



Report of Chief Officer, Housing Management, Housing Leeds

Report to Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board

Date: 25 February 2014

Subject: Annual Tenancy Visits - Outcomes

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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 an update on the outcomes identified from the completed ATV's following an earlier report which was presented in Nov '13.

Recommendation

- 2 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 provide Scrutiny Board with an update on the process to deliver a programme of ATV's following an earlier report that was presented in Nov '13 and to confirm the amendments that were requested.
- 1.2 The report will also provide further details of the outcomes from the completed visits to date.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Prior to the creation of Housing Leeds the three previous housing organisations undertook a programme of tenancy visits which was on a rolling programme and ranged from 33% to 100% on an annual basis.
- 2.2 In order to provide a consistent model of service delivery a decision was taken back in early 2013 to undertake a programme of annual tenancy visits to all tenancies across the city.
- 2.3 The annual programme of visits commenced in April '13.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The main focus for delivering a programme of annual tenancy visits was to identify tenancy fraud and to ensure compliance with the tenancy agreement, although this should not be seen as a replacement to the day to day operational delivery of an effective tenancy management service.
- 3.2 Whilst the main focus of the programme was to identify tenancy fraud it has allowed for the collection of additional information that can then be used to tailor, and where appropriate, improve local service delivery.
- 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 In response to a request made by Scrutiny Board in Nov '13 an additional question (question 10) has been added to identify the method of cooking facilities that are available to tenants. A copy of the amended questionnaire is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Current year to date performance on completed visits is over 62% with a detailed breakdown attached at Appendix 2.
- 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 An initial evaluation of the outcomes has been produced and is attached at Appendix 3 and provides information on the following areas;

- Employment status of the lead and joint tenants.
- Safeguarding issues that require further investigation.
- Requirement for tenancy support.
- Need for financial assistance.
- Condition of the property.
- Abandoned properties.
- Tenancy fraud.
- HB fraud.

3.8 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 TV's 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 ATV's 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 20FTE's.

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 ATV's.

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

5 Conclusions

5.1 A citywide process for delivering ATV's has been developed and was implemented from 1.4.13.

5.2 To date performance is reported at over 62% with a projection to meet target by the end of March '14.

6 Recommendations

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

7 Background documents¹

7.1 No background documents

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.