

## TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Wednesday, 1st July, 2015 at 1.30 pm

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### MEMBERSHIP

Sally Bannatyne

Jim Fergusson

Olga Gailite

John Gittos

Christine Gregory

Michael Healey

Maddy Hunter

Peter Middleton

Roderic Morgan

Barry Stanley

Andrew Williams

Jackie Worthington

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*Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded*

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**Agenda compiled by:**  
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**Scrutiny Support Unit**  
**Tel: 39 50878**

**Head of Scrutiny and Member Development:**  
**Peter Marrington**  
**Tel: 39 51151**

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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<b>ELECTION OF CHAIR</b>  To approve the appointment of a Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year.	1 - 2
2			<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b>  1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.  2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.  3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-  <b>RESOLVED –</b> That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:  <b>No exempt items have been identified.</b>	
3			<b>LATE ITEMS</b>  To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.  (The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
4			<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  To receive any apologies for absence.	
5			<b>MINUTES - 18 FEBRUARY AND 19 MARCH 2015</b>  To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meetings held on 18 February and 19 March 2015.	3 - 8
6			<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROCEDURE RULES</b>  To receive the Board's terms of reference and procedure rules.	9 - 20
7			<b>TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS - REVIEW OF ANNUAL TENANCY VISITS</b>  To consider an update regarding the Board's inquiry report into Annual Tenancy Visits.	21 - 32
8			<b>WORK PROGRAMME - DISCUSSION WITH CHIEF OFFICER (HOUSING MANAGEMENT)</b>  To discuss with Liz Cook, Chief Officer (Housing Management) the work of Tenant Scrutiny Board including possible areas for Scrutiny.	33 - 44
9			<b>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</b>  To note the following meeting dates for the 2015/16 municipal year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday, 2 September 2015</li> <li>• Wednesday, 7 October 2015</li> <li>• Wednesday, 4 November 2015</li> <li>• Wednesday, 2 December 2015</li> <li>• Wednesday, 6 January 2016</li> <li>• Wednesday, 3 February 2016</li> <li>• Wednesday, 2 March 2016</li> <li>• Wednesday, 6 April 2016</li> </ul> (All meetings to take place at Leeds Civic Hall at 1.30pm)	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
			<p><b>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</b></p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice</p> <p>a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.</p> <p>b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.</p>	



Report author: Peter Marrington  
Tel: 39 51151

## Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date: 1 July 2015**

**Subject: Election of Chair**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. The Board is required to appoint a Chair for the 2015/16 municipal year. Prior to today's meeting members of the Board were asked to express an interest in whether they wished to be a candidate for the post and if so submit a brief supporting submission prior to the closing date of 18 June 2015. The Board agreed at a recent informal meeting that it was no longer necessary to appoint a Vice-Chair.
2. One Board Member (John Gittos) has expressed an interest to be Chair.

### Recommendations

3. Members of the Board are asked to approve the appointment of John Gittos to serve as Chair of the Board for the 2015/16 municipal year.

### Background documents<sup>1</sup>

None used

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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## TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 2015

**PRESENT:** John Gittos in the Chair

Jim Fergusson, Michael Healey, Roderic Morgan, Keith Newsome, Barry Stanley and Jackie Worthington

### 59 Late Items

There were no late items, but the following additional information was submitted to the meeting:

- Answers to additional questions
- Notes from visit to Wakefield District Housing
- Examples of other Tenant Scrutiny Board reports.

The above information was subsequently made available on the Council's website.

### 60 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Carol Bennett, Sandra Bland, Maddie Ullah and Damien Walsh.

### 61 Minutes - 21 January 2015

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015 be approved as a correct record.

### 62 Discussion with Executive Board Member - Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel, Councillor Peter Gruen

The Board welcomed to the meeting, Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Board Member (Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel) to discuss the work and ambitions of the Tenant Scrutiny Board and possible future areas for Scrutiny.

Potential future areas for scrutiny were discussed:

- The role of the Board in reviewing the tenant engagement strategy.
- Potential review of tenant engagement across Leeds.

The Chair invited questions and the key areas of discussion were:

- The responsibilities of tenants.

Minutes to be approved as a correct record  
at a future meeting (March meeting not quorate)

- An enhanced role for housing management and less emphasis on choice based lettings.
- Development of a core tenant group to identify common issues.
- Greater emphasis on getting to know tenants.
- A suggestion that Councillor Gruen be invited to attend a future Board meeting.

The Chair thanked Councillor Gruen for his attendance at the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the above potential future areas for scrutiny be noted
- (b) That Councillor Gruen be invited to attend a future Board meeting.

### **63 Performance Report**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the Board's quarterly performance report.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Nik Carter, Senior Data Quality and Data Analyst
- Emma Kamillo-Price, Programme Management Officer.

The main areas of discussion were:

- A request that the performance table be updated to include monthly performance information to be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.
- In addition, a request that the performance table be updated to include figures as well as percentages.
- Confirmation that the STAR survey had been despatched to 13,000 tenants and 3,434 responses had been received (this equated to a 27% response rate).
- An update that submission of the STAR survey had been postponed to enable the inclusion of high level action plans. The STAR survey was due to be presented to Housing Advisory Board in April 2015.
- Clarification sought how information and data presented in the STAR survey was being used to inform service reviews.
- A request for information regarding the service review of independent living satisfaction.
- Issues associated with delays to major adaptations.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Board's quarterly performance report be noted.
- (b) That the performance table be updated to include monthly performance information to be provided to the Board on a quarterly basis.
- (c) That the performance table includes figures as well as percentages.

Minutes to be approved as a correct record  
at a future meeting (March meeting not quorate)



(d) That the above requests for information be provided.

#### **64 Report Writing and Report Style**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited the Board to consider how it wished to produce its report on Annual Tenancy Visits (ATVs) and in what style.

Examples of tenant reports from other areas (together with the style used by Leeds Scrutiny Boards) had been circulated to Board Members in advance of the meeting.

**RESOLVED –** That the Board approves the style used by Leeds Scrutiny Boards when producing inquiry reports.

#### **65 Recruitment**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented information to support future Board recruitment.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Tenant Scrutiny Board Information Pack
- Tenant Scrutiny Board Membership Application Form
- Tenant Scrutiny Board Information Flyer.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Sharon Guy, Housing Manager (Scrutiny and Customer Relations)
- David Rickus, Housing Manager (Scrutiny and Information).

The key areas of discussion were:

- An outline of the support arrangements available in promoting the work of tenant scrutiny, particularly through the development of social media.
- Positive feedback received from tenants interested in becoming involved with tenant activities.
- A suggestion that an informal meeting be arranged to discuss the recruitment process and associated timescales.
- Utilising grant funding to support the development of training activities.
- A suggestion that a copy of the Tenant Scrutiny Board flyer be included in the next tenant newsletter.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) That the Board approves the use of the information pack, membership application form and information flyer to support future Board recruitment.
- (b) That an informal meeting be arranged to discuss the recruitment process and associated timescales.

Minutes to be approved as a correct record  
at a future meeting (March meeting not quorate)

- (c) That a copy of the Tenant Scrutiny Board flyer be included in the next tenant newsletter.

## **66 Annual Tenancy Visit - Inquiry - Recommendations**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which asked the Board to consider draft recommendations that had been submitted for consideration at today's meeting.

The Board discussed a broad range of recommendations submitted by Board Members to be incorporated into a first draft report for further discussion.

It was suggested that an informal meeting be arranged to consider the draft inquiry report and recommendations.

**RESOLVED** – That an informal meeting be arranged to take place on Thursday, 5 March at 1.30 pm to consider the draft inquiry report and recommendations.

## **67 Any Other Business**

Barry Stanley advised that he was resigning as Vice-Chair of Tenant Scrutiny Board, to take effect immediately after today's meeting. Barry advised that he would continue to serve as a Board Member. Members thanked Barry for his hard work and support as Vice-Chair. The Board was advised that there was no statutory requirement for the Board to appoint a Vice-Chair.

Board Members briefly discussed the benefits of introducing a pre-meeting for all future meetings to commence 30 minutes prior to the main Board meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the Board introduces a pre-meeting for all future meetings to commence 30 minutes prior to the main Board meeting.

## **68 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Thursday, 19 March 2015 at 1.30pm

(The meeting concluded at 4.20pm)

## **TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD**

**THURSDAY, 19TH MARCH, 2015**

**PRESENT:** John Gittos, Michael Healey, Roderic Morgan, Keith Newsome, Maddie Ullah and Jackie Worthington

### **69 Opening remarks**

Board Members were advised that today's meeting was inquorate and that no formal decisions could be taken, but recommendations could be made and subsequently ratified at the next meeting of the Board.

### **70 Late Items**

There were no late items.

### **71 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Sandra Bland, Jim Fergusson, Barry Stanley and Damien Walsh.

### **72 Minutes - 18 February 2015**

**RECOMMENDED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2015 be approved as a correct record.

### **73 Matters arising from the minutes**

#### **Minute No. 62 – Discussion with Executive Board Member – Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel, Councillor Peter Gruen**

The Board requested an update regarding development of a core tenant group to identify common issues and areas of concern. Board Members were advised that development of the group was still ongoing. Further discussions were scheduled to take place at an overview meeting on 30 April 2015.

### **74 Annual Tenancy Visit - Inquiry - Draft Scrutiny Report**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited Members to agree the Board's draft scrutiny inquiry report into Annual Tenancy Visits.

The Board was advised that initial views regarding the draft scrutiny inquiry report had been sought from Housing Management. Sharon Guy, Housing Manager (Scrutiny and Customer Relations) was in attendance to present a summary of the response. The Board was thanked for its hard work in producing the report and it was reported that all recommendations were

Draft minutes to be approved  
at a meeting date to be confirmed

considered sound, reasonable and within the Council's legal framework. A formal response was to be provided in due course.

**RECOMMENDED** – That the Board's draft scrutiny inquiry report be submitted to Housing Leeds for its final comments prior to receipt at this Board for approval.

## **75 Recruitment**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited the Board to comment on proposals for future recruitment activity.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Notes of the recruitment meeting on 3 March 2015.

The Board received an update on activities to advertise and attract potential Board Members, particularly younger tenants interested in becoming involved in a range of tenant activities.

**RECOMMENDED** – That the Board approves the proposals for future recruitment activity outlined in the notes of the recruitment meeting on 3 March 2015.

## **76 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

It was agreed to cancel the April Board meeting. Future meeting dates to be confirmed.

(The meeting concluded at 2.05 pm.)

## Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date: 1 July 2015**

### Subject: Tenant Scrutiny Board – Terms of Reference and Procedure Rules

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. The Executive Board report of July 2013 set out the principles for the role of the Tenant Scrutiny Board. Terms of reference and procedure rules were subsequently endorsed by the Housing Advisory Board and agreed by the Tenant Scrutiny Board in April 2014. They are put on today's agenda to remind existing and new members the Board's role and remit.
2. The role of the Tenant Scrutiny Board is to provide independent, customer focused scrutiny which will robustly challenge policy, practice and performance to ensure that Leeds City Council provides a high quality housing service that retains tenants at the heart of the organisation. (Appendix 1)
3. It will do this by acting as a critical friend and through a series of reviews and inquires make an assessment of, and where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas;
  - The quality of Housing Services
  - Tenant Satisfaction
  - Performance Management

4. The Tenant Scrutiny Board will conduct its proceedings in accordance with agreed procedure rules. These rules are designed to provide robust rights and responsibilities for the Board and to provide the framework from within which meaningful scrutiny can take place. (Appendix 2)

## **Recommendations**

5. Members of the Board are asked to note the attached draft terms of reference and procedure rules

## **6. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None used

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.



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## **TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Tenant Scrutiny Board provides independent, customer focused scrutiny which will robustly challenge policy practice and performance to ensure that Leeds City Council provides a high quality housing service that retains tenants at the heart of the organisation.

The Tenant Scrutiny Board is authorised to discharge the following scrutiny functions:

1. Provide independent assurance on the quality of service delivery against agreed performance indicators.
2. Assist in supporting the process of establishing performance indicators.
3. Act as a “critical friend” on behalf of tenants and residents providing “challenge” to the Council in relation to its Housing service delivery and by reviewing policies and strategies.
4. Review tenant satisfaction.
5. Ensure tenants are consulted before major changes to Housing Services are implemented.

Form an integral part of the governance of Leeds City Council through effective links with the Housing Advisory Board and Scrutiny Board (Environment and Housing)

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## **TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD<sup>1</sup> - PROCEDURE RULES**

### **1.0 FREQUENCY AND PLACE OF MEETINGS OF THE SCRUTINY BOARDS**

- 1.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Board will meet every Month
- 1.2 Extraordinary meetings may be called from time to time as and when appropriate.
- 1.3 A meeting may be called by;
  - the Chair; or
  - the Scrutiny Officer if he/she considers it necessary or appropriate.
- 1.4 The Tenant Scrutiny Board may sit at such place and at such time as it considers necessary and appropriate.
- 1.5 The Tenant Scrutiny Board may appoint a Working Group as it feels appropriate and necessary to assist in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of its work<sup>2</sup>.

### **2.0 QUORUM / SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

- 2.1 The quorum for the Scrutiny Board shall be 50% of membership plus 1
- 2.2 Substitute members will not be allowed

### **3.0 NOTICES OF MEETINGS**

- 3.1 Notices for all meetings of a Tenant Scrutiny Board shall be issued from the office of the Scrutiny Officer.

### **4.0 ADMISSION TO MEETINGS**

- 4.1 All meetings of the Tenant Scrutiny Board shall be open to the public unless identified as confidential. This shall be without prejudice to any power of exclusion to suppress or prevent disorderly conduct or other misbehaviour at a meeting.
- 4.2 The Tenant Scrutiny Board may resolve to exclude the press and public from a meeting (whether the whole or part only of the proceedings) by passing a resolution.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to Scrutiny Board relate to Tenant Scrutiny Board

<sup>2</sup> These must be appointed to carry out specific tasks such as visits to premises or other information gathering activities as part of an on-going Inquiry.

## **5.0 MINUTES**

- 5.1 All meetings of each Tenant Scrutiny Board shall be minuted.
- 5.2 Oral evidence given to a Tenant Scrutiny Board may be recorded via tape recording as shall appear to the Tenant Scrutiny Board to be appropriate.

## **6.0 RIGHTS OF TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD MEMBERS TO DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1 When a Tenant Scrutiny Board conducts a review, every member of the Board<sup>3</sup> shall have a right of access to any documents which are relevant to the subject matter of the review and are not deemed confidential.

## **7.0 AGENDA ITEMS**

- 7.1 A Scrutiny Board shall as a minimum consider the following business at an Ordinary Meeting:
- apologies for absence;
  - minutes of the last meeting;
  - the Board's work programme; and
  - the business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

## **8.0 WORK PROGRAMMING**

- 8.1 No Tenant Scrutiny Board may undertake a review into:
- any decision of a Plans Panel or the Licensing Committee or a Licensing sub-committee;
  - any decision taken by an officer under delegated authority which falls within the terms of reference of a Plans Panel or the Licensing Committee or a Licensing Sub-Committee;
  - any matter which falls outside of the Tenant Scrutiny Board's Terms of Reference
  - any decision in respect of which there are:
    - ongoing judicial proceedings, Ombudsman or audit inquiry or complaint under the Council's formal complaints procedure;<sup>5</sup> or
    - individual personnel issues.

## **9.0 REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY**

### **9.1 Reviews requested by a member of the Tenant Scrutiny Board**

Any member of the Tenant Scrutiny Board may propose that a review be undertaken into a relevant matter. The Board will then consider whether to

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<sup>3</sup> Information received as a member of a Tenant Scrutiny Board should be used only in this capacity.

undertake the review. In doing so, it shall take into account the wishes of all members of that Board.

## **9.2 Requests for reviews from other sources**

The Tenant Scrutiny Board shall consider a request from any other source to conduct a review.

- 9.3 If the Scrutiny Board decides not to carry out a review into the matter, the Scrutiny Officer will inform the referring body about the decision of the Tenant Scrutiny Board, and the reasons for its decision

## **10.0 SELECTING SCRUTINY INQUIRIES**

- 10.1 Before deciding to undertake a scrutiny Inquiry, the Tenant Scrutiny Board must

- consider how the proposed Inquiry falls within its terms of reference; and
- consider the current workload of the Tenant Scrutiny Board and the available resources required to carry out the work.

- 10.2 Where any Scrutiny Board decides that there shall be an Inquiry, the Scrutiny Board shall

- consult with the relevant Director and Executive Member;
- agree the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry;
- agree the period within which the Inquiry's Report is to be completed;
- compile a preliminary list of witnesses from whom the Tenant Scrutiny Board require evidence; and
- compile a preliminary list of documents which the Tenant Scrutiny Board requires to be produced.

## **11.0 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 At the conclusion of a review the Tenant Scrutiny Board shall, where it considers it to be appropriate, produce a written report summarising the evidence that it has taken and set out its recommendations.

- 11.2 Where the Tenant Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to it finalising its recommendations. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the tenant Scrutiny Board and considered before the report is finalised.

- 11.3 The review report shall include:

- an explanation of the matter reviewed or scrutinised;

- a list of the participants involved in the Inquiry (save where the Board considers that a name of a witness should be withheld for reasons of confidentiality) ;
- a list of all documentation that has been considered by the Board; and
- any conclusions and recommendations on the matter reviewed or scrutinised.

11.4 Where any member of the Tenant Scrutiny Board does not agree with the content of the Board's Report, they may produce a Minority Report setting out their findings and recommendations. The Minority Report will be an appendix to the Tenant Scrutiny Board's Report.

## **12.0 RESPONSES TO REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

12.1 The Housing Advisory Board, the Executive Board, Community Committee's or officers shall consider any report and recommendations of the Tenant Scrutiny Board within two months of it being received. The Council or Executive is under a duty to respond to the Tenant Scrutiny Board, indicating what action (if any) it proposes to take and to publish its response.

## **13.0 WITNESSES – GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

13.1 Where the Tenant Scrutiny Board wishes to take evidence from a witness, the Scrutiny Officer shall notify the witness of:

- the date upon which their evidence is to be taken;
- the matters upon which evidence is sought;
- any documents that the Tenant Scrutiny Board wishes to have produced; and
- the date upon which the Board requires any written evidence from the witness.

13.2 Those assisting the Scrutiny Board by giving evidence shall be treated with respect and courtesy.

## **14.0 MEMBERS AND OFFICERS GIVING ACCOUNT/ INFORMATION**

14.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Board may require any Executive Member, or Member in relation to a matter where the Member has exercised functions, the Chief Executive and/or any senior officer to attend before it to answer questions and provide information about:

- any particular decisions or series of decisions;
- the extent to which actions taken implement Council policy

14.2 It is the duty of those officers and Members to attend and to answer questions.

14.3 The Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Board will inform the Scrutiny Officer if the Scrutiny Board requires any Member (including an Executive Member) or

officer to attend a Scrutiny Board under this provision. The Scrutiny Officer shall inform the Member or officer of this, giving at least 7 working days' notice of the meeting at which he/she is required to attend.

14.4 The notice will state:

- the nature of the item on which he/she is required to attend to give account; and
- whether the Tenant Scrutiny Board requires him/her to produce any documents or reports.

14.5 Where the Scrutiny Board requires the person to produce a report, then the Scrutiny Officer will give the Member or officer concerned sufficient notice to prepare it.

14.6 The Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Board will inform the Scrutiny Officer where a Scrutiny Board requires a Director to attend the Tenant Scrutiny Board in person.

14.7 Directors may be accompanied by any other officer the Director feels appropriate.

14.8 Where the Tenant Scrutiny Board does not require a Director to attend in person, he/she will be responsible for ensuring that an officer of sufficient knowledge and requisite seniority attends. Any such witness may be accompanied by such adviser(s) as he/she considers necessary.

14.9 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Member or officer is unable to attend on the required date, and then the Scrutiny Officer shall, in consultation with the Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Board and the Member or officer, arrange an alternative date for attendance, or agree an appropriate substitute.

## **15.0 ATTENDANCE BY OTHERS**

15.1 A Tenant Scrutiny Board may invite members of the public or other persons to attend meetings, address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions.

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## Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date: 1 July 2015**

### **Subject: Tenant Scrutiny Board recommendations – Review of Annual Tenancy Visits**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. Last municipal year, the Tenant Scrutiny Board undertook a substantial inquiry into Annual Tenancy Visits. Recommendations arising from the Inquiry were submitted to Housing Leeds for formal response.
2. The initial response to the Board's recommendations were discussed with the Tenant Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 19 March 2015. In May 2015 a fuller response was discussed with the Housing Advisory Board, who agreed;
  - To note the key findings of Tenant Scrutiny Board's Inquiry and recommendations
  - To note and welcome the changes made to the Annual Home Visit policy and procedures following the inquiry
  - That a report providing data collected from home visits be submitted to a future meeting of the Board
3. The report submitted to the Housing Advisory Board including the formal response to the recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Board is attached. Officers from Housing Leeds will be in attendance to answer any questions from members of the Board.

## **Recommendations**

4. To consider the response from Housing Leeds to the recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Board following its inquiry into Annual Tenancy Visits.

## **5. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None used

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

**Report of**    **Neighbourhood Services - Tenant and Community Involvement Service**

**Report to**    **Housing Advisory Board**

**Date:**        **20 May 2015**

**Subject:**     **Tenant Scrutiny Board Recommendations – Review of Annual Tenancy Visit Process**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. The purpose of this report is to present details of the findings of Tenant Scrutiny Board's recent inquiry and subsequent recommendations made in relation to the Annual Tenancy Visit process.
2. Housing Management wish to appraise Board Members of key changes to the Annual Tenancy Visit process, including a change in name, the process is now known as the Annual Home Visit.

### Recommendations

3. That Housing Advisory Board:
  - Note the key findings of Tenant Scrutiny Board's Inquiry and recommendations.
  - Consider the changes made to the Annual Home Visit policy and procedures which have been made following the inquiry.

### **3 Purpose of this report**

- 3.12 To present details of Tenant Scrutiny Board's Inquiry and their recommendations to the Annual Home Visit process.
- 3.13 To update the Housing Advisory Board on recent changes made to the Annual Home Visit policy and procedure, following the inquiry.

### **4 Background information**

- 4.1 Annual Tenancy Visits were first introduced by the former ALMOs in 2008 following a recommendation from an Audit Commission inspection. Initially a big focus of the visit was to identify tenancy fraud. However, the process has evolved in recent years with a greater focus being put on the customer, in relation to identifying tenancy management issues and support needs that may affect tenancy sustainability.
- 4.2 Annual Tenancy Visits support a key Housing Management principle of getting to know our tenants, to deliver customer focused services which are tailored to an individual's need.
- 4.3 Tenant Scrutiny Board selected Annual Tenancy Visits as an area for investigation because:
  - It was thought performance in this area would benefit from improvement; and
  - It was felt Annual Tenancy Visits are fundamental to tenants' experience of the Housing Management service.
- 4.4 The Inquiry involved a variety of methods of investigation, including a desktop review of relevant literature and a review of performance information, discussion and consultation with; tenants, Housing Officers, Housing Managers and benchmarking with other landlords including Wakefield District Housing. It is felt this approach adds validity to the Inquiry as the findings and resulting recommendations are based on empirical evidence and extensive consultation with stakeholders.
- 4.5 The level of commitment and scale of work undertaken by volunteer tenants on Tenant Scrutiny Board in this exercise has been considerable.

### **5 Main issues**

Tenant Scrutiny Board have summarised the quality of the Annual Tenancy Visit process is determined by the consistency with which Housing Management are able to:

- Accurately record data
- Build on good tenant/landlord relations
- Communicate to tenants the purpose and benefits of the visit
- Ensure effective use of officer time, achieving a reduction in duplication of effort, increased service efficiencies and opportunities for savings

- Ensure data collected is correct and used to improve service outcomes for customers
- 5.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Board concluded that; the Annual Tenancy Visit process could deliver an improved service if their recommendations were implemented. The recommendations from Tenant Scrutiny Board which includes feedback form Housing Management can be found in Appendix 2.
- 5.2 On receipt of the Tenant Scrutiny Board Inquiry, Housing Management has reviewed its Annual Tenancy Visit policy and procedures and has incorporated many of the findings into the process. This updated process will be followed in completing visits for 2015/16.
- 5.3 The approved recommendations were implemented on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015.
- 5.4 Key changes made to the policy and procedure are as follows:
- The visits will be renamed 'Annual Home Visits', to reflect the change of focus towards being more tenant focused.
  - The main focus of the visits will now be on building good landlord / tenant relations – identifying tenancy management and sustainability issues which may need additional support.
  - Visits will be arranged by appointment, except where there is suspected tenancy fraud.
  - For sheltered tenants, Annual Home Visits will be combined with the Annual Support Review.
- 5.5 The only recommendation from the inquiry that was not incorporated into the updated policy was a recommendation that visits should be every 2 years for tenants identified as low risk. One of the principal ways of delivering a proactive tenancy management service is through the Annual Home Visit programme. The visit captures all of a tenant's issues and needs in one visit and assists Housing Management to deliver a holistic approach in tenancy management and customer service. Housing Leeds have therefore decided not to implement this recommendation at this time.
- 5.6 The review of the process in 2015 has allowed Housing Management to reflect on work undertaken and respond to customer and staff feedback. As a result, the majority of visits will now be by appointment, where appropriate. This enables Housing Management to promote positive and constructive relationships with tenants. It is recognised that early intervention and regular contact with tenants is key to achieving effective tenancy management. Where there are concerns or a suspicion of tenancy fraud, visits will continue to be unannounced.
- 5.7 As part of the process review, consideration was also given to the introduction of Universal Credit in Leeds during 2016. In preparation, additional questions have been added to the process in order to establish which tenants are likely to need support in making benefit claims.

5.8 Key objectives of the re-launched Annual Home Visit programme are to:

- Obtain up to date occupancy details and confirm identification
- Confirm emergency contact details
- Collect tenant profiling data, including preferred method of contact
- Identify tenant sustainability issues or support needs
- Discuss and arrange payment plan for outstanding arrears
- Identify potential subletting
- Identify abandoned properties
- Identify tenancy breaches
- Encourage tenant involvement
- Signpost tenants to full services of Housing Leeds and the Council
- Identify fire risks
- Arrange access for gas servicing

5.9 The visit consists of a thorough inspection of every room in the property and external conditions. This enables the Housing Officer to ensure that tenants comply with conditions of tenancy and where appropriate implement enforcement action to achieve resolution. Housing Management records the outcomes of Annual Home Visits and uses information to review and improve services for tenants. Housing Management have reviewed the process for inputting data and have been successful in removing duplicate inputting. This will reduce administrative work significantly for Housing Assistants, and has resulted in staffing efficiencies, which can be reinvested into front line customer service.

5.10 A key feature of the housing management function is partnership work with other agencies and stakeholders, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services. This supports Housing Management to achieve strategic objectives in delivery of joined up services, to increase the quality and range of support available, particularly to those who find sustaining a tenancy most difficult. It also supports Housing Management in delivery of the Safeguarding agenda.

5.11 **Table A sets out performance for 2014/15**

Nearly 84% of Housing Leeds tenants received an annual tenancy visits during 2014/15, an improvement from 73% in 2013/14. A target of 100% has been set for 2015/16.

Area	Property Stock	Not Visited	Visited	Complete
East and North East	17203	2593	14754	85.76%
South and South East	15952	3660	12486	78.27%
West and North West	20444	2918	17736	86.75%
<b>City total (excluding BITMO)</b>	<b>53599</b>	<b>9188</b>	<b>44986</b>	<b>83.93%</b>

### 3.12 Table B sets out outcome details for 2014/15

Area	Tenancy Support Required?	Internal Property Overview				External Property Overview				Abandoned Investigations	West Yorkshire Fire Safety Referrals	Internet Access Availability		
		Good	Fair	Poor	Follow Up	Good	Fair	Poor	Follow Up			Yes	No	Pending / Unknown
SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST REGION	97	8787	1563	200	21	7619	1780	221	40	12	156	5899	4645	184
EAST AND NORTH EAST REGION	56	7125	1662	242	22	5563	1542	246	25	15	132	5435	3839	954
WEST AND NORTH WEST REGION	82	5641	1304	149	17	3832	981	124	18	12	95	4169	3141	79
<b>CITY</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>21553</b>	<b>4529</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>17014</b>	<b>4303</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>15503</b>	<b>11625</b>	<b>1217</b>

- 3.13 Of the 383 referrals made to West Yorkshire Fire Service, 268 tenants have received a 10 year smoke detector, resulting in a reduced risk of fire.
- 5.14 Of the 645 referrals made for adaptations this has resulted in 402 tenants receiving adaptations in their home. The benefit of undertaking adaptations promotes independent living, provides an improved quality of life and a safe living environment for tenants. In addition, this may prevent the need for rehousing which avoids disruption for vulnerable tenants and may minimise void turn over and associated costs.
- 5.15 Contact through the home visit programme has resulted in the successful completion of 26 outstanding gas services. Housing Officers continue to work closely with the Mechanical and Electrical Team; this supports Housing Leeds to meet statutory gas servicing requirements.
- 5.16 Support needs are identified at the time of the visit, which has resulted in 235 referrals made for tenancy support, of which, 169 support packages are now in place which supports tenancy sustainment.
- 5.17 During 2014/15, 1789 tenancy breaches were identified resulting in early identification and appropriate intervention.

## 6 Corporate Considerations

### Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1 The Tenant Scrutiny Board is made up of tenants only. They have led on and directed the purpose of this Inquiry; from deciding what the Inquiry should be about, who to speak with and what information to request and review.
- 6.2 As part of the Inquiry into Annual Tenancy Visits there was wider consultation with tenants and officers through a survey. The inquiry also considered the approach of other landlords to undertaking Annual Tenancy Visits.
- 6.3 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**
- 6.3.1 The nature of a Tenant Scrutiny Board Inquiry is that tenants themselves identify how services can be improved by taking time to investigate a particular service area and then make recommendations for improvement.
- 6.3.2 An Equality Impact Assessment of the Annual Home Visit review has been undertaken in conjunction with tenants.
- 6.3.3 The following recommendations are examples of where the service is likely to advance equality of opportunity:
- By providing a quality and comprehensive Annual Home Visit this will enable Housing Management to provide a tailored and proactive housing service where interventions are put in place at an early stage to promote tenancy sustainment.
  - To provide effective sign posting to all of our services and the services of other agencies and partners and to promote tenant involvement.
- 6.4 **Council policies and City Priorities**
- 6.4.1 The Annual Home Visit supports the Best Council objective to 'ensure high quality public services, improving quality, efficiency and involving people in shaping their city.'
- 6.5 **Resources and value for money**
- 6.5.1 Value for Money is one of the key drivers for Tenant Scrutiny Board. The recommendations made and changes to the policy support the principle of; improved efficient and effective ways of working by removing duplication and providing efficient services.
- 6.6 **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**
- 6.6.1 The engagement structure has been developed in line with The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing 2012. In particular; 'Providers are expected to engage meaningfully with their tenants and offer them opportunities to shape the tailoring of services to reflect local priorities. Tenants should have the ability to scrutinise their provider's performance, identify areas for improvement and influence future delivery'.
- 6.7 **Risk Management**



- 6.7.1 By delivering a quality, comprehensive Annual Home Visit this provides tailored support for vulnerable tenants, which enables the most vulnerable tenants to maintain a successful tenancy and promotes independent living.
- 6.7.2 Tenancy fraud is a key priority for Housing Management. The Annual Home Visit helps to identify and manage risks to tenants sub-letting their tenancies. It enables us to identify tenancy breaches and take early intervention.
- 6.7.3 Additionally, it enables Housing Management to deliver customer focused services, tailored for individual need which supports improvement in customer satisfaction. A key feature of the Annual Home Visit process is partnership working with other agencies, including Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

## **7 Conclusions**

- 7.1 Housing Management wish to acknowledge the work of Tenant Scrutiny Board and their positive contribution to service improvement and delivering better outcomes for tenants.
- 7.2 Housing Advisory Board are asked to review and support the recommendations made by Tenant Scrutiny Board and Housing Management.

## **8 Recommendations**

- 8.1 That the Housing Advisory Board:
- Note the key findings of Tenant Scrutiny Board's Inquiry and recommendations.
  - Consider the changes made to the Annual Home Visit policy and procedures which have been made following the inquiry.

## **9 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Tenant Scrutiny Board Report.

Appendix 2 – Tenant Scrutiny Board recommendations with feedback from Housing Management.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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**ATV RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD**

**Desired Outcome** – To reassure tenants that the primary purpose of home visits is to build good tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 1** – That the confused purpose of the ATV be clarified to clearly show that the primary purpose of the ATV is to get to know tenants and understand their needs *not* to detect tenancy fraud.

**Comment-** Agreed, but tenancy verification will still have a secondary role in the ATV.

**Desired Outcome** – To reassure tenants that the primary purpose of home visits is to build good tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 2** – That the ‘tarnished’ image of the ATV be improved with a change of name. The phrase ‘*Home Environment Review*’ is suggested as an umbrella term to capture information about the built environment and social environment.

**Comment** - Agree with the proposal to change the name – but feel that ‘Home Environment Review’ is officer type language, and so we would recommend ‘Annual Home Visit’.

**Desired Outcome** – Better use of officer time and improving tenant/landlord relations

**Recommendation 3** – That visits be by appointment in the first instance where possible

**Comment** – Agreed, where appropriate, but not in cases where tenancy fraud is suspected

**Desired Outcome** – Focussing resources on tenants most in need of support

**Recommendation 4** – That housing managers have local discretion to extend the period between visits to two years for those tenants they feel are not at risk.

**Comment** - We feel strongly that an annual visit to each tenant is important – shows our commitment to all tenants, communicating on new issues, preventing escalation of issues, so we would like to continue with all of these annually.

**Desired Outcome** – More effective use of officer time

**Recommendation 5** – That housing officers work smarter with other agencies in terms of planning visits and gaining access.

**Comment** – Agreed

**Desired Outcome** – To reach tenants not already contacted through ATVs

**Recommendation 6** – That ‘Action Days’ be used to target areas in the city where landlord/tenant contact is low

**Comment** – Agreed

**Desired Outcome** – Reduction in duplication of effort

**Recommendation 7** – That those living in sheltered accommodation be removed from the formal visiting arrangements

**Comment** – Agreed that the ATV needs to be done differently for sheltered tenants who are receiving support, and can look to combine with reviews of support plans.

**Desired Outcome** – Increased and better targeted and managed contact with tenants

**Recommendation 8** – That Housing Leeds reviews alternative contact methods for identified groups

**Comment** – Similar to comments on recommendation 4

**Desired Outcome** – Increased service efficiencies and opportunities for savings

**Recommendation 9** – That the Director of Environment and Housing supports the business case for funding to introduce mobile technology in housing management (subject to a successful pilot) We also request that this Board be provided with an update on the pilot outlining the financial and operation viability of the technology.

**Comment - Agreed.** Pilot underway to implement mobile working.

**Desired Outcome** – To ensure data collected is correct to improve service outcomes

**Recommendation 10** – That the data collected be reviewed as part of the development programme for the introduction of mobile technology and an evaluation be undertaken about how the information collected is shared and translates into service improvement

**Comment** – Agreed

## Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date: 1 July 2015**

**Subject: Work Programme – Discussion with Chief Officer (Housing Management)**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. At the Boards last informal meeting it was agreed that to assist the Tenant Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload for the forthcoming municipal year members would be provided with performance information and guidance on potential areas of work. It was further agreed that to help with this process, Liz Cook, Chief Officer (Housing Management) would be invited to today's meeting.
2. This report provides the following information;
  - Performance report
  - STAR survey findings
3. It is recognised that individual Board members will also have ideas of potential areas for Scrutiny and these are especially welcome.

### Recommendation

4. Members of the Board are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with the Chief Officer (Housing Management) to:
  - a) confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year

- b) authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up draft inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Tenant Scrutiny Board.

### **Background papers<sup>1</sup>**

5. None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

**Date: 1 July 2015**

### Subject: Performance Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## 1.0 Summary of main issues

- 1.1 At the September 2014 Board meeting, it was agreed that housing officers be provided with a wish-list of performance information to be reported back to the Board on a quarterly basis. This information would be used to help the Board identify future areas of scrutiny.
- 1.2 The Chair, at the time, subsequently met with officers to discuss the Board's requirements and agreed a draft template for consideration by the Board. This was brought to the Board at its October 2014 meeting and agreed.
- 1.3 Attached is this quarter's performance report. Please also see the separate report which is provided in relation to the STAR survey.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to receive and comment on the attached performance information.

## 3.0 Background documents<sup>1</sup>

- 3.1 None

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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Responsible Area	Description	Target	Previous month %	Current %	No. Jobs	No. met/ complete	Cumulative %	Against Target	Trend	Notes
Property & Contracts	Repair First Time	90%	89.49%	88.42%	10819	9566	88.96%		↓	
Property & Contracts	Repairs Completed in Target	99%	87.74%	86.29%	16030	13833	87.02%		↓	
Property & Contracts	Repair Appointments Kept	99%	94.80%	94.03%	8212	7722	94.43%		↓	
Property & Contracts	% of Satisfaction with Repairs	97%	98.09%	99.42%	1029	1035	98.69%		↑	
Property & Contracts	Gas Repair First Time	87%	98.49%	99.20%	1378	1367	98.84%		↑	
Property & Contracts	Gas Repairs Completed in Target	98%	98.30%	97.07%	2084	2023	97.73%		↓	
Property & Contracts	Gas Appointments Kept	98%	95.43%	0.00%	0	0	95.43%	Data Unavailable	↓	
Property & Contracts	Gas Satisfaction	97%	98.32%	98.91%	814	823	98.57%		↑	
Property & Contracts	% of Annual Gas Services Completed	99.86%	99.79%	99.69%	44547	44410	0.00%		↓	
Property & Contracts	Minor Adaptations First Time	99%	84.50%	88.70%	115	102	86.48%		↑	
Property & Contracts	Minor Adaptations Completed within Target	98%	78.19%	82.87%	181	150	80.49%		↑	
Property & Contracts	Minor Adaptations Appointments Kept	97%	99.22%	95.42%	131	125	97.30%		↓	
Property & Contracts	Minor Adaptations Satisfaction	97%	100.00%	100.00%	17	17	100.00%		→	
Property & Contracts	Major Adaptation Satisfaction	97%	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	#DIV/0!	Data Unavailable	→	
Property & Contracts	% Major Adaptation completed within target	97.00%	85.71%	78.57%	70	55	79.86%		↓	

Responsible Area	Description	Target	Previous month %	Current %	No. Jobs	No. met/ complete	Cumulative %	Against Target	Trend	Notes
Housing Management	% of Rent Collected	98.00%	96.53%	96.07%					↓	
Housing Management	Rent Arrears of Current Tenants as a proportion of the Authority's Rent Roll	2.20%	2.65%	2.81%			0.00%		↓	
Housing Management	Former Tenant Arrears as % of Rent Roll	1.20%	1.31%	1.30%			0.00%		↑	
Housing Management	Income Management Satisfaction	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	Data Unavailable	→	Survey on hold pending completion of service review
Housing Management	Proportion of Properties Currently Untenanted	0.73%	0.97%	0.94%			0.00%		↑	
Housing Management	Number of Properties Void for more than 6 months	9	2	2			0		→	
Housing Management	% Rent Loss from Voids	0.90%	0.96%	0.96%			0.00%		↑	
Housing Management	Gross Average Relet Times for Dwellings - (i.e. Without Exclusions)	30.00	0.00	35.85			0.00		↓	
Housing Management	% Tenants that reported ASB who are satisfied with Final Outcome.	80.00%	0	0			0.00%	Data Unavailable	→	Data curently unavailable
Housing Management	% Complaints Responded to Within 10 Working Days	96.25%	94.12%	0.00%			0.00%	Data Unavailable	↓	Awaiting results
Housing Management	Complaints Satisfaction	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	Data Unavailable	→	Survey on hold pending completion of service review
Housing Management	% Annual Tenancy Visits Completed	15.38%	7.71%	18.71%			0.00%		↑	
Housing Management	Independent Living Satisfaction	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	Data Unavailable	→	Survey on hold pending completion of service review

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**Report to: Tenant Scrutiny Board**

**Subject: STAR Survey 2014/15 – Headline Findings**

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## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To provide headline findings from the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) 2014/15 survey in comparison with a similar survey from 2012, and analysis of key themes.
- 1.2 In addition to summarise service action points for 2015/16 arising as a consequence.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 The survey was sent to almost 13,000 general needs tenants of Housing Leeds and Belle Isle TMO in November/December 2014. We received 3434 responses, which represents a 27% response rate.
- 2.2 The findings are accurate and representative at: City level to +/- 1.6%, Area level to +/- 3%, and at Ward level to +/- 10%.
- 2.3 The previous STAR survey took place two years previously in 2012. By using the same methodology and many of the same questions we are able to compare trends around the changing views of tenants.
- 2.4 At the time the survey was carried out the housing service was undergoing a substantial restructure. This followed the closure of the ALMOs earlier in the year and the service returning to Leeds City Council.
- 2.5 In the two years since the previous STAR survey many tenants will have been affected by changes to the welfare benefits they receive, including additional charges for under-occupation (removal of the spare room subsidy).
- 2.6 The Intelligence and Improvement team carried out the STAR survey entirely in house, using council resources including the Print and Mail Room, and completed the project at a cost of around £16K.

### 3 Key findings from STAR 2014 survey:

In general the results showed a mixed picture, with some areas showing clear increases in customer satisfaction, and others reflecting decreases in satisfaction.

The Intelligence and Improvement team have been meeting with services to help them to understand the findings and consider actions in response, to build into their service plans. This work is still ongoing, however where actions have been confirmed, these have been included with findings below.

#### 3.1 Overall satisfaction with services - remained at 77%.

#### 3.2 Differences in satisfaction across different age groups:

- Comparison across key questions in the survey for different demographic groups showed **younger tenants to be significantly less satisfied than older tenants**, with around 90% of tenants aged over 65 satisfied with the overall services provided, compared to only around 65% of tenants aged less than 35.

#### 3.3 Successes:

- Tenants increasingly consider **rent to be good value**:
  - Satisfaction that your **rent provides value for money** has risen by 3% to 75%.
- Increased **satisfaction with repairs and maintenance** rising 2% to 71% and with most aspects of previous repair including:
  - **repair appointment kept** rising 8% to 88%,
  - **satisfaction with repairs service on last occasion** increasing 3% to 74%,
  - Particularly positive increases for WNW area with various aspects of the previous repair, including **repair appointment kept** rising 13% to 89%, bringing more consistency city-wide.
- A new question this year found three quarters of respondents, 76%, agreed that their landlord has **friendly and approachable staff**.
- Increases in satisfaction with various **advice and support services**, including for **moving home** and for **vulnerable people**. For example, satisfaction with advice and support with **managing your finances and paying rent** increased 3% to 63%.

#### 3.4 Areas for further development:

- Responses indicate a need for further development of **customer services**:
  - 68% agreed that in general we provide an **effective and efficient** service.
  - 59% of respondents that made contact in the last 12 months, said it was **easy to get hold of the right person**.
  - Decrease of 6% to 68% in satisfaction that your **landlord treats you fairly**.

Actions to improve **customer services** include:

- The new service provides dedicated Housing Officers for small patches of less than 300 properties. The name and contact details of Housing Officers are well publicised to the tenants in each patch.
  - Working with the Contact Centre to ensure it is adequately resourced with trained staff to meet Housing Leeds customer promise and standards - answering the phone within 3 minutes (on average) and aiming to resolve most queries through a single telephone call.
  - Office opening hours have been rationalised throughout the city and are now consistent across the city, making it easier to access services.
  - Development of a new Leeds Homes website, with further details around prospective properties and additional functionality.
- Responses indicate a need to consider how we **communicate** and **engage** with tenants:
    - 6% decrease in satisfaction that **the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them**, falling to 56%.
    - 5% decrease in respondents reporting that the landlord is good at **keeping tenants informed**, falling to 63%.
    - 4% decrease in satisfaction that **the landlord gives tenants the opportunity to make their views known**, falling to 58%.
    - Reputation of the landlord - agreement that the landlord has a **good reputation** decreased 3% to 60%.
    - Satisfaction **varied significantly by age**, with around 90% of tenants aged over 65 satisfied with overall services provided, compared to only around 65% of tenants aged less than 35.

Actions to improve **communications** and **tenant engagement**, including to address varying levels of satisfaction for different age groups:

- Development of a Tenant Communication Plan to include a review of newsletter and housing web pages, customer service standards, and all methods of communication, including social media, to meet the needs of different audiences.
- Embed the new Tenant Involvement Framework across the city, which includes setting up new tenant forums for older, younger, disabled and high rise occupants, enabling further opportunities to get involved. All forums to be coordinated and overseen by a new singular Strategic Tenant's Body.
- Developed a monthly E-bulletin 'In the Loop', which is sent to all involved tenants, and includes news and opportunities to get involved in local events

### 3.5 Other findings of note:

- Rising importance of neighbourhood and environment.
  - **Your neighbourhood as a place to live**, has risen 6% to become the third highest priority for tenants.
  - **Satisfaction with grounds maintenance, such as grass cutting** decreased 3% to 66%.
  - **3 environmental indicators** in top 5 major issues – Dog fouling, rubbish or litter, and overgrown trees/shrubs or grass.

Actions to address the rising importance of **neighbourhood** and **environmental** factors:

- Allocation of £3m in funding for environmental projects to address interrelated issues including schemes to: improve car parking, improve footpaths and play areas, improve the quality of housing estates, improve security and security, outdoor spaces and play area, and resolve some historical waste and recycling collection issues by improving access.
- Engage with housing management officers to identify winter works such as removal of self-set trees, redefining grass plot edges (particularly link footpaths), addressing problem ginnels and other works in line with funds allocated.
- Implement changes to the grounds maintenance contract monitoring team to enable a focus on a smaller geographic area and increase links with housing management and contractor staff.

- **Heating and energy** questions included for the first time.
  - 39% said they found it difficult to afford their energy bills.
  - 35% said their heating and insulation are poor at keeping their home warm.

Actions to continue to build on improved satisfaction with the **repairs and maintenance** service, and improve **heating and insulation** include:

- Carry out a feasibility exercise to determine a 10 year investment programme for multi-story flats, with a key focus on central heating and insulation.

- Current **financial position**:
  - A third, 33%, described their current financial situation as fairly of very difficult.
  - Just over a quarter, 27%, of tenants said welfare reform has had large impact on them.

Actions to continue to build on improved satisfaction with **rent as value for money**, and to support tenants in **financial difficulty** include:

- Developing an enhanced offer to all tenants affected by welfare reform, using the learning from the MSF DHP Project, to help them access benefits, employment advice and budgeting skills.
  - Establishing a Welfare Reform Project group to co-ordinate the service's preparations for the implementation of Universal Credit.
  - Refocus of Annual Home Visits on money advice and support need, for all tenants city wide to ensure all customers are able to access services.
- Tenants were asked what they liked about living in a Housing Leeds home. The word cloud below shows key words identified in the responses. These include: **repairs, area, home, neighbours, rent, safe, secure**:



- **Key drivers** identified that affected overall tenant satisfaction were:
  - Quality of home, repairs and maintenance,
  - Dealing with enquiries, effective and efficient service,
  - Being treated fairly, trusts landlord, listening and acting on views

The key tenant demographic drivers for satisfaction were:

- Current financial position (with those finding it difficult influencing lower satisfaction)
- Age of lead tenant (with younger tenants influencing lower satisfaction)

In general the results showed a mixed picture, with some areas showing clear increases in customer satisfaction, and others reflecting decreases in satisfaction.

- The key question - overall satisfaction with services - remained at 77%
- Areas of increased satisfaction were:
  - Repairs & maintenance
  - Rent as value for money
  - Advice and support
- Areas of where further development is needed were:
  - Communications and engagement
  - Customer services
- There are distinct differences in satisfaction related to age, with younger tenants significantly less satisfied than older tenants.
- The survey also highlighted the rising importance of the neighbourhood and environment to tenants.