

Committee(s): Housing Sub-Committee	Date(s): 2 July 2012
Subject: Annual Report for Tenants and STAR survey results	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children’s Services	For Information
Ward (if appropriate):	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report has a dual purpose. Firstly, it is to present Members with our third Annual Report for Tenants, which has been written and designed accordingly to be user-friendly and with resident input.</p> <p>Producing an Annual Report is good practice amongst the housing sector and has become part of the new national standards to ensure all social landlords are accountable to their tenants, and through this, to the regulator.</p> <p>Secondly, this report summarises the results of the STAR tenant satisfaction survey that was carried out earlier this year. Some of the results are also encompassed within the Annual Report.</p> <p>Overall, we have delivered a high performing housing service which our tenants are very satisfied with.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Members are asked to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of this report and receive further annual reports. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation (CoLC) continuously strives to deliver high quality and cost effective services to its tenants and residents across all of its 11 housing estates which it owns and manages. This is increasingly important as we now operate in a self-financing environment.
2. This is our third consecutive annual report for tenants, which helps to build a picture of our work and achievements on a rolling basis for a range of stakeholders, including our tenants and regulator.
3. This year's report contains the headline results from our STAR tenant satisfaction survey. This survey is an independent survey that is carried out every three years as industry practice, and helps us and tenants to gauge where we are in comparison with other landlords. (It was previously called the STATUS survey).

Current Position

4. The full Annual Report for Tenants 2012 is attached as Appendix 1 and follows the same format as the previous two reports. As previous years, this is the final context; final proofing will be done at the printing stage. Tenants from our Resident Involvement group were involved in drafting the document. The final design and printed report will be delivered to all tenants during July.
5. The STAR survey results are enclosed in the full analysis report which is attached as Appendix 2. The survey was administered on our behalf by a specialist, independent, non-profit organisation called Feedback Services.
6. This committee paper summarises the key performance and satisfaction results for Members' convenience:

Key performance of Housing Services 2011-2012

7. Overall, the City's Housing Services are provided at very high standards. The Annual Report included as Appendix 1 sets out the full results for the previous financial year. Some core results include:
 - Collecting 98.88% of all rent due which is up from 98.4% last year.
 - Increasing the number of involved tenants from 198 to 261 over the past year.
 - Completing repairs needed in an empty home before we can re-let it in an average of 4 days against a target of 10 days.
 - Providing support to 99% of vulnerable tenants who require help to maintain their tenancy which exceeds our target of 95%.
8. The new performance indicators that were agreed for the last financial year have proved to work well for all managers, and will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure changes to policy or practice are adjusted for.

STAR satisfaction survey results summary

9. The overall results are encouraging, especially given the number of changes we have made to the services that have affected tenants. However there are some areas that require our continued attention, more details below in paragraphs 11-16).
10. The summary results are as follows:

		Result 2012	Movement from 2009	London average rankings (2010/11)	National Housemark comparison quartile (2010/11)
1.	Satisfaction with overall service	81%	+1%	78%	Top
2.	Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance	73%	same	74%	Bottom
3.	Satisfaction with quality of home	79%	-1%	80%	Median/Top
4.	Satisfaction with estate as a place to live	85%	+1%	78%	Median/Top
5.	Satisfaction with value for money for rent & service charge	74%	-3%	73%	n/a / tbc
6.	Satisfaction with views taken into account	58%	-10%	64%	Median
7.	Satisfaction with being kept informed	87%	+4%	80%	Top
8.	Satisfaction with dealing with general queries	73%	-1%	72%	n/a / tbc

11. The most important result that we are benchmarked nationally against is the top one, which is the satisfaction rating for the whole housing service we provide. Therefore, it is pleasing to see that we have increased our result here since the 2009 survey and remain in the top quartile nationally.

12. It may be regarded as slightly disappointing that, after the efforts we have gone to improve our repairs service, this result has remained the

same since 2009. However, satisfaction results are of course subjective indicators and often people's views take a long time to change. Members should also note that the in-house surveys carried out for over a year now (after tenants have repairs completed in their home) have consistently reported a satisfaction level of over 80% which offers a contrasting view. The new Head of Property Services is continuing to review service delivery and identify on-going improvements to this service area.

13. Satisfaction with value for money has dropped by 3% since 2009 which may come as no surprise as many tenants suffer financial difficulties in the on-going recession. Our move to self-financing will help us to ensure we have proper measures of how our services add value to our tenants and allow us to better report on this in future years.
14. The drop in satisfaction with how we take our tenants views into account has dropped since 2009. This may indicate a deeper perception amongst our tenants that decisions are made at all levels without regard to them (although Members should note a much higher than average % of tenants expressed a 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' answer to this question rather than being outright dissatisfied). We have been implementing a new Resident Involvement service that is building up the numbers of involved tenants, however this indicator relates to how all staff engage and involve tenants, and so it may be concluded that there is still work to be done here. The Head of Policy and Involvement, and Head of Estates have met and agreed to tackle this issue including delivering training in order to further increase the awareness and skills of staff in genuinely involving residents in decision-making at all levels.
15. In contrast to the above, the satisfaction with how we keep tenants informed has increased and put us in the top quartile nationally. There have been several changes to the quality, consistency, content and style of the information we send to tenants (whilst reducing costs) so it is pleasing to see this result. In particular, the new Policy Watch bulletins introduced over a year ago and sent every 4 months always illicit high returns for attached consultation surveys, which shows our tenants are interested in what's going on in the wider world of housing as it affects them.

16. The satisfaction rating for dealing with general queries has only dropped by 1%, which is less than expected given the changes we have made to front-line staffing over the past 18 months. However, this is a vital indicator as it is this service area that most influences the results for the overall satisfaction question. On-going work to improve customer service across our work will therefore remain a priority for the Housing Services team.

Financial and Risk Implications

17. The cost of printing this year's annual report was £1942 which was within the £2000 allocated budget. The total cost of administering the STAR survey was £7316 which was under the profiled budget of £10,000.

18. Producing the Annual Report meets a regulatory requirement, and the improved performance management procedures help to minimise risk to the business by regularly monitoring and preventing poor performance.

19. Carrying out the independent STAR tenant satisfaction survey is an important measure of our tenants' perceptions of our services and is administered in consistent ways so we can identify trends over the years and take improvement actions where necessary.

Strategic Implications

20. The Annual Report and the STAR survey positively contribute to the Department's strategic objectives. They help to ensure greater efficiencies, value for money, engagement with our service-users and on-going service improvements.

21. Similarly, having high quality publicly produced performance information such as the Annual Report is welcomed by our tenants, as this year's STAR results would suggest.

Consultees

22. The Town Clerk, Comptroller & City Solicitor and the Chamberlain have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Conclusion

23. This report presents the third Annual Report for Tenants for Members' information, along with the STAR tenant satisfaction survey results. Both ensure we meet our regulatory requirements but more importantly they are part of ensuring we are a professional, efficient, accountable and transparent housing provider operating for the benefit of all our residents.

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