

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY – UPDATE**

Report of the Head of Personnel

### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The current Customer Service Strategy was launched in April 2016.
- 1.2 This report provides Operational Board with an update against progress made and includes the marketing opportunities now provided through the 'Get Online' incentive scheme approved by the Council.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Approve the target figures for tenants registering and using 'my tenancy on line' as:  
  
April 2017 – April 2019 to increase the number of tenants registered from 4000 to 8000.
- 2.2 Note the actions being taken to implement the Customer Service Strategy.

### **3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 The Customer Service Strategy is about expanding the accessibility of our services and giving our customers more choice.

It is designed to ensure that our customers know the different options available to make contact with us.

Our objective is to support those customers who could use the website to do so. If these customers could use the website they would benefit from accessing services at a time that would suit them.

- 3.2 In March 2017 the Council Cabinet approved a new incentive scheme for tenants which supports the Derby Homes Customer Service Strategy. One of the key elements required to qualify for a £100 incentive payment is for our customers to be signed up to online services.
- 3.3 In early 2017 we undertook a survey of all tenants who are currently registered to the Derby Homes Dashboard. We wanted to understand what was good about the system, but more importantly what areas can be improved as we move forward. The feedback that we have received is being used and taken into account in the build of the new Customer portal. A summary of ideas and suggestions from the Dashboard Survey is attached as appendix 1

- 3.4 Later this year the Dashboard will become “My Tenancy on Line” accessed directly through our new housing management IT system – Open Housing.  
We are currently creating this new “My Tenancy on line” Customer Portal and are trying to incorporate people’s feedback and suggestions. This system will provide live information relating to rents and repairs, which was one of the main areas of frustration from customers who provided feedback.
- 3.5 Working with tenants who are already registered on the ‘Dashboard’ is helpful but we need to do more work with two thirds of our tenants who are still choosing to contact us through the more traditional methods of telephone and face to face.
- 3.6 We have established an internal Steering Group to ensure that Derby Homes has a planned strategy for maximising the impact of the ‘Get On-line’ Incentive Scheme to assist with the channel shift that we need to achieve.
- 3.7 We have already agreed that over a three month period (May – Aug) we will have an internal campaign to capture as many up to date email addresses as possible. Staff will be speaking with customers with a view to providing the necessary electronic contact details ahead of the launch of our new online customer portal which is due to be launched towards the end of July 2017. Capturing email addresses at this point is important so that data can be transferred to the new system and make sign-up as simple as possible.
- 3.8 We will be planning a marketing campaign leading up to the launch of the new system which will be called ‘My Tenancy On-Line’.
- 3.9 We are proposing the following targets for increasing the numbers of tenants registered and using ‘My Tenancy On-Line’
- 3.10 April 2017 – April 2019 to increase the number of tenants registered from 4000 to 8000, this will be reviewed half yearly.
- 3.11 Internally we have been holding discussions within Senior Management Team to identify key service areas which will benefit from changes to the ways in which we deal with our customers.
- 3.12 One of the most important areas is how we manage calls from customers wanting assistance with paying their rent, or dealing with rent arrears. From 8 May 2017 we have introduced a specialist triage team who will in future deal with all incoming telephone enquiries relating to rent accounts and/or arrears.
- 3.13 This will provide specialist help for customers that contact us, we will also use this team to try and encourage customers who could ‘self-serve’ to do so.
- 3.14 This new service will be evaluated over an initial six month period, and depending on the success may be rolled out to other services in the future.
- 3.15 We are starting to see an increase in the numbers of customers who are using the on-line system for service requests. We ensure that our team members regularly monitor email service requests and we are confident that we are meeting service standards.

Service requests via Derby Homes website and email:

April 2016	460
May 2016	499
June 2016	495
July 2016	415
August 2016	417
September 2016	478
October 2016	482
November 2016	460
December 2016	417
January 2017	569
February 2017	620
March 2017	711
April 2017	676

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

Consultation  
Financial and Business Plan  
Legal and Confidentiality  
Council  
Personnel  
Environmental  
Equalities Impact Assessment  
Health & Safety  
Risk  
Policy Review

If Board Members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact:

Annabelle Barwick / Customers Services & Equalities Manager / 01332 888402 /  
annabelle.barwick@derbyhomes.org

Background Information: None

Supporting Information: None