



**Policy Title:** **Best Value Policy**

**Policy Section:** Governance

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**This document will be made available in different languages and formats on request, including Braille and audio formats.**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cadder Housing Association (The Association) recognises best value will be realised through achievement of value for money to maximise our resources to facilitate high quality services and improvements to our tenants and their homes.
- 1.2 A strategic aim of the Association is to 'achieve best value in all that we do', therefore we aim to secure value for money through our work and activities.
- 1.3 This Policy sets out the context and drivers of best value in our business and how we will undertake this to enable the Association to achieve against our strategic aims and mission statement to 'Make Cadder Better' as outlined in our Business Plan. We will establish an action plan to provide a focus and measurement for the achievement of best value for money in our work.

## 2.0 What is Best Value

- 2.1 "Best value for money is defined as the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to meet customer requirements"  
(Department of Finance – U.K Government)
- 2.2 Best Value or as often referred to as Value for Money is defined as the relationship between the economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the business, which is sometimes identified as the 'value chain' or the 3 E's:
  - **Economy** - The price paid for what goes into providing a service, for example salary cost of employees, time and material cost for repairs, payments to contactors, suppliers and consultants. It is also about minimising the cost of resources of an activity, whilst not losing sight of quality
  - **Efficiency** - a measure of productivity considering how much you get out in relation to what is put in.
  - **Effectiveness** - A measure of the impact achieved or a measure of outcomes.
- 2.3 The definition of Best Value and achievement of the 3 E's will contribute towards our aim to either 'do the same for less' or 'do more for the same' in the delivery of our service and programme for improvement in Cadder.

2.4 Best Value will be achieved when we achieve the 'optimum combination of the 3 E's i.e. low costs, high productivity and successful outcomes.

2.5 A key consideration for the Association in Best Value is to maximise the social impact and demonstrate benefits to the Association and community.

### **3.0 Best Value Principles & Objectives**

3.1 There are four key principles of Best Value:

a) Challenge

We will aim to continuously improve across all areas of work. Our services will be scrutinised by our Management Committee; auditors; our Scrutiny Panel; our tenants and other customers; and other stakeholders e.g. Scottish Housing Regulator to ensure improvement.

The Association will set a challenging programme of work through development and review of the Business Plan, which will maximise new opportunities, attend to key risks and challenges and deliver continuous improvement in our work and activities. Through our auditors and our self-assessment programme we will assess our compliance against legislative and regulatory requirements, policy and procedural provisions and good practice guidance, where the outcome will be to provide reassurance at various levels of management and address any shortcomings to demonstrate improvement in our work.

b) Compare

We will compare our performance, statistical data and tenant satisfaction against other housing associations. Our benchmarking will be undertaken in the context of the Scottish Housing Charter and data provided through the ARC by peer associations (LSVT association with less than 1000 units), neighbouring associations (North West of Glasgow) and the housing association sector.

c) Consult

We will seek the views of the scrutiny panel, Customer Services Working Group, Cadder Community Council and our tenants and other customers in the development and review of service policies and activities. This will ensure our services and activities reflect the needs and aspirations of the Cadder community and our people.

We will present and publish performance information through the Annual Report on the Charter, in our newsletter, Cadder News and on our website and seek feedback from tenants and other customers on how we can further improve our services.

d) Compete

A key objective of the Association is to provide high quality, efficient and effective services to our tenants and other customers through our staff team including our Trade & Estates Teams, contractors and other partners. Our aim is to ensure that the Association and in turn our tenants and other customers secure best value from the full range of services in the delivery of the local housing service.

3.2 The objectives that will demonstrate our achievement of Best Value are:

a) A robust approach to strategic decisions

- We will ensure we make strategic decisions that fit with the strategic aims and mission statement as outlined in the Business Plan
- Best Value will be a key consideration in our programme of work to achieve our Business Plan.

b) To ensure financial viability and sustainability.

- We will have financial strategies in place to demonstrate our short, medium and long term viability, these will include Annual Budget, Business Plan and 30 year financial plans, and Treasury Management Plan.
- Our financial management strategies and plans will take into account how the business is performing and will consider risks and scenario planning to strengthen our financial arrangements.
- We will provide accurate and timeous reports to our stakeholders to demonstrate the financial position of the Association.

c) To ensure robust management of performance and costs.

- We will ensure there is an analysis and scrutiny of costs across the Association.
- We will set value for money targets in the development and review of our annual budget and longer term financial projections plans.
- We will benchmark performance internally and externally to demonstrate our performance compares favourably.
- We will encourage our staff to identify improvements in their work and activities that would contribute towards the achievement of best value.
- We will establish performance systems aligned to the Business Plan that facilitate setting challenging targets, monitoring and scrutiny at all levels, and reporting to stakeholders.
- We will have a programme of audit and self-assessment to check compliance.

- d) To ensure achievement of affordable rent and other service costs
- We will aim to keep rent and other service costs i.e. management costs, service charges, insurance affordable to our tenants and owner-occupiers.
  - We will have a prudent approach to financial management and through the achievement of best value in all that we do, we will contribute to a viable and sustainable organisation, which will lay the foundation for reasonable and affordable increases in rent and other costs.
  - We will undertake planned and cyclical improvements to our tenants' homes, as well as provide a high quality service to attend to needs and expectations, which are key factors in tenants' assessment of the value for money for their rent.
  - We will aim to provide a high quality factoring service and ensure we are effective in the upkeep and maintenance of the common property through our Trade & Estates Team or external contractors to demonstrate value for money.
  - We will seek the views of our tenants and owner-occupiers on the affordability of the proposed increase in their rent and charges, respectively to inform the Management Committee's decision on the annual increase.
- e) To publish our Best Value Achievements
- We will publish our best value achievements on our website, quarterly newsletter and annual report to demonstrate our commitment to value for money services.
- f) To ensure robust procurement of contracts
- We will implement the provisions of our Procurement Policy and Strategy to ensure best value in the tendering of work, services and supply contracts.
  - We will annually review our 5 year investment strategy and assess how this work will be undertaken to achieve best value.
  - We will work with our contractors to streamline processes, whilst maintaining quality and cost efficiency to achieve best value.
- g) To maximise the capability of our People
- We will ensure the culture and leadership approach maximises the capability of staff and outputs and outcomes in their role.
  - We will ensure performance targets link to our strategic aims and are disaggregated throughout the Association.
  - We will establish best value for money targets for staff members through their performance review.
  - We will provide training and development opportunities for our people, whilst ensuring it achieves value for money in their role within the Association.

- h) To achieve social value through our work and activities
  - We will aim to provide work and training placements, volunteering opportunities through our work and activities to provide school leavers and unemployed persons with opportunities, whilst delivering best value in the provision of services.
  - We will through the procurement of contracts seek to maximise community benefit outcomes, specifically for the:
    - Cadder Community Centre and key themed uses;
    - Employability initiative; or
    - Provision of apprenticeships through the contracts
- i) Create a Framework to measure Best Value
  - We will ensure each staff member has a Best Value objective in their annual Performance Review
  - We will establish an action plan to achieve Best Value.
  - We will report against the action plan every 6 months on how our commitment to best value is being achieved.

## **4.0 Legislation, Regulation and Good Practice**

### **4.1 Legislation**

#### **a) Local Government in Scotland Act 2003**

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 sets out the responsibilities of local authorities in achieving best value. The duties on local authorities to achieve best value through this legislation are as listed:

- the duty of Best Value, being to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance (Quality & Cost), to have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, the equal opportunities requirements and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the duty to achieve break-even in trading accounts subject to mandatory disclosure;
- the duty to observe proper accounting practices;
- the duty to make arrangements for the reporting to the public of the outcome of the performance of functions.

Housing associations are not covered by this legislation, however in our delivery of service to our tenants and other customers we are committed to taking account of this guidance to contribute towards our aim to maximise best value for money through our work and activities.

#### b) Housing (Scotland) Act 2010

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the Scottish Housing Charter, which would set key standards of performance for all social housing landlords. The Scottish Housing Regulator was given the remit to implement the Charter by social landlords and ensure performance is measured.

#### c) Good Practice

The Association will observe statutory regulations and guidance to local authorities and consider how we can implement this as good practice in our work and other activities.

### 4.2 Regulation

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) regulates social landlords through its Regulatory Framework. The Regulatory Framework and associated regulatory guidance relating to best value is as listed:

- Regulatory Standards for Governance and Financial Management

Standard 3 of the SHR's Regulatory Standards for Governance and Financial Management states:

"The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being and economic effectiveness"

- Scottish Social Housing Charter

The SHR regulates social landlords' compliance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter, which has specific outcomes and indicators associated with value for money and best value as listed:

Section - Getting good value from rents and service charges includes Charter Outcome 13

"Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay"

This standard covers the efficient and effective management of services. It includes minimising the time houses are empty; managing arrears and all resources effectively; controlling costs; getting value out of contracts; giving better value for money by increasing the quality of services with minimum extra cost to tenants, owners and other customers; and involving tenants and other customers in monitoring and reviewing how landlords give value for money.



The Social Housing Charter requires social landlords to make an Annual Return on the Charter in May of each year to the SHR covering performance, statistical and satisfaction indicators associated with the Charter. The SHR will publish landlords' data in a Landlords' Report on their website, which enables any member of the public to view this and compare an association's performance with other association and the social housing sector's performance.

Another key feature of the Charter is that housing associations have to enable tenants and other customers to hold them to account in the delivery of their services and activities. The Association will aim to re-establish the Customer Services Working Group, which is a scrutiny panel and their role is to challenge and act as a 'critical friend' in their assessment of our key services.

- **Factoring Services in Scotland – A Thematic Study**

The Association provides a factoring management service to over 400 owner-occupiers and we will take account of the Regulator's thematic study and guidance on how social landlords should provide and charge for factoring services.

## **5.0 Strategic Aims / Values**

5.1 The Association will through this Policy and Action Plan have a clear objective to demonstrate the achievement of best value will comply with our values and achieve against our strategic aims

a) Strategic Aims in the Business Plan 2016-19 are as listed:

- I. Provide a high quality housing service that is continually responsive to the expectations of our tenants and other customers;
- II. To engage and build relationships with our customers to ensure our service and activities meet their needs and aspirations of our tenants and other customers;
- III. To invest in our people to ensure they have good knowledge and skills to excel in their role within the Association;
- IV. Pursue development, regeneration and wider role initiatives in close working with key partners with the aim of improving Cadder, as well as the quality of life and living conditions of tenants and residents in Cadder; and

- V. Maintain the financial viability of the Association through sound business planning, control and **achievement of best value in all that we do.**

b) Values

The Association identified core values associated with our commitment to improve the 'customer journey' in our services, which are integral to our achievement of our Strategic Aims. These values are often referred to the 4 Cs, they are:

- Customer Focussed
- Communication
- Caring
- Commitment

## **6.0 Key Drivers / Characteristics of Best Value**

### 6.1 Commitment & Leadership

- 6.1.1 The Management Committee will be involved in setting the strategic direction through the Business Plan. This will include best value considerations, which will ensure there is a mechanism for internal and external scrutiny of performance, and a cyclical review of service policies and contracts.
- 6.1.2 Strategic priorities will be informed by a good understanding of our business and take into account the needs of our tenants and residents in the setting of priorities and assessment of performance against relevant targets will be undertaken with transparency.
- 6.1.3 The Management Committee will lead, manage and direct the organisation to ensure there are high quality, efficient and effective services and good outcomes for our tenants and other customers, across all areas of our work.
- 6.1.4 Committee Members and senior managers will ensure accountability and transparency through effective internal and external performance reporting.
- 6.1.5 The Association will take account of regulatory guidance associated with best value, as well as their National Panel of Tenants and Services Users' views of value for money and affordability of rent and other service costs.

## 6.2 Governance & Financial Management

6.2.1 The Association will ensure sound governance at a strategic, financial and operational level. It will have appropriate policies and procedures in place. Key elements of this are the:

- Codes of Conduct for Committee and Staff
- Business Plan
- Financial Regulations & Procedures
- Performance Management Framework
- Risk Management Strategy
- Treasury Management Strategy

6.2.2 The Association will notify the Regulator of any significant or exceptional issue, event or change within the organisation. Specifically, this will include events where we put at risk: the interests or safety of our tenants and other customers; the financial health of the Association; and good governance and reputation of the Association and the housing sector.

6.2.3 The Association will prepare an Annual Statement of compliance of our governance structures and arrangements against the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management

6.2.4 We will effectively manage payments and benefits to Committee members and staff, ensuring these are paid strictly in accordance with the Committee Members Expenses Policy and the Terms and Conditions of Employment, respectively.

6.2.5 The Association will publish a Succession Plan and Action Plan to ensure orderly succession of Committee members aimed at ensuring we have the appropriate balance of skills, knowledge, experience and representation with our shareholders and the Cadder community we serve.

6.2.6 The Association will assess annually the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity of individual members and the Management Committee.

6.2.7 All Committee members will be subject to annual appraisal and performance review to assess their contribution and effectiveness. There will be a particular focus on members with nine or more year's continuous service where they are seeking re-election, where the Management Committee must be assured these members continue to be effective in the role.

6.2.8 We will have an effective induction programme for any new Committee member to ensure they understand their role, powers and duties, as well as the need to undertake training and receive support to sustain their continued effectiveness.

- 6.2.9 All Management Committee members will be required to individually and collectively comply with the Code of Conduct and the expected standards of conduct of their membership of the Committee and Association.
- 6.3 Responsiveness & Consultation
- 6.3.1 The Association will give stakeholders the opportunity to make their views known and taken account of. This will be through regular attendance at the Customer Services Working Group, Cadder Community Council and any other Tenants and Residents Association meetings, as well as wider consultation on proposed policies or change that is likely to significantly affect those our tenants or other customers.
- 6.3.2 We will publish and implement a sound strategy for encouraging and supporting tenants, residents and other customers to participate actively in all areas of our work. We will support tenants to take an active interest in managing their homes.
- 6.3.3 We will deal fairly and effectively with anyone wanting to appeal against, or complain about, any of our decisions or activities. We will publish our Complaints Procedure, as well as outcomes from reported complaints.
- 6.3.4 We will seek to re-establish our Customer Services Working Group as the main external body for scrutiny and challenge on the performance of our services and activities. They will undertake the role as our “critical friend” aimed at delivering continuous improvement against Charter indicators and our services and activities. The CSWG will identify the key performance and Charter indicators we will report to our stakeholders e.g. Tenants, Regulator and other customers.
- 6.3.5 The Association will establish a customer suggestion scheme to seek the views of stakeholders and maintain a robust complaints handling procedure. This customer suggestion scheme will be integral to our aim to achieve best value through improving our service to meet the expectations of our customers.
- 6.3.6 To allow stakeholders to make informed comment we will make information available through our newsletter and website. Comments will be fed into policy and service reviews.
- 6.3.7 The Association will show transparency in decision making by publishing our Management Committee minutes on our website and in our reception area.
- 6.3.8 Key decisions will be contained in our newsletter.

## 6.4 Management of Resources

- 6.4.1 The Association will make the best use of our people and our physical resources to achieve efficiency, best value, continuous improvement and to deliver high-quality services that meet the needs of our service users. .
- 6.4.2 The Association will undertake a review of the staff structure every 3-5 years to ensure it 'lean and effective' and demonstrates best value and achievement of our strategic aims and mission statement.
- 6.4.3 The Association will consider the development of our in-house services and/or capability of our people to attend to new and existing contracted works.
- 6.4.4 The Association will award contracts in line with the Financial Regulations and Operating Procedures and its Procurement Policy, keeping a considered and appropriate balance between cost, quality and price. We will have a systematic and accountable approach to finding the most efficient and cost-effective way of securing the quality of assets and services we need.
- 6.4.5 The Association will maximise the resources of our direct labour staff in the upkeep and maintenance of our tenants' homes, empty properties, common areas and open spaces
- 6.4.6 The Association will test the quality and cost efficiency of our Trade & Estates Team, specifically on how they compare with our historical costs, neighbouring and peer housing association and market rates to demonstrate whether best value is being achieved.
- 6.4.7 The Association will ensure staff members' contribution is assessed and maximised through an annual Performance Review and at least bi-monthly progress meetings on their work, performance and contribution to achieving their role, their team's contribution and strategic ambitions and our strategic aims.

## 6.5 Review and options appraisal

- 6.5.1 The Association's internal auditors will assess compliance with our services in respect to legislative, regulatory and policy requirements, as well as good practice.
- 6.5.2 The Association will set a 3 Year Audit Plan, which will be reviewed annually by the Audit Sub-Committee to ensure it attends to key priorities, risks to achieve our strategic aims, shortcomings in our service and activities

- 6.5.3 The Association's Senior Staff Team will undertake a programme of self-assessment audits to assess compliance with our key policies and procedures, which will complement our internal audit plan.
- 6.5.4 Reviews will be undertaken on a systematic basis and concentrate on identified priorities, and areas where performance may be poor, which are of importance to stakeholders and can offer clear opportunities for improvements in services.
- 6.5.5 When reviewing a service or strategy all options will be considered and the views of the CSWG will be taken into account and reported to inform the Management Committee's decision.
- 6.5.6 The Association will in its implementation of the Charter review and account for our performance through the Annual Return of the Charter (ARC) and the Annual Report on the Charter. This will be undertaken through internal assessment, liaison with the CSWG and publication of our Annual Report.

## 6.6 Continuous Improvement

- 6.6.1 The Association will develop a work programme for our Governance / Management structures that demonstrates continuous improvement against our strategic aims
- 6.6.2 Committee and staff will be challenged, supported and managed to excel in their role within the Association
- 6.6.3 The implementation of the Performance Management Framework as a key strategy in our Business Plan will guide staff and Committee to improve our performance, effectiveness, monitoring, management and reporting arrangements.
- 6.6.4 The Business Plan will include key strategic and operational tasks and indicators to demonstrate achievement of strategic aims, which will include best value.
- 6.6.5 The Association will through its implementation of its Performance Management Framework and the Scottish Housing Charter have a performance system, which will:
- Challenge staff to excel in their role and improve their performance;
  - Establish monitoring arrangements to assess the performance of staff members; sections and the Association to contribute to and demonstrate achievement against the strategic aims;
  - Benchmark our performance through our historical position; peer and neighbour housing associations and the housing association sector.
    - Develop action plans to attend to any shortcomings in our performance.

## 6.7 Sustainable Development

6.7.1 The Association will consider the social, economic and environmental impacts of its activities and decisions both in the shorter and longer term. We will ensure that our policies and actions are underpinned by our commitment to sustainability. We consider the impact we can have in improving the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the wider community

## 6.8 Community Benefit

6.8.1 The Association will through the tendering of work, services and supply contracts aim to maximise community benefit, which will be in the form of:

- Services, activities or resources for the Cadder Community Centre;
- Contributing towards the Association's commitment to employability and provision of training and work experience placements, extended placements or apprenticeships within the Trade & Estates Team or by the appointed contractor / supplier; and
- Making a positive contribution to mitigate the level of deprivation in Cadder as defined in key categories in the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

## 6.9 Equal Opportunities

6.9.1 The value of equality and diversity is at the heart of the Association's work and clearly stated within our strategic plans and annual reports. We have a robust Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy in place and action plan to improve our services and performance across all aspects of our work. We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work

## **7.0 Delivering Our Policy**

### 7.1 Culture

7.1.1 This Best Value Policy and Action Plan will aim to further strengthen the culture of cost efficiency and effectiveness and high quality in the management of the Association and provision of our services to our tenants and other customers.

7.1.2 The Association will embed the culture of best value and value for money through achievement of our Action Plan, which will include procurement arrangements, training and development of our people, implementation of our communication strategy i.e. team meetings and individual progress meetings with staff

7.1.3 The Best Value Policy and Action Plan will be achieved through the Committee and staff undertaking the following:

- Management Committee

The Management Committee (Committee) will be responsible for approval of the Best Value Policy and Action Plan to achieve against the strategic aims of the Business Plan.

The Committee will delegate the implementation of the Action Plan to the Director and Senior Staff Team and they will monitor progress against the Action Plan through a six monthly progress report.

All reports to the Management Committee will include a section on Best Value, which will demonstrate to members the options and implications to inform their scrutiny, challenge and ultimately decision on the matter, where it is seen to maximise best value.

- Senior Staff Team

The Senior Staff Team (SST) will ensure the Best Value Policy and Action Plan is implemented.

The SST will be responsible in leading their teams to ensure the best value culture is embedded throughout the Association and will through the review of services, activities and processes result in savings and efficiencies and improvement in our management of the business, as well as improved services to our tenants and other customers.

The Director will lead on monitoring and reporting of the Best Value Action Plan to the Committee, as well as the annual review of the Action Plan

The SST will ensure their teams consider best value in their work programme and day to day management of services or any service reviews or work related matters.

Best Value will be a standing agenda item on each Team meeting to ensure it is understood by staff and they are encouraged to raise cost efficiencies and service improvement to contribute towards best value.

- Staff

Staff will be made aware of the importance of best value through training, team meetings and will be encouraged to contribute ideas to improving best value.



Staff will contribute towards the development and review of Business Plan, specifically the participation in the development session for the full review of Business Plan; the annual review of key tasks and targets in the Team's Contribution Plan and in their own contribution in their roles and responsibilities.

Staff should have at least one best Value objective from their annual Performance Review meeting.

## 7.2 Tenants and Other Customers

7.2.1 The views of tenants and other customers are central to our business and will have a positive impact in the development and review of our services and investment strategies that will contribute towards the achievement of best value:

7.2.2 Tenants and other customers i.e. owner-occupiers will be involved in:

- Providing their views in the Resident Satisfaction Survey;
- Providing their view on service reviews;
- Participating on the Scrutiny Panel, Customer Services Working Group;
- Attending focus group meetings on key issues i.e. consultation on annual rent, management fee and service charge increase; and

## 7.3 Contractors, Suppliers, Consultants and Partners

7.3.1 The Association will establish a Procurement schedule for the tendering of work, service and supply contracts to comply with legislation obligations and the requirements of our Procurement Policy.

7.3.2 The Association will maximise the use of Framework Agreements to streamline the procurement process, whilst ensuring compliance.

7.3.3 There will be a report to the Management Committee on tendering of contracts for works, services and supplies where the procurement value of the contract is above the Director's financial authorisation limit as outlined in the Financial Regulations, which will outline the method of procurement and evidence best value to inform the Management Committee's decision. In situations, where the procurement value is below the Director's financial authorisation limit, the Director and SST are required to sign off the tender that it is been undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Policy and contributed to best value.

7.3.4 The Association will develop partnerships with neighbouring or other housing associations and local groups to attract funding, deliver services and activities for the achievement of best value. We will only enter into partnerships where the objectives are clear and can be

linked to our strategic aims and we are satisfied the partnership is the best way of meeting its objectives.

7.3.5 The Association will work with our contractors, suppliers, consultants and partners to inform them of our commitment to best value and seek their views on how their work or service could be made more efficient or effective to contribute towards our best value agenda.

#### 7.4 Best Value Working Group

7.4.1 The Director will convene a working group to discuss the following:

- Development and annually refresh the Best Value Action Plan;
- Consider outcomes from strategies and service reviews, service performance i.e. complaints, satisfaction surveys, risks and quarterly management accounts to inform the annual review of the Best Value Action Plan.
- Procurement opportunities and arrangements
- Review progress against the Best Value Action Plan

7.4.2 The membership of the Best Value Working Group will be the Director, Finance & Corporate Services Manager and representative from each service area (Finance & Corporate Services, Customer Service Maintenance, Customer Service Housing, Trade Team, Estates Team, and Community Centre)

7.4.3 The Best Value Working Group will meet quarterly.

#### 7.5 I.C.T Strategy

7.5.1 The Association aims to maximise service efficiency and accessibility, reduce costs and increase tenant and customer satisfaction through effective ICT systems. The ICT Strategy will include hardware and software upgrades and improvements to facilitate efficient management of data and communication arrangements, as well as monitoring, management and reporting of outcomes.

7.5.2 Best Value will be achieved through maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of our ICT systems, which will include:

- Periodically tender to appoint an ICT Service Support Provider to maintain and protect our ICT systems;
- Cyclical replacement of our ICT hardware to facilitate an effective, efficient and high quality service;
- Maximise the use of the SDM Housing system and other software systems in the management and delivery of our services;
- Explore new systems that will contribute towards service excellence and in turn demonstrate achievement of best value e.g. phone systems, mobile technology for maintenance services, community centre lets, remote access, etc.

- Improved monitoring and reporting of data, service outcomes to key stakeholders e.g. Tenants and other customers, Management Committee, Scottish Housing Regulator, etc.

## 7.6 Service Reviews

7.6.1 The Association undertakes a cyclical review of policies and services as a method to ensure;

- compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements and good practice guidance;
- review our approach to improve our service and achieve best value;
- address shortcomings in the delivery of services;
- continuous improvement in our performance;
- good outcomes continue to be achieved for tenants and other customers
- establish key performance indicators and performance indicators to inform monitoring on policy provisions
- reporting arrangements are effective in the management and governance structures and to key stakeholders e.g. lenders, Scottish Housing Regulator etc.

7.6.2 Through the review of the Business Plan 2019-2022 there will be a 3 year programme for the review of policy and procedures

## 7.7 Trade & Estates Team

7.7.1 The Association established in-house estates and trade services in 2005 and 2013, respectively. The key services undertaken by the estates and trade team are as listed:

- Estates Service  
The estates service undertakes the our service obligations in the upkeep and maintenance of the common areas, backcourts, shrub beds and open spaces, as well as other service e.g. empty house clearances, pest control, de-littering streets, etc.
- Trade Team Services  
The trade team service undertakes the following:
  - 80% of re-active repairs mainly plumbing, electrical, joinery and plastering works;
  - Cyclical repairs i.e. gutter cleaning, environmental maintenance;
  - Major repairs i.e. kitchen and bathroom replacement, verandah screens etc.

- 7.7.2 The Association will regularly test the best value of our estates and trade team services through:
- Quarterly performance monitoring to compare our costs and performance against previous outcomes i.e. last quarter / financial year;
  - Quarterly assessment of tenants satisfaction to assess whether the service has met their expectations;
  - Best value exercise to assess our costs, service quality and social impact against peer, neighbouring and sector costs of:
    - Maintenance costs per unit;
    - Component replacement i.e. kitchen and bathroom
    - Tenant satisfaction
    - Social outcomes e.g. employability, impact of doing either 'same for less' or 'more for the same'

## 7.8 Rent and Other Service Costs

- 7.8.1 A key aim of the Association is to ensure our rent and other service costs are affordable for our tenants and owner-occupiers, respectively and in turn they feel they get value for money from these charges.
- 7.8.2 We will consult with tenants and owner-occupiers annually on the proposed increase of their rent and other service costs, respectively and ensure the Management Committee are provided with their views to make an informed decision on the increase to be applied to rent and other service costs.
- 7.8.3 We will ensure high quality services and effective upkeep, maintenance and improvement of our tenants' homes and the common property, which are key factors in tenants and owner-occupiers' assessment on whether they receive value for money for their rent and other service costs.
- 7.8.4 We will seek to mitigate the annual increase of rent and other costs, whilst ensuring the financial viability of the Association to take account of inflation and achieve our service and investment obligations in the short, medium and long term.

## 7.9 Benchmarking

- 7.9.1 The Association will compare our performance to assess our continuous improvement and achievement of best value. This will be achieved through:
- Internal assessment  
Comparison against previous quarter or financial year
  - External assessment  
Comparison with peer and neighbouring housing association and the housing association sector

7.9.2 The Association will establish an action plan to address any shortcomings of our quarterly assessment against the Charter indicators and other key performance indicators.

## 7.10 Performance Management

7.10.1 The Association established a new Performance Management Framework in August 2018 and through implementation of key features our aim is to further strengthen our performance through:

- Establishing performance targets for staff, sections and the Association's work and activities;
- Improve monitoring arrangements to facilitate discuss with staff on an individual and sectional basis;
- Implementation of audit and self-assessment programme to assess our compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, good practice guidance, provisions of policies and procedures, with the specific aim of achieving improvement across our work and services.
- Improving our reporting of performance to our stakeholders (tenants, customers, Management Committee and designated sub-Committees, Scottish Housing Regulator, Lenders and others)

## 8.0 Equality & Diversity

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

8.2 The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone

8.3 The Equality Act 2010 details types of discrimination and these are referred to 'protected characteristics'. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of their age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

8.4 The Equality Act 2010 also protects from discrimination:

- at work
- in education
- as a consumer
- when using public services
- when buying or renting property
- as a member or guest of a private club or association

8.5 We will not compromise our commitment to comply with the Equality Act 2010 in our pursuit of best value in our work and activities.

## **9.0 Glossary of Terms**

9.1 A Glossary of Terms is listed in appendix 2 and explains some of key elements of the Best Value Policy.

## **10.0 Review**

10.1 The Best Value will be reviewed in January 2022 or earlier to take account of its implementation and effectiveness or any changes in relevant legislation, regulatory guidance or best practice.



## Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms

### Glossary of Terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Affordability	This is measure where our tenants and owner-occupiers level of ability to pay their rent and other service costs, respectively based on their income.
Assessment	A written review of how well the service or team is performing. This should use a variety of related indicators and other evidence and where possible have comparisons to other similar councils and any related national standards or inspection grading.
Asset Management	Is the management and maintenance of our housing stock taking into account the stock condition survey and our investment strategy, demand and turnover, and demographic considerations to inform the sustainability of our property port-foilio.
Audit	An independent review of the evidence to ensure it is accurate and of good quality.
Audit Plan	The Audit Plan sets out the programme of audit assessments, which will take account of risks, shortcomings in performance, key priorities associated with the ability to achieve the Strategic Aims. The Audit Plan will normally be set for a 3 year period and reviewed annually.
Benchmarking	Comparing ourselves to other housing association to help evaluate performance, efficiency of processes and value for money.
Best Value	Best value is about getting the best price and / or quality in relation to a contract or service
Business Plan	The Business Plan is the key strategic document, which sets out the strategic direction of the Association through key considerations i.e. risk, asset management, financial implications etc inform the work programme.
Community Benefit	Community benefit is the additional value that can be obtained through tendering of contracts to benefit the community e.g. employment opportunities through the contract, services in the community centre etc.
Continuous Improvement	No matter how well we are performing we should never be complacent and always strive to do better and improve outcomes for our tenants and other customers.
Culture	Culture is often defined as the approach,, practices and behaviours of the people in the organisation.
Data Quality	To ensure the right service and organisational decisions are made the data and information informing them must be of good quality. By this we mean it must be; accurate; valid; reliable; timely; relevant and complete.
Economic Effectiveness	Cost effectiveness is an assessment of cost against the outcome of an activity or action.
Engagement	Actively participating or being involved.
Equality & Diversity	Plans and strategies should comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure full consideration has been given to the needs of all people and vulnerable communities. Individuals should not be disadvantaged by virtue of their background or circumstances, and consideration should be given to



	implementing a consultation plan and an equality impact assessment to reduce or eliminate any detrimental impact
Evidence	The proof of how we are performing
Framework Agreements	Framework Agreement in the context of procurement are is a contract detailing the terms of a procurement contract, which enables other organisation to access the agreement to appoint a contractor or supplier from the existing tendering exercise.
Good Practice	Good Practice refers to a method or technique that has been generally accepted as better than existing or alternative arrangements.
Governance	The system checks, process validation and approval mechanisms in place to ensure we are reporting accurately and there is good and clear management oversight
Governance / Management Structures	<p>The Association Governance Structure refers to the Management Committee and designated sub-Committee i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Audit &amp; Staffing Sub-Committee</li> <li>○ Community Centre Sub-Committee</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Management Structure relates to the roles of Office Bearers and Senior Staff Team i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office Bearers (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary)</li> <li>• Senior Staff (Director, Finance &amp; Corporate Services Manager, Customer Services Manager)</li> </ul>
Indicators	A measure which helps quantify the achievement of a desired outcome
Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	There can be a large number of indicators available. 'KPI's are the lead measures selected as they best represent and demonstrate the impact on the outcome
Leadership	Leadership is the approach of leading staff to achieve work and the strategic aims of the business.
Management Information	Performance measures and data to track day to day operational business. Where possible should have the ability to compare teams and individual staff
Measures	Performance measures are how well a particular service or system is working as opposed to the impact on whole populations – "Management Information".
Mission Statement	The mission statement reflects the organisation's purpose and sets out the organisation's overall goal
Outcomes	A statement of our service and activities
Outputs	The productivity or amount produced by a person, team or the Association..
Participation	To take part in an activity or group
Performance Review	Performance Review refers to the system for staff appraisal
Performance Management Framework	Performance Management Framework outlines the key features and systems to measure, monitor, manage, audit, report performance with the goal of continuous improvement in the Association.
Policy	Policies are clear, simple statements of how your organisation intends to conduct its services, activities or business. They provide a set of guiding principles to help with decision making.

Priorities	The most important things we want to achieve
Procurement	Procurement relates to the tendering of contracts
Productivity	The achievements, efficiency and effectiveness of staff, teams or the Association
Quarterly	Formal performance reporting follows a 3 monthly (quarterly) reporting schedule based on the financial year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1st Quarter – April to June</li> <li>• 2nd Quarter – July to September</li> <li>• 3rd Quarter – October to December</li> <li>• 4th Quarter – January to March</li> </ul>
Regulatory	Requirements of the Association's Regulators i.e. Scottish Housing Regulator or Office of the Scottish Charitable Regulator.
Risk	The probability of a threat to service delivery or other negative occurrence that is caused by external or internal vulnerabilities, and that may be avoided through pre-emptive action
Scenario Planning	Scenario planning assesses potential outcomes against the baseline position to establish how the future may unfold. The Association mainly undertakes scenario planning against the assumptions in its financial business Plan to test longer term viability e.g. impact of increased interest rates, increased bad debts, etc.
Scrutiny	Scrutiny is the assessment and analysis of a document or work activity
Scrutiny Panel	A group who meet to scrutinise the performance, activities or services of the Association. Scrutiny Panels were established through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 through the Scottish Housing Charter to ensure landlords were held to account.
Self-Assessment	An assessment or evaluation the Association conducts on itself
Social Impact	Social impact is the effect our work and activities have on the well-being of the community.
Statutory	Something which the Association has to do by law
Strategic	A high level long term assessment
Strategy	A high level plan which involves a number of service areas across an organisation
Surveys	A method of gathering information from individuals
Targets	Where we want to be and by when. This can be at indicator level or against actions within a delivery plan
Treasury Management	Treasury Management relates to the Association's loan portfolio and lending arrangements, and accounting and banking in its financial management arrangements.