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**Decision Session - Executive Leader ( incorporating      23 January 2017  
Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods)**

Report of the Assistant Director – Housing and Community Safety

**2016/17 Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results**

**Purpose of the report**

1. This is the report on the outcomes of the 2016/17 annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey, (hereafter referred to as the Survey) which is the biggest single gauge of satisfaction across landlord services by tenants of council owned housing stock.

**Background**

2. The Survey was conducted by the Strategic Business Intelligence Hub (independently of housing services) between September and November 2016. While the Survey was primarily carried out by post, contact by email was also used to encourage tenants to complete the survey online, and all participants had the option to complete the survey online rather than filling in a paper form. A randomly selected representative sample of 2,800 tenants (of 7,507 total lead tenants) was contacted, producing a 23% response rate (644 respondents – 8.6% of total lead tenants). This was a cross sectional study, which means the sampling method used reflected the demographics of the population, although the response did not.
3. The 2016/17 results are statistically significant to within a +/- 3.69% confidence interval.
4. This year, the number of questions asked in the Survey was reduced from 44 to 25. The aim of this was to:
  - Try and increase the response rate, which has been falling in recent years
  - Ensure that each question asked was still relevant, and that the results of each question could be used to feed meaningfully into service improvement

- Reduce the material cost of administering the Survey and the time taken to process the results

## Consultation

5. The question set for the 2016/17 Survey was reduced and amended from the 2015/16 Survey through discussions with officers from the housing service.
6. The Tenant Scrutiny Panel was also given the opportunity to contribute to the 2016/17 Survey.

## Summary

7. The Survey feeds into benchmarking the housing service against national comparators, using Housemark.<sup>1</sup> Housemark proscribes a set of core questions which are detailed in table 1; asking these core questions every year allows City of York Council (CYC) to measure its performance on tenant satisfaction against other social housing providers.
8. Table 1 below shows how CYC performed on the Housemark core questions compared with its performance in 2015/16.

<b>Table 1: Housemark core questions (marked with an * throughout the report)</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
Service provided by the landlord*	88.87%	↑ 0.2%
Overall quality of the home*	84.54%	↓ 2.65%
Rent providing value for money*	86.5%	↑ 2.06%
Repairs and maintenance (generally)*	80.56%	↓ 4%
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	85.14%	↑ 3.87%
Landlord listening to views and acting on them*	73.55%	↑ 7.83%

9. This year's results show that satisfaction has increased across 4 of the 6 core measures.
10. It is not possible to compare our performance in the 2016/17 Survey core questions with other providers' (such as Housing Associations or Local Authorities) performance for 2016/17 until late 2017 because of the time lag in data collection and analysis. For the purposes of this report therefore, we have compared the 2016/17 Survey data with data from

<sup>1</sup> Housemark is the independent core benchmarking service that CYC uses. Details at <https://www.housemark.co.uk/>

the most recent (2015/16) Housemark report in order to provide a general gauge of where CYC's performance sits with national comparators. This will be done throughout the report where possible.

11. The following tables show the most significant fluctuations in satisfaction from the 2016/17 Survey when compared with the 2015/16 results.

<b>Table 2: Headline improvements since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Increase from 2015/16</b>
Landlord listening to views and acting on them*	73.55%	↑ 7.83%
Availability of storage space	70.82%	↑ 7%
Ease of reporting a repair	90.05%	↑ 6.21%
Ability of staff to deal with query	84.03%	↑ 5.25%
The way landlord deals with Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)	58.12%	↑ 5%
Rent providing value for money*	86.5%	↑ 4.25%

<b>Table 3: Headline decreases in satisfaction since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Decrease from 2015/16</b>
Being kept informed about the progress of complaint	32.67%	↓ 7.07%
Ease of making a complaint	66.99%	↓ 5.74%
Speed of dealing with a complaint	33.66%	↓ 5.56%
Support while complaint was dealt with	31.31%	↓ 5.29%
That crime is not a problem	76.14%	↓ 5.05%

12. The full survey results are grouped according to housing's four themes, the broad content of which are shown in table 4 below. The full survey results are shown in Annex 1 and the highlights from each theme are contained in this report.

<b>Table 4: Housing Themes</b>	
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Tenant Satisfaction with...</b>
Your Property	Repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition
Your Place	Place to live, neighbourhood and estate services
Your Service	Customer service, complaints, rent and overall service
Your Say	Resident involvement and tenant influence

## Recommendations

13. The Executive Leader (incorporating Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods) is asked to:

- Consider the results of the 2016/17 Tenant Satisfaction Survey and note the officer comments regarding future actions.
- Agree to run a Tenant Satisfaction Survey for 2017/18.

**Reason:** To ensure that CYC has up to date information regarding customer satisfaction, enabling landlord and building services to target resources and improvements to those services prioritised by customers, and to feed into the annual Housemark benchmarking return.

## Analysis

### Theme 1: Your Property

14. Tenant satisfaction with repairs, gas servicing and overall property condition has been mixed; the most significant fluctuations in satisfaction are outlined in table 5 below. Many of the other results under this theme showed no material change in satisfaction levels (less than a 1% shift) since 2015/16 and are not shown here.

<b>Table 5: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
<b>Increases in satisfaction</b>		
Ease of reporting a repair	90.05%	↑ 6.21%
Time taken before repair started	79.03%	↑ 1.27%
Speed the repair was completed	86.74%	↑ 1.69%
The attitude of repairs operatives	93.42%	↑ 1.8%
<b>Decreases in satisfaction</b>		
Repairs and maintenance (generally)*	80.56%	↓ 4%
Overall quality of the home*	84.54%	↓ 2.65%
Overall quality of the repair	85.56%	↓ 2.1%

15. Satisfaction with both of the core questions in this theme has decreased. Satisfaction with the overall quality of the home decreased by 2.65%, bringing satisfaction down to 84.54%. The Housemark median for this question for 2015/16 was 81%, meaning that even though satisfaction has reduced CYC still scores well above average using the 2015/16 measure.

16. General satisfaction with repairs and maintenance – the second core question in this area – decreased by 4%, bringing overall satisfaction to 80.56%. The 2015/16 Housemark median score for this question was 80%; using the 2015/16 measure, CYC's 2016/17 score sits slightly above the average for this question.
17. All of the most significant increases in satisfaction in the Your Property theme are with specific aspects of the repairs service. Satisfaction with specific aspects of repairs are drawn from the 395 tenants that answered 'yes' when asked whether they have had a repair in the last 12 months.
18. With repairs, the highest levels of satisfaction were with the attitude of the repairs operatives (satisfaction at 93.42% - an increase of 1.8% from 2015/16), the ease of reporting a repair (satisfaction at 90.05% - an increase of 6.21% from 2015/16) and with keeping dirt and mess to a minimum (89.68% - a decrease of 0.67% from 2015/16).
19. The lowest levels of satisfaction with repairs were with the time taken before the work started (79.03% - an increase of 1.27 % from 2015/16), the repair being done right first time (82.23% - an increase of 0.71% from 2015/16) and with being able to make an appointment (82.88% - a decrease of 0.36% from 2015/16).
20. Overall performance in this area has fallen by 4%, which is disappointing. However, the general results with repairs are inconsistent, with some satisfaction levels on specific areas of repairs remaining high or increasing, as detailed in the paragraphs above. For example, satisfaction with 'the attitude of the repairs operatives' has increased to 93%, suggesting that staff have the right approach and care about the job. Further, satisfaction with 'ease of reporting a repair' has increased by 6.21%; this reflects work that has been done by building services to map call demand and increase phone resources at times when the evidence shows lines will be busy.
21. Where satisfaction levels have decreased, building services are examining patch level data and undertaking further analysis with operational managers and supervisors to understand this inconsistency.

## **Theme 2: Your Place**

22. The most significant fluctuations in satisfaction for questions in the Your Place theme are listed in table 6 below.

<b>Table 6: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
Neighbourhood as a place to live*	85.14%	↑ 3.87%
<b>Increase in tenants reporting the following are not a problem (i.e. satisfaction improved)</b>		
Availability of storage space	70.82%	↑ 7%
Noise from traffic	71.18%	↑2.86%
Vandalism or graffiti	83.78%	↑ 3.03%
<b>Decrease in tenants reporting the following are not a problem (i.e. satisfaction decreased)</b>		
Drunk or rowdy behaviour	57.44%	↓3.21%
Noisy neighbours	63.56%	↓3.83%
Problems with pets and animals	76.99%	↓3.25%
Other crime	76.14%	↓5.05%
Conditions of roads/pavements	41.86%	↓3.77%

23. Satisfaction with the only core question in this category – neighbourhood as a place to live – increased by 3.87% for 2016/17 to 85.14%. The Housemark median score for this question in 2015/16 was 83%, putting CYC above average for this measure.
24. When asked to rank estate based problems, tenants rated car parking the highest with 58.38% of respondents stating it ‘is a problem’ (2.36% increase from last year), followed by dog mess at 55.96% (down 2.7% from 2015/16) and conditions of roads and pavements (58.14% – increase of 3.77% from last year).
25. The biggest improvement in estate based services compared with 2015/16 results was with tenants rating availability of storage space as ‘not a problem’ (70.82% - up 7%). Throughout the last year, housing services have been working to improve the amount of storage space available to tenants through providing a range of extra storage facilities through the Estate Improvement Grant, particularly in the East and West areas of York. These extra facilities have been in a range of forms including facilities to store bicycles and mobility scooters and internal storage within accommodation blocks.

### **Theme 3: Your Service**

26. General satisfaction with the service provided has increased on several key measures, as shown in the table below.

<b>Table 7: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
Ability of first person to deal with query	84.03%	↑ 5.25%
Helpfulness of staff	85.18%	↑ 4.18%
Rent providing value for money*	86.5%	↑ 4.25%
Service provided by the landlord*	88.87%	↑ 0.2%

27. Satisfaction that rent provides value for money increased by 4.25% to 86.5%; this compares favourably with the Housemark median for this category which was 82% in 2015/16.
28. Satisfaction with the second core question in this category – overall service provided by the landlord – was 88.87%, an immaterial increase of 0.2% from 2015/16. However, we still compare favourably with the Housemark median score for this measure which was 84.5% in 2015/16.
29. Satisfaction with the way the landlord responds to tenants' issues was highest with responding to enquiries (77.6% satisfied), and dissatisfaction was highest with the way the landlord deals with anti-social behaviour (14.21% dissatisfied).
30. The Survey also included a question asking how satisfied tenants were with the process of making a complaint to the landlord. Responses to this question indicate that satisfaction decreased across the board, as shown in the table below.

<b>Table 8: Satisfaction with complaints</b>		
<b>How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following aspects of how your complaint was dealt with?</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
Ease of making complaint	66.99%	↓ 5.74%
Information and advice provided	54%	↓ 3.62%
Being kept informed about the progress of complaint	32.67%	↓ 7.07%
Support received while complaint was dealt with	31.31%	↓ 5.29%
Overall way complaint was handled	39.22%	↓ 1.57%
Speed complaint was dealt with	33.66%	↓ 5.56%
Final outcome of complaint	36.08%	↓ 4.32%

31. It is important to note that the detailed responses about complaints listed above are drawn from a small sample of 109 tenants (those who answered 'yes' when asked if they had made a complaint to their landlord in the last 12 months). Although not statistically significant, this number of responses provides a good indicator of satisfaction with complaints. 18.47% of respondents had made a complaint to the landlord in the last 12 months, down 3.27% from 2015/16.
32. Going forward, officers will be working within housing services and the Customer Complaints and Feedback Team to understand more fully why satisfaction with complaints handling has declined. This will include looking at data from formal complaints and comparing it with the data on complaints gathered through the Survey to see if there are any notable patterns. Initial research has shown that there is a difference in what customers perceive as a complaint and what is classed as a formal complaint and therefore logged through the complaints process.
33. This year's Survey also asked tenants how they access the internet. The results showed that the percentage of people using a home computer/tablet has steadily decreased over the last three years – from 42.8% in 2014/15 to 28.93% in 2016/17. Conversely, the percentage of people accessing the internet using a Smartphone has steadily increased from 10.05% in 2014/15 to 22.91% in 2016/17. The amount of people selecting 'I don't use it at all' has also decreased from 42.26% in 2014/15 to 34.42% in 2016/17.
34. Taking into account wider changes taking place across the council, the 2016/17 Survey also asked a more general question about CYC moving to provide more services online in the long term. The question asked was: *'We are looking at providing more of our services online through the council website. These changes could enable you to report issues and/or access your records online. We'd like to know what you think about this – please use the space below to make any comments or suggestions you have'*.
35. The response to this question was in free text form and so there is no quantitative data from it. The qualitative data shows that around 42% of respondents think that providing more services online is a good idea, around 34% flagged problems with access to the internet/equipment and 8% stated that they did not have digital skills/had a physical barrier to accessing services online such as a disability.
36. The results of this question will be used by the Digital Services Board which is working towards the mapping the future of all electronic/digital



communications made by CYC. The Board will use the information gathered from this Survey to ensure that the future shape of this service is as inclusive as possible and that it meets tenants' needs.

#### Theme 4: Your Say

37. Satisfaction with questions in the 'Your Say' theme has mainly increased, as shown in the table below.

<b>Table 9: Headline changes in satisfaction since 2015/16</b>		
<b>Tenant satisfaction with...</b>	<b>2016/17 figure</b>	<b>Change from 2015/16</b>
Landlord listening to views and acting on them*	73.55%	↑ 7.83%
Landlord treating tenants fairly and with respect	87.4%	↑ 3.25%
Landlord keeping tenants informed	77.16%	↓ 0.02%

38. The most notable increase is with satisfaction with the landlord listening to tenants' views and acting on them, with 2016/17 Survey results showing an increase of 7.83% from 2015/16, bringing satisfaction up to 73.55%. The Housemark median score for this question in 2015/16 was 67% showing that we compare very favourably with our comparators.

39. This year, the tenant engagement team have been working to provide more opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to tell CYC about any issues they have or suggestions to improve the service. These feedback mechanisms are being built into the day to day work of the housing team, as stated within the Tenant Engagement Strategy. For example, new Tenant Choice focus groups have taken place this year as part of the Service Inspectors' work; these focus groups afford tenants the opportunity to raise concerns and ideas for service improvement in relation to the Tenant's Choice scheme. The information gathered is then fed back to the contractor and the contracts manager.

#### Service Improvement

40. The results from the Survey have also been analysed by tenancy patch which allows the data to be used to target issues in particular areas.

41. The results of the Survey will be used to inform the future development of the housing service. Some specific examples are listed below.

42. The results will be used to inform the restructure of housing services. The results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey over several years have highlighted that tenants want to have a single clear point of contact within

housing services to go to with queries. The restructure will move towards a new staffing model which will address this.

43. Housing services are working to change the way the Estate Improvement Grant is allocated from April 2017. This will bring a range of changes including: a renewed focus on targeting the Estate Improvement Grant on ward priorities identified through the Survey such as improving storage/car parking; a move away from the current annual budget process (which tends to fund small projects) towards a system aligned with ward budgets over a time period of four years. This could allow access to four years' Estate Improvement Grant funding in one go in order to enable achievement of more substantial projects (potentially co-funded with ward budgets). The aim is to achieve economies of scale and enable more substantial projects to be achieved which meet the needs of individual wards.
44. The results will also feed into the commissioning of a new IT system which will improve efficiency for tenants, including enhancing the ability of repairs staff to do mobile working.
45. Building services are working to examine the Survey data in more detail at patch level, where satisfaction has decreased. The initial review of the Survey results relating to repairs indicated that there were higher levels of dissatisfaction in patches where Tenant's Choice works were about to take place; as a result building services are reviewing the approach to reactive repairs in the run up to Tenant's Choice work and looking at the sustainability of the components that are installed to ensure they are not failing earlier than anticipated and driving unnecessary tenant dissatisfaction.

### **Equalities Monitoring**

46. A detailed profile of respondents can be found in Annex 2, compared to the profile of lead tenants.
47. There was a low response rate from the younger age categories. The response from tenants aged 16-24 was particularly low. This age group makes up 5.6% of the sample and 5% of all lead tenants, however just 2% (11 tenants) of survey respondents were 16-24. Similarly, 25-44 year olds make up 34% of the lead tenant population but constituted just 17% of the total respondents.
48. The gender split was broadly representative of the current lead tenant population with more female respondents (64%) than male (36%). There

were no significant differences between female and male answers to the core satisfaction questions.

49. There were not sufficient numbers of respondents with other protected characteristics to be able to draw conclusions about any differences in satisfaction. The respondent profile, including detail on protected characteristics, can be found in Annex 2.

### **Council Plan**

50. This survey supports the Council Plan priority 'a Council that listens to residents', which commits the council to working with communities to deliver the services they want.

### **Implications**

51. The implications arising from this report are:

- **Financial** – None. The survey is delivered within existing budgets.
- **Human Resources** – None.
- **Equalities** – See points 46-49 above. The respondent profile, including detail on protected characteristics, can be found in Annex 2.
- **Legal** – None.
- **Crime and Disorder** – None.
- **Information Technology** – None.
- **Property** – None.

### **Risk Management**

52. This survey provides the key measure of tenant satisfaction with housing services. Its results also feed into benchmarking work through Housemark, which enables us to measure how the service is performing compared to national peers. Without the information gained through the survey there is a risk of the Council being unable to target resources at the services customers feel are most in need of attention.

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**Report  
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## **Background Papers**

None

## **Annexes**

- Annex 1 Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2016/2017
- Annex 2 The respondent profile