

Report to the Housing Scrutiny Panel

Date of meeting: 30 January 2007

Portfolio: Housing – Cllr D. Stallan

Subject: Report on the Tri-annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2006

Officer contact for further information: Alan Hall, Head of Housing Services

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry



Recommendations:

That the National Housing Federation's (NHF's) report on the results of the Council's tri-annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey (previously circulated separately to all members of the Scrutiny Panel) be considered and that the Panel provides any comments on the results of the Satisfaction Survey to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing Services as appropriate.

Report

1. Every three years, the Council is required to undertake a detailed Tenant Satisfaction Survey. A standard satisfaction form is used nationally (called the STATUS Survey) in order to compare results amongst landlords. The previous satisfaction survey was carried out in 2003; as then, the Council's latest survey was undertaken by an independent organisation called the National Housing Federation (NHF). The NHF has carried out around 200 satisfaction surveys for local authorities and housing associations, so they are in a good position to compare performance amongst landlords.

2. The results of the Satisfaction Survey have now been received and a copy of the NHF's detailed report on the results have previously been circulated separately to all members of the Scrutiny Panel to study. Helpfully, the detailed report includes an Executive Summary of the results (which was provided to all Members of the Council through the Council Bulletin at the beginning of January 2007).

3. Around 1,400 tenants (22% of all the Council's tenants) were randomly selected by the NHF to be surveyed. An exceptionally high response for a postal survey of 72% was received, giving a 3% margin of error at the 95% confidence level. This means that if the Council surveyed all 100% of its tenants, there is a 95% certainty that the results for all the questions would be somewhere between 3% less and 3% more than the results from the sample survey.

4. Based on their findings, the NHF concluded that:

"The Council's tenants have shown they believe the Council is continuing to provide an excellent housing service. They are much more likely to be satisfied with most of the landlord services they receive than the tenants of most other social landlords. In particular, they are exceptionally pleased with the Council's repairs and maintenance services and also with the contact they have with the Council's staff. They usually find that staff are helpful and good at dealing with their problems. The survey identified no weak service areas."

5. In very brief summary, overall satisfaction with the housing service remains consistently high, increasing slightly from 84% in 2003 to 85% being satisfied (compared to the national average of 77%). 85% of tenants were satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (compared to the national average of 73%). The Council ranked a

strong first in its Peer Group for all 6 aspects of the repairs and maintenance service measured.

6. The Council's tenants also recorded more positive responses for all 4 of the aspects measured relating to customer contact with Housing Services than any of the other Peer Group landlords. Indeed, 72% of the Council's tenants were satisfied with the final outcome of their contacts - 10% higher than average.

7. The only disappointing results were that only 67% of tenants felt that the Council took account of their views (1% less than the national average) and only 49% felt that they were given opportunities for involvement in the management of their homes (6% less than the national average) – although it should be noted that only 7% of tenants thought that involving tenants in the management of their homes was important.

8. The detailed report on the results of the Satisfaction Survey were due to be considered by the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, at its meeting on 23 January 2007. The main headlines will also be reported in the next issue of Housing News.

9. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider the NHF's report and provide any comments on the results to the Housing Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing Services as appropriate.