

# Hawthorn Housing Co-operative Management Committee 26.10.22

## Assurance Framework Dashboard

### A Scottish Social Housing Charter

#### Key

	Compliant
	Compliant (with non-material areas for improvement)
	Working towards compliance
	Not compliant

#### The Customer/Landlord Relationship (Equalities, Communication and Participation)

- Equality and Diversity Audit June 2018
- Equality Action Plan 2019 – good progress made but needs review
- Satisfaction with being kept informed **slight fall to 99% from 100%** and opportunities to participate **increased to 100%** from 97.6%. This compares well with other small urban RSLs [95.6% and 91.3%]
- Recording and learning from complaints reviewed 2021
- Hawthorn Tenants Circle established, with improved and increased amount of electronic communication
- Regular surveys being held with HTC
- Committee meetings summarised in Facebook
- Programme for Equality Impact Assessments being implemented 3 completed so far this year
- Diversity in community better reflected on committee [race, gender, employment, age] though 2 committee members from ethnic minorities resigned and another did not process to membership of committee
- Hawthorn Community Action Group set up with broad cross-section – though group currently inactive.
- TPAS award received for work with Chinese tenants - meeting bi-monthly
- Extended opening hours for receiving calls to 6.30 pm. Trial terminated due to poor take-up.
- We are gathering equalities data for all groups
- Monthly updates being issued to members of Tenants Circle
- Self-assessment of our approach to customer engagement reported to committee on 30.05.22
- 3 BME tenants attended HCAG
- Community campaigning led by Co-op

#### Reason for assessment

- Still to gather and analyse data, to embed commitment to equalities throughout Co-op & to reflect diversity amongst staff and committee.

#### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- Assess equalities data and develop action plan to address any issues
- Encourage greater diversity on Committee to reflect diversity within community
- Continue self assessment programme

**Comments and recommendation** - keep amber, but consider shift to once actions completed re analysis of equalities data etc

#### Housing Quality and Maintenance

- Repairs carried out quickly - though performance affected by covid
- emergencies slightly slower than peers, non-emergencies slightly quicker
- Stock condition survey completed – 30 year investment strategy from own resources in place, further survey planned for September 2022
- All houses - other than 1 in abeyance - now comply with SHQS, [3.5% of peer group fail]
- High proportion stock meets EESSH = 99.7% compared to 97.7% for peers.
- Major investment in older properties [all to have received new heating systems, kitchens and bathrooms by 2024. Bathroom contract underway.]
- All investment to be financed without borrowing this to be reassessed following stock condition survey
- Customer satisfaction with quality of home **dropped to 86%**. [slightly lower than peer group of 88.3%]
- We do not have a formal appointment system, but tenants do specify when they would like work carried out.
- level of repairs carried out right first time -94.6% higher than peers 91.8%
- **Big drop in satisfaction with repairs services from 92.3% to 79%** compared to 92.5% for peers
- Tenant safety scorecard introduced
- All houses had gas service within 12 months
- EICRs all complete other than 3 in abeyance [no access]
- smoke detectors complete
- Follow on work to 3 unsatisfactory EICRs to be completed

**Comments and recommendation** – **reassess as amber due to significant drop in satisfaction and current uncertainty about ability to keep to long term investment programme.** repairs times have slipped – but not a significant issue

### **Neighbourhood and Community (Estate management and Anti-social behaviour)**

- Caretaking team restructured with additional equipment
- Caretaking service expanded [weedkilling etc] those very satisfied **increased to 100% from 75%**, reflecting the **full resumption** of the service **after** lockdown estate now very well maintained.
- **However, Survey showed low levels of satisfaction with grounds maintenance of our land and of land not owned by us [do people know what land we own?]**
- **91%** of tenants satisfied with management of neighbourhood [**a drop from 97.6%**] compared to 93.5% for peers
- ASB complaints are low level and all dealt with on time [96.8% for peer group] in 2020/21, though 1 not dealt with in time so far this financial year.
- Been unable to encourage tenants to attend estate walkabout. Housing Officer now carrying out regular estate inspections.
- Have struggled to get Council to deal with fly-tipping, to maintain derelict land and to repair roads/improve roads network.
- Glasgow site being developed by volunteers

#### **Reason for assessment**

- Drop in tenant satisfaction following staff being furloughed,
- Benchmarking with MHA,
- Difficulty in getting council to deal with issues

#### **Changes to be made to improve compliance**

- Review once we have results from Tenant satisfaction Survey
- Continue to develop community campaigning to ensure Council meets its obligations

**Comments and recommendation** - Retain in amber, due to drop in satisfaction, though not clear how much of this is responsibility of Co-op

### **Access to Housing and Support (Housing options and Tenancy sustainment)**

- Applicants are offered interviews to complete applications and consider options
- Welfare advice, Financial inclusion and Tenancy support services are available and have been reviewed and shown to provide VFM
- Allocations policy reviewed to comply with 2014 Act
- Significant increase in houses let to homeless - from 4.2% to 45.3% [net of transfers]
- Tenancy sustainment increased from 88.9% to 98.3% compared with ave of 93.2% for peer group
- No evictions in 2020/21 or 2021/22 with one since March 2022
- Starter packs made available for new tenants
- 217 applicants have applied online for housing

#### **Reason for assessment**

- Drop in tenancies sustained in previous year [though numbers are very small] & lack of mainstreamed support services

#### **Changes to be made to improve compliance**

- Consider approach to support projects if grant funding not obtained
- Review whether we should introduce housing options interviews
- **Application made for funding for Link up worker**

**Comments and recommendation** - Keep amber with possible review to green if tenancy support service etc obtains long term funding

## Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges

- Level of overall satisfaction slightly lower than peer group average [fell slightly from 92.9 % to 92.2% compared to 93.3% for peers] though remained at similar level despite impact of covid restrictions on services provided
- Rent level getting closer to peer group average. Rent increase at 31.03.23 was below CPI.
- Voids performance improved [though affected by covid], from 0.65% to 0.54%. This is higher than 0.41% for peers
- Rents restructured from 2015 – 2017. Significant increase but Co-operative financially viable over long term
- 2020 – all rents assessed to be affordable using SFHA tool.
- Satisfaction that rents provide value for money fell from 86% to 82%. Lower than peer group average 89.2%. May reflect impact of cost of living increases.
- In consultation on the annual rent increase 90% of the tenants that responded said we provided VFM
- Improved rent arrears performance. From 8.74% to 7.35% over 5 years - still significantly poorer than peers [3.46%]
- Posting rental Payments fully automated
- one member of staff studying for finance qualifications
- VFM and procurement strategies being reviewed every year
- Non rental income being maximised by successful grant applications - £41,204 in 2020/21, £26,750 in 2021/22
- Analysis of our costs show - our houses to staff ratio is comparable with this sample of RSLs, Our management costs per house are higher than peer group.
- Regularly participate in collaborative procurement
- Have been appointed of hubWest
- Internal audit of rent arrears provided full assurance
- Increased use of frameworks in procurement
- New Financial software fully introduced - with Purchase Order system
- Improvement in voids and arrears performance in 2021/22
- Completed external review of pensions liability in 2022
- Have carried out VFM review of caretaking service and support services that we purchase
- Last two post recruitments have reduced salary costs
- Pyramid financials fully operational
- Low rate of absence – 0.82% compared to 4.89% for peers
- Rents on 3 and 4 apts are cheaper than peers, 2 and 5 apts are dearer.
  - 2 apt £79.15 compared to £71.36
  - 3 apt £69.29 compared to £78.24
  - 4 apt £78.13 compared to £88.07
  - 5 apt £100.61 compared to £98.94

### Reason for assessment

- Management costs compared to peers and rents for 2 apts.

### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- Difficulty of achieving affordable rent increase with inflation projected to be 11%, consider feasibility of lower than inflation increase with increase phased in over future years when inflation reduces.
- Review rent levels for different sized houses.
- Review feedback from TSS
- Review management costs compared to peers

**Comments and recommendation** - Keep amber due to slow progress with arrears and little chance of acceptable rent increase being implemented this year.

## B Regulatory Standards –

See Self -assessment document [SAd], Self-assessment evidence 2019 [SAe2019] and Action Plan [SAap] for further details

	<b>Standard 1 – Leadership and direction</b>			
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	<b>Standard 2 – Openness and accountability to customers</b>			
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	<b>Standard 3 – Managing resources for affordable rents</b>			
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	<b>Standard 4 – Making decisions and managing risk</b>			
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	<b>Standard 5 – Honesty and integrity</b>			
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	<b>Standard 6 – Skills and knowledge</b>			
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	1 statement complaint (with non-material areas of improvement)			
	<b>Standard 7 – Organisational changes</b>			
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	0 statements complaint (with non-material areas of improvement)			

**Comments and recommendation –** no change

## C Regulatory Requirements & Legislation

### See – Self-Assessment requirements [SAr]

#### Health and Safety

- Management committee trained on Health and safety
- Smoke detectors in every house
- EICR carried out all but 3 houses in last 5 years. Those tenants have refused to give access
- Employer issues – Comply with Best practice and EVH guidelines/advice
- Our processes for ensuring tenant safety were externally assessed in 2021.
- All gas services carried out within 12 months
- Corporate staff taken on responsibility re compliance with tenant safety maintenance activity
- Minor works for fire safety completed,
- contract for installing self-closers is 75% complete
- Tenant safety scorecard introduced and reported to Operations sub
- Health and safety assessment completed
- Regulator has closed notifiable event re tenant safety
- Vibration levels of equipment reviewed

#### Reason for assessment

- Range and complexity of issue, need to ensure new monitoring regime is effective

#### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- Sustain quarterly scorecard for year then review compliance level

Comments and recommendation – Issue of vibration shows complexity and range of this issue – keep at amber as cant be assured we are covering all issues.

#### Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Complaints

- Complaints handling reviewed to ensure we learn from complaints and to comply with SPSO guidance
- 2 Complaints made to SPSO in 2021 – SPSO did not take complaints forward.

#### Reason for assessment

- Not been adequately tested.

#### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- review our procedures to ensure they comply with best practice

Comments and recommendation – close to green

#### Performance Reporting, Tenant Scrutiny, Complaints

- Charter return has been audited/validated,
- Arrears ARC figures has been audited by internal auditor
- Assurance statement submitted by 31.10.22 with improvement plan developed to improve compliance and progress reviewed after 6 months
- 8% of tenants regularly feeding back via Hawthorn Tenants Circle
- Complaints handling reviewed to ensure we learn from complaints with recording by person receiving call introduced
- New comprehensive quarterly performance report introduced
- Completed self-assessment re customer engagement
- Stage 1 and 2 complaints dealt with quicker than peers
- Fewer recorded complaints per house than peers

#### Reason for assessment

- Tenant scrutiny [outwith committee members] remains fairly limited with surveys rather than ongoing dialogue

#### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- Develop dialogue with Tenants Circle
- Complete two further self-assessments

Comments and recommendation – getting close to being re-assessed as green

#### Environmental Protection

- All activities [eg weed spraying] comply with environmental regulations
- Environmental Impact Policy approved Sept 2021
- Biodiversity being developed at Glasgrov site with plans for further work
- Fully funded plan agreed with Council for developing Bardowie Street park

#### Reason for assessment

- Poor performance by some tenants re waste disposal/recycling and lack of strategy to improve energy performance of our homes

#### Changes to be made to improve compliance

- Increase community buy-in to development of Glasgrov site
- Improve treatment of waste [reduce bulk, improve recycling at flats]
- Encourage bike use
- Develop policy re reduce energy use & carbon consumption in heating our homes
- **Energy Audit being carried out on Finlas St flats**

Comments and recommendation -keep as amber, due to lack of buy-in from many tenants and difficulty achieving net zero with our stock

### **Data Protection and Published Information**

- Website has been reviewed to comply with FOI during full overhaul
- GDPR policy in place.
- FOI policy in place – fully compliant
- Have obtained cyber essentials and undergoing Usecure training
- Annual report in 2021 was reviewed to ensure compliance
- FOISA included in minute taking protocol

#### **Reason for assessment**

- Minimal scrutiny/checking to ensure we consistently meet this standard

#### **Changes to be made to improve compliance**

- Carry out external assessment

**Comments and recommendation** – possible shift to green if positive external assessment

### **Equality and Human Rights**

- Equalities and Diversity action plan in place.
- Equality Impact Assessment tool in place. Policies identified where it should be used
- Approach to gathering equalities data agreed March 2022
- Equality and diversity policy reviewed April 2020
- Equalities data been gathered for staff and committee and being gathered for tenants and applicants
- Monthly updates being issued to members of Tenants Circle
- 3 BME tenants attended HCAG

#### **Reason for assessment**

- Equality Impact assessments not carried out systematically
- No strategy for human rights

#### **Changes to be made to improve compliance**

- Develop strategy in relation to human rights
- Assess equalities data and report to committee with action plan to address any issues identified.

**Comments and recommendation** – keep amber, maybe shift to green once Human Rights strategy is being implemented

### **Whistleblowing**

- Whistleblowing Policy in place
- Committee demonstrated awareness of whistleblowing in appraisal
- Committee members received training prior to signing COC
- Training for staff and committee Sept 2021
- **Comments and recommendation** – keep as green

### **Housing Law**

- Allocations Policy, ASB Policy and tenancy agreement reviewed in light of 2014 Housing Act following training from TPAS
- Allocs policy reviewed May 2022 with key elements approved by solicitor

**Comments and recommendation** – keep green

### **Accounting Taxation and Financial returns**

- External auditors been appointed following competitive tender.
- Internal auditors been competitively tendered and 3 year programme agreed.
- New Accountants appointed
- All financial returns made on time
- Annual accounts submitted to 2021 AGM

#### **Reason for assessment**

- New accounting system, accountants and external auditors recently introduced. This has highlighted various issues which are being dealt with but need properly 'tested' to ensure confidence.

#### **Changes to be made to improve compliance**

- **Decide on whether there is greater benefit in** procuring accountancy services on three year contract **or an a year-by-year rolling contract.**

#### **Comments and recommendation** – keep amber

### **Constitutional**

- Annual Assurance Statement submitted
- Comply with Regulatory Standards [with some areas identified for improvement]
- Committee reports indicate constitutional fit

#### **Comments and recommendation** – keep green

### **Employment Law**

- HR employment advice from Employers in Voluntary Housing (EVH) and external legal advisers.
- Model policies provided by EVH

#### **Comments and recommendation** – Keep green