

**Update on the Housing Service’s position with the Regulator of Social Housing  
(Housing, Andy Vincent)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**A notice was served by the Regulatory of Social Housing in October 2019 on Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Service for non-compliance with the Home Regulatory Standard.**

**A review was conducted of the Regulatory Notice in March 2022. This review recognised the progress that had been made to address concerns in relation to electrical and fire safety – although indicated that further progress was required in meeting the Decent Homes Standard.**

**A further review was requested in November 2022. The Regulator has concluded the review, accepting that Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Service is now compliant with the Home Standard and removed the notice.**

**Recommendation(s):**

- i. Members celebrate the removal of Runnymede Borough Council’s Regulatory Notice and thank those involved for achieving this outcome.**

**1. Context and background of report**

1.1 Runnymede Borough Council was sent a Regulatory Notice from the Regulator of Social Housing in October 2019 identifying the following areas of concern: -

- a) Runnymede Borough Council has breached the Home Standard;
- b) As a consequence of this breach, there was the potential for serious detriment to Runnymede Borough Council tenants.

The concerns specifically related to: -

- 1 Periodic electrical testing
- 2 Management of Fire Risk Assessment recommendations
- 3 Insufficient recent data on our housing stock to confirm that all properties comply with the [Decent Homes Standard](#)

1.2 A review of Runnymede Borough Council’s Regulatory Notice was conducted in March 2022. This review recognised the improvements the council had made in addressing fire safety actions and electrical safety performance, but also noted the improvements required to the percentage of the Council’s homes reaching the Decent Homes Standard.

1.3 A further review of the notice was requested by Runnymede Borough Council in November 2022. The Regulator has agreed that Runnymede Borough Council has met the requirements of the Home Standard and as a result the notice has been withdrawn.

- 1.4 The following extract was taken from the letter from the Regulator of Social Housing to Runnymede Borough Council.

*“We will now move to remove the regulatory notice which set out the Council’s previous breach of the consumer standards. To confirm this is scheduled for Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023.*

*In the meantime, I wanted to record my sincere thanks to the Council .... for the positive and constructive engagement we have had throughout the period of our engagement and for their transparency and openness as this case has progressed.”*

## **2. Communication to members**

- 2.1 The news of the withdrawal of the Regulator Notice was sent to all Councillors by the Chair of this committee on 22 January 2023.

## **3. Policy Framework**

- 3.1 Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Service has a strategy suite and annual improvement plan (service area plan) which ensures continuous improvement.
- 3.2 Progress in delivering the strategies and service area plan is regularly reported to the Council’s Housing Committee.
- 3.3 Runnymede Borough Council’s Housing Compliance Performance indicators are reported to the Housing Committee four times per year (at the end of each quarter) and set stretching targets for improvements in service delivery.

## **4. Resource implications/Value for Money**

- 4.1 Resources are in place in place to maintain compliance performance and to deliver 100% Decent Homes Standard performance.

## **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 The Regulator of Social Housing is an independent body, responsible for setting standards that all registered providers of social housing must meet and holding landlords to account for compliance with these standards. The Regulator considers whether landlords are meeting the standards at an organisational, or systemic, level. This means looking at the landlord’s performance in the round and making sure they have the appropriate systems and processes in place to meet the standards. The Regulator’s standards cover both economic issues (such as governance and financial viability) and consumer issues (such as ensuring homes are decent and safe, that complaints are managed effectively and that tenants are listened to and provided with opportunities to engage).
- 5.2 Providers of social housing are required to comply with various pieces of legislation regarding gas, electrical and fire safety.

## **6. Equality implications**

- 6.1 Equality implications are considered when undertaking Decent Homes work.
- 6.2 Refusals are monitored and followed up to promote uptake.

7. **Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 7.1 A significant proportion of the work be undertaken to achieve the Decent Homes Standard will improve the energy performance of our homes.
- 7.2 This will both reduce carbon emissions and help address fuel poverty – addressing two key objectives of the Housing Service.

8. **Conclusions**

- 8.1 Removing the Regulatory Notice is a key public milestone in the improvement of Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service.
- 8.2 Further improvements are required to achieve the service vision of providing "*quality, empathetic and compassionate housing services.*"

(To resolve)

**Background papers**

Link to the removal of the notice on the Regulator of Social Housing's website - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-judgement-runnymede-borough-council/regulatory-notice-runnymede-borough-council-30-october-2019>

Paper to January Housing Committee setting out the progress made in achieving the Home Standard - [DRAFT AGENDA REPORT COVER SHEET \(runnymede.gov.uk\)](#)

Link to the definition of the Home Standard [Home Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)