



**REPORT FOR  
DECISION**

**AGENDA  
ITEM  
6**

<b>MEETING</b>	Six Town Housing Board
<b>DATE</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2010
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Response to Tenant Services Authority Consultation
<b>STATUS</b>	FOR PUBLICATION
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	Suzanne Frier Director of Corporate Services
<b>REPORT BY</b>	Julie Heywood Customer Contact Manager
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**Purpose**

To share with Board the consultation summary document ‘A new regulatory framework for social housing in England’ which is a Tenant Service Authority statutory consultation paper. Also in addition the draft consultation response to-date.

**Link to Strategic Objectives**

The introduction of the new regulatory framework links with our strategic objective: Putting our Customers at the heart of everything we do and working in partnership with them to ensure that we not only meet but exceed their expectations

- Customer driven and judged
- Raising and exceeding expectations

**Key Points**

- Each national standard currently sets out first the high-level outcome that landlords should achieve, then a series of "specific requirements" related to that outcome.
- Local standards will need to be developed with our customers and published no later than 1st October 2010.
- A baseline position report which measures Six Town Housing against the national standards noting any gaps including improvement plans needs to be submitted no later than 1st October 2010.
- In addition to the national standards the consultation document also makes a series of proposals on registration, performance monitoring, and the use of enforcement powers.
- Where registered providers do not meet the TSA standards speedy self improvement will be expected, where this is insufficient the TSA have a range of graduated enforcement powers to ensure tenants get the service they deserve

- **Recommendation**

Board members are asked to:

To comment on the summary consultation document 'A new regulatory framework for social housing'

To consider and comment on the draft consultation response on behalf of Six Town Housing

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

<b>Risk Management</b>		
<b>Impact: Medium</b>	<b>Probability: Medium</b>	<b>Risk Rating: Medium</b>
<b>Risk Implications</b> A failure to consult and comment on the TSA's proposed new regulatory framework paper could result in there being a lack of understanding of the key messages within the paper and the impact the TSA will have on the organisation.		
<b>Financial Implications (including Value for Money / Efficiency Agenda)</b> There are no costs directly linked to the consultation exercise		
<b>Health &amp; Safety Implications</b> There are no health & safety implications		
<b>Impact on Customers</b> Tenants should have the chance to influence decisions their landlords takes that will affect their lives. The TSA have made involving tenants part of the national standards that all social housing landlords will have to meet from April 2010. Tenants can help the TSA drive up standards of services in affordable housing and get involved in the work of their landlord.		
<b>Service User Consultation Undertaken</b> Staff have been consulted in a variety of ways. Service Managers have been requested to comment on their specialised areas. All consultation documents have been made available to all staff for comment. Customers on our Homeview group have been sent information linked to services where they have shown a specific interest. A customer event has been re arranged from December to January to discuss the consultation paper, members of RAG, TRACC, REACH and HSSG have been invited to attend. All consultation documentation is available in reception and on the internet for all customers. Joint commissioning partners (St Vincents/Jonny Johnson/Great places ) have also been included in the consultation .		
<b>Equality and Diversity Implications</b> Throughout the consultation diversity issues have been considered. The TSA also have specific duties under equalities legislation, one of which is to conduct effective Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that policies are based on the right evidence.		

**TRACKING/PROCESS**

EMT	WORKING GROUP	COMMITTEE
<b>BOARD</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup> January 2010</b>		

**1. Introduction:**

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) have produced a consultation document on the new regulatory framework for social housing in England. The new system of regulation is with effect from 1st April 2010.

The TSA believe the best place for the quality of services to be discussed, agreed and scrutinised is locally, between providers and their tenants. So their standards require landlords to set out what they offer to tenants and set local standards that reflect the local priorities.

There are six new standards. They place greater emphasis on the relationship between landlords and their tenants at the local level – one where tenants are at the heart of shaping, influencing and monitoring the services they receive.

The proposed new standards for social housing providers are the centrepiece of the TSA’s new regulatory framework. They describe the outcomes the TSA want to see delivered and the specific requirements they expect all providers to comply with in meeting these outcomes. The TSA believe the best place for the quality of services to be discussed, agreed and scrutinised is locally between providers and their tenants. So the standards require providers to set out what they offer to tenants and set local standards that reflect the priorities of local communities.

These proposals balance new demands on providers to be transparent and report on performance to their tenants, and hold themselves to account – with a significant reduction in red tape, with no TSA Codes of Practice, the removal of thousands of individual regulatory consents, and the demise of over 50 detailed Housing Corporation Circulars and Guidance Notes.

The six new standards that social housing providers will have to meet are:

<b>Proposed standard</b>	<b>Containing requirements relating to the following areas</b>
1. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement and empowerment</li> <li>• Customer service and choice</li> <li>• Equalities and diversity</li> <li>• Tenants with additional support needs</li> <li>• Complaints</li> </ul>
2. Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repairs and maintenance</li> <li>• Quality of accommodation</li> </ul>
3. Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations</li> <li>• Rent</li> <li>• Tenure</li> </ul>
4. Neighbourhood and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood management</li> <li>• Local area co-operation</li> <li>• Anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>
5. Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value for money</li> </ul>
6. Governance and Financial Viability** This standard does not apply to local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Financial viability</li> </ul>

## **What it means to you**

For tenants landlords, lenders and stakeholders who have an interest in the social housing sector, this consultation is an opportunity to influence how the TSA implement their new powers.

**2. Conclusion**

Six Town Housing welcome the publication of a new regulatory framework for the social housing sector.

The consultation paper also indicates the impact that the TSA will have on the organisation and the need to create and deliver a project plan to ensure compliance with the standards.

**3. Recommendations:**

**To comment on the summary consultation document 'A new regulatory framework for social housing'**

**To consider and comment on the draft consultation response on behalf of Six Town Housing**