

**REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 10 JUNE 2008**

**SUBJECT: HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 4 AND ANNUAL PERFORMANCE 2007/8**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 This report to the Communities Committee outlines the performance of the Housing Service for the period 1 January to 31 March 2008 and for the year 2007/08.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the Council's housing functions.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Communities Committee:-**

- (i) scrutinises performance outlined in this report;**
- (ii) notes the actions being taken to seek improvements where required;**
- (iii) agrees targets proposed for 2008/09; and**
- (iv) agrees proposed changes to Service Standards.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Housing Service has reported quarterly to Community Services Committee on a wide range of performance information for many years. The performance indicators reported include all statutory performance indicators which will be reported nationally, local indicators, agreed Service Standards along with their targets (where set). The report considered by Community Services Committee on 9 August 2006 (paragraph 26 of the Minute refers), presented a revised format.
- 3.2 On 29 August 2007, the Policy Committee noted that the content of the Housing Performance report would change as a result of the establishment of the Housing Sub Committee (paragraph 39 of the Minute refers). As a result, the performance information presented to the Policy Committee and now the Communities Committee covers –

Building Services  
Allocations  
Homelessness

Private Sector Grants  
Gypsy/Travellers  
Strategy and Enabling  
Complaints  
MSP Enquiries

Performance information directly relating to the Council's landlord role will be presented to the Housing Sub Committee meeting on 20 June 2008.

- 3.3 **APPENDIX I** shows the performance of the housing service against agreed targets. **APPENDIX II** shows performance in relation to agreed Service Standards.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 The table below summarises performance in relation to agreed targets detailed in **APPENDIX I**. Some performance measured by the Service is not set against a target – the information provided may be more contextual, but nevertheless valuable when assessing the level of achievement. Performance should also be viewed in the broader context of tenant satisfaction and benchmarking results when compared to the performance of other local authorities.

- 4.2 The summary of performance for Quarter 4 in 2007/08 is presented within three headings:

- Green – performing well
- Amber – requiring close monitoring
- Red – requiring improvement action

Function	No. of PIs with targets set	Green Performing Well	Amber Close monitoring	Red Action Required
1. Building Services	3	2	0	1
2. Allocations	5	1	2	2
3. Homelessness	2	1	0	1
4. Gypsy/Travellers	1	1	0	0
5. Complaints	2	2	0	0
6. MSP enquiries	1	1	0	0

- 4.3 The table below summarises performance in Quarter 4 in relation to Service Standards, detailed in **APPENDIX II**.

<b>Function</b>	<b>No. of PIs with targets set</b>	<b>Green Performing Well</b>	<b>Amber Close monitoring</b>	<b>Red Action Required</b>
1. Strategy/enabling	3	3	0	0
2. Building Services	3	2	1	0
3. Private Sector Grants	3	2	0	1
4. Gypsy /Travellers	1	1	0	0
5. Allocations	4	2	1	1
6. Homelessness	7	4	0	3

- 4.4 The detail within the appendices also identifies annual performance, where appropriate.

## **5. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 Areas of good performance**

- 5.1.1 Performance in relation to targets agreed by the Policy Committee is generally good across a number of activities, notably Building Services, Gypsy/Travellers, Complaints and MSP enquiries.
- 5.1.2 Performance in relation to Service Standards agreed by the Committee is good across a number of activities, notably Strategy/Enabling, Building Services and Gypsy/Travellers.

### **5.2 Areas for performance identified for improvement action**

#### **Building Services**

- 5.2.1 Expenditure on overtime (indicator 1c) exceeded the target in Quarter 4. However, annual performance met the target.

#### **Allocations**

- 5.2.2 In Quarter 4, the percentage allocations to waiting list and transfer list applicants (indicators 2f and 2g) fell outwith the range agreed by Committee. However, the annual performance met the targets.
- 5.2.3 On service standards, targets for the proportion of relets within specific time bands have not been achieved, although performance on average time to relet property has broadly been maintained. The Council's 2006/07 performance was ranked 5th in Scotland by Audit Scotland. Although specific time band targets have not been met, it is likely that the Council will continue to be one of the best performing local authorities in relation to average relet time. The

Housing Sub Committee considered a report on void management at its meeting on 19 March 2008 (paragraph 5 of the Minute refers). A revised Void Management Policy will be considered by the Sub Committee at its meeting on 20 June 2008. The Committee may wish to note that at the year end, a review of the definition of 'low demand' properties was carried out which has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of properties being deemed as low demand. Consequently, the annual performance figures for relet periods have been reworked to reflect this.

### **Homelessness**

- 5.2.4 Decision making time on homeless applications (indicator 3j) has consistently been below target in 2007/08. Officers have examined the reasons for this level of performance through a process mapping exercise and have identified some procedural and operational issues that impact on performance. An action plan to address this area of performance is being developed and will be closely monitored to ensure performance improvement.
- 5.2.5 Within homelessness service standards, areas for improvement relate to timescales for interviews and the Council's performance in relation to timescales for families in bed and breakfast accommodation. Actions to improve interview timescales are being implemented. Performance on bed and breakfast timescales is measured in terms of the number of breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order 2004 noted at the end of each quarter. The number of breaches at the end of Quarter 4 was 9, reflecting the pressure in Moray arising from homelessness. A separate report on the Committee's agenda proposes interim changes to the Council's Allocations Policy to address specific issues around homelessness and the operation of the Allocations Policy.

### **Private Sector Grants**

- 5.2.6 For the first time in a number of years, the Council did not achieve full spend in 2007/08. This was primarily due to staffing issues during Quarter 3 and 4.

## **6. TARGETS FOR 2008/09**

- 6.1 **APPENDIX I** identifies targets for 2008/09 across all areas of service activity reported to the Communities Committee.

## **7. REVIEW OF SERVICE STANDARDS**

- 7.1 Following informal meetings held with the Audit and Performance Review Committee, consultation on service standards has been carried out with the Housing Sub Committee and tenant representatives. As a result of both comments from the Audit and Performance Review Committee and feedback from the Moray Tenant's Core Group, some changes to service standards are proposed for 2008/09. Proposed revised service standards for the activities reported to the Communities Committee are detailed in **APPENDIX III**.

- 7.2 Service standards are intended to be primarily of value to customers, to indicate the level of service that the Council aims to provide. It is therefore also proposed that the service standards are published on the Council's website and publicised in other ways to increase customer awareness.

## **8. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

### **(a) Corporate Development Plan/ Community Plan/ Service Improvement Plan**

Improving the quality of housing service provision is a priority within the Service Plan.

### **(b) Policy and Legal**

There are no legal implications arising from this report. The quality of the Council's housing services will be subject to inspection by the Scottish Housing Regulator in 2008/09.

### **(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

There are no direct financial, staffing or property implications arising from this report.

### **(d) Consultations**

Consultation on this report has been carried out with the Director of Community Services and managers within the Housing Service.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 **This report has provided a comprehensive picture of performance in Housing Services for the fourth quarter of 2007/8. Where appropriate, annual performance has been indicated. While there are a number of areas where the potential for improvement has been identified, the Housing Service continues to perform well in relation to Statutory Performance Indicators. Improvement actions are identified where appropriate.**

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