



DfC

Department
for Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Regulatory Framework

Craigowen Housing Association - Regulatory Judgement

Report 2017/18

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 as 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

Craigowen Housing Association (Craigowen HA) was first registered with the Industrial and Provident Society (I&PS) in 1976 and with the Department of the Environment the following year. The Association was established to provide and maintain housing accommodation for people with learning disabilities and for those who care for them, along with their families. They have 229 bed spaces, all of which are located within three Camp hill Communities, namely Mourned Grange, Clanabogan and Glencraig.

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:

**Craigowen Housing
Association**

3

Does not meet the requirements but is working to improve its position.

Based on a review of the evidence submitted by the RHA, Housing Regulation Branch has determined that Craigowen HA has partially met the Regulatory Standards for Governance, met the Standard for Finance, but have not met the Consumer Standard. Further information on our Regulatory Standards can be obtained within the following Advice Note; [How we Regulate](#)

Assessment Findings

Outcome of Governance Standard – PARTIALLY MET

Governance Standard 1:

Whilst it is accepted that some controls are in place, and that the association are working towards improving their processes, weaknesses do exist in the policy structure. There is a significant number of policy documents which are either being introduced, or renewed.

Work is also ongoing at Board level to consider collective Board performance, individual member performance and the current mix of skills and experience their Board contains. On the basis of this, Craigowen HA has failed to demonstrate that they have sufficient governance arrangements in place, at this time to deliver their aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner.

Governance Standard 2:

Craigowen HA has demonstrated that they currently have an acceptable approach to the assessment and management of risk, and they have in place an informed and transparent decision-making processes.

Outcome of Finance Standard - MET

Finance Standard 1:

Craigowen HA has demonstrated that they manage their resources effectively to ensure financial viability is maintained in the short, medium and longer term.

Finance Standard 2:

Craigowen HA has provided a limited assessment of their approach to achieving value for money in meeting their organisation's objectives.

Outcome of Consumer Standard – NOT MET

Consumer Standard 1:

Craigowen HA has been unable to provide evidence of how they manage their business so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with. They have been unable to provide evidence of a number of key documents and processes, including their Corporate Strategy; a Tenant Participation Strategy and Tenant participation training with their Staff / Board / Community.

Consumer Standard 2:

Craigowen HA has not provided sufficient information to fully demonstrate how they provide 'Decent Homes' standard accommodation with good service quality choices appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants.

Consumer Standard 3:

Craigowen HA failed to demonstrate how they contributed to supporting vibrant communities, encouraged tenant opportunities, and promoted well-being. A structure and process should be put in place to address these matters, and this may well emanate from the introduction of a Tenant Participation Strategy which is planned for the near future.

Anticipated Level of Engagement for 2018/19:

Level 2 – Targeted engagement to be carried out where there is additional assurance required which is not covered in the standard information.

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](#)

Engagement Plan 2018/19

Craigowen HA role;

- In conjunction with Housing Regulation Branch, Craigowen HA has agreed to a time bound action plan containing fourteen recommendations. This should be addressed in full by Quarter ending December 2019.

Housing Regulation Branch role:

- To regularly meet with the Craigowen HA Board and management team to discuss and monitor progress, and ensure that the 14 recommendations are implemented in line with target dates.

Engagement Plan 2018/19 Review

Craigowen HA's Regulation plan will be kept under review and may be amended subject to changes or addition of events. If we are required to use alternative regulatory engagement to seek additional assurance, we may do so.

Our level of regulatory engagement has been decided from the information supplied to us as part of the Regulatory Framework annual assessment. We rely on the information supplied being accurate and complete. We do not accept liability if this is not the case. Liability will also not be accepted by us for actions arising from a third party's use of the information or views contained in the Regulation Plan.