

## Annual Housing Equality Review (Housing, Andy Vincent)

### Synopsis of report:

This report assesses the profile of tenants accessing housing services.

The report identifies where the profile of the tenants' accessing services is out of step with the wider tenant or resident population.

The report also looks at who is receiving support from the Housing Service and how the success of this provision is measured.

### Recommendation:

Members note the actions identified for addressing the discrepancies in the tenant profiling information.

## 1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 A draft of this report was discussed at the Housing Member Working Party on 1 February 2023.
- 1.2 Objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:
  - (a) *eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;*
  - (b) *advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
  - (c) *foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

- 1.3 The purpose of this annual review of tenant profiling information and service usage is to identify discrepancies in service take up. Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service can then identify what action it proposes to take to address any areas for concern.

## 2. Profiling Data

- 2.1 Runnymede Borough Council has considerable profiling data on the gender, age and ethnicity of its tenant population. This data can be used to assess how services are being accessed. Appendix A highlights: -
  - The profile of RBC's tenant population compared to the profile of Runnymede residents.
  - The profile of RBC's tenants in rent arrears compared to the tenant and resident population.

- The profile of RBC's tenants using the repairs service compared to tenants in arrears, the tenant and resident population.
- The profile of new RBC tenants since 2010 compared to the tenant and resident population.
- The profile of Runnymede housing applicants compared to the tenant and resident population.
- The profile of RBC's Independent Retirement Living tenant population.

## 2.2 Analysis of profiling data identifies a number of discrepancies in service usage.

1. More women live in properties owned by Runnymede Borough Council than their share of the resident population.
2. Significantly more women utilise the repairs service than men.
3. The profile of new tenants better reflects the ethnicity profile of the resident population with a lower proportion of 'White British' households taking up tenancies since 2010 than the tenant population as a whole.
4. The profile of tenants in rent arrears is out of step with the wider tenant profile. The 25-39 and 40-55 age groups are much more likely to be in rent arrears than the rest of the tenant population.
5. The profile of tenants using the repairs service diverges from the wider tenant profile. The 25-39 and 40-55 age groups are particularly much more likely to request a repair than the 18-24 age category.
6. The profile of housing applicants diverges from the wider tenant population. Particularly the 25-39 age category is significantly overrepresented on the Housing Register compared to the resident or tenant population.

## 2.3 Actions

1. Undertake further analysis of the data, particularly rent arrears data to understand the profile of tenants in significant rent arrears (over £1000) to establish if the age trends continue throughout the arrears levels.
2. Undertake some structured qualitative interviews with tenants intensively utilising the rents and repairs services to understand what is driving usage patterns. Under these interviews jointly with the Cost of Living Social Prescriber in Community Services this will also enable support opportunities to be identified.
3. Bring back a report to the Housing Committee in September 2023 seeking to identify further trends within the data and reporting on what is driving usage patterns. Proposals will be included within the report to seek to mitigate a greater intensity of service use by particular cohorts of tenants.

## 3. Support offered to vulnerable tenants

### 3.1 Runnymede Borough Council's Housing Service supports tenants in the following

circumstances: -

- Independent Retirement Living tenants
- Vulnerable 'general needs' tenants
- Households in temporary accommodation

- 3.2 Appendix A provides a breakdown of the profile of tenants living in Independent Retirement Living, plus a breakdown of the profile of tenants living in 'general needs' accommodation receiving support.
- 3.3 From 1 March 2023 the Housing Service will implement an additional module within its Housing Management IT system enabling the service to report on the impact of support services in improving the resilience of service users. Alongside this piece of work, we will consider how we are identifying tenants who would be suitable to be on the corporate Vulnerable People Register in case of a borough emergency.
- 3.4 An illustration of the data available from this module will be provided to a future Housing Committee meeting.

#### 4. **Policy Framework**

- 4.1 The Housing Service Area Plan 2022/23 identifies the following action

Housing and Neighbourhood Services	Vulnerable Persons Strategy	Enables the service to consider what more we can do to support vulnerable people. Be that with gardens, tenant support, advise on becoming a council tenant, resettlement etc
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- 4.2 This report seeks to begin to understand how services are being accessed and what more can be done to support vulnerable people.

#### 5. **Resource implications/Value for Money**

- 5.1 This report has no resource implications. Evidence gained from this analysis and further research will help drive future service decisions.

#### 6. **Legal implications**

- 6.1 The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities are now required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**7. Equality implications**

- 7.1 This report considers how housing landlord services are being accessed.
- 7.2 This report seeks to ensure that the housing landlord service meets its legal obligations as a landlord.

**8. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications**

- 8.1 This report has no environmental implications.

**9. Timetable for Implementation**

- 9.1 A review of profiling data and service use will be conducted by the Housing Service annually.
- 9.2 The action plan set out within section 2.3 have timescales for implementation.

**10. Conclusions**

- 10.1 Discrepancies have been identified in how housing services are being accessed. Further analysis will be undertaken to look at patterns within the data to seek to explain the discrepancies. Qualitative interviews will also be conducted with households who fall into the 25-39 and 40-55 age cohorts to seek to understand why their service usage is higher than other age categories, plus why women are using the repairs service with greater intensity than men.

(To Resolve)

**Background papers**

None