

## Measures report

### Housing service: 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009

**Purpose: to match the right people with the right home.**

This report supplements the strategic and Service Plan performance indicators reported through the SPAR process. It aims to monitor the impact of the redesigned service following the Systems Thinking review and give Members information to understand and challenge what is happening within the service.

The Housing service redesign considers two aspects of the tenants experience – ending a tenancy and starting a tenancy. The main value demands identified during Check were:

‘I want to end my tenancy ...’

‘I want/need a place to live ...’

‘I want to transfer to another home ...’

‘Set me up right ...’ (in other words, enable me to start my tenancy with rent paid, an ongoing payment plan in place and knowing how to get what I need from you)

The redesign went live with new processes on 5 May, the key features being:

- Ensuring existing tenants leave ‘clean’
- Accompanied viewing incorporating tenant void standard choice
- Extended ‘sign up’ interview and welcome process
- Ensuring new tenants are ‘set up’ right
- Resolving housing problems ‘one stop’

The measures we have created for the service link to that purpose and to what matters to the customer. The customers/ applicants said that they wanted to *be kept informed of progress with their housing applications* and they wanted access to a good quality, affordable home. **The housing service customers are not solely interested in speed of processing, they want good quality housing advice, a fair system of allocations and a well presented home to move into.**

During Redesign we produced a number of operating principles such that we do our best to:

- Fully understand our customers housing needs.
- Resolve the customers housing need at the earliest opportunity.
- Receive complete and correct information at first contact with the customer.
- Make it clear to customers what we can and can’t do.
- Have up to date and detailed information about our properties.
- Make sure that the tenant (current and new) understands and is fully informed about their rights and responsibilities.
- Reduce the time from keys to keys:
  - Get the current tenant out quickly;
  - Get the new tenant in quickly;
  - Get the void property prepared quickly;
  - Minimise rent loss.

## ANNEX 2

- Do the work required to the property and those works agreed with the new tenant.
- Be accountable and responsible for raising issues and finding solutions to things that affect our work.

There is greater overview now of all the work streams in the teams at any one time and passage of the work through the system is regularly tested to ensure that no unnecessary delays are occurring. The performance for the E2E times of

The focus of the work is now principally on the value activity and what matters to customers, with tasks that added no value for the applicant reduced as far as possible. The value steps in our redesigned system are essentially:

- gathering information on an applicant's housing needs and understanding need,
- providing accurate, honest housing advice,
- resolving homelessness,
- advising existing tenants how to leave 'clean,
- joint visit with contractor and new tenant to agree the work required to a void property,
- informed customer bids for property,
- matching customer need with suitable homes,
- setting new tenants up right.

We have sought to reduce preventable demand coming into the service by guiding applicants and agents, through pre application activity and an Agents' Forum and again by making sure that plenty of information was available on the website (even with its current limitations).

The test of a good measure is:

1. Does it relate to purpose and our knowledge of 'what matters' to our customers
2. Does it help us understand our service as a 'system'
3. Is it used by those in the work and managing the work to improve the work?

We have developed two types of measures – **leading and lagging**.

**Leading measures** are the 'real time' indicators which tell us what is happening **now** in the system and are the key measures that help us lead change and improvement. Examples are:

1. Demand analysis - the type (value or preventable) and frequency of customer demand
2. Our ability to deal with requests/demand first time (one stop)
3. How long a process takes from start to finish (end to end times)

**Lagging measures** are the 'rear view' indicators which tell us what's happening in the system after the event. They tell us about the effectiveness of the service but will not necessarily help us to lead change. Examples are:

1. Budget monitoring
2. Customer satisfaction and staff morale
3. National and local performance indicators.

ANNEX 2

To deliver good results, the focus of management needs to be on the leading measures as the key drivers of improvement. If these levers for change are understood and used effectively then excellent results and customer satisfaction will follow.

**Leading measures**

Indicator	Check	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Comment
<p><b>Capability at first point of contact</b></p> <p>– measured by the %age of tenants with a clear rent account immediately after ‘sign up’.</p>	12%	30%	
<p><b>End to End times (keys to keys)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keys to Housing Needs</li> <li>• Keys to repairs</li> <li>• Keys to contractor</li> <li>• Void repaired/prepared</li> <li>• Keys to repairs</li> <li>• Keys to Housing Needs</li> <li>• ‘Sign up’ new tenant</li> <li>• Rent paid</li> <li>• Total end to end time</li> </ul>			

Service redesign live from 5<sup>th</sup> Mav

<p><b>Preventable demand</b></p> <p><i>Measured by sampling demand to assess what %age of demand is preventable through service design.</i></p>	72%	n/a	<p>As part of the review the level of preventable demand was measured by sampling.</p> <p>Another exercise is currently underway to measure preventable demand now.</p>
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Check</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<p><b>Customer demand – new applicants during the quarter</b></p> <p><i>A key driver in service performance</i></p>	Xxx applications	Xxx applications	
<p><b>Customer demand - caseload</b></p> <p><i>Number of households registered on our Housing Register and the number of bids received for each property advertised through the CBL scheme</i></p>	Xxx households	Xxx households	

## Value & Preventable Demand Survey

The original survey took place during the Check process and the follow up survey between xxx September 2009.

	Check (January 2009) Value Demand	September 2009 Value Demand	Check (January 09) Preventable Demand	September 2009 Preventable Demand
Telephone	50%		50%	
Post and email	85%		15%	
Face to face	75%		25%	

### Lagging measures

Indicator	Check	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Comment
<p><b>Customer satisfaction:</b> <i>measured by monthly telephone survey carried out 4-6 weeks after tenancy commenced.</i></p>			
<p><b>NI 156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation.</b> <i>This is a snapshot measure of the number of households in temporary accommodation on 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.</i></p>			
<p><b>NI 160 Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services.</b> <i>This is a measure of overall tenant satisfaction with the services provided by the council measured through the biannual STATUS survey.</i></p>			
<p><b>BVPI 212, the time taken to relet local authority housing</b> <i>This is a measure of the number of the average number of days taken to relet a property from the day it becomes vacant to the date a new tenancy commences.</i></p>	22 days 2008/09		
<p><b>Percentage of new tenants who fall into rent arrears</b> <b>Could this be a leading measure?</b></p>	51%		

<b>Percentage of new tenants good/irregular rent payers</b>	27% habitually in arrears		
<b>Length of time in days it takes a new tenant falling into rent arrears to clear their rent account.</b>	92 days		
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Check</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Number of bids received per property advertised through Choice Based Lettings			
Average length of time spent on the Housing Register before being housed (general needs & sheltered housing).	39 months average general needs housing and 27 months average sheltered housing		
Number of homeless applications where the Council accepts a homeless duty towards the applicant.		8	This is a radical reduction in homeless acceptances which can be attributed to a range of homeless prevention measures being implemented.

Staff morale, sickness absence and turnover are all in the lagging measures too as well as budget info to show how investment impacts on performance

### **Project investment and benefits**

The Systems Thinking review in housing cost approximately £4,625. This was a one-off cost for consultancy support to work on the project and was paid partly from the Housing Revenue Account. The project has delivered substantial benefits, including:

- Improved customer satisfaction with the allocations process and tenant choice.
- Significant reduction in new tenants going into rent arrears.
- A more thorough new tenancy 'sign up' and welcome process with greater clarity of roles and responsibilities.

- Any work done to get the contractors to give us back keys earlier on voids with small amount of work?

## **Remaining Issues**

Although the project has delivered transformational improvements there remain a number of areas for further work.

We are maintaining an Issues Log and this is attached so that members can see how we are steadily working on all the issues we have which will improve the way we work from our customers' point of view, and remove waste from the system.

## **Staff culture**

Staff have responded very well to the changes and readily adopted the new working methods. Most of the new methods were generated by staff themselves and the challenge is to maintain a culture where people are encouraged to contribute ideas and suggestions on an ongoing basis rather than as part of a set-piece exercise away from the workplace.

Staff focus groups have praised improved communication within the office and between managers and staff. The increased communication with customers has also improved morale as staff can see that housing is clearly a people-business.