

Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 7 August 2012

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan

Subject: Housing Service Standards – Performance Report 2011/12 and Review

Officer contact for further information:

Alan Hall – Director of Housing (01992 564004)

Committee Secretary: Mark Jenkins (01992 56 4607)



Recommendations:

- (1) That performance against the previously-agreed Housing Service Standards in 2011/12 (where measured), as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;**
- (2) That, subject to the views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the proposed changes and additions to the Housing Service Standards (as set out in bold italics within Appendix 1) be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder, and that the relevant leaflets be updated at an appropriate time; and**
- (3) That the Housing Service Standards, and performance against the Service Standards in 2012/13, be reviewed again in July/August 2013.**

Background

1. In 2007, following consultation with the Housing Scrutiny Panel and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, the Housing Portfolio Holder agreed a range of Housing Service Standards, covering all of the Housing Directorate's main areas of activity. An updated Housing Charter was also agreed at the same time, which sets out the Council's approach and ethos to the delivery of its housing service to customers.
2. Subsequently, a leaflet setting out all of the agreed Housing Service Standards was issued to all the Council's tenants and added to the Tenants Handbook, given to new tenants. In addition, a number of leaflets were produced setting out the Housing Service Standards for particular areas of activity.
3. At the same time as agreeing the Service Standards, it was also agreed that the Housing Directorate's performance against the Housing Service Standards (where possible and appropriate) should be considered annually.

Performance against the Housing Service Standards in 2011/12

4. Performance against the Housing Service Standards - and the Standards themselves - have been reviewed by the Housing Scrutiny Panel, Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and Housing Portfolio Holder annually since their introduction.

5. Appendix 1 provides details of the Housing Service Standards and – where measurable and appropriate – the Housing Directorate’s performance in meeting the standards in 2011/12. As a comparison, Appendix 1 also provides details on the performance in 2010/11 and 2009/10.

6. It is emphasised that it is not possible to measure performance against every Service Standard. In a number of cases, there is nothing that can be measured, since the Standard is a “statement of intent”; in a number of other cases, whilst performance could potentially be measured, it is considered that the time and resources that would be required to properly record and monitor performance is not warranted.

Proposed Changes and New Service Standards

7. The Director of Housing has reviewed the Housing Service Standards, having regard to performance in 2011/12 and changes in legislation and Council policy. As a result, a number of changes are proposed, including some proposed new Service Standards. These are set out in bold italics under the description of the relevant standard in the first column of Appendix 1.

8. A number of the proposed changes result from the introduction of the Repairs Management Contract with Mears, and the improvements that Mears and officers have already made to the Housing Repairs Service – particularly due to the introduction of Mears’ own Repairs IT system, which was a key requirement of the Council.

9. It is recommended that the proposed changes and additions to the Housing Service Standards - as set out in Appendix 1 - be recommended to the Housing Portfolio Holder for approval, and that the relevant leaflets be updated at an appropriate time. It is also suggested that performance against the Service Standards is reviewed again in July/August 2013.

Consultation Undertaken:

The Tenants and Leaseholders Federation is being consulted on the performance against the Service Standards and the proposed changes and additions, at its meeting to be held on 19th July. Their views and comments will be reported orally.