

Report of Interim Chief Officer, Housing Management, Housing Leeds

Report to Scrutiny Board (Housing and Regeneration)

Date: 26th November 2013

Subject: 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. The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Board with the process for undertaking annual tenancy visits to Council tenancies.
2. The report will provide details of the previous processes undertaken in the previous ALMOs and how this process has been integrated to develop a consistent approach across the City.
3. The report will identify the key purpose of the annual tenancy visit (ATV) process and identify the key outcomes.

Recommendation

4. Scrutiny Board are asked to note the contents of the report and request any additional information.

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to update Scrutiny Board on the current process for undertaking a programme of ATVs.

The report will identify the purpose of the ATVs and the required outcomes.

The report will identify progress to date in the current financial year.

2 Background information

2.1 All three ALMOs previously undertook ATVs although the approach was slightly different.

- West North West Homes undertook an annual rolling programme of 33.3%, based on risk and a vulnerability assessment. This resulted in an annual programme of 7,200 visits which were conducted through booked appointments. The no access rate was 3.2%.
- Aire Valley Homes undertook an annual rolling programme of 20% based on a risk profile and visited all customers who hadn't been in contact with the service during the previous 12 months. This resulted in an annual programme of 3,200 visits which were conducted through unannounced visits. The no access rate was 22%.
- East North East Homes undertook an annual programme on all tenancies. This resulted in an annual programme of 19,000 visits and was supported by their repair contractors due to the resource requirements.

2.2 The questionnaire that was used to undertake the above visits obtained the same base data but each organization had a range of bespoke questions that were specific to their individual organization.

3 Main issues

3.1 The main focus for delivering a programme of annual tenancy visits was to identify the project scope, the process for undertaking ATVs and the resource requirements for effective delivery.

3.2 The project scope identified that the main focus of the ATV was to identify tenancy fraud and ensure compliance with the tenancy agreement.

3.3 Additional consideration was given to identify gaps in our customer profiling data, tenancy support needs, debt advice due to Welfare Reform and best use of stock through offering to facilitate a transfer if required.

3.4 A single questionnaire has been developed and has been used in all ATV visits since 1.4.13. A copy of the questionnaire is attached as appendix 1.

3.5 A programme has been developed to undertake 100% ATVs between 1.4.13. and 31.3.14.

- 3.6 The delivery of an Annual visit has been identified as one of the key priorities by the Executive Board member for Housing, with performance being reported to the Housing Advisory Board on a regular basis.
- 3.7 Current performance is 44% for the year to date. A performance report is attached as appendix 2.
- 3.8 An interim review at month six is currently being undertaken to identify any areas that require further consideration.
- 3.9 At the end of the financial year a full evaluation will be undertaken to understand the outcomes from this process and will include a full financial review to consider the social return on investment.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 As part of the evaluation that is undertaken at the end of the financial year consideration will be given to any proposals that could help improve service delivery based on the outcome of the ATV process.
- 4.1.2 Should any such proposals be identified then appropriate consultation will be undertaken with residents, elected Members and officers.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The process of undertaking TVs will increase our customer knowledge through increased customer profile data.
- 4.2.2 Our on-going evaluation to consider outcomes will analyse the data by equality characteristics and make any recommendations for service improvements based on the findings of this data.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The delivery of a programme of 'Annual Tenancy Visits' is one of the 6 key priorities for Housing Leeds.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 Prior to the introduction of the ATVs an evaluation of resources was undertaken which identified that whilst the activity was undertaken by a range of staff across the business the totality of staff time would equate to 20FTEs.
- 4.4.2 At the end of the first year a full evaluation of staff resources will be undertaken and will include non-productive time due to no access visits. The outcomes from successful visits will be evaluated to report on the findings of the first year of operation and also to undertake a full VFM assessment.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 As this report is for information only there are no issues to be considered further at this stage.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 Whilst there are no issues that need to be identified within the corporate risk register there are issues around applying safe operational working practices whilst undertaking ATVs.

4.6.2 All staff undertaking home visits have undertaken the relevant training around Health and Safety and Lone Working.

4.6.3 Through earlier negotiations it was agreed that our repairs contractors (Morrison) would undertake an initial ATV assessment when attending a property to undertake a repair, although this process has not been introduced as yet. Further delays to the introduction of these arrangements could affect the year end performance.

5 Conclusions

5.1 A citywide process for delivering ATVs has been developed and was implemented from 1.4.13.

5.2 To date performance is reported at 44% with a projection to meet target by the end of March 2014.

6 Recommendation

6.1 Members of Scrutiny Board are asked to note the contents of the report and request any additional information.

7 Background papers¹

7.1 None used.

¹The 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.