



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department fur
Commonities

Regulatory Framework

Grove Community Housing Association – Regulatory Judgement

Report 2021/22



Introduction

The Department for Communities (DFC) is the Regulatory Authority for Registered Housing Associations (RHAs) in Northern Ireland. The Housing Regulation Branch within DFC undertakes this Regulation activity on behalf of the Department and we seek to protect the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use the services provided by RHA's. To ensure this is achieved, RHAs must provide us with the necessary information on a regular basis to demonstrate how the Regulatory Framework Standards are being achieved.

RHA Background

Grove Community Housing Association (GCHA), was first registered with the Industrial and Provident Society in 1976 and with the Department of the Environment the following year. The association was established to address poor housing and environmental conditions in the area and has worked to improve these through renovating old dwellings and building new homes. It has approximately 218 properties in and around the Shore Road area in North Belfast.

Regulatory Approach

Through our risk-based and proportionate approach to regulating RHAs, we focus our attention on the important risks and key aspects of the RHA's performance. This includes having different levels of engagement depending on the RHA's risk and performance profile.

When we refer to risk, we are talking about the risk to the interests of tenants and other service users. This may not always be the same as an RHA's own detailed assessment of the operational risks it faces. This judgement is completed in accordance with the risk-based approach to Regulation introduced in April 2017.

Overall Opinion

Regulatory Judgement:

**Grove Community
Housing Association**

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Meets the requirements.

Based on a review of the evidence submitted, Housing Regulation Branch (HRB) has determined that GCHA has demonstrated that it meets the Regulatory Standards for Governance, Finance and Consumer in respect of the 2021/2022 year. Further information on our Regulatory Standards can be obtained within the following Advice Note: [How we Regulate](#)

Assessment Findings

Outcome of Governance Standard - MET

Governance Standard 1:

GCHA has demonstrated that it has effective governance arrangements that deliver its aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner.

A previous best practice recommendation has not yet been fully implemented. The recommendation relates to ensuring all remaining policies and procedures are reviewed and approved by the Board. Implementation will further enhance compliance with this standard.

Governance Standard 2:

GCHA adopts a robust approach to the assessment and management of risk and demonstrates informed and transparent decision-making processes.

Outcome of Finance Standard - MET

Finance Standard 1:

GCHA has demonstrated that it manages its resources effectively to ensure financial viability is maintained in the short, medium and longer term.

Finance Standard 2:

GCHA has articulated and delivered a comprehensive and strategic approach to achieving value for money in meeting the organisation's objectives.

A recommendation, however, remains outstanding from the 2020/21 regulatory assessment report: the Value for Money (VfM) Statement could be enhanced by the inclusion of specific targets and/or Key Performance Indicators, thereby enabling users to assess GCHA's performance, progress achieved, and benchmark against other organisations. A sector-wide scorecard has been developed which could be incorporated into the VfM Statement in the future and form one part of a broader assessment of performance.

Outcome of Consumer Standard – MET

Consumer Standard 1:

GCHA has managed its business so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Consumer Standard 2:

GCHA has demonstrated that it provides 'Decent Homes' standard accommodation with good service quality choices appropriate to the diverse needs of its tenants.

Consumer Standard 3:

GCHA has illustrated how it contributes to supporting vibrant communities that encourages tenant opportunities and promotes well-being.

Anticipated Level of Engagement for 2022/23:

Level 1 – Where following submission of the Regulatory Standards Annual Return (RSAR) and required financial information, we are content there is sufficient assurance and little additional contact is required unless other matters arise.

Further information on how we reach our Regulatory Judgment decision and the different levels of engagement can be found in the following advice note; [Regulatory Judgements and Engagements](#)