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## **Your Homes Newcastle Outer West and North Area Board**

14<sup>th</sup> May 2007

Service standard monitoring and review

**Report by: Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Business**

**Area Implications: Outer West and North**

For information

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The service standard monitoring report to Area Boards in March provided an update on revised service standards for housing management. It also gave information about the review of all service standards, and described monitoring arrangements.
- 1.2 Further comments were made in relation to the housing management service standards at the March meeting of the Outer West and North Area Board. A response is given to these comments in this report. Work on reviewing other service standards has progressed since March. This work is also described in the report
- 1.3 Following the completion of the YHN Service Plan for 2007/08, a review has taken place of monitoring arrangements in relation to all service plan targets. This review impacts upon future reporting of performance in relation to service standards. This report explains revised arrangements, and proposes changes to the way in which performance in relation to service standards is reported to Area Boards.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Area board are recommended to:
  - Agree the amended housing management service standards, and to make comments and ask any questions that relate to any aspect of the report.
  - Receive a combined performance and service standard report at future

meetings

### **3. Your Homes Newcastle Strategic Objectives**

- 3.1 As an element of performance management, monitoring our performance in relation to our service standards can help us achieve all of our strategic objectives.

### **4. Housing Management Service Standards**

- 4.1 A number of comments were made by Outer West and North Area Board in March in relation to the revised housing management service standards. These are addressed below:

- It was requested that for repair times given as service guarantees it should be specified whether the timescale is calendar or working days. This information will be included. The revised section has been amended to:

We will ensure that target response times for all categories of repair are achieved. This includes the following targets:

- Urgent 1 working day – 98%
  - Urgent 3 working days – 98%
  - 7 calendar days – 96%
  - 28 calendar days – 98%
  - Special agreed (will include Minor Works) – 98%
  - Rapid Response appointments – 97% within 5 working days
- Reference was made to the Respect agenda. It was suggested that this should be incorporated into the nuisance and harassment service standards. The difficulty with doing this is in relation to timescales. It is proposed to complete the review of all service standards by August. It is unlikely that specific targets or service guarantees can be drawn from Respect before then. However, discussions about how Respect can be incorporated are being carried out initially with the manager of the Tenancy Services Team.
  - It was pointed out that there was a discrepancy in the report about the timescale for visits to new tenants. The proposed timescale is six weeks, as at present, and this will be clarified in the standards.
  - Greater clarity was requested in relation to the timescales and categories for types on nuisance and harassment. It is intended that the 1, 5 and 10 day timescales should generally correspond to the types of harassment listed in the March report as follows:

We will begin investigating cases of nuisance or harassment either:

- the next working day: for example abusive graffiti, assault, domestic violence, racial harassment and criminal activity

- within five working days: for example property damage and vandalism, loud noise, music and parties, and rubbish dumping
- within ten working days: for example illegal parking, behaviour of animals, scrap and rubbish accumulation

It is difficult to be too prescriptive in terms of which category fits which type of nuisance, as the seriousness of incidents within each category can vary. It is proposed to include a wider list of categories in the revised nuisance and harassment service standards. Also, the text of the revised service standard booklet will be amended to make a stronger link between categories and timescales

- It was also asked how monitoring of the service standard that customers should be seen within 5 minutes would be carried out. This will be through a combination of 'mystery shopping', satisfaction surveys and random sampling. The details of this have yet to be finalised, as the standards are still in draft form

- 4.2 Following incorporation of Area Board comments into the revised draft housing management service standards, it is now proposed to consult on the standards with the Tenants Federation, prior to their final agreement

## **5. Service Standard Review**

- 5.1 Since the March meeting of the Area Boards, the review of service standards has progressed. In addition to the eight sets of service standards already reviewed, discussions have commenced initially with service managers with responsibility for the remaining sets of service standards. It is intended to bring a full list of proposed service standards for the remaining services to the July meeting of this board.

It is proposed that service user and stakeholder consultation in relation to revised standards will commence following meeting with service managers. This will primarily be with the Tenants Federation, but will incorporate other appropriate groups. An example of this is that a focus group has already been held with stakeholders of Newcastle Furniture Service to discuss and agree revised service standards in principle, subject to agreement by Area Board and other service users.

## **6. Service Standard Monitoring**

- 6.1 Since the March meeting of Area Boards, the new YHN Delivery and Service Plans for 2007/08 have been agreed by Main Board, and by the City Council Executive. The new Service Plan includes a list of targets for each team within the organisation. This year, the service plan includes a wider range of targets, actions and standards, and it incorporates service standards where these have already been reviewed.

6.2 Monitoring arrangements in relation to the service plan have been developed to ensure that service managers are able to provide accurate information in relation to all of their targets. This will include information to confirm performance in relation to service standards, where these have already been revised

6.3 As service standards are becoming more precise and measurable through the review, and information is being collected on these through the performance management framework, it is proposed to amalgamate the monitoring of service standards and performance into one report in future. This should simplify arrangements in terms of collecting information, and it should also make the information presented to Boards more meaningful and easier to understand. Area Boards are requested to consider and comment on this proposal.

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Background Papers: Service standard monitoring reports to YHN Area Boards, July 2006, March 2007