



Report to the Board

19 September 2013

Title: Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders 2012/13

Report of: Managing Director

Purpose of Report

1. To present the Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders 2012/13 for approval.

Background

2. The Homes and Communities Agency, and prior to this the Tenant Services Authority placed a requirement on landlords to follow the principles of co-regulation within their organisations.
3. This is an expectation that landlords support tenants to shape and scrutinise service delivery and hold Board members to account.
4. Previously, the regulatory framework specifically required organisations to produce an Annual Report with their tenants as part of this approach. Although this requirement is not now in place, it is considered good practice to produce the report as a way of working with tenants to identify how we are performing against the standards set in the framework and our service delivery overall.
5. The first annual report was produced in October 2009 and subsequently has been published each October and issued to all tenants and leaseholders.
6. The Annual Report has been shortlisted for the last two years in the TPAS (Tenant Participatory Advisory Service) Northern Awards for Excellence in Annual Reports.

Developing the report

7. A working group of tenants and leaseholders was established to work with the company to produce the report.
8. The group was involved in discussing and approving the format and content of the report, including writing sections of it themselves.

9. The group reviewed position statements, produced by each Service Manager to understand their current performance, service highlights and the challenges they are facing for the year ahead.
10. The position statements were used as a basis to formulate further questions, undertaken in question and answer sessions between the managers and representatives of the working group. Highlights from this information were used to develop the content of the report.

Summary

11. This year's report is attached at the appendix to this report. The report is split into the following sections:
 - Calendar of key activity during the year
 - Information on 4 projects selected by the group
 - Sections on each standard from the regulatory framework including key information, facts, customer comment and information on the focus for the year ahead.
 - Leasehold page
 - TALISMAN page
 - Information on expenditure
 - Plans for the 2 years ahead
12. Once approved the report will be produced and issued to all tenants and leaseholders with the October newspaper and will be made available on the website and by request.

Link to values

13. This report is aligned to the following company values: -
 - Being a listening and learning organisation.
 - Being honest, accountable and transparent.
 - Being customer focused, innovative and professional.
 - Embracing equality

Impact on tenants

14. The purpose of the report is to provide information to tenants and leaseholders about the services we offer and show how we meet the national standards. By showing how we compare with other organisations, tenants and leaseholders have the information to challenge where we need to improve our performance and hold us to account.

Risk Management Implications

15. Failure to continue to engage with tenants has been identified as a strategic risk for the company. The Annual Report provides an example of how we are regularly involving tenants and leaseholders in monitoring and challenging our performance.

Financial Implications

16. The Head of Corporate Services confirms that the cost of producing the report can be met from existing budgets.

Equality and Diversity Implications

17. The report shows a range of images to represent the diverse range of customer that are living in our homes.
18. The working group also considered the accessibility of the report as part of the development process. This included consideration of the colour contrasts, font sizes and use of plain English throughout the document.
19. In addition the report will be made available on the website where people using screen readers will be able to get the audio version of the information.

Value for Money Implications

20. This year's report is a reduced version to minimise the cost implications of production. This will be issued with October's newspaper to ensure that it reaches all tenants and leaseholders without additional postage costs.

Health Implications

21. There are no health implications directly arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

22. There are no environmental implications directly arising from this report.

Consultation carried out

23. The report was produced in conjunction with the tenant and leaseholder working group. Members reviewed the format of the report and developed the content they wanted to see in the report.
24. The report has also been shared with Gateshead Council.

Recommendation

25. The Board is recommended to approve the draft report to be published and issued in October to all tenants and leaseholders.

Contact: Louise Taylor, Involvement and Diversity Manager Tel No: (0191) 433 5380
