

20 DECEMBER 2018

**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING SERVICES AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS****ANNUAL REPORT TO TENANTS 2017-2018****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

n/a

PURPOSE

To provide details of the Councils Landlord Performance for 2017/18 as required under the Homes & Community Agency Landlord Regulatory Framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet approve:-

- Approve production of the Council's Landlord Annual Report to Tenants' (2017/18) complying with required governance under the Landlord Regulatory Framework as shown at **Appendix C**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Councils landlord service is subject to statutory regulation by the Homes & Community Agency. In recognition that the landlord service now sits within the Neighbourhood and Communities service the Annual Report this year has taken the opportunity to illustrate cross fertilisation between all of the councils services to evidence its contribution "One Tamworth, Perfectly Placed" Open for business since the 7th Century A.D.

Annually a consumer regulation report is published by the MHCLG and highlights areas of best practice and non-compliance for landlords to review. Officers assess this to inform continuous improvement and progress. The last report issued was for 2017/18 and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consumer-regulation-review-2017-to-2018>.

The Localism Act 2011 has been in place for 8 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:-

Details within this report have been used to produce the annual report and as previously mentioned this is shown at Appendix C. Members should note that the attached is a working draft and subject to finalisation but officers feel that that this would give members a flavor of what the final publication will look like

The live performance dashboard is discussed with tenants and these are the top KPIs they scrutinise routinely:-

	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	Estimated top quartile*
Overall satisfaction with landlord services	78%	78%	88% ¹	82%
Average time between lettings	14 Days	17.60 Days	17days	17.50 Days
Completed Walkabouts/ Estate Inspections	10	10	10	Not benchmarked
Tenant satisfaction with communal cleaning	87%	87%	87%	Not benchmarked
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	561	617	557	Not benchmarked
% of repairs appointments made and kept	94.17%	95.00%	90.48%	98.06%
Gas servicing CP 12	99.37%	99.99%	97.82%	100%
Urgent repairs completed on time	98.35%	97.58%	96.91%	98.04%
Tenant satisfaction with responsive repairs	97.67%	83.00%	95%	98.50%
Arrears as a % of rent due	1.82%	1.82%	2.15%	1.79%
Number of Evictions	18	10	18	0.18%

- Figures based on estimated top quartile range when benchmarked nationally

¹ This is the aggregated figure based on local satisfaction monitoring

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 positive outcomes. Qualitative data suggests overall satisfaction (when aggregated across all landlord services) remains at around 88%. Full details of the KPIS are shown in the customer intelligence report 2017/2018 **Appendix A – Customer Intelligence Report 2017-18**.

Officers meet routinely to discuss performance and actions to improve. 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 8th 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.

The management and maintenance of the councils housing stock directly contributes to the Councils strategic agenda and achievements in 2017/18 have included:-

Landlord Service Achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRA Business Planning progress highlighting £298m of investment in the councils housing stock from 2019 – 2048 ensuring compliance with the Governments Decent Homes Standard • Core Landlord Services across housing management and maintenance have continued to show improvement when benchmarked nationally • Improving customer satisfaction levels with tenants, when aggregated across all of landlord services remains around 88% • Progression of regeneration projects at Tinkers & Kerria to deliver up to 150 new homes • Development and acquisition of new and affordable housing, currently up to 54 additional new social and affordable homes. Along this a new rent policy has been implemented allowing for affordable rent levels • Following the development of a self-financing model for the Councils sheltered housing service, as a result of County wide cessation of supporting people grant funding, satisfaction levels have remained at 95% • A programme of tenant inspection audits, to contribute to the healthier and safer lifestyles of residents in these areas across all garage sites • Continued enjoyment of high satisfaction levels within our sheltered housing services • Compliance with health and safety evidenced through a robust review of fire safety and development of a fire safety strategy • Continued development of the tenant regulatory framework through development of an updated Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy Action Plan • More than 100 involvement activities have been arranged, ranging from postal surveys, estate - based activities, consultation events and awareness

sessions on key landlord projects

- Developed a Temporary Accommodation Policy – a pilot, using up to 5 council properties as temporary accommodation for homeless persons
- Undertook a Construction Employability Programme with Wates aimed at unemployed Tamworth residents and care leavers facing extra barriers into employment

Clearly the service remains focused on continuous improvement and key to the work plan for 2018/19 is as follows:-

Landlord Service Key Priorities 2018/2019 & 2019/2020

Tenancy Standard

- Re-tender the Sheltered Housing lifeline service to be undertaken during 2018
- Assessment of future funding models for the delivery of supported and sheltered housing
- To review the Tenancy Management Policy, including fixed term tenancies
- Allocations Policy review & improvements to the 'Finding a Home' website providing improved mobile device access and user friendly functions
- Commission independent Peer Review for sheltered housing services
- To review the Disability Facility Adaptation approach and policy

Home Standard

- Assessment of options for the future delivery of the repair and investment services for council housing
- Review asset investment profile to deliver against ambitions for garage sites including stock viability and sustainability
- Scope development ambitions in terms of new HRA funded council housing and wider acquisitions to meet housing need
- Continue with the High Rise refurbishment programme
- Re-tender Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service - Home safety
- Development of an Asset Management Strategy
- Continuation and delivery of the Councils acquisition programme
- Review approach to Fire safety following Grenfell and in view of the plan adopted 2017.

Neighbourhood & Community Standard

- Continuation of the Welfare Reform Agenda, particularly Universal Credit
- Impact Assessment following the introduction of a 12 month pilot project at Eringden House to employ a full time member of staff on site providing an enhanced housing management service.
- Develop an agile neighbourhood based suite of service standards tested against national best practice requiring submission of a renewal application for HouseMark accreditation Continue with the estate regeneration projects at Tinkers Green and the Kerria
- Integrate a joined up approach across council services to tackling anti-social behaviour within a place based context

Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard

- Review tenant regulation and scrutiny in view of the MHCLG approach to improving tenant led scrutiny of core services

- Continued focus on delivering quality services supporting the digitisation and customer transformation agenda by delivering services right first time
- Map the requirements for consultation on all major Landlord projects
- Continue with engagement and communications for all landlord service major projects i.e. High Rise refurbishment programme
- Deliver annual estate inspection and communal cleaning audit programme to shape housing services and improve accountability to tenants (2018/2019)
- Review and launch the Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023
- Deliver customer profile exercise as part of wider Business Continuity planning
- Continue to support and develop the following involvement groups under the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment framework: Tenant Involvement Group, Tenant Consultative Group, Complaints Review Panel, ASB Service Improvement Group
- Update Landlord Service Health Inequalities Plan
- Publish key statutory and other landlord publications to include Annual Report to tenants (2018/19), Tenant Involvement annual Impact Assessment (2018/2019), annual complaints/customer intelligence report on learning and outcomes (2018/19) and Open House' quarterly e-newsletter

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 is central to localised performance management.

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 contributed to savings in the HRA resulting in savings being invested in gathering improved customer profiling data so services can be tailored.

A New Deal for Social Housing – Green Paper

Given the Governments focus on tenant regulation as part of it "new deal for social housing" published in the Housing Green paper; it is important to evidence the Councils continued commitment. This Green paper sought views on the government's vision for social housing and how regulation could be strengthened in the future.. The consultation ran from 14 August 2018 to 6 November 2018. See **Appendix B - A New Deal for Social Housing (Green Paper)** for a summary of key points

The social housing green paper proposes fundamental reform to ensure social homes provide an essential, safe, well managed service for all those who need it. Consideration is also given to how the relationship between residents and landlords can be re-balanced to ensure issues are resolved swiftly and residents' voices are heard.

The paper sets out 5 principles which, it says, will underpin a new, fairer deal for social housing residents and each of these will have an impact on tenant regulation and linking this back to neighbourhood resilience will be a key ambition in the updated HRA business plan in 2018/2019:-

- A safe and decent home which is fundamental to a sense of security and our ability to get on in life;
- Improving and speeding up how complaints are resolved;
- Empowering residents and ensuring their voices are heard so that landlords are held to account;
- Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities, challenging the stereotypes that exist about residents and their communities, and
- Building the social homes that we need and ensuring that those homes can act as a springboard to home ownership.

Finally, it is important to note that revisions to the Business Plan were agreed in June 2018 and the narrative is currently being prepared setting out our ambitions. The HRA Business Plan is a statutory requirement and the production of a robust HRA Business plan is fundamental to the successful delivery of the Councils Housing Service. The HRA business plan is also one example of how tenants have and should, influence shape and scrutinise core housing services.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The production of the annual report, as per previous years, will be advertised on the web, via an e-newsletter and targeted hard copy to ensure value for money and these costs can be met from 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.

Business risks around performance are assessed as part of the councils approach to risk management

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Customer Intelligence Report 2017-2018

Appendix B – A New Deal for Social Housing (Green Paper)

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