

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER OF HOUSING

28TH SEPTEMBER 2017

ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS' 2016-2017

EXEMPT INFORMATION

n/a

PURPOSE

To provide details of the Councils Landlord Performance for 2016/17 as required under the Homes & Community Agency (HCA) Landlord Regulatory Framework 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet approve:-

- Approve production of the Council's Landlord Annual Report to Tenants' (2016/17) complying with required governance under the Landlord Regulatory Framework.
- Delegate further scrutiny of performance; detailed under each of the Landlord national consumer standards; to Tamworth's relevant scrutiny committee(s) in consultation with the Scrutiny Chair(s) and Portfolio Holder for Housing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Councils landlord service is subject to statutory regulation by the Homes & Community Agency. The Localism Act 2011 has been in place for 6 years and landlords are familiar with their respective roles arising from that legislation. Specifically the regulatory framework seeks to ensure compliance with four national consumer standards, listed below, :-

1. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment
2. Home
3. Tenancy
4. Neighbourhood and Community

The standards are detailed on the Governments website:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>

Each year the HCA publishes the regulator's approach to consumer regulation and includes case studies and lessons learned with the expectation that organisations' use this to support their own learning. The last report issued was for 2015/16 and can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-regulation-review-2015-to-2016> . The HCA report for the period concerning this report (2016/17) should be published around September and officers will assess this to inform continuous improvement and progress. If it is available in time for the Cabinet

report the relevant link will be inserted.

Given Cabinet’s approach to managing performance and the developing role of its scrutiny committee(s) it is recommended that detailed scrutiny of landlord performance should be delegated to the relevant committee in agreement with the respective Chair(s) and Portfolio Holder of Housing.

Compliance with each of the national standards is routinely assessed and this is provided in detail in the attached appendices. Headline successes directly supporting the Councils strategic priorities includes;

- Improving customer satisfaction levels with tenants rising from the 78% assessed independently using the Star Status Survey (2016); to 88% currently using aggregated satisfaction figures derived from localised surveys across each core service area.
- Successfully launching service charges in 2016 to generate an additional £595k per year to invest in services
- Development of a self-financing model for its sheltered housing service, following County wide cessation of supporting people grant funding, whilst maintaining satisfaction levels above 95%.
- Independent accreditation for its income management service by HQN. In fact the income collection levels enjoyed in 2016/17 continued to be top quartile. Eviction levels nearly halved as efforts were put into earliest help and prevention; achieving significant reductions in rent loss
- Independent accreditation for its Neighbourhood services by HouseMark as a result of its focus on total ‘place based’ solutions. Collaboration with community safety and partners was identified as best practice
- Successful procurement process to ensure contractual arrangements delivering a multi-million pound repairs and investment service

Alongside this the focus on using HRA resources to support corporate ambitions around commerciality have seen progress on the development of regeneration at Tinkers & Kerria, with over 100 households successfully moved on; as well as development & acquisition of new and affordable housing.

Landlord Service has continued to celebrate improving performance and the majority of the benchmarked KPIs are either top quartile or in an improving position, as seen in the table below. The live performance dashboard is discussed with tenants and these are the top KPIs they scrutinise routinely:-

| | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/2017 | Estimated Top Quartile* |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Overall satisfaction with Landlord Services | 75% | 78% | 78% | 82% |
| Average time between lettings | 17 days | 14 days | 17.60 days | 17.50 days |
| % of appointments made and kept | 97.86% | 94.17% | 95.00% | 98.06% |
| Gas servicing – CP12 | 99.69% | 99.37% | 99.99% | 100.00% |
| Urgent repairs completed on time | 98.02% | 98.35% | 97.58% | 98.04% |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|--------|
| Customer satisfaction with repairs | 93.76% | 97.67% | 83% | 98.50% |
| Arrears as a % of rent due | 1.96% | 1.82% | 1.82% | 2.13% |
| Evictions | 28 | 18 | 10 | 8 |

Benchmarking across the sector and 'best in class' is a core part of the Councils approach to performance management; ensuring we are able to measure key performance indicators, improvements and operational efficiencies. Tamworth's own stock retained housing service continues to report outcomes that are either top quartile or in an improving position. In fact qualitative data suggests overall satisfaction (when aggregated across all landlord services) is around 88%. Full details of the KPIS are shown in the customer intelligence report 2016/2017.

Clearly the service remains focused on continuous improvement and key to the work plan for 2017/18 is the:-

- Development of the HRA business plan to assess and support commercial opportunities in line with the Councils commercial investment strategy
- Assessment of the landlord service functions using peer review; self-assessment and independent scrutiny. Repairs and lettings due 2017/18.
- Assessment of options for the future delivery of repair and investment services for its council housing
- Continued focus on delivering quality services supporting the digitisation and customer transformation agenda by delivering services right first time using predictive income & data analysis to reduce waste demand on officers time.
- Assessment of future funding models for the delivery of supported and sheltered housing
- Continuation of welfare reform agenda, particularly universal credit
- Business and organisational re-engineering to support the most vulnerable within communities in collaboration with partners

Key to demonstrating performance is communicating performance; and for Tamworth this is via the production of an Annual Tenants' Report. This outcome based assessment is subject to wider benchmarking with organisations such as HouseMark, Rent Income Excellence Network and Chartered Institute of Housing. Comparisons with 'best in class' to provide real time learning and is central to localised performance management.

As in the past, the Tenant Consultative Group have influenced the production and contributed to target setting and scrutiny in relation to core housing management performance. If approved, the production of the Annual Tenants Report will be the 7th publication since the regulatory code was introduced.

The co-regulatory framework developed by tenants is aimed at ensuring they influence, scrutinise and inform policy decisions and their views are routinely referenced in cabinet reports. In addition, the Annual Report gives details of how tenant involvement will be delivered, by whom, and how tenants will play a central part in performance management, activities and initiatives in the future.

Along with the Corporate Communications Team, we continue to review all tenant led publications. Being able to produce Open House and the Annual Report to tenants electronically has facilitated a more regular edition and satisfied requests for more

up-to-date and timely information. Moving to e-publications, as agreed in 2014, has already contributed to savings in the HRA resulting in savings being invested in gathering improved customer profiling data so services can be tailored.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The production of the annual report will be advertised on the web, via an e-newsletter and targeted hard copy to ensure value for money and provision for this is within existing budgets.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Failure to comply with the Homes & Community Agency Regulatory Framework could result in intervention should this be assessed as causing “serious detriment” to tenants’. The co-regulatory framework developed with tenants to assess consumer standards as well as contribute to economic regulation mitigates this risk going forward.

REPORT AUTHOR

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List of Background Papers