

REPORT TO: HOUSING SUB COMMITTEE ON 22 MARCH 2012

**SUBJECT: CUSTOMER FEEDBACK – ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR –
1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2011**

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 This report provides the Housing Sub Committee with details of the responses received in the customer feedback processes for anti social behaviour for the period 1 January to 30 December 2011.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to its housing management functions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Sub Committee:-

(i) welcomes the high levels of customer satisfaction presented in this report;

(ii) considers the report; and

(iii) notes that further reports on customer feedback will be presented to future committee meetings in 2012.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At its meeting on 11 November 2011,(Paragraph 10 of the minute refers) the Housing Sub Committee noted a report giving details of customer satisfaction levels in relation to the Council's management of neighbour disputes. This covered the period of the calendar year 2010 and 1 January to 30 June 2011. It was also agreed to implement a number of improvement actions recommended in the report.

3.2 It was also agreed that further report on customer satisfaction be presented to the first meeting of the Housing Sub Committee in 2012. This report presents this consideration.

3.3 The Council categorises anti social behaviour complaints by severity:-

Category A: involving violence/extreme behaviour

Category B: involving noise, threats or disturbance

Category C: disputes between 2 neighbours

Category D: ordinary breaches of tenancy conditions e.g. untidy garden.

4. ANALYSIS OF FEEDBACK 2011

- 4.1 **APPENDIX I** provides an analysis of the responses received between January and December 2011. As can be seen, a total of 60 questionnaires were sent to tenants, with a total of 25 returned. This is more or less similar to the figures for 2010 of 63 sent and 31 returned. While the numbers are relatively low, the response rate (43%) is considered to be high, in comparison with other feedback processes and similar to last year's figure of 49%. Some caution is however required with some specific areas of the feedback given due to the low numbers of questionnaires returned. During 2011, no questionnaires were sent to Category A complaints and only 4 sent to Category B complaint, reflecting that the majority of complaints do not involve the most extreme end of the spectrum of anti social behaviour.
- 4.2 **Initial contact**
The responses indicate that the previously preferred method of tenants reporting complaints about anti social behaviour is changing from written complaints to reporting them over the phone. Complaints made in person have also reduced from 7 cases (23%) in 2010 to 4 cases (16%) in 2011. As the Council's contact centre is now the first point of contact for customers reporting complaints about their neighbours from 4 April 2011 this may explain the change. The level of satisfaction with the way in which initial complaints was handled has shown a significant improvement on last year's figures, with 18 households (72%) of respondents indicating that they were very satisfied or satisfied compared with just 15 households(48%) in 2010. Just 4 (16%) of respondents, indicated that were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the initial handling of their complaint. 18 (72%) respondents indicated satisfaction with the information and advice provided compared to 16 (52%) in 2010. 4 (16%) respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the information/advice provided. Some caution however is required with these figures given they represent only 4 cases. These are being investigated in more detail to establish if there are areas for improvement.
- 4.3 **Complaint management**
11 (44%) respondents indicated satisfaction with the time in which a visit by the Area Housing Officer took place. This is the same numerically on the previous year's figures of 11 cases (35%). However, 7 (28%) respondents were dissatisfied with this area of activity. 15 (60%) respondents were satisfied with the explanation of how the complaint would be managed, with dissatisfaction levels of 4 cases (16%).
- 4.4 17 (68%) respondents were satisfied with the way in which they were kept informed of progress in contrast to 14(45%) last year, with 3 (12%) respondents being dissatisfied with this aspect of case management.
- 4.5 The responses received indicate an encouraging picture of the outcome of complaints. 18 (72%) respondents indicated that the problem was resolved or that there was a partial improvement. This compared to 21 (68%) cases in 2010. 5 (20%) respondents indicated that the problem had got worse.
- 4.6 As in the feedback reported from 2010, a number of positive comments were made by respondents about the Council's management of their complaint.

5. IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

- 5.1 Customer feedback shows a marked improvement across all aspects of neighbour disputes/anti social behaviour since the last report to committee.
- 5.2 Following the analysis of customer feedback received in 2010, a number of improvement actions were outlined in the report to the Housing Sub Committee on 11 November 2011. The actions agreed were:-
- amendment of the questionnaire to capture specific reasons for tenants' dissatisfaction to help identify future improvements to the service;
 - improvements to case management procedures to ensure that visits are carried out within timescales
 - improvements to communications to ensure that tenants are kept informed of actions being taken
 - robust procedures to be put in place to consider feedback responses in a systematic way.
- 5.3 The feedback results for the calendar year 2011 are encouraging as they demonstrate improvement in the areas previously identified for further action. Some recurrent themes however continue to be raised by tenants which merit closer scrutiny. These include the need to explain the process of managing disputes more fully, getting back to tenants to keep them advised of progress about the management of their complaint, the length of time cases take to conclude and offering tenants a choice of venues to discuss their complaints. Actions agreed by committee to improve the management of anti social behaviour disputes by the Area housing teams will continue to be closely monitored along with the results feedback provided by tenants.
- 5.4 Further reports on feedback received from tenants will be presented to Housing Sub Committee meetings in 2012.
- 5.5 The Sub Committee may wish to note that the Communities Committee considered a report on the potential scope for review of the Neighbour Disputes and Anti Social Behaviour Policy. A separate item on the Sub Committee's agenda considers the policy.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/ Service Improvement Plan
Improving the quality of service provision is a priority in the Service Improvement Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal
There are no policy or legal implications arising from this report.

(c) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

(h) Consultations

Consultation on this report has been carried out with the Head of Housing and Property, Area Housing Managers (Moray East and West) and Aileen Scott, Legal Services Manager (Property and Contracts).

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This report presents the analysis of customer feedback in relation to the management of anti social behaviour complaints in council housing.

Author of Report: Mike McClafferty, Housing Services Manager

Background Papers: Held by author

Ref: HSC/MMcCI – ASB Feedback – 5 March 2012