

REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 06 SEPTEMBER 2018

HOUSING SERVICE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE

EXCEPTION REPORTING APRIL - JUNE 2018 (ABERDEENSHIRE PERFORMS)

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Acknowledge the positive performance achieved April to June 2018 (Quarter 1), identified in Section 2.3;
- 1.2 Consider those measures where performance is below expectations in April to June 2018 identified in Appendix 1;
- 1.3 Acknowledge the publication of the complete April to June Performance Report on Ward Pages

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of how the Service is performing against key performance measures and associated targets as set out in the Infrastructure Services Service Plan 2017-2020, as approved by Infrastructure Services Committee.
- 2.2 The performance measures are linked to the Council's priorities. The quarterly performance monitoring report provides regular opportunity for elected Members to maintain scrutiny of significant activities in order to achieve good outcomes for the residents of Aberdeenshire.
- 2.3 Performance during the first quarter of 2018/19 can be summarised as follows:-

Key Service Objectives	Are we getting better?
<p>1. To ensure access to good quality, affordable housing</p>	<p>With regards to the number of applicants accessing affordable housing, performance is much better than target this quarter, with 390 households housed. New build council housing in Laurencekirk, Inverurie and Kingseat has made a significant contribution to this increase, along with the return of properties that had been undergoing Interior Wall Insulation works.</p> <p>The proportion of properties meeting the EESSH standard at the end of 2017/18 has increased slightly compared to the previous year, with an estimated 1,460 properties to be brought up to the standard during 2018/19. Officers from Property and Facilities Management have also begun work on mapping out mobilisation stages for year two of the contract.</p>
<p>2. To ensure our service meets the outcome for the Scottish Social Housing Charter</p>	<p>Performance continues to be mixed this quarter, with 2 indicators currently performing better than target and one worse than target.</p> <p>The average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs is slightly higher than the previous quarter, but remains better than target and has been consistently so since Q2 of 2016/17. Five of the six Aberdeenshire areas were meeting or exceeding the target of 10 working days in Q1 of 2017/18. While performance in Formartine was worse than target in Q1, it is showing significant improvements in Q2 so far, and is currently 6.9 working days.</p> <p>In contrast, the average number of days taken to relet properties has increased compared to the previous quarter, increasing from 55 days last quarter to 60 this quarter. However, performance has started to improve in Q2 so far, with the average days falling to 47 in July. A greater than usual number of low-demand</p>

	<p>properties were let during this quarter, which has had an impact on the overall figures.</p> <p>Arrears performance has improved significantly, with arrears as a percentage of our gross rent debit decreasing from 4.6% in Q4 of 2017/18 to 4.07% in Q1 of 2018/19. This improvement has been driven by reductions in the level of former tenant arrears, with improvements being most noticeable in Banff and Buchan and Buchan. So far, the roll-out of Universal Credit does not appear to have had an impact on arrears levels, but staff are continuing to monitor this as more households will be affected by the new benefit over time.</p>
<p>3. Reduce fuel poverty</p>	<p>A detailed update on Fuel Poverty activities will be provided with the Q2 performance report.</p>

2.4 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3 Scheme of Governance

3.1 *The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section D 7.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the scrutiny of performance in relation to the Service Plan 2017-20 for Infrastructure Services as approved by Infrastructure Services Committee on 1st June 2017.*

4 Implications and Risk

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

An equality impact assessment is not required because the report is to inform Committee on performance and there will be no differential impact, as a result of the report, on people with protected characteristics.

4.2 Staffing and Financial Implications

There are no specific staffing and financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Risks

This report is to inform the Committee on performance and there will be no impact on levels of risk at either the Corporate or Strategic level.

4.4 Towns Centre First Principle

As this report is only to inform Committee on performance there is no impact on town centres thus a Town Centre Impact Assessment is not required.

Stephen Archer, Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Neil Watts, Senior Information Officer (Housing)
9th August 2018

Appendix 1: Communities - Housing Services Quarterly Performance Q1 2018 - 2019 - Exception Report

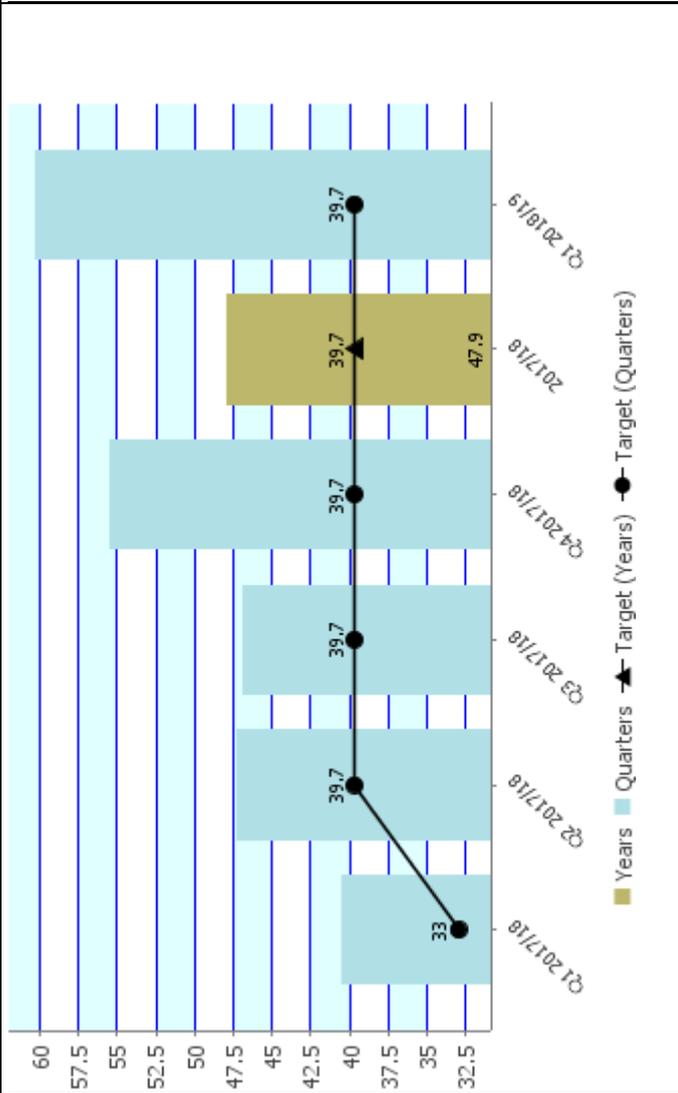
Generated on: 09 August 2018

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

Traffic Light: Red 1

HSWSP2 SO2 - Scottish Social Housing Charter

Indicator	2b) A'shire - Average re-let time in days					Red T'hold	Amber T'hold
	Target	Status	Value	Base	Long Trend		
Q1 2017/18	33	🔴	40.5	227	➡	41.7	40.1
Q2 2017/18	39.7	🔴	47.3	249	➡		
Q3 2017/18	39.7	🔴	46.9	238	➡		
Q4 2017/18	39.7	🔴	55.5	221	➡		
Q1 2018/19	39.7	🔴	60.2	275	➡		



This indicator demonstrates how quickly people are able to access housing, and that the service is minimising rent loss due to voids. It represents the average (mean) number of days between a property becoming void and a new tenant taking possession of the property.

Performance in Q1 of 2018 is worse compared to the previous quarter, increasing from 55 days in Q4 of 2017/18 to 60 days in Q1 of 2018/19. The relet of low demand properties was significant this quarter, with twice as many low demand properties let as in Q1 of 2017/18. In particular, low demand sheltered housing properties had an impact on this month's figures, with 2 properties in Rosehearty and Fyvie each taking over a year to relet due to a lack of suitable applicants. Similarly, 8 of the 10 longest void periods this quarter were for sheltered housing properties. While there has been an increase in the number of properties relet this quarter overall, the increase in low demand properties is disproportionate (the number of properties relet overall has increased by 25%, while the number of low demand properties let has doubled).

Performance has started to improve in Q2 so far, with the average days to relet in July falling to 49 in Q2 to the 23rd of August, and 5 of the 6 areas showing significant improvements over Q1 performance. This follows an anticipated pattern, as this indicator looks at performance at the end of the void process (i.e. after the property is let), and therefore it was expected that it would take some time before the effect of existing void properties being let would cease.

The impact of low demand sheltered housing can perhaps be illustrated by looking at the

effect it can have at an area level, where the smaller numbers mean that outliers have a bigger impact on overall figures. To take Formartine as an example, in quarter 1, there were 3 sheltered housing properties in Fyvie, Rothienorman and Cuminstown that between them took over 1000 days to relet due to a lack of applicants. This resulted in an average of 90 days to relet sheltered housing in Formartine in Q1, and an overall average of 62 days. In contrast, no such long term void properties have been relet in Q2 to date, resulting in the average days to relet sheltered housing decreasing to 36 days (less than half), and the overall average dropping to 32 days (slightly more than half).

A similar pattern can be most readily seen in Banff and Buchan and Marr – in particular, Banff and Buchan shows almost identical times to relet non-sheltered housing in both Q1 and Q2, but a drop in average time to relet sheltered housing from 115 days in Q1 to 49 days in Q2 means that the overall average has dropped by 10 days in Q2. Unfortunately, such properties are an ongoing issue, as there are currently 14 sheltered housing properties that have been void for over 100 days which are likely to impact on performance in the future, and a further 9 properties identified as low demand that could also be void for extended periods. All of these properties are in the northern half of Aberdeenshire, with the largest concentrations in Formartine (6) and Buchan (4).

The fact that this indicator looks at performance after a property has been let means that we are unable to accurately predict performance, as we cannot say when properties like these will actually have an impact on the figures. When the letting process results in a number of properties being let within the same quarter, rather than being spread out across the year, this will have an impact on the figures for that quarter, and lead to a natural fluctuation in performance.

This is not to say that low demand and sheltered housing are the only factors influencing current performance however – as discussed in previous commentaries, there are other specific factors that the housing service are currently working to address. However, as discussed above, the nature of this indicator means that it will take some time before any improvements will filter through. The work currently being undertaken includes:

- working with manufacturers to speed up the delivery of materials such as external doors and kitchens where there is a significant time lag for manufacturing. Staff are also working with energy suppliers to speed up the clearing down of debt on gas/electricity meters, and making improvements to the supply of new electricity meters after new electric heating installations.
- continuing the rollout of the new RPMM system to all remaining areas to increase the efficiency of work within our in-house repairs teams and reduce the time taken to complete works on void properties
- a revised sign-up procedure with stricter timescales for responses, viewings and sign-up of new leases

