

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Report to:	Audit and Governance Committee
Date:	3 rd September 2019
Subject:	Tenant Profiling Update
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Nature and Reason for Reporting:	
<p>This report provides information on work carried out by the Community Housing department in relation to tenant profiling. It follows an internal audit report submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting of 23 July, which raised the lack of tenant profiling as an 'Issue/Risk'. Following a discussion, members requested the Head of Housing to attend the Committee's next meeting to provide an update on the tenant profiling position.</p>	

1. INTRODUCTION

During February - June 2019, the internal audit team undertook an internal audit in respect of a key corporate risk, Welfare Reform. The final audit report was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in July 2019.

The Welfare Reform audit highlighted 'Issues/Risks' including:

- Improving tenant profiling information in order to support future service delivery – this is directly linked to how we forecast and focus our efforts in supporting tenants who are live or will go live onto Universal Credit
- Improve management reports in order to monitor tenant-related performance of Universal Credit (to include arrears, operational issues)
- Ensure formal guidelines were in place and communicated to operational staff and partners
- Improve the housing Client Relationship Management system, Orchard to ensure the accurate and swift reporting structure was in place and moving away from the existing time consuming manual approach

All actions to address the 'Issues/Risks' are underway and are being led by the Community Housing Service Manager.

In July 2019, the Audit & Governance Committee voiced concern regarding the lack of progress made with tenant profiling in housing services.

Isle of Anglesey County Council's housing department is the landlord to 3,812 properties. Each council property is recorded on our Orchard Client Relationship Management system. Information regarding name of tenants, address, contact details, age and number within the household is held within Orchard. Orchard

also captures tenancy history, arrears information, officer interactions, tenancy breach recording, financial inclusion analysis and much more. This is what is called tenant profiling.

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) (September 2010) describes tenant profiling as the collection, grouping and analysing information regarding tenants. This in turn provides a greater understanding on the demographics, motivations, needs, attitudes, lifestyles and behaviours of our tenants. Having accurate tenant profiling can support the department to develop future services alongside existing services, such as the response to Universal Credit.

The ever-changing landscape of our socio-demographics on Anglesey means we are continuously responding to these changing needs in order to meet our customer demand, improve our services and adapt our approaches to support our most vulnerable. For example, we expect a 30% increase in our over 65's by 2039.

No one household on the Island has the same profile. This makes our communities excitingly diverse. Reversely, this can provide additional challenges in managing resources within our service delivery such as hot spot areas for anti-social behaviour (ASB)

With this, ensuring our services are tailored to each tenant is important to ensure we meet the outcomes expected; our tenants are feeling safe and well, are listened to and are provided with a service based on their needs.

Tenant profiling also supports with:

- Evaluating our existing services to ensure we meet demands as they change
- Plan accommodation needs within our 30 Year business plan
- Manage resource effectively and opportunity to transform our approaches with customer care
- Improved & prioritise decisions
- Be more consultative in our approaches to ensure changes are developed in partnership with our tenants & partners
- Overcoming barriers
- Communication
- Targeting resources to specific locations
- Improve quality of our services
- Manage risks
- Improve access to innovative and affordable housing
- Respond to criminal matters such as County Lines / Cuckooing

The implementation of critical Welsh Government Acts, Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 and Social Services & Wellbeing Act 2014, ensures public bodies to act earlier and preventatively also placing more emphasis on co-production resulted in a Pan-Wales population needs assessment.

The population needs assessment has provided housing with useful information in order to identify key areas where poverty, health, education and wellbeing data in order to consider our approaches when delivering tenants participation services, plus also ensuring a targeted approach between agencies is in place to deliver on improving matters that are of concern to individuals / areas.

Other methods of capturing data and information to develop our services, which are beneficial to housing services, includes-

- The Looked After Children population
- The Older Persons Strategy

- STAR surveys – Satisfaction survey for tenants & residents
- Anti-social behaviour surveys
- Population Needs Assessments
- Office of National Statistics

Operationally, tenant profiling is the responsibility of the customer service team. The customer service team consists of six full time equivalent officers dealing with day-to-day maintenance response queries, first contact response for housing allocations, homelessness alongside tenant profiling.

Customer care staffing levels have fluctuated throughout the Year. This through one member of staff going on a secondment alongside two officers on maternity leave. This has been a barrier to capturing tenant profiling on a continuous basis. The customer service team currently operate from two offices, split into three officers at each location per working day.

Homeless presentation levels have increased thus resulting in more incoming calls to our customer care team in order to support those who are threatened with or are homeless. There is also a drive to attract new tenants onto our housing waiting list, which increases challenges due to the existing demand-led approach.

Working from two offices is viewed as a challenge. Having a dispersed team with fluctuating staffing levels means, the teams' priority has been responding to incoming calls.

Going forward, the Housing Senior Management Team have agreed to locate the customer care team from one location and discussions are underway as to which office would be the most suitable longer term – Llangefni or the Housing Maintenance Unit in Gaerwen. Once the team have one location, one officer will concentrate on profiling per day, alternating on a rota basis. It is viewed the customer care team, working from one location, will create greater resilience allowing for a more proactive approach to operations.

The majority of tenants continue to contact housing services by phone. The service is continuously reactive to calls. From January 2020, the focus will be on a 2 Year plan in tenants reporting issues and managing their tenancies on a digital platform, linked to Orchard. The target of tenants using the digital tenants' portal by 2022 is 75% of customer care related interactions.

As assurance to the Audit and Governance committee, housing services work closely with the Department for Work & Pensions, O'Toole and CAB concerning Universal Credit. The Council has commissioned Policy into Practice reports three times per Year, which outlines hot spot areas concerning Universal Credit. The Universal Credit hub has been refreshed to focus on post-UC implementation factors, which includes sharing information, intelligence, data and information regarding those affected by the change in benefit circumstances.

The following figures have been extracted from Orchard, however the integrity of the accuracy of these figures is questionable:

Survey Year	Number of surveys recorded
2012	82
2013	362
2014	160
2015	166
2016	203
2017	228
2018	229
2019	63
Total	1493

2 – Pre-audit tenant profiling approaches (pre-June 2019)

Approach one – mailshot all tenants in the post and setting an incentive for completed and returned questionnaires. We received 1,200 responses which is 33% of our stock.

Approach two – in 2014-15, housing services employed three tenant profiling officers over a period of 18 months to ensure the information was as up to date as possible. Profiling officers were targeted to complete 15 profiles per day and were visible across our estates.

3 – Post-audit tenant profiling approaches (post-June 2019)

Customer care officers have been targeted to undertake ten tenant-profiling calls per month from August 2019 onwards. Three attempts will be made by phone and a letter will be sent requesting the tenant to complete and return the profiling form by a specific date.

New tenants are requested to complete and bring their profiling questionnaire to a property sign-up. In the event a new tenant does not provide this information at the sign up point, the relevant Housing Management Officer (HMO) will direct themselves to the customer care team to follow up.

An increase in visibility on our estates by our customer care team to support our vulnerable tenants in completing the profiling questionnaire

4 – Future tenant profiling approaches

- To develop a tenant profiling strategy - in partnership with our tenant group
- To launch the strategy externally with tenants and provide frequent updates on the importance on tenant profiling / tenants keeping housing updated regarding their personal information
- To launch the strategy internally and work on mainstreaming tenant profiling with housing services
- Tenants completing their own profile on the digital tenant portal – January 2020 onwards
- Customer care officers targeting tenants through increasing visibility on housing estates / arranging specific days when they'll be on an estate undertaking profiling

5- Conclusion

Housing services are committed to improving tenant profiling in order to support our services – this includes our integral support for Universal Credit.

It is recognised that operations are currently reactive to inbound calls and managed accordingly. Once the customer care team are located in one location, measures will be in place to ensure more of a proactive approach to profiling.

5 - Recommendations

- Agree that measures are in place to improve the tenant profiling within the department
- Agree that a tenant profiling strategy needs to be developed to ensure this aspect is mainstreamed within the department
- Agree that tenant profiling needs to be reviewed by the internal Housing Services Board on a quarterly basis for the initial 12 month period

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foster, et, al (September 2010) – Tenant Insight – A toolkit for landlords (CIH, Housemark, Tenant Services Authority)