

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenant's Strategic Group Meeting – 24th May 2021

STAR Update/ Action plan –*Please note for information purposes only*

Report Author: Sharon Yarde, Housing Customer Experience Lead

Background

The Star (survey of tenants and residents) was done at the end of 2021 and we received the report from Acuity in January 2021. A tenant friendly version was received and posted to our website in February 2021. Acuity collated over 1,000 comments from our tenants during the survey and these comments, along with the statistical data from the STAR report have been fed into an action plan to address the findings highlighted in the STAR report.

Current update

An action plan report was taken to Housing Senior Management Team meeting on 29th March by Sharon Yarde. During this meeting it was agreed that the following areas would be investigated in this order. The priority order was based upon the number of comments, Acuity's recommendations and whether a programme of works was already in existence, for example there is a current programme of regular block inspections to address number 4.

- 1) Communication-easy to deal with us
- 2) ASB
- 3) Repairs
- 4) Communal areas
- 5) Damp & Mould

It was agreed that due to the size of this action plan it would be actioned in bite size chunks starting with number 1 – “Communication”.

To address communication, we have already completed the following actions:

- Created a “contact my housing officer” form online. This went on live on 30th March and we will review its success in July 2021.
- Agreed a standard of 5 working days for all queries created via this form.
- Published names and patch details of responsible officers in the newsletters (Autumn, Winter and Summer issues). Direct Telephone numbers were published in the Housing Newsletter for arrears officers. (Spring issue).
- Reviewed our Firm step groups to streamline the routing of calls to the correct officer.
- New structure includes 2 new distinct case managers for each tenant (arrears and tenancy).
- Arranged for photographs of Case managers to be included in the Estate Inspection letters to our tenants so that they can be easily identified when out and about on our estates. Suggested by our Tenants' Action Group and acted upon.

Agreed Action Plan for Communication- Lead: Sharon Yarde supported by Amy Maggs

- Investigate how many queries are dealt with at first point of call, do Customer Services staff require up skilling, what hold music options are there.
- Investigate whether it is feasible to publish direct lines.
- Mystery Shopper activity – to involve the Tenants’ Action Group.
- Arrange a customer service refresher course for all customer facing staff within the Housing Directorate- Unconditional Positive Regard refresher.
- Introduce a Customer Portal so that tenants can view rent accounts and engage online. Likely that we will use Capita for this, this project is currently being led by Karen Penfold and will be introduced in approximately 18 months’ time. There are facilities to pay rent and contact your housing office online.
- Introduce logging repairs online – currently liaising with Business Analysts to create an online form for this to address the “gap” between now and the introduction of the portal.
- To assess against the “check list”: i.e. is there a policy, procedure, standards, scorecard, KPI for communication.

Going Forward

Open for questions from the group during the meeting on 24th May 2021

To focus on action plan for communication before starting an action plan for ASB. To present an action plan for ASB to TSG when communication element is complete.

Democratic Path: N/a for information only

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

Reporting Frequency: **Once only** **Ad-hoc** **Quarterly**

Twice-yearly **Annually**

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