

CABINET**Tuesday, 17th October, 2023**

Present:-

Councillor Gilby (Chair)

Councillors	Holmes	Councillors	Davies
	Sarvent		J Innes
	Serjeant		Staton
	Baldauf-Good		Stone

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

**30 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

32 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 19 September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four-month period November, 2023 to February, 2024 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

34 **ANNUAL REPORT FOR TENANTS**

The Service Director – Housing presented the Annual Report to Tenants for the financial year 2022/23 to Cabinet, prior to publication.

The Annual Report to Tenants was attached at Appendix A to the report and provided summary details on performance, service delivery and planned improvements in relation to the Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards.

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard looks at how the Council's housing service communicates, engages, and works with tenants, and ensures tenants have the opportunity to shape how the service operates. The Standard also covers how the council deals with complaints.

In the current financial 2023/24 tenant satisfaction surveys would be carried out to capture the housing service's performance against the new standard Tenant Satisfaction Measures, as required by the Social Housing Regulator. The surveys would be sent at different times throughout the financial year to a random sample of tenants.

During 2022/23 the Council had launched a new complaints policy and complaints system. The main changes included speeding up response times for dealing with complaints from 15 to 10 days and making it easier for tenants and residents to make complaints, and for the Council to record and manage performance. Members' attention was drawn to a table in Appendix A to the report, which showed a summary of the housing service's complaints performance for 2022/23.

The Tenancy Standard covers how properties are allocated and how the Council provides support to tenants in their homes.

The number of households on the council's housing register had increased by 14.3 percent in 2022/2023 to 2,926 households (from 2,558 households in 2021/2022). The high level of empty properties had proven to be a significant challenge, with the number of empty properties totalling 336 at the end of March 2023, up from 285 a year earlier. Tackling the backlog of empty properties would be one of the housing service's main priorities for 2023/24.

To support new tenants, Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) were introduced in 2022/23 for new applicants on the housing register. The PHP aimed to

explore the circumstances of individual households to help enable the Council to better understand their needs. The intelligence gained would also provide the Council with the opportunity to signpost applicants to support services and alternative accommodation options and choices if appropriate.

The Home Standard looks at how the Council's housing service repairs and makes improvements to homes. Key performance information was detailed in Appendix A to the report. It was noted that during 2022/23 the council had invested over £21.5 million in its homes and estates and a further £3.2 million on the construction of new homes.

In 2023/24 the Council would be investing up to £22.4 million in its homes and estates, including new heating systems, windows, and doors.

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard sets out how the Council manages communal areas and its estates and works with other partners and agencies to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB).

In February 2022, consultation began on a new ASB strategy. The consultation ran until August 2022 and included surveys of tenants and members of the public, who were invited to give their views on ASB issues and how they were approached. The Council now had a new single ASB strategy for the whole authority, adopted during 2022/23, which provided a clear approach on how the Council should look to tackle ASB both at a strategic and operational level. The strategy also outlined how we would work with other key stakeholders to manage and reduce ASB.

The Value for Money Standard looks at how the Council spends the money it receives in rent from its tenants. The social rents charged were set through a national formula based on household incomes and house prices. The average rents by property size for 2022/23 were set out in Appendix A to the report.

***RESOLVED -**

1. That the Housing Service's Annual Report to Tenants for the financial year 2022/23, attached as Appendix A to the Service Director's report be approved.
2. That a copy of the Annual Report be published on the council's website.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. Since 2010, housing providers have been required to produce an Annual Report to Tenants.
2. The Annual Report to Tenants is a key tool in strengthening the Council's relationship with tenants, through effective communication and engagement with our tenants, and ensuring that the housing service seeks to maintain and improve its performance against a range of service delivery standards.
3. The Annual Report to Tenants for each year ending 31 March, should be made available to tenants and should include details of in-year performance against the standards, other achievements and planned service improvements for the following year.