

# **HDN Board Excellence Programme**

## **Workshop 5**

### **Customer Involvement & Customer Governance**

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# Aims for Today

Building confidence in Board Members to challenge & ask questions

- To hear about consumer regulation & changes happening in customer influence & engagement (Yvonne)

## **And from Eamon:**

- To hear about the ALMO sector on governance & consider cross cutting themes for HAs & ALMOs
- To hear about Board leadership & responses to policy changes

# Consumer Regulatory Assurance

- Consumer Regulation
- RSH Annual Consumer Regulation Review
- NHF Together with Tenants Plan – (National Housing Federation)
- NHF Together with Tenants (TWT) - their Charter for Residents
- Customer Involvement and Customer Governance

# Regulation

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>

- Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)
  - Economic Regulation - proactive
  - Consumer Regulation - reactive
- Co-regulation
- **Self assessment to meet the consumer regulatory standards**
- Increasing those Consumer Standards – social housing white paper (coming soon - Eamon)
- New Building Safety Regulator (coming soon - Eamon)

## Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard (TIES)

- Customer service
- Access to services
- Choice
- Complaints – annual reporting on activity & lessons learnt
- Equalities & additional support for vulnerable tenants

This standard is cross cutting and applies to all other standards

## Tenant involvement and empowerment Standard (2)

Tenant engagement in:

- Policy – new and renewal
- Performance & monitoring performance, suggesting improvements
- Service standards – shaping, revising, monitoring
- Annual report to residents
- Major Change
- 3 year review of tenant engagement in scrutiny and governance
- **Disposal and demolition**

(and a few less used clauses on tenant management, tenants doing own repairs)

# What might you expect to see as a Board Member?

- Customer Engagement Strategy/Policy
- Customer Insight – feedback from transactional surveys and STAR etc  
<https://www.liverpoolmutualhomes.org/get-involved/improve>
- Resident Consultative and/or Scrutiny groups:  
<https://cobalthousing.org.uk/communities/get-involved/tenant-consultative-panel/>
- Reader panels, or editorial groups (on line or in person):  
<https://www.traffordhousingtrust.co.uk/get-involved/digital-readers-panel>
- Task and finish/Hot Topic groups of residents on local, or organisational wide issues – like safety or the annual report to residents: <https://www.southwayhousing.co.uk/about-us/get-involved/low-involvement-a-few-minutes-here-and-there/>
- Resident researchers/ambassadors: Leeds Jewish HA
- **Digital engagement:** <https://www.gateway2engagement.co.uk/>
- **Customer Governance:** <https://www.salixhomes.co.uk/customer-committee>



# Home Standard

- Continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- Provide cost effective repairs service
- Right first time repairs
- Ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs
- Right balance of planned & responsive repairs
- **Meet health & safety arrangements**
- Approach which includes cyclical, responsive, planned, capital works, work on adaptations & empty homes to be agreed with tenants



# Tenancy Standard

- Allocations – co-operate with Local Authority
- Mutual Exchanges – access to national database
- Manage under-occupation & overcrowding
- Publish the Policy – common register, common allocations & local lettings policies
- Clear Tenure Policy – type of tenancy including new fixed term tenancy, when they will grant the tenancy & what the grounds of appeal will be
- Explain when Probationary Tenancies will be used

# Neighbourhood & Community Standard

- Keep neighbourhoods & communal areas clean & safe
- Co-operate with tenants & partners to help promote the social, environmental & economic wellbeing of areas
- Identify & publish the role you can play in areas where they have homes
- Prevent & tackle ASB – using full legal powers
- Take decisive action on ASB & make it easy to report
- Support witnesses & victims of ASB

# RSH Consumer Regulation Review (annual)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-regulation-review-2019-to-2020>

- Co-regulation does not lessen the obligation to comply with the consumer standards
- 3 stage process
- Triple the number complaints to RSH in the last review and downgrades
- Number of tenants affected with breach & seriousness/duration of failure – risk of harm
- Failure reflected in the governance judgement – transparency, information to Boards, risk & internal controls – and the Board’s response to failure
- RSH Consider HSE actions and Ombudsman complaint failures
- Common issues, repairs and H&S errors (safety oversight of gas, fire etc)
- Consumer inspections (4 yearly) – Eamon to cover this next

# Together with Tenants 4 point plan

1. A new requirement in the National Housing Federation Code of Governance for boards to be accountable to residents
2. A new Together with Tenants charter – **optional** so residents know what they can expect from their landlord
3. Resident oversight and reporting of progress against the charter
4. Giving residents a stronger collective voice with the regulator – issues uncovered by resident oversight and reporting could be referred to the regulator

**Board signing up to the NHF Together with Tenants Charter** are then expected then to have oversight of delivery.....



# Together with Tenants Charter – 1.

*Housing associations that adopt the Charter commit to developing the following to make them work at their organisation:*

- 1. Relationships** – Housing associations will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between residents and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency
- 2. Communication** – Residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from their housing association on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues
- 3. Voice and influence** – Views from residents will be sought and valued and this information will be used to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear



## Together with Tenants Charter – 2.

- 4 **Accountability** – Collectively, residents will work in partnership with their housing association to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services
- 5 **Quality** – Residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed
- 6 **When things go wrong** – Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong



# Governance and Board Assurance

## Governance Standard

- **Report annually** on compliance with the regulatory standards - Annual financial statement & accounts (since 2015)
- How do you gain assurance of consumer standards compliance?
- How do you gain assurance of delivery of the TWT Charter (if you have signed up)?
- How do you learn from the RSH annual report on Consumer Standards?

## VFM Standard

- **Local indicators** to measure VFM (outside the metrics expected by RSH for HAs) –How do you measure quality of services, or involvement/engagement of residents/community

## For HAs: Code of Governance 2021

- **Culture:** How do you consider and define culture and behaviour to best deliver mission and values?
- **Equalities:** How do you demonstrate a clear and active commitment to achieve equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in all of the organisations activities, as well as own composition?
- **Customers:** How do you ensure customers are at the heart of decision making? (includes frameworks, insight, accountability and **board selection**)

# Thanks for listening

## Breaktime

Then over to Eamon to discuss  
...the tougher challenge ahead

