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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 12</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 2018</b>	<b>CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>STAR SURVEY 2018</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS01</b>

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 The Committee is recommended to note the findings of the tenant satisfaction Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To outline to the Committee the main findings of the STAR survey, set out at Appendix 1, that was concluded in August 2018.

## **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 Following Committee approval in April 2018 a consultation was undertaken using a questionnaire designed by BMG Research in conjunction with Council Officers.
- 3.2 The aim of the consultation was to assess tenants' satisfaction with South Derbyshire District Council's (SDDC) Housing Services. More specifically the objectives of the consultation were:
- To assess satisfaction with Housing Services.
  - To gather opinion on the Council's estate services.
  - To assess satisfaction with the advice and support provided by the Council for new tenants, vulnerable tenants and those moving home.
  - To assess levels of satisfaction with the quality of the condition of Council properties
  - If a repair had been undertaken, to gather satisfaction regarding this repair.
  - To assess tenants' views of contact and communication with Housing Services.
  - To gather tenants' opinion of supported housing.
- 3.3 The STAR survey provides valuable information on how tenants view the services the Council provides. The Council will use this information to ascertain what it is doing well and areas it may need to improve on and this will form a major part of the Housing Service's future priorities.

- 3.4 The questionnaire was sent to all South Derbyshire District Council housing tenants in July 2018. Tenants were given two weeks to complete and return the questionnaire and tenants who did not respond were then sent a reminder survey. Responses were tracked and those who did not respond to either the initial mail out or the first reminder were sent a second reminder giving them a further two weeks to take part in the consultation. The consultation period ended on the 24 August 2018
- 3.5 In total 1,014 completed questionnaires were received, giving an excellent response rate of 34%. This was down on the Council's target figure and the 2015 response rate of 1,326 (45%) completed questionnaires, but still represents a sound and statistically reliable response rate to a survey of this type. The return rate ensures that the data is a lot more robust than the confidence interval +/- 4% that HouseMark recommends for an organisation the size of South Derbyshire District Council for a STAR Survey. As a membership organisation, HouseMark supports housing providers across the country to achieve improved performance and Value for Money (VFM) by comparison of their performance information against other organisations.
- 3.6 The STAR survey contains seven core questions which allow Housing Services to benchmark the results via our benchmark provider, HouseMark. The results of the STAR Survey have not yet been benchmarked against approximately 360 other providers with HouseMark as this will be completed as part of the second quarter submission which will be finalised in November. The results of this benchmarking will be presented as part of the follow up report scheduled in early 2019.
- 3.7 The Council's headline findings for the core questions compared to those results from 2015 survey are shown below.

**Table 1 – Overall STAR results comparison 2015/2018**

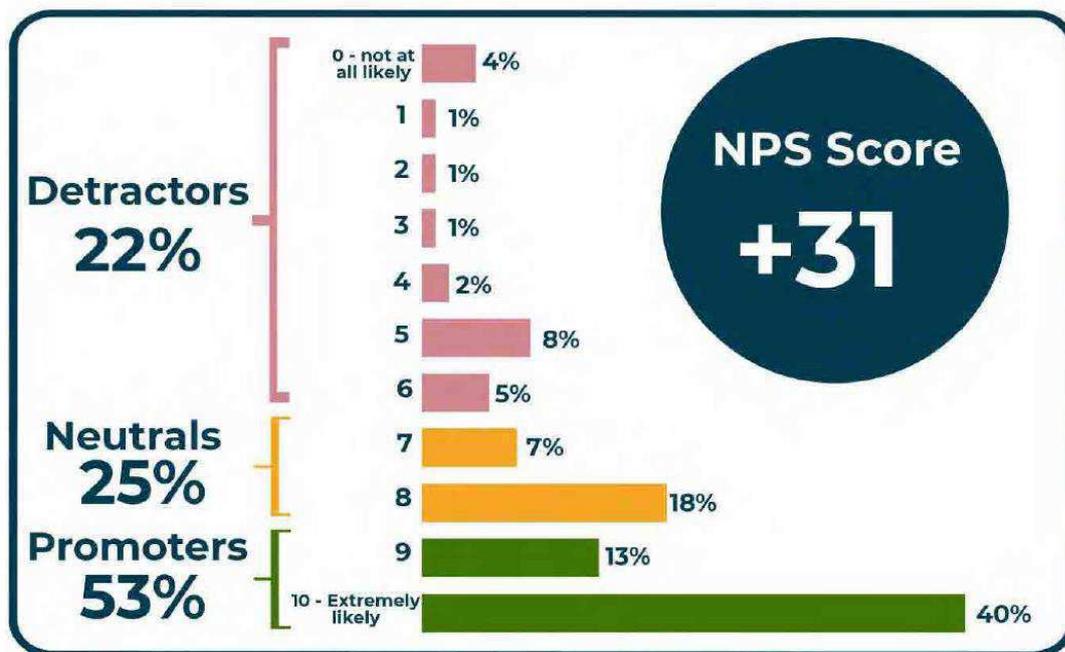
	2018	2015	Difference
Overall service provided by South Derbyshire District Council's Housing Service?	89%	93%	-4%
Rent provides value for money (N/A included for comparison with 2015)	83%	86%	-3%
Your neighbourhood as a place to live	87%	92%	-5%
Overall quality of your home	87%	91%	-4%
Housing Services deals with repairs and maintenance	86%	91%	-5%
SDDC listens to your views and acts upon them	63%	79%	-16%
Net Promoter Score	+31	N/A	N/A

- 3.8 **Overall Satisfaction with the Housing Service:** Nearly nine in ten respondents were satisfied with the services provided by the Housing Service (89%); including 52% that were very satisfied. Whilst this is a decrease compared to 2015 (93%), the BMG benchmark shows that the Council performs within the upper quartile for this measure. With regard to perceptions of the services provided by the Housing Service, Nine in ten (90%) tenants agree that Council staff are friendly and approachable. 87% agree that the Council provides the service they expect and provides an effective and efficient service. 87% also agree that the Council is trustworthy. The Housing Service continues to review its key processes to ensure that they meet the requirements of its tenants and keeps policies up to date with good practice and the latest legislative requirements.
- 3.9 **Value for money of rent:** Nearly nine in ten (87%) of tenants are satisfied that their rent provides value for money, with over five in ten (52%) being very satisfied. This increases to 90% amongst sheltered tenants whilst falling to 85% for general needs tenants. The BMG benchmark shows that the Council performs around the median for this measure. The 87% for this indicator is based on the valid responses received and excludes respondents who did not answer this question.
- 3.10 **Neighbourhood as a place to live:** Nearly nine in ten (87%) tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live; with just under five in ten (49%) are very satisfied. The BMG benchmark shows that the Council performs around the median for this measure. Eight in ten tenants (80%) are satisfied with the overall appearance of the neighbourhood. Satisfaction with grounds maintenance fell from 79% in 2015 to 65% this year. However, the Council has recently introduced Service Standards which came into place just before the survey was undertaken. Therefore, changes made as a result of the introduction of these standards will not have had time to flow through into this survey, but should have an impact on satisfaction in this area in future years. Of those tenants who gave an answer, 32% said that better greenery maintenance would help to improve the estates, whilst 21% cited providing a cleaner environment including grass cutting as something that would make a difference.
- 3.11 **Quality of Home:** Nearly nine in ten (87%) tenants are satisfied with the quality of their home. Whilst this is a decrease compared to 2015 (91%), the BMG benchmark shows that the Council performs within the upper quartile for this measure. Perceptions of the condition of tenant's homes are generally positive, with around eight in ten satisfied with all areas of their home. Of those dissatisfied with the condition of their home, 23% said it is due to a lack of kitchen improvements whilst 21% said their doors and windows need improving. Over seven in ten (72%) tenants were satisfied with the standard of their home, with more than three in ten (32%) very satisfied. Work is underway to procure new contracts for future planned maintenance and a review of the stock condition survey; these will help the Housing Service to improve how it maintains and improves the quality of its properties.
- 3.12 **Repairs and Maintenance:** Over four fifths (86%) of tenants were satisfied with the Repairs and Maintenance service, with over half (53%) being very satisfied. Whilst this is a decrease compared to 2015 (87%), the BMG benchmark shows that the Council performs within the upper quartile for this measure. Overall satisfaction with the repairs service increases to 91% amongst sheltered tenants but drops to 83% amongst general needs tenants. Two thirds of tenants (66%) have had a repair in the last 12 months. Of those who have had a repair, 95% said it was easy to report the repair, whilst 84% said it was easy to get the repair completed and 92% were satisfied with the overall quality of work. The Housing Service has commenced a review of repairs and improvements which is expected to be completed by November 2018.

3.13 **Listening to views and acting upon them:** Just under two thirds (63%) of tenants are satisfied with their views being listened to and acted upon by the Housing Service, with over a third of tenants very satisfied (35%). This measure has seen the biggest drop in satisfaction compared to the 2015 results and places us in the lower quartile in the BMG benchmark. Overall dissatisfaction has remained relatively stable. The reason for the drop in satisfaction is due to a quarter of tenants (26%) saying they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with views being listened to and acted upon, a 13% increase compared to 2015. The Council has delivered refreshed customer service training to front line staff in housing and other service areas in November to support the development of skills and offer tools/techniques to improve their interaction with customers.

3.14 **Net Promoter Score (NPS):** As part of this survey the Council asked tenants how willing or otherwise they would be to recommend the Council as landlord to others. NPS was calculated from the proportion of tenants who give a score of nine or ten - 'promoters' who are very likely to recommend their landlord – minus those less likely ('detractors' who score 0-6). With 53% classified as promoters and 22% as detractors, this yields an NPS of +31 (see Table 2 below). This is a good net promoter score and reinforces that generally tenants are happy with the services provided by the Council.

**Table 2 – The Council's NPS**



Unweighted sample base: 992

3.15 Tables 3 and 4 shown overleaf highlight how well the Council results this year perform against BMG's Research's internal benchmark data. This includes 46 organisations including Council's Arms-Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and housing associations from around the country and has been benchmarked separately for both general needs and sheltered tenants. This benchmarking shows a positive picture for the Council. All but one of the core questions benchmarked received high levels of satisfaction. This level of satisfaction placed the Council in or just outside the top quartile in the BMG benchmark data. The only indicator where this is not the case is in how tenants feel the Council listens to their views and acts upon them which placed the Council in the lower quartile in the BMG benchmark data from the feedback received from both our general purpose and sheltered tenants.

3.16 Feedback from BMG is that satisfaction with the landlords for which it has undertaken surveys has fallen nationwide. The Council will look at this again to see if this is the case with the Housemark benchmarking data which covers a larger number of landlords nationwide.

**Table 3: Latest general needs benchmark data provided by BMG's internal benchmark data (46 organisations) \* Not applicable option included**

	2018 result	Upper quartile	Media	Lower quartile	2015 result
Overall service provided	88%	88%	83%	78%	90%
Value for money of rent	85%*	86%	84%	79%	85%*
Neighbourhood as a place to live	85%	87%	83%	79%	88%
Quality of home	87%	86%	84%	79%	87%
Repairs and maintenance	83%	81%	78%	72%	87%
Listening to views and acting upon them	61%	71%	67%	61%	75%

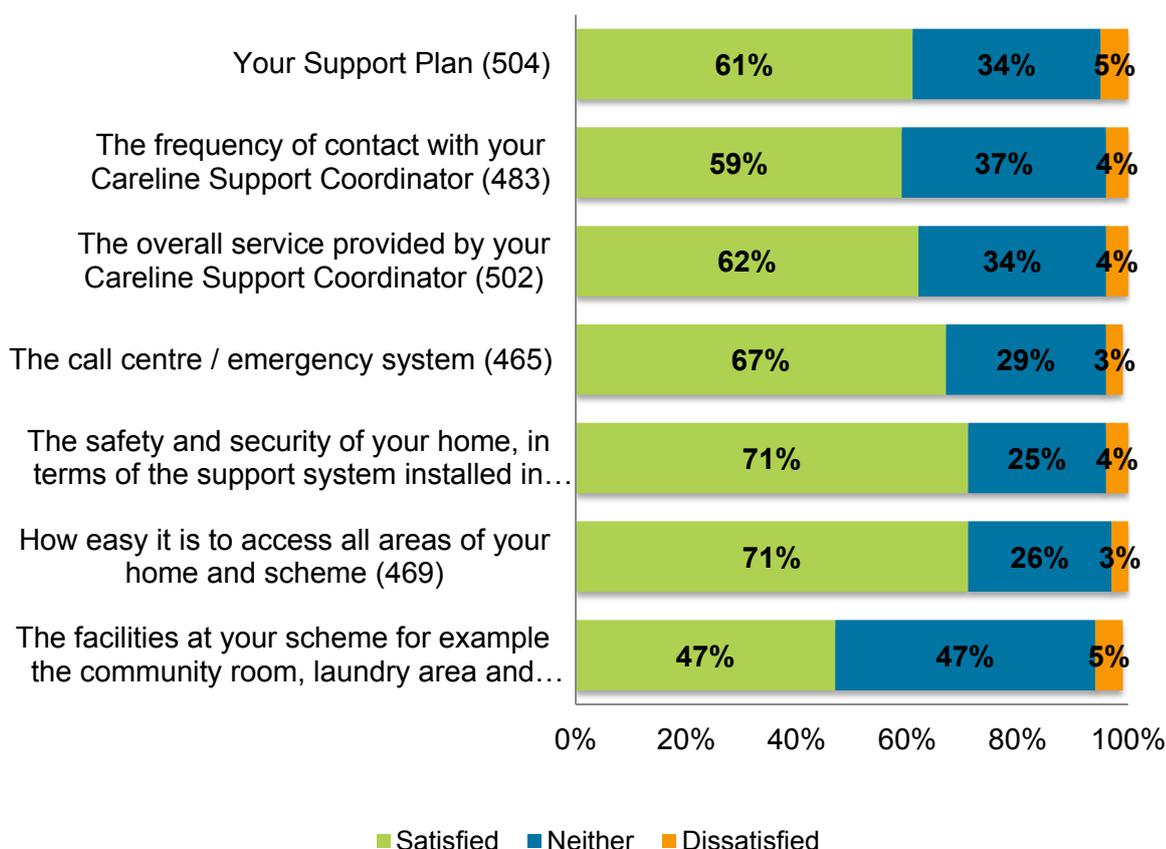
**Table 4: Latest sheltered benchmark data provided by BMG's internal benchmark data (20 organisations) \* Not applicable option included**

	2018 result	Upper quartile	Median	Lower quartile	2015 result
Overall service provided	91%	91%	90%	89%	95%
Value for money of rent	90%*	94%	91%	87%	88%*
Neighbourhood as a place to live	92%	95%	93%	89%	96%
Quality of home	94%	94%	93%	90%	96%
Repairs and maintenance	91%	90%	86%	82%	95%
Listening to views and acting upon them	68%	80%	76%	69%	85%

3.17 In addition to the core benchmarking questions, the Council also looked at more specific satisfaction data for its Housing Service. Results for this are shown below:

- 3.18 **Complaints:** Two thirds (65%) of tenants are satisfied with the way that the Council deals with anti-social behaviour with only one in ten tenants being dissatisfied. Seven in ten (69%) are satisfied with the way the Council deals with complaints.
- 3.19 **Community Engagement:** Three quarters (75%) of tenants feel that the Housing Service is good at keeping them informed about things that may affect them as a resident, with a third saying the Council is very good (33%). Nearly six in ten (59%) tenants are satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in Housing Services decision making process, with a quarter (24%) being very satisfied. With regards to tenant involvement, the majority of tenants, seven in ten (70%) confirmed that they would like to know what the Housing Service is doing, but are happy to let officers get on with delivering these services.
- 3.20 **Supported Housing:** Tenants who have the services of a Careline Support Coordinator or an alarm system which enables them to contact the Careline Team were asked how they feel about various aspects of the support service. Over seven in ten of these tenants (71%) are satisfied with the safety and security of their home and how easy it is to access all areas of their home and scheme (71%). Levels of dissatisfaction for all measures are at 5% or below. To continue to improve this service, the Housing Service will be implementing a number of improvements following the review of Supported Housing in which was presented in this Committee in 2017. More information on the levels of satisfaction is shown in the table below.

**Table 5: Satisfaction with Council's Supported Housing Services**



### Actions Underway

- 3.21 The Housing Service already has actions in place to address the issues raised by tenants including:

- A comprehensive review of Repair and Improvement Services, due to be completed in November 2018.
- A review of the Stock Condition Survey data, due to be completed by December 2018.
- Service Standards for the maintenance of internal and external communal areas was introduced in 2018.
- Detailed satisfaction surveys of tenants within blocks of flats.
- The procurement of new contracts for the provision of fire safety measures in communal areas.
- The procurement of new contracts for the provision of planned maintenance and major works.
- Process reviews of key functions including the collection of rent arrears and the reletting of empty properties.
- The implementation of actions arising from the review of Supported Housing in which was presented in this Committee in 2017.

### **Next Steps**

3.22 On 27 November, Officers will meet with the Tenants' Panel to go through the full STAR 2018 results ahead of a workshop with officers, tenants and BMG Research on 6 December. This workshop will provide an opportunity to go through the findings and agree additional actions to support the work underway identified in 3.21. A report will then be produced summarising these actions, this will be brought back to this Committee in early 2019.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no explicit financial implications arising from the results of the survey however detailed actions arising from the survey findings will need to be considered by a future Committee.

### **5.0 Corporate Implications**

5.1 There are three strategic aims contained within the Council's Corporate Plan that provide a background to this consultation.

- Place, PL4 connect with our communities, helping them feel safe and secure
- Outcomes, O5, maintain customer focus
- People, PE2 is to protect and help support the most vulnerable including those affected by financial challenges

### **6.0 Community Implications**

6.1 None

### **7.0 Background Papers**

7.1 Appendix 1 – South Derbyshire District Council's STAR Survey Report 2018.