

Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

15 February 2024

Subject:	Housing Regulatory Framework
Director:	Interim Director of Housing Dean Epton
Contact Officer:	Interim Director of Housing Dean Epton

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 To consider and comment upon the changes to the Housing Regulatory Framework.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Changes are being made to the regulatory framework that governs the provision of Social Housing.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	People live well and age well Meeting the regulatory requirements ensures a safe home for tenants to live well and age well, free from hazards.
	Strong resilient communities Some of the new requirements places significant responsibilities on landlords to ensure that they play a key role on the quality and safety of the neighbourhoods and communities that they have homes.





Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods

The new standards set minimum requirements for the quality and affordability of the homes covered by the regulations.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Following Grenfell and the tragic death of Awaab Ishak there has been a major shake-up in the regulations and law that governs the provision of rental property within England. This has led to the creation of two new Regulators and a raft of legislation changes that have and are being introduced in stages that both enhance the controls placed on Landlords and increases the powers held by the Regulator to make an intervention. It also widens the scope of the legislation to cover Local Authorities as well as Housing Associations.
- 4.2 The Building Safety Regulator has a remit to ensure the safety of all buildings that have more than one domestic property within the same building. There is a particular focus initially on taller buildings over 18m but have amended existing legislation and introduced new laws for all buildings with more than one dwelling even a maisonette. Some of these requirements came in on 1 October 2023 and the remainder take effect 1 April 2024. This presentation gives an overview of those new requirements for Sandwell.
- 4.3 The Regulator of Social Housing is in the process of introducing new standards for Landlords following the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and these take effect on 1 April 2024. This will be in the form of 4 Consumer Standards containing 20 specific requirements that will be published in February 2024 and an in-depth inspection regime that will commence in April 2024. This presentation gives an overview of those new requirements for Sandwell.



5 Implications

Resources:	The Housing Medium Term Financial Strategy has been written to include the additional resources believed to be needed to meet the new requirements.
Legal and Governance:	As the legislation is introduced, we are taking legal advice on what changes we need to make to ensure we meet the requirements going forward.
Risk:	Not meeting the new requirements is a significant risk and so changes are being made to the systems and processes within Housing to ensure those risks are mitigated.
Equality:	All changes will be assessed for equality as they are introduced.
Health and Wellbeing:	There are specific requirements in the legislation that must be met with regards to the Health and Wellbeing of the communities that we serve as a Landlord.
Social Value:	All contracts placed and activities undertaken within Housing are assessed for Social Value and have specific clauses in them regarding the employment of local resources and apprenticeship opportunities.
Climate Change:	There are specific climate change and fuel poverty requirements in the legislation that must be met.
Corporate Parenting:	All changes will be assessed to ensure we meet our Corporate Parent responsibilities as they are introduced.

6 Appendices

Appendix One – Presentation

7 Background Papers

None

