



REPORT TO:	Policy Development Panel
DATE:	24 September 2024
SUBJECT:	Knowledge and Information Management Strategy: Housing Landlord Services
PURPOSE:	To consider the adoption of the Knowledge and Information Management Strategy: Housing Landlord Services
KEY DECISION:	No
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing
REPORT OF:	Jason King, Assistant Director - Housing
REPORT AUTHOR:	Vikki Cherry, Housing Transformation Programme Manager
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All Wards
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

In 2023, the Housing Ombudsman Service published their Spotlight report on Knowledge and Information Management (KIM). Their report was published in response to two core issues: the culture of the landlord and the effectiveness of its governance, recommending that all Registered Providers implement a KIM strategy.

Members are requested to consider the adoption of the Knowledge and Information Management Strategy: Housing Landlord Services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Policy Development Panel supports the recommendation to Cabinet to adopt the Knowledge and Information Management Strategy: Housing Landlord Services
2. That Policy Development Panel supports the recommendation to Cabinet to delegate minor operational amendments to the Knowledge and Information Management Strategy: Housing Landlord Services to the Assistant Director – Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To deliver a recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman Service, recommending that all Registered Providers implement a Knowledge and Information Management Strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing – to not adopt the Strategy. Failure to deliver a key recommendation from the Housing Ombudsman Service, of which could contribute towards a Complaint Handling Failure Order.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Information is one of our greatest assets and its usage is a major responsibility. We aim to be a landlord that is trusted by its tenants to manage and protect their information. The Strategy will ensure that we utilise information as a strategic asset, using recognised best practice, legislation and technology to minimise requests for information and to maximise the opportunities for information intelligence to shape the future Housing Landlord Service and evaluate the effectiveness of existing practice.
- 1.2. In 2023, the Housing Ombudsman Service published their Spotlight report on KIM. Their report was published in response to two core issues: the culture of the landlord and the effectiveness of its governance. Recommending that all Registered Providers implement a KIM strategy.
- 1.3. In 2024, a revised set of Consumer Standards was published by the Regulator of Social Housing. The foundation of delivering the outcomes of these standards includes knowing your tenants and knowing your stock - having reliable, up to date data and delivering a landlord service based on the information this provides.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Knowledge and information management (KIM) is crucial for landlords to collect, store, share, and use data and knowledge. This includes information on tenants, properties, finances, policies, and maintenance schedules. Good management of knowledge and information helps us to make informed decisions, improve service delivery, and maintain legal and regulatory compliance.
- 2.2 Successful knowledge and information management starts with an understanding and appreciation of its benefits to both the landlord and its tenants. Without good information management, a landlord cannot adequately:
 - horizon-scan and identify risk
 - contingency plan
 - proactively address hazards (such as fire safety, asbestos and damp and mould)
 - fully comply with legal and regulatory requirements
 - ensure evidence-based practice
 - provide a high-quality service to tenants.
- 2.3 This Strategy sets out key challenges around knowledge and information management for the Housing Landlord Service and how we will overcome them, including an action plan to deliver key parts of the Strategy.

- 2.4 The Strategy sets out the role and responsibilities around information management and how the Strategy links with existing corporate policies. Record keeping and ensuring data remains valid and up to date are referenced along with using data to improve the service tenants receive such as communication preferences, recording and updating vulnerabilities on a regular basis to offer a bespoke service to our most vulnerable tenants.
- 2.5 This strategy will be reviewed in 12 months to consider how we progress to using this information and knowledge to create insight and innovation in the Housing Landlord Service.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. This Strategy enables the Council to deliver requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Service and improve the service that we offer our tenants, whilst ensuring that decisions and improvements are made on valid and quality data and information. The action plan will be monitored by the Housing Governance Clinic, chaired by Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing.

4. EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1. Knowledge and Information Management arrangements for the HRA strengthen the wider governance arrangements of South Holland District Council.
- 4.2. South Holland as a sovereign partner Council continues to contribute to the overall reputation of the Partnership. Therefore, continuing to show preparedness for an upcoming external inspection from the Regulator of Social Housing will support the Partnership's reputation.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1.1 None.

5.2 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.2.1 None. Improved use of data and information will contribute to the Council's overall aims and objectives in the Corporate Plan around efficiency and effectiveness.

5.3 STAFFING

- 5.3.1 None.

5.4 WORKFORCE CAPACITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.4.1 Delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards (including those of the Housing Ombudsman Service's Complaint Handling Code) places additional demands on the Council in its role as a registered provider. Arrangements in the Strategy place additional duties on the Housing Management Team and the Business Support Team. Capacity continues to be monitored by the Assistant Director-Housing.
- 5.5.1 A paper on resources will be brought to Members in due course (as part of the wider Transformation Programme).

5.5 CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.5.1 A Knowledge and Information Management Strategy for the Housing Landlord Service which sets out how information will be managed, represents good governance. The proposed programme of work will also consider compliance with legislation relating to data and information. This work will also improve safeguards against data breaches where sensitive data needs to be protected. An Information Asset register will be updated to identify key datasets and ensuring that each has a clear owner with accountability for that data.

5.6 DATA PROTECTION

5.6.1 This Strategy supports compliance with data protection regulations. This work will also improve safeguards against data breaches where sensitive data needs to be protected. An Information Asset register will be updated to identify key datasets and ensuring that each has a clear owner with accountability for that data.

5.7 FINANCIAL

5.7.1 None.

5.8 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.8.1 Risk will be managed through gaining a better understanding of the data assets we hold and their specific security and risk implications. A review of the Information Asset register will give greater visibility to those risks; identifying the owners and enabling better management of risk.

5.9 STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

5.9.1 The following have been consulted:

- Housing Managers
- Data Protection Officer and Deputy Data Protection Officer
- Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing.

5.9.2 Considering the volume of Housing policies programmed over the next 12 months and the tenant engagement survey being held currently, it was not considered appropriate to consult with tenants on this Strategy. It is considered a better option to seek tenant views on items that will have greater impact on them e.g. anti-social behaviour case management.

5.10 REPUTATION

5.10.1 This policy improves governance around data held by the Housing Landlord Service, reducing the risk of successful legal challenge around compliance with data protection regulations.

5.11 CONTRACTS

5.11.1 None.

5.12 CRIME AND DISORDER

5.12.1 None.

5.13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

5.13.1 Whilst this approach to Information Management will not in itself have any specific impacts on the Public Sector Equality Duty, all decisions are made on the basis of data and information we hold and maintain. Management of personal and equality data will be included in the scope of the Strategy and as a result, the improved management of that data will lead to improved understanding of the equality impact of future decisions.

5.13.2 An equality impact assessment has been completed and there are no significant equality impacts as a result of this report, save that proper governance and use of information will ensure that we safeguard vulnerable people from indiscreet sharing of personal data, and improve service for their specific needs.

5.14 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

5.14.1 None.

5.15 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.15.1 None.

5.16 LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

5.16.1 None.

6. ACRONYMS

6.1 None.

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
APPENDIX A	Knowledge and Information Management Strategy
APPENDIX B	Equality Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND PAPERS	
Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -	
Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Regulator of Social Housing - Consumer Standards	www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards
Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code	https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/landlords-info/complaint-handling-code/
Housing Ombudsman Spotlight on: Knowledge and Information Management (KIM)	https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/KIM-report-v2-100523.pdf

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

None

REPORT APPROVAL	
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Signed off by:	Jason King, Assistant Director - Housing jasonking@sholland.gov.uk
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Approved for publication:	Councillor Tracey Carter, Portfolio Holder for Strategic and Operational Housing
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