

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 5 MARCH 2008

**SUBJECT: HOUSING QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT –
3rd QUARTER 2007/8**

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report to the Policy Committee outlines the performance of the Housing Service for the period 1 October to 31 December 2007.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A(60) – A(70) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the Council's housing functions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Committee:-

- (i) scrutinises performance outlined in this report; and**
- (ii) notes the actions being taken to seek improvements where required.**

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 now presented to the Policy 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 19 March 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 the period 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	1	0
2. Allocations	5	3	2	0
3. Homelessness	2	0	0	2
4. Gypsy/Travellers	1	1	0	0
5. Complaints	2	2	0	0
6. MSP enquiries	1	0	1	0

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

Function	No. of PIs with targets set	Green Performing Well	Amber Close monitoring	Red Action Required
1. Strategy/enabling	3	3	0	0
2. Building Services	3	2	1	0

3. Private Sector Grants	3	3	0	0
4. Gypsy /Travellers	1	1	0	0
5. Allocations	4	2	1	1
6. Homelessness	7	4	0	3

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, Allocations, 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, Private Sector Grants, Allocations and Gypsy/Travellers.

5.1.3 Audit Scotland has recently published performance data for 2006/07. In relation to performance considered in this report, the Committee will be pleased to note that the Council's performance –

- on rent loss due to voids in 2006/07 was ranked 2nd in Scotland;
- on the percentage of not low demand properties let within 4 weeks was ranked 5th;
- on the average time to relet not low demand properties was ranked 5th.

5.2 **Areas for performance identified for close monitoring/improvement**

Building Services

5.2.1 In Building Services, the level of absences has risen above the target of 2.5% for the first time in this financial year. This increase can be attributed to a number of short term absences during the period, with the majority of staff now back at work and absence levels back within target.

Allocations

5.2.2 Within the allocations activity, two indicators are identified for close monitoring. In relation to the percentage of refusals of offers of housing (indicator 2d), the level of refusals has shown an increase over the past quarter. As with previous analyses of refusals, location appears to be the commonest theme. Reasons for refusals will be further analysed to identify any recurring issues. On the percentage of applicants admitted to the waiting list within a target of 28 days (indicator 2e), performance for two months in Q3 exceeded the target but was offset by poorer performance in one month. In relation to service standards, the standard requiring action relates to the time taken to relet not low demand properties within specified time bands. Whilst some of the targets are achieved, the main area for improvement is in relation to 2-4 weeks and 5-8 weeks. A

review of void management procedures is ongoing and will be reported to the Housing Sub Committee on 19 March 2008.

Homelessness

5.2.2 There are two indicators within the homelessness activity identified for improvement. The first relates to the level of repeat homelessness (indicator 3i). The main reasons for repeat homelessness arising are linked to the lack of alternative housing options available to non-priority homeless applicants. The second relates to the decision making time on homeless applications (indicator 3j). Officers have urgently considered the reasons for this poor performance and have now implemented robust measures to address this. The measures implemented will be monitored weekly to ensure performance improvement. In relation to service standards, performance on timescales for interviews has dipped since Q2. This is a consequence of pressures on staff resources given current levels of homelessness.

5.2.3 Audit Scotland's performance data for 2006/07 reports on two homelessness performance indicators. This indicates that the Council's performance:

- on the average time between presentation and completion of duty was ranked as 14th in Scotland
- on the percentage of cases reassessed as homelessness within 12 months was ranked 13th in Scotland.

Performance on these two indicators is very much influenced by the shortage of affordable housing opportunities in Moray and impact of this shortage on outcomes for homeless people.

MSP Enquiries

5.2.4 The timescale for response to MSP enquiries was not met in two instances in Q3. In one instance, the response was only one day late. In the second case, it was two days late.

6. 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 the future.

(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, the Chief Housing Officer and managers within the Housing Service, whose comments have been incorporated in this report.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This report has provided a comprehensive picture of performance in Housing Services for the third quarter of 2007/8. It has considered performance in relation to targets and where appropriate, drawn comparisons with previous performance and with the performance of other local authorities. 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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Background Papers: held by author
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