

Thursday, 31 October 2024

## Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Planning

### Council Housing - Tenants' Annual Report 2023/2024

#### Exempt Information

None

#### Purpose

The purpose of the report is to: -

- Set out the detail for the Councils Annual Report for council housing tenants' 2023/24.
- Agree the headline improvement action plan for the tenant satisfaction measure survey undertaken in 2023/24.
- Set out the arrangements for undertaking the annual tenants' satisfaction measure survey 2024/25 as per the Regulatory requirements, including the use of grant funding from MHCLG for this purpose.
- Provide update on the tenants' conference on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, and the forthcoming consultation roadshow on the draft `tenant involvement and consultation strategy 2025-30`.
- Set out the details for the `Getting to Know You` survey being launch during the winter of 2024 to understand the diverse needs of our tenants which will be used to shape and improve housing services.

#### Recommendations

Cabinet are recommended to: -

1. Approve the draft `Council Housing Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24` for circulation to all Council's tenants via the Council's website, to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance. **Appendix A.**
2. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Social Housing, Homelessness & Planning and the Executive Director of Communities to make the final amendments to the draft Council Housing Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24, prior to digital circulation to Council tenants.
3. Approve the headline improvement action plan for the Tenants Satisfaction Measure Survey undertaken in 2023/24. **Appendix B.**
4. Approve the commissioning of an independent research company to undertake a census annual tenants' satisfaction measure survey for 2024/25, as per the Regulator of Social Housing's requirements. Noting the grant funding set out in the report.
5. Endorse the arrangements for the tenants' conference 2024 highlights video and the consultation roadshow timetable (**Appendix C**) following the tenants conference, designed to put tenants at the heart of housing services.
6. Delegate final arrangements to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Planning and the Executive Director of Communities for the `Getting to Know You` survey to be undertaken during the winter of 2024.

## Executive Summary

This report deals with the routine reporting of the council's annual housing landlord performance to its tenants.

Cabinet will be aware that the Council has self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing in relation to some of the consumer standards requirements and those details have been reported separately to Corporate Scrutiny on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024, followed by Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2024.

The Council Housing Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24 covers the period between the beginning of April 2023 and the end of March 2024. This is the 14th tenants' annual performance report and is developed with the Council's Tenant Consultative Group who continue as part of the regulatory framework to influence, scrutinise and inform policy decisions.

Given the changing landscape around housing regulation and based on the Council's ambition to put tenants and leaseholders at the heart of its service, the Council took the opportunity to take part in a HQN's session 'Annual Report – Time to Mark Your Homework' specifically designed to review Tamworth's annual report. The outcome identified strengths and some learning which have been incorporated into the Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24, which mainly included making the report shorter and an easier read.

### Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24

As part of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Consumer Standard the Council is required to annually publish their performance. The tenants' annual report is a recognised mechanism for achieving this along with publishing its annual tenant satisfaction measure results. At Tamworth, tenants have actively been involved in the development of the tenants' annual report via the tenants' voice panel group. Their feedback has been incorporated into the draft Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24 attached at **Appendix A**.

This Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24 reflects the Council's housing landlord performance against the Regulator of Social Housing new approach for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services which took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. The Regulator introduced a suite of revised four consumer standards (1. Safety & Quality Standard, 2. Tenancy Standard, 3. Neighbourhood & Community Standard, 4. Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard) which includes a set of 22 defined tenant satisfaction measures (TSM's) that housing landlords must report on annually, which the Regulator will soon make public for all landlords with 1,000 or more homes.

Like previous years, Cabinet know that performance of the Council's stock retained services is reported annually to its tenants, including achievements, areas for continual improvements, key performance indicators and compliance across the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. This year the Tenants' Annual Report will also include the Council's first annual tenant satisfaction performance measure results undertaken during 2023/2024.

Routinely, the production of the Tenants' Annual Report involves benchmarking with Housemark as a way of evaluating Tamworth's performance against external standards, or with other landlords for the purpose of learning to inform service planning and improvements.

You can view our full performance information in our Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24 attached at **Appendix A**, with a summary of the key performance set out in the table below.

## Circulation of the Tenants' Annual Report 2023/24

The Annual Report must be circulated to all tenants, so it is proposed to place a copy on the Council's website and tenant's portal for tenants to access, distribute copies within its sheltered and supported schemes, and provide any hard copies on request.

We propose any final amendments to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Planning for final approval.

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures Performance 2023/24

To comply with the new regulatory requirements, this year's report will also include the Council's 22 tenant satisfaction key performance measure results for 2023/2024.

The 22 tenant satisfaction measures cover five themes: repairs, building safety, effective complaint handling, respectful and helpful tenant engagement, and responsible neighbourhood management. Of these 22 measures, 12 must be collected through an annual tenant-perception survey and 10 through landlord data directly. Tenants and the Regulator will be able to use these measures to understand how well landlords are doing and who need to improve the service they offer to their tenants.

The Council submitted their first year of annual tenants' satisfaction measures performance measures results for 2023/24 to the Regulator in June 2024 as per their requirements, including publishing the results on the Council's website. You can view our full tenants 22 satisfaction measures performance for 2023/24 on Council's website on the link that follows: [Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Performance Information | Tamworth Borough Council](#)

Set out below is the Annual Tenants Satisfaction Measure Survey Findings for 2023/24.

- 58% satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council
- 62% satisfied with the overall repairs service
- 62% satisfied with the time taken to complete most recent repair
- 63% satisfied that the Council provides a home that is well maintained
- 69% satisfied that the Council provides a home that is safe
- 51% satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts upon them
- 56% satisfied that the Council keeps them informed about things that matter to them
- 69% agree that the Council treats them fairly and with respect
- 23% satisfied with the Council's approach to complaints handling
- 68% satisfied that the Council keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
- 52% satisfied that the Council makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhoods
- 54% satisfied with the Council's approach to handling anti-social behaviour

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures Improvement Action Plan

Based on the results and feedback from our tenant satisfaction measures survey 2023/24 the Council has been working with the Tenant Consultative Group to agree an outline improvement action plan to address and improve tenants' perception and satisfaction with housing services. This will also form part of the discussions as the Council commences its consultation roadshow during November 2024 on its draft Tenant Involvement and Consultation Strategy 2025-2030. Details on the consultation roadshow are set out below in this report.

The headlines from the improvement action plan are set out in full in **Appendix B**. The intention is to consult on the development of the SMART implementation plan once Cabinet have approved these headlines during the consultation roadshow.

The action plan is based around the five themes of the tenant's satisfaction measure survey (safe & well-maintained homes, repairs, communication, neighbourhoods and complaints). A summary is listed below:

We will:

- work hard to improve the time taken to complete a repair after reporting it
- communicate with our tenants on capital works programmes & repairs performance
- publish a suite of housing services standards, so tenants know exactly what level of service to expect
- carry out an annual estate inspection programme
- co-design with tenants our new 'tenants' involvement and consultation strategy 2025-30 to ensure tenants are at the heart of decision making affecting their homes and have their voices heard
- make sure we are clear about what anti-social behaviour is and what we can act on
- provide refresher customer care services training for our staff including active listening and effective communication
- Re-open the Council's front desk reception early 2025

Tenant Satisfaction Measure Survey 2024/25 and grant funding

On 29 August 2024, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published their section 31 grant funding determination letter to local authorities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tenant-satisfaction-measures-2024-2025-section-31-grant-determination-letter/tenant-satisfaction-measures-2024-2025-section-31-grant-determination-letter>

The purpose of this grant is to support with social housing stock in England to fund the collection of the tenant satisfaction measures over the 2024/25 financial year. The funding has been paid through a section 31 grant. The amount of grant to be paid to Tamworth Borough Council is £17,284.00 and subject to Cabinet approval will be used to cover the costs of commissioning an independent research company to undertake a census annual tenants' satisfaction survey for 2024/25, which will take place during January and February 2025.

Update on the success of the Tenant Conference 2024

With the Regulator of Social Housing's new approach to consumer regulation the aims of this year's tenants' conference was to put a spotlight on these regulatory changes and it was a good start to rebuilding trust, improving tenant-landlord relationship, whilst continuing to put tenants at the heart of the housing services we provide.

Tamworth Borough Council were proud to host its Tenants & Leaseholders Conference 2024 at the Assembly Rooms in Tamworth on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024, from 12 noon to 3:30pm. It was a full house with over 70 tenants and leaseholders in attendance. Tenants and leaseholders came from all over Tamworth to attend the conference. Some used free transport to and from the venue provided by the Council. This meant those who are unable to drive could be given the chance to go.

The full presentations and tenants' involvement video shown during the conference are available on the following links below:

<S:\Housing and Health Directorate\Housing\Board - tenants conference 2024\Tenant Conference 16 September 2024 final.pptx>

<S:\Housing and Health Directorate\Housing\Board - tenants conference 2024\Update on Consumer Regulation Yvonne Davies Slides.pptx>

<S:\Housing and Health Directorate\Housing\Board - tenants conference 2024\Linda Slides Tamworth 2024 V2.pptx>

<S:\Housing and Health Directorate\Housing\Board - tenants conference 2024\Tenant Conference Celebrating our Tenant Leaseholder Voice 160924.pptx>

<S:\Housing and Health Directorate\Housing\Board - tenants conference 2024\Tenant Conference - Final.pptx>

As a way of thanking tenants and leaseholders for attending the tenants' conference and to provide those who could not attend the opportunity to see what went on during the conference, Council Officers are currently preparing a short video which will include a wide range of photos taken throughout the conference with consent from all participants.

The tenants' conference video will be posted on the Council's website along with the presentations shown during the conference, which will also be shared with staff, members and external partners too.

#### Consultation Roadshow – draft Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy 2025-2030

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 Officers gave the initial feedback on the success of the tenants' conference to the Housing, Homelessness & Planning Board and included the development of the consultation roadshow which will take place across Tamworth from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

The consultation roadshow is seeking views from our tenants on the council's new draft 'Tenant Involvement and Consultation Strategy 2025-2030'. This strategy aims to engage and communicate with tenants in a more transparent and accountable way. It also seeks to build on the former engagement successes, to drive housing service improvements and build a stronger relationship with our tenants. Tenants feedback will be used to shape and co-design the final strategy which will be published early 2025 following Council Cabinet approval.

You can view full details of the consultation roadshow invitation programme including calendar of events and different methods of participation, attached at **Appendix C**, which will be sent out to every tenant.

#### 'Getting to Know You' Tenant Insight Survey

The Council have engaged the use of M.E.L Research, a specialist insight consultancy company to undertake a tenants' '**Getting to Know You**' insight census survey and an associated findings report during the winter of 2024.

The collected insight information will be used to understand the diverse needs and characteristics of our tenants which will help shape fair and equitable outcomes for our tenants, as per the regulatory requirements set out in their Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

To gather the required tenant insight information which will include but not limited to the 9 protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The tenant insight census survey approach will consist of the following collection methods, set out in the table below:

Aim to contact all Tamworth Borough Council tenants		
Digital / QR code linked to on-line survey	MEL Research	
Council contact	All Council Officers who are contacted by Tenant	During November & December 2024
By Email	MEL Research	
Over the phone	MEL Research	

To promote the tenant insight survey, the Council will launch a **‘Getting to Know You’** promotional campaign with the aim of reassuring tenants that this is a legitimate request for personal information by the Council and the findings will be used to shape and improve housing services.

The Council’s communication team will promote the **‘Getting to Know You’** campaign via a wide range of communication channels including press release, website, tenants’ portal, social media, tenants newsletters etc.

**Financial Implications**

Annual Report

With the production of a digital Annual Report 2023/24 there are very minimal financial implications. As like previous years, the Annual Report will be advertised on the web, via an e-newsletter and targeted hard copies to ensure value for money and these costs can be met from existing budgets, approximately £250. The council saves on average £2000 a year on printing costs by producing a digital annual report rather than a paper one, which has been reported previously.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024/25

As per the conditions of the Section 31 grant of £17,284.00 this will be used to cover the cost of commissioning an independent research agency to carry out the tenant satisfaction measures survey 2024/25 and support the Council with submitting the results to the Regulator.

Consultation Roadshow, November 2024

No associated financial implications arising from this consultation event other than the small cost £150 of posting an invitation letter out to all tenants which can be met from existing budgets.

All venues being used for the roadshow are Tamworth Borough Council owned which means no venue hire charges have been incurred.

Getting to Know you Survey, Autumn 2024

Preliminary discussions have been held with M.E.L. Research Consultancy to undertake a tenants' 'Getting to Know You' insight census survey with associated baseline findings informing the delivery of a SMART improvement plan supporting engagement, involvement and inclusivity. It is recommended to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Planning to finalise these arrangements.

**Risk Implications**

<b>Regulatory Standards set by RSH</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
	The regulatory framework requires the Council to publish its housing performance information and TSM survey results consult with tenants and understand the diverse needs of our tenants. Failure to do so will be a breach of the framework and may result in regulator intervention and/or enforcement.	Finalise and publish the Annual Report in October/November 2024.  Undertake tenants' satisfaction survey for 2024/25 in January 2025.  Undertake consultation roadshow during November 2024 & Getting to Know You survey Autumn 2024.

**1. Timetable**

Finalise draft of tenants' annual report 2023/24 & arrange with graphics to produce into an e-booklet	October 2024
Publish tenants' annual report 2023/24 on website	November 2024
Undertake consultation roadshow – draft tenants' involvement & consultation strategy 2025-30	November 2024
Getting to Know You Survey	Winter Nov/Dec 2024
Commission independent research agency to undertake 2024/25 Tenant Satisfaction Survey	Commission November/December 2024  Survey January 2025
Report on findings of the 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures performance to the Regulator	June 2025

**Report Author**

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**Appendices**

Appendix A - Draft, Annual Neighbourhood Services Report 2023/24  
Appendix B – Tenant Satisfaction Measure Improvement Action Plan  
Appendix C – Consultation Roadshow Programme

