

Report to:	Housing Advisory Board	Date: 10 September 2026
Subject:	Springs Annual Assurance Report	
Report of	Head of Performance, Improvement and Assurance	

Summary

1. Springs Tenant Management Co-operative (TMC) provides services to the 284 homes it manages on behalf of Bury Council. Springs TMC performs well in a number of key areas, including repairs, tenancy management, complaint handling and tenant satisfaction. Most Tenant Satisfaction Measures compare favourably against regulatory benchmarks and locally agreed targets.
2. Safety compliance performance has remained high throughout the year, with gas, fire, asbestos and electrical safety requirements consistently meeting or close to 100%. Reviews undertaken by Bury Housing Services' Compliance Team identified opportunities to further improve property compliance reporting. This will improve oversight, assurance and the quality of management information. Support has been provided to Springs TMC and will continue to support ongoing improvement.
3. The review identified some areas for further development particularly around governance assurance, risk management, audit arrangements and property compliance reporting, monitoring relating to rent arrears and damp and mould cases.

Recommendation(s)

4. It is recommended that the Housing Advisory Board;
 - To note the contents of the report.
 - To consider the findings and areas identified for further development.
 - To support the continued development of the annual assurance framework for Tenant Management Organisations.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

5. This is the first annual review of Springs Tenant Management Co-operative to be presented to the Housing Advisory Board. The report provides information about Springs TMC, an overview of performance, compliance, governance and tenant satisfaction during 2025/26 and establishes a baseline for future annual reporting.

It highlights areas of strong performance and identifies opportunities for improvement and further development of oversight and assurance arrangements.

Alternative options considered and rejected

6. No alternative options have been considered. The annual assurance review forms part of Bury Council Housing Service oversight and assurance arrangements for the Tenant Management Co-operative.

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Background

7. Bury Council has delegated the management of 284 properties to Springs Tenant Management Co-operative through a Management Agreement under the Right to Manage. Under the Right to Manage tenants can exercise their statutory Right to Manage and establish a Tenant Management organisation. The Council retains responsibility for ensuring appropriate governance, regulatory compliance and service delivery standards are maintained.
8. Springs Tenant Management Committee (TMC) was established under the Right to Manage arrangements in 1995 following a successful tenant-led initiative and formally assumed management responsibility for the estate on 1 July 1996. The organisation has therefore managed housing services locally on behalf of Bury Council for over 30 years. April 2022, following Cabinet approval, Springs TMC became a self financing tenant management organisation, the first in the Northwest. This means that Springs retains the rents it collects from the homes it manages and uses this to pay for the management and maintenance of the properties.
9. Whilst the council can delegate the management of the homes to Springs TMC it cannot delegate its accountability as a landlord. The council remains responsible for regulatory compliance, consumer standards, health and safety, building safety, complaints oversight and value for money.
10. This annual review of Springs TMC provides Housing Advisory Board with assurance on Springs operational performance, regulatory compliance, governance arrangements, financial performance, tenant satisfaction and risk management throughout 2025/26. The review draws on performance information,

compliance monitoring, tenant satisfaction measures, audit findings and partnership discussions between Bury Council and Springs TMC.

11. Overall, the review found that Springs provides good services to tenants, performs well on repairs, tenancy management, complaints handling and tenant satisfaction. The review identified some areas for further development particularly around governance assurance, risk management, audit arrangements and property compliance reporting, monitoring relating to rent arrears and damp and mould cases.

Modular Management Agreement

12. Springs Tenant Management Co-operative manages 284 homes on behalf of Bury Council under a Modular Management Agreement. The agreement sets out how housing services are shared between Springs TMC and the Council, defining the responsibilities of each. It provides the framework for service delivery, performance monitoring, financial management, governance and compliance, ensuring there is clear accountability for tenants and residents.
13. Under the agreement, Springs TMC is responsible for managing day-to-day housing services and making decisions at a local level, while Bury Council remains the landlord and retains responsibility for strategic oversight, legal and regulatory compliance, and assurance.
14. The services managed by Springs are:
 - Repairs reporting and monitoring
 - Estate management
 - Tenancy management
 - Rent collection and arrears management
 - Resident engagement and community activities
 - Complaint handling
 - Anti-social behaviour management
 - Lettings and void management
15. The Management Agreement is an important governance document and should be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains up to date and reflects current legislation and regulatory requirements. The periodic review should also ensure that Springs TMC continues to provide clear responsibilities, effective oversight and value for money for tenants. Reviewing the agreement also provides an opportunity to strengthen governance and assurance arrangements and ensure it remains fit for purpose for the future.

16. As the Management Agreement has not been reviewed since 2022 we plan to engage some consultancy support to help us carry out a review of the management agreement and the governance arrangements we currently have in place.

Governance and Oversight Arrangements

17. Bury Council currently receives regular performance reporting from Springs through the quarterly scorecard process. The table below sets out what this covers and the areas of oversight:

Service area	Areas of oversight
Tenant Satisfaction	All tenant satisfaction measures Targets are the same as Bury Housing Services
Asset Management	Decent Homes compliance EPC performance Capital programme delivery Stock condition survey complete and data
Building Safety and Compliance	Gas safety Fire safety Asbestos management Electrical safety Damp and mould monitoring Legionella is not a risk as no shared water spaces.
Financial Management	Rent collection Arrears Void loss
Service delivery	Repairs performance Tenancy management Complaints Anti-social behaviour

18. Performance is reviewed throughout the year and monitored against agreed targets. Scorecards are shared with the Housing Advisory Board (HAB). One Member of HAB is a committee member of Springs TMC Board.

Service delivery

19. Day-to-day services are delivered by a small housing management team led by a Director. The team includes a Housing Officer, Finance Officer, Community Engagement Officer and Handy Person, who work together to provide housing management, tenant support, financial advice, resident engagement and estate-based services for tenants and residents. The local office-based model enables

staff to respond quickly to tenant enquiries, provide personalised support and maintain strong relationships within the community.

Staffing Resilience

20. The Springs local service model is delivered through a small team structure which enables close engagement with tenants and rapid local decision making. However, the size of the team creates a degree of operational dependency on key individuals. Long-term absence, recruitment difficulties or turnover within key posts could impact service continuity. Ongoing succession planning and business continuity arrangements will therefore remain important areas for monitoring.

Governance

21. Springs TMC is governed by a Management Committee made up of tenant representatives, and elected Councillors. The Committee is responsible for overseeing the performance, financial management and operation of the organisation. Decisions require a minimum of three members to be present to ensure meetings are quorate. Current Committee membership includes:

- Roy Frost – Chair
- Jill Browne, Vice Chair
- Janet McKenniffe, Committee Member
- Jackie Frost, Committee Member
- Carol Unsworth, Committee Member and Secretary
- Lea-Ann Brooks, Committee Member
- Councillor Tamoor Tariq

22. Whilst governance arrangements are established and meetings are held on a regular basis (Meetings are held every 6 weeks. Annual General Meetings take place), Bury Housing Services is responsible for ensuring appropriate oversight and assurance arrangements are in place. Strengthening governance reporting will provide greater visibility of decision making, board effectiveness and the organisation's ability to respond to future regulatory and operational challenges.

Risk Management

23. Springs TMC maintains operational oversight of service risks; however, a formal risk register is not routinely reported through existing Council monitoring arrangements. Introducing regular risk reporting would strengthen assurance by providing visibility of strategic, operational, compliance and financial risks together with mitigating actions. This would align oversight arrangements more closely with the expectations placed upon Bury Housing Services.

The tenant ballot 2026

24. Under the Modular Management Agreement, Springs TMC must periodically consult tenants on whether they want the organisation to continue managing housing services on their behalf. This is called a continuation ballot.
25. The next continuation ballot is due in November 2026. This is an important democratic process that gives tenants the opportunity to review the performance of Springs TMC and decide whether they wish the current management arrangements to continue. A positive vote will provide a renewed mandate for Springs to continue delivering housing services locally under the Management Agreement. The ballot also provides an opportunity for Springs and Bury Council to demonstrate the value of tenant management, highlight achievements and engage with residents on future priorities.
26. As a result, preparation for the ballot will be a key focus during 2026/27 to ensure tenants are fully informed about performance, service delivery and future plans for the organisation.
27. Whilst Springs TMC will lead the resident engagement, the council needs to ensure that it has undertaken its own due diligence and can verify that the ballot has been conducted in accordance with the right to manage regulations and all statutory requirements have been met before it continues the management agreement. We will be working with Spring TMC to ensure that the ballot is conducted fairly and in accordance with the Regulations

Internal Controls

28. The last internal audit was conducted in 2007 and one recommendation made, which was followed up and completed. A full audit of the TMC will need to be conducted this year.
29. Financial accounts are produced by an independent chartered accountant annually with a more in depth audit every 3 years.
30. Springs TMC uses Bury Council Legal Services for issuing any enforcement measures i.e. NSP's ASB enforcement. During the year, two potential fraud cases were identified and appropriately referred through Council fraud procedures.
31. Springs TNC has appropriate staff training in place. All staff complete the Council's data protection compliance and GDPR training Council Course). Citation HR (external provider) provides health and safety training and Fire Marshall training to staff. Prevent awareness training was provided Via Bury Council. The staff receive food hygiene and first aid training every 3 years

Regulatory Assurance

32. In reviewing Springs TMC it is found that a self-assessment against the consumer standards would be beneficial and would ensure that Spring TBC fully understood the requirements of the consumer standards in relation to the services they deliver.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

33. Performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures remained strong throughout 2025/26, with the majority of indicators exceeding both locally agreed targets and Bury Housing Services benchmark performance. Overall tenant satisfaction was 91.46%, significantly exceeding the target of 74%, whilst measures relating to residents feeling safe in their home, feeling listened to, being kept informed and being treated fairly all achieved consistently high levels of satisfaction.
34. Satisfaction with repairs, neighbourhood management and complaint handling also performed positively. Although some measures experienced a reduction during Quarter 2 and Quarter 3, performance improved significantly during Quarter 4, resulting in a strong year-end position across most indicators.
35. Communal area satisfaction achieved 65.52%, marginally exceeding the target of 65.5%. This demonstrates that Springs continues to deliver positive outcomes for tenants and maintains high levels of resident confidence in the services provided.
36. The detailed Tenant Satisfaction Measure results and year-end performance scorecard are included within Appendix 1.

Complaints and Housing Ombudsman

37. Springs TMC operates in accordance with Bury Housing Services' Complaints Policy and uses complaint handling procedures and templates that align with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
38. Performance during the year was positive, with 100% compliance achieved for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaint handling timescales. Complaint volumes remained low relative to the size of the landlord.
39. One anti-social behaviour complaint progressed through the complaints process but was not upheld at either Stage 1 or Stage 2.
40. At the time of writing, one anti-social behaviour case remains under consideration by the Housing Ombudsman and the determination is awaited.

Tenant Engagement Activities.

41. Tenant engagement is a key strength of Springs TMC. Springs supports a range of community activities through the New Springs Community Project Group, including the Monday Drop-In Café, Luncheon Club, Craft Group, Community Gardening Group, Kids Club and Summer of Fun programme. These activities help reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing and strengthen community connections. Attendance is recorded through sign-in sheets for all activities.

Support for Tenants

42. Springs also provides a range of support services for tenants who may be vulnerable or experiencing financial difficulties. This includes assistance with Universal Credit and Housing Benefit applications, liaison with social prescribing services, signposting to safeguarding and adult social care services, and referrals to specialist support agencies where required.
43. Tenancy visits are carried out on a targeted basis, informed by tenancy risk, welfare concerns identified through estate walkabouts, referrals from social prescribers and cases where tenants may require additional support due to mental health or other vulnerability-related issues. These visits help ensure tenants receive appropriate support, advice and signposting at an early stage.
44. While participation in community activities is recorded, Springs does not currently measure the reach of these activities or collect information about the diversity of participants. Developing a simple approach to monitoring attendance, engagement levels and equality information would help provide assurance that activities are accessible, inclusive and reaching all sections of the community.

Finance – Audited Accounts.

45. The 2024/25 audited accounts provide assurance that Springs is financially well managed. The external auditors found that the accounts accurately reflect the organisation's financial position and identified no significant concerns about its ability to continue operating. Springs remains financially stable, with substantial cash reserves, a strong balance sheet and a history of generating annual surpluses.
46. Spring TMC is in a strong position to invest in its homes and services, respond to unexpected repairs and compliance requirements, and support future improvement programmes. The audited accounts show cash reserves of £4.59 million and a surplus of £797,501 for the year, demonstrating a high level of financial resilience.
47. While financial sustainability is not a concern, there is an opportunity to consider how reserves can best be used to benefit tenants and the housing stock. In particular, the forthcoming stock condition survey, ongoing boiler replacement programme and future investment priorities should help inform how resources are

used over the coming years. This will ensure that reserves are aligned to future asset management needs, maintaining decent homes standards, improving energy efficiency and reducing long-term repair costs.

Key Priorities for 2026/27

48. The key priorities for Springs TMC during 2026/27 are:

- **Governance and Assurance** – there is a need to strengthen governance, risk management and assurance arrangements to support effective oversight and regulatory compliance.
- **Preparing for the Tenant Ballot** - before November 2026 Spring TMC needs to engage with tenants and prepare for the November 2026 tenant management ballot, ensuring residents are informed about performance and future plans
- **Investment in Homes** - Use the Stock Condition Survey to develop a long-term investment programme that maintains decent homes standards, improves energy efficiency and supports future asset management needs.
- **Compliance and Tenant & Property Safety reporting** - Continue to maintain strong compliance performance while improving assurance, reporting and record-keeping arrangements.
- **Supporting Tenants and Communities** - Maintain high levels of tenant satisfaction, strengthen community engagement activities and continue providing support to vulnerable residents.
- **Financial Sustainability** - Monitor rent arrears, maintain strong rent collection performance and ensure financial resources are aligned to future investment priorities.

Conclusion

49. The available evidence demonstrates that Springs Tenant Management Co-operative delivered strong overall performance during 2025/26. Tenant satisfaction remains high, repairs and tenancy management services continue to perform well, and rent collection exceeds target.

50. The organisation continues to provide effective locally managed services on behalf of Bury Council and remains financially resilient. However, the review has identified opportunities to strengthen governance assurance, risk management, compliance reporting, damp and mould oversight, staffing resilience and long-term asset investment planning. These areas do not currently represent significant weaknesses in service delivery but require further development to ensure the Council can demonstrate robust landlord oversight, regulatory compliance and long-term sustainability of the management arrangements.

Links with the Housing and Corporate Priorities:

This report supports the delivery of the Let's Do It Strategy and Let's Do Housing by:

- Ensuring safe, well-maintained homes for tenants.
- Supporting strong and resilient neighbourhoods.
- Promoting effective tenant engagement and influence.
- Providing assurance that housing services are delivered efficiently and effectively.
- Supporting compliance with consumer standards and regulatory requirements.

Tenant voice

Tenant feedback remains a key element of the assurance process. Tenant Satisfaction Measures demonstrate high levels of satisfaction across most service areas, with performance exceeding regulatory benchmarks and locally agreed targets in many areas. Feedback obtained through tenant engagement activities, complaints, service reviews and routine interactions has informed service improvements and performance monitoring arrangements. Tenant feedback will also be captured via the 2026 tenant ballot

Equality Impact and Considerations:

N/A

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

The report itself has no direct environmental impact. However, assurance activities support compliance programmes which contribute to the safety, sustainability and long-term management of homes. Effective property maintenance, compliance monitoring and asset management help support Bury Council's wider environmental and carbon reduction objectives.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Link to Housing Strategic risk register:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to meet Consumer Standards and regulatory expectations	Ongoing performance monitoring, annual assurance reviews and partnership working with Springs TMC.

Weaknesses in governance and risk management arrangements	Continued oversight, action planning and periodic governance reviews.
Non-compliance with Property Safety requirements	Regular compliance monitoring and support from Bury Housing Services Compliance Team.
Absence of capital investment plan	Stock condition survey brought forward to 2026 and results will inform the future improvement plan.
Increasing rent arrears affecting financial resilience	Enhanced monitoring and early intervention arrangements for tenants experiencing financial difficulties.
Reputational risk arising from service failure	Performance scrutiny through contractual monitoring and annual assurance reporting.
Staffing Levels	Segregation of duties and cover in times of sickness and holidays given the small delivery team. X 2 members off long term Sick currently. Temporary Director replacement for 3 months Commencing September. Full recruitment process will need to be explored if anything further than 2 months required

Procurement Implications:

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report

Legal/ Regulatory Implications:

The report supports compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and Bury Council's obligations under the Management Agreement with Springs Tenant Management Co-operative.

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from acceptance of this report. Performance and financial risks identified through the assurance process will continue to be monitored through existing governance arrangements.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents (please save these as clearly labelled separate documents in the Teams folder).

- Springs Annual Financial Audit [Spring Audited Accounts 2025.pdf](#)
- Year End Performance Dashboard and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
[Springs scorecard Q4'26 V1.1.doc](#)

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

- None

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
TMC	Tenant Management Co-operative
TSM	Tenant Satisfaction Measures
HAB	Housing Advisory Board