

## REPORT TO SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE – 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2016

### HRA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS – TENANT SATISFACTION MONITORING

#### 1 Recommendations

The committee is recommended to:

##### 1.1 Acknowledge and comment on the contents of this report

#### 2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) currently spends around £27m annually improving and upgrading existing Council Housing in addition to new build expenditure. This is over and above revenue spend on planned maintenance and reactive repairs (£12.2m in 2015/16). The capital improvement programme is managed by the Council's Property Service who appoint contractors and manage the programme. There is close working between the Housing and Property in monitoring the delivery of the capital programme.
- 2.2 In 2010, IBP Strategy & Research were commissioned to undertake a pilot programme of telephone interviews with tenants following Improvement/Upgrade works. Since 2010, a more robust and comprehensive approach has been implemented for capturing tenant satisfaction information for improvement projects. From 2011 onwards, the service has developed into a detailed proactive approach to tenants to gain feedback on key aspects of the capital improvements programme service delivery and their views of the service received across a range of issues
- 2.3 Although in place since 2011, this report concentrates on key trends in financial year 2015/16 and a comparison with 2014/15. There is a detailed report from IBP, which provides a detailed analysis of the feedback and this can be emailed to Members of SWHC if required
- 2.4 The intended outcomes from the survey's work is to:
- Measure tenants' rating for aspects of service related to the type of work done under various upgrades
  - Confirm that services (water/lighting etc) were back on at end of each day and tenants' are happy with this
  - Record any specific issues
  - Assess overall rating of services provided
- 2.5 The total number of tenants on the "database" in 2015/16 for contact was 3,911. Of that figure, 973 did not provide a contact number or a wrong number and a further 126 had either:

- Moved in after the work was done or;
- Work not yet completed or;
- Work was refused.

This left a workable sample of 2,812. Of that number, 1,515 (54%) responded to the interview/survey for the 44 contracts undertaken in 2015/16. Responses by contract ranged from 1 to 187 (others either refused to participate or were not contactable by phone after three attempts). Of the 1,515 who participated, the headline issues from the survey work shows that:

### ***Overall Service***

- 90% of those responding said the overall service they received was good or very good, which includes 41% who rated it as very good

### ***Access Arrangements Etc***

- Ratings remain high for all aspects of the service, particularly in relation to:
  - Arrangements for workers gaining access to the home (94% good or very good)
  - Courtesy of people carrying out the work (93%)
  - Respect shown for home, facilities and possessions (91%)
  - Advance notice of start date (91%)
  - Efforts made to minimise damage to decoration (91%)
  - Information received before and during course of works (90%)
  - Choices made available (90%).

### ***Quality of Work & Minimising Damage***

- Ratings are broadly similar with 2014/15. There are slight improvements in 2015/16 under “quality of work” (positive rating 86% compared to 85% the previous year); and efforts made to minimise damage to decoration (91% compared to 90%)

### ***Reinstatement of Services***

- 81% stated that their services were reinstated satisfactorily at the end of each day compared to 87% in 2014/15. 3% indicated this was not the case and a further 16% could not say or could not recall

### ***Complaints***

- Despite the general positive ratings, 26% of those responding had a specific “complaint” about at least some aspect of their home upgrade or how it was done (compared to 24% in 2014/15). Such complaints covered a range of aspects of service and quality of work and it is accepted that there is scope for continuous improvement across a wide range of service elements. Notwithstanding, the vast majority (88% in 2015/16 compared to 91% in 2014/15) were very or quite satisfied overall with their housing improvement/upgrade and how it was done

- 2.6 The detailed report from IBP shows respondent profiles vary across Aberdeenshire (22% in Banff & Buchan; 34% in Buchan; 11% in Formartine; 9% in Garioch and Kincardine & Mearns and 15% in Marr). The gender split of those responding (68% female and 32% male) and age range (52% aged 55+ and 46% under 55) is similarly varied as is the question on disability (30% stating they had a disability); ethnic origin (85% Scottish) and the nature of the improvement carried out. (37% Insulation; 22% External Doors; 21% Heating System; 10% Bathroom; 9% Kitchens; 1% Windows)
- 2.7 The responses are “contract specific” and detailed, which allows Officers to pinpoint key issues by contract and contractor. In 2015/16, ten contractors (including the council’s in-house repairs team doing capital works) are assessed under each of the criteria at 2.5 above and by component level (for example if contractor A only does heating systems, then they are assessed under this for each of the categories in 2.5 above, but if Contractors B-D do All / Bathrooms / Kitchens / Windows etc, then they are assessed under these for each category.
- 2.8 In terms of specific complaints, 26% of respondents (up from 24% in 2014/15) had a specific complaint about an aspect of their home improvement (72% had no complaint and 2% did not know). IBP point out that although a proportion of tenants had some complaint about the work undertaken, they still expressed very positive views of the service received. There are also some negative and positive comments. See **Appendix 1**
- 2.8 Overall, the satisfaction ratings are high and Housing will continue to carry out detailed evaluation of capital improvement/upgrade satisfaction levels. This complements other satisfaction surveys carried out in terms of the Social Housing Charter; Repairs; Homelessness and Options-related work and specific pieces of survey work. All contribute to the Housing Continuous Improvement agenda and “Benchmarking” with Scotland’s Housing Network and Housemark
- 2.9 The Head of Finance, the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development have been consulted on the contents of this report, and are in agreement with it.

### **3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no staffing or financial implications and an EIA is not required as this report is for the information of members

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Appendix 1

Sample of further comments respondents asked to provide in relation to service received or how service can generally be improved

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
Not enough notice of work being done	Best job I have ever seen
All done in bits and bobs. Workers disappeared to do other jobs. Took too much time	Friendly helpful workers
Lots of dust all over the house. Poor finish to work. Workers not very courteous. They kept leaving the back gate open, even though we have kids	Happy with service and kitchen
Design of kitchen is not good	The workmen were excellent
Took ages to dismantle scaffold after work was done	Workers were fantastic, they couldn't do enough to help
I got a different flooring than the one I had chosen	Guys who were here were excellent
Some damage done to floor and walls and this was put right – still not perfect though	Very satisfied. Has made a difference to the warmth in the house
They forgot about me, had to chase them	Delighted with new doors. Previous doors had been here since I moved in. these ones actually close properly