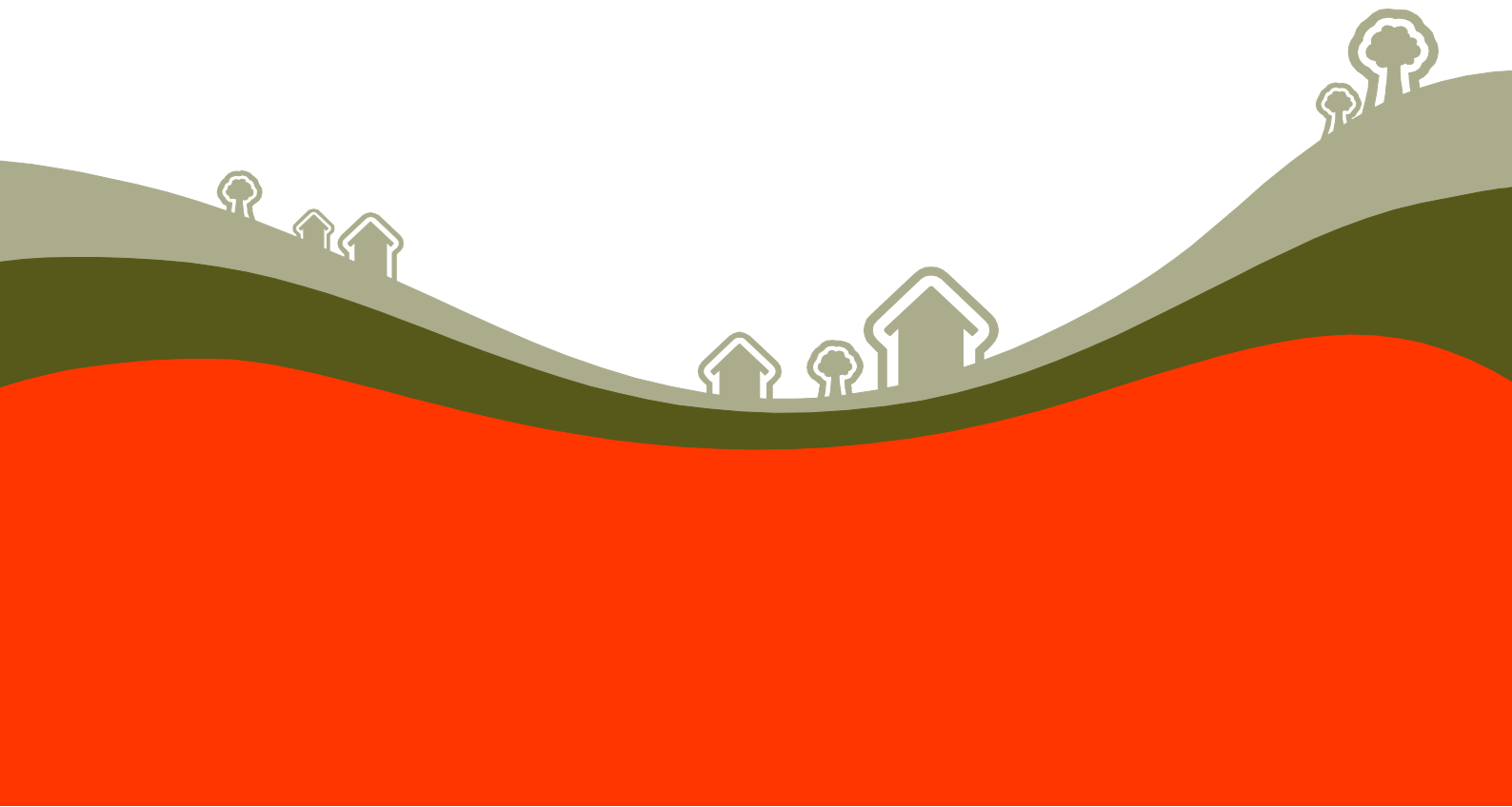


# WELWYN HATFIELD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST

## DELIVERY PLAN 2016-17



Welwyn Hatfield  
Community Housing Trust



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## 1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** This is the seventh annual Delivery Plan for Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust (the Trust); an organisation formed to manage, repair and improve council housing in the Welwyn Hatfield Borough, and deliver other services, such as the management of housing needs, Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and Community Development, and an emergency alarm call service.
- 1.2** Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) is the single shareholder in the Trust and a management agreement forms the legal contract between the two organizations, designed to ensure that the Trust is a key partner in contributing to the fulfillment of the Council's priorities.
- 1.3** This Delivery Plan identifies what the Trust will achieve during 2016/17. The goals of this delivery plan for the Trust are:-
- to continue to improve the services delivered to the community – as set out in our Continuous Improvement and Value for Money Strategy (revised in 2013, to be refreshed in 2016)
  - to further enhance the options and opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to have a greater say in the running of the housing service;
  - to refocus existing resources into improving the quality of the housing repair service and into further developing community initiatives identified by tenants, leaseholders and residents for the neighbourhoods in which they live;
  - to work with the Tenants' Panel, service users and the council to refresh Service Standards and enable effective tenant-led scrutiny;
  - to identify, in partnership with the council, opportunities to increase the number of homes managed and to extend the range of services offered by the Trust in order to better meet local housing/community related needs and generate additional income;
- 1.4** Significant change to public spending continues to create challenges in meeting housing needs both in the short and long term, with changes to welfare benefits requiring the diversion of resource to mitigate the impacts upon customers and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.
- 1.5** While the currently available resources within the HRA provide opportunities to both maintain the Council's housing stock and to continue to explore with the Council how that financial strength can directly deliver more homes for those in our community with housing need, the impact of changes to rent charging policy guidance and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill will also need to be factored into future plans.
- 1.6** At the time of preparing this Plan, the Trust is undergoing some significant changes following the Council's review of the organisation during the latter half of 2015. The Review has prompted a revision of both operations and leadership which will see closer working between the two bodies and some sharing of services. This means that the activities contained within the Plan may be re-allocated to different officers and, in some cases, re-prioritised as the re-organisation progresses.

## 2 OUR VISION

### 2.1 The Trust's vision remains:-

**“To be the best at what we do and to do more of what we do best”**

This Plan focuses on sustaining and improving performance while seeking opportunities to extend the Trust's work as a provider of both housing and community services

## 3 OUR MISSION STATEMENT

### 3.1 Our mission statement continues to be:-

**“Working together to deliver excellent services, better homes and pride in our communities”.**

## 4 OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 The main objectives of the Trust are:-

**To provide excellent services which represent value for money:**

- Achieve performance across all service areas within the upper quartile
- To support tenants in financial difficulty, providing advice and practical assistance to help reduce the impact of changes to the benefit system
- To support the Tenants' Panel in their scrutiny of services
- To achieve efficiencies in the delivery of services
- To be reaccredited with the government's Customer Service Excellence standard.

**To have high levels of customer satisfaction:**

- To achieve continuously improving levels of customer satisfaction
- Using a range of ways to involve customers in providing ongoing feedback on their experience of receiving a service
- Work to build on and increase the number of customers who believe that the Trust has a good reputation, and who feel that the services have improved since the Trust was launched

**To create opportunities for everyone to get involved and make a positive difference within our community:**

- Through delivery of our Community and Tenant Involvement Strategies
- Through the Neighbourhood Improvement Scheme, giving tenants the opportunity to put forward their ideas on how their local areas can be made safer and more attractive
- Giving free training to help people access and make better use of the internet
- Through extending the range of activities provided at the Jim MacDonald Centre so that many more people can benefit and feel included;
- Through neighbourhood interventions, such as Walkabout Wednesdays;
- Explore opportunities with the council to increase our role in providing for and supporting community groups
- Demonstrate that we have met the needs and interests of the community

**To develop innovative local solutions to provide and manage more homes and services:**

- To contribute to delivery of the Council's affordable housing programme
- To explore, with the Council and others, opportunities to extend the range of existing services and develop innovative solutions to meet local housing need
- To explore and develop opportunities, with the Council, in the remodelling of its housing stock in order to best meet local housing need
- To review the sheltered housing service to ensure it continues to meet the needs of older people
- To provide additional community services that help people feel involved, including the Jim McDonald Centre and the community transport service.

**To be an organisation where people are valued and proud to work:**

- Through our approach to equality and diversity
- Through partnership with other stakeholders/agencies
- Through implementing our Workforce Strategy, recruiting and retaining the right skill-sets, delivering staff development and training
- Delivering services that we can all be proud of

**5 OUR CORE VALUES**

5.1 In delivering these objectives WHCHT is committed to the following core values which clearly underpin how we will deliver our services:-

<b>Excellence in all we do</b>	➤ Passionate
<b>Inclusive</b>	➤ Community-focussed, Fair, Respectful
<b>Open</b>	➤ Honesty, Integrity, Trust
<b>Innovative</b>	➤ Progressive, Proactive
<b>Caring</b>	➤ Friendly
<b>Reliable</b>	➤ Consistent and Dependable

5.2 As an organisation we are committed to challenging attitudes and behaviours that do not reflect, or which may undermine, our core values. We are also committed to using our values in evaluating and shaping any future growth and business development opportunities.

**5.3 Services provided by the Trust**

5.3.1 The Trust manages around 20% of the total housing stock within the Borough. In carrying out this work the Trust:-

- manages and maintains the housing stock
- manages the annual capital programme
- collects income and provides tenancy and estate management services

- manages the available temporary accommodation both directly and in partnership with other providers
- provides a tenancy support service to help sustain tenancies
- manages 556 garages
- provides sheltered housing services to 1752 tenants and an emergency alarm service to a further 992 users in the Borough, in addition to outside the Borough on a contractual basis
- encourages and supports tenant and community involvement
- promotes, in partnership, a sustainable community, where people want to live
- works in partnership with the Council, police and other agencies in providing safer neighbourhoods, reducing crime and dealing with anti-social behaviour
- provides the 24hr/365days emergency out of hours telephone call centre for the borough and for other organisations on a commercial basis
- manages the Housing Revenue Account on behalf of the council
- administers the Right to Buy function on behalf of the council
- manages the Housing Needs Register and the Choice Based Lettings Scheme for the borough
- Provides a housing advice and options service
- works to prevent, investigate and manage homelessness
- provides a community transport service
- manages a community centre and a number of smaller halls

#### **5.4 Service Standards**

**5.4.1** The Trust carries out an annual review with customers of the standards for its core services as a corner stone of its approach to tenant regulation.

**5.4.2** The Trust has developed service standards for the following:-

- i. Applying for a home
- ii. Housing Options and homelessness
- iii. Moving into your new home
- iv. Carrying out repairs to your home
- v. Rent collection services
- vi. Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- vii. Tenancy and Neighbourhood Management
- viii. Tenancy Support Services
- ix. Supported Independent Living
- x. Leaseholder Services
- xi. Customer Services
- xii. Comments, Compliments and Complaints
- xiii. Getting Involved
- xiv. Equality and Diversity

#### **5.5 Managing Risk and Ensuring Business Continuity**

**5.5.1** Business Continuity Plans have been developed for each service area and are reviewed on a six-monthly basis. These plans continue to form part of the wider Business Continuity Plan for the Council.

**5.5.2** The Trust Management Board reviews strategic risks on a six-monthly basis, with overview and exception reporting to the Management Board, based on an agreed traffic-light system, which is focused on impact and likelihood. The Trust has also identified a number of shared risks with the Council that are regularly reviewed.

**5.5.3** The Trust also has in place a number of operational risks, which are monitored, reviewed and managed by Heads of Service. This takes place on a six-monthly basis, with exception reporting to the Board.

## **5.6 Managing Health and Safety**

**5.6.1** The Trust had an independent review of its approach to health and safety undertaken during 2014. The implementation of the recommendations within the review was largely undertaken during the early part of 2015. Fully revised policies and processes are now in place, with enhanced monitoring and reporting.

## **5.7 Tenant and Leaseholder Participation**

**5.7.1** A tenant involvement specialist was employed in 2015 to support the Tenants Panel and help it work on a number of key initiatives – most importantly scrutiny and succession planning. The findings of the independent review are being implemented now, will conclude in 2016/17 and culminate in a refresh of the Tenant Involvement Strategy. The first tranche of objectives will see the Panel's revised approach to scrutiny being implemented.

## **5.8 Delivering Equality for All**

**5.8.1** Our ongoing 'Help Us, Help You' tenancy visit programme helps us identify our customers' needs and preferences so that we can deliver services which are relevant and inclusive.

**5.8.2** We have a multi-disciplinary Equalities Group whose role it is to ensure that we comply with the Equalities Act 2010. This involves carrying out equality service reviews (impact assessments) for new and updated policies.

## 6 **FINANCIAL PLAN**

### 6.1 **Working in Partnership**

6.1.1 The Management Agreement requires that the Trust produces this annual Delivery Plan to demonstrate how it will meet and resource the strategic and operational objectives of the service. The budget setting process is a key component of this requirement.

6.1.2 The following table details the main actions and outputs for the budget process:

<b>Nominated Officer</b>	<b>Action/Output</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Company Accountant (WHCHT)	Pre-budget projections for the HRA and the Trust	<b>Mid July</b>
Head of Resources (WHBC)	Pre-budget projections for WHBC	<b>Mid July</b>
Head of Resources(WHBC)	Supply WHBC direct HRA charges	<b>November</b>
Company Accountant (WHCHT)	Calculate rents and other budgets	<b>November</b>
Company Accountant (WHCHT)	Produce Draft Budget for WHCHT	<b>End of November</b>
Company Accountant (WHCHT)	Produce Draft HRA Budget for WHBC	<b>End of November</b>
<b>Head of Resources(WHBC)</b>	<b>Report to Council to set House Rents/HRA Budget/Trust Fee</b>	<b>February</b>

### 6.2 **Delegation Scheme**

6.2.1 Responsibility for the statutory Housing Revenue Account (HRA) remains with the Council, as does the ownership of the housing stock. However, the Trust has responsibility for managing the HRA on the Council's behalf, in accordance with the Management Agreement.

6.2.2 The Trust is independent, but the Council, through its Section 151 Officer, has the responsibility of ensuring that arrangements are in place for the proper administration of the Company. These include:-

- The legality of transactions.
- Standards of financial conduct, prevention/detection of fraud and corruption.
- The systems of internal financial control.

6.2.3 The Trust will continue to satisfy these requirements by ensuring that a robust financial information system is used; that procedure rules for the organisation comply with the Council's own standards and that strong internal controls remain in place that will be tested by internal audit inspections.



**6.2.4** The Trust, an independent body, has put in place financial controls and reporting arrangements to meet its own governance requirements. These include:-

- setting annual budgets for the Trust
- monthly budget monitoring for the Executive Team - to assess performance
- quarterly budget monitoring reports to the Management Board
- production of forecast information - to reflect changes in circumstances
- production of annual accounts and year end performance reports

### 6.3 Service Delivery

The following sections detail and expand on the practical arrangements for the financial management of the Trust and the HRA.

### 6.4 Calculation of the Management Fee

**6.4.1** There is a two way relationship between this plan and the setting of the management fee. The plan needs to be realistic and affordable within the management fee, but the fee needs to cover the commitments made in the plan.

**6.4.2** The following table indicates the split of HRA and non-HRA expenditure and income within the management fee and how the whole HRA is constructed. The budget for 2016/17 has been set within available resources including contracts made and held by the Trust for maintenance of the housing stock.

	Housing Revenue Account	Total Trust General Fund	Total Capital	Council Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Trust Management Fee</b>	<b>10,783</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>2,459</b>	<b>13,813</b>
<b>Trust Managed Budgets</b>	<b>(18,798)</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>(18,540)</b>
<b>WHBC Direct Budgets</b>	<b>12,332</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12,332</b>
<b>Total Budget 2016/17</b>	<b>4,317</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>2624</b>	<b>7,606</b>

### 6.5 Financial Planning

**6.5.1** The timetable and delegated officers for completion of the annual budget process are included earlier in the document. The details of financial planning for the Trust will consist of the following major components:

- The Trust's annual budget covers the organisation's activities for the coming year and is presented in a relevant format for the company. This incorporates the management fee from the Council.
- The HRA MTFS takes a medium term view of the finances over a five year period and is produced before the budget process starts to inform criteria for the budget process, like inflation levels and pay awards. This sets out the criteria upon which the Trust fee is set.

- The Council's HRA Business Plan takes a longer term view of the HRA position and includes detail around the cost of asset management over a 30 year term.

**6.5.2** Included within the financial planning process will be the requirement to achieve efficiency savings in line with the Council and Government expectations.

## **6.6 Service Targets**

**6.6.1** Service targets exist for the following areas:

### **Internal Control**

- Maintain a robust system of internal control
- Monitor and update Financial Regulations
- A programme of audits to test the internal control systems
- A financial training programme for Trust staff

### **Budget Setting**

- Carry out regular reviews and forecasts during the financial year
- Set the Trust Budget for 2017/18
- Update the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the HRA

### **Budgetary Control**

- A monthly budget monitoring scheme
- Produce regular reports within two weeks of the period end
- Report for the Trust Board, Council's Client Officer and Members (Cabinet Housing Planning Panel and Resources Overview Scrutiny Committee)
- Aim to ensure expenditure remains within the agreed management fee

### **Final Accounts**

- Create a set of Final Accounts for the Trust
- Complete the closure of accounts within the required timetables
- Engage external auditors for the final accounts audit
- Ensure that the audited accounts are complete within statutory timescales

### **Working in Partnership**

- Complete the Council's HRA budget monitoring, within agreed timetables and supply relevant information for the Council's capital budgets
- Assist in the closure of the 2015/16 HRA accounts
- Complete all statutory forms within deadlines
- Complete a HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2016/17
- Review the HRA Business plan from 2016/17
- Calculate rents for 2017/18
- Construct the HRA budget for 2017/18 and supply details of General Fund budgets covered by the Trust management fee, for Council approval
- agree Service Level Agreement costs in line with any changes, or reviews, of these services for 2017/18.

## CAPITAL PLAN

### 6.7 Working in Partnership

- 6.7.1 Nominated WHBC and Trust Officers will continue to liaise as follows to prepare capital expenditure bids and cash flows based on agreed Capital Programmes for the Council's housing stock:-

Nominated Officer	Action/Output	Timetable
Director of Property Services (WHCHT)	Submit draft Annual Business Plan and capital bids relating to planned investment in the stock	September
Company Accountant (WHCHT)	Calculates draft Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) resources	November
Head of Resources (WHBC)	Prepares and presents Capital Programmes for decision	December
Head of Resources (WHBC)	Confirms Decisions on Capital Programme	January

- 6.7.2 The Trust has developed an Asset Management Strategy for the housing stock, within the context of a self financed HRA Business Plan. The Asset Management Strategy covers a five year period between 2015 and 2020.
- 6.7.3 The strategy will ensure the effective management and maintenance of all existing property and land assets, together with complimenting the Council's aims to increase the provision of affordable housing. Delivery will help provide the best service available, value for money and customer satisfaction.
- 6.7.4 As well as ensuring the baseline assumptions are reliable the outcomes will be to produce integrated investment programmes and also take a more holistic approach that addresses matters of housing demand, stock and neighbourhood sustainability and customers' needs and aspirations.
- 6.7.5 A feature of the strategy is a review of Health and Safety ensuring that customers and staff operate in a secure risk management framework.
- 6.7.6 Customers will also benefit from an enhanced Energy Strategy which will carry out more detailed assessments of the efficiency of their home and offer guidance on energy saving measures.

### 6.8 Asset Management Strategy Delivery

- 6.8.1 Since the strategy received Board approval in April 2015 excellent progress has been made with progressing the objectives, some of which are short term while others will require a sustained period of delivery over the full term of the strategy.
- 6.8.2 Following a major review of the stock condition data the capital requirement for the next 5 years (2016 – 2020) has been revised and is summarised by element in the table below. Costs include management and overheads but exclude VAT
- 6.8.3 Years 2–5 remain the subject of ongoing validation, a rolling basis year by year to follow the business planning and budget setting timeline. **The initial information presents the Trust and the Council with some challenges in prioritisation as the initial spend requirement does not align with the availability of capital. As part of the implementation of the Strategy, work is being undertaken to re-profile the need**

**for capital investment to ensure that a more even spend is achieved that matches the availability of funds.**

<b>Works Programme</b>	<b>Year 1 (2016)</b>	<b>Year 2 (2017)</b>	<b>Year 3 (2018)</b>	<b>Year 4 (2019)</b>	<b>Year 5 (2020)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Bathrooms, Showers and Sanitary Ware	£1,233,621	£4,384,373	£5,321,511	£4,943,344	£2,680,310	£18,563,159
Cyclical Redecorations (Blocks Only)	£171,360	£193,630	£267,580	£101,150	£133,620	£867,340
Environmental Works	£378,625	£1,561,755	£2,660,439	£1,817,418	£1,655,391	£8,073,628
External Works	£310,973	£5,754,649	£224,795	£1,120,330	£663,139	£8,073,885
Fascias, Soffits and Rainwater Goods	£1,538,599	£309,021	£332,760	£232,559	£385,898	£2,798,836
H&S Compliance	£93,575	£3,448	£164,495	£171,883	£1,017,013	£1,450,413
Heating and Hot Water	£2,843,665	£1,731,169	£1,819,665	£4,339,238	£2,153,668	£12,887,404
Internal Works (Communal Only)	£58,615	£11,356	£8,750	£6,425	£18,008	£103,154
Kitchens	£1,778,081	£6,349,833	£7,717,835	£7,179,604	£3,876,538	£26,901,890
Mechanical and Electrical Specialist Services	£195,825	£71,595	£109,890	£79,365	£593,533	£1,050,208
Rewires and Lighting	£1,584,573	£4,619,854	£5,605,724	£5,211,411	£3,055,745	£20,077,307
Roof Replacement	£2,279,136	£124,239	£189,496	£2,344,429	£2,799,458	£7,736,758
Smoke and Co2 Detectors	£601,289	£47,684	£86,138	£110,798	£115,273	£961,180
Solid Wall Insulation		£325,620	£289,440	£470,340	£325,620	£1,411,020
Windows and Doors	£1,169,508	£1,422,928	£2,878,219	£1,046,956	£313,456	£6,831,066
<b>Total</b>	<b>£14,237,444</b>	<b>£26,911,151</b>	<b>£27,676,736</b>	<b>£29,175,248</b>	<b>£19,786,666</b>	<b>£117,787,246</b>

**6.8.4** A key theme of the Trust's Asset Management Strategy will be to use asset intelligence to apply a range of viability tests which will result in the stock being categorised into one of the following groups:

- Core stock in the right location and performing well.
- Dispersed location raising challenges to effective management (taking into account the need to provide for housing need in rural locations).
- Stock of a high asset value.

- Stock of questionable performance when evaluated against criteria.

**6.8.5** These initial tests may trigger option appraisals with the following outcomes:

- Disposal due to high investment needs and/or high asset value which are not outweighed by identified housing need.
- Remodel/change of tenure to provide more suitable accommodation or better address housing needs.
- Redevelop to increase provision of affordable housing.
- Retain and invest in the identified core stock (the outcome in the majority of cases).

**6.8.6** We want to reach a point where we know which properties are assets and which are liabilities enabling us to obtain a forensic grip on the future management of the stock.

## **6.9 Procurement and Contract Management**

**6.9.1** WHCHT is responsible for developing and implementing all contractual arrangements for maintenance to the housing stock in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

**6.9.2** The Trust has adopted the National Housing Federation agreement and a procurement strategy that aims to set up a small number of large 'term' contracts with external providers via which the majority of works are delivered.

**6.9.3** Contracts currently procured under this arrangement are:

- Gas appliance servicing and maintenance.
- Mechanical and Electrical servicing and maintenance.
- Disabled Adaptations.

**6.9.4** During 2016/17 the Trust will be consolidating the contractual relationships to achieve optimum performance from our service providers. However the most significant procurement activity during 2016/17 will be to renegotiate the contract with Mears who deliver reactive repairs, void works and elemental planned maintenance.

**6.9.5** From April 2017 and onwards for the remainder of the contract, the Trust has the option to re-evaluate the fundamental terms of the contract which will focus on changes in legislation, removing inappropriate and redundant terms and conditions and introduce measures to improve value for money. This is a major project and will involve a diverse group in reaching a satisfactory conclusion.

## **6.10 Service Standards**

**6.10.1** The Trust will continue to ensure that all works are carried out in accordance with the service standards agreed with tenants and will continue to review and develop these standards by consulting on an annual basis with tenants and leaseholders.

**6.10.2** The office move from Bridge Road East, has presented an opportunity to review the delivery model for how the Trust provides and manages Property Services. Co-location of Property Services team in Hydeway with Mears, will greatly improve coordination between the various teams.

**6.10.3** With such an ambitious programme of objectives it is critical our aspirations are matched by a culture of performance management and enabling our staff with the right skills to achieve our aims.

**6.10.4** We will also ensure that our service providers adopt the same work ethic and that they respond positively to the Trust's priorities which will help us to progressively build on our success and continually meet and exceed customer expectations.

## **6.11 Performance Targets**

**6.11.1** A number of agreed performance indicators are in place to measure the quality and timeliness of service delivery by our key partners. These will be used to track the effectiveness of repairs service improvement measures as the action plan is implemented.

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## **7 PERFORMANCE PLAN**

### **7.1 Working in Partnership**

- 7.1.1** Nominated WHBC and Trust officers will continue to work together to prepare and agree the elements of the Performance Plan for the delegated services.
- 7.1.2** The Trust will develop detailed action plans setting out timescales, officer responsibility and expected outcomes.
- 7.1.3** The Trust will meet with Council representatives to develop, monitor and discuss the management of performance information.
- 7.1.4** The Trust will continue to work, where appropriate, with the Council on achieving its corporate and cross cutting targets and will support the Council where necessary to meet its objectives.
- 7.1.5** The Trust will work as a key partner for the Council in helping to deliver and promote its Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan and Older Persons Strategy objectives.
- 7.1.6** The Trust will also continue to work with the Hatfield 2030 regeneration project.

### **7.2 Delegation Scheme**

- 7.2.1** The Trust has developed a self assessment approach aimed at ensuring that services meet the standards agreed with tenants, leaseholders and other service users, producing team action plans and setting targets to meet those standards. Each year, an accessible annual report is made available to service users, setting out the Trust's performance against those agreed standards.

### **7.3 Service Delivery**

- 7.3.1** The Trust is committed to ensuring that all its services are in the top 25% of housing organisations nationally and has fully taken part in performance benchmarking across the housing sector through Housemark.
- 7.3.2** Performance is reported at every Board meeting of the Trust and to the Council as part of its Quarterly Performance Clinic, held by the Leader of Council. In addition, a quarterly report of key performance information is presented to the Council's Cabinet Housing and Planning Panel. Monthly meetings are held by officers of the Trust with the Council's nominated officer.
- 7.3.3** The Trust works with and supports the Tenants' Panel so that it can fulfill its role at the centre of the Trust's Tenant Involvement Framework. This will include:
- supporting the Panel in fulfilling its scrutiny role
  - reporting performance information to the Panel on a quarterly basis
  - providing appropriate training and personal development
  - working with the Panel on the development of service innovation

### **7.4 Performance Targets**

- 7.4.1** The table below sets out the range of key indicators that the Trust uses to manage its performance.
- 7.4.2** Where appropriate, the above targets have been set to sustain a top quartile level of performance. The quartiles used for satisfaction levels being based on the latest benchmarking data published by Housemark in May 2015 for the end of year 2013/14, and the quartiles used for performance targets being based on the benchmarking data provided by landlords to HouseMark for the year ending 2014/15.

Ref No	Description and performance at Q2 2015/16	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target/ tolerance	Frequency	Comments
<b>HMPI 210</b>	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of annual rent debt.  1.79% at Q2	1.73%	1.73%	Quarterly	The target is based on Housemark's quartile one peer data for end of year. Arrears lower than 2.25% will maintain top quartile performance. With the external environment becoming more challenging, maintaining performance will be an achievement.
<b>NI156</b>	Numbers of Households in Temporary Accommodation  65 at Q2	55 hsehlds	55 hsehlds	Quarterly	Performance reported is at a point in time at period end and will include commentary regarding the performance trend. Based on rolling 3 month average.
<b>LI160</b>	Overall Tenant Satisfaction with the Service*	90%	85%	Annual	A target of 88% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers. 85% is Quartile 2.
<b>NI183b</b>	Average length of stay in Hostel Accommodation (based on those leaving) on a rolling annual basis.	12 wks	Less than 12 weeks	Quarterly	Remains as before. Target is seen as good practice in the sector.
	Average void property Re-let Times for standard voids (ex all major work voids)  17.8 days at Q2	21 days	19.85 days	Quarterly	The target of 19.85 days is based on Housemark's quartile one peer data for end of year.
	Percentage of Repairs carried out within agreed timescales  99.75% at Q2	98%	98%	Monthly	Performance of 98% or above will be top quartile.
	Percentage of Repairs where work was right first time  91.41% at Q2	80%	90%	Monthly	Performance of 90% or above will be top quartile.
	Percentage of Repairs Appointments Made and Kept	95%	95%	Monthly	Performance of 95% or above will be top quartile.



	96.05% at Q2				
Percentage of properties where the gas service was carried out within the last 12 months	100%	100%	Monthly	Will always be 100% to meet statutory compliance. 1 dwelling = 0.01% non-compliance.	
Average Time Taken for Mobile Warden to attend the address in response to Emergency Alarm Call	12 minutes	12 minutes or less	Quarterly	Remains as before. Target is seen as good practice in the sector.	
Number of under occupying tenants moved to smaller accommodation (inc Mutual Exchanges)	80 pa	80 per annum	Annual	Remains as before. Target is seen as good practice in the sector.	
	42 at Q2				
% of stock vacant due to standard voids Qrt2 = 0.12%	n/a	0.33%	Quarterly	The target is based on Housemark's quartile one peer data for end of year. Tolerance is quartile two.	
% of stock vacant due to major work and policy voids Qrt2 0.35%	n/a	0.14%	Quarterly	The target is based on Housemark's quartile one peer data for end of year. Tolerance is quartile two.	
Overall Leaseholder Satisfaction with the Service		55%	Annual	A target of 62% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile two data leaseholder peers.	

**7.4.3** The Trust provides profiled performance against the majority of indicators on a quarterly basis, together with monitoring information that sets out key data in respect of homelessness, housing advice, housing needs register, gas safety and Right to Buy activities in a format agreed with the Council.

**7.4.4** The Trust monitors diversity information to assess the impact of our services on people with 'protected characteristics' (Equality Act 2010).

## 8 SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

### 8.1 Working in Partnership

8.1.1 The Trust meets with WHBC quarterly to review performance and discuss progress in delivering the service in compliance with this Delivery Plan. If, at any point, the Council has any concerns or requires further information further meetings will be arranged as appropriate.

8.1.2 The Trust will advise WHBC of any areas of concern that arise among service users and of major communications it has with service users.

8.1.3 In service areas where there is a level of joint working or inter-dependence, the following nominated officers work to ensure that this is achieved effectively:-

Service Area	Nominated Officer WHCHT	Nominated Officer WHBC	Timetable/Frequency
<b>Homelessness/ Housing Advice/ Housing Needs Register/Allocations</b>	Head of Housing Needs	Housing Client and Policy Manager	Monthly
<b>Anti -Social Behaviour</b>	Head of Community Development	Partnerships and Community Safety Manager	Case basis
<b>Court Attendance</b>	Head of Housing Management	Head of Legal Services	Case basis
<b>Housing Rent Setting</b>	Company Accountant	Head of Resources	Annually
<b>Independent Living Services</b>	Director of Operations	Head Housing and Community	When required
<b>Rent Accounting</b>	Company Accountant	Head of Resources	When required
<b>Housing Benefits</b>	Head of Housing Management	Revenues and Benefits Client Manager	Half Yearly

### 8.2 Delegation Scheme

8.2.1 The Trust is authorised to undertake the contractual and regulatory responsibilities in respect of Housing Services delivered on behalf of WHBC, as set out in the Management Agreement. The Board of the Trust has delegated the day to day management responsibility to Officers of the Trust through a detailed scheme of delegation.

**8.2.2** The Trust delivers the Housing Services outlined in the Delegation Agreement which forms part of the Management Agreement with WHBC, including:-

- Enforcement of tenancy conditions
- Dealing with arrears and rent collection
- Tenant information, communication and consultation
- Tenant participation, inc. involvement in setting and monitoring service standards
- Similar functions for leaseholders
- Stock investment decisions
- Responsive repairs including ordering and monitoring all aspects of the work
- Planned specialist and cyclical maintenance
- Managing lettings and void (empty) properties
- Tenancy offer and sign up
- Estate management
- Independent Living Services, including the community transport service
- Tenancy support
- Community involvement, including the Jim McDonald Centre

### **8.3 Service Delivery**

**8.3.1** The Trust wants to seek a range of independent approved verifications of the quality of the services it provides to demonstrate how it is delivering excellence. Through benchmarking and the development of local regulation, based on agreed service standards, it will provide a cost effective approach to replace independent inspection.

### **8.4 Performance Targets**

**8.4.1** The Trust is committed to the delivery of a wide range of services that provide high levels of customer service, using a range of customer satisfaction measures.

**8.4.2** Our current key customer satisfaction measures are:

Measure	Freq.	At Q2 15/16	Target
<b>Responsive repairs service</b>	Quarterly	<b>95%</b>	92%
<b>Planned Maintenance Work</b>	Quarterly	<b>99%</b>	90%
<b>Gas Servicing Work</b>	Quarterly	<b>95%</b>	95%
<b>New Tenant Survey – including voids and Choice Based Lettings</b>	Quarterly	<b>89%</b>	90%
<b>Complaints Handling</b>	Quarterly	<b>88%</b>	80%
<b>Welfare Decorations</b>	Annually	<b>n/a</b>	90%
<b>Lifeline Service</b>	Annually	<b>n/a</b>	95%
<b>Sheltered Housing Service</b>	Annually	<b>n/a</b>	95%

**8.4.3** During 2014 the Trust carried out a STAR survey with tenants and the results have been used to inform some of the improvement targets below. Critical to meeting these targets will be installation of methods that will enable the Trust to measure these perceptions on a regular basis and understand the keys drivers. The initial surveys undertaken with this methodology will inform the speed with which these targets can be met. Work is being

done in Q4 of 2015/16 to ensure that this is possible. A further wide survey will then be carried out in 2016 to monitor progress.

**On a bi-annual basis, through the Survey of Tenants and Residents with tenants:**

<b>Measure. (Housemark benchmark measures)</b>	<b>2014/15 results</b>	<b>Target 2016/17</b>	<b>Comments.</b>
<b>Satisfaction with the overall service</b>	81%	85%	A target of 88% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.
<b>Satisfaction with the quality of their home</b>	79%	83%	A target of 87% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.
<b>Satisfaction with the neighbourhood as a place to live</b>	84%	87%	The target is based on Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.
<b>Satisfaction with the repairs service</b>	72%	78%	A target of 84% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.
<b>Satisfaction that the Trust listens to their views and acts upon them</b>	60%	68%	A target of 72% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.
<b>Satisfaction with the rent provided value for money</b>	76%	79%	A target of 84% has been set for 2017/18 being Housemark's quartile one data for ALMO peers.

- 8.4.4** In order to raise the profile of the Trust and to provide opportunities for developing its community empowerment aims, the Trust will continue to support a range of community events and activities. The Trust will work with the council and other local stakeholders to deliver its Community Involvement Strategy.
- 8.4.5** The Trust will also deliver the first year of its emerging Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, taking a fresh look at prevention in response to new powers.
- 8.4.6** Our strategic review of services for older people underpins our long term business model for providing sheltered and other related support services into the future. We are developing a joined-up approach to delivering community based activities, making full use of the communal facilities and community transport service. We will provide control centre services for other organisations to can generate an income to sustain our existing services to local people.
- 8.4.7** The Trust will implement changes to the way in which the Jim McDonald Community Centre is promoted and expand the range of services it offers, with the aim of providing more and better activities for people of all ages, whilst ensuring the centre's future financial viability.
- 8.4.8** The Trust will monitor the impact of government reforms in social housing and welfare provision. We will work closely with the Council at both strategic and operational levels to mitigate the impacts of these changes. The Trust will continue to implement its Welfare Reform Action Plan.

**8.4.9** During 2016/17 the Trust will continue to support the Council in meeting its strategic housing objectives in relation to providing housing advice, including:

- Continuing to build links with the private rented sector in order to improve access to and the quality of accommodation. This will include the launch of the Community Lettings Service in April 2016
- Seek to attain 'Gold Standard' accreditation for our Housing Options services, achieving Silver in April 2016 and Gold in December 2016
- Implementing and enhancing the Housing Options Model relating to the way in which we deliver Housing Advice
- Continuing to maximise the use of our temporary accommodation through letting units to other providers and by continuing to keep decision times for homelessness assessments as short as possible, without compromising the quality of the decision.

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## **9 RESOURCING PLAN**

### **9.1 Working in Partnership**

**9.1.1** The Trust uses due care, skill and diligence in undertaking its functions in managing the efficient and effective delivery of services delegated to it by WHBC and in order to ensure that the terms of the Management Agreement are met. The Trust directly employs its own staff to deliver the core front line service but also utilises Council run support services through Service Level Agreements.

### **9.2 Delegation Scheme**

**9.2.1** All employees are directly employed by the Trust and it has an established Employee Forum, with representatives from all teams and the trade union which meets on a six-weekly cycle in order to carry out formal and informal consultation with staff in relation to the Trust's operations and employment policies.

**9.2.2** WHBC leases the office accommodation at both Campus East and White Lion Square, Hatfield currently used as offices by the Trust under Service Level Agreements. The Commercial team also co-occupies office premises and has use of ICT services at Hyde Way, Welwyn Garden City.

### **9.3 Service Delivery**

**9.3.1** The Trust is managed by a Board of Non-Executive Directors as more fully described in 'Governance'. The day to day running of the Trust is delegated to an Executive Team, headed by the Managing Director. Membership of the Team includes the Director of Operations, Director of Property Services, Head of Governance, Head of Human Resources and the Company Accountant.

**9.3.2** The MD has responsibility for the following service and support functions:-

- Strategy and Business Planning
- Governance
- Accounts and Finance
- HRA Management
- Rent Accounting
- Leasehold Management
- Housing Systems
- Human Resources
- Communications
- Customer Service and Complaints Handling
- Performance and Service Development

**9.3.3** The Director of Operations currently has responsibility for:-

- Tenancy and Estate Management
- Tenant Involvement and Consultation
- Rent Collection and Arrears Prevention and Recovery
- Voids and Lettings
- Housing Needs Register
- Choice Based Lettings
- Homelessness Prevention and Management
- Housing Options and Advice
- Temporary Accommodation
- Tenancy Support
- Sheltered Housing
- Community Development

- Anti-Social Behaviour Prevention and Enforcement
- Out of Hours Emergency Call Centre
- Receptions
- Community Services

**9.3.4** The Director of Property Services currently has responsibility for:-

- Responsive Maintenance
- Void Property repairs
- Planned and Cyclical maintenance
- Gas Servicing and Electrical/Mechanical Maintenance
- Major Works Programmes
- Specialist Maintenance
- Stock Condition
- Repairs Reporting and Call Handling
- Partnering Contract Management and Procurement
- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety

#### **9.4 Staff Resources**

**9.4.1** The Trust currently employs c.150 FTE to deliver its services.

**9.4.2** The Trust has the responsibility to continually review its staffing structures and arrangements in order to best achieve the aims and objectives as set out in this and future Delivery Plans. Any reviews will be carried out in full consultation with staff and their trade union representatives as provided for in the terms and conditions of employment.

#### **9.5 Staff Training**

**9.5.1** The Trust is committed to being a service provider and employer of choice. Key to this is the ongoing learning and development of existing staff. In support of this the Trust was successful in being accredited with “Investors in People” (IIP), meeting the silver level in 2014. The Trust has a strategy to use IIP as a tool for organisational development and will seek accreditation at gold standard in a timeframe linked to targets in its Workforce Strategy.

#### **9.6 Support and Professional Services provided by the Council**

**9.6.1** The Trust purchases a number of support and professional services from the Council, set out in the Management Agreement as Service Level Agreements (SLAs). These SLAs are reviewed and where necessary renegotiated with the Council or terminated. The Trust is required to ensure that the services covered by these agreements demonstrate best value and support the development and improvement of the core services to tenants and leaseholders. A timetable of reviews has been established specific to each of the SLAs.

**9.6.2** The Trust also provides a number of services to the Council in order to ensure that key areas of service integration and/or efficiency and value for money continue to be achieved following the setting up of the Trust. These are also subject to SLAs set out in the Management Agreement and include :-

- an out of hours emergency call centre
- management of housing options, advice and homelessness services
- assistance with the prevention, investigation and enforcement of anti social behaviour within the borough

**9.6.3** Regular meetings between the officers of the Trust and the Council take place at intervals agreed within the SLAs in order to monitor service quality and performance against targets.

## **9.7 Performance Targets**

**9.7.1** WHCHT is committed to equal opportunities and seeks to employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community we serve. In order to demonstrate how it is meeting that commitment the Trust has developed equalities and diversity monitoring information in respect of its employees, management, recruitment and Board membership.

**9.7.2** The Trust is seeking to strengthen its culture through the positive re-enforcement of its agreed values and by challenging attitudes and behaviours that fail to demonstrate those values

**9.7.3** To promote housing as a career and encourage young people to become involved, the Trust will continue to work with 3 educational establishments.

**9.7.4** The Trust will continue to support housing traineeships and will work with both the Welwyn Hatfield Housing Maintenance Team and other contractors to promote training and apprenticeship programmes. The Trust has continued to recruit, train and develop apprentices.



## GOVERNANCE PLAN

### 9.8 Working in Partnership

- 9.8.1 **NOTE:** The paragraphs that follow describe the current governance arrangements for the Trust, as defined in the Management Agreement. However, as stated in the introduction, the re-organisation of the Council and findings of the independent review of the Trust mean that these arrangements will be subject to some revision. The Articles are likely to be revised in quarter four of 2015/16 and quarter 1 of 2016/17.
- 9.8.2 The Board of the Trust is committed to working in partnership with other organisations in our community and in particular with WHBC. The relationship between the Board of the Trust and WHBC is governed by the Management Agreement setting out the terms under which housing management and related services are delegated.
- 9.8.3 WHBC is able to monitor that relationship through the quarterly performance monitoring meetings attended by the Head of Housing and Community Services, the Chief Executive of the Trust and its Directors. This is supplemented by monthly monitoring and service planning meetings between officers of the two organisations, with bi-monthly meetings being attended by the Council's housing portfolio holder and the Chair of the Board.
- 9.8.4 WHBC, through its agreement with SIAS, provides internal audit services to the Trust. In addition the Board has employed Grant Thornton to provide external audit services.
- 9.8.5 WHBC approves Board appointments in accordance with the terms of the Management Agreement. The Trust has appointed an independent agency to oversee elections for the Tenants' Panel.
- 9.8.6 The Trust also produces an Annual Governance Statement to reflect the different internal control mechanisms, framework of systems and process, and the culture and values by which the Trust is controlled.

### 9.9 Delegation Scheme

- 9.9.1 The Trust is authorised to undertake the contractual and regulatory commitments in respect of the housing services delivered on the Council's behalf.

### 9.10 Service Delivery

#### 9.11 The Board of Directors

- 9.11.1 Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust is managed by a Board of Non-Executive Directors which meets on a quarterly basis. The Board is comprised of seven tenants (including one Leaseholder), three local authority nominees and five independent members with relevant experience of a wide range of social housing, finance and legal skills and knowledge.
- 9.11.2 Tenants/leaseholders make up the largest group within the Board and this reflects the importance placed on ensuring that they have a greater input into the management of their homes and the resulting impacts on the communities in which they live.
- 9.11.3 Tenant/Leaseholder Board Members are nominated from within the Tenants' Panel. The membership of that Panel is in turn elected by an independently run postal ballot of all tenants/leaseholders.
- 9.11.4 The Board operates 3 formal Sub-Committees: **Finance and Audit, Services and Resources**. These Sub-Committees are made up of Board Members with specific expertise or interest in these areas of the strategic management of the Trust allowing a greater focus on these issues. Each of the sub-committees meets on at least a quarterly basis, has a clearly defined role and terms of reference, and reports to the Management Board.

- 9.11.5 The Board is committed to ensuring that Members are effectively trained to undertake their duties. A full skills audit of existing Members has been undertaken and an ongoing programme of training is in place.
- 9.11.6 Annual appraisals are completed for all Board Members and the learning used both by individuals and the Board collectively to develop governance.
- 9.11.7 Board Members have their training and development needs assessed as part of the annual appraisal. New Board Members have their training needs assessed upon appointment to the Board as part of their induction.
- 9.11.8 Board Members are committed to ensuring that all decisions are made in the best interests of the Trust and are independent of outside third party interests. Training has been given to all Board Members on their roles and responsibilities. The Board has also agreed a code of conduct.
- 9.11.9 The Board has agreed an approach to Strategic Risk Management, and the risks are reviewed and monitored every six months.
- 9.11.10 The Board regularly reviews the performance of the Trust through performance reports made to the Board. The Board ensures that performance is regularly reported to the Tenants' Panel and more widely through publication on the website and in newsletters.
- 9.11.11 All reports to the Board are assessed on the potential financial, policy, communication, risk and equalities impacts.
- 9.11.12 The SIAS Audit Team from within Herts County Council has been appointed to provide internal audit reports. An annual audit plan is agreed by the Board.
- 9.11.13 The Board also ensures that, through Annual Performance Appraisals, targets for the service are communicated to all employees of the Trust.
- 9.11.14 The Chair and Vice Chair of the Board carry out the appraisal of the Managing Director of the Trust.

## **9.12 The Approach to Governance**

- 9.12.1 The Management Agreement and Delivery Plan are based on the principles of self monitoring and it is for the Board to take responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Delivery Plan. The Trust is required to notify the Council through monitoring meetings of any failure to meet performance targets as set out in this Delivery Plan or any significant operational problems.
- 9.12.2 In referring any problems to the Council, the Board will seek to demonstrate how it intends to address any shortfalls or performance failure. While the Management Agreement sets out methods for dealing with failing performance, it will be the responsibility of the Board to ensure it is delivering services according to agreed standards.
- 9.12.3 The Board has ultimate responsibility for the governance and strategic leadership of WHCHT. In carrying out this role the Board will:-
  - Set out and review the overall strategic objectives and direction of the Trust
  - Set out the core values of the Trust
  - Ensure compliance with those core values
  - Ensure compliance with the management agreement
  - Agree the Annual Delivery Plan with the Council
  - Monitor the performance of the Trust against the Delivery Plan
  - Approve and monitor the Trust's budgets and accounts
  - Ensure that arrangements are in place for urgent decisions to be made

- Agree policies and make key decisions on all matters with significant financial or other risks to the Trust
- Satisfy itself that the Trust conducts its affairs in a lawful and ethical manner, within the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and within accepted standards of performance and propriety.

**9.12.4** Officers of the Trust are responsible for implementing the overall strategy and for reporting to the Board on progress and performance.

### **9.13 Code of Governance**

**9.13.1** The Board of the Trust has developed a detailed approach to governance and a Code of Governance for the organisation which incorporates:-

- Constitution of the Board and the exercise of its functions
- Conduct of the Board's business
- The roles of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Board Members
- The roles and terms of reference of Committees
- Board Member recruitment, support, training and development
- Accountability and Openness
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Risk Management, internal control and audit
- Code of conduct
- Financial Regulations and Standing Orders