



Housing Services Cabinet Committee

Wednesday, 11 September 2024

Dear Councillor

You are advised that the attached documents form part of the main agenda papers for this meeting.

Please ensure you bring them with you to the meeting.

Yours faithfully



S Walsh
Assistant Director
(Organisational Development & Democratic Support)

List of documents attached

- | | |
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| 5. Allocations Scheme Update Presentation | (Pages 3 - 8) |
| 7. Outturn of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures | (Pages 9 - 18) |

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Annual Review of the Housing Allocation Scheme

Kenan Dogan
Head of Housing Solutions
11 September 2024

Introduction

Local authorities are required to publish a Housing Allocation Scheme.

This policy sets out the Council's priorities for how social housing in the Borough of Gravesham is allocated, and the guidelines which determine entitlement and eligibility to social housing.

The broad objectives of the scheme are to:

- To ensure we are letting properties in line with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996.
- Determine the priority of applicants in a clear, transparent and consistent way.
- Allocate affordable housing fairly and to those in greatest need.
- Create sustainable communities by the use of local lettings plans.

Background

The was previously revised in March 2023.

The Head of Housing Solutions deferred the review of the scheme following an announcement by government in January 2024. The announcement outlined there would be a consultation on reforms to social housing allocations and sought the views of local authorities.

However, following the announcement of an election, this piece of work stalled and therefore, a review of the Housing Allocation scheme took place.

Confirmation has been received that this reform is no longer proceeding.

Housing Allocation Scheme key changes 2024 review

New Sections	
Move on from supported accommodation (section 3.6)	This is a new section which stipulates when priority will be awarded to households moving on from supported housing.
Deliberate worsening of housing circumstances (section 3.10)	This ensures all households are aware of the potential implication if they contribute to worsening of their circumstances or housing situation.
Victims and survivors of domestic abuse (section 4.4)	Linked into DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) to ensure the policy addresses domestic abuse in its own right and details the work the council will do to ensure they access safe accommodation.
Care Leavers (section 4.5)	This section confirms that care leavers can apply to join the councils housing register (three-year residency not required), if they are currently residing in Gravesham.
Temporary Housing Support (section 4.6)	This is a new initiative being piloted to reduce reliance on temporary accommodation for households who work with the council to prevent their homelessness.
Pitches for Gypsies and Travelers (section 6.2)	Provides clarity on the process and what the council will do to ensure that we allocate pitches fairly.

Conclusion

The Housing Service is responsible for the Housing Allocation Scheme. It is important that we review the scheme annually and follow any changes to the relevant legislation or regulations.

In line with the Housing Allocation Scheme, Authority to introduce minor amendments is delegated to the Director (Housing) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing Services.

Therefore, the changes outlined within this presentation have been made to the existing scheme and has been available on our website from September 2024.

Thank you for listening



Any questions?

Tenant Satisfaction Measures Housing Committee Update

Andrew Johnson
Head of Neighbourhood Services - September 2024

Regulatory Reform Re-cap

The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, which became UK law in April 2024, introduced significant changes to improve social housing standards and tenant protection. These changes aim to enhance tenant safety, improve service quality, and ensure landlords are held accountable.

Key Changes:

Enforcement Powers

New powers for the Regulator of Social Housing to take action against failing landlords before tenants are at risk

Accountability and Transparency

Landlords must be accountable to tenants and provide transparent information about the condition of homes and tenant needs.

Proactive Regulation

Regular inspections and responsive engagement to ensure compliance with standards.

New Enhanced Consumer Standards

Landlords must ensure tenant safety, handle complaints effectively, and engage with tenants fairly and respectfully

Regular inspections of landlords with 1,000+ homes.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Collection and use of data on tenant satisfaction, repairs, and other relevant issues.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

- The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are a set of standards introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing to assess how well social housing landlords are performing
- The measures are designed to provide transparency and accountability, ensuring that tenants receive high-quality services.
- The broad areas covered are:
 - **Overall Satisfaction** - Measures tenants' overall satisfaction with the services provided by their landlord.
 - **Repairs and Maintenance** - Assesses the effectiveness and timeliness of repairs and maintenance services.
 - **Safety Checks** - Evaluates the regularity and thoroughness of safety checks, including gas and electrical safety.
 - **Communication** - Measures how well landlords communicate with tenants, including responsiveness and clarity of information.
 - **Complaints Handling** - Assesses how effectively landlords handle complaints, including resolution times and tenant satisfaction with the process.
 - **Tenant Involvement** - Evaluates opportunities for tenants to be involved in decision-making processes and how their feedback is used.
- There are 22 specific measures, split into two groups – 10 measured by data taken from landlord systems and 12 which are measured by a tenant perception survey. ([Link to TSM Detail](#))
- The regulator specified the perception survey questions and providers not permitted to deviate. We were permitted to add other questions.
- Similarly, the data sets were specified by the regulator and had to be reported in a specific format.
- Results are required to be submitted annually, and organisations receive a set of satisfaction scores from the regulator. These must be publicised and readily available to customers and the general public.
- The scores enable organisations to compare their performance against the standards with comparator organisations locally and nationally.

How we collected the data

- As this was first year of the TSM survey and data collection, a decision was made to ask every GBC household to complete the survey.
- Attempts made to contact all tenant households using a range of types of contact. (Phone, in person, online, and a paper version of the survey).
- Each household was only permitted to enter one survey.
- We offered incentives to customers in the form of a monthly draw for cash vouchers, to encourage participation.
- Survey was publicised on corporate Social Channels and in Your Home.
- All customers received written reminders via their rent statement.

All Successful Contacts By Method

Survey Method	Number completed
Telephone Contact	512
Internet Submission	183
Face to Face in person	508
Postal Survey	63
SMS	0
Total successful surveys by all methods	1266

Total of 1266 surveys completed = 22.32% of Households took part in the survey.

How did Gravesham's tenants score the Council – tenant perception

Measure	Result
Overall satisfaction	75.4%
Satisfaction with repairs	71.6%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	66.4%
Satisfaction that home is well maintained	74.9%
Satisfaction that you feel safe at home	79.6%
Satisfaction that your landlord listens and acts	63.6%
Satisfaction that your landlord keeps you well informed	75.2%
Agree that your landlord is fair and respectful	79.9%
Satisfaction with complaint handling	29.6%
Satisfaction that communal areas are kept clean and well maintained	71.1%
Satisfaction that your landlord makes a positive contribution	66.2%
Satisfaction with landlord's handling of anti-social behaviour	54.0%

- Overall satisfaction 75.4% - highest among near neighbour's – both local authority & other registered providers (HA's)
- All scores are publicly reported and will be ranked nationally; the RoSH requires this information to be published in a variety of different ways
- Overall, considering this is the first time the exercise has been completed, the results are generally pleasing and show that in most contacts, most customers are satisfied with the contact or action. results but with room for improvement.
- Perception v" reality – e.g. feeling safe (perception) and being safe because we are compliant with fire safety (reality). Customers perception doesn't always reflect the reality we know exists, and we need to find ways to provide reassurance to customers through better communication.
- 2 outlying areas –
 - Important to note with both that "lower quartile" is not vastly different to "upper quartile" (15 percentage points in the case of ASB)
 - Important to acknowledge that even when the scores are low, such as with complaint handling, Gravesham is in most cases out-performing other organisations, while performance in those areas needs improvement, it is not out of sync generally with performance across the sector.
- Dissatisfaction with outcome often expressed as dissatisfaction with the process and how a case is handled.
 - Complaint Handling & ASB Case Management
 - New CRM system being rolled out.
 - New ombudsman guidance
 - Better visibility and reporting,
 - Complaints now only reviewed by HoS or A/Director

What our system data told the Regulator about our performance:

Measure	Result	Measure	Result
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	14.0%	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	100%
Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescales	89.0%	Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescales	100%	Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	100%
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	100%	Proportion of homes for which all legionella risk assessments have been carried out	100%
Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes	17.9	Number of stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes	1.9
Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	84.3%	Proportion of stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	90.9%

How Gravesham Compared

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) - Perception Survey	Gravesham	Benchmarking Local Authorities						Benchmarking - Housing Associations				Housemark Data		
	Actual outturn											Quartile 1	Median	Quartile 3
TP01 - overall satisfaction	75.4%	63.2%	71.4%	72.3%	68.0%	69.0%	71%	77.0%	61.4%	65.0%	67.0%	63.0%	69.4%	78.0%
TP02 – Satisfaction with repairs	71.6%	64.7%	73.9%	77.8%	72.8%	70.6%	72%	76.0%	61.4%	68.0%	68.0%	64.5%	70.4%	78.7%
TO03 - Satisfied with time taken to repair	66.4%	59.0%	67.4%	81.3%	68.7%	66.9%	66%	75.0%	54.7%	63.0%	63.0%	59.0%	66.4%	75.5%
TP04 – Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	74.9%	65.8%	71.4%	75.1%	64.4%	68.8%	70%	76.0%	60.4%	64.0%	73.0%	63.3%	69.4%	77.8%
TP05 – Satisfaction that the home is safe	79.6%	72.0%	74.8%	78.0%	70.2%	69.8%	78%	85.0%	67.5%	72.0%	78.0%	70.0%	76.1%	82.2%
TP06 – Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	63.6%	48.6%	47.1%	62.8%	53.9%	51.3%	55%	66.0%	50.9%	50.0%	63.0%	51.3%	58.9%	67.3%
TP07 – Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	75.2%	59.7%	63.7%	68.5%	59.5%	61.8%	71%	79.0%	57.1%	62.0%	78.0%	62.7%	69.5%	76.7%
TP08 – Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	79.9%	67.0%	69.9%	76.2%	71.1%	67.7%	72%	81.0%	64.2%	68.0%	81.0%	70.0%	76.3%	83.3%
TP09 – Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	29.6%	27.0%	31.1%	30.9%	34.2%	26.2%	34%	44.0%	31.1%	34.0%	34.0%	26.0%	33.8%	40.0%
TP10 – Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	71.1%	61.6%	56.3%	52.5%	55.2%	63.6%	70%	64.0%	56.2%	70.0%	69.0%	58.7%	65.5%	72.3%
TP11– Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	66.2%	52.4%	43.0%	58.3%	51.2%	53.6%	59%	68.0%	46.0%	52.0%	80.0%	56.0%	62.5%	71.2%
TP12 – Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	54.0%	44.6%	40.1%	51.1%	49.3%	45.0%	54%	63.0%	45.3%	50.0%	68.0%	51.0%	57.0%	63.6%

What are we doing with the data and results?

- Important to recognise that, overall, 75% of our customers think we do a good job in delivering Housing Services in the borough. This is the highest overall satisfaction in any of the surrounding local authorities.
- Still, there are areas where there is a need to improve the service delivery. Notably complaints and ASB handling.
- Regulatory requirement to show that we are actively listening to feedback and taking steps to change service delivery.
- Making every contact count – we are taking every opportunity to take feedback on services from a customer live – and managers are expected to intervene and take corrective action as soon as they become aware of a dissatisfied customer.
- Recent upgrade to MRI has seen the introduction of a new Housing and ASB Case Management IT System. This enables closer monitoring of workloads and performance, better case management and a reporting ability which will highlight when a process isn't being followed or is out of time.
- Focus for new Assistant Director (Social Housing) and two Heads of Service (Neighbourhoods and Housing Assets) to increase customer satisfaction levels and demonstrate the Council is responding to the feedback received.

Next Steps:

- Collection of technical data and perception survey answers for the 2024-2025 assessment period. Different approach this year - outsourced to reduce the demand on service resource, with opportunity to review data prior to submission.
- Will not be 100% of customers surveyed this year – worth doing Y1 as it gave a good benchmark for the first year, may be worth repeating in the future.
- Year on year, use the results to drive improvements in service delivery, valuable source of customer feedback which needs to be built upon with regular quality audits for case work and satisfaction feedback requests from customers.
- Formation of customer scrutiny panel which will provide the framework for customers to be more actively involved in all forms of scrutiny, including the building safety scrutiny. This is as important as the regulator has placed emphasis on organisations consulting with customers and engaging them in all aspects of service design and delivery.
- Focus on customer complaints and ASB case management, including comms to inform customers about perception versus reality, to understand the difference between (dis)satisfaction with the process and how we handled the case or complaint, and the level of (dis)satisfaction with the outcome. They are different but we know customers often express dissatisfaction a process because they didn't like or want the outcome that was offered.

Any Questions?



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