

SHDC Housing Landlord Strategy

2024-2026



Introduction

This Strategy sets out the Council's vision for Council-owned social housing within the district of South Holland.

Expectations on Registered Providers are changing, with a focus on property condition, tenant experience and accountability. Registered Providers face the challenge of ensuring they get the basics right whilst contributing to the wellbeing of tenants and communities. Balanced with an increase in oversight and scrutiny from the media, the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing.

With over 3,700 properties, South Holland District Council is the largest landlord in South Holland providing lettings, tenancy and estate management, repairs, programmed maintenance and rent collection directly for its tenants. Homelessness duties are outside the scope of this Strategy.

In setting our Strategy, we have analysed the defining issues shaping the operating environment and the trends that the Council anticipates will influence our sector now and in the future.

A Housing Transformation Team has been established to ensure the Strategy is delivered. The document is to be read in conjunction with the Housing Transformation and Improvement Programme Mandate and the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-Regional Strategy 2024/25-2028/29.

National context

The social housing sector is currently facing several key external drivers that will influence this Strategy over its delivery period. Over the past 2 years, there has been widespread consultation and debate but, in many areas, the detail is still being determined.

The Strategy and supporting action plan must remain agile to account for pending clarifications around key policy issues. The Strategy and action plan will be revised to reflect any financial and operation impacts arising from any material changes to the assumptions made at the time of drafting this Strategy.

- **Social Housing Regulation Act 2023**
New consumer regulation ensuring that landlords listen to their tenants, communicate effectively, have good quality information about the condition of the homes they are responsible for and provide responsive and accessible landlord services. The Regulator of Social Housing sets the standards registered providers must meet so tenants live in safe, quality homes, have choice and protection, and can hold landlords to account, known collectively as the Consumer Standards (2023). Registered providers will be subject to reactive and proactive inspections to ensure that the Consumer Standards are met from April 2024.
- **Fire Safety Act 2021**
Additional fire safety measures to ensure tenants are safe in their homes.
- **Building Safety Act 2022**
New legislation to make sure all tenants are safe in their homes and landlords have a responsibility to advise and report on compliance.
- **Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code**
The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code sets out good practice that will allow landlords to respond to complaints raised by their residents quickly and to use the data and

learning from complaints to drive service improvements. It will also help to create a positive complaint handling culture amongst staff and residents.

- **Social Housing Decent Homes Standard Review**
A review of the standards for condition of social homes - consultation pending.
- **Future Homes Standard 2025**
Ensuring new built homes from 2025 produce less emissions.
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
Transforming the response to domestic abuse, helping to prevent offending, protect victims and ensure they have the support they need.
- **Care Act 2014**
Ensuring that housing has a role to play in safeguarding adults.
- **Levelling up White paper**
The government's vision for spreading opportunity more equally across the UK, announcing the establishment of an Older People's Housing Taskforce to better understand the housing market for our ageing population.
- **People at the Heart of Care, Adult Social Care Reform White Paper**
Sets out the Government proposals for reform of Adult Social Care, highlighting prevention and positioned digital connectivity as vital to better care. The government's key policy priority is to support people to remain at home, rather than in care homes or hospital settings, for as long as possible.

Whilst there is legislation, regulation and prescribed practice in place, the Council still has freedom to determine how it delivers services. This Strategy sets out how the Council will deliver its Housing Landlord Service "the service".

Strategic vision

The overall strategic vision for the Council is directed by the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Sub-Regional Strategy 2024/25-2028/29.

A bold and ambitious partnership of Councils, working together:

- To shape policy at sub-regional level
- To secure more resources to deliver on our priorities
- To do more for the communities we serve
- To have a greater impact in tackling the wider common challenges our communities face
- To become more efficient in the way we operate

As a social landlord, South Holland District Council aims to go beyond the minimum statutory and regulatory requirements placed on local authority landlords, where the tenant's voice is heard and acted upon. We will determine our vision, as a landlord, with our tenants as part of one of our first tenant engagement pieces.

Our Tenants

In 2023, the Council carried out a tenant census. Tenants were invited to complete the census by post, online and by telephone. 70% of tenants took part in this piece of work allowing us to understand more about current occupancy and vulnerabilities, as well as the level of interest and involvement tenants had in the service provided.

The key findings are as follows:



Our 'typical' tenant is a woman in her mid sixties living on her own in the Council's general needs housing



51% of tenants state that their day to day activities are limited by a long term physical or mental health condition or illness, with 40% of households experiencing permanent mobility issues



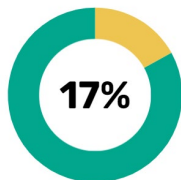
A third of general needs tenants have children living with them



54% of general needs tenants are underoccupying their home



66% of tenants would like to be more informed about our service



17% of tenants would like to be involved in improving and shaping our service

Tenant satisfaction

Tenant satisfaction is one of the many ways to measure the performance of the service.

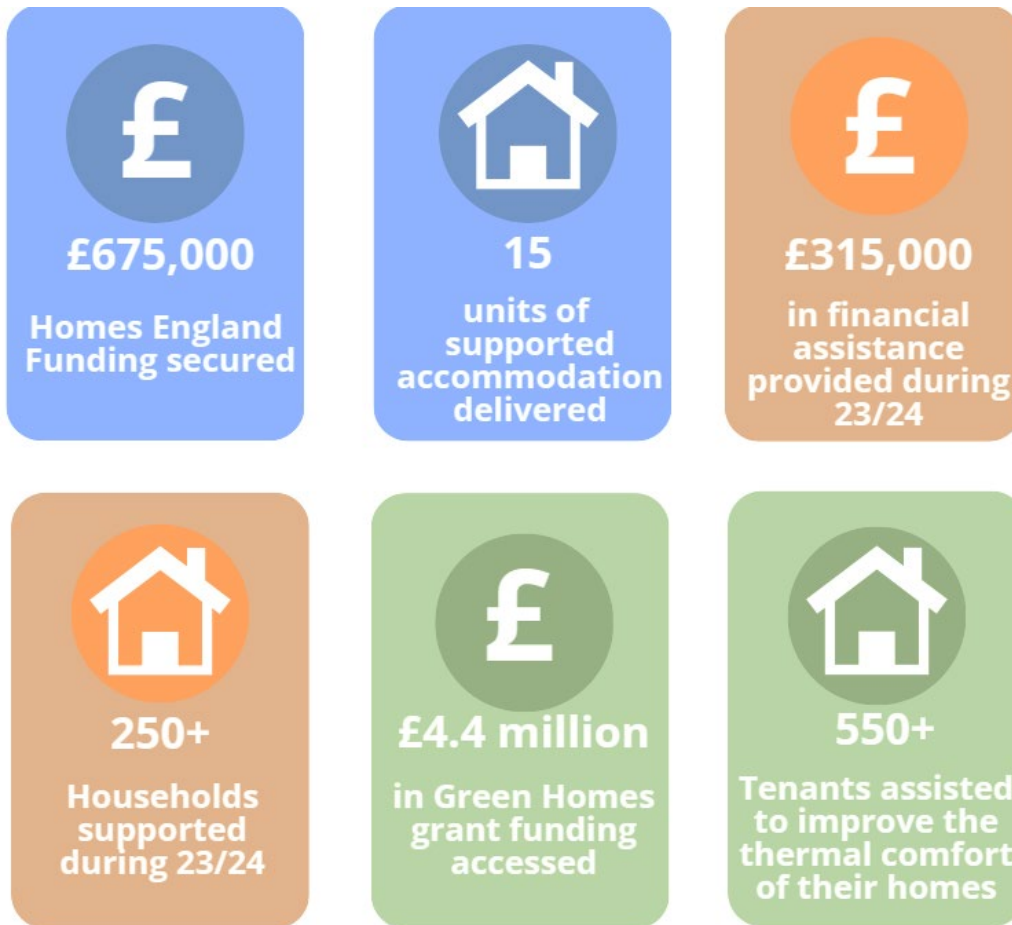
From 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing requires all registered providers to collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods. There are 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes:

- Keeping properties in good repair
- Maintaining building safety
- Respectful and helpful engagement
- Effective handling of complaints
- Responsible neighbourhood management.

This data must be submitted to the Regulator and published. Live data on tenant satisfaction will be made available on our website at www.sholland.gov.uk/GetInvolved-Feedback and will be shared with our tenants and Members annually.

Supporting our tenants

The Council prides itself in supporting its tenants.



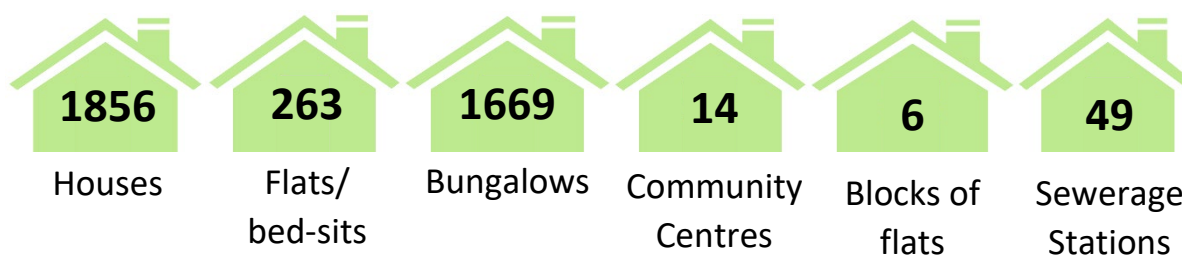
- For many years, the Council has partnered with the Citizens Advice, offering a dedicated money and debt advice service to its tenants focussed on sustaining tenancies.
- Following extensive consultation with our tenants, we have recently completed a review of the Sheltered Housing service offer. Alongside digital improvements designed by tenants, service improvements will be recommended based on tenant feedback.
- Capitalising on our Investment Partner status with Homes England, we have secured £675,000 in funding and delivered 15 units of supported accommodation. This compliments our traditional tenancy offer for those who may otherwise struggle to access accommodation.
- Our established Tenant Hardship Fund continues to support tenants suffering extreme financial hardship. In response to the Cost-of-Living crisis, we assisted tenants during 2023/24 with financial assistance in excess of £315,000. We also established a Cost-of-Living Support team, concentrated on brokering support from partner agencies, having assisted over 250 households to date with a variety of issues such as improving finances, downsizing and accessing employment.
- We have secured £4.4 million in Green Homes grant funding to date, assisting over 550 tenants with improving the thermal comfort of their homes, in turn reducing their energy costs.

Our properties

South Holland District Council manages a portfolio of over 3,700 homes across the district consisting of bed-sits, flats (all below 11m tall), bungalows and houses let as general needs and sheltered housing, plus shared owners and leaseholders. 1025 units are let as sheltered housing to residents aged 55 and over and/or residents that would benefit from a wellbeing alarm system connected to a telecare service available 24/7.

Included in the portfolio are community centres scattered across the district within our Sheltered Housing schemes, as well as sewerage treatment works where our residents are not able to access mains sewers. In 2022/2023, we invested £5 million in our properties and have committed to spend £7.5 million during 23/24 (including £2.8 million Green Home grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of our homes). In 2023, we purchased 54 new properties.

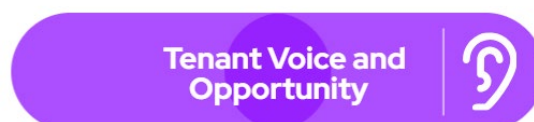
The portfolio is ringfenced via the Housing Revenue Account. All money received from tenants and leaseholders for rent and service charges pays for housing management services, reactive repairs, planned maintenance, estates, and asset management. The Strategy provides the overarching direction for how the resources and assets held within the HRA are used.



Please note these figures fluctuate based on Right to Buy sales and new properties being purchased.

Our ambitions

This Strategy covers areas of service delivery related to landlord functions and how the Council shapes, engages, and improves services for tenants. The Strategy follows four themes:



Culture and Operational Excellence

We will deliver a service that meets the needs and aspirations of our tenants, whilst keeping them safe. To accomplish this, we will:

- Embed a professional and positive culture where we respect and listen to tenants and do the right thing, including proactively putting things right when they go wrong. The corporate culture will include partnership working, inclusivity and task ownership
- Appropriately resource the service, retaining and recruiting talent
- Ensure that the service has a strong voice across the Council and South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
- Make sure our colleagues have the tools, insight, knowledge and flexibility to provide a positive customer experience including intelligence into how people are living, targeting support for those in greatest need
- Equip our colleagues with the information, professionalism, skills and capacity to embed change

Accountability and Transparency

We will be well governed and financially resilient, operating efficiently and responsibly, and investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose. To be successful, we will:

- Critically examine our decision making, satisfaction and performance with our tenants and our partners through the lens of their expectations
- Measure, monitor, report and publish our performance, anticipating issues before they occur
- Embed compliance and assurance at the heart of our Service through good governance arrangements
- Balance the priorities of excellence in outcomes for tenants whilst seeking efficiency and delivering value for money
- Benchmark ourselves against organisations inside and outside of the Housing sector
- Use data to make the right decisions to drive the best outcomes for our homes and our customers

Quality Homes and Connected Neighbourhoods

We will deliver well maintained, safe, affordable homes and neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live that supports their health and wellbeing. To achieve this, we will:

- Continue to take our regulatory, statutory and legislative responsibilities extremely seriously by carrying out programmed safety checks, visits, and regular inspections

- Continue to actively seek external funding and invest in our homes to improve energy efficiency, thermal comfort and seek to reduce the running costs of our homes
- Be confident in the data we hold about our assets to help us make informed proposals on where tenant's money should be spent including making strategic decisions about disposing of assets that are impacting on the standard of service we can deliver
- Continue to work with our tenants to inform us how to improve and get the best out of our Repairs Service
- Invest in the delivery of new homes across a variety of tenures to increase choice and support successful mixed communities
- Work with our partners to provide reliable, consistent services, and tailored intensive support to those tenants who need us the most.

Tenant Voice and Opportunity

Tenants will be at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make. In order to ensure tenants are involved and informed, we will:

- Transform our approach to tenant engagement, ensuring that tenants have opportunities to engage with us in ways that suit them, where they can influence and shape our current and future services
- Ensure tenants are well positioned in our governance structure, inviting them to scrutinise services with us
- Ensure tenants have a high level of satisfaction, where we listen to their concerns and put things right where we need to
- Give tenants a choice in when and how they use our services, ensuring they can access high-quality services quickly, easily and in a way which suits them
- Prioritise service improvements where it will make the biggest difference to our tenants

Measuring success

The Council will measure the success of our Strategy using a series of key performance indicators.

- National Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Tenant satisfaction surveys
- Repair response times and satisfaction
- Quality, time and satisfaction of void properties
- EPC rating of our homes
- ASB data and insight
- Regulator of Social Housing inspection
- New policies adopted
- Complaints data and insight
- Employee satisfaction surveys
- Call and email response times to tenants

Monitoring

The Council is committed to being open and transparent about our performance, and accountable to all our stakeholders, ensuring there is clarity about the accountability and structures framework.

The work of teams, and the results of performance, will be scrutinised and regulated collaboratively by the following:

- Council boards and committees
 - In addition to committees such as Policy Development Panel and Performance Monitoring Panel, we will establish a Housing Programme Board to monitor the satisfaction, performance, and progress of the strategy
 - Oversight for the delivery of the Strategy will lie with the Portfolio Holder – Communities and Operational Housing, Deputy Chief Executive – Corporate and Assistant Director - Housing. They will make sure the service fulfils the primary requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and all other legislation
 - Compliance and performance will be reported as follows:
 - Monthly to the Portfolio Holder – Communities and Operational Housing
 - Quarterly to Senior Leadership Team
 - Six monthly progress report will be provided to Executive Members
- Our tenants
 - Scrutiny and involvement forums – to be established
 - Progress updates and performance information (including satisfaction) will be shared regularly with our tenants including in our annual report and on our website
- Regulator of Social Housing and regulatory standards
 - Annual and quarterly reporting on key performance metrics, stock volumes and implementation of the regulatory standards
 - Assessment / inspections regime
- Housing Ombudsman Service
 - Self-assessment against the Complaints Handling Code
 - Reporting complaint data and demonstrating learning from complaints
- Building safety regulation
 - Health & safety legislation and regulatory compliance
 - Responding to the emerging Building Safety Regulator within the Health and Safety sector
- Benchmarking against the sector.

To ensure the Strategy reflects the changing landscape in the social housing sector, the content will be reviewed on a regular basis with minor operational amendments adopted by the Assistant Director – Housing in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Operational Housing. Progress against the Strategy will be reported annually taking account of any fundamental changes.

Housing Landlord Transformation and Improvement Programme Mandate



February 2024

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1. Purpose

The Programme Mandate defines the Housing Landlord Transformation and Improvement Programme “the programme” in terms of why it is needed, what it will achieve, the governance arrangements and how the programme will be managed. It describes how the programme will review, design and deliver the aspirations of the Council and the actions arising from the various audits undertaken by the Service in preparation for regulation changes in the social housing sector. It supports the Programme Board and Key Stakeholders to visualise the pathway for change and how outputs and outcomes will move into a new Business As Usual operating model.

The Mandate should act as a guide to the Programme Board as a reminder as to why the programme is being undertaken. The priorities will be reviewed annually.

At the outset of the programme, it is difficult to define all the relevant parameters. The Mandate seeks to describe plans for the immediate phase of ‘Solid Foundations’ and the outline of subsequent phases. In the immediate phase, we will be seeking to review the basics of the Housing Landlord Service “the service”; evidencing our strengths and improving our areas of weakness in order to deliver excellence.

The programme mandate should be read in conjunction with the Housing Landlord Strategy for a full understanding of the ambition of the service.

2. Programme Ambition – the Landlord the Council aims to be

When the programme is completed, we will have established a service that delivers a proactive, bespoke offering, whilst demonstrating best practice and establishing a framework for continuous review and improvement. Our tenants will be informed and have the opportunity to regularly scrutinise services. We will maintain up to date and validated data about our properties, which will underpin decision making. We will deliver a safe and compliant service which meets regulatory and legislative requirements, performance will be measured and scrutinised, and Councillors and Senior Officers will have assurance and oversight of the service.

3. Programme vision

A comprehensive review and improvement of every facet of the Housing Landlord Service is completed, ensuring tenants are at the heart of everything we do.

4. The case for change

In February 2022, the Council participated in a Local Government Association Peer Challenge focussed on Social Housing Management. The challenge focussed on the service within the Housing Revenue Account and the Council’s readiness for the Social Housing Charter (White Paper for the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023). Recommendations for improvement were made. The Local Government Association described the Council as being in a ‘strong position to make the step change by the Charter [now Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023], with good foundations to build on’.

In May 2023, following the local elections, the Council experienced a change in Executive Members. The new Administration aspires to expand on resident involvement in how services are delivered and consultation with residents.

In August 2023, the Council commissioned a suitably experienced external professional to assess and report on the landlord function. This ‘health check’ provided a high-level analysis of the

service and made the case for change by recommending an improvement plan be produced with clear milestones to address the service specific issues identified, including meeting the requirements within the relevant and emerging legislation.

In September 2023, the Council carried out a self-assessment of the service and considered its position and approach against the specific legislation and regulatory standards of the Social Housing Regulator. Key risks were identified as part of this piece of work.

The assessments of readiness in response to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act (2023) have been the drivers for transformational change across the service resulting in a proactive approach to delivering services to ensure they comply with the new Consumer Regulation Standards.

Senior Leaders, Officers and Members are aware that change is needed and support a review of the service and ways of working.

A summary of the drivers for change:

- Changes in regulation including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act (2023) and good practice such as the findings of the Better Social Housing Review;
- Enhanced customer focussed services required by the Housing Ombudsman;
- Customer satisfaction evidenced by our Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey findings;
- Results from our Tenant Census – 54% of general needs properties are underoccupied. There are permanent mobility issues within 40% of households and mental health issues amongst 30%
- The Regulator’s requirement for an accountable and transparent service delivering value for money to its tenants.

5. Transformation methodology

Our methodology describes the way we will approach transformation, and consists of five stages:

- identify the item to review;
- discover and analyse the service;
- consult with key stakeholders;
- prepare a business case setting out the change to include risks, financial evaluation, resource requirements and timescales;
- design and pilot amendments; and
- transform and embed the change with clear and regular communication with all stakeholders.

6. Programme themes

The Housing Landlord Strategy sets out four strategic themes which will focus on strengthening the delivery of our Housing Landlord Service into the future.

Culture and
Operational Excellence




We will deliver a service that meets the needs and aspirations of our tenants, whilst keeping them safe.

Accountability and Transparency 

We will be well governed and financially resilient, operating efficiently and responsibly, and investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose.

Quality Homes and Connected Neighbourhoods 

We will deliver well maintained, safe, affordable homes and neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live that supports their health and wellbeing.

Tenant Voice and Opportunity 

Tenants will be at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make.

7. Programme scope

The programme affects the strategic delivery of all Housing Landlord Services which includes the following functions:

- Tenancy management and enforcement
- Estate management
- Programmed repairs
- Voids and responsive repairs
- Business Support including complaint handling and data analysis.

The programme scope excludes the following:

- Rent collection and rent setting
- Review of the Sheltered Housing Offer (separate project)
- Delivery and operation of ‘business as usual’ – the Housing Management Team will continue to deliver the landlord ‘day to day’ functions whilst the service is reviewed
- Drafting of a Housing Strategy
- Housing Options Service
- Private Sector Housing Service
- Operational management arrangements for Housing Delivery.

8. Programme goals and objectives

The Housing Landlord Transformation and Improvement Programme (HLTIP) is designed to support the ambition and objectives of South Holland District Council by improving the service it provides to tenants. whilst ensuring we are compliant with the relevant legislation.

*Outcomes with an asterisk relate to the Regulator of Social Housing’s Consumer Standards 2023 – at the time of writing the report, these were still in draft stage.

Key deliverables	Expected outcomes
STRATEGIC THEME: Culture and operational excellence	
Embed a professional and positive culture where we respect and listen to tenants and do the right thing, including proactively putting things right.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants are treated with fairness and respect* • We use relevant information and data to ensure we understand the diverse needs of our tenants, and assess whether tenants have fair access to and equitable outcomes of housing and landlord services*

<p>The corporate culture will include partnership working, inclusivity and task ownership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We allow tenants and prospective tenants to be supported by a representative or advocate in interactions with us* • There is a culture of ongoing service improvement. • The approach to complaint handling is simple and accessible. Complaints are addressed fairly, effectively and promptly.* • Tenants are informed about the types of complaints received and how we have learned from them and improved the service.* • The vision and values of the service have been established (involving tenants), and Officers understand and adhere to them. • A culture of evidence-based checks has been established across the service with transactional surveys carried out. Areas of difficulty or underperformance are identified promptly, and planned interventions support quick resolution. • Feedback and involvement from Officers at all levels is welcomed, valued and encouraged. Officers are confident to propose ideas and that they will be considered fully.
<p>Appropriately resource the Housing Landlord service, retaining and recruiting the best talent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Health and Safety Lead is appointed, and tenants are aware of this individual and their role*. • A revised service workforce is achieved based on customer data and insight, governed, and resourced appropriately. • Personal development opportunities are available, inspiring excellence and enabling Officers to reach their full potential whilst building resilience within the service. • Programmes such as the SELCP Future Leaders Programme grow succession plans, highlighting a clear career path to inspire Officers and assist with recruitment. • Attainment of professional qualifications and membership of professional bodies is supported and encouraged. Managers have enrolled onto professional courses to gain necessary qualifications and a skills audit has been completed for the whole department.
<p>Ensure that the Housing Landlord Service has a strong voice across the Council and South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clarity on relevant service standards and expectations within the Council. Service level agreements are established and performance is measured. • Officers and Members are familiar with the activities and responsibilities of the service and the regulatory requirements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We showcase good news stories of best practice within the service and feedback to Officers. • Organisational silos are addressed and effective cooperation and collaboration between departments is demonstrated.
Make sure our colleagues have the tools, insight, knowledge and flexibility to provide a positive customer experience including intelligence into how people are living, targeting support for those in greatest need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual records of interactions with tenants are accurate and provide insights that improve service performance. Individual communications include progress, next steps and outcomes*. • Communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of our tenants*. • We develop a data roadmap demonstrating that we collect and use our data to inform and improve performance. • Areas for improvement have been identified by data and inform the production and improvement of processes, systems, and policies • A customer service training programme is established. • The focus on equality and diversity and inclusion is strengthened.
STRATEGIC THEME: Accountability and Transparency	
Critically examine our decision making, satisfaction and performance with our tenants and our partners through the lens of their expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have established a clear and realistic vision for the service with tenants. A vision is publicly available and regularly refreshed. Members, Officers, and residents understand the vision for the service; and progress towards its achievement can be demonstrated. • We provide tenants with; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ information about how we are performing and actions being taken to improve services ○ how we have taken tenants' views into account to improve services, information and communication ○ how income is being spent ○ directors remuneration and management costs*
Measure, monitor, report and publish our performance, anticipating issues before they occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettings and sales continue to be reported via CORE system* • A suite of KPIs have been delivered- performance reporting is comprehensive, covers all services that make up the landlord function, and includes multiple sources of information. • Performance information is reported and published in a format that can be easily understood by all. • Comprehensive compliance reporting and assurance to Senior Leadership Team, Portfolio Holder, Scrutiny and other Tenant Boards (once established) • Continue to report data to central government including LADR and LAHS returns.

<p>Embed compliance and assurance at the heart of our service through good governance arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is available to tenants about the relevant roles and responsibilities of Senior Officers, including who has responsibility for compliance with the Consumer Standards* • We continue to meet all statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements/terms of occupation* • Risks are managed, minimising incidents of harm, non-compliance, and unnecessary expenditure. Risk registers inform agendas for Senior Officer and Member meetings. • Decisions taken and the reasons for them are recorded, tracked and communicated. • Officers and Members have a clear view on progress towards achieving strategic objectives, and policy and regulatory requirements are met. • Members and Senior Officers are clear about which body is accountable for different aspects of operational delivery, including statutory and regulatory requirements. • HRA business plan narrative is produced including a shared understanding of the acceptable minimum reserve level for the HRA to unlock resources to deliver against the strategic vision. • Housing Landlord Advisory Board established to receive and review information related to compliance and make recommendations for change. • Data assurance exercise on compliance measures completed evidencing compliance with legislative and regulatory standards • Contract Register established
<p>Balance the priorities of excellence in outcomes for tenants whilst seeking efficiency and delivering value for money</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have considered alternate delivery models for services including a review of existing arrangements with partner departments, including but not limited to Park and Grounds, Facilities, Community Safety and Environmental Protection. • Value for money and open competition across services is demonstrated and published as part of our procurement and contract awarding.
<p>Benchmark ourselves against organisations inside and outside the Housing sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking information is available alongside performance reporting. • Work programmes and performance improvement plans include adoption of good and emerging practice.
<p>Use data to make the right decisions to drive the best outcomes for our homes and our customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An embedded data driven culture. The service makes sound operational and strategic decisions underpinned by informed and validated data.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data informs the design and delivery of services, delivering high levels of compliance and value for money investment. • Our service offers adjustment to tenant vulnerabilities, with decisions documented.
STRATEGIC THEME: Quality Homes and Connected Neighbourhoods	
<p>Continue to take our regulatory, statutory and legislative responsibilities extremely seriously by carrying out programmed safety checks, visits, and regular inspections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents feel safe in their homes we identify and take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and communal areas* • All required actions arising from legally required health and safety assessments are carried out within appropriate timescales* • The safety of tenants is considered in the design and delivery of our services, taking reasonable steps to mitigate risks* • We deliver high levels of property safety by utilising modern practices in asset management
<p>Continue to seek funding and actively invest in our homes to improve energy efficiency, thermal comfort and seek to reduce the running costs of our homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A programme of detailed assessments of all our properties has been established to understand how they are performing and where we need to invest. • Energy reduction initiatives explored and tenants are aware of ways to reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint • A programme is in place to ensure all properties achieve EPC C by 2035.
<p>Be confident in the data we hold about our assets to help us make informed proposals on where tenant's money should be spent including making strategic decisions about disposing of assets that are impacting on the standard of service we can deliver</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes with adaptations continue to be allocated appropriately* and processes are established regarding rent setting and updating our records • Repairs, planned maintenance and improvements are informed by the needs of tenants and provide value for money*. • A consistent approach has been adopted for service charge setting and reviews . • We develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in our properties* • We take action to prevent and tackle tenancy fraud* • We hold accurate data for each property, based on a physical assessment of all properties and this data is kept up to date* • Data from across our records informs the provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes* • Property standards inform our investment, development and disposal programmes • A programme of investment and improvement is established for play equipment in our green spaces • Data we hold about our properties informs our HRA business plan and an investment programme to ensure all our homes meet relevant quality standards

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use innovative technologies to better understand our properties and customers
Continue to work with our tenants to inform us how to improve and get the best out of our Repairs Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive repairs service, ensuring customers can report repairs easily*, get their repairs fixed first time with clear information along the way (including timescales)* • New voids standard and approach with quality assurance processes, unlocking savings in time and/or money • Services delivered under contract meeting landlord and tenant needs and expectations. • Tenant satisfaction levels are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
Invest in the delivery of new homes across a variety of tenures to increase choice and support successful mixed communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support the Council in fulfilling its duties to meet identified local housing need * • We make sound strategic decisions on delivering new homes underpinned by data on demand and need, including requirements for accessible homes
Work with our partners to provide reliable, consistent services, and tailored intensive support to those tenants who need us the most	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With our partners, we promote social housing, environmental and economic wellbeing in our district including digital inclusion*. • We offer tenancies compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community and the efficient use of our housing stock* • We have established ways of working to tackle and deter hate incidents in our neighbourhoods* • Working co-operatively with other agencies, we enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice to tackle domestic abuse * • The wider Council supports Lincolnshire County Council in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation* • We continue to supply tenants with access to a free mutual exchange matching service* and this is publicised to tenants* • Support is available to assist tenants with accessing mutual exchanges and they are supplied with information on the implications for tenure, rent and service charges* • We prevent unnecessary evictions and support is available to tenants to sustain their tenancy * • Timely advice and assistance is offered about housing options before a tenancy ends*. • We engage with partners when there are evident welfare needs, exploring sharing of data to proactively map our most vulnerable tenants. This

	<p>will include targeted proactive campaigns to promote the services available to tenants including the possibility of moving to sheltered housing, accessing disabled adaptations and support available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular strategic meetings are held with partner agencies achieving proactive solutions • New disabled adaptations process introduced. Clearly communicated revised process with tenants and partners • We work with our tenants and partner agencies to tackle and reduce incidents of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) • New approach to ASB case management including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ it is easy to report ASB ○ vulnerable residents know what they can expect when reporting ASB* ○ tenants are informed about the progress of their case. ○ we take prompt and appropriate action, utilising a full range of tools and legal powers ○ we support and signpost victims to agencies that can support them* • A menu of support options is available for victims of domestic abuse and we have reviewed our approach regarding responding to domestic abuse. • Where practicably possible, we will share data across Council departments to support the delivery of services, such as occupancy rates of properties (Council Tax), businesses being run from homes (Licensing), potential HMOs on our estates (Private Sector Housing) etc.
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STRATEGIC THEME: Tenant Voice and Opportunity

<p>Transform our approach to tenant engagement, ensuring that tenants have opportunities to engage with us in ways that suit them, where they can influence and shape our current and future services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive tenant handbook produced with tenants including information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Available landlord services and how to access them, and standards of service tenants can expect ○ Standards of safety and quality tenants can expect homes and communal areas to meet ○ Rents and service charges that are payable by tenants ○ Responsibility of the landlord and the tenant for maintaining homes, communal areas, shared spaces and neighbourhoods* • Decisions are informed by local knowledge as well as data. • A multi strand communication and engagement offering is developed by tenants for tenants including
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	<p>establishing a Tenant Board. Tenants get involved in the things that matter most to them and make our services more accountable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets set aside for training and upskilling tenants to assist them in improving and scrutinising our service
<p>Ensure tenants are well positioned in our governance structure, inviting them to scrutinise services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We elevate and amplify the voice of tenants, ensuring they are heard by policymakers and decision-makers • The service regularly considers ways to improve and tailor our approach with tenants* • A wide range of meaningful opportunities exists for tenants to influence and scrutinise our strategies, policies and services including the neighbourhood*. Where there is interest to do so, arrangements are in place for tenants to deliver these activities * • Accessible support is available, meeting the diverse needs of our tenants, so they can engage with us* • Customer commitments and service standards are established with tenants, providing clarity on what tenants can expect.
<p>Ensure tenants have a high level of satisfaction, where we listen to their concerns and put things right where we need to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our complaints process is accessible to tenants and they know what they can do if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint or how a complaint was handled* • Complaints data and process has been reviewed and different ways of working have been established (learning from mistakes and making proactive service improvements). • Satisfaction surveys are regularly carried out with results and improvements published
<p>Give tenants a choice in when and how they use our services, ensuring they can access high-quality services quickly, easily and in a way which suits them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are accessible and accessibility is publicised to tenants. This includes supporting tenants to use online services, if required* • Services are more convenient for residents to use and enhanced digital opportunities are available such as reporting repairs online • A digital roadmap is produced to solve standard issues and transactions through digital means quickly and easily for customers, whilst allowing our telephone and in person responses to focus on more complex queries and to be there for customers who do not use digital channels
<p>Prioritise service improvements where it will make the biggest difference to our tenants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities are available for tenants to realise their aspirations and achieve their full potential. • Tenants see their priorities reflected in actions or understand why their views have not been incorporated into policy/service delivery approaches.

	<p>This is felt equally by residents from diverse demographics and geographies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A service improvement priority plan is established based on tenant feedback.
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9. Key strategies and policies

In order to deliver the outcomes, we will produce and/or review policies and strategies in place. The table overleaf sets out the documents required and whether we have an existing policy in place. We will involve, Officers, Members and Tenants in drafting these.

We will ensure all tenant facing policies and procedures are accessible, easy to read, kept up to date, and tenants have been involved in shaping them.

Key

*Regulatory Consumer Standards
+ Policy in place currently

- Housing Landlord Strategy +
- Health and Safety Policy
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Equality and Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding Adults and Children Policy +
- Learning and Development Programme
- Resourcing Report
- Skills audit

Culture and Operational Excellence

- Tenant Engagement Policy +
- Tenant Census +
- Tenant Satisfaction Measure Surveys and action plan +
- Tenant Handbook
- Housing Communication Strategy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Tenant Voice and Opportunity

KEY STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Accountability and Transparency

- KPI's
- Compliance scorecard
- Risk Register for the Landlord Service
- Data Strategy
- Value for Money procedure including procurement and contract management
- Policy & Procedure review programme (year planner)
- Service Level Agreements with internal departments+*
- HRA Business Plan +*
- Remuneration and management costs*
- Self-Assessment against Ombudsman reports
- Housing Ombudsman Code self-assessment+*
- Compliments, Comments, Complaints and Compensation Policy+*
- Income Management Policy+
- Rent and Service Charge Setting Policy*
- Tenancy Fraud Policy*

Quality Homes and Neighbourhoods

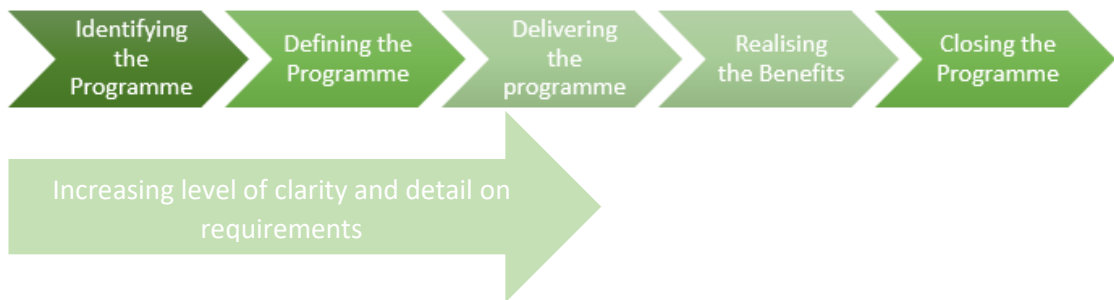
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy*
- Domestic Abuse Policy*
- Hate Crime Policy*
- Underoccupancy Policy*
- Aids and Adaptations Policy
- Repairs, Voids, and Maintenance Policy+*
- Disposal of Land and Assets Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Damp condensation and Mould Policy*
- Landlord Compliance Policy*
- Fire Safety in Buildings Policy*
- Garage Management Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy*
- Tenancy Management Policy+*
- Estate Management Policy+
- Tenancy Strategy*
- Allocations and Lettings Policy+
- Introductory Tenancy Policy*
- Succession Policy
- Housing Strategy*
- Housing Delivery Framework+

- *We publish clear and accessible policies outlining our approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies, prevent unnecessary evictions and tackle tenancy fraud**
- *Policies will be fair, reasonable, accessible and transparent, and where relevant, they set out decision-making criteria and appeals processes**

10. Programme delivery overview

The framework we are using for the programme will provide the basis for achieving consistency in how we define, plan and deliver the programme over the coming years.

The framework has five key elements as illustrated in the diagram below. We have completed the initial activities involved in the identification of a programme. The next stage of the process will be to create greater clarity against the programme elements and to develop implementation plans.



11. Target Operating Model

The development of the Target Operating Model (the way the service will be delivered in the future) plays a key role within delivery of this programme of work. The guiding principle will allow the programme to remain focused and the required outcomes can be tested against the plans to ensure the desired benefits can be achieved.

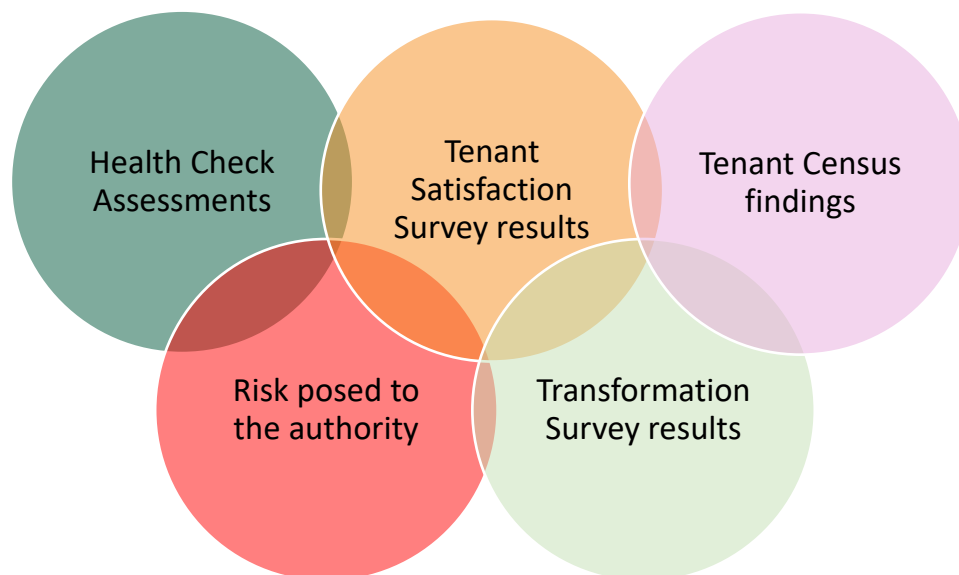
Initially the programme has determined a fluid Target Operating Model (TOM) to allow programme focus centred around achieving the desired tenant experience. The TOM acts as a guide for direction and may be developed throughout the programme journey.

The programme will be an opportunity to trial and pilot key initiatives whilst working with tenants to understand the value added.



12. Our focus for the coming years

Programme priorities have been determined by balancing tenant satisfaction with recommendations from Health Check Assessments (including LGA peer review recommendations) and risk posed to the Authority in response to the requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.



- Health Check Assessment priorities:
 - ASB case management
 - A tenant centred culture – engagement and satisfaction
 - Reviewing the voids standard
 - Using data to influence decision making and planning
 - Strengthening governance, performance oversight, challenge and risk mitigation
- 2023 Tenant Satisfaction Measures – areas of least satisfaction
- Key risks to the authority regarding non-compliance with Consumer Standards:
 - Transformational change required to achieve meaningful engagement.
 - A clear approach for how we will tackle and deter hate incidents in neighbourhoods.
 - Policy required on how to respond to domestic abuse and Anti-Social Behaviour.
 - Governance and oversight
- Housing Ombudsman recommendations made as part of an investigation regarding disabled aids and adaptations
- 2023 Tenant Census – 66% of households would like to be kept more informed about at least one of the following;
 - Investment in your home (repairs and upgrades) – 54%
 - Keeping your home safe (fire safety and health and safety) – 46%
 - Supporting you (financial help and support available) – 42%
 - Looking after your neighbourhood (ASB management) – 39%
 - How we spend your rent – 23%
- Resident and Officer Transformation survey results –
 - Formal consultation with residents and officers between 19th December 23 – 7th January 24 on the four main objectives of the Housing Landlord Strategy and on

the key issues that residents and officers think are the most important areas for the Council as a Housing Landlord to prioritise.

- The top 5 issues that residents and officers wanted the Council to prioritise were
 1. ASB management – 45.21%
 2. Review and Improve housing repairs services – 43.84%
 3. Review the condition we handover our properties to new tenants in (voids standard) – 39.73%
 4. Property maintenance – 36.99%
 5. Tenants views and satisfaction – 35.62%

Wider stakeholder engagement will occur as the programme progresses and projects are developed.

13. Indicative timescales and priorities



14. Risks

The following risks have been identified in initial desktop studies.

Ref	Risk	Mitigation/ Response
S1	There is a risk that the programme Mandate will not be supported by Members or the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This may delay the start of the programme and will compromise the authority's ability to meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman.	Early engagement with Members and SLT on the importance of the programme and the Outcomes it is seeking to achieve.

S2	Not being clear on what 'great' looks like and being able to consistently articulate and embed.	Joining HouseMark will allow benchmarking and sharing of best practice. Currently CIH Members allowing access to examples of best practice and webinars.
S3	There is a risk that the Regulator of Social Housing inspects the Council during the programme period.	Minutes will be taken for Board meetings and work evidenced to show how we are working towards compliance. Greatest risk items will be prioritised.
S4	There is a risk that Officers do not travel in the direction that is needed to deliver the programme and the culture does not change.	Change management training/coaching provided to Housing Managers and HR involved. Regular Officer briefings and surveys on changes.
D1	There is a risk that Housing Managers/Officers do not assist with the necessary information and resources to deliver the programme. This will compromise the authority's ability to meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing.	Assistant Director - Housing on the Programme Board. Clear scope and regular Manager briefings.
D2	There is a risk that SELCP Partnership Managers/Officers of shared services do not assist with the necessary information and resources to deliver the programme. This will compromise the authority's ability to meet the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing.	Senior Officers on the Programme Board from a variety of areas within the Partnership. Interdependencies will be recorded and tracked.
D3	There is a risk that the Transformation Team is not resourced appropriately to successfully deliver the programme.	As the programme progresses and is mapped out, resourcing will be reviewed
D4	Scope creep - the Transformation Team becomes involved in operational matters and demands	Open dialogue with Assistant Director – Housing. Clear mandate from the outset to maintain focus of transformation programme.
D5	Legislation changes during the transformation.	Subscriptions to regular legal and sector updates. Programme Board to be 'fleet of foot' and able to respond to changes and revise priorities accordingly.
D6	The Transformation Team does not track a change in legislation/expectation from the Regulator/Housing Ombudsman and misses a key deliverable. (There is no other resource focussed on policy/legislation changes currently – reliance that the team is keeping track of changes).	Subscriptions to regular legal and sector updates. Housing Managers sharing information about changes within the department. Monthly meetings organised with the Head of Delivery (member of the Chartered Institute of Housing Policy Advisory Committee).
D7	The Transformation Team does not have capacity to read and respond to Ombudsman and Regulator consultations.	As the programme progresses and is mapped out, resourcing will be reviewed
O1	There is a risk that the Programme Board will not be established soon enough to	Early engagement with Board members to secure their position on the Board

	drive forward the first phase of the programme, as a consequence the programme will be delayed in moving to mobilisation which will compromise the authority's ability to meet the requirements of the Regulator.	
O2	Housing Managers do not have the capacity to dedicate the time needed to support the review of services.	Dates of service pressures e.g. rent review will be mapped out and attempts will be made to avoid these times wherever possible
O3	Service interruption stalls the programme e.g. mass flooding/major change in legislation	Disaster recovery plan. Transformation Team to switch focus and priorities to ensure time is not lost.
L1	Survey/consultation results in breach of data protection regulations.	Early engagement with Data Protection Officer and sign off of consultations

15. Assumptions

There are several assumptions associated with the programme including:

- The programme and its mandate have full Member support.
- The workforce changes can be developed and implemented at pace in line with the operating model developed and in line with the service organisational need.
- There is sufficient resource and capacity within the Transformation Team and across the service to ensure delivery of the programme.
- There are sufficient funds available to continue to deliver in accordance with the programme across all key areas.
- The culture development identified and built into change planning is openly adopted and successfully embedded by all.

16. Interdependencies

A key focus on this programme will be to monitor and consider key interdependencies. Initial interdependencies identified include:

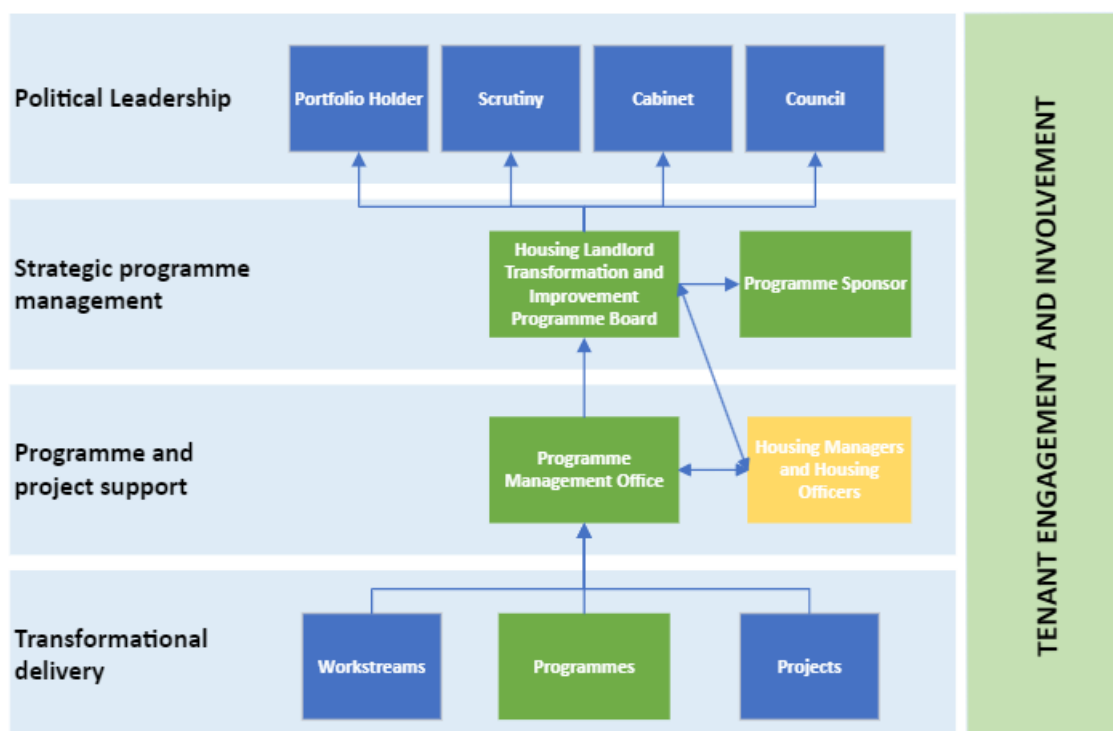
- Preparation, adoption and implementation of a Housing Strategy
- Review and update the Council's Safeguarding Policy
- Delivery of a Partnership and Playing fields Strategy
- Current and future regulatory legislation
- Support available from Communications and Consultation Team to sign-off consultations and communications, and to analyse consultation responses.

17. Governance

The programme's governance and reporting structures need to be efficient, promoting action and innovation and making best use of existing operational governance structures.

The programme will be managed within the Council's Constitution. Where constitutionally required, decisions regarding projects within the programme will be presented to existing Member Committees for approval.

Tenants will be involved throughout the programme including influencing and scrutinising decisions and recommendations.



18. Roles and responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities have been determined:

Housing Transformation Team	To engage with tenants, identify issues, assess best practice, propose reforms, present informed options and recommendations to Programme Board.
Housing Transformation Programme Board	To review options, challenge and scrutinise recommendations and make decisions (or make recommendations to decision makers in accordance with the constitution).
Housing Managers	Role model professional behaviours, supporting proposed changes through coaching their relevant teams to embrace new ways of working. Engage with and provide support to the Transformation Team and highlight areas of weakness/gaps whilst proposing potential solutions/improvements.
Assistant Director - Housing	To be satisfied that the changes proposed are right and proportionate for tenants and the Council, with proposals backed up by evidence. To ensure that the changes made by the Housing Transformation Team are adopted and become Business as Usual within a timely manner. To provide a link to the Senior Leadership Team.
Senior Leadership Team	To be satisfied that the changes proposed are supported by evidence, and that they meet the relative legislative requirements. To provide a Partnership overview.

Portfolio Holder – Communities and Operational Housing	To chair the Transformation Board. To influence and scrutinise service improvements and recommendations made by the Housing Transformation Team. To be satisfied that data supports recommendations and that tenants and Officers have been involved with the improvements. To provide a link with other Members and encourage their early engagement in the change process.
Members	To engage in the change process at an early stage and scrutinise recommendations made by the Housing Transformation Team prior to considering them for adoption.

19. National and local context

In preparing this mandate, the following supporting information has been considered.

SHDC:

- Consumer Regulation Health Check 2023
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 Self-Assessment
- LGA Social Housing Management Peer Challenge 2022
<https://democracy.sholland.gov.uk/documents/s35866/Appendix%201%20for%20LGA%20Social%20Housing%20Management%20Peer%20Challenge.pdf>
- LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2023 <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/article/22624/LGA-Peer-Challenge>
- Tenant Satisfaction Measure Survey report (ARP) – following Member adoption
- Tenant Census Report (ARP) [https://www.sholland.gov.uk/media/23965/South-Holland-District-Council-Tenant-Census-2023-Report/pdf/1456 South Holland DC tenant census 2023 report v2.pdf?m=1703674821847](https://www.sholland.gov.uk/media/23965/South-Holland-District-Council-Tenant-Census-2023-Report/pdf/1456%20South%20Holland%20DC%20tenant%20census%202023%20report%20v2.pdf?m=1703674821847)
- Housing Landlord Strategy – <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/Housing-consultations-and-policies>
- Housing Landlord Strategy Survey results - <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/Housing-consultations-and-policies>

National:

- Tenant Satisfaction Measures - www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-satisfaction-measures-standard/tenant-satisfaction-measures-technical-requirements-accessible-version#introduction
- Regulator for Social Housing - www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing
- Housing Ombudsman Service - www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/
- Complaint Handling Code - www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/
- The Better Social Housing Review - www.bettersocialhousingreview.org.uk/
- Regulator of Social Housing - Consumer Standards
www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards
- The Charter for Social Housing White Paper - www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-residents-social-housing-white-paper