

## For publication

### Annual Report for Tenants (H000)

<b>Meeting:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>Cabinet portfolio:</b>	Housing
<b>Directorate:</b>	Housing
<b>For publication</b>	

#### 1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To present and approve the Council's Housing Services Annual Report to Tenants 2021/22, prior to publication and distribution to tenants.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the Housing Service Annual Report to Tenants 2021/22, set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 To authorise that a copy of the Annual Report is published on the council's website and a graphic designed version be produced and distributed to all tenants and households in the Borough, in the 'Our Homes' section of the autumn edition of 'Your Chesterfield'.

#### 3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 The annual report to tenants is a key tool in strengthening the council's relationship with tenants, through effective communications and engagement with our customers, and ensuring we seek to maintain and improve our service delivery standards.
- 3.2 Since 2010, housing providers have been required to produce an annual report to tenants setting out performance against a range of standards.
- 3.3 The annual report for each year ending 31 March, should be made available to tenants and should include details of performance against the regulatory standards, achievements during the year and planned service improvements for the following year.

#### 4.0 Report details

- 4.1 The annual report provides an opportunity to explain how the services the Council provides are performing and to celebrate achievements. It highlights the priorities

for the year ahead and the changes that are planned to ensure that the Council continues to provide high quality homes and great services for our tenants and leaseholders.

- 4.2 The report includes summary details on performance, service delivery and future improvements in relation to the Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards:
- Tenant involvement and empowerment standard
  - Tenancy Standard
  - Home Standard
  - Neighbourhood and community
  - Value for money standard
- 4.3 Although in part, 2021/22 was another challenging year, there were many positives to take away. The Covid-19 pandemic led to new ways of working to ensure that tenants and staff were kept as safe as possible and being able to provide a range of additional support to those in need.
- 4.4 Key achievements during 2021/2022 included;
- Undertaking our largest new build housing scheme for 40 years at Badger Croft
  - Completing the £1.2m refurbishment of the 45 flats at Pullman Close, Lowgates
  - Delivering over £21m of Capital Investment into properties and estates
  - Approving additional investment to re-shape our housing management service to better support the needs of our customers
- 4.4 The information that is used to collate the performance statistics is drawn from the operational data that the council collects as it delivers services and from the Housemark Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) tenant satisfaction survey. The use of the Housemark's STAR methodology ensures that the satisfaction survey is statistically robust and can be consistently benchmarked over time and with other social landlords. The latest STAR survey was carried out in autumn 2021. The full results and detailed action plan were report to Council Cabinet in May 2022.
- 4.6 The action plan focuses on ensuring delivery of key service improvement and responding to the new requirements from the Regulator for Social Housing. A key action within the plan is reshaping the housing service. The first phase of the reshape includes housing management, homelessness and statutory housing services and will deliver a number of benefits including:
- Increasing the numbers of front-line housing officers who will provide the frontline point of contact for tenants
  - The introduction of annual home visits to build a better relationship with our tenants and to identify any vulnerabilities that we were unaware of
  - Ensuring that tenancy support issues are identified at tenancy commencement but also in tenancy as customers' needs change, leading to an increase in wellbeing and a reduction in tenancy failure, increased tenancy length which will result in a reduction in voids, transfers and management moves
  - An increased tenancy enforcement officer resource with a comprehensive approach to community safety, joint tasking within Community Safety Team

- Enabling staff to have the ability to more proactively address the presenting of mental health issues which impact on neighbour disputes and ASB, and provide capacity for increased partnership working with support agencies, health and social care, community safety and the Police
- Increased resources to enable a greater focus on environmental management of the estates and open spaces leading to improved clean, safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods, early identification of environmental risks, increased visibility and reassurance to tenants
- Relaunching a range of tenant engagement options and reviewing how we keep tenants informed

4.7 Phase one of the reshape is progressing well and we will continue to embed new and improved ways of working throughout the service. Work will also progress on a further phase of the housing service re-shape in asset management, repairs and maintenance services.

## **5.0 Alternative options**

5.1 Not to approve and publish the Annual Report to tenants would be detrimental to the Councils ongoing relationship with tenants. The report is a key tool in communicating and engaging with our customers and ensuring we seek to maintain and improve our service delivery standards.

5.2 Not publishing the report could also be considered a breach of the Regulator's expectations.

## **6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money**

6.1 The annual report includes financial information on income and expenditure figures related to the delivery of the overall housing service.

6.2 In order to provide a demonstration of value for money of the service to tenants, a breakdown of the proportionate spend across the range of housing services has been produced. This shows that for every pound spent, the majority of that is invested in property maintenance and repairs and new build homes.

## **7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal**

7.1 The development and publication of an annual report is a requirement of the regulator of social housing.

## **8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources**

8.1 No implications identified.

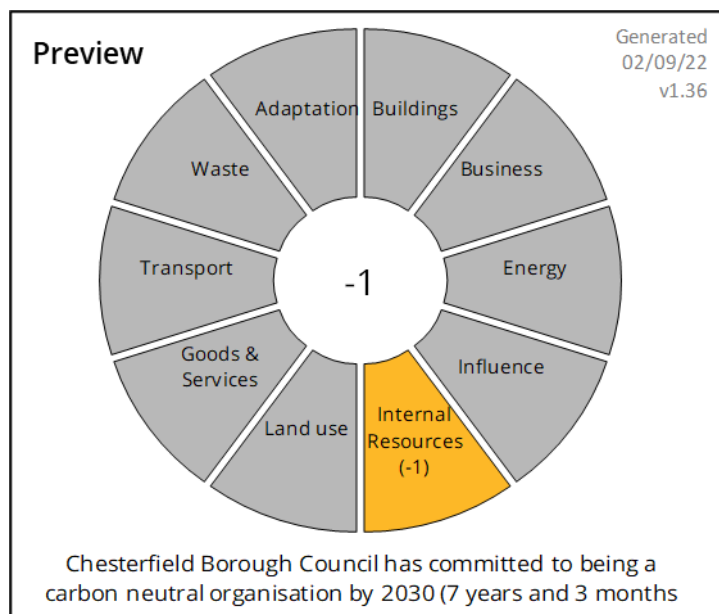
## **9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan**

9.1 The Annual Report to Tenants demonstrates how the provision of Council Housing delivers the Council Plan objectives of improving quality of life for local people through meeting housing needs and provision of quality homes.

- 9.2 The efficient management of council housing and the delivery of responsive repairs and planned and programmed works ensures good quality affordable homes are available in the Borough. The focus of the capital programme is to ensure homes are warm, dry, and well maintained which has a positive impact on individual and community health and well-being. The programme also includes delivery of adaptations to ensure people can remain living in their own homes promoting community cohesion.
- 9.3 The Council also continues to improve the quality of the public spaces on its estates with investment in estate improvements programmes such as those completed at Barrow Hill and Pullman Close to refresh and uplift the local environment.

## **10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change**

- 10.1 The programme of capital works to properties including new windows, doors, boilers and roofs all increase the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock and contribute towards reduced energy usage and costs for tenants. Improvements include:
- i. The roof renewal programme where non-compliant insulation exists we increase the thickness to 300mm in order to decrease heat loss through the roof space.
  - ii. The installation of new windows and doors to more recent building regulation standards also increase thermal efficiency.
  - iii. Gas re-heating – age expired gas boilers are replaced with more efficient models.
- 10.2 As well as being built to a high environmental standard our new developments block refurbishment programmes now include bio-diversity net gain onsite including bee hotels, bird and bat boxes and long-term planting schemes designed to soften landscapes and reduce rainwater runoff. The estate improvement scheme at Barrow Hill has increased the number of trees on the estate by 168 and planted over 1,500 metres of hedges.
- 10.3 The Home Options allocations system is an online only system reducing the need for paper applications.
- 10.4 The production and delivery of the Housing Annual Report has been assessed using the Council's Climate change impact assessment tool.
- 10.5 The annual report continues to be provided within 'Your Chesterfield' magazine and is not printed as a standalone document. Printing impacts on carbon emissions in terms of paper usage and the equipment/machinery used. However, there are benefits to producing the report in this way, such as maximising audience reach (a copy of the magazine is delivered to all tenants). It is also a regulatory requirement to produce an annual report for the financial year which provides details on Chesterfield Borough Council's performance as a landlord. It is likely that a 'paper' version of the report will always be required in some capacity to ensure maximum accessibility for tenants.



## 11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 In the production of its own guidelines and regulations the Regulator of Social Housing have completed an Equality Impact Assessment on the entire regulatory framework, including the Annual Report to Tenants. We will produce individual equality impact assessments when reporting any changes in subsequent policy, practice and procedure.

## 12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 This work concerns the implementation of regulatory performance practise.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Regulatory risk of failure to produce the Annual Report	Medium	Low	Use of routinely available data to ensure the report can be developed in in a timely manner Publish the Annual report to tenants on the Councils website	Low	Low

### Decision information

<b>Key decision number</b>	<b>1116</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>All Wards</b>

### Document information

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<b>Background documents</b>	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
N/A	
<b>Appendices to the report</b>	
Appendix A	Annual Report to Tenants 2021/22