management plans have been developed, approved and published to the Council's [website](#), creating greater clarity and visibility on how the council will do things and the procedures in place. Supporting a number of policies are operating procedures for staff to follow.

**Tenants' Corner:** is the new tenant focussed area of the Council's website, bringing relevant information and documents into one place and responding directly to feedback from tenants that it was sometimes hard to find the information tenants were looking for.

**ICT Investment and Improvement:** The Council took a decision to invest in and improve its housing management IT system in 2019 to provide a comprehensive modern and cross service solution. This has supported a range of improvements in how the Council receives and manages data and information, and capabilities to share relevant information with contractors. Further development of IT systems and connectivity between IT systems is included within this service plan.

**Income Recovery and Rent Arrears:** Having identified it as a key risk, we have strengthened our management of rent arrears and have increased staffing capacity in this area, whilst continuing to ensure a balance between income recovery and supporting tenants who are in financial hardship to develop financially affordable solutions. An action plan is in place and rent arrears performance is being closely monitored with regular oversight from senior managers and Cabinet members. Changes have also been made to the corporate performance dashboard to show both the rent collection performance and rent arrears as a percentage of the rent roll each quarter.

**Landlord Assurance Board:** Whilst the Council has well established mechanisms to monitor performance, risk and compliance, it is important to draw together the various strands of the landlord service that collectively demonstrate how the Council operates and performs as a landlord so that these can be considered together, enabling collective awareness of this key agenda, whilst also supporting continuous improvement. The Board has been developed to ensure collective awareness and visibility relating to regulatory assurance, financial resilience, risk management, performance and compliance on all matters relating to being an effective landlord

and will receive timely and relevant information and updates. Full membership of the board will include council officers, councillors, tenants and external peers.

**Housing Support Review:** A review of housing support arrangements has led to proposals for a new Independent Living Framework, setting out what support the council will provide to tenants in Extra Care Housing, Sheltered Housing and General Needs Housing. A new Wellbeing Service has been implemented at Gretton Court and arrangement for a new Independent Living Support Service for sheltered housing tenants is currently being consulted upon, with discussions for future support arrangements for general needs tenants due to commence. Through the housing support review, we have listened to tenant views and have considered how we can provide more person-centred support for tenants and in doing so, how we can support tenants to transition to appropriate support and digital lifeline services.

**Proactive preparation for new Social Housing Regulation Regime:** We have taken a proactive approach to preparing for the new regulatory regime and appointed a lead officer to support our preparatory work, which was then assessed via an audit review leading to good assurance. Four recommendations for improvement were identified, two of which have been completed and two are underway:

- Publish details of the health and safety / consumer regulation leads (and their deputies to the council's website): **complete.**
- Create an inspection plan: **complete.**
- Finalise the development of a housing service plan: **complete**
- Complete a diagnostic against the new regulatory standards to determine compliance and areas for improvement: **in progress.**

**Complaints:** The Council's complaints policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure it responds to and complies with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code. Staff have been briefed on policy changes and supported to understand the requirements of the complaints handling code. Analysis of complaints is undertaken and used to shape service improvements, with reporting to councillors undertaken through routine performance monitoring and focussed scrutiny reviews. The Landlord Assurance Board will now consider a housing complaints specific report at its future meetings and the council will continue to ensure its complaints handling self-assessments and performance are published to the council's website.

**Introduction of pre-tenancy assessments:** Pre-tenancy assessments are enabling housing officers to better understand households needs before housing allocations are confirmed and to agree specific support arrangements to support tenants to manage and sustain their tenancies effectively.

**Managing Anti-Social Behaviour:** A new policy has been developed and implemented, alongside a project to purchase, configure and implement a new module within the NEC housing IT system. Housing officers have received additional training and work closely with the Police and the Council's wider Safer Communities Team to understand and seek to resolve ASB issues. Further system and training developments in this area are included within this service plan. It is recognised that

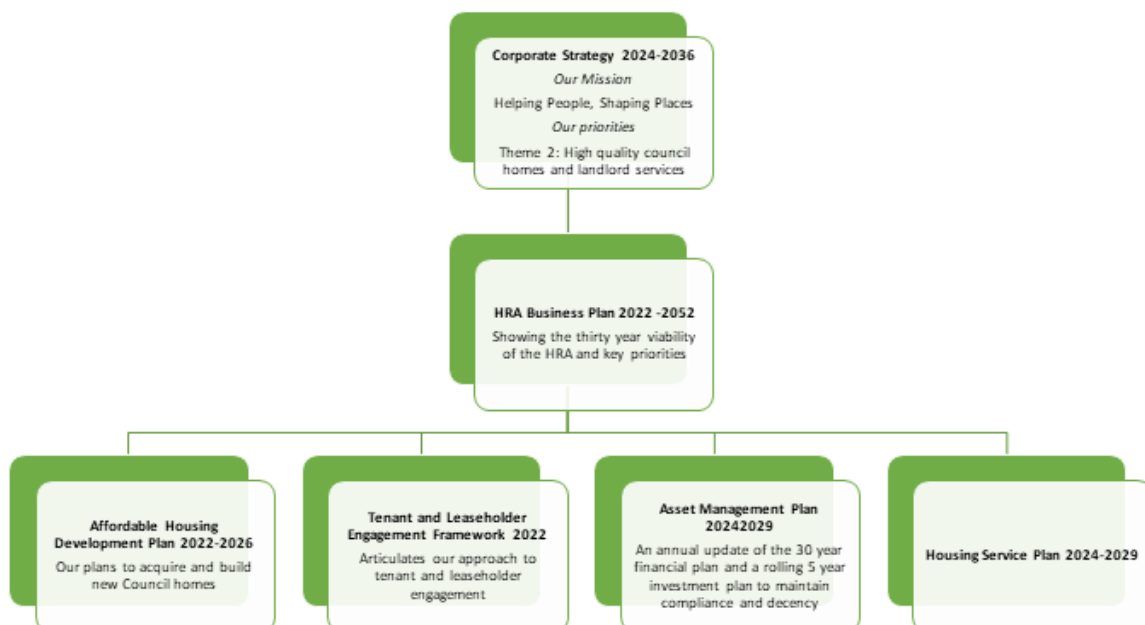
ASB is an area of lower satisfaction arising from the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 23/24.

**Consumer Regulations Review:** A review of compliance with and opportunities for improvement against the new consumer regulations is currently underway. A 'health check' assessment of compliance of the previous consumer regulations was undertaken in 2023/24 and reported to Cabinet members. Opportunities to strengthen and improve the council's work as a landlord arising from the diagnostic health check have been incorporated into ongoing work programmes and form part of this service plan. The health check identified that further work is required in the following key areas, all of which are embedded into this service plan:

- Review arrangements for tenant engagement and scrutiny.
- Strengthen data and opportunity for analysis: tenant profile data.
- Clarity around service charges and definitions.

**Councillor Communications:** Engagement with elected members has been strengthened through the introduction of quarterly update meetings for all councillors, and fortnightly members bulletins, ensuring that our Councillors are well informed about the work across the housing service areas and are able to ask questions on any aspect of the work being undertaken.

Supporting delivery of high-quality homes and landlord services, are a number of other key strategic documents. The diagram below shows how they link together, ensuring the 'golden thread' across each aspect of the council's service delivery as a landlord.





We have made significant progress to strengthen the Council's landlord services since 2019, but we are not complacent. The housing service plan underpins the commitments made within the Corporate Strategy and HRA Business Plan and is the next part of the framework of documents shown above.

## Regulatory Context and Proactive Inspection Regime

April 2024 marks a significant change for the housing sector with the introduction of a new social housing regulatory regime, including proactive aspects consumer regulation and an inspection programme for all landlords with over 1,000 properties. The infographic below represents the changing regulatory context within which this service plan, and the delivery of the Council's housing services is set:

### An interactive guide to the regulatory changes in social housing since Grenfell.

BY DEWBIEN PLUMMER (Vol. 1 as at March 2024)

#### Grenfell Tower Fire

The Grenfell Tower tragedy, a devastating fire that claimed 72 lives in June 2017, exposed critical deficiencies in building safety and resident welfare within social housing.

This catastrophe prompted an extensive examination of UK housing regulations beginning with the Grenfell Tower Fire Inquiry and the Hackitt Review. These investigations unveiled systemic failures and laid the groundwork for comprehensive changes.

#### Key Investigations

The Hackitt Review and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry were key independent reviews following the Grenfell tragedy. The Hackitt Review, led by Dame Judith Hackitt, focused on building regulations and fire safety, while the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, chaired by Sir Martin Moore-Dick, examined the causes of the fire and related issues. Both identified systemic failures in building safety, oversight, and resident engagement. They highlighted the need for regulatory reform and better standards, kickstarting a journey towards significant sectoral changes.

#### Awaab Ishak

Awaab Ishak, a two-year old died tragically in 2020 after prolonged exposure to mould. He lived in a social housing property with his family. His death led to a campaign for Awaab's Law by Shelter, Manchester News & Awaab's parents. It sought to mandate timescales for landlords to address damp & mould properly. It has been incorporated into the Social Housing Regulation Act.

#### The Findings

There was an urgent need for a more effective regulatory and accountability framework. Problems included a lack of transparency & accountability, poor record keeping, institutional indifference to residents and a lack of professionalism.

### Regulatory Bodies

The Regulator for Social Housing oversees standards for social housing providers, focusing on organisational aspects like management and financial viability and ensuring homes are decent and safe. The Housing Ombudsman Service deals with individual complaints about landlords, mediating disputes and recommending improvements. Together, they ensure compliance with housing standards, with the Ombudsman referring systemic issues to the Regulator for broader action. They have issued guidance on their relationship.

### Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act 2022 emerged as a direct response to the systemic flaws in building safety exposed by the Grenfell tragedy and the subsequent Hackitt Review. It enacts significant reforms in building safety standards, particularly for high-rise buildings. Key changes include:

- A more rigorous regulatory framework for building safety.
- Enhanced accountability for building owners and managers.
- Improved resident engagement and complaint handling processes.

### Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, catalysed by the Grenfell tragedy, the Social Housing White Paper, and the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, brings pivotal changes to social housing regulation. It aims to enhance tenant safety and wellbeing by:

- Strengthening the Regulator of Social Housing for more frequent inspections and issuing fines to non-compliant landlords.
- Expanding the Housing Ombudsman's powers for guidance post-investigations.
- Setting deadlines for landlords to rectify hazards like damp and mould.
- Introducing new qualifications for housing managers.
- Implementing a new, proactive consumer regulation regime.

DEWBIEN PLUMMER MARCH 2024 ©

#### Reading List

##### The Acts

[Building Safety Act 2022](#)

[Social Housing Regulation Act 2023](#)

##### Quality Measures

[Revised consumer standards](#)

[Competence and conduct standards \(consultation\)](#)

[Awaab's Law \(consultation\)](#)

[Complaints Handling Code 2024](#)

[Inspections](#)

[Tenant Satisfaction Measures](#)

[Decent Homes Standard Review](#)

##### Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Reports

[Attitudes, respect and rights – relationship of equals](#)

[Knowledge and Information Management \(KIM\)](#)

[Damp and mould – it's not a lifestyle](#)

### TIMELINE: The Journey So Far...

The Consumer Regulations are:

- **Safety and Quality Standard:** outcomes about the safety and quality of tenants' homes.
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard:** outcomes about how landlords provide information, listen to tenants, and act on their views.

- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard:** outcomes about how landlords work with other organisations to help ensure tenants live in safe neighbourhoods.
- **Tenancy Standard:** outcomes about how landlords allocate and let homes and manage tenancies.

Key to the Regulatory Regime is ensuring that tenants live in decent and safe homes, and that they have the opportunity to shape the services they receive. This is in line with commitments made through the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

The regulations require social landlords to demonstrate key things including:

- Having an accurate record on the condition of every home, based on checks of properties, so landlords can understand any problems and take action.
- Setting clear timelines for the completion of repairs, maintenance and planned improvements, communicating them clearly to tenants.
- Giving tenants opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's services such as through meetings with tenant groups.
- Providing tenants with information about their rights and how to make complaints.
- Publish new tenant satisfaction measures to make it clear how tenants feel their landlord is performing and hold them to account.

Over the next four years, all local authority landlords with over 1000 homes will be inspected by the Regulator for Social Housing, who will be seeking assurance that they are compliant with a set of Consumer Standards.

In March 2024, Melton Borough Council was notified that it would be one of six councils to be included in the first round of regulatory inspections. The inspection commenced in April 2024 and includes a range of steps, with regular with the Regulator for Social Housing throughout:

- Submission and review of a context document, setting out the context within which the council operates and delivers its services.
- Submission and review of documentary evidence in response to the inspection scope set out by the Regulator for Social Housing.
- Observation of pre-arranged meetings: Landlord Assurance Board, Scrutiny Committee and tenant workshops, Your Choice meeting.
- Meetings with council officers, tenants, elected members and key stakeholders.
- Tour of some locations across the Melton Borough.



The inspection process has been positive and constructive. The regulatory judgement is expected to be published in summer 2024 and will be communicated proactively to tenants.

### Complaints Handling

Social landlords are also required by law to abide by the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code, which became statutory from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

The Council has a positive complaint handling culture, committed to learning and continuous improvement. Our customer feedback and complaints policy which was last updated in March 2024 to ensure it remains compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code. The policy supports a clear and effective way in which to respond to tenant dissatisfaction and to resolve issues when they occur. The policy is [published](#) to the Council's website.

We aim to properly investigate issues raised, enabling a positive response to complaints. We encourage complaints from our tenants and view them as opportunities to learn and to improve the quality of our services.

The Council has identified a member responsible for complaints as part of their Portfolio responsibilities for performance and governance, who ultimately oversees and ensures accountability and commitment to continuous improvement in this area.

All complaints received by the council are held centrally, and analysis of complaints is undertaken to support learning and continuous improvement. Our performance on complaints is reported to Cabinet as part of our quarterly performance report, in addition to focussed reviews undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee. The Landlord Assurance Board will also receive specific updates on housing complaints, and complaints performance information is included on the council's website as part of the TSM measures, to support tenants to hold the council to account in this regard.

Within this service plan, we show how we will consider the learning arising not only from the complaints we receive, but also from trends and learning across the housing sector, including from the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Reports.

## **Tenant Satisfaction 23/24**

Melton Borough Council last undertook a tenant satisfaction survey in 21/22, with the results used to inform the development of the long term HRA Business Plan, supported by follow focus group discussions with tenants on their priorities and choices for investment. This had been intended as a baseline position, and the introduction of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures has since replaced the methodology used in the previous survey.

As part of the new regulatory requirements, landlords must collect and report on a range of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM). TSM's must be published every year in a way that tenants can easily access and understand. It is also important that the findings and insights from TSM's drive organisational reflection and continuous improvement. There are two elements to the TSM's – performance, and tenant satisfaction and perception.

We commissioned Housemark to carry out our perception survey. This was considered important to enable the council to use their expertise in this area to submit a compliant and independently led set of responses to the regulator, whilst also being able to access benchmarking information and ongoing support. Housemark is a nationally recognised housing service cost and performance benchmarking service and consultancy provider. We selected Housemark to carry out the TSM surveys (and also follow up analytical work with tenants and staff) for the following reasons:

- They had previously developed the voluntary STAR framework for perception surveys in the absence of regulation. Not only was this framework influential in the development of the TSMs but it also gave them expertise in conducting perception surveys.
- They worked closely with the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) and helped inform the development of the TSM framework. Therefore, they are crystal clear on regulatory requirements and guarantee compliance.

They also provide our benchmarking and analytics capabilities so we could see where we would be fitting against other organisations of a similar type.

- Whilst other local authorities have chosen to undertake their perception surveys in house, we wanted the external rigour and impartiality which an external provider delivers.

The performance measures have been incorporated into the council's performance monitoring framework and dashboard. They are also [published to the Council's website](#).

## Keeping properties in good repair



**96%**  
of our properties  
meet decent  
homes standard



**67%**  
Tenants satisfied  
that homes are  
well maintained



**74%**  
Tenants satisfied that  
communal areas are  
clean, safe and well  
maintained



**96%** Non emergency repairs  
completed in time  
**100%** Emergency repairs  
completed in time



**72%**  
Tenants satisfied  
with repairs  
service



**67%**  
Tenants satisfied with  
time taken to complete  
most recent repair

## Safety in our properties



**79%**  
Tenants satisfied  
that their home  
is safe



**Fire Safety**  
**100%**  
Of flats have a current  
fire risk assessment



**Gas Safety**  
**99%**  
Of stock have a valid  
gas safety check



**Lift Safety**  
**100%**  
Of lift safety checks  
have been completed



**Asbestos**  
**91%**  
Of asbestos checks have  
been completed  
(100% of communal blocks)



**Water hygiene**  
**100%**  
Of flats have a  
current water  
hygiene certificate

## Respectful and helpful engagement

**28%** Satisfied with our handling of complaints

**42** Stage one complaints received  
(per 1000 homes)

**5** Stage two complaints received  
(per 1000 homes)

**88%** Stage one complaints handled within the  
Housing Ombudsman's timescales

**100%** Stage two complaints handled within the  
Housing Ombudsman's timescales

**63%** Overall satisfaction  
with the services we  
provide to you



**62%** Satisfied that we keep  
you informed



**73%** agree that we treat you  
fairly and with respect



**54%** Satisfied that we listen  
to your views and act  
upon them



## Responsible neighbourhood management



**64%**  
Satisfied that we  
make positive  
contributions to your neighbourhoods



**59**  
Anti-social behaviour  
cases (per 1,000  
homes)



**47%**  
Satisfied with how  
we handle anti-social  
behaviour cases

The Tenant Satisfaction Survey shows that there are elements which will be encouraging, there is room for improvement on some of the perception measures. Better understanding those areas is an important next step.

We are committed to reflecting on the tenant satisfaction measures, and to embedding learning and opportunities for development into our ongoing work. We also see the tenants satisfaction measures as key to enhancing our engagement and openness with our tenants and leaseholders Actions linked to this review are included within this service plan and include:

- Engaging TPAS to review our tenant engagement and scrutiny arrangements, and opportunities to hear a wider range of tenants voices.
- Following a vacancy management review, a new permanent post of 'Tenant Engagement and Regulatory Compliance Lead' has been created and will be appointed to support the ongoing development and coordination of this work and associated projects.
- Further staff training on customer care
- Engaging with the corporate Customer Journey review to ensure that the repairs process is as effective as possible for customers.
- We will commission an external provider to carry out our future tenant satisfaction surveys, and we will include an option to carry out surveys on a quarterly basis to better support us to identify trends in satisfaction and ensure we respond as quickly as possible to anything arising from what we hear from our tenants.

## Tenants Views

Keeping tenants at the heart of service delivery was key to producing the service plan.

The draft service plan was shared with tenants at the Your Choice meeting on the 21.05.2024, then 3 feedback sessions were held to obtain tenants views on the document.

The feedback identified key areas of interest for tenants which included

- The importance of a strong approach to comprehensively managing ASB.
- A request for social activities – to enable engagement on a more informal level
- Refuse collection

- Compensation, for when things go wrong
- More community days of action
- Information about how to access additional services, such as mental health
- A review of the current approach to mobility scooters, and the scooter pods
- A review of the ground's maintenance service and support for the annual gardening competition
- Provision of Wi-Fi
- Tenant expectations for the new role of Tenant Engagement & Regulatory Compliance Lead.

Where possible, these suggestions have been incorporated in the action plan.

## Key Programmes of Work 24/25 and 25/26

Key programmes of work arising from the Council's Corporate Strategy and Consumer Regulations review are set out in this section. The key programmes of work in 24/25 and 25/26 are:

1. **Review and enhance tenant engagement and scrutiny arrangements.**
2. **Strengthening our tenant data (Tenant Profile Data Project).**
3. **Programme of complaints analysis and reflection.**
4. **Delivery of the Housing Asset Management Plan and opportunities to increase council housing stock.**
5. **Clarity around service charges and definitions.**
6. **Digital Switchover.**
7. **Diagnostic of new consumer regulations and associated actions.**
8. **Implementation of the ASB module and processes**

### **Key Programme of Work: Review and enhance tenant engagement and scrutiny arrangements.**

Lead Officer(s): Assistant Director of Housing Quality, Development and Landlord Services / Tenancy Services Manager

#### Overview

Key to our role as a landlord is the voice of our tenants: ensuring this is embedded and being reflected in the decisions and service improvements that we make, that we learn from feedback including complaints, and tenant satisfaction information and that tenants have opportunities to shape the services they receive.

In January 2022, Melton Borough Council implemented a [new framework](#) for tenant and leaseholder engagement. The framework recognised that the Council was at the start of a new phase of engagement and provided a strong foundation upon which the Council could refresh its approach in readiness for regulatory change. The plan created a framework to support the Council in its plans to change and develop its

approach to engaging with tenants, and to embed a strong ethos that tenant engagement is not just one person's job.

From this, we made a number of changes to enhance the way we communicate with tenants, and to enable tenants to have a stronger voice and opportunities to hold the council to account. The Council has also become and has maintained its membership of TPAS, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service. There is more information about tenant engagement on our [website](#) and in our most recent annual [report to Cabinet](#) (June 2023).

The tenant and leaseholder engagement framework initially set a series of actions. The actions were intended to broaden and improve meaningful engagement, whilst also creating solid foundations to make service changes and improvements in response to feedback. We are able to demonstrate that tenants have been consulted on a number of service improvements and policy changes and shaped a number of areas of our work.

We take the voice and views of our tenants seriously and we have taken a number of steps to embed this into our role as a landlord, but there is more to do, and our corporate strategy makes clear that we intend to review and enhance our approach to tenant engagement. We have asked TPAS, the Tenant Participation and Advisory Service to support us with this review and options to implement recommendations. We have provided TPAS with details of our current tenant engagement arrangements and with our tenant satisfaction results.

During 24/25 we will complete the following key actions:

- Following a vacancy management review, a new permanent post of 'Tenant Engagement and Regulatory Compliance Lead' has been created. A recruitment process has been completed, and the **Tenant Engagement & Regulatory Compliance Lead** was appointed in August 2024. The postholder will support the ongoing development and coordination of this work and associated projects (including the TPAS review and Tenant Profile project).
- We will work closely with TPAS and a tenant working / task and finish group to review our tenant engagement and scrutiny arrangements and we will consider the recommendations arising from this review, to determine how we can further develop and strengthen tenant engagement and scrutiny at Melton Borough Council, in a way that is meaningful and relevant to our size and context. As a result of this review, we will update our Tenant Engagement framework and we will take a report to the Landlord Assurance Board and Cabinet setting out how we will address the recommendations made and the further steps we will need to take to achieve TPAS accreditation.
- We will recruit tenants to join our recently established Landlord Assurance Board, creating another way through which tenants can hold us to account. Tenants will be supported to join and contribute to the board in a way that feels right for them, and they will be supported to access training and guidance in this role. We have asked TPAS to support us to ensure we give our tenant board members access



to the right training and support to help them to be confident and effective in this role.

- We will publish our Tenant Satisfaction results to our website, and we will show clearly how tenants can ask us questions about the information we have published. We will ask our Your Choice group for their views about the format of the information on the webpage, and we will provide opportunities for tenants to scrutinise any area of our performance via our Your Choice group. We will also ask our tenants for their views on how we can make sure more tenants know how we are performing and how to hold us to account.

### **Key Programme of Work: Strengthening our tenant data (Tenant Profile Data Project)**

Accountable Lead Officer: Assistant Director of Housing Quality, Development and Landlord Services, Tenancy Services Manager

#### Overview

It is important that the Council can be confident that it holds appropriate and up to date information about its tenants to enable services, or individual responses, to be shaped to meet tenants needs. We have carried out an initial review of our tenant data and the systems we have in place for storing data. We have also explored the best ways in which to update the data we hold (for example, a tenant census) and the type of the data that would be helpful to include in our systems.

Our initial work has shown that:

- As a council we hold a significant amount of information and that we are adapting services and responses to meet individual needs with the information we hold, but that there are gaps, and the information is not always up to date.
- There are issues with the accuracy of some of the data we hold due to lack of automated processes to maintain it.
- The [‘Tell us Once’](#) process is working effectively, enabling tenancy records to be updated and required actions taken following a death.
- Our systems have the capability to store more information and in a way that we can then use and report on and analyse more effectively but that we need to invest in and update our systems to do this properly.
- We also need to consider how our housing IT systems interface with other council systems, for example the CRM used by our Customer Services Team. The corporate Customer Journey Review provides an important opportunity to align this project and maximise opportunities for automation and compatibility of different council systems.

This needs to be managed as a corporate project, using the Council’s project management arrangements. We have a track record for approaching a project in this way, from our stock condition and asset management data and system

improvements. We have established a cross departmental project team, and initiated this as a corporate project that will be overseen by the internal Helping People Board. Once complete, we will have:

- An IT system that is capable of storing the data in a way that will allow us to report on, analyse and better understand the needs of our tenants. This will support the development of future policies, service improvements and plans as well as individual responses.
- Accurate and up to date tenant data, supporting professional and person-centred service delivery.
- Increased understanding of how our tenants communication preferences, allowing more targeted sharing of performance information (i.e. complaints and compliance). Shifting from passive communication methods to proactive.
- Processes in place to maintain and update the information we hold.
- Influenced and supported the corporate customer journey project, leading to confidence that we have improved the customer journey experience for our tenants.
- This is a 12–24-month project, with corporate oversight via the Helping People Board and reporting to the Landlord Assurance Board and to Cabinet. Our aim is to have concluded all required actions by the end of the financial year 2025/26.

During 24/25 we will complete the following key actions:

- Following a vacancy management review, a new permanent post of ‘Tenant Engagement and Regulatory Compliance Lead’ has been created and appointed to. This postholder will support the ongoing development and coordination of this work and associated projects (including the TPAS review and Tenant Profile project).
- This has been initiated as a corporate project and an implementation plan has been developed. It will be overseen by the Helping People Board. A copy of the implementation plan (as of May 2024) can be found at [Appendix B](#).

### **Key Programme of Work: Programme of complaints analysis and reflection**

Lead Officer(s): Housing Leadership Team, Corporate Policy and Communications Manager

#### Overview

The Council’s complaints policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure it responds to and complies with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaints Handling Code. Analysis of complaints and our learning from complaints is undertaken and used to shape service improvements, with reporting to councillors undertaken through routine performance monitoring and focussed scrutiny reviews.

It is important that we consider the learning arising not only from the complaints we receive, but also from trends and learning across the housing sector, including from the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Reports.

During 24/25 we will complete the following key actions:

- Complete our next self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code. We will report this and our complaints handling performance and learning to our Cabinet, and we will publish the self-assessment to our website. We will also continue to update our Your Choice group on complaints trends, performance and learning.
- Ensure the Landlord Assurance Board receives a housing complaints specific report at its future meetings.
- Review spotlight reports and sector learning reports published by the Housing Ombudsman at our Housing Leadership Team meetings. We will consider any learning points that can strengthen our own policies and practices and we will include this learning as part of our reporting on complaints.
- Arrange refresher training for relevant staff members, to support team awareness of complaints handling and a positive complaints handling culture.
- Invite the Housing Ombudsman to meet with staff and tenants at a 'Meet the Housing Ombudsman' event hosted by Melton Borough Council.
- Ensure the new complaints management IT system is implemented and can be used to support complaints analysis, monitoring and learning. This will also provide enhanced performance monitoring which will be shared directly to tenants.

### **Key Programme of Work: Delivery of the Housing Asset Management Plan and opportunities to increase council housing stock.**

Lead Officer(s): Housing Asset Manager, Affordable Housing Development Manager

#### Overview

Our Housing Asset Management Plan covers a five-year period. It is updated on an annual basis. It sets out the Council's delivery plans for investment and improvement in council homes and details a rolling five-year capital programme. The capital programme delivery is being supported by the successful procurement and delivery of a number of new contracts, which are monitored closely by the Housing Asset Management Team.

Opportunities to develop or acquire new council homes are currently reliant on right to buy receipts, section 106 monies and government grant funding meaning that the pipeline for future housing development is limited. There is a risk that we cannot sufficiently mitigate the loss of properties through the right to buy, (RTB) arrangements through replenishment of housing stock and that we cannot meet future demand for council housing.

During 24/25 we will complete the following key actions:

- We will monitor and report on delivery of the Housing Asset Management Action Plan and update on progress via the annual review scheduled for March 2025. As part of the annual review, we will communicate clearly with tenants to confirm how we have performed against our capital programme commitments.

- Consider how the Asset Management Plan and Affordable Housing Development Plan can be more closely aligned, to support investment in existing homes and acquisition or development of new council homes.

### **Key Programme of Work: Clarity around service charges and definitions**

Lead Officer(s): Tenancy Services Manager

#### Overview

An initial review of the application of service charges and the associated descriptions on rent statements has been carried out. There is a rent and service charging policy in place. Tenant feedback shows that it is not always clear how charges have been calculated. This is an area in need of review to ensure greater clarity.

During 24/25 and 26/26 we will complete the following actions:

- Review current arrangements with other teams, for example, grounds maintenance and reviewing their work schedule estate plans and costs.
- Check and develop service level agreements and estate plans.
- Consult with tenants and leaseholders – scope of services / specifications and definitions.
- Create an Estate Management Policy.
- Review contracts and SLA's.
- Procure new contracts if required.
- Explore a solution to make the annual adjustment process smoother to manage and carried out within the NEC Housing system.
- Move to a model which is based on actual spend one year in arrears, to ensure accuracy, equity, and transparency.

This work is progressing, but some aspects are more complex than others and require other departments of the council to be involved. Our aim is to have concluded all required actions by the end of the financial year 2025/26.

### **Key Programme of Work: Digital Switchover**

Lead Officer(s): Tenancy Services Manager

#### Overview

Telecoms companies in the UK are replacing the technology they use to provide fixed telephone networks (landlines). For most customers, the upgrade is expected to be complete by 2025. This is known as the 'digital switchover'. For customers using assistive technology (including lifelines), this must be digitally enabled to ensure the technology still works effectively after the switchover.

During 24/25 we will complete the following actions:

- Ensure that assistive technology within our extra care and sheltered housing schemes is digitally enabled. We will also review the monitoring arrangements to ensure value for money and effective service delivery arrangements.
- Support tenants across our dispersed housing stock who currently have and wish to retain a lifeline, to transition to a digitally enabled solution that meet their individual needs and preferences.

### **Key Programme of Work: Diagnostic of new consumer regulations and associated actions.**

Lead Officer(s): Assistant Director of Housing Quality, Development and Landlord Services

#### Overview

A diagnostic of the previous consumer standards was carried out in 2023/24 (See Appendix D). Areas for improvement were reported to Cabinet and are included within this service plan. The new housing regulatory regime commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, including a revised of consumer standards with which all social landlords must comply (the guidance was published on 29.02.2024). A diagnostic against these revised standards is required, and the service plan should be updated in response to any actions arising from the diagnostic review. The Council will also embed any actions or recommendations arising from the regulatory inspection taking place in 24/25.

During 24/25 we will complete the following actions:

- Complete a diagnostic of the new Consumer Standards. We will update our service plan in response to any actions arising from the diagnostic review and we will report the outcome of the diagnostic review to the Landlord Assurance Board and to Cabinet.
- Maintain a positive and constructive dialogue with the Regulator for Social Housing during and after the regulatory inspection process.

### **Key Programme of Work: Implementation of the ASB action plan**

Lead Officer(s): Tenancy Services Manager

#### Overview

The Council adopted a refreshed and updated ASB Housing Policy via a Portfolio Holder decision in 2023 which sets out Council's aspirations to ensure issues and concerns are dealt with sensitively and effectively, that decision making processes are clear, consistent and fair, and that we meet our statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

Following the adoption of the policy a review of anti-social behaviour case management identified that improvements could be made to enhance case management, reporting and trend analysis. This was followed by an action plan was developed and included as part of a corporate project that is managed through the Helping People Board. Significant progress has been made; the module has been purchased and the majority of the development work is complete.

During 24/25 we will complete the following actions:

- Complete the work to implement the ASB module in NEC Housing, including dashboards, heat maps and letters.
- In addition to the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy a full procedure will be developed to sit alongside.
- Introduce business processes and staff training for managing ASB cases through the new system.

## Operational Action Plan

Operational actions will be delivered through service improvements as part of the council's commitment to continuous improvement and will be implemented according to priority and resource availability They are shown at **Appendix A** and are aligned to the consumer standards. Many of these actions support the delivery of the programmes of work outlined above, alongside the strategic commitments articulated in our Corporate Strategy and HRA Business Plan.

Like all Council landlords, Melton Borough Council must continue to balance resources and mitigate risks to organisational stability and resilience alongside business-as-usual activities and the day-to-day demands of delivering housing and landlord services. This means that to make the most of the resources available to the council, actions and commitments must be prioritised and managed accordingly. Each action has been assigned to a member of the team, resource requirements have been identified and a target date for completion has been set.

## Assurance, Oversight and Continuous Improvement

### Service Plan Delivery and Oversight

Delivery and monitoring of the Housing Service Plan will be led by the Housing Leadership Team.

The plan will evolve in response to changing requirements or areas of focus. The document will have a light touch review every 6 months by the Housing Leadership Team and an annual review reported to the Senior Leadership Team, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services and to the Landlord Assurance Board.



The Housing Leadership Team will continue to ensure that the appropriate priority and level of resources has been planned for each programme of work and key actions within the plan. This process will also enable the plan to be updated as required, as it is important that the housing service plan remains current and responsive to the housing context in which the Council operates.

### **Managing Risk**

Each directorate maintains its own risk register, with key and significant risks escalated to the Corporate Risk Register and reported to the Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Standards Committee. Key risks are recorded on the register, along with details of the risk rating, a target risk, control measures, risk owner and review date. The risk registers are reviewed quarterly and shared corporately. Examples on the current risk register for the housing service include readiness for regulatory inspection and income collection rates.

Where it has been identified that a project will be created, there will be a separate project risk register. This register will record any individual project risks, and these will be reported to the relevant project board.

### **Managing Performance**

Performance is monitored at a corporate level through a series of performance measures. For the housing service, these are made up of 69 measures across three areas (housing management, tenancy management and housing assets). The measures include the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (performance and perception). These are monitored by the Housing Leadership Team and key measures are included in the corporate performance report and reported to the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. Performance information will also be provided to the Landlord Assurance Board.

Health and Safety compliance is monitored on a monthly basis and reported directly to the Landlord Assurance Board to provide ongoing assurance in this important area. The health and safety performance dashboards are also shared with elected members on a monthly basis via the Members' Bulletin.

### **Transparency, Influence and Accountability**

We are committed to ensuring that our tenants know how we are performing as a landlord and can hold us to account.

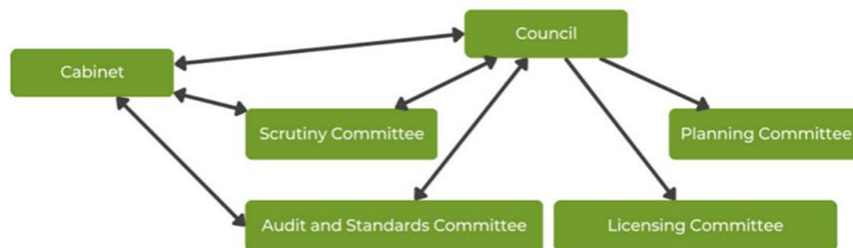
We will publish our Tenant Satisfaction results to our website, and we will show clearly how tenants can ask us questions about the information we have published. We will ask our Your Choice group for their views about the format of the information on the webpage, and we will provide opportunities for tenants to scrutinise any area of our performance via our Your Choice group. We will also ask our tenants for their

views on how we can make sure more tenants know how we are performing and how to hold us to account. To support our tenants and increase their understanding and confidence to raise questions, we have commissioned TPAS, to appraise our current approach and support us in shaping future opportunities for meaningful engagement with our tenants and leaseholders, and training and support to tenants to give them the confidence and capacity to hold us to account as a landlord.

### Council Governance Arrangements

The formal governance structure for the Council is shown below:

### Current Council and Committee Structure



Currently there are 5 Portfolios held by Members of the Cabinet. The Leader is personally responsible for the discharge of all Cabinet Functions and may take any decision in relation to any function, whilst recognising the specific statutory responsibilities placed on individual portfolio holders. The Leader delegates all Cabinet Functions which fall within the portfolio of each Cabinet Member to that Cabinet Member who may take any decision in relations to those functions subject to any reservations that may deemed to be controversial, high profile and/or financially significant.

The five elected members (known as ‘portfolio holders’) in the **Cabinet** are shown below.

1. Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure & Landlord Services (Leader of the Council)
2. Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services (Deputy Leader)
3. Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Wellbeing
4. Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Growth and Prosperity
5. Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources

## **Role of the Landlord Assurance Board**

Effective governance, assurance and oversight are essential to deliver high quality council homes and landlord services. Whilst the Council has well established mechanisms to monitor performance, risk and compliance, it is important to draw together the various strands of the landlord service that collectively demonstrate how the Council operates and performs as a landlord so that these can be considered together, enabling collective awareness of this key agenda, whilst also supporting continuous improvement.

The Landlord Assurance Board (LAB) was launched in April 2024 and provides an opportunity for collective ownership of one of the Council's most significant areas of responsibility. Whilst it does not replace any of the Council's existing structures, scrutiny or decision-making arrangements, it provides a single focus for political and professional leaders and tenants to consider housing matters in one place and ensure there is a focus and grip on housing, regulatory responsibilities, and tenant voice.

The Terms of Reference for the Board can be found [here](#).

The Landlord Assurance Board does not replace any existing structures, scrutiny or decision-making arrangements. However, it provides a single focus for political and professional leaders to consider housing matters in one place and ensure there is a focus and grip on housing, regulatory responsibilities, and tenant voice.

The Landlord Assurance Board will provide an annual report for consideration by Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council. This will also form part of the Council's overall governance and assurance arrangements, forming part of the Annual Governance Statement.

Membership of the LAB will include tenant representatives, to ensure they have a strong voice and opportunities to raise questions and hold us to account on behalf of tenants. A recruitment process and role profile have been developed, and tenants will have access to training and support in this role.

## **Internal Audit**

The Council also has an Audit and Standards Committee. As part of its remit, the Committee agrees and oversees an annual programme of Internal Audit, receives updates from the Internal and External Auditors, monitors progress and completion of audit recommendations and monitors the key strategic risks for the Council. The Council's Audit Plan responds to risks, key issues and areas of focus. Internal Audit is valued and continues to provide an important source of assurance relating to the Council's Landlord function.

During 22/23 and 23/24 the Council's Internal Audit Plan included the following matters relevant to the Council's role as Landlord:

2022/23		
Audit	Audit Opinion – Controls	Audit Opinion - Compliance
Right to Buy	Good	Good
Management of the HRA	Substantial	Substantial
Landlord Health & Safety	Substantial	Good
2023/24		
Audit	Audit Opinion – Controls	Audit Opinion - Compliance
Voids	Moderate	Good
Landlord Health & Safety	Good	Good
Social Housing Regulation Changes	Good	Good

The Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 contains a number of specific audits relevant to the Council's role as a landlord, and specifically, the consumer regulations.

Assurance Areas	Internal Audit Assignments (including assurances sought and basis for inclusion)	Audit days	Risk entries *1	Corporate objective *2	Initial timing	Client lead
Housing & Communities – risk based audit coverage	<b>Planned maintenance</b> Assurances over contract management processes and links to asset data. To seek assurance that actions implemented are working as intended and demonstrating value for money.	12	SRR SG04 HRA03 HRA04	2	Q1	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Housing allocations and homelessness applications</b> To provide assurance over the consistent and fair application of the housing allocation and homelessness policies and procedures so that qualifying applicants are given an appropriate level of priority.	18	-	2	Q1	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Social housing regulatory change</b> To provide assurance over the Council's preparedness for the regulatory change and inspection regimes. To include coverage on 'knowing your stock' and 'knowing your tenants' – split across two reviews.	20	HRA11	2	Q1 and Q3	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Housing repairs and housing voids – targeted follow up</b> To conduct a follow up review on actions taken in response to the last audits of housing repairs and housing voids. To provide assurance that actions have been implemented effectively and embedded in practice.	8	SRR SG04 HRA03 HRA04 HRA05	2	Q2	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Landlord health and safety</b> To conduct some targeted annual testing to provide assurance that compliance regimes remain up to date.	6	HRA6	2	Q3	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Rent arrears</b> To provide assurance over the controls in place to ensure the timely and complete recovery of housing rents, including former tenant arrears.	12	SRR SG04 HRA09	5	Q4	Director for Housing & Communities
	<b>Counter fraud support</b> To provide support to the Council on the investigation of any matches arising from the Social Housing NFI pilot exercise in 2024.	6				

The full 24/25 Internal Audit Workplan plan can be found [here](#).

### Access to benchmarking services

In 2023, the Council made a three-year commitment and became members of Housemark to support cost and performance benchmarking and improvement. It was considered that:

- Subscription to the Housemark Benchmarking service will provide a broad range of support in the ongoing improvement within the Councils' Housing service.
- It will also support preparation for the implementation of the new housing regulatory regime.

As part of the subscription and annual data submission process, the council has also begun to submit monthly performance information and is now in the early stages of obtaining monthly 'Pulse' reports which provide an insight into performance trends across the sector, how the council compares and areas for focus, further analysis or improvement. A summary of the sector Pulse reports will be considered each month by the Housing Leadership Team. The Housemark Pulse process uses a small suite of indicators to provide an overview of sector performance against key metrics. These are compared and split into four quartiles, with upper quartile representing the best performance and fourth quartile, the lowest performance. This process is entirely voluntary and therefore self-selecting in terms of the number of participants but offers a broadly representative group.

An internal data quality group has also been established to discuss and plan for data submissions including LAHS (Local Authority Housing Statistics) and Housemark to ensure data integrity and collective understanding.

### Appendices

**Appendix A:** Operational Action Plan.

**Appendix B:** Self-assessment diagnostic against previous consumer standards: actions arising.

**Appendix A: Operational Action Plan 24/25 and 25/26**

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Project team</b>	<b>Target date for completion</b>
<b>Neighbourhood and Community Standard</b>				
Launch programme of annual tenancy visits.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Dec-24</b>
Write hate crime policy and arrange staff training.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>
Review scooter pods arrangements. Commenced with demand analysis and charging policy.	<b>CF</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>
Review the garden areas at the 3 sheltered schemes and Gretton Court.	<b>AB/CF</b>	<b>AM/TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Dec-24</b>
Implement an estate management policy with budget and estate appraisal toolkit - covering issues such as CCTV, grounds maintenance, tenant involvement and wider partners.	<b>AB,DS,CF</b>	<b>TS, AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Mar-25</b>
Review the approach to leasing communal areas	<b>DS</b>	<b>DS/CF</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>April – 25</b>
Review grounds maintenance standards in consultation with tenants	<b>DS</b>	<b>DS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>April - 25</b>
Appraise option to provide Wi-Fi in communal areas	<b>DS</b>	<b>DS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>April 25</b>
<b>Tenancy Standard</b>				



<b>Standards</b>	<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Project team</b>	<b>Target date for completion</b>
Temporary Income resourcing – sustain during 24/25.	DS	TS	N	Jul-24
Develop specific introductory tenancy policy.	DS	TS	N	Dec-24
Development abandonment policy.	DS	TS	N	Mar-25
Ongoing implementation of the arrears action plan.	DS	TS	Y	Mar-25
Explore electronic tenancy sign up options.	DS	TS	Y	Sep-25
Appraise options to offer any day tenancies.	DS	TS	Y	Sep-25
Add additional direct debit dates for payments.	DS	TS	N	Jun-24
Fraud - continue with the National Fraud Initiative.	DS	TS	Y	Ongoing
Implement service charge review project team (cross departmental) including energy costs.	DS	TS	Y	Jan-25
Review the outcomes of the pre tenancy inspections.	DS	TS	Y	May-24
Update policy to include under occupation and overcrowding.	DS	TS	N	Sep-24
Review approach to bad debt provision.	DS	TS	Y	Sep-24
Review approach to FTA's.	DS	TS	Y	Sep-24
Encourage new tenants to pay one month in advance to achieve the 'rent on time' model.	DS	TS	Y	Ongoing
When tenants are being considered for a property – issue them with a draft copy of the tenancy agreement so that they can consider this in advance of their sign up.	DS	TS	Y	Sept-24

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Project team</b>	<b>Target date for completion</b>
<b>Transparency, Influence and Accountability (including tenant satisfaction measures)</b>				
Recruit to the role of tenant board member (Landlord Assurance Board)	<b>AB, DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>June-24</b>
Tenants newsletter - implement an editorial panel with tenants.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>
TSM project - feedback, action plan and tender for future years	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Quarterly councillors' meetings	<b>AB</b>	<b>AM, TS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Housemark Project - feedback, submission of data and action plan	<b>AB</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Annual tenants & leaseholders report - expand to provide a section for tenants, <a href="#">to also include information about additional support services such as mental health.</a>	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>
Implement revised housing support arrangements.	<b>AB</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Dec-24</b>
Provide training to staff on the use of plain English for correspondence.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Nov-24</b>
Enhance opportunities for HLT scrutiny of the service - Forward Plan	<b>AB</b>		<b>Y</b>	<b>Aug-24</b>
Progress a business case to support cleaning and catering resilience at Gretton Court	<b>AB</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Sep-24</b>
TPAS Accreditation - review of the current approach and develop an action plan. Work commenced with desk top survey, TPAS now commissioned to devise an action plan for formal TPAS accreditation	<b>AB/DS/CF</b>		<b>Y</b>	<b>Sep-25</b>

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Project team</b>	<b>Target date for completion</b>
Use the data we hold on tenants to identify, for example, those tenants who we have not had contact from in the last 12 months, to prioritise targeted visits and proactive contact.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>March-25</b>
Review the consent form, including review timeframe.	<b>DS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Nov-24</b>
Complaints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to share with YC standing agenda item, plus how we have changed in response.</li> <li>Quarterly agenda item for Councillors updates</li> <li>Add quarterly performance to Tenants Corner website linked to service changes in response to complaints and compliments</li> <li>Increase visibility of complaints information to tenants via web, newsletters and other forms of tenant communication.</li> </ul>	<b>AB</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Create opportunities for tenants to request further information on / scrutinise performance	<b>AB</b>	<b>TS/AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>December 24</b>
<b>Safety and Quality Standard</b>				
Explore options for contractor led call handling for repairs when contractor interface has been successfully implemented – link to customer journey review.	<b>CF</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>2025</b>
Review the policy and process for aids and adaptations and explore options to develop parameters of policy.	<b>CF</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Mar-25</b>
Undertake 20% stock condition survey annually.	<b>CF</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
Electrical safety operational management plan.	<b>CF</b>	<b>AM</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Aug-24</b>

<b>Standards</b>	<b>Responsible officer</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Project team</b>	<b>Target date for completion</b>
Fire safety operational management plan.	CF	AM	Y	Sep-24
Develop 5 year investment plan - energy efficiency and estate appearance.	CF	SM	Y	Nov-24
Review use of technology particularly for remote working.	CF,DS		Y	Dec-24
Review the approach to and outcome of disrepair claims over the last 5 years.	CF	AM	Y	December 2024
Review compliments & complaints and contribute to the review of the council wide policy – agree how to programme and approach review of spotlight reports.	AB,DS,CF		Y	Ongoing
Use the tenant data to appraise local offers, e.g. prioritising repairs for vulnerable tenants, or enhanced security provisions for those experiencing DV.	CF	AM	Y	Mar-25
Appraise options to improve how we update tenants on the progress of their repairs.	CF	AM	Y	Mar-25
<b>Development</b>				
Garage strategy and action plan, now need a development plan, to retain high demand garages and appraise options for low demand garages	CF	AM	Y	Nov-24
Resolve the split of land holdings with the general fund and future development opportunities.	CF	AM	Y	Corporate
Quarterly updated on new developments shared across all teams	TM	DEV	N	Ongoing

## Appendix B – Self-assessment against previous consumer standards

A summary of the areas requiring further development are shown in the table below:

<b>3. Neighbourhood and Community Standard</b>			
<b>Ref No.</b>		<b>Outcomes / expectations</b>	<b>Assessment of current position</b>
<b>1</b>	2.1	Neighbourhood management - Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes.	We have a service charge action plan which includes actions to revise the policy, review current services, including better charging and tenant consultation on the specification, for example over the specification for grounds maintenance
	2.2	Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:	
<b>2</b>	2.2a	Identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties	To be considered as part of service charge action plan and policy
<b>3</b>	2.2b	Co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives	To be considered as part of service charge action plan and policy

<b>4. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard</b>			
<b>Ref No.</b>		<b>Outcomes / expectations</b>	<b>Assessment of current position</b>
<b>4</b>	1.2.1 c	The scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved	This is included in "Your Choice" sessions, however, further work in this area will include tenant representation at the Landlord Assurance Board. TPAS have undertaken a desktop survey of Melton's current approach to tenant engagement and made recommendations, which will support Melton's journey towards accreditation with TPAS. The opportunity for tenants to be more engaged and informed about the service is being enhanced through the introduction of the Landlord Assurance Board which will include tenants in its' membership, and an open Scrutiny meeting to receive feedback on the findings from the TSMs. We are also seeking approval to create a new Tenant Experience and regulatory compliance lead officer, to ensure that we have the necessary resource and capacity.
<b>5</b>	1.2.1 e	The management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made.	New tenant involvement strategy provides a framework to undertake this but limited practical evidence to date
<b>6</b>	1.2.1 f	Agreeing local offers for service delivery.	New tenant involvement strategy provides a framework to undertake this but limited practical evidence to date
<b>7</b>	1.3.1 b	Demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.	Tenant data is available in the system, but there are system limitations on how that can be used and the data has not been maintained in a robust way. The need to improve tenant data is one of the key actions identified. To redress this a Tenant Data Project to appraise both how we can store and manipulate the data we record and how we will then refresh the

<b>4. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard</b>			
<b>Ref No.</b>		<b>Outcomes / expectations</b>	<b>Assessment of current position</b>
			data we hold on all our tenants to deliver more bespoke services
<b>8</b>	2.2.1 d	Providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.	TPAS review and Landlord Assurance Board offer additional opportunities for involvement. Council Scrutiny meetings open to the public. Ongoing work with TPAS to provide specialist training for tenants will support delivery in this area, as we commence our journey to TPAS Accreditation
<b>9</b>	2.2.4	Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.	The development of the Tenant Engagement Framework in 2022 addressed this but will be reviewed in 2024/25 when the document is refreshed to reflect the new regulatory requirements.