

Report To: Audit Committee

Date of Meeting: Thursday, 10 March 2022

Report Title: Homes England Compliance Audit Report 2021/22

Report By: Andrew Palmer, Assistant Director Housing and Built Environment

Key Decision: N

Classification: Open

Purpose of Report

To report the outcome of the Homes England compliance audit.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. To acknowledge the contents of the compliance audit report and record this on the Investment Management System (IMS) Compliance Audit System**

Reasons for Recommendations

1. The council has been subject to a compliance audit by Homes England and now needs to acknowledge the findings of the report.

Introduction

1. In October 2020, the council secured additional capital and revenue funding through the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to provide move on accommodation for rough sleepers. The fund was administered by Homes England.
2. The council has acquired 4 units, which have now been brought into use as Housing First accommodation.
3. Hastings Borough Council is a Homes England Investment Partner. This means the council can bid for grant funding to support the development of affordable housing. The council has also re-activated its Registered Provider status, which means it can provide affordable housing directly.

Compliance Audit

4. The scheme was selected for a compliance audit by Homes England. The purpose of the audit is to check grant recipients have met Homes England's policies, procedures and funding conditions.
5. The council appointed Ashdown Hurrey to carry out the audit and report their findings to Homes England. The findings are then reviewed by the Homes England Lead Auditor.

Judgement Summary

6. The report comments that "on review of the evidence provided, the outcome of the audit has shown the provider has complied with all the programme requirements and guidance. A GREEN grade has been assigned and no breaches were identified".
7. A full copy of the report can be found at Appendix A.
8. The council received the report on 17 January 2022 and must acknowledge the findings within 3 calendar months.

Timetable of Next Steps

| Action | Key milestone | Due date (provisional) | Responsible |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Acknowledge findings of the report | Report recorded on the Homes England IMS | 11 March 2022 | Strategic Housing and Projects Manager |

Wards Affected

(All Wards);

Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score: 49.3

Have you used relevant project tools?: Y

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Equalities and Community Cohesiveness | N |
| Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17) | N |
| Risk Management | Y |
| Environmental Issues & Climate Change | N |
| Economic/Financial Implications | Y |
| Human Rights Act | N |
| Organisational Consequences | Y |
| Local People's Views | N |
| Anti-Poverty | Y |
| Legal | Y |

Additional Information

Appendix A – Homes England Compliance Audit Report 2021/22

Officer to Contact

Officer Michael Courts

Email mcourts@hastings.gov.uk

Tel 01424 451 315