

Measures Report

Housing Service: Quarter 3 October - December 2009

We established a purpose during Check which is – **to match the right people with the right home**. The Redesign went live with a new (redesigned) system and operating principles on 5th 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 our adopted purpose and to 'what matters' to the customer. Our 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.

There is greater overview now of all the work streams in the housing teams at any one time and the passage of the work through the system are regularly tested to ensure that no unnecessary delays are occurring. The performance for the End 2End times of our keys (leaving tenant) to keys (new tenant) is monitored closely.

The focus of the work is now principally on the value activities and 'what matters' to customers, with tasks that add no value (waste) 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 the need;
- providing accurate, honest housing advice;
- resolving/preventing homelessness;
- advising existing tenants how to leave 'clean' when they give Notice to Quit;
- 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 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:

- Demand analysis - the type (value or preventable) and frequency of customer demand.
- Our ability to deal with requests/demand first time (one stop).
- 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:

- Budget monitoring.
- Customer satisfaction and staff morale.
- National and local performance indicators.

Leading measures

Indicator	Check	3rd Q	Comment
<p>Capability at first point of contact Housing advice and homeless prevention.</p> <p>– measured by the %age of tenants with a clear rent account immediately after ‘sign up’.</p>	<p>5%</p> <p>12%</p>	<p>35%</p> <p>40%</p>	<p>We are spending longer with homeless applicants to deal with cases ‘one stop’.</p> <p>The improved new tenancy ‘sign up’ process has put more emphasis on rent payment and has resulted in a significant improvement.</p>
<p>End to End times (keys to keys)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total End to End time • Keys to Housing Needs • Keys to repairs • Keys to contractor • Void repaired/prepared • Keys to repairs • Keys to Housing Needs • ‘Sign up’ new tenant • Rent paid 	<p>38 days mean Predictably 64 days</p> <p>34 days mean Predictably 66 days</p> <p>5 days mean Predictably 10 days</p> <p>23 days mean Predictably 55 days</p>	<p>See capability charts attached.</p> <p>51 days mean Predictably 96 days annex 1</p> <p>45 days mean Predictably 98 days annex 2</p> <p>7 days mean Predictably 15 days (keys to new tenant) annex 3</p> <p>-1.2 days mean Predictably 31 days annex 4</p>	<p>We have used a time line (see below) to break down elements of our system which can be represented by the travel of house keys through the value steps of our system. Our End to End times improved during the first Redesign experiment however when we moved to a Change of Tenancy Team experiment our End to End times deteriorated. A number of steps have been designed out of our system since Check making direct comparisons difficult.</p>

Service redesign live from 5th May 2009

Indicator	Check	3rd Q	Comment
<p>Preventable demand</p> <p><i>Measured by sampling demand to assess what %age of demand is preventable through service design.</i></p> <p>Our top five preventable demands</p>	<p>See table below</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you tell me how my bid is getting on? 2. Have you received my application form? 3. What's happening with my application? 4. Can you tell me how to bid for a property? 5. What's my Housing Register number? 	<p>n/a</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is my application doing? 2. What do I do if I don't have internet access? 3. Can you help me register online? 4. Why has my banding changed? 5. Can you complete a housing application for my client? 	<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>
<p>Customer demand – new applicants during the quarter</p> <p><i>A key driver of service performance</i></p>	<p>53 homeless approaches 33 preventions</p>	<p>43 homeless approaches 20 preventions</p>	<p>We measure the number of homeless applications received and accepted.</p>
<p>Customer demand - caseload</p> <p><i>Number of households registered on our Housing Register.</i></p>	<p>4,500 households</p>	<p>4,200 households</p>	<p>We also measure the number of applicants on the housing register at any time. We can break this down by location and bedroom requirements. The introduction of Devon Home Choice will reduce the number of applicants on the housing register.</p>

Service redesign live from 5th May 2009

Value & Preventable Demand Survey

The original survey took place during the Check process and the follow up survey in December 2009. We are undertaking these surveys quarterly.

	Check (January 2009) Value Demand	December 2009 Value Demand	Check (January 09) Preventable Demand	December 2009 Preventable Demand
Telephone	50%	65%	50%	35%
Post and email	85%	85%	15%	15%
Face to face	75%	75%	25%	25%

Lagging measures

Indicator	Check	3rd Quarter	Comment
Customer satisfaction: <i>measured by monthly telephone survey carried out 4-6 weeks after tenancy commenced.</i>			See comments below.
NI 156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation. <i>This is a snapshot measure of the number of households in temporary accommodation on 31st March each year.</i>	91	76	A good reduction and part of a consistent downward trend.
NI 160 Local Authority tenants' satisfaction with landlord services. <i>This is a measure of overall tenant satisfaction with the services provided by the council measured through the biannual STATUS survey.</i>	87% Top quartile	87% Top quartile	We have this survey undertaken every two years in accordance with government advice.
BVPI 212, the time taken to relet local authority housing <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>	22 days 2008/09	28 days	This average measure legitimately excludes properties undergoing major repairs from the calculation.

Indicator	Check	3rd Quarter	Comment
BVPI 66a proportion of rent collected <i>This is a measure of the amount of rent collected as a proportion of rent collectable.</i>	97.11%	98.30%	We are seeing a steady increase towards our 'stretch' target of 99% collection of rent due.
Percentage of new tenants who fall into rent arrears	51%	29.88%	The new tenancy 'sign up' process emphasises the important of maintaining a clear rent account.
Percentage of new tenants irregular rent payers	27% habitually in arrears	10.34%	Fewer tenants are poor or irregular payers.
Length of time in days it takes a new tenant falling into rent arrears to clear their rent account.	92 days	25 days	Fewer tenants are going into arrears at the start of their tenancy.
Number of bids received per property advertised through Choice Based Lettings	Typically 20	Typically 20	We are still receiving an average of 20 bids for each property advertised.
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	3 years and 27 weeks (approx. 42 months) for general needs and sheltered housing	This waiting time for housing is longer than we would like and is directly related to vacancies occurring in our housing stock.
Number of homeless applications where the Council accepts a homeless duty towards the applicant.	17	6	This is a radical reduction in homeless acceptances which can be attributed to a range of homeless prevention measures being implemented.

Project investment and benefits

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.

In December we undertook a telephone survey of new tenants after the commencement of their tenancy. The results of this survey reveal that of the 27 new tenants contacted most rated the service received 8-10 out of a possible score of 10. The accompanied viewing was scored high and staff considered helpful and friendly. We had a few cases where the standard of the property did not meet expectations (poor quality painting and minor repairs not done). In each case we invited the tenant to say how we could improve performance and receive a top score.

The latest new tenant survey results undertaken in January 2010 of tenants that moved into their new homes in October are shown in **annex 5**.

Remaining Issues

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.

The top 5 issues on the Issues Log that need resolving are:

- Ensuring that the appointment system for accompanied viewings works consistently well;
- Production of capability charts quickly and accurately;
- Notifying all new tenants of the need to come to the 'sign up' with an ability to pay their rent;
- Rent triggers set up before 'sign up' to ensure that rental payments could be accepted;
- Contractors should not be dictating void ready dates to suit them.

We need to ensure that the measures reports are used by staff and managers to be more aware of what is happening in our system and to allow early corrective action where performance can be improved.

Staff morale, sickness absence and turnover are all lagging measures too as well as budget information to show how investment impacts on performance. These have not been included in this report.

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.

The operational, change, leadership and management principles all need embedding to ensure that we are all working to 'new world' principles and not those that influenced behaviours prior to introducing Systems Thinking.

