

SUBJECT:	HOUSING 30-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN: SUMMARY OF INITIAL TENANTS' CONSULTATION
DIRECTORATE:	HOUSING AND INVESTMENT
REPORT AUTHORS:	RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT, CORPORATE POLICY AND TRANSFORMATION

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee the results of the recent tenants' consultation, linked to the Council's Housing Revenue Account 30-Year Business Plan.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Council's HRA Business Plan was approved by Executive in November 2023. This business plan sets out the long-term income and expenditure plans for delivery of council housing in the city over the next thirty years, and was developed in partnership with Savills.
- 2.2 The Lincoln Tenants' Panel has been involved in development of the business plan since its inception. During summer 2023, prior to finalising and seeking Executive approval for the business plan, the Council also undertook a wider consultation with tenants to seek their views on their local neighbourhoods.
- 2.3 This report aims to brief the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the Council's approach to this tenants' consultation, and summarise the responses received.

3. Approach to Tenants' Consultation

- 3.1 The Council is committed to empowering its tenants, through meaningful engagement in decision making and encouraging them to hold the Council to account. The city has an active and effective tenants' panel (LTP), which represents all council tenants and leaseholders in the city, and the Council has worked closely with the LTP and Members in developing the business plan.
- 3.2 Given the significance of the Housing 30-Year Business Plan and the ambitious objectives it seeks to deliver, the Council and the LTP identified a need for early engagement with all tenants in the city. This early engagement was sought via a short survey, and gave tenants an opportunity to share their views on their neighbourhoods and estates.
- 3.3 Survey questions were developed by Housing and Investment in partnership with the LTP, with advice sought from the Communications and Corporate Policy and Transformation Teams prior to approval by the Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing. The survey was sent by post to every council tenant and leaseholder in the city (over 7,800 properties). An incentive was offered to complete the survey to

boost participation; all tenants who responded were given an opportunity to be entered into a prize draw to win a £100 high street shopping voucher. Tenants were given the option of responding to the survey online or by post, and provided with both pre-paid postage and a QR code make it easy to take part. A copy of the survey is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.

- 3.4 The survey ran for three weeks, ending on 31st August. The response rate to the survey was relatively low, with 311 responses (4%). Approximately two thirds of tenants returned their surveys by post, with the remaining third completing it online.
- 3.5 Survey responses were then collated and analysed, and a copy of the findings are attached as '**Appendix B**' to this report.

4. Summary of Consultation Findings

- 4.1 The findings set out in '**Appendix B**' show that, overall, the Council's tenants are relatively satisfied with the areas where they live. For consistency, responses to each survey question have been interpreted using the following methodology:

- Each question category asked tenants to rate their satisfaction with a given topic, from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 10 (very satisfied). Scores of 5 or above were therefore considered to indicate a neutral-to-positive response. Scores of 4 or below have been interpreted as negative responses.
- Each rating question was followed by a free text question, which gave tenants an opportunity to leave comments linked to the preceding question. These responses are likely to have skewed negative due to the question type; not all respondents answered these free text questions; and many of the positive comments left by respondents were very brief and offered limited additional information. Because of this, the comments data in '**Appendix B**' collates negative feedback only.

4.2 Satisfaction with Living on their Estate/Neighbourhood

73% of respondents selected the rating 5 or above, indicating that almost three quarters of tenants who responded either rate their neighbourhoods positively or hold neutral views on this topic. The mean score given by tenants was 6.20 out of 10.

The subsequent question that asked residents to explain their score garnered 104 positive comments and 161 negative comments. Key themes for both positive and negative comments related to how respondents felt about their neighbours, their community, and the behaviour of people in vicinity of their home. Figure 2 in '**Appendix B**' categorises the negative comments received from respondents.

The most common reason given by respondents who provided negative comments was antisocial behaviour.

4.3 Satisfaction with Paths/Green Space/Play Space

The mean score for this question was 5.75, with 70% of respondents giving a satisfaction rating of 5 or above.

Significantly more negative responses were received than positive, focused primarily on maintenance, cleanliness and the condition of pavements. Figure 4 categorises the negative comments received. Comments related to maintenance centred around trees, hedges and weed control, with numerous tenants providing comments about the condition of paths in their neighbourhood. Comments on cleanliness focused on people fly tipping and littering.

Responses also indicate a demand for more child friendly outdoor spaces, with 28 comments in this category.

4.4 Satisfaction with Parking

This rating question garnered the lowest overall satisfaction score in the survey, with a mean score of 5.19. The subsequent comment question highlighted concern over a lack of parking spaces, and issues linked to inconsiderate parking behaviours.

Figure 6 in '**Appendix B**' categorises the negative comments received.

4.5 Perceptions of Safety

72% of respondents rated this question 5 or above, indicating that the majority of tenants who completed the survey felt safe in their home and neighbourhood. Over 40% of respondents gave a score of 8 or above.

Of the 169 negative comments received, the most common reason given by respondents was antisocial behaviour, followed by concerns about drugs. 38 respondents stated they felt unsafe without providing more information.

4.6 Satisfaction with Communal Areas (if applicable)

66% of respondents gave neutral-to-positive scores on satisfaction with communal areas, and 69% for outdoor communal areas. Similar to feedback on outdoor greenspaces, negative comments provided in relation to the subsequent question centred around cleanliness/fly tipping and maintenance issues.

4.7 Top 5 Improvements

Key improvements requested by respondents were as follows:

- Improved parking
- Street cleanliness
- Road/pavement maintenance
- Garden maintenance
- Child/youth facilities

Improved parking was the most popular response, with 36.4% of respondents providing comments linked to this topic.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 The City of Lincoln Council's Vision 2025 priorities are:

- Let's drive inclusive economic growth.
- Let's reduce all kinds of inequality.
- Let's deliver quality housing.
- Let's enhance our remarkable place.
- Let's address the challenge of climate change.

This report relates primarily to 'Let's deliver quality housing.' Meaningful engagement with tenants and leaseholders is crucial to delivery of the 30-Year Business Plan, and the consultation feedback provided in this report will assist the Council in understanding, at this early stage in the life cycle of the business plan, the key issues that matter to tenants when developing new housing and regenerating existing assets. This feedback also provides an insight into how the residents view their local area and may also be used for information for the 'Let's enhance our remarkable place' priority.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The consultation subject of this report demonstrates the Council's commitment to engaging with all tenants. This is the first of multiple engagement exercises with tenants on the 30-Year Business Plan, and further measures will be taken to try to ensure that customer feedback is as representative of the city's makeup as can be achieved.

7. Risk Implications

- 7.1 (i) Options Explored – Not applicable to this report.
- 7.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach – Not applicable for this report.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee reviews and comments on the content of this report and the information contained therein.

Is this a key decision?	No
Do the exempt information categories apply?	No
Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?	No
How many appendices does the report contain?	Two (Appendix A, B)
List of Background Papers:	None

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