

Appendix 2 – Service Area Initiatives to Improve Customer Satisfaction

Service areas across the Council have been working with tenants to improve satisfaction and general performance. Service areas have also achieved the Customer Service Excellence accreditation which has led to much closer working relationships with tenants.

Direct Services

Direct Services management team have reviewed all the satisfaction data in detail and are actively working to improve satisfaction across service areas, conscious that expectations are continually rising. Although the issue is satisfaction, there is a clear requirement that good performance is demonstrated.

Estate Officer Team:

- The Customer and Workforce Services Manager and the Estate Officer Supervisors have a quarterly meeting with the Tenancy Management Manager to talk through performance, service standards, issues which currently include bulky items like pushchairs being left in communal areas, bikes in corridors etc., which make cleaning difficult.
- The Customer and Workforce Services Manager and the Estate Officer Supervisors have a quarterly meeting with the Maintenance and Surveying Manager to talk through risk assessments, legionella testing, fire alarm testing etc.
- To ensure standards are met, the team have service standards in place, which are displayed in all blocks and review the cleaning schedules frequently to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- All complaints are investigated and action taken where required.
- All staff have undergone customer services training.
- The supervisors inspect all blocks over the year and score the blocks based on the cleanliness against the agreed cleaning standard. The target for clocks passing inspection has increased this year to 96% from 95% over the last few years. Any estate officers whose blocks do not meet the correct standard are spoken to and action taken to restore the cleaning to the required standard.
- Proposals have been made to reinstate a planned approach to the improvement and upgrading of flooring to assist with improving cleaning effectiveness.
- The team have ISO9001 processes in place, which they work towards and these are audited internally and by an external organisation annually.
- The estate officer's job is made difficult in some blocks due to the infrastructure of the building and some tenant's lifestyles.

Street cleaning team

- The Streetscene Manager and the Streetscene team are continuing to support the Great Estates and Cleaner Greener campaigns to deal with litter, dog fouling etc. as per the council's programme.

- The team review work schedules based on collected data around incidents of litter, dog fouling etc.
- The team attend walkabouts with members, members of the public and key officers from across the council to deal with estate issues.
- The team are reviewing Streetscene frequencies based on areas on the STAR report where they are least satisfied and will be undertaking additional inspections on areas to see the extent of the problem.
- All staff have undergone customer services training.
- To ensure standards are met, the team have service standards in place.
- The team have ISO9001 processes in place, which they work towards and these are audited internally and by an external organisation annually.
- The team collect a variety of performance measures and benchmarking data is reviewed annually with APSE and HouseMark to see how the service is performing in a national context.

Repairs and maintenance

- The Building Operations Manager and the Repairs and Maintenance team are now meeting fortnightly with Housing and Properties to reduce delays in bringing forward planned maintenance projects.
- To manage tenant expectations, the Decent Homes Standard and the Oxford Standard will be publicised to demonstrate that the standards have not reduced but the customer expectations have increased and reiterate repair response times.
- Key officers within the service area attended monthly SLA meetings with the contact centre to highlight the importance of the first contact the tenant has with the council and to ensure repairs are being reported correctly as well as dealing with issues to ensure a one council approach and the highest possible customer services to tenants.
- All staff have undergone customer services training.
- To gain further information in real time about the customer experience satisfaction, call-outs from the contact centre would be needed. This would allow early identification of problems and allow early rectification if needed.
- To further review why tenants are dissatisfied, customer journey mapping is going to take place over the summer with around 10 tenants to find out exactly where they become dissatisfied.
- Key Officers work with Repairs tenant groups to research why more tenants are dissatisfied with repairs and maintenance service and what changes could make tenants more satisfied.
- To ensure standards are met, the team have service standards in place.
- The team have ISO9001 processes in place, which they work towards and these are audited internally and by an external organisation annually.
- The team write to tenants when there is a backlog of repairs so they are aware and so expectations can be managed.
- Key officers are reviewing the repairs timescales with housing and promote the repair times and ensure the contact centre state the repairs priority and the time scales.
- As a direct consequence of the STAR results, greater emphasis has been placed on team leaders to ensure jobs are done on time and to monitor the

work in progress (WIP) to ensure all work can be resourced to avoid any backlog of repairs.

- The team are responding to complaints quicker to prevent escalation.
- The team are working with ICT to add a right first time function to handhelds so that it can be monitored.
- The Head of Service has met with Building Services staff to emphasise importance of customer care, jobs being done on time, taking personal responsibility, reducing need for return visits etc.
- Building Services are undergoing a service review in 2016/17 to review all work process, performance, costs etc. to see where further improvements can be made.
- The team collect a variety of performance measures, which is shown below and monitored monthly. As well as this, benchmarking data is reviewed annually with APSE and HouseMark to see how the service is performing in a national context.
- Examples of data / performance for 2015/16 include:
 - Disabled adaptation waiting time was between 6 – 7.5 weeks against a target of 9 weeks or less.
 - 356 kitchens and 302 bathrooms were installed.
 - Average time to complete kitchens was 2.90 weeks against a target of 3 weeks or less.
 - Over 99% of repairs appointments were kept.
 - 4,927 emergency responsive repairs were completed, of which 99.82% were completed on time.
 - 2,892 urgent responsive repairs were completed, of which 99.34% were completed on time.
 - 14,443 routine responsive repairs were completed, of which 97.20% were completed on time.
 - Over the year 1,323 routine jobs were inspected for quality, of which 99.09% passed inspection. All recalled jobs were rectified to the required standard.
 - 2,844 emergency gas repairs were completed, of which 99.58% were completed on time.
 - 2,234 urgent gas repairs were completed, of which 99.02% were completed on time.
 - 3,287 routine gas repairs were completed, of which 99.42% were completed on time; all exceeding target.
 - 7,240 gas services were completed during the year. 100% of gas appliances were serviced this is the 6th year running 100% has been achieved.

The plan for 2016/17 to increase satisfaction with tenants includes:

- Actively encourage use of tenant portal to report repairs.
- Reintroduce text messaging for repairs appointments reminders.
- Customer journey mapping with tenants to identify where tenants became dissatisfied.
- Utilising alternative resources at times of excessive demand.
- Continuing to work with tenant groups and other service areas.

Housing Needs

The Housing Needs teams continue to work with tenants on a one to one basis to understand the customer requirements and have achieved Customer Service Excellence. Customer Satisfaction and feedback is recorded and discussed at monthly team meetings with a view to implementing improvements where needed.

Tenancy Management

The Tenancy Management team held an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) with tenants and leaseholders at the end of September 2015 to provide feedback on ways in which they can improve the service. The attendees included tenants who had used the service in the past twelve months and also tenants who had submitted a complaint about the service over the same period.

Areas for improvement raised by the tenants and outcomes from the AI:

- Improve communication
- Want a way to be able to give us feedback
- Improvements to mutual exchange process
- Show customers fairness

From there, an action plan was developed.

1. Improve communication
 - a. Training of Contact Centre staff to increase ability to answer queries at first call. A training plan has been written with Tenancy Management managers to provide a regular training session at their team meetings.
 - b. Training of Tenancy Management Support Officers to take direct calls to the team. A training plan was carried out and officers are dealing with the majority of queries.
 - c. Tenancy Management Officers and Support officers to check and respond to Lagan (service requests) cases within 24 hours
 - d. Advertise what actions we have taken including environmental improvements and enforcement of the tenancy conditions in the Tenant in Touch magazine. TMOs write an article specifically for their patch area for each edition.
2. Want a way to be able to give us feedback
 - a. TMSOs have added a survey form to mutual exchange visit paperwork
 - b. Appreciative Inquiry to be held for leaseholders in 2016
3. Improvements to mutual exchange process
 - a. Support Officers provide regular updates to the customer on progress (phone or text)
 - b. Hold an exchange conference with other local RSLs to improve working together
 - c. Mutual exchange information leaflet to be produced
4. Show customers fairness

- a. Tailor services to the needs of the customer within legislative limitations (for example assisting tenants with help to move, carpet a property, replacement furniture)
- b. The Tenancy Management Officer for the sheltered schemes has set up regular time slots when she is available at each of the ten schemes to enable tenants to speak with her about any concerns they may have as we recognise it is not as easy for some older residents to use other forms of communication.

Further discussions with tenants were held at the Tenant and Leaseholder Conference.

Welfare Reform Team

The Welfare Reform Team didn't feel that they were getting value from previous survey results, so they have developed a new survey which has been in use since April 2016. The first results from their new customer survey are due to be published in October 2016.

Performance information is published on the Council's website and the intranet and through social media. This shows performance against key targets and service standards. Where we are not meeting these or have identified the need for improvement, we provide a brief narrative outlining the reasons and actions we have taken.

The Welfare Reform Team have run a number of customer and partner consultations in the last 12 months:

- a customer exit survey for our European Social Fund (ESF) private rented project in 2014/15
- a partner exit survey for the ESF project
- a partnership meeting in December 2015 to inform team partners of the work are doing to mitigate the impact of the reduced benefit cap in 2016 and to seek their views on our performance and better joint working
- as part of our Customer Service Excellence (CSE) reaccreditation, a customer focus group in January 2016 – we intend to hold annual customer focus groups as a matter of course

We regained CSE accreditation in January 2016 with full compliance and an extra compliance plus award – we now have five compliance pluses.

Customer and partner feedback are considered widely in our ESF evaluation document, which was also featured in a recent Guardian article:

- 75% of customers said our support was very useful and 11% said it was quite useful
- 53% of partners described their working relationship with us as excellent, and 40% said it was good

Job fairs were a major service initiative during the ESF project, and we initially held these in partnership with Jobcentre Plus (JCP). We now provide financial, logistical

and marketing support for job fairs, with JCP and Aspire as lead delivery partners. This programme routinely considers feedback from jobseekers and employers attending events, and we have made substantial changes to the programme to better meet employer and jobseeker needs.

All customer and partner feedback was considered as part of our 2016/17 service planning. We have made a number of changes to our service delivery model as a result of this feedback. These include:

- an improved alternative support offer where DHP is refused or stopped
- improved caseworker support to jobseekers, including help with CVs and job applications
- development of an in-work support procedure to help customers who find jobs manage the transition off benefits and into work more smoothly.

ASBIT

It is recognised that achieving high satisfaction in anti-social behaviour cases is impossible as many complainants want punitive action against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour whereas the Council essentially wants the behaviour to stop. Similarly there is often a customer perception that relatively minor incidents or breaches of tenancy conditions would warrant eviction however a court has to consider reasonableness and proportionality – meaning that generally only the most severe incidents would end up in a successful possession case.

As a result, rather than focus on satisfaction as a measure, the ASBIT and Community Response Teams have undertaken a massive programme of interventions and engagement across the city.

General figures

- 18 written compliments recorded since Sept 15
- 55 legal actions recorded since Jun 15
- 1 successful commissioned Restorative Justice (RJ) case (Circle of Justice)
- 1 successful RJ with residents in Barton (internal)
- 11 on-going RJ cases being managed between ASBIT and CRT (All ASBIT are trained with 4 CRT)
- Over 95% of Multi Agency Safeguarding hub enquiries completed on time (5% shortfall due to IT issues)
- 97 Cases on Uniform since Mar 16
- 150 Sanctuary cases (Apr15-Apr16)
- Community Protection Notices are being successfully used to deal with low level nuisance at least 4 notices have resulted in paid fixed penalty notices, 1 notice is currently being appealed and 1 notice is going to court.
- 1 undertaking in a complex case involving a number of vulnerable males in a housing block
- Numerous Safeguarding referrals

Projects

- Appreciative inquiries for residents – Barton community, Blackbird Leys Youths x2 and Graffiti
- Implemented Mandatory possession and now following through on a case
- Supported successful Closure Notice and application for Closure Order
- Successfully managing 4 temporary CCTV cameras in response to ASB issues
- Successfully challenged introductory tenancy of a tenant
- Foresters Tower PSPO is remaining successful and was first of its kind in the country
- City Centre PSPO is running successfully – Appreciative Inquiry and focus groups around Busking
- Osney Fields – rough sleeping - area is now clear of at least 20 residents/5 encampments
- Neighbourhood Resolution is through the planning stage with the open events being organised
- VERA ((Vulnerable Elderly Risk Assessment) scheme is progressing very well
- Blackbird Leys regeneration ASB sub group progressing very well
- Joint approach with Youth Ambition with regard to Participatory Budgeting and youth forums
- Supporting of the Oxford Food Surplus Café and the Oxford Soup
- All ASBIT Officers are trained and accredited with the ability to apply for interim injunctions without legal representation (2 successful injunctions have been gained since accreditation)
- Continued support to Thames Valley Police (TVP) for Organised Crime Groups (OCG) and serious
- Young carers initiative to comply with the Care Act 2014
- Management of domestic noise and the Matron equipment
- Language forum chaired by ASBIT
- Student champion scheme continued in conjunction with Oxford Brookes
- All Neighbourhood Action Groups are attended
- Neighbourhood Resolution Project: Building Community Super Heroes.

ASBIT follows the Victim's Charter and adheres to the local offer. They have also achieved ISO 9001 accreditation and are seeking Customer Service Excellence accreditation. The team have also worked closely with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel on a number of workshops and briefings.

Community Response Team

Compliments received by CRT 3Cs 2015-16 = 38

Initial Contact within 5 days = 97% (across all tenancy types)

The following Community Engagement initiatives have either taken place or are planned

- Participation with Tenant Involvement in Local Offer ASB input to tenants

- Arranged for tenants to attend walkabouts to look at environmental issues in Blackbird Leys
- Rose Hill Community Centre – Claws event arranged for the benefit of the community, free micro chipping and neutering for cats / dogs.
- Blackbird Leys – Claws event ran in October 2015 – 174 Cats and Dogs were either micro chipped neutered or had a combination of the two. These were arranged in partnership with, RSPCA, Dogs Trust, Cat Protection, local vets, Blue Cross
- Barton is next for Claws event to be trailed
- Dog fouling operation incorporating education conducted on Blackbird Leys Estate in February
- Participated in Clean For the Queen litter pick
- Monthly drop in for members of the public to meet the CRT and police at East Oxford Community Centre
- Attend Curry For the Homeless in East Oxford to give One Council advice
- Attend East Oxford Mosque and deliver advice, signpost housing enquiries
- Facilitating Appreciative Inquiries with ASBIT
- Participated and had a stand at all Tennant Conference at the Town Hall
- Engaged with Community and Neighbourhood to ensure Partnership Priority Areas have correct direction
- Work out in the community – Rose Hill Community Centre every Tuesday and Thursday to engage with the public / tenants
- Littlemore – Arranged to work out of / provide a drop in facility on the estate in Littlemore Community Centre
- Plans in place to run this out eventually in all areas of the city
- Engage in all walkabouts with Councillors
- Attend Tenant Resident Association (TRA), Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) , Parish Council Meetings, Waterways meetings, Area Forums, public meetings
- Have trained some of the team in Restorative Justice in conjunction with ASBIT
- Some officers have participated in a Level 3 Community Problem Solving qualification
- Officers also attained BTEC Level 3 in ASB Case Management
- Cleaner Greener Campaign for north Cutteslowe to be undertaken in June with another three areas across the city to follow

Incomes Team (Rents)

Although the Incomes Team don't measure satisfaction within the service they have initiatives planned to engage and receive feedback from customers.

- Tenant Focus Group – (escalation policy) we carried this out last year to gain feedback on tenants to what our escalation policy should look like. We are taking those views into our development of new processes on Northgate. We intend to re-visit those groups in the coming months when testing the escalation process.
- Leaseholder Focus Group – reviewing the letters we send along with escalation policy we want to get some feedback from this customer group.

- New Tenants – we are talking to all new tenants advising on the correct payment plan, promoting direct debit take up and educating them on the service and how to contact us when in need.
- Court Survey – we intend to speak to tenants that have been to court and gather opinion as to whether we could have done things differently such as escalation, payment plans, communication methods.
- Branding Campaign – we are working with Tenant Involvement developing a campaign to promote the role we do and how we can assist in ways other than rent payments.

Tenant Involvement Team

Although the Tenant Involvement Team do not currently measure satisfaction with their own services, they have been instrumental in helping teams across the council, facilitating meetings between tenants and service areas.

The Tenant Review group will be looking at the Tenant Involvement Team this year.

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