

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES ANNUAL REPORT – 2024-25</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND INVESTMENT</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>BUSINESS MANAGER - CORPORATE POLICY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT</b>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present to the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee a report on performance against the National Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures for the year 2024/25; and
- 1.2 To propose, based on the key findings arising from 2024/25 TSMs, the key areas of focus for DHL over the coming year to further improve tenant satisfaction.

## **2. Lincoln Tenants Panel Consultation**

- 2.1 LTP have been consulted about this report and comments noted.

## **3. Summary**

- 3.1 The national Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) came into force in April 2023, as part of the Social Housing Regulation Act. In April 2024 these were incorporated into the Regulator's Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.
- 3.2 The purpose of TSMs is to ensure openness and transparency among social housing providers; specifically, how they treat tenants with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise complaints, and influence decision making and hold their landlord to account. Landlords are also required to understand the diverse needs of their tenants; engage with them and take their views into account when making decisions; communicate with their tenants and provide information; and encourage effective scrutiny.
- 3.3 The TSMs are in two parts
  - 12 'tenant perception measures', obtained by surveying tenants for their views; and
  - 10 'management information measures', derived from data held by the landlord as part of their housing management and asset management activities.
- 3.4 To ensure consistency and comparability between housing providers, there is a data standard for each TSM. This is defined by the Regulator in the form of

technical guidance. There is both a national standard for [tenant survey requirements](#), and [technical requirements](#) for each TSM. Every housing provider with a stock size of more than 1,000 is required to submit an annual return to the Regulator.

- 3.5 A copy of the performance data for the Council's TSM annual return is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.

#### 4. Approach

- 4.1 In 2023 the Council procured services from Acuity Research and Practice to undertake the tenant perception survey element of the TSMs on its behalf. Based on the Council's stock size, the TSM technical guidance requires it to survey 600 households each year.

In 2024/25 Acuity completed 150 tenant perception surveys each quarter.

- 4.2 All tenant perception surveys were completed by telephone. In addition to the core TSM tenant perception questions, the Council's contract with Acuity enables it to ask up to three additional, non-statutory questions. In addition, the Council chose to ask the following, as an opportunity to gain enhanced insights into tenants' views:

- **Easy to deal with** – “how satisfied or dissatisfied are with the service provided by City of Lincoln Council's Housing Service?”
- **Net promoter score** – “how likely would you be to recommend City of Lincoln Council's Housing Service to other people?”
- **Cost of living** – “how concerned are you about the cost of living for you personally”

Tenants were also asked “Are you interested in getting more involved with the City of Lincoln Council to help them improve their service? If you are interested, we will tell City of Lincoln Council”.

- 4.3 Acuity's approach to the mandatory tenant perception questions included clarification/follow up questions, to help tenants to provide more detailed responses. This has been very beneficial and has enabled the Council to gain greater insights into tenants' views beyond the standard tenant perception questions. Tenants were also asked if they were willing to consent to being contacted by the Housing service to discuss their responses in more depth. The Residents Involvement Team do follow up calls (customer recovery) with those residents who wish to continue participation.

- 4.4 Data for the ten management information measures has been compiled in-house, using the same internal data collection arrangements as established quarterly performance reporting.

- 4.5 All data in '**Appendix A**' complies with the technical guidance referred to in paragraph 3.4.

## 5. Results and Benchmarking – Tenant Perception Measures

- 5.1 There are twelve tenant perception (TP) measures which are collated on a quarterly basis and these report satisfaction levels of the tenant responding.

The table below sets out the performance data for these measures showing comparisons for each quarter in 2024/25, the annual figure for 2024/25 and the annual figure for 2023/24 for comparison.

Measure	Q1 2024/25	Q2 2024/25	Q3 2024/25	Q4 2024/25	2024/25	2023/24
Overall Satisfaction (TP01)	64%	69%	73%	66%	68% (-3)	71%
<b>Keeping Properties in Good Repair</b>						
Repairs Last 12 Months (TP02)	73%	71%	72%	75%	73% (-2)	75%
Time Taken Repairs (TP03)	67%	66%	61%	71%	66% (-2)	68%
Well Maintained Home (TP04)	71%	70%	71%	68%	70% (-3)	73%
Safe Home (TP05)	75%	75%	76%	73%	75% (0)	75%
<b>Respectful and Helpful Engagement</b>						
Listens & Acts (TP06)	58%	58%	59%	49%	56% (-4)	60%
Kept Informed (TP07)	71%	72%	70%	69%	71% (+3)	68%
Fairly & with Respect (TP08)	80%	78%	79%	77%	78% (+1)	77%
Complaints Handling (TP09)	36%	51%	48%	39%	44% (+7)	37%
<b>Responsible Neighbourhood Management</b>						
Communal Areas (TP10)	64%	79%	76%	68%	72% (-3)	75%
Neighbourhood Contribution (TP11)	65%	65%	65%	67%	65% (-4)	69%
Approach to ASB (TP12)	53%	59%	59%	47%	55% (+1)	53%
<b>Other</b>						
Easy to Deal With	69%	69%	72%	65%	69% (-1)	70%
NPS (Promoters)	35%	34%	43%	31%	36% (-5)	41%

- 5.2 Overall, 68.2% (TP01) of City of Lincoln's tenants are satisfied with the service they receive from their landlord. This is a slight reduction from previous year of 71% and does usually fluctuate through the year.

The Housing Service highest level of satisfaction for the way the Council treats its tenants fairly and with respect is 78.3% (TP08)

Six of the twelve tenant perception measures in the table have a satisfaction rate of 70% or above and five are between 55% - 69%. One is under 50%, "Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling" which has a satisfaction rate of 44%. It should be noted that this has the highest percentage point increase compared with 2023/24 and when benchmarked against other social housing providers, City of Lincoln is in the top quartile for this measure.

- 5.3 Benchmarking for all twelve tenant perception measures is based on 'quartiles'. The Council's performance against the quartile thresholds for each measure is set out in '**Appendix A**'. This information shows how City of Lincoln Council's performance compared with other social housing landlords, during 2024/25 for these 12 measures.

It should be noted that minor changes in percentage can see a reduction in benchmarking position and measures that are improving locally may still see a reduction in quartile position when compared against other social landlords through national benchmarking.

- 5.4 As detailed in Appendix A, in 2024/25, for the twelve tenant perception measures;
- 3 are in the top quartile
  - 8 are in the second quartile
  - 1 is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile

This is compared with all twelve being in the top quartile in 2023/24.

These will fluctuate depending on the individual circumstances and experiences of tenants surveyed and are a snapshot of a moment in time.

- 5.5 It should be noted that the measure that has moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile in 2024/24 is “TP12 – Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord’s approach to handling anti-social behaviour” which actually saw an increase in percentage satisfaction score.

## **6. Results and Benchmarking – Management Information Measures**

- 6.1 Some Housemark benchmarking comparisons for the ten management information measures are based on the national median rather than quartiles. Where this applies, this is set out clearly in ‘**Appendix A**’.

- 6.2 The highest performance across the management information measures are:

- Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes standard. At only 0.26% of the Council’s housing stock, performance is in the top quartile.
- Proportion of homes for which all fire risk assessments have been carried out. At 100% compliance, this is the maximum amount achievable and places the Council above the national Housemark median.
- Proportion of homes for which all communal passenger lift checks have been completed. As with fire risk assessments, a compliance rate of 100% is the maximum achievable.
- Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out. At 100%, this is the maximum compliance achievable against this measure
- Emergency repairs completed within target timescale. With year-end performance at 99.96%, the Council is placed in the top quartile among Housemark members nationally.
- Proportion of homes for which all gas safety checks have been carried out. Performance is in line with the Housemark median for this measure at 99.87%.
- The proportion of ASB cases reported per 1,000 homes is just above the national Housemark median. At 0.4 per 1,000 homes, the proportion of reported hate incidents is significantly lower than the national Housemark median of 0.7 (low is good) and relates to one report.

- Non-emergency responsive repairs carried out within target timescale. At 89.12%, this places the Council in the top quartile of Housemark members. The threshold for placement in the top quartile is 88.4%, and the Council's performance against this measure exceeds this.

## **7. Benchmarking Regulator of Social Housing 2023/24 and other Findings**

- 7.1 At the end of last year, The Regulator issued the results from all landlords completing their TSM returns, and these results can be used to compare against the results from the Council's survey. Although there is a lag in this full data set and is comparing 2023/24 data instead of the more recent 2024/25 data it is worth noting the Council's result in the wider context and presenting this information for comparison next year to examine direction of travel.

This information has been included in Appendix A and compares the Council's results against all social landlords that submitted data based on both Low-Cost Rental Accommodation (LCRA) and against other local authorities.

The Council compares very well against other local authorities, with all measures above the Regulator median. Two measures, the handling of complaints (43.9%) and the upkeep of the communal areas (71.8%), are in the top quartile.

Although these results show good levels of satisfaction when compared to other local authorities, improvements can still be made to further improve satisfaction scores, and recommended areas of focus are highlighted in section 8 of this report.

- 7.2 Notable observations from this analysis are summarised below:

- 7.3 The 'Keeping Properties in Good Repair' section of the tenant perception survey indicates that, whilst the Council's overall performance on repairs is in the top quartile of Housemark members, this does not align with tenants' perceptions.

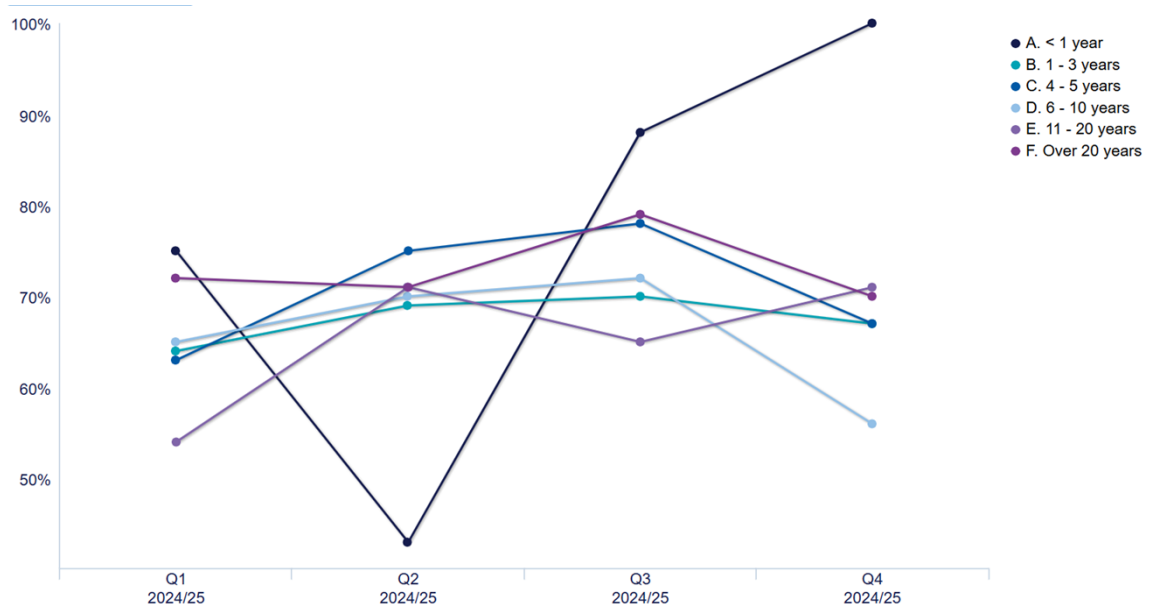
The top two reasons expressed by tenants for dissatisfaction with the repairs service were:

- The timescales for completion of repairs; and
- Outstanding and forgotten repairs.

Of the 600 tenants who answered this question, (389) 62% said they had a repair completed in the home in the last 12 months. Satisfaction in this area has decreased slightly (-2.1%) as well as a decrease in satisfaction in the speed of repairs (-1.7%).

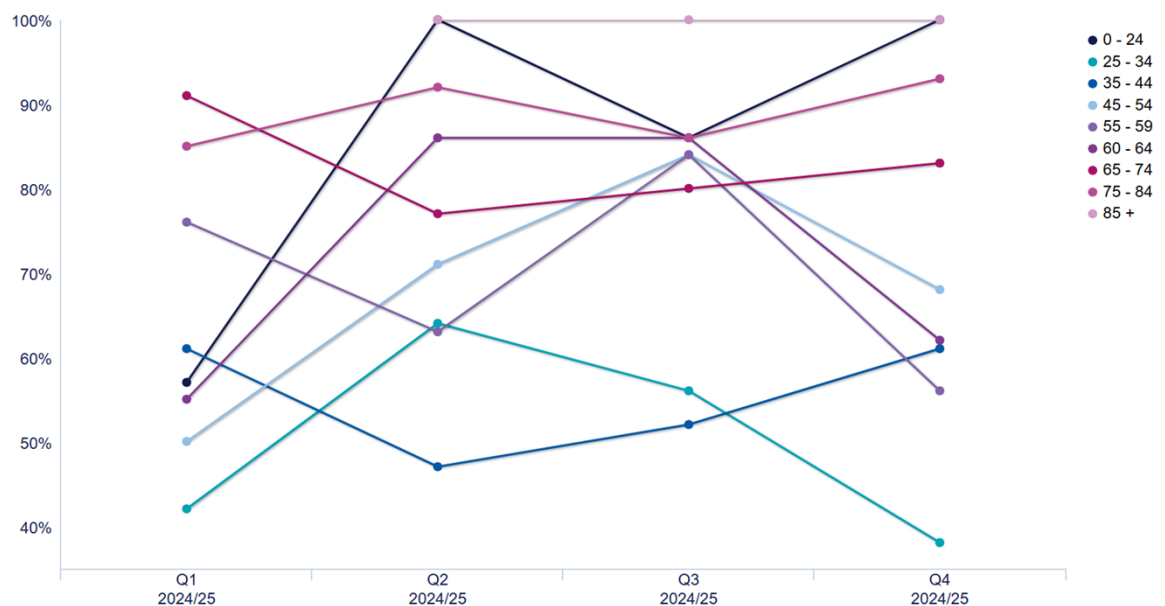
- 7.4 When splitting down the results into different subgroups, this confirms that satisfaction does tend to increase with age, those in the Housing for Older People being particularly highly satisfied. No single area stands out from the rest in terms of satisfaction, although those in the city centre appear to be a little more satisfied than those in other areas. Those tenants new to the Council and those with the longest tenures tend to be the most satisfied and male tenants are more satisfied than their female counterparts.

- 7.5 As shown in Figure 1 below, there is close correlation between length of tenancy and overall tenant satisfaction. Tenants reporting highest levels of satisfaction are those who have lived in City of Lincoln housing stock for less than one year, or more than 20 years. Dissatisfaction appears to peak between 1 and 5 years, before steadily improving over time.



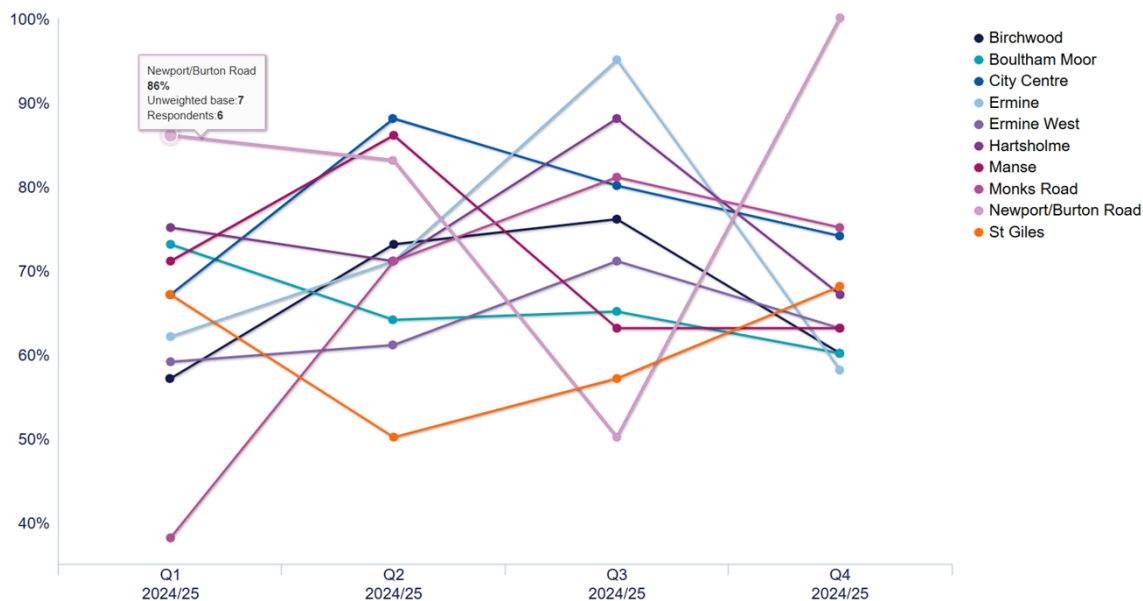
**Figure 1: Summary of relationship between tenant satisfaction and length of tenancy**

- 7.6 Figure 2 highlights the correlation between satisfaction and age, with satisfaction generally improving as tenants get older. This correlation will be linked to tenancy length, as set out in Figure 1.



**Figure 2: Summary of relationship between tenant satisfaction and age**

- 7.7 Figure 3 highlights the correlation between where tenants live and satisfaction, this does vary however, those living on Newport/Burton Road are overall 100% satisfied in comparison with areas such as Boultham and Birchwood with Ermine having the lowest score.



- 7.8 The Council chose to ask tenants three additional questions as part of its tenant perception survey. More than three-quarters of tenants (77%) are at least slightly concerned about the cost-of-living crisis; 51% are very concerned, slight increase from Q3, with 26% slightly concerned. Just 13% are not concerned at all, although this has increased slightly also.

Analysis by Acuity demonstrates a strong relationship between tenants' concern about the cost-of-living crisis and their satisfaction with the Council's landlord function. It is often shown that those struggling financially are less satisfied with the range of services provided by their landlord. This does appear to be the case with the City of Lincoln Council. This does suggest that if the Council can relieve some of this concern by helping with budgeting or with benefits, it could lead to higher satisfaction. Promoting the Council's Welfare Team may be of benefit to tenants and outcomes from the developing Lincoln's Anti-Poverty Strategy and action plan will also support tenants.

- 7.9 A question related to 'net promoter score' indicated just under a third of tenants (31%) are promoters, happy to promote and recommend City of Lincoln Council to other people, with 25% giving a score of 10 out of 10.

The same number of tenants are considered passives, giving a score of 7 or 8. Addressing the specific concerns of this group is likely to increase the number of promoters. However, more are detractors this quarter (38%).

Issues related to the repair service were once again the most frequently mentioned, with the timescales for completing repairs and dealing with outstanding repairs the most common; issues which are hard to resolve. "Quicker responses with

maintenance issues." Communications and customer service are then the next issues, in particular, showing tenants care and support when they make contact, listening to them more carefully and some say they would like more visits from staff.

- 7.10 The third and final additional question asked tenants to what extent they agreed the Council is easy to deal with. 65% of respondents stated they agreed with this.

## 8. Conclusion - Key Drivers of Tenant Satisfaction

- 8.1 Overall, levels of satisfaction for services provided by the City of Lincoln remain moderate, with satisfaction rates performing in line with the Regulator median for councils with under 10,000 properties.
- 8.2 Acuity's analysis reveals the key drivers that influence satisfaction among City of Lincoln tenants. The most important driver for tenant satisfaction is for the Council to provide a safe home. This has changed slightly from last year with "well maintained home" being the main driver last year. This, and the other key drivers, are set out in Figure 4 below:

### Key Driver Analysis

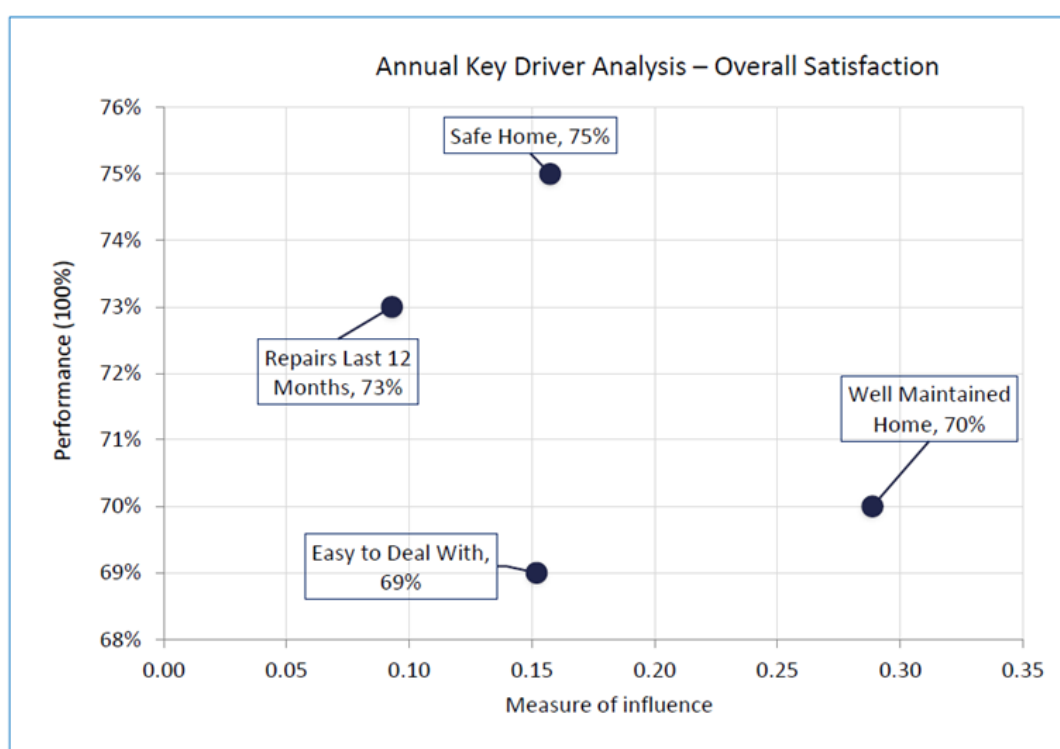


Figure 4: Acuity analysis of key driver of Lincoln tenants' overall satisfaction

- 8.3 Two measures outperformed the upper quartile score; satisfaction with complaint handling (44%) and satisfaction that communal areas are clean and well maintained (72%) which are quite often lower-scoring metrics of surveys of this type.



As seen above a well-maintained home and a safe home are key drivers of satisfaction for the tenants of the Council.

In last year's report, presented to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee in August 2024, one of the recommended areas of focus for the coming year was "Improving how the Council responds to complaints". As previously mentioned in this report, Measure TP09 has increased to 43.9% satisfaction from 37% in 2023/24 and the Council's performance is benchmarked in the top quartile. When analysing the Council's complaints data, the conversion rate from Level 1 complaints to Level 2 complaints in the Directorate for Housing and Investment is relatively low at 14% also suggesting that complaints are resolved largely at the first review.

Also in last year's report, a focus on perceptions around ASB was suggested. Despite Measure TP12 being benchmarked in the third quartile, satisfaction did increase from 53% to 55% and whilst progress is being made, it is acknowledged that further work would be beneficial.

These, and TSM performance data summarised in '**Appendix A**', indicate that the key areas of focus for the coming year should be:

#### **8.4 Repairs Service – Communication**

While satisfaction with recent repairs is one of the highest rated measures in the survey at 73% and in line with the Regulator median, the time taken to complete repairs is lower at 66%. Timescales to complete repairs combined with outstanding repairs were the most commonly cited reasons for dissatisfaction in the survey and also cited against the open question around customer service and communication. These issues are also cited in complaints.

Day-to-day repairs are a key service, and for most tenants, one of the main reasons they would be in contact with their Council.

It is important, therefore, to investigate causes of dissatisfaction and to look at ways to improve the service. From a review of complaints in 2024/25 and the commentary in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, miscommunication, poor communication and follow up on progress with repairs is identified as an area for focus along with time take for repairs to be undertaken. Reviewing the efficiency of existing systems and procedures for communicating repairs would be a beneficial development area.

#### **8.5 Customer Care and Communication**

While the provision of good quality, well-maintained, and safe homes are the key drivers of satisfaction with the Council, effective communication and a high standard of customer care are also shown to be very important to tenants.

Frustration from not being able to contact the Council easily is likely to hurt satisfaction with a range of service areas, as will a lack of empathy from staff. Resources may limit what is possible around increasing the capacity for answering

calls, however, work is currently underway to investigate opportunities to reduce call wait times through a deep dive into customer services demand and processes.

Through a review of annual complaints last year alongside the detail in the Tenant Satisfaction Measure commentary, customer care across services has been identified as an area of focus. Options for refresher customer care guidance and training available to officers across services are being investigated for delivery in 2025/26.

## **8.6 Complaints Handling**

Complaint handling can be one of the lower-performing measures in these surveys for most social housing landlords. There is an opportunity to explore complaint handling at the Council, with a 6p.p lead on the upper quartile figure and a 7p.p increase in satisfaction from 2023/24. The Council could benefit from investigating tenants' reasons for dissatisfaction by following up with tenants from this survey.

It has been nearly a year since the updated Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code and many providers are still facing challenges. Compliance is not enough and as the Council is demonstrating strength in this area there would be benefit from the investment in customer care and communication to drive satisfaction.

A further piece of work is currently underway reviewing the data on all complaints received during 2024/25 to understand issues in more detail with a view to identifying the areas that need further support and improvement. The detail in the complaints correlate with the comments and feedback in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

## **8.7 Tenant Participation**

In last year's report a focus on improving approaches to tenant participation and keeping tenants informed was suggested. In 2024/25, measure TP07, "Proportion of respondents who report that their landlord keeps them informed about the things that matter to them" is 70.6% and increase from 68% in 2023/24. Measure TP06, "Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to them" is 55.8% which has decreased from 60% in 2023/24. Both of these measures rank in Quartile 2 in the benchmarking data.

Continuing to improve approaches to tenant participation and keeping tenants informed should be continued through digital magazine and encourage tenants to participate in future service delivery. The Council is updating both its Communication Strategy and Consultation and Engagement Strategy during 2025/26 and further feedback from tenants will be sought and considered as these are developed.

## **9. Strategic Priorities**

### **9.1 The City of Lincoln Council's Vision 2030 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'. Monitoring and reporting performance, and tenant satisfaction, provide the means for the Council to assess its progress against this corporate priority and identify areas for improvement.

## **10. Organisational Impacts**

### **10.1 Finance**

Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, there are several indicators that do affect the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) including the amount of rent collected and repairs and improvements.

The financial position of the HRA and Housing Repairs Service (HRS) are continually monitored, with quarterly reports to Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Executive.

### **10.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **10.3 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.

Due to the nature of this report, there are no equality, diversity and human rights impacts to be assessed however their impact will continue to be considered as part of the service delivery.

## **11. Risk Implications**

### **11.1 (i) Options Explored**

Not applicable to this report.

11.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach

Not applicable for this report.

**12. Recommendation**

- 12.1 That Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee reviews and comments on the content of this report and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures data contained therein;
- 12.2 That Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee supports the priorities listed in section 8 of this report; and
- 12.3 That Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee notes the TSM data contained within **'Appendix A'**.

**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?**

One  
(Appendix A)

**List of Background Papers:**

None

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