

REPORT TO: HOUSING SUB COMMITTEE ON 21 JUNE 2012

SUBJECT: TENANT FEEDBACK – PLANNED MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 This report is to inform the Sub Committee of the results of tenant feedback on Planned Maintenance Contracts for 2011/12.

1.2 The report is submitted to the Housing Sub Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the maintenance and improvement of the Council's housing stock.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Sub Committee:-

- i) considers the results of the feedback;**
- ii) welcomes the continuing level of satisfaction with delivery of the Housing Investment Programme; and**
- iii) notes the improvement actions proposed**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following inspection by the Scottish Housing Regulator, an Asset Management Improvement Plan was developed. Part of the plan included proposals to gather more tenant feedback on Planned Maintenance contracts.

3.2 A tenant feedback questionnaire was developed by the Capital Programmes Team, and agreed at Housing Best Value Group. The questionnaire seeks to cover the whole Planned Maintenance delivery process through initial contact, survey, site operations and the defects period, and issued on all planned maintenance contracts as they are completed.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Results are now available for the full 2011/12 financial year, based on questionnaires returned between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012.

Questionnaires are issued as a range of Planned Maintenance projects are completed on site, and the Investment Strategy progresses through each financial year. Information has been included in **APPENDIX I** to show results for all Quarters of financial year 2011/12, and a comparison of the combined overall satisfaction levels with those of the previous financial year.

The results are based only on questionnaires which have been returned. Where tenants have not answered individual questions, these have not been included in the calculations.

Return rate and time taken to return

- 4.2 The return rate for the questionnaire during 2011/12 was 39.43%. A total of 350 feedback forms were issued during the year and 138 returned.

Before we started work – Table 1 in Appendix

- 4.3 The first section of the feedback mainly relates to how the Council contacts tenants before work commences, the amount of choice offered (where appropriate), and the arrangements for survey visits.

Feedback Appraisal

There has been a slight reduction in levels of satisfaction in two areas between Q3 and Q4, with a more marked reduction in the satisfaction with the amount of notice provided before the start of works. It is proposed that further investigation is carried out in this area as the results for this particular indicator have also shown a reduction when compared with the previous financial year. The other indicators for Q4 have remained at the level of 100% which was attained during Q3. In terms of comparison with the previous financial year there has been some minor variation in satisfaction, however the majority of indicators are over 95%.

While the work was going on – Table 2 in Appendix

- 4.4 In the second section of the questionnaire, tenants are asked to rate the attitude and helpfulness of any staff they contacted, how good the Council is at keeping them informed of progress, the speed and quality of the work, the care taken of their home and belongings, and the condition that their home was left in after the works were complete. Additional questions are also asked as to the way any queries, complaints or faults were dealt with, and the level of the overall service provided.

Feedback Appraisal

Having attained levels of 100% satisfaction in most areas in Q3, just over half of the indicators have shown reduced levels of satisfaction in Q4, with the largest variation relating to speed with which queries were dealt with. When compared with the previous financial year, there has been some minor variation in satisfaction, however the majority of indicators are considered to be acceptable at over 90%. The largest variation over the full financial year, and the lowest satisfaction level overall in this section relates to dealing with faults after the work has been completed. Further work is to be carried out in this area to identify specific issues and consider revisions to processes to target improvements in satisfaction levels.

After The Work Was Complete – Table 3 in Appendix

- 4.5 This section of the questionnaire asked tenants how satisfied they were with the issue of decoration/flooring allowances, the arrangements for final

inspections, the helpfulness of inspection staff, and the speed with which any queries are dealt with.

Feedback Appraisal

The main area of dissatisfaction continues to centre on decoration vouchers. This has been highlighted in a number of previous reports. On further investigation there are still a variety of reasons for tenants indicating dissatisfaction, including the amount of decoration vouchers offered, time taken to issue vouchers, and a suggestion that a cheque or rent credit would be more acceptable than vouchers. A review of the voucher process is currently being undertaken, and it is envisaged that this will be completed within the next 3 months. A number of the issues raised will be considered as part of this review, with any processes amended if required. The other indicator showing a reduction, which also relates in some part to the results in table 2, is the speed with which queries are dealt with.

In General – Table 4 in Appendix

- 4.6 The final section of the questionnaire asked tenants how satisfied they were with the amount of information they were given in relation to the work being carried out, the length of time taken to carry out the work, and their satisfaction with the overall service received.

Feedback Appraisal

Satisfaction levels for two of the indicators in this final section for Q3 have shown reductions from the 100% levels attained for the indicators in the previous quarter, but are still considered to be acceptable at over 94%. In comparing the results with those of the previous financial year, it is noted that the indicators for the amount of information provided, and overall satisfaction are showing improvements from the previous financial year. There has however been a slight reduction in the indicator for the length of time taken to complete the works.

Summary

- 4.7 Looking at the overall results for the current financial year and comparing to the previous year it is considered that apart from a small number of areas, tenants are generally satisfied with the way in which the various teams involved deliver the Housing Investment Programme.
- 4.9 In cases where tenants have expressed clear dissatisfaction with particular aspects of the programme, the Housing Service undertakes further investigative work to gather more detailed feedback on the reasons for any dissatisfaction and deal with any issues arising through minor changes to processes.
- 4.10 Results will continue to be report to the Housing Sub Committee during 2012/13. Any actions proposed, or taken to deal with areas of poor satisfaction will be detailed in subsequent reports, and regular progress updates provided to Committee.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Single Outcome Agreement/Service Improvement Plan

This proposal relates to:

- (i) Local Priority 4 – Housing/Homelessness
- (ii) the Service Improvement Plan priorities 2.3 - Improving housing quality, and 2.4 – Improving housing service quality

(b) Policy and Legal

Maintenance and Improvement works are carried out in order to meet statutory legal requirements and in accordance with current relevant policies.

(c) Financial implications

There are no direct financial implication arising from this report. There are no European funding implications.

(d) Risk implications

Failure to record and review tenant feedback may lead to a reduction in satisfaction levels.

(e) Staffing

There are no staffing implications associated with this report.

(f) Property

The improvement and maintenance of the housing stock will ensure that it remains sustainable in the longer term both physically and environmentally.

(g) Equalities

There are no equalities issues associated with this report.

(h) Consultations

Consultations have taken place with the Head of Housing and Property, and Senior Managers in the Housing and Property Service.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Investment in the Council's housing stock enables the Council to address the priorities to improve the quality of housing stock in Moray. Specifically, investment in the Council's housing stock enables the Council to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015, as required by the Scottish Government. Gathering tenant feedback on Planned Maintenance Contracts provides the Council with information as to the satisfaction level of tenants with the works carried out, and identifies areas for improvement.**

Author of Report: John Macdonald, Asset Manager
Background Papers: held on file by the Asset Manager
Ref: JMM/SUBCOMM21JUNE/TENANT FEEDBACK