



REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 26 JUNE 2018

SUBJECT: HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTERS 3, 4 AND ANNUALLY FOR 2017/18

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the performance of the Housing Service for the period from 1 October 2017 to 31 March 2018 and the annual performance for 2017/18.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (G) (15) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to performance management for housing functions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Communities Committee:

- i) scrutinises and notes performance outlined in this report;**
- ii) agrees the recommended target changes for 2018/19 listed in APPENDIX II and;**
- iii) notes that a copy of the annual report for tenants and other customers will be shared with this Committee in November 2018.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 22 May 2013, Moray Council agreed that information relating to performance will be reported on a 6 monthly basis and will include information showing the direction of travel of performance indicators (whether performance is improving or deteriorating) (paragraph 8 of the Minute refers).
- 3.2 On 13 September 2016, this Committee approved a revised housing performance management framework (paragraph 14 of the Minute refers). A number of local and operational indicators were omitted from the reports and these are now monitored by service managers. The performance achieved by the Housing Service in Quarters 3 and 4 and the 2017/18 annual performance is presented in **APPENDIX I**.

4. **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 The table below sets out the Council's performance which is monitored through 72 indicators across 6 service activities. For 26 of these indicators, performance against target is reported to Committee on a six-monthly basis. The remaining indicators are either reported against target on an annual basis or are contextual indicators included for information only.

Outcomes/ standards	No. of indicators	Green Performing Well	Amber Close Monitoring	Red Action Required	Data or Annual Only
Customer/Landlord Relationship	10	1	1	1	7
Housing Quality and Maintenance	13	5	2	4	2
Neighbourhood and Community	3	1	1	0	1
Access to Housing and Support	32	6	2	1	23
Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges	10	3	0	2	5
Gypsy/Travellers	4	1	0	0	3
Total	72	17	6	8	41
%	100	54.8%	19.4%	25.8%	

5. **AREAS OF GOOD PERFORMANCE**

- 5.1 Performance against targets in Quarters 3, 4 and annually for 2017/18 is generally good across each of the 6 service activity areas.

The Customer/Landlord Relationship

- 5.2 Local authorities must follow a model complaints handling procedure developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). A first stage complaint is more appropriate for an immediate resolution and dealt with through a frontline solution and a second stage tends to be more complex and requires investigation.
- 5.3 The 100% target for responding to first stage complaints within 5 working days (*indicator 1.5a*) was not met in Q3 (73.7%) but there was a marked improvement in Q4 (97.7%). The annual performance for 2017/18 was 77.8%. Similarly, the 100% target for responding to second stage complaints within the SPSO target of 20 working days (*indicator 1.5b*) was not met in Q3 (60%) but was achieved in Q4 (100%). The annual performance for 2017/18 was 74.3%. Of the complaints upheld in 2017/18, 37.6% were at stage 1 and 38.6% were stage 2. The majority of complaints received during the year were about repairs and maintenance (122, 64%) and 39% of those related to heating/boiler failures. A significant number of older heating systems/boilers are expected to be replaced as part of the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) programme. It is hoped that this will improve

tenants' homes, reduce the number of response repairs, save money, and reduce service complaints.

- 5.4 During the year, the new Lagan complaints system and changes in corporate personnel responsible for overseeing the system has had an impact on complaints performance. This has now been addressed and has helped improve performance in quarter 4.

Housing Quality and Maintenance

- 5.5 Good performance continues on response repairs timescales. The 4 hour target timescale to complete emergency repairs (*indicator 2.7*) was achieved in Q3 (2.7 hours), Q4 (2.8 hours) and annually for 2017/18 (2.6 hours). The 10 working day target for non-emergency repairs (*indicator 2.8*) was achieved in Q3 (7.3 days), Q4 (7.2 days) and annually for 2017/18 (7.7 days).
- 5.6 The 100% target for the percentage of properties having a gas safety check completed by the anniversary date (*indicator 2.13*) was met in Q3, Q4 and annually for 2017/18. New procedures for gas safety were introduced following a review of existing processes in 2016/17. The main change has seen the creation of a gas safety team within Building Services (DLO). They are responsible for all gas safety actions and this change has enabled the procedures to be streamlined and has reduced the number of officers and housing teams that were previously involved in gas safety. Raising the profile of gas safety with tenants, making changes to the charging policy for forced entries and having dedicated staff overseeing each of the individual processes has also had a positive impact in keeping tenants safe and reducing the number of forced entries required to complete the gas safety check.

Neighbourhood and Community

- 5.7 There has been a significant improvement in resolving antisocial behaviour cases within locally agreed targets (*indicator 3.4*). Although performance was just below the 90% target in Q3 (89.9%), it was met during Q4 (91%) and annually for 2017/18 (95.1%). The improvement can be attributed mainly to a policy change that was agreed by this Committee on 7 March 2017 (paragraph 8 of the Minute refers) which extended the resolution timescales for Category B (35 days) and Category C (40 days). The revised policy was implemented from 1 April 2017.

Access to Housing and Support

- 5.8 The 80 day target for completing applications for medical adaptations (*indicator 4.4*) was achieved in Q3 (47 days), Q4 (48 days) and annually for 2017/18 (43 days). This national indicator is a composite of major and minor adaptations. There has been an improvement in the time taken to complete major adaptations which has decreased from an average of 239 days in 2016/17 to 176 days in 2017/18. The budget and governance of adaptations has now been transferred to the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB). The MIJB has established an Adaptations Governance Group with a remit that includes performance and efficiency.

- 5.9 The 100% target for the percentage of households requiring temporary accommodation to whom an offer was made (*indicator 4.7*) was met in Q3, Q4 and annually for 2017/18.
- 5.10 The 7% target for refusing offers of temporary accommodation (*indicator 4.8*) was not achieved in Q3 (9.2%) but improved during Q4 (6.9%). The annual performance of 7.9% was a significant improvement compared with previous years. Most refusals were for the Council's private hostel (32) and most commonly due to location. The Council will continue to reconfigure its supply of temporary accommodation during 2018/19.
- 5.11 The percentage of homeless households satisfied with the quality of temporary accommodation (*indicator 4.9*) exceeded the 90% target in Q3 (100%) and Q4 (100%). The annual result for 2017/18 was 94.4%. Only 1 respondent expressed dissatisfaction, however when this survey was reviewed all the other questions were answered positively. This has led to the conclusion that the service user has simply ticked the wrong box.

Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges

- 5.12 Good performance continues on the value for money indicators. The 97% target for rent collected as a percentage of total rent due (*indicator 5.2*). This indicator was met in Q3 (102.6%), Q4 (100.4%) and annually for 2017/18 (101.8%). This indicator includes rent collected from both current and former tenants.
- 5.13 The performance on gross rent arrears as a percentage of total rent due (*indicator 5.3*) was better than the 2.8% target in Q3 (2.5%), Q4 (2.4%) and annually for 2017/18 (2.4%). The Housing Service remains concerned about the potential impact of Universal Credit (UC) on rent arrears and a working group continue to monitor the situation on a monthly basis. The group have been profiling vulnerable tenants and will target them for additional support if UC becomes an issue for them. Staff training and preparation for UC is ongoing and advice and information will continue to be given to tenants where required. There has been a leaflet produced for tenants relating to UC, there will be a comprehensive article included in the summer edition of Tenants' Voice as well as information on social media in advance of the full roll out of UC from 27 June 2018.

Gypsy/Travellers

- 5.14 The target for the time taken to visit new unauthorised encampments was met throughout 2017/18. Of the 2 new unauthorised encampments in Q3 and Q4, 100% were visited within the target timescale of 1 working day (or 2 working days for rural locations).

6. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Customer/Landlord Relationship

- 6.1 The 90% target for responding to MSP enquiries (*indicator 1.7b*) was not met in Q3 (80%) and Q4 (75%). The annual performance for 2017/18 was 67.7%. The combination of having to deal with complaints and MP enquiries within the same 20 day target deadline does have an impact on performance.

Housing Quality and Maintenance

- 6.2 All social landlords in Scotland must bring their properties up to the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) by December 2020 (*indicator 2.2b*). At 31 March 2018, 55.4% of properties met the ESSH against an annual target of 67%. A review of cloned data during the year identified that some Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings appeared to be overstated which in turn meant that some of the properties that were targeted for improvement works during the year still did not meet ESSH. The release of new ESSH guidance from the Scottish Government has helped to identify what measures will now be required and a revised programme of ESSH works was agreed by this Committee on 1 May 2018 (paragraph 8 of the draft Minute refers). A revised compliance target of 65.75% has been set for 2018/19.
- 6.3 The percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in (*indicator 2.3*) is gathered through feedback surveys which are sent to new tenants six weeks after moving in. Performance was below the 90% target in Q3 (77.8%), Q4 (75%) and annually for 2017/18 (78.9%). During 2017/18, there were only 11 tenants expressing dissatisfaction. Of these, 6 provided reasons for their dissatisfaction. Poor overall appearance, the standard of decoration, the condition of the garden, repairs being required after moving in and one tenant stating that the heating system and kitchen in their property was not to the same standard they had seen in other properties were the reasons given.
- 6.4 In setting these comments into context, properties are let in accordance with the Council's Letting Standard. Non-urgent repairs may be carried out after a tenant moves in, particularly if there is a pressing need for entry (such as preventing homelessness). In relation to decoration, properties are painted only if there are exceptional circumstances (for example the tenant is frail, vulnerable and/or disabled or the condition of the property is considered unacceptable). Decoration packs are provided if properties require decoration and many tenants have been supportive of this scheme which allows them to decorate their homes to their own personal taste.
- 6.5 The percentage of tenants who were satisfied with the repairs or maintenance carried out (*indicator 2.14*) was 83.2%, slightly below the 90% target. A new process was introduced in November 2017 to gather feedback from tenants by phone when repairs are carried out. Since this change, only a small proportion of tenants (5.6%) have expressed dissatisfaction.
- 6.6 The percentage of planned maintenance works completed within the agreed programme (*indicator 7.6*) was 88.4% against an annual target of 98%. This was due to a number of factors including delays on external wall insulation contracts and issues with lack of resources within Building Services (DLO).

Access to Housing and Support

- 6.7 The Council operates three lists for housing applicants and uses quotas to guide the number of allocations made to each list (*indicator 4.18*). In 2017/18, 40% of allocations were targeted to be made to those on the homeless list, 40% to the waiting list and 20% to housing transfers. Each list has a small permitted variation of +/-5%. Homeless households did not achieve this target

with 54.6% in Q3, 51.3% in Q4 and 51.2% for 2017/18. This can be explained by the pressures in responding to and dealing with homelessness, which reduces the need for bed and breakfast accommodation and helps to control financial costs associated with temporary accommodation during peak periods. As a result, the performance for the waiting list (Q3 19.4%, Q4 31.9%, 2017/18 28%) and transfer list (Q3 25.9%, Q4 16.8%, 2017/18 20.8%) were affected.

Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges

- 6.8 Performance on void rent loss (*indicator 5.4*) was 0.76% in Q3, 0.89% in Q4 and 0.66% for 2017/18 against a target of 0.63%. There has also been an increase in the average time to re-let empty properties (*indicator 5.6*) which was above the 32 day target in Q3 (35 days), Q4 (44 days) and 2017/18 (35 days). This can be attributed mainly to pressures within the Council's Building Services (DLO) which continues to have problems recruiting to key trades. In addition some delays have been caused while waiting for asbestos surveys to be carried out by external consultants. Structural changes within the DLO voids team were implemented just prior to year-end with the aim of improving void performance. Realistically due to the current voids backlog, this is unlikely to take effect until the second quarter of 2018/19.

7. PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR 2018/19

- 7.1 Performance targets across all indicators have been reviewed and only the ESSH compliance target has been increased for 2018/19. **APPENDIX II** provides details of the targets set for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

8. SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER PERFORMANCE

- 8.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) requires social landlords to monitor progress against the outcomes and standards of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The Council's Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) was submitted in May 2018.
- 8.2 Social landlords must also produce an annual report on their performance for tenants and other customers which details how they are achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards.
- 8.3 The SHR expects tenants to be involved in decisions about the content and format of the report. At a Moray Tenants Forum meeting on 10 April 2018, tenant representatives were asked for their views. Tenant representatives felt that there were no issues with the content but made a number of suggestions about the design for the development of the 2017/18 report.
- 8.4 The Forum has also suggested that the circulation of the report should be reviewed. Previously a copy has been issued to every tenant; however it is generally felt that this may not be appropriate. The Housing Service will ensure that the report is available on request and publicised on the website, social media and the Tenants' Voice newsletter. Copies will also be made available at access points, homeless hostels and for tenant representatives.

Previous reports have cost in the region of £6k to publish and post. There will be a significant financial saving as a result of this change in process.

- 8.5 In addition to the feedback from the Moray Tenants Forum, the Housing Service received 83 feedback forms following the issue of the report. The feedback forms generally reflect the Forum's views:
- 80% felt the report was relevant to them;
 - 88% felt the content was detailed enough;
 - 89% felt the report was easy to understand; and
 - 72% felt the design was good.
- 8.6 The SHR expects social landlords to make their annual report available to tenants and other customers by 31 October 2018 at the latest. The SHR expects performance reports to be developed in partnership with tenants and other customers rather than exclusively by the Council. The SHR will publish the Council's performance on 31 August 2018 and the drafting of the annual report will commence thereafter. Due to the tight timescales between the SHR publication, drafting the annual report and the Committee cycle, it is intended to present a final version of the annual report to this Committee in November 2018.
- 8.7 In January 2018, the SHR launched a discussion paper on the future of social housing regulation which suggests that its future priorities are likely to include the increasing profile of homelessness, governance and tenant safety. The introduction of compulsory annual assurance statements is also being considered.

9. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

The monitoring and management of performance assists the Council to continue to improve housing services and helps to manage assets more effectively to provide the best outcomes for tenants and other customers. It also promotes safer communities and adults living healthier, sustainable independent lives safeguarded from harm which meets the key objectives of both the Corporate Plan and the Housing and Property Service Plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

Reporting on Scottish Social Housing Charter performance indicators is a legal requirement under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010.

(c) Financial implications

The cost of producing the annual report to tenants and other customers is likely to decrease. It is difficult to estimate the final costs until the number of copies required is known.

(d) Risk Implications

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no property requirements/implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

(h) Consultations

Consultation on this report has been carried out with the Head of Housing, senior managers within Housing and Property and the Committee Services Officer (Caroline Howie) whose comments where relevant have been incorporated in this report.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 This report provides an analysis of key areas of performance in relation to the Council's role as a landlord. Performance during 2017/18 in relation to Q3, Q4 and for the year is set out for this Committee to consider. Where performance is below target, actions for improvement have been identified. Proposed targets for 2018/19 are presented for the Committee's approval. The report also updates Committee on the development of the annual performance report to tenants and other customers and the Scottish Housing Regulator's review of its regulatory framework.

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