



November 2005
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WALES AUDIT OFFICE
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Housing Key Lines of Enquiry

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This document is a draft version pending further discussions .

HOUSING KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY (KLOE) GUIDANCE NOTES

General

The Wales Audit Office has completed three pilot Housing Association inspections and is currently finalising in the first round of published Housing Association inspections.

In order to provide housing associations in Wales with guidance on how inspectors will measure service quality during inspections, we have reviewed the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) developed by the Audit Commission to reflect the Welsh context with the aim of providing an interim framework through which housing associations may view and assess their service quality.

It is our intention in time to develop and agree a specifically Welsh set of KLOEs. This process will, of course, involve extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Introduction to KLOEs

KLOEs will be used by the Wales Audit office during the inspection of the housing services provided by housing associations.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of those housing services.

KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services.

KLOEs seek to describe what we would expect of excellent and satisfactory services and will be used by inspectors to assist them in carrying out service level inspections and relevant improvement work with housing associations.

The Wales Audit office also envisages that the individual KLOEs will be useful to organisations such as:

- national bodies, such as the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru, the Welsh Federation of Housing Associations and the Welsh Local Government Association seeking to advise their members on service improvement issues, or
- consultants helping and working with housing organisations to improve their services.

KLOE development

The current set of KLOEs is based on those developed by the Audit Commission. The Wales Audit Office intends to develop a specifically Welsh set of KLOEs. This process will be based on consultation with relevant stakeholders as well as the emerging outcomes of inspections in Wales. We would aim to have a set of Welsh KLOEs in place by the end of our second full year of inspection – March 2007.

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The KLOE set

The KLOEs cover service specific areas within housing and deal with issues that need to be assessed in arriving at a judgement on 'How good is the service?' and how we assess whether the service provided is

- excellent
- good
- satisfactory
- has scope for considerable improvement

The KLOE 2.10 covers the criteria on which we make our inspection judgement "What are the prospects for improvement?" and how we assess whether a particular organisation

- demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities,
- is raising standards in service delivery,
- shows weaknesses in processes and performance,
- fails to demonstrate capability

Seven KLOEs in total have been developed by the Wales Audit Office.

1.2 Rents and Service Charges

1.3 Letting Housing

1.4 Managing Housing

1.5 Maintaining Housing

2.2 Relationship to Tenants

2.3 Equal Opportunities

2.10 Performance Management and Continuous Improvement

Because all of the service specific KLOEs cover Access, Diversity and Value for Money issues, we recognise that the KLOEs may appear repetitive. However, this approach ensures that the KLOEs can be used on a stand-alone basis for each relevant service area. The numbering of the relevant sections within the Regulatory Code for Housing Associations In Wales.

The basic structure of KLOEs

All KLOEs have the same structure. They cover the Key Lines of Enquiry and give descriptions of what excellent and satisfactory organisations look like. Therefore all service specific KLOEs have the following headings:

1. Key lines of enquiry (KLOE).
2. An organisation that is providing excellent services.
3. An organisation that is providing satisfactory services.

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The KLOE covering prospects for improvement is broken down into the three main questions. These are:

- What is the evidence of service improvements?
- How good are the current improvement plans?
- Will improvements be delivered?

How the Wales Audit Office will use KLOEs in inspections

The Wales Audit Office will use the KLOEs by applying only those that are relevant to the scope of the inspection. The scope of an inspection will follow an assessment of each organisation. Inspections will also use self assessment appraisals carried out and produced by inspected bodies and the Welsh Assembly Government's Regulatory Code to determine the scope of the inspection and the KLOEs to be used.

The questions that appear under each KLOE provide the overarching key questions that inspectors will be asking of the organisations that they inspect. Inspectors will look for answers to these questions by asking a series of more detailed questions and undertaking reality checks, specifically tailored for each inspected body, that will help inspectors arrive at robust assessments and judgements for the particular body being inspected. This tailored approach will take close account of the context in which inspected bodies deliver their services.

How the Wales Audit Office envisages housing service providers will use KLOEs

The Wales Audit Office envisages that housing organisations will use the KLOEs to prepare themselves and staff for the process of inspections. This is likely to take the form of both aiding organisations in preparing staff for the potential questions and issues inspectors are likely to want to discuss and understand during inspections and in completing self-assessment appraisals.

It is also hoped that the KLOEs will provide housing organisations with a set of tools to carry out in-depth service reviews outside of an inspection regime. Here we envisage that organisations will use the KLOEs as a framework to review and assess services and to develop improvement plans to drive forward customer orientated service improvements.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing the KLOEs, there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

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Your comments and where to get help

If you have any feedback about the KLOEs and where you think they can be improved, please contact Steve Barry or Carol Kay at:

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Carol.Kay@wao.gov.uk

or by writing to Steve Barry or Carol Kay at:

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1st floor

Princess House

Princess Way

Swansea

SA1 3LW

Alternatively, if you wish to speak to Steve Barry or Carol Kay for advice or assistance in connection with the KLOEs please ring:

Steve Barry - 07786 190210

Carol Kay - 07748 181676

1.2 Rents and Service Charges

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on rents and service charges is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the rents and service charges KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs, there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The Rents and Service Charges KLOE is intended to cover the following areas:

- access, customer care and service user focus;
- diversity;
- rent and service charge accounting and collection;
- current and former tenant arrears recovery;
- debt advice; and
- Value for Money.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Access, customer care & user focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about rents and service charges? • How easily do service users access the service? • How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective? • How does the organisation respond to service users? • What service user satisfaction has been achieved with this service area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who all demonstrate user focus in their work and treat people with respect at all times • Has front-line staff who demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users. Including issues around welfare rights advice, managing debt and reducing indebtedness. • Provides flexible payment options that make it easy for service users to pay rent, service charges and other debts (ie, direct debit/standing order, local shops/offices, post offices, the internet). • Offers a range of ways for service users to contact them for customer-friendly information about their accounts and get debt advice – by telephone, in person or electronically – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively. • Has set challenging service standards in conjunction with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need. • Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service. Service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing an inconsistent approach to customer care. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not a strong enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes inconsistent. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are unclear where or who to access the information from, to be able to help service users. • Offers a reasonable range of ways for service users to contact the service, but some are not as efficient and effective as others, therefore providing inconsistent service provision. • Does provide a range of payment methods for its service users to make it easy to pay rent, service charges and other debts, but these are not comprehensive and some service users have limited choices of payment methods. • Does not make it as easy for service users to always obtain customer-friendly information about their accounts and to get debt advice as they could.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is confident about signposting service users to other organisations as service providers, when necessary and in the best interests of service users. • Has service users who understand clearly the different means by which they can pay their rent and service charge, and the organisation can demonstrate this awareness. • Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with their ability to contact and use the service and pay their rent or other charges for services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has set some key service standards, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them. • Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of stakeholders. • Has begun partnership working with service users and other community organisations. The organisation has made efforts to engage with other service providers and is developing strategies to deliver alternative service provision. • Does not always actively signpost service users to other organisations which might be able to assist them with independent advice on debt and welfare benefits. • Has a significant proportion of service users who do not think they receive a good service in the context in which the organisation works or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are.
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to rents and service charges service area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear understanding of its local community using census and other information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services. • Knows, records and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to offer services to most service users. Has identified resources, but may not have allocated them yet to meet the needs of all service users. • Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg, large print, Braille, other languages etc. • Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up. • Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive and misses the needs of some groups. • Considers local factors and is seeking to make itself more relevant to the needs of service users and is establishing mechanisms to better engage with the community. • Generally has a reasonable overall approach to diversity, but may still have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.
<p>Rent and service charge accounting and collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and adopt good practice methods in terms of rent and service charge setting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides comprehensive information to all service users that clearly describes the organisation's rent and service charge setting policy, and how rents and service charges are calculated and collected. • Delivers accurate and timely information about rent and service charge accounts to service users, for example, quarterly rent and service charge statements. • Minimises and prevents arrears by ensuring that new rent accounts are always set up, and means of payment supplied to new tenants, before tenancies commence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information about the organisation's rent and service charge setting policy, and how rents and service charges are calculated and collected, but this is not customer-friendly and in places difficult to understand. • Does provide information about tenants' and leaseholders' accounts to service users, but this is not always accurate or timely, eg, annual statements only provided. • Does not clearly record and account for rent arrears, court costs, and other debts separately. This makes it difficult for service users and staff to manage the debt effectively.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures that accounting systems are well integrated with housing management and benefit systems. As a result the organisation can clearly identify arrears due to housing benefit (HB) claims or payment in credit or arrears. Separately records and accounts for rent arrears, court costs, rechargeable repairs and other debts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is unable to always easily and clearly identify arrears due to HB claims or payment in arrears. Fails to ensure that new rent accounts are routinely set up, and means of payment supplied to new tenants before tenancies commence.
<p>Current and former tenant arrears recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation minimise loss of income by taking prompt and appropriate action to recover both current and former service user arrears and other debts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops mutually supportive working relations with all parties in the arrears recovery process so that all parties work effectively together, including other corporate service providers and the court system. Prevents debt increasing by taking early action as soon as accounts fall into arrears and ensures that customer-friendly letters and home visits to vulnerable residents are available and carried out when appropriate. Provides a mix of incentives and sanctions to encourage service users to stay out of debt or reduce their arrears, eg, discounts for advance payments. Adapts its approach to arrears management based upon an analysis of reasons for non-payment. Uses alternative remedies to recover tenant and leaseholder debt such as attachment of earnings, garnishee orders and the small claims court where appropriate and where it benefits tenants with costs. Seeks possession on rent arrears only as a last resort, once all other reasonable steps have been taken and after tenants have received comprehensive debt advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has some effective working arrangements with some parties, but has not developed mutually supportive working relations with all parties in the arrears recovery process, including other corporate service providers and the court system. Does not routinely take prompt action when accounts fall into arrears. May rely on automatically sending impersonal letters, without accounting for individual circumstances. Pursues a rigorous arrears recovery policy, but with little referral to other relevant corporate priorities. Does not use alternative remedies to recover service user debt, relying on traditional money judgements, possession action and eviction procedures. Has no corporate debt recovery policy, which leaves tenants, leaseholders and staff confused as to which debt the service user should pay first. Does not have a co-ordinated approach to the recovery of rent, service charges or former tenant debts. May pursue the recovery of, for example, rechargeable repairs without taking account of other debts to the organisation.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures appropriate referrals to homelessness and other housing advice services when it takes possession action. Has a policy on former tenant arrears that includes the methods used to collect such arrears and the factors to be taken into account when writing off these debts. Has robust processes in place to ensure that communal area services expenditure matches income collected. This information is current and available to service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopts a generally reactive approach to arrears management, with little analysis of reasons for non-payment and links to other debts. Does not systematically pursue the recovery of court costs, rechargeable repairs even when the service user has no other debts. Provides few incentives or sanctions to encourage service users to stay out of debt or reduce their arrears. Lacks clear processes to ensure that communal area services expenditure matches income collected. This information is incomplete or not readily available to service users.
<p>Debt advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation ensure that service users receive effective welfare benefit and debt advice to maximise income and manage debt? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carries out benefit assessment with potential new tenants to identify if a property is affordable. Minimises and prevents arrears by ensuring that all new tenants receive an accurate welfare benefits check at the start of their tenancies and advice on debt management as appropriate. Pro-actively signposts service users to other agencies that can maximise their income, whether in arrears or not. Has effective planning and liaison partnerships with Housing Benefit and other agencies (for example the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and debt advice agencies) that can maximise service users' income. All parties work closely together to agreed protocols. Promotes benefit take-up campaigns, including housing benefit, to help prevent increases in rent arrears and other debt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has protocols with some agencies that can maximise tenants' and leaseholders' income, but these are not managed in an effective way to the benefit of tenants. Has empowered individual officers to refer service users to agencies that can maximise their income when arrears arise, but this is not done in a systematic way. Has some planning and liaison partnerships in place with Housing Benefit and other agencies, but this does not systematically lead to the maximisation of all service users' income. Follows and supports wider benefit take-up campaigns but demonstrates little initiative of its own. Does not have a system to inform potential new tenants about the amount of benefit they are likely to receive, but will provide that service when requested.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps service users in arrears to stay in their homes by providing advice and assistance on debt management and pursuing debt collection strategies that sensitively balance the pursuit of debt against the needs of vulnerable tenants. 	
<p>Value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for rents and service charges services? How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users? Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefits service users and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects accurate information on costs and services and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Provides service users with comprehensive and accurate information on services, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement. For example, the costs of different rent collection methods and the promotion of the most cost-effective methods. Is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/or quality improvements through partnerships and has investigated partnerships with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement) such as other housing associations/ councils. Provides clear and well understood information on costs and benefits and how these relate to the quality of services delivered. Has low overall costs and unit costs for key services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not collect accurate or sufficient information about its services, or use it to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Does not systematically inform service users about costs, benefits and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner. Has arrangements for consulting, advising and recovering appropriate communal service and improvement costs from leaseholders, but they are not consistently applied, leading to tenants inadvertently paying a larger share of costs than they should. May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery. Has either high overall and unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs, but services are also of a low quality. Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it ineffectively.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a good corporate and service procurement strategy that follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally. • Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation. • Has used procurement to achieve significant savings without loss of quality, eg, can demonstrate achievements in delivering programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of both cost and quality. • Has effective arrangements for advising and recovering appropriate costs for communal services and improvements from leaseholders. • Will be improving its rent collection rate year on year and will have top quartile performance (or very close to it) compared to similar organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and has therefore not made full use of them. • Often fails to deliver programmes and projects on time, to target and to service users' satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality. • May have good performance compared to its own income collection targets, but these do not compare well with comparator groups.

1.3 Letting Housing

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on Letting Housing is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the letting housing KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The Letting Housing KLOE is intended to cover the following areas:

- access, customer care and service user focus;
- diversity;
- the housing register, the housing allocations policy and offering choice;
- void property management; and
- value for Money.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Access, customer care & user focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about its allocations and lettings service? • How easily do service users access the service? • How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective? • Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements in relation to the allocations and lettings service? • How does the organisation respond to service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff that all demonstrate user focus in their work, who treat people with respect at all times when assisting service users through the allocation and lettings service. • Has front-line staff that demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive in connection with the allocation and lettings service or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users with their queries. • Offers a range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person or electronically – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively. • Has set challenging service standards in connection with the allocation and lettings service in conjunction with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need. • Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve the allocation and lettings services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service. Service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. • Is confident about signposting service users to other organisations as service providers, when necessary and in the best interests to service users, eg, in providing them with a choice of social landlords in the area and how to access their housing stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing an inconsistent approach to customer care. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not a strong enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes inconsistent in relation to the allocations and lettings service. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive in relation to the allocation and lettings service and are unclear where or who to access the information from, to be able to help service users. • Offers a reasonable range of ways for service users to contact the service, but some are not as efficient and effective as others, therefore providing inconsistent service provision. • Has set some key service standards for the allocation and lettings service, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them. • Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of stakeholders.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What service user satisfaction has been achieved in the allocations and lettings service? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with their ability to contact and use the allocations and lettings service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a significant proportion of service users who do not think they receive a good service in the context in which the organisation works, or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are.
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to allocations and lettings? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a clear understanding of its local community using census and other information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services. Knows, records, analyses and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to ensure services are delivered appropriately and to prioritise resources. Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg, large print, Braille, other languages etc. Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up. Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to offer services to most service users. Has resources identified, but may not have allocated them yet to meet the needs of all service users. Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all. Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive. Generally has a reasonable approach to diversity, but may have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>The housing register, the housing allocations policy and offering choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How fairly and effectively does the organisation administer the local housing registration scheme for social housing in the area? • How good is the organisation’s allocation policy and how effectively does the organisation manage revisions, updates and amendments to the policy in consultation with service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear registration policy that is widely publicised and is accessible to all potential applicants and complies with regulatory guidance. • Acts on clear procedures to ensure applications are processed efficiently and effectively. • Has clear service standards and quality assurance and monitoring processes in place, especially for black and minority ethnic groups, to ensure applicants are treated fairly. • Keeps applicants fully informed of their position on the register and provides an easily accessible indication of the likelihood and timeframe of them being re-housed. • Has a housing register that is fully reviewed by the organisation at an appropriate period of time for the locality. • Has formal nomination agreements in place with other housing partners, such as councils, housing associations and voluntary organisations and monitors these to ensure the agreements are adhered to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a basic registration scheme that works effectively, but has inefficiencies, is not as accessible as it could be and is not widely publicised. • Have some procedures to support the administration of the register, but these do not cover the full range of the service and therefore leave gaps where inconsistent service provision is apparent. • Has some review of the register, but this does not form a key task that is periodically undertaken at an appropriate period of time for the locality. • Has a formal allocations policy that has been derived in consultation with some service users and agreed by board members, but is not comprehensive, covering most eventualities, and has not been widely publicised. • Has nomination agreements with some other housing partners, but these arrangements are not monitored. • Has inconsistent arrangements for working together with other partners, be they councils or housing associations, on fulfilling necessary responsibilities in relation to duties for homeless households, so that efforts are not co-ordinated effectively to an appropriate level of allocations/ nominations to homeless households in the context that the area operates.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much choice can applicants exercise over the type and location of their future home through the allocation policy and being registered on the housing register, through mechanisms such as a choice-based lettings scheme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works effectively together with other partners, be they councils or housing associations, on fulfilling necessary responsibilities in relation to duties for homeless households and co-ordinates efforts to ensure an appropriate level of allocations/ nominations go to homeless households in the context that the area operates. Efficiently provides right first time allocations/ nominations to partner organisations on request within agreed service standard timescales. Provides a formal written appeals process that is widely publicised and gives a swift and fair response to applicants and treats each appeal individually on its merits. Has a formal clear, comprehensive allocations policy that has been derived in consultation with service users and agreed by board members, which is widely publicised and is available in all appropriate formats and languages. Works well with local authorities and other housing organisations to maximise all opportunities to secure permanent accommodation. Has a clear policy for those tenants wishing to transfer to alternative social housing and provides a fair service which gives service users options and choice in where they move to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides nominations to partner organisations relatively effectively, but service standards are not always clear or adhered to and nominations are not always appropriate. Provides a formal written appeals process, but this is not widely publicised and sometimes treats appeals in an overly formulaic way, not having enough regard to the individual circumstances of the appeal.. Some limited choice is available to some applicants for certain property types, but in general the concepts of choice based lettings for applicants have not been embraced or applied to the service. Works with local authorities and organisations to try and maximise opportunities to secure permanent accommodation, but limited scope of scheme or successful outcomes for many applicants. Has a reasonable transfer policy for tenants wishing to move to alternative social housing, but options and choice is limited. Have some formal monitoring arrangements, but these do not cover all arrangements and aspects of performance. Does not always effectively risk assess lettings and has underused local lettings policies to help balance communities where appropriate. May deal with one aspect of the service well but not another. Eg, it may remedy the problem quickly, but not identify and resolve/ deter the cause of the problem.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an allocation policy that records, collects and takes accounts of individual’s needs and support requirements in order to match their needs with appropriate housing. Ensures that appropriate support is available for vulnerable service users at the start of their tenancy. • Carries out risk assessments on lettings where appropriate and has made effective use of local lettings policies where appropriate, which balance clearly policies on nominations and needs against policies promoting balanced communities. • Has a clear policy in place aimed at maximising choice for applicants in accordance with the allocation policy such as a choice-based letting scheme. • Works in partnership with other organisations and utilises mobility schemes to provide additional housing opportunities for those wishing to transfer. • Meets or exceeds targets specified in service standards. 	

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Void Property Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How promptly are empty properties identified and re-let and is this in accordance with published procedures and service standards? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has effective arrangements for staff and service users to report vacations and unauthorised occupation, and checks them quickly. • Carries out periodic tenancy checks to ensure that the legal tenant is in occupation. • Reacts promptly, effectively and legally to remove unauthorised occupiers. • Re-lets void properties promptly, in line with its published targets and close to top quartile performance in comparison to similar organisations. • Has a systematic approach to dealing with difficult to let properties and a variety of appropriate methods are being used to tackle this issue. • Can demonstrate an understanding of its stock and the reasons for any problems letting certain properties. • Provides customer focussed lettings procedure, with accompanied viewings and follow-up visits to new tenants. Ensures that appropriate support is available for vulnerable service users at the start of their tenancy. • Provides high quality and relevant information about the property and neighbourhood in advance of any viewing. • Will record detailed reasons why applicants refuse properties, and use this information to improve its letting performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on ad hoc arrangements to identify and deal with vacations and unauthorised occupation. Does not maintain periodic tenancy checks. • Is unlikely to re-let its properties within target timescales, or may be meeting re-let targets, but with limited regard for the well-being or health and safety of new tenants. • Makes little organised attempt to tackle the causes of hard-to-let properties. Has little or no understanding of why or where such issues are occurring. • Does not routinely carry out accompanied viewings and follow-up visits to new tenants. • Provides only basic information about the property it is offering to an applicant. • Is unlikely to record detailed reasons why applicants refuse properties. Where it does (for example to meet regulatory requirements) the organisation will not use this information to improve its letting performance.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for allocation and letting services? • How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users? • Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefits service users and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects accurate information on costs and services and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy. • Provides service users with comprehensive and accurate information on services, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement. • Is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/or quality improvements through partnerships and has investigated partnerships with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement) such as other housing associations/ councils. • Provides clear and well understood information on costs and how these relate to the quality of services delivered. • Has low overall costs and unit costs for allocation and letting services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services). • Follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally. • Has used procurement to achieve significant savings without loss of quality, eg, can demonstrate achievements in delivering programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of both cost and quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not collect accurate or sufficient information about its services, or use it to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy. • Does not systematically inform service users about costs, benefits and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner. • May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery. • Has either high overall and unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs, but performance, range of services and quality of works do not meet service users' expectations. • Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it ineffectively. • Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and has therefore not made full use of them. • Often fails to deliver programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation. • Has effective arrangements for advising and recovering appropriate costs for communal services and improvements from leaseholders. 	

1.4 Managing Housing

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on managing housing is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the managing housing KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs, there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The Managing Housing KLOE is intended to cover the following areas:

- access, customer care and service user focus;
- diversity;
- tenancy management
- enforcing tenancy conditions and dealing with anti-social behaviour;
- estate management; and
- Value for Money.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Access, customer care & user focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about tenancy and estate management issues? • How easily do service users access the service? • How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective? • How does the organisation respond to service users? • What service user satisfaction has been achieved within tenancy and estate management services? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who all demonstrate user focus in their work and who treat people with respect at all times. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who can or how to access the necessary information to help service users. • Offers a comprehensive range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person, electronically, etc – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively and are known to be the way service users want to access the service. • Has set challenging service standards in conjunction with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need. • Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service. Service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. • Is confident about signposting service users to other organisations as service providers, when necessary and in the best interests of service users. • Provides the tenancy agreement, conditions of tenancy and Tenants' Handbook in a variety of ways appropriate to tenants' needs eg Welsh language, large print, Braille, other languages etc. • Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with their ability to contact and use the tenancy and estate management services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing an inconsistent approach to customer care. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not strongly enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes patchy. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are unclear where or who to access the information from to be able to help service users. • Offers a reasonable range of ways for service users to contact the service, but some are not as efficient and effective as others, therefore providing patchy service provision. • Has set some key service standards, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them. • Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of stakeholders. • Does not always provide the tenancy agreement, conditions of tenancy and Tenants' Handbook in a variety of ways appropriate to tenants' needs eg, Welsh language, large print, Braille, other languages etc

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a significant proportion of service users who do not think they receive a good service in the context in which the organisation works, or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are.
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to tenancy and estate management services? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a clear understanding of its local community using census and other information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services. Knows, records, analyses and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to ensure services are delivered appropriately and to prioritise resources. Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg Welsh language, large print, Braille, other languages etc. Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up. Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to provide services to most service users. Has resources identified, but may not have allocated them yet to meet the needs of all service users. Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all. Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive and misses the needs of some groups. Generally has a reasonable approach to diversity, but may have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Tenancy management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements in providing tenancy management services? Has the organisation developed good quality, effective and appropriate tenancy management services? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has tenancy management services which comply with statutory requirements, such as the right to quiet enjoyment. Is able to advise tenants and unauthorised occupants of their rights or status in regard to carrying out improvements, to mutual exchange, assignment, succession, Right to Buy and other requests for tenancy changes, at the first point of contact. Ensures that residents are informed how they can easily report the sighting of rats, cockroaches and other pests, and has efficient arrangements for their eradication. Meets or exceeds targets specified in service standards, which have been set at a level that provide high levels of services, and publicises performance. Clearly explains the tenancy conditions, and how breaches will be dealt with, at the start of every new tenancy and what service users can expect in return. Updates the tenancy agreement, conditions of tenancy and Tenants' Handbook to take account of changes in the law, regulatory requirements, and its own policy or procedures. Has clearly defined lines of responsibility for different strands of the service. Service users and staff know who to contact when they have a query. Delivers tenancy management in an appropriate way, following consultation with tenants and after a full analysis of the costs and benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has tenancy management services that broadly comply with statutory requirements, but standards sometimes fall below these requirements. Is able to broadly advise tenants and unauthorised occupants of their rights and status in regard to carrying out improvements, to mutual exchange, assignment, succession, Right to Buy and other requests for tenancy changes, but standard of advice is inconsistent and sometimes requires more than one contact between the service user and organisation. Has some service standards, but either sets unrealistic targets that it then fails to meet or service standards that are too low only providing adequate levels of services. May deal with one aspect of the service well but not another. For example, it may remedy the problem quickly, but not identify and resolve the cause of the problem. May be slow to update the tenancy agreement, conditions of tenancy and Tenants' Handbook to take account of changes in the law, regulatory requirements, and its own policy or procedures. Lines of responsibility for different strands of the service are sometimes confused and not clearly defined, leading to confusion amongst both service users and staff on who to turn to when solving problems.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Enforcing tenancy conditions and dealing with anti-social behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation effectively deal with all incidents of nuisance, anti social behaviour (ASB) and harassment by responding to incidents rapidly, in accordance with published procedures and their legal remedies? How quickly and sensitively does the organisation handle neighbour disputes, promoting mediation where appropriate? Have effective partnerships been formed at a local level with statutory agencies, council departments and other landlords to ensure the most appropriate response to ASB and the sharing of information? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a comprehensive, clear and accessible statement of policies and procedures on ASB and takes a robust stance in tackling nuisance, ASB and harassment, which is reviewed regularly. Has a tenancy agreement which contains clear and comprehensive conditions relating to nuisance and ASB and the sanctions available where these are breached. Has evidence that it has enforced these conditions when necessary. Takes a proactive and innovative approach to combat anti-social behaviour through security measures, local lettings policies and community development activities, such as youth work. Ensures that residents can easily report breaches of tenancy conditions, and has efficient and effective arrangements for dealing with them. Keeps complainants informed about the progress of their case from the point of complaint to resolution and beyond. Has strong partnerships with other agencies eg, social services, environmental health, the police and other landlords in tackling anti-social behaviour and strong protocols for sharing information. Is an active member of the strategic partnership eg, the Crime and Disorder or the Community Safety Partnership. Uses the full range of remedies as appropriate to address ASB, including mediation, injunctions and exclusion orders, acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs), anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), possession proceedings and introductory/ starter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can deal with one-off cases of nuisance, ASB or harassment well, but does not have a systematic approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour, abandoned properties or unauthorised occupation. Has a statement of policies and procedures on ASB, but it is not comprehensive, clear or accessible. Does not spell out expectations about anti-social behaviour clearly in the tenancy agreement and conditions. Has little substantive evidence that it has systematically enforced the tenancy conditions when breached. Takes a generally reactive approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour. Does not make it easy for all groups of tenants to report anti-social behaviour. Has procedures, which are not clear to service users or staff and they are not implemented consistently. As a result, tenants receive an inequitable service. Is involved in some partnership working but it is ad-hoc, and largely at the instigation of individual managers, with ad-hoc information sharing arrangements. Demonstrates only limited evidence of proactive work to 'design' out crime and improve security measures for service users where appropriate.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<p>tenancies – and publicises to the wider community the successful use of such remedies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has established good working arrangements with local courts to deliver efficient processes for legal proceedings, including witness protection. • Works with planning departments and/ or housing associations to ensure that crime prevention is a key issue in designing estate improvements and new homes. • Uses a range of methods to gather evidence - for example professional witnesses, CCTV, video cameras, noise monitoring equipment etc. • Works proactively to promote, support and sustain tenancies through mechanisms like the use of floating support, rather than terminating or demoting them. • Supports victims either directly or in conjunction with specialist care and support agencies. • Fully supports perpetrators to amend their behaviour where this is a reasonable remedy to addressing the ASB concerned. • Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with the way anti-social behaviour is managed, whether they are victims of ASB or not. • Records and monitors reports of ASB and other criminal activities and reviews strategies and policies in light of these to improve services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates only some successful use of the full range of remedies for ASB and the enforcement of tenancy conditions, so outcomes for service users are not consistent or very systematic, and undertakes limited publicity in the use of remedies to deal with ASB. • Demonstrates only patchy evidence on some estates of systematically managing difficult tenancies or seeking to make sustainable lettings. • Generally places the onus on the victim to record and supply evidence to support complaints of, sometimes serious, anti-social behaviour. • Does not fully support victims or witnesses and there is little understanding or attempts to use professional witnesses or evidence gathering equipment systematically. • Does not always fully support perpetrators to amend their behaviour, where this is a reasonable remedy to addressing the ASB concerned. • Has service users who believe that the organisation performs inconsistently in response to reports of ASB. • Does not systematically monitor the impact of incidents and take action to improve the service.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Estate management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice in estate management? Are estate grounds and other communal areas kept clean, tidy and attractive by working closely with service users, other departments and external agencies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has estates which are clean, tidy and attractive. Abandoned vehicles, graffiti and vandalism are dealt with swiftly according to set procedures. Systematically inspects all estates working with local residents to identify illegal parking, abandoned vehicles, footpaths, cleaning standards, condition of communal facilities (particularly play equipment) and graffiti. It deals quickly and efficiently with the issues identified. Takes steps to identify those responsible for unauthorised dumping and other environmental damage, and takes appropriate action under its tenancy management or other, legal procedures. Ensures that animals do not cause environmental damage or nuisance on its estates, and works well with dog warden and animal welfare organisations to remove stray dogs. Ensures the most efficient use of its garages and parking areas, taking into account the needs of its services users – tenants and leaseholders - and other stakeholders, and design limitations. Takes a proactive approach to increasing security and ‘designing out’ crime to communal areas. Works in partnership to deliver services, where appropriate, has clear arrangements for referral and signposting to other services and actively seeks out learning and best practice from elsewhere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not maintain estates consistently well, with visible evidence of neglect and poor management in some areas. Abandoned vehicles, graffiti and vandalism are not dealt with effectively. Has some good systems in place to identify problems in communal areas, but does not routinely involve service users in estate inspections and systematically identifying problems. Lines of responsibility for different strands of the service are not always clearly defined leading to confusion amongst both service users and staff on who is ultimately responsible for dealing with problems in some parts of the service, which leads to unnecessary delays in resolving problems. May deal with one aspect of the service well but not another. Eg, it may remedy the problem quickly, but not identify and resolve/deter the cause of the problem. Can deal with one-off cases well, but does not have a systematic approach to dealing with environmental problems on its estates. Responds reactively to environmental issues, often well, rather than planning ahead to avoid them. Has not taken a systematic approach to dealing with parking and traffic management problems on its estates. Does not make the best use of available space. Inspects its play equipment on a regular basis, but may be slow to repair or make it safe.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have examples of good practice, but cannot demonstrate proactive work to ‘designing’ out crime and improve security measures for residents where appropriate. • Can show little evidence of preventative initiatives working jointly with local communities and other organisations.
<p>Value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for tenancy and estate management services? • How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users? • Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefits service users and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects accurate information on costs and services and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy. • Provides service users with comprehensive and accurate information on services, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement. • Is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/or quality improvements through partnerships and has investigated partnerships with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement) such as other housing associations/ councils. • Provides clear and well understood information on costs and how these relate to the quality of services delivered. • Has low overall costs and unit costs for tenancy and estate management services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not collect accurate or sufficient information about its services, or use it to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy. • Does not systematically inform service users about costs, benefits and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner. • May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery. • Has either high overall and unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs, but performance, range of services and quality of works do not meet service users’ expectations. • Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it ineffectively. • Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and has therefore not made full use of them.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation. • Follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally. • Has used procurement to achieve significant savings without loss of quality, eg, can demonstrate achievements in delivering programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of both cost and quality. • Has effective arrangements for advising and recovering appropriate costs for communal services and improvements from leaseholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly fails to deliver programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality.

1.5 Maintaining Housing

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on maintaining housing is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the maintaining housing KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The Maintaining Housing KLOE is intended to cover the following areas:

- access, customer care and service user focus;
- diversity;
- capital improvement, planned and cyclical maintenance, major repair works
- responsive repairs
- void repairs and property management
- gas servicing
- aids and adaptations and
- value for Money.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Access, customer care & user focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about housing maintenance issues? • How easily do service users access the service? • How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective? • How does the organisation respond to service users? • What service user satisfaction has been achieved through housing maintenance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who all demonstrate user focus in their work, who treat people with respect at all times. • Has front-line staff that demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users. • Makes it easy for residents to report or query repairs or improvements by telephone, in person or electronically, including outside normal office hours – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively. • Will generally use appropriate technology to help staff and service users identify the appropriate repair. • Tells service users when their repair should be completed at the time they report it, including outside normal office hours. • Arranges repair, maintenance and improvement work, and inspections related to it, at a time to suit the service user, mainly by appointment. • Tells service users whether they are responsible for paying the cost of a repair at the time they report it. • Has clear arrangements for dealing with service users when they refuse access for repairs and uses appropriate legal methods to ensure the completion of all necessary works. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing an inconsistent approach to customer care. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not a strong enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes inconsistent. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are unclear where or who to access the information from, to be able to help service users. • Offers a reasonable range of ways for service users to contact the service, but some are not as efficient and effective as others, therefore providing inconsistent service provision. • Does not make it easy for all service users to report repairs, including some service users trying to report repairs outside normal office hours. • Often has basic IT or even paper systems for staff to use in trying to help staff and service users identify the appropriate repair.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has published clear service standards for the repairs service, which are tailored to meet local need and which often exceed minimum statutory requirements - for example, Right to Repair for council service users. • Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service, for example in relation to stock investment priorities, programmes and procurement and repairs target timescales. • Has service users who feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. • Has service users who are satisfied with the repairs and improvements they receive and this is evidenced by a wide range of feedback methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not systematically tell service users when their repairs should be undertaken or should be completed. There may be an appointment system, but it is not service user-focussed. • Does advise some service users whether they are responsible for paying the cost of a repair at the time they report it, but not systematically. • May rely on possession action, or other inappropriate, remedies to gain access where residents refuse it. • Has set some key service standards, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them. • Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of stakeholders. • Has a significant proportion of service users who do not think they receive good quality repair and improvement work, or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to stock investment and repairs and maintenance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear understanding of its local community using all relevant information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services. • Knows, records, analyses and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to ensure services are delivered appropriately and to prioritise resources. • Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg: Welsh language, large print, Braille, other languages etc. • Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up. • Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to offer services to most service users. Has resources identified, but may not have allocated them yet. • Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all. • Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive and misses the needs of some groups. • Generally has a reasonable overall approach to diversity, but may still have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Capital improvement, planned and cyclical maintenance, major repair works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice on housing maintenance? Is the organisation carrying out the right maintenance and improvement work to the right homes at the right time? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carries out a consistent programme of maintenance services designed to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), and other service targets. Collects accurate information on stock condition to confirm the condition of its properties in relation to the WHQS and on costs and services, and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources. Carries out a statistically representative sample stock condition survey at least every three years. Automatically updates information from asset management programmes into its stock condition database. Maintains an up-to-date record of the location and condition of asbestos or presumed asbestos in its properties and provides information on its location and condition to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb any asbestos. Has improvement programmes which aim to deliver homes to a high quality, 'WHQS plus', and address 'lifetime' homes and ecological issues. Has an investment programme which covers the short, medium and long term and provides sufficient detail so that service users and others are clear about the extent and timing of works. Has a repair service which reflects the wider needs of service users – for example, they meet service standards, address security and anti-social behaviour (ASB) issues or address hard to let areas/ properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement programmes deliver homes to Scheme Development Standards but do not always plan to meet a high quality and/or 'lifetime' standard. Either does not systematically collect accurate information on stock condition in relation to the WHQS and on costs and services; or collects it, but does not always use it effectively to decide priorities and to manage resources. Maintains an up-to-date record of the location and condition of asbestos or presumed asbestos in its properties, but may not systematically provide information on its location and condition to anyone who is liable to work on or disturb it. Has investment plans which are largely short-term in approach and lack the detail necessary so that most service users and contractors can be clear about what is to be done, where and when. Does not have clear future maintenance programmes - these have been prepared in outline form only. Has programmes which may focus on the WHQS, but they do not always or clearly link to other work programmes such as void refurbishment or regeneration initiatives. Has a repair service which does not consider the wider needs of the service – for example, how it addresses security and anti-social behaviour issues or address hard to let areas/ properties.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services electrical systems, communal heating systems, play equipment, lifts and other plant and mechanical systems, in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines, statutory requirements and current good practice guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services its electrical systems, heating systems, play equipment, lifts and other plant and mechanical systems, in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines and statutory requirements.
<p>Responsive repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective and responsive is the organisation in keeping its homes and communal facilities in a good state of repair? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can get the necessary work done quickly and efficiently without long-winded approval systems. Completes repairs to a high standard within its target timescales, generally at the first visit. Uses an innovative mix of caretaker, handyperson and multi-trade working to complete repair works in a responsive and customer-focussed way. Regularly inspects communal areas, jointly with residents' representatives, and ensures the necessary repairs are carried out within target timescales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a responsive repairs service that meets basic legal and contractual requirements. Completes repairs to a reasonable standard, but too often outside target timescales and often not at the first visit. Generally uses traditional contractor and single trades arrangements to complete all repairs. Inspects communal areas, but not systematically. As a result communal repairs are often not completed in target timescales.
<p>Void repairs and property management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a minimum lettable standard been published and developed in consultation with service users? How quickly does the organisation complete repairs to its empty properties? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a challenging re-let standard, to which service users have contributed, and which is available to tenants and prospective tenants before they view the property. Has a high level of tenant satisfaction with the standard at which homes are re-let. Carries out repairs and safety checks to empty properties quickly and efficiently, to the re-let standard and service users automatically receive copies of safety certificates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have a re let standard, but does not systematically achieve it and/ or tenant satisfaction with re-let standards is low. The re let standard is not systematically used to ensure new service users move into homes of a consistently good standard. Provides inconsistent advice to advise prospective tenants of the re-let standard before they view the property. May carry out safety checks to empty homes but service users do not automatically receive copies of safety certificates.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Gas servicing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation comply with gas safety regulations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually services and carries out safety checks to all internal gas appliances and carries out all necessary repairs and replacements promptly. Uses innovative ways to gain access where service users refuse it, using forced entry as a last resort and only after taking appropriate legal advice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually services gas appliances in accordance with statutory requirements. May rely on possession action or other less satisfactory remedies to gain access where service users refuse it.
<p>Aids and adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation enable service users with disabilities to continue to live in their homes, if they want to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has good relationships with other stakeholders, including Health and Social Service specialists, enabling service users to receive aids and adaptations as part of appropriate support packages. Promotes adaptations for service users with disabilities and provides them quickly and to a high standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides adaptations for service users with disabilities, but they are not well-publicised or well-resourced and may not work in a well-coordinated way with other stakeholders.
<p>Value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources on stock investment and asset management? How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects accurate information on costs and services and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Has undertaken a thorough assessment of the resources required and potentially available, to support investment in the WHQS, including (where appropriate) private finance, social housing grant, recycled grant funds, proceeds from the disposal of properties and regeneration resources as well as internal budgets. Provides service users with clear, comprehensive and accurate information on services, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement. Provides clear and well understood information on costs and benefits and how these relate to the quality of services delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not collect sufficient or accurate information about its services to allow the organisation to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Does not systematically assess and bid for additional available resources to deliver national housing priorities. May bid for, and secure, one-off sums, sometimes for works that are not high priority areas. Does not systematically inform service users about costs, benefits and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner. Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it ineffectively.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefits service users and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally. For example, is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/ or quality improvements by employing partnering methods and incentives such as standardisation, partnering down the chain and discounts for long contract periods. Employs partnering arrangements with contractors and uses a range of Egan Initiatives to provide an improved range of services to service users and reduces overall costs. The organisation may have achieved Chartered Construction Client Status for its maintenance services. These partnerships may include those with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement) such as other housing associations/ councils. Uses cost and other information (including Housing Quality Indicators, performance indicators and costs in use) effectively to compare with others and monitor its own performance over time. The organisation can demonstrate how information has been used to improve services. Has low overall costs as well as unit costs for housing maintenance costs compared to other organisations with similar services and stock and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services). Has used procurement to achieve significant savings without loss of quality, eg, can demonstrate achievements in delivering programmes and projects on time, to target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of both cost and quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery. Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and how Egan, Byatt and Latham based principles are procured and applied. May have applied for Chartered Construction Client Status, but have yet to achieve it. Has either high overall and unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs, but performance, range of services and quality of works do not meet service users' expectations. May have good performance compared to its own service targets, but these do not compare well with comparator groups. Does not effectively collect appropriate repair and improvement costs from leaseholders. Orders repairs accurately, but carries out more repair pre-inspections than good practice guidelines suggest. May carry out inspections of completed repairs within good practice guidelines, but without any risk-assessment. Has relatively high overall as well as unit costs for housing maintenance compared to other organisations with similar services and stock and allowing for the local context.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have effective arrangements for advising and recovering appropriate costs for communal services and improvements from leaseholders. • Aims to keep repair pre-inspections within good practice guidelines. • Carries out inspections of completed repairs within good practice guidelines, using a risk-based assessment. • Ensures that aids and adaptations are recycled, if the property is not to be re-let to a new tenant who needs them. • Has a standardised specification for building works for use on individual projects or programmes of work that provides high quality accommodation that is well above WHQS requirements, which has been evaluated for value for money and agreed with service users. • Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation. • Has achieved an optimum balance of expenditure between planned maintenance and responsive repairs, having regard to good practice guidelines, but appropriate to the age and condition of the organisation's stock. • Has achieved an optimum balance of expenditure between emergency, urgent and routine response repairs, having regard to good practice guidelines, but appropriate to the age and condition of the organisation's stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a minimum standard specification for building works (must be to Scheme Development Standards for housing associations) to meet WHQS which may have been evaluated for value for money and agreed with service users. • Budgetary control is indifferent and often budgets are overspent or are not set with reference to long-term financial plans. • Spends more on planned maintenance than on responsive repairs, appropriate to the age and condition of the organisation's stock, but does not understand clearly how to improve on this. • Carries out a higher percentage of emergency and urgent repairs compared to routine repairs, than good practice guidelines suggest having regard to the performance of other similar organisations. • Does not routinely link investment in planned works with responsive and cyclical work programmes and resources are wasted as a result. • Has arrangements for consulting, advising and recovering appropriate communal repair and improvement costs from leaseholders, but they are not consistently applied, leading to service users inadvertently paying a larger share of costs than they should. • Does not consistently manage contracts effectively and regularly fails to deliver programmes and projects on target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality and performance. • Often overspends its project and programme budgets.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages contracts effectively and can demonstrate achievements in delivering programmes and projects on target and to service user's satisfaction, in terms of both cost and quality and performance. • Has systems in place which ensure there is probity of procurement including an internal audit process. • Consistently meets or exceeds targets specified in service standards and performance indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has policies and procedures in place to ensure probity of procurement, but they are not effectively monitored.

2.2 Relationship to Residents

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on relationship to residents is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the relationship to residents KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs, there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The relationship to residents KLOE covers the following areas:

- access, customer care and service user focus;
- diversity;
- Corporate Culture and Governance
- Access to the service
- Information
- Complaints
- Consultation and feedback mechanisms
- resources for Resident involvement;
- the impact of resident involvement; and
- Value for money.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Access, customer care & user focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about resident involvement? • How easily do service users access the service? • How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective? • How does the organisation respond to service users? • What service user satisfaction has been achieved with this service area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person or electronically – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively. • Has staff who all demonstrate user focus and a commitment to resident involvement in their work, and who treat people with respect at all times. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users. • Has set challenging service standards in conjunction with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need. • Has a well established, effective and comprehensive compact and/ or tenant participation strategy. The compact/ tenant participation is up to date and relevant. • Provides tenancy/ lease conditions handbook and other material, which give comprehensive information on rights and responsibilities and the ways in which residents can be involved in, and influence, service delivery. • Produces a regular newsletter to which service users make a significant contribution in terms of content and style. Its content is up to date, user focused and presented in innovative ways to promote interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a range of ways for service users to contact the resident involvement service, but some are not efficient and effective. • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing a lower standard. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not a strong enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes patchy. • Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are not clear enough on where or from whom to access the information, to be able to help service users. • Has staff who do not understand that effective resident involvement requires a commitment at all levels of the organisation. It therefore displays some weak areas in its resident involvement. • Has set some key service standards, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them. • Has a tenants compact and/or tenant participation strategy, but it is not regularly referred to in practice. • Has a compact/ tenant participation strategy which is a discrete piece of work – it is limited in its scope and only covers the minimum requirements.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice in resident involvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces information on why and how management decisions have been made, to a level of detail agreed with service users. This is widely distributed to service users in a range of formats. Is engaging service users in significant, innovative and effective ways in meeting all national requirements. Treats resident involvement as an integrated and important element of the service, designed for the convenience of the service user and not the organisation. Has a range of mechanisms in place that allow service users to participate effectively, in a way and level that suits them, in the design, management and performance of housing services. Can show that consultation and involvement always begins at an early stage (for example, in Tenant Compact/ Tenant participation strategy and policy development work) and that service user views are taken into account before all key decisions are made. Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service. Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with opportunities to inform management, decision-making and service delivery. Service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May display information on resident involvement, but does not promote it effectively or make it easy to understand. May produce a residents' newsletter, but with limited resident involvement in terms of style and content. Does not allow service users the opportunity to have an input in all service areas/ functions of the organisation. Does not view resident involvement as a core improvement driver for all areas of service delivery. Resident involvement policies are superficial and not integrated into the service. Is reliant on traditional methods of resident involvement (through resident associations and formal meetings) which do not reflect the varying levels of commitment that service users are willing to offer, thus limiting their engagement. Shows evidence that consultation with service users is limited to commenting on proposals produced largely by officers/ Board. Service users are not involved in the early stages of decision-making or policy development. Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of other stakeholders.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has service users who know about, and understand the compact/ tenant participation strategy and are satisfied with its content and scope. • Has resident board members who are aware of and/ or understand their responsibilities as directors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a significant proportion of service users who think that their influence over the services they receive is limited, or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are. • Has satisfaction levels which reflect that users are not clear that the organisation responds to, and takes account of their feedback. • Has service users who may be aware of the compact/ tenant participation strategy, but know little about its content and scope. • Has resident board members who are not always aware of and/ or understand their responsibilities as directors. • Operates processes for the recruitment of resident board members that are not transparent and do not encourage the recruitment of good quality resident Board members. • Has not developed ways for leaseholders to participate effectively and systematically, either within the wider service user, movement or separately.
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to resident involvement opportunities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a clear understanding of its local community using all relevant information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services. • Knows, records and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to offer services to most service users. Has resources identified, but may not have allocated them yet to meet the needs of all service users. • Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg, Welsh language, large print, Braille, other languages etc. • Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up. • Works alongside service users to decide the best ways of involving them depending on their circumstances. • Has mechanisms that facilitate involvement of service users that are representative of the organisation's customer base. • Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or having AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. • Can demonstrate how the varied methods of resident involvement have led to black and minority ethnic (BME) and hard-to-engage groups having an impact on the service they receive. • Provides a range of support to enable service users with specific needs to be involved, for example by offering travel or carers' allowances, using accessible venues for meetings, translating information, providing hearing loop systems, etc. • Has a range of local compacts/ agreements in place and a clear plan for introducing the remainder where service users want them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive and misses the needs of some groups. • Considers local factors and is seeking to make itself more relevant to the needs of service users and is establishing mechanisms to better engage with the community. • Has made no concerted effort to facilitate the involvement of residents that are representative of the local community(s) it serves. • Has an awareness of its customer base beyond formal residents associations and has made efforts to reach out to it. Has identified resources but may not have allocated them yet • Can show little evidence of BME or hard-to-engage groups having an impact on services. • Generally has a reasonable overall approach to diversity, but may still have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or having AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a range of support to enable residents with specific needs to be involved, for example by offering travel or carers' allowances, using accessible venues for meetings, translating information and providing hearing loop systems. • Has a few local compacts/ agreements in place but no clear plan for introducing the remainder where residents want them.
<p>Corporate Culture and Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there clear and consistent leadership ensuring that the whole organisation has a clear customer focus? • Have service users and relevant stakeholders been involved in evaluating the service and determining standards and priorities for improvement? How have these priorities been disseminated? • Are external requirements – legislative or good practice being addressed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an impressive and appropriate corporate approach to customer care that is very well understood throughout the organisation. There is a regular, consistent message and ethos that focuses on the customer. Has staff who all demonstrate user focus in their work, and who treat people with respect at all times. • Sets clear standards in consultation with customers for all aspects of customer service. Customer services and standards are regularly tested and monitored, including by customers themselves, in all sections of the organisation. • Regularly updates and reviews the approach in light of external and internal requirements. Training programmes on customer care are regularly updated and delivered to relevant staff. Experience and good practice is shared in an effective and structured way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing an inconsistent approach to customer care. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not strongly enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes inconsistent. • Has some customer standards; some of these and some customer services are tested or monitored, but significant aspects of the service lack standards and monitoring. • Does not regularly update its approach and there is a lack of knowledge on external and internal requirements. While there is some good practice in the organisation, this is not shared adequately. • Has only a partial knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and few actions are taken in response to weaknesses. Customers' views do not have significant input into prioritising actions for improvement

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the governance structures receive the reports necessary to judge whether the organisation is delivering on customer focus? How does the organisation respond to service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knows what its strengths and weaknesses are in delivering a customer focussed service. It is taking appropriate actions to improve the areas where customer service standards are not high. Customers' views are taken into account when prioritising actions for improvement. Has comprehensive reports supplying information and statistics on the quality of customer care in all parts of the organisation. Measures have targets or benchmarks. Tells service users what will happen as a result of their enquiry/request at the first point of contact, including outside normal office hours. Arranges the appropriate response, at a time to suit the service user, mainly by appointment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has few measures in reports. In some relevant areas, there are no targets or benchmarks. Explanations for different measures and outcomes are not always adequate. Many senior officers and board members are not aware of the relevant key issues. Does not systematically tell service users how and when their enquiry/request will be dealt with, at the first point of contact. There may be an appointment system, but it is not service user-focussed. Does advise some service users whether they are responsible for paying the cost of a service at the first point of contact, but not systematically.
<p>Access to the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are customers easily able to contact the organisation by telephone, in person or via the internet? Have appropriate decisions been made on where to locate offices, at what times services are available and how to structure the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has services that are easily accessed through conveniently located offices, by telephone and internet and by visits to residents where appropriate. Makes it easy for residents to access the service by telephone, in person or electronically, including outside normal office hours – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively Has carried out a full analysis of the costs and benefits of the different means of accessing services and residents have been consulted. Has signs leading to offices and receptions that are clear and effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a reasonable range of ways for service users to contact the service, but some are not as efficient and effective as others, therefore providing inconsistent service provision. Has many customers who do not find getting to the office convenient. The website is of limited use to access services and service users cannot easily contact staff by e-mail or telephone. May have carried out some cost benefit analysis and consultation on the means of accessing services, but has not used that information effectively. Has some offices that are not easy to locate.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are customers aware of the services available and how and when to access them? • Are services standards comprehensive and are customers aware of them? • Can the organisation identify customers who are not accessing the service and is appropriate action being taken to remove barriers to access? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully publicises all methods of access along with opening times and arrangements for out-of-hours contact which are clear, and have been agreed following consultation with users. • Has service standards that are realistic and challenging. Customers are aware of the standards, understand them and are informed on how well the organisation is meeting those standards. • Can provide significant evidence that customer service is delivered to a high standard including a high level of customer satisfaction. • Has staff and contractors who deal with customers who are professional, informative and polite. They are well trained and well supported by information technology to deliver an effective service. They are able to tell customers about relevant services in other organisations. • Offers a range of services and information via the internet and forms can either be downloaded or submitted on-line • Has information from surveys and databases that inform it of groups of customers who are not accessing the service as frequently as others. Action is taken to remove any barriers to accessing the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has opening times and arrangements for out-of-hours contact that are either not clear and well publicised or have not been agreed following consultation with users. • Has many customers who are not aware of the standards. Information on whether standards are being met is limited, if it exists at all. • Carries out little testing of customer services or the evidence that exists suggests that the service is below average quality. • Has a small but significant proportion of staff or contractors who are not professional, informative and polite. Training while delivered is either very brief or inconsistent. Staff are not well supported by information technology. • Has very little information available on customers who are not accessing the service and very little action is being taken to remove barriers to accessing the service

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the information provided to customers easy to read? Was it developed in consultation with customers and does it meet their needs and expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has front-line staff that demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users. Provides a variety of leaflets, posters, handbooks and other relevant information covering all that customers reasonably need to know, including, for example, customer services, complaints, contact information, opening hours, approach to rent arrears and dealing with anti-social behaviour. Provides all information in plain English and other formats required by customers (see equal opportunities KLOE). These are easily available on paper and electronically on the website. Produces regular newsletters about policies, procedures and performance that are interesting and informative and residents are involved in production and decisions on content Routinely consults residents about the nature and content of leaflets and handbooks. Residents are satisfied with the quality and timing of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are not clear enough on where or who to access the information from to be able to help service users. Provides a variety of information to customers but it is not comprehensive and is not consistently written in plain English. Does not supply information in alternative formats to suit the needs of groups with special needs. Provides newsletters that are not regular, not interesting or not informative. Has limited resident involvement in the production of leaflets, handbooks, newsletters etc. Has below average resident satisfaction with the quality and range of information they receive.
<p>Complaints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the complaints service well publicised and easy to access? Are standards for complaint handling high? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has customers who know about the complaints system and find it easy to use. The complaints process runs as it is says it will run. Deals with complaints in a professional manner. Has clear standards for handling complaints and performance is reported to customers. Staff and customers are clear about procedures and standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is not open to complaints and is reactive in its approach. Has a complaints procedure but it is not readily accessible or well publicised and complaints must always be made in writing. Has standards for complaints but performance against these is not routinely measured and monitored.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are results from the complaints process publicised to customers and do they result in improvements to the service? • Are customers reasonably satisfied with the responses to their complaints? • Has the organisation implemented determinations by the Social Housing Ombudsman? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses complaints and learns from them, using them to drive improvements to services. • Involves customers in monitoring performance on complaints and identifying service improvements • Monitors customer satisfaction with complaints and has customers who are satisfied with the way complaints are handled. • Implements promptly, and in full, determinations made by the Social Housing Ombudsman. • Has guidelines on compensation made in response to complaints and service failure that ensures that compensation is fair and relatively consistent. • Has guidelines which meet statutory requirements, for example, regulatory requirements for HAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not publicise complaints information and performance on complaints well. • Makes some use of information from complaints to drive improvements in services, but it is not systematic. • Does not manage complaints well and many customers are unhappy with the responses to complaints. • Does not implement promptly, determinations made by the Social Housing Ombudsman. • Has minimal guidance on compensation in response to complaints. There is a significant lack of consistency in compensation given out. • Has guidelines which do not take account of statutory and regulatory requirements on compensation for repairs.
<p>Consultation and feedback mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there a variety of methods of consulting and obtaining feedback from customers and are they effective? • Does the approach take account of local context and ensure that a wide range of user views are obtained? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service. • Provides customers with a range of opportunities to put forward their views using an approach which has been developed in consultation with users. • Seeks views from a broad cross section of users using methods that encourage good response rates. • Uses appropriate survey methodology on satisfaction and uses comparison with other similar organisations in order to set targets for improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of stakeholders. • Has limited opportunities for service user involvement and feedback. What exists has been developed with little reference to the views of service users. • Does not ensure that consultation methods routinely reach a wide cross section of residents. • Does not use appropriate survey methodology on satisfaction or use comparison with other organisations to set targets for improvement.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is good use made of this information? • Are customers informed about what happens as a result of providing their views? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses consultation and feedback from users to drive changes and improvements to the way services are delivered. • Has high levels of satisfaction with opportunities to inform management and affect decision making and service delivery • Has customers who understand the purpose and value of participating in and replying to surveys and questionnaires. Customers are confident that their input will be valued and acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has customers who are not clear whether the organisation responds to, and takes account of, feedback and this is reflected in satisfaction levels.
<p>Resources for resident involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the level of resources and training for service users demonstrate the organisation's commitment to resident involvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the funding and staff in place to make effective resident involvement happen through dedicated staff resources and mainstreamed resident involvement service delivery. • Delivers high-quality, and ongoing, training to facilitate resident involvement in technical matters. • Provides significant resources for resident training, which is developed with service users. • Has set up training for potential service user board members to widen the scope of possible applicants. • Makes training and support such as mentoring an integral element of being a resident board member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has some funding and staffing in place to make resident involvement happen, generally through dedicated staff resources, but rarely through mainstreamed resident involvement service delivery. • Provides some, often one-off, training generally to service user representatives from formal associations. • Does not publicise training outside of the traditional avenues and is focused on a small number of committed tenants. May make some support available (eg, budgets for resident involvement costs), but does not widely promote its availability. • Makes training available, but it is limited to specific service areas and is not flexible to tenants' needs.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Impact of resident involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there clear evidence that resident involvement has led to improved services and outcomes for service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is clear about the purposes of involving residents and evaluates the organisation's efforts against its resident involvement objectives. Can demonstrate that service users have used training opportunities and/ or their skills and abilities to make a real impact in improving services. Has delivered improvements to the service as a result of resident involvement. Can demonstrate links between resident involvement and community development and takes part in projects that promote sustainable communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is clear about the purposes of involving residents, but does not systematically evaluate, and therefore understand, the organisation's efforts against its resident involvement objectives. Can demonstrate some limited evidence of resident involvement affecting service planning and delivery, but examples are isolated and not co-ordinated against a clear resident involvement project plan. Has delivered some improvement to housing services as a result of resident involvement, but there is evidence of missed opportunities in gaining further benefit from meaningful resident involvement. Does not effectively link resident involvement and community development work and their roles in promoting sustainable communities.
<p>Value for money</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for resident involvement? How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects accurate information on resident involvement costs and benefits and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Provides service users with comprehensive and accurate information on resident involvement, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement. Is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/or quality improvements through partnerships and have investigated partnerships with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not collect accurate or sufficient information about its services, or use it to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy. Provides limited, or some inaccurate information on costs and benefits to service users. Does not systematically use information on costs and benefits to review cost-effectiveness or to improve services. Does not systematically inform service users about costs and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefit service users and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides clear and well understood information on costs and how these relate to the quality of services delivered. Has low overall costs and unit costs for resident involvement compared to other organisations with similar levels of services and stock and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services). Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation. Follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally. Is aware of, and successfully bids, for appropriate additional resources to deliver resident involvement (for example, Welsh Assembly Government grants). Consistently meets or exceeds targets specified in service standards and performance indicators on resident involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery. Has either high overall/ unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs but services are also of a low quality. Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it ineffectively. Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and has therefore not made full use of them. Often fails to deliver programmes and projects on time, to target and to service users' satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality. May be aware of, but fails to successfully secure, all available resources to deliver resident involvement. May have good performance compared to its own targets but these do not compare well with comparator groups. May deal with one aspect of the service well but not another. Eg, it may remedy the problem quickly, but not identify and resolve/ deter the cause of the problem.

2.3 Equal Opportunities

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on equal opportunities is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. In inspections, service specific KLOEs are used as a basis for assessing 'How good is the service?' and the equal opportunities KLOE is one of this set.

Each KLOE contains three overarching themes on access, diversity and value for money. The rest of the KLOE is concerned with the detail of the specific service area being assessed or inspected.

There is a separate KLOE to assess 'What are the prospects for improvement?' This KLOE covers the assessments made on visions and ambitions, track record, ability to learn, quality and effectiveness of plans, prioritisation, capacity to deliver improvements and performance management.

While the Wales Audit Office has packaged some services together in producing these KLOEs, there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Wales Audit Office remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

The Equal Opportunities KLOE is intended to cover the following areas;

- Corporate Culture and Governance
- Access to customer services
- Service user involvement
- Partnerships
- Harassment

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<p>Corporate Culture and Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there clear and consistent leadership in the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity? • Are external requirements – legislative or good practice - being addressed? • Have service users and relevant stakeholders been involved in determining priorities? How have these priorities been disseminated? • Do the governance structures receive the reports necessary to judge whether the organisation is delivering on equal opportunities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a corporate policy on equal opportunities that is appropriate and understood throughout the organisation. There is a regular, consistent message and ethos. • Promotes its commitment to equal opportunities to its customers and other stakeholders. • Uses categories recommended by the CRE to monitor ethnic breakdown of staff and contractors. Has a staff composition that, at all levels, reflects the community which it serves; or which is working positively towards this target. • Has responded to external factors. Actions are taking place accordingly and there is a suite of training programmes to share knowledge • Has representative involvement in determining priorities. Training programmes for users and providers (including contractors) exist and information is shared, in a variety of media, and on a regular basis. In this context, information includes promoting policies or, for example, race equality • Has comprehensive reports supplying information and statistics on a wide variety of issues affecting customers. Measures have targets or benchmarks. Senior officers and board members or councillors are aware of the relevant key issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an appropriate corporate policy but many staff are either unaware of it or unfamiliar with it. There is a different approach or emphasis in different parts of the organisation without a good reason. • Has policies on equal opportunities but does not promote them to its customers and other stakeholders • Monitors the ethnic breakdown of staff and contractors, but is unable to compare performance with other organisations which use categories recommended by the CRE. • May have a staff group that reflects the community it serves overall, but is not working positively towards achieving it at all levels of the organisation. • Has identified most of its responsibilities with regard to legislation and good practice and has some training available. Actions planned to meet good practice are not comprehensive or not progressing as intended. • Has some priorities and decisions that have been influenced by stakeholders. • Has reports with few measures. In some relevant areas, there are no targets or benchmarks. Explanations for different measures and outcomes are not always adequate

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not discriminate against any person or organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally has a reasonable approach to equal opportunities, but may have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.
<p>Access and customer care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is communication with service users conducted in a manner that meets their needs, and can all service users access all relevant services? <p><i>‘access’ here includes physical access and relates in part to the DDA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there up-to-date information on the vulnerabilities of different service users, which is easily available and used to provide an appropriate service? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a clear understanding of its customer base, and local demographics using appropriate sources of information, including the input of local partners. It knows the exact breakdown of residents by age, ethnicity, disability and other factors that are relevant locally. Resources are prioritised accordingly. Uses categories recommended by the CRE to monitor ethnic breakdown of service users. Has a comprehensive database which sets out the preferred methods of communication for each resident. This addresses issues of language, literacy, hearing and visual impairment and support. This information is highlighted on computer systems for the benefit of all staff and provided to contractors where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a breakdown of residents by age, ethnicity, disability and other factors but it is not comprehensive. There are few or no ideas of what relevance the ethnic origin or age of residents and their families has to the organisation. Resources may not have been allocated where it might have been relevant to do so. Monitors the ethnic breakdown of service users, but is unable to compare performance with other organisations who use categories recommended by the CRE.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the needs of vulnerable service users monitored to ensure that they are getting the right amount of support? • Is there the facility to bring in more support for service users where this is needed? • Do all service users who need them, have aids and adaptations provided appropriately? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a communication strategy that ensures that translation and interpretation facilities are readily available with guidelines on when and how to use them. Where there is a need, relevant documents are translated and readily available. All such communication issues are appropriately advertised. • Complies with statutory requirements on, for example, the CRE code of practice on lettings. • Meets targets for lettings and allocations to the diverse range of applicants which reflect priority housing need and the communities in which it is working. • Has customer service points all of which are fully wheelchair accessible, with hearing loops, and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. • Has comprehensive arrangements for disabled access to communal areas of estates and homes. • Has front line staff that all know how to use Talktype or text phones and how to deal with different levels of vulnerability and disability with evidence of training or induction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has details of the communication requirements of some of its residents. Such information is not held in a systematic way and may not be available to all relevant service providers. Some documents are translated but it is not clear why not all are, and why in some languages and not others. Not all staff members are aware of how to access interpreters to attend meetings. Information to customers on these services is inconsistent. • Does not have a communications strategy that ensures that translation and interpretation facilities are readily available with guidelines on when and how to use them. • Does not adequately advertise the communication facilities that are available. • Has adopted the CRE code of practice on lettings, but does not monitor compliance. • Makes lettings on priority housing need but does not monitor the diverse makeup of the communities in which it is working. • Has some customer service points that are not fully wheelchair accessible with hearing loops and in compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act • Has arrangements for disabled access to some communal areas of estates and homes, but it is not comprehensive.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a computer alert system to say which residents are potentially dangerous. Relevant staff and contractors have easy access to information about issues around vulnerability or challenging behaviour that are relevant to the service they are delivering. • Has systems that ensure that experience about successful ways of dealing with vulnerable residents is shared, recorded and made easily available. • Has a system for monitoring and reviewing the circumstances of vulnerable tenants to ensure that they are getting the support that they need. • Can access extra or floating support for residents who have particular needs such as teenage parents or residents with low level mental health problems. • Has a clear process for assessing the needs for aids and adaptations, and provides them to residents' properties in a timely manner. This is communicated to all residents and all requests are appropriately dealt with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has some front line staff who do not know how to communicate effectively with those with disabilities. • Has a list of potentially dangerous residents but it is not used systematically. • Has information about vulnerable or challenging residents on file but in a way that makes it difficult for staff to find it unless they spend time looking. • Has some staff that are experienced and competent at dealing with vulnerable residents but their experience and successful approaches are not being shared and recorded. • Does not regularly review the needs and circumstances of vulnerable tenants. • Has vulnerable tenants who are not getting adequate support. • Provides aids and adaptations. However there are some difficulties around budget or communications and there are cases of unreasonable delay.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Service user involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the organisation aware of the diversity of its service users, and is it taking steps to ensure equality of opportunity? • Are the views of specific and minority groups and the diverse needs of service users taken into account when developing and improving the service? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets equal opportunities targets for service users and monitors and reports on the breakdown of service user involvement bodies, surveys, forums and focus groups by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, location and others as relevant. • Takes action to achieve a better balance where there is under representation of any particular group. • Has members of service user involvement bodies who understand the clear message from the organisation on the importance of equal opportunities. • Consistently breaks down information from surveys and service users by relevant categories and has made changes and improvements in response to the views expressed by specific groups and minorities. • Uses various methods to ensure the views of under represented groups are adequately heard. • Has different types of minority groups of service users who all feel that the organisation is taking serious steps to ensure that their opinions are heard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows what the breakdown of the more significant service user bodies is on equal opportunities, but not all active bodies. • Takes little or no action to improve equal opportunities within relevant bodies where they are not representative. • Does not communicate the message of the importance of equal opportunities adequately. Service user representatives are not necessarily aware of the significance of equal opportunities within their organisation • Occasionally breaks down information from customers by category of customer. This information may not lead to any specific action. • Takes very few pro-active steps to hear the views of those who are under represented. • Has minority groupings of service users who feel that the organisation is not taking serious steps to ensure that their opinions are heard.
<p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation ensure contact with its various communities? What is it doing to involve other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with a wide base of other community organisations to ensure that services are tailored to local need. It can demonstrate that it has an understanding of different issues of relevance to diverse need and different local communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has contact with few community organisations and has a limited awareness of the communities and diverse needs that it serves. Staff can refer customers to only a limited list of other relevant service providers.

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<p>agencies and partners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation ensure that it understands cultural requirements of service users? • How does the organisation ensure that its contractors and consultants are committed to equality of opportunity in service provision? • Does the organisation promote community cohesion? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is able to inform service users about other service providers as appropriate. • Has an understanding of the cultural issues of all significant minority groups where this is relevant to the service they receive. • Ensures that the needs of more hidden groups or sub groups are understood. For example the needs of travellers and gypsies and the way they engage with the settled community, the needs of Turkish women as distinct from the needs of the Turkish community taken as a whole. • Has a well-developed procurement policy, that does not exclude smaller groups and that requires consultants and contractors to demonstrate good practice and sign up to the organisations' policies. The performance of contractors and consultants is monitored and the results used to improve services. • Uses its position to develop and influence partnerships to promote community cohesion and address social exclusion. • Actively promotes its role within the locality to develop partnerships and influence the debate around cohesion and exclusion. • Has strategies in place to address its role locally, review the contribution that it makes and divert resources to enable the aims of promoting cohesion and addressing exclusion to be met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a procurement policy that is not well developed. There are limited requirements on consultants and contractors to meet standards on equal opportunities. Has consultants and contractors who are aware of the organisation's policies or priorities on equal opportunities, but their adherence to them is not being monitored. • Has limited involvement in local or community initiatives to address community cohesion and social exclusion. It does not take a leading or active role in this, and exerts limited influence as a result. • Has few mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of its role as a partner, and limited resources to assist in this work have not been fully identified.

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A SATISFACTORY SERVICE
<p>Harassment and domestic violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the organisation have an effective approach to dealing with harassment and domestic violence? • Are there effective means of offering support to residents who suffer harassment or domestic violence? • Is there a clear message to residents on the stand that the organisation takes against those who harass and in support of those who suffer harassment? • Does the organisation encourage a community response against harassment where appropriate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies different types of harassment and offers fast and effective action including support to those suffering harassment. • Has staff that understand the policies and procedures, and the actions taken are appropriate and timely. • Where appropriate, evicts perpetrators of violence, leaving the person suffering the violence with the same or equivalent tenancy. • Can and does give support in a number of different ways to those experiencing harassment and violence including through a variety of agencies. • Promptly deals with offensive graffiti and vandalism committed with intent to harass. • Has residents that are aware of the stance that the organisation takes against harassment and domestic violence. They know that perpetrators can lose their tenancies and that support is available for those who face harassment or domestic violence. • Works, where relevant, with resident organisations and other community groups to help tackle harassment and promote positive attitudes and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be aware of the different types of harassment but its approach to dealing with these is inconsistent and may leave the victim feeling vulnerable and subject to further harassment or intimidation. • Has staff who mostly understand the policies and procedures but actions may not be appropriate or timely. • Can provide some kind of support to those experiencing harassment. It does not have experience or contact with enough organisations to support many of the minority groups that could be subject to harassment. • Has many residents who are not aware of the stance that the organisation takes against harassment and domestic violence. • Has only rarely worked with residents groups and other community organisations in addressing acts of prejudice where such things have occurred.

2.10 Performance Management

2.11 Continuous Improvement

This Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) on performance management and continuous improvement is part of a set of KLOEs produced by the Wales Audit Office. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the KLOE guidance notes available from the Wales Audit Office.

KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements around either service or judgement specific issues which provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. These KLOEs are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services.

This KLOE on performance management and continuous improvement takes a slightly different format to the other KLOEs which relate to service specific issues looking at 'How good is the service?'.

This KLOE is framed around three main questions which are:

What is the evidence of service improvements?
How good are the current improvement plans?
Will improvements be delivered?

This KLOE on performance management and continuous improvement covers the following areas:

- track record;
- service user benefits;
- learning;
- use of continuous improvement principles;
- contents of plans;
- quality of plans;
- ambitions;
- prioritisation;
- capacity; and
- performance management.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
What is the evidence of service improvements?		
<p>Track record How effectively has the organisation successfully implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the recommendations from previous inspection reports from regulators or other regulatory or improvement work relevant to the services inspected, such as external audit or peer review; and their own corporate and service improvement plans, whether following a best value review or equivalent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has fully integrated recommendations and action points from previous inspection reports from regulators, peer reviews or from external audit, into its service planning system and has completed the actions it has set out to achieve within corporate and service plans on time, to budget and with the required outcomes and impacts. Has achieved progress at a rate and extent exceeding expectations set in relation to the baseline performance of the organisation, and within the context and constraints in which the organisation operates (ie, levels of improvement in a poorly performing housing organisation need to be demonstrably greater, and targets more stretching, than in a high performing one). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has not fully integrated recommendations and action points from previous inspection reports from regulators, or other peer reviews or from external audit, into its service planning system. A mixed picture emerges of some actions that are detailed within corporate and service plans completed, others in progress and some not commenced. Has achieved progress to date which is less than would be realistically expected of the organisation given its context and the constraints faced.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
<p>Service user benefits How extensively has the organisation delivered clear and discernible benefits for all customers of the service in the last two years?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has delivered discernible benefits for all groups of customers, including the most disadvantaged, from the improvements implemented. The organisation, in implementing its corporate and service plans, has ensured that actions have brought considerable benefits to the quality of life of all customers. • Has delivered clear benefits as measured through national and local indicators which compare well with other service providers, high levels of customer satisfaction and through demonstrable changes on the ground. • Has achieved benefits for customers, the scale and extent of which are considerable given the constraints faced by the organisation. The scale and extent of achievements represents good value for the effort and resources deployed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has made changes but delivered improvements of mixed quality. The organisation may have expended much energy but there are few outcomes for customers and achievements are concentrated on processes and internal infrastructure. • Has completed some key actions, some of which have resulted in improvements to the quality of life of some customers, but for others including the most disadvantaged, the impact has been minimal. • Has delivered variable quality of improvement as reflected in the local and national PIs which show that, while some elements of the service may be in the best quartile, others are below average. Customer satisfaction is mixed and service users and communities have limited awareness of any improvement in services. • Has not achieved improvements and benefits of a scale and extent that would be expected given the type of organisation and the constraints it faces. What has been achieved does not represent good value.
<p>Learning How well is the organisation implementing service improvements as a result of learning from its own experience and from others, for example complaints systems, customer surveys, staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively seeks to learn from its own experience and from others. It has robust systems in place to capture and implement learning points from a wide range of sources and share these across services within the organisation. • Uses this learning in service planning and reviews of service delivery. Shares learning systematically across the organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns from customers, staff and partners but only as a reaction to problems raised by them. It does not deliver continuous improvement in services because it does not set out to proactively learn from itself and others. • Changes to services only occur when risks are exposed or when the organisation is forced to change by external agents.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
and customer suggestions and best practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can point to significant service improvements that are attributable to suggestions and feedback from customers, staff and other stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has limited mechanisms to share learning across the organisation and consequently good practice is not adopted throughout. Has few examples of where it has significantly improved services as the result of learning from customers, staff and other stakeholders.
How good are the current improvement plans?		
<p>Use of continuous improvement principles</p> <p>How thoroughly has the organisation applied the principles of continuous improvement in preparing its service and/ or improvement plans?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can show that it has recently reviewed and challenged its objectives, policies and practices. Reviews have taken a broad, overarching strategic approach to looking at services. It can demonstrate how this was done, who was involved and how this review has informed its service and/or improvement plans. Periodically reviews the need for the service, or particular aspects of the service, when preparing plans for individual service areas. The reasons for any decisions arising out of this challenge are clear. Has applied lessons it has learnt from other providers in the public, voluntary or private sectors to improve services and/or make them more cost effective. Acts on the information it receives from its comprehensive benchmarking of all key service areas and is aware of how its performance compares to others. It can give examples of how it has used information gained from benchmarking and good practice to plan improvements and set appropriate targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has not recently reviewed and challenged all or many of its objectives, policies and practices. Any reviews that have taken place have not been done in a overarching strategic way, but in an ad-hoc way. In preparing plans for individual service areas, the organisation has not thoroughly considered the need for all or parts of the service or how these may best be provided. Has made only limited attempts to look outside the organisation for examples of good practice. Has undertaken little benchmarking and the organisation is only vaguely aware of how its performance compares with others. Can show only tenuous or unclear links between how it plans to improve services based on learning from other organisations. Has carried out limited consultation about the service and/or improvement plan(s) and it is not clear how stakeholders or hard-to-reach groups have been identified and consulted. The approach adopted to

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves a wide range of stakeholders, including hard-to-reach groups, in its consultation process and can show how this consultation has influenced its service and/or improvement plans. The consultation is high quality, based on good quality, timely information and high quality engagement and feedback. Has recently reviewed its procurement arrangements and who is best to deliver services, particularly for significant areas of expenditure. It has evaluated these and takes an approach which is the most cost effective and which provides high quality services in line with customer preferences. 	<p>consultation and engagement with customers and other stakeholders is not adequate. Insufficient information is provided and time allowed. The organisation cannot show comprehensively how consultation has influenced what it plans to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have a well developed approach to procurement and has only undertaken limited examination of whether other service providers may be better able, in terms of both cost and quality, to provide elements of the service. The organisation cannot demonstrate that its plans will cost effectively deliver high quality services in line with customer preferences.
<p>Contents of plans How much have the organisations' plans for services and improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> taken account of changes in the external environment such as recent or forthcoming legislation, regulatory requirements and good practice; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has service and/or improvement plans which clearly take into account all key issues raised in recent and forthcoming legislation and, where applicable, other regulatory requirements. Regularly looks at good practice in other organisations including, where appropriate, outside the housing sector, in preparing its plans. Has a good understanding of its key service strengths and weaknesses, including costs. This understanding is based on objective performance information and the views of customers, staff and other stakeholders. Service and/or improvement plans include realistic and achievable actions to address these weaknesses. The organisation has set future objectives and new targets which are clear from the plans and which are linked to overall organisational objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has service and/or improvement plans which do not fully address a number of the key issues raised in recent and forthcoming legislation and, where applicable, other regulatory requirements. In developing plans, the organisation does not look to the best performers. Has a sketchy understanding of its key service strengths and weaknesses. This understanding is based on limited information. At best, the service and/or improvement plan(s) only partially address these weaknesses. Has future objectives and new targets which are not clear from the improvement plan(s). The links with overall organisational objectives are also unclear.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addressed key service weaknesses and set new targets to achieve the desired outcome; and set a framework which will deliver clear improvements for customers, that are both challenging and outward focussed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service and/or improvement plan(s) include clear and challenging intended outcomes including value for money. These outcomes are in line with identified customer priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has improvement plan(s) which do not show clear outcomes for the service and/or are only partially in line with identified customer priorities.
<p>Quality of plans How robust are the organisations' plans and do they set a sustained focus for the organisation to achieve objectives and priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has robust plans which set a clear and challenging framework for the medium and longer term. The plans include clear milestones along with challenging, though realistic, targets and timescales for completion. Priorities within the plans are clear and they also include clear responsibilities for all actions and the associated resource requirements. The plans can be described as genuinely SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic and Time-bound). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have robust plans, nor a range of actions for the short, and especially medium- and longer-term to deliver objectives and priorities. Responsibility for each element of the plans may not be clear, nor are there milestones, targets and timescales for all actions. Does not have clear priorities within the plans and information on resource requirements is limited. Timescales for implementation of the plans in light of resources available are either over-generous or over-ambitious. Targets are not challenging or are over ambitious.
<p>Will improvements be delivered?</p>		
<p>Ambitions How strong is the leadership of the organisation and does it have a clear vision and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a good understanding of the local context in which it operates. Has a good understanding of the priorities of the local community and those of key partners/ stakeholders as well as its own corporate aims. Its aims are consistent with corporate and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have a good awareness of the context in which it is operating nor of the priorities of the local community and of key partners/ stakeholders. Its aims are not consistent with corporate and community objectives and do not fully reflect national and local

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
ambitions for the future, that provide clear, challenging, robust and realistic aims?;	<p>objectives as well as national and local priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has longer-term aims which are challenging, yet realistic, given its context, past performance and resources. The aims are robust with a clear indication of the outcomes and the challenging targets to be achieved. • Has overall aims developed through engagement with customers and other stakeholders. They recognise the aims, share a common purpose with the organisation and are enthusiastic about achieving them. • Enables users and other stakeholders (where appropriate) to positively influence decisions about services. Residents are encouraged, by the way they are advertised and managed, to attend board and committee meetings. 	<p>priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has some clear aims, but these are unrealistic given its context and performance. The aims, overall, are not robust as it is not always clear what the outcome will be or the target to be achieved. • Has had limited engagement with customers and other stakeholders in the development of aims and, consequently, they are not seen as shared. • Has ad hoc arrangements for users and other stakeholders to influence decisions about services. Residents are not encouraged to attend board and committee meetings.
<p>Prioritisation</p> <p>In delivering improvements, how effectively has the organisation made clear what its priorities are and what are not priorities for improvement, so that it has a clear basis for service priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an integrated approach to setting priorities and allocating resources against them. The basis for the priorities is clear, robust and determined, utilising a wide range of research and information to understand local needs. It moves resources away from areas that are not priorities or from services where development is not needed. The approach is cyclical, reviewing priorities and allocating resources coherently in line with budget setting and other cycles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have clear priorities and therefore is unable to target resources effectively. The organisation does have some information and research to understand priorities but has not used this comprehensively to shape its improvement plan or the timing and scale of its actions. • Has not allocated resources to all services and growth areas. Has not explicitly identified areas that are a lower priority.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
<p>Are service priorities consistent with corporate priorities and can resource allocations be shown to clearly be targeted and redistributed where necessary in order to meet the stated priorities?</p>		
<p>Capacity Does the organisation have the capacity to deliver service aims and drive improvement? Can it demonstrate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it has the right balance of resources and skills in place; • there is clarity about what officers/Board members are responsible and accountable for; and • it has partnerships that are used effectively to deliver priorities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is self aware about its capacity and has the people, skills, IT systems, suppliers and capability it needs to deliver its aims, priorities and drive improvement. • Maximises its own internal capacity through effective human resource (HR) practice which has ensured that the staff, managers, and Board members it recruits are high quality, well trained and have good support. • Annually reviews the skills and abilities of its staff, managers and Board members, and uses training programmes to address gaps. • Has active, visible and effective management and leadership, recognised by staff, partners and stakeholders. Leadership is evident from senior managers and Board members in their ambitions for the service, the organisation and its contribution within the community. • Has Board members, a management team and staff who are representative of the gender, race and age profile of their tenants and the broader community they serve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have all the people, skills, suppliers and capability it needs to deliver its aims and priorities. • Does not have fully effective HR practices and therefore staff, managers and Board members do not have the skills they need to adequately perform their roles. • Has a framework for reviewing the skills and abilities of its staff, managers and Board members, but it is either not implemented consistently, or training does not address gaps identified • Has mixed qualities of leadership and management, and this is confirmed by staff, partners and stakeholders. • Has Board members, a management team or staff who are not representative of the gender, race and age profile of their tenants and the broader community they serve

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Board members and officers who are clear about their strategic and operational roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and the boundaries between them. These are clearly set out in protocols, standing orders and the constitution and there are effective, productive relationships between them. • Has effective decision making and officer and Board structures which work well in the management of the organisation and in improving services. Decision making is open, transparent and, where appropriate, inclusive of customers. • Has, in the case of a group structure or similar, established clear delegations to allow local operational freedom but still gives the 'partner' RSL the necessary controls on the group as a whole. • Has invested in up-to-date ICT and this has improved its ability to deliver services. • Has taken a modern approach to procurement, enabling the organisation to realise efficiency savings and improve the quality of services delivered. • Has a robust medium-term financial plan (MTFP) which demonstrates the organisation has the financial capacity to deliver its aims. The MTFP takes account of the organisation's priorities and commitments within its improvement and other plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a lack of clarity and accountability around some key strategic and operational roles of Board members and officers. The organisation does not generally have clear protocols and, consequently, relationships are not effective. • Often makes decisions slowly and with an operational focus. The officer and Board structures do not assist effective decision making and delegation. Customers have limited involvement and perceive that the organisation is not open. • Has not, in the case of a group structure or similar, established a full range of clear delegations to allow local operational freedom. The 'partner' RSL does not necessarily have adequate control on the group as a whole. • Does not have up-to-date ICT systems and this reduces its ability to take on new services or enhance existing ones. A reliance on manual systems takes capacity away from improvement. • Has not developed modern procurement methods and there are few examples of where the organisation has realised the opportunities this can bring. • Does not have a MTFP and the organisation has made little more than forecasts of its available resources against key budget headings. Future commitments and priorities are only loosely reflected and it is not robust. • Has established relationships with contractors and other service providers, however, these are not real partnerships and their potential has not been realised.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has formed successful partnerships with external companies, other service providers and the voluntary and community sectors. These partnerships enable the organisation to provide more efficient and high quality services. 	
<p>Performance management</p> <p>Does the organisation have effective performance management arrangements in place to ensure the achievement of objectives, priorities and the implementation of improvement plans?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a strong performance management culture within the organisation and it is thoroughly embedded across all services and well understood and used by officers and Board members. Has robust and high quality corporate and service planning arrangements which make clear the contribution of services and individuals to corporate aims, priorities and targets. These are closely scrutinised and monitored and action is taken to deal with under-performance and slow progress. Has codes of conduct and registers of interests in place to guide the standards of behaviour expected from Board members, managers and staff. Has strong systems in place to manage performance. Targets are challenging, reflect local and national priorities and link to its service plans and overall objectives. Involves tenants and other stakeholders in the monitoring of performance including setting of targets and addressing area of under-performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a performance management framework, but this has not been fully embedded across the organisation and it is not used consistently by managers and Board members. A clear understanding of performance monitoring and management does not exist at all levels. Has evident corporate and service planning arrangements but they are not effective in maintaining a focus on aims and priorities. The cascade of aims, priorities and targets to services and individuals is not clear. Has some codes of conduct in place to guide the standards of behaviour expected from Board members, managers and staff, but they are not well known or referred to. Has generally weak performance management systems for services or improvement plans. The information collection is not always relevant or useful in managing performance, often concentrating solely on KPIs Have some un-ambitious targets which do not link clearly to service priorities. Involves tenants and other stakeholders in a limited way in setting targets and managing performance.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can show that managers and Board members use the information to understand the reasons for variations in performance against targets. They take appropriate corrective action in response to variations and follow this up to ensure the desired outcome is achieved. • The organisation understands how well it performs compared to others, particularly the best performers. Targets reflect the desire to achieve and sustain excellence. • Ensures that people who use the service have access to service standards and targets and know what to do if they are unhappy with the services they are receiving. Information on complaints and performance against service standards is used in reviewing overall performance. • Has excellent financial monitoring and the budget management at all levels of delegation. Uses resources flexibly in line with priorities and provides high quality reports to officers and Board members to enable them to undertake their different monitoring roles. • Knows the cost effectiveness and value for money of its services. It uses this information to make changes in the way services are provided to improve its performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only show some isolated examples of the information being used to address under performance, more often little corrective and follow-up action is taken by officers/Board members. • Compares its performance with others, but this tends to be only its neighbours and does not include the best performers. • Does not have service standards for all services and does not make clear the action customers should take if they are not satisfied. Does not use feedback on complaints and performance in the delivery of service standards in reviewing overall performance. • Has adequate financial monitoring and budget management. The organisation provides limited information to officers and Board members and they do not have the ability to act appropriately. • Does not know if it provides value for money in all services. It undertakes basic cost comparisons but there is little evidence of how this is used to change the way services are provided. • Is risk aware of the more obvious risks, such as health and safety. It does not routinely assess the risks inherent in what it plans to do. Risk assessment and management is inconsistent in service/business plans. Only limited evidence exists of risk being effectively managed in the delivery of services. • Has considered risks in the market, and its funding streams, in developing its Business and Delivery Plan(s), but does not review them regularly.

Key line of enquiry (KLOE)	An organisation which demonstrates strong corporate and strategic capabilities	An organisation which shows weaknesses in processes and performance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is risk aware and assesses the risk inherent in what it plans to do. The action to be taken to address risks is incorporated in service/business plans as well as improvement plans. There is clear evidence that risk is managed in the delivery of services. • Routinely remodels its Business and Delivery Plan(s) to take account of developing risks in the market, or its funding streams. 	