

Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing.

21<sup>st</sup> September 2010

Report of the Head of Housing Services

## Annual Report to Tenants 2009-2010

### Summary

1. This report and its annex set out the thinking behind, and seeks the Executive Members approval for the proposed Annual Report to Tenants 2009/10 .
2. The Housing Landlord Service is subject to regulation by the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). This new regulatory framework requires Housing Services to produce an Annual Report which is circulated to all of its tenants by the 1st of October 2010. The draft Annual Report is attached at Annex 1. The Executive member is asked to approve the draft Annual Report and agree that the Head of Housing Service's can make minor amendments prior to final printing if required.

### Background

3. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2010 the TSA published its new regulatory framework document for social housing in England, at its heart are six standards, five of which are applicable to local authorities. Against each strand a number of outcomes and expectations are described that landlords should meet. The six standards cover:
  - **Tenant involvement and empowerment** – covers requirements relating to customer service, choice and complaints; involvement and empowerment; and understanding and responding to diverse needs of tenants
  - **Home** – covers requirements relating to quality of accommodation; and repairs and maintenance
  - **Tenancy** – covers requirements relating to allocations; rents; and tenure
  - **Neighbourhood and community** – covers requirements relating to neighbourhood management; local area co-operation; and anti-social behaviour
  - **Value for money**
  - **Governance and financial viability** (this standard does not apply to local authority housing departments).
4. In addition there is an expectation that landlords agree with their tenants local offers which set out how services are to be delivered and measured locally.

**Local offers are to be in place by April 2011.** Whilst the content of local offers is for a housing provider to agree with its tenants the TSA expect discussions to cover a number of areas related to the TSA standards in particular around three standards:

- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment ,
- Home and
- Neighbourhood and Community standards

## **Annual Report**

5. To comply with the regulatory framework, social housing landlords must produce an annual report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 to be made available to tenants by **no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2010** a copy of which is to be provided to the TSA.
6. Whilst the TSA have not been overly prescriptive on how the report should look there are a number of requirements which are to be included. These are:
  - Setting out how the TSA standards are being complied with/ actions to be implemented to ensure full compliance.
  - Identify any gaps and associated improvement plans. Identifying plans for developing locally tailored offers with tenants which support the TSA standards to be in place by 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2011.
  - Assurances on how the outcomes reported have been gained, including how tenants have been involved in scrutinising performance and, where appropriate, use of external validation, peer review and benchmarking.
  - Setting out how tenants have been involved in producing and scrutinising the report.
7. The TSA's requirements have been incorporated in the production of the Draft Annual Report attached at Annex 1.

## **Consultation**

8. In the development of the Annual Report, Housing's Service Development Team have engaged with the Residents Federation and have worked closely with 13 tenants in agreeing the content, design and layout of the report. The tenant's ideas highlighted below have been incorporated within the report.
  - Something for everyone
  - Easy to read and no jargon
  - Interesting
  - Not too many pictures (no pictures of staff and to be relevant to the content)
  - Facts and figures all together at the end
  - Information to include the good and the bad

## Options

9. Option 1 – To agree the attached Annual Report for Housing Services.
10. Option 2 – To not agree the attached Annual Report for Housing Services and suggest changes.

## Analysis

11. Option 1 – The attached annual report has been developed in partnership with a group of council tenants and the Tenants & Residents Federation and is focused on providing our assessment against the strands as set out in the regulatory framework, but in a way that meets our customers needs.
12. It clearly sets out our key achievements for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 against each strand and our proposed service improvements for the coming year.
13. Option 2 – To not agree the report will result in a delay in publishing the annual report and result in the council not meeting a statutory requirement as set out in the regulatory framework.

## Corporate Priorities

14. The production of an Annual Report supports the Corporate Priorities of being an Inclusive and Effective Organisation.

## Implications

15. The implications associated with this report are:
  - **Financial** – The cost of producing the Annual Report and distributing to tenants is in the region of £5,000 to be met from within existing budgets.
  - **Human Resources (HR)** N/A
  - **Equalities** – The report considers Equalities Information and will be made available in different languages and formats on request.
  - **Legal** N/A
  - **Crime and Disorder** N/A
  - **Information Technology (IT)** N/A
  - **Property** N/A
  - **Other** N/A

## Risk Management

16. The risks associated with the proposals in this report are low and score less than 16. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no direct risks.

## Recommendations

17. The Executive Member is asked to:

- Approve Option 1, to agree the Annual Report and delegate to the Head of Housing Services approval to make minor amendments prior to final printing if required.

Reason: To ensure that the council provides appropriate information to its customers and meets its statutory requirements.

## Contact Details

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		<b>Report Approved</b>	✓	<b>Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2010								
<b>Specialist Implications Officer(s)</b> <i>List information for all</i> <table style="width:100%; border:none;"> <tr> <td style="width:50%;"><i>Implication ie Financial</i></td> <td style="width:50%;"><i>Implication ie Legal</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Name</i></td> <td><i>Name</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Title</i></td> <td><i>Title</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Tel No.</i></td> <td><i>Tel No.</i></td> </tr> </table>						<i>Implication ie Financial</i>	<i>Implication ie Legal</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Tel No.</i>	<i>Tel No.</i>
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<b>For further information please contact the author of the report</b>													

**Background Papers:** TSA- A New Regulatory Framework

**Annexes:** Annex 1 Annual Report 2009-2010