

## REPORT TO COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 20 FEBRUARY 2020

### HOUSING ACTION PLAN

#### **1 Reason for Report / Summary**

- 1.1 To update Committee on the key areas for improvement for the Housing Service arising from the Annual Return on Charter.

#### **2 Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to:**

**2.1 Discuss and approve the Housing Action Plan; and**

**2.2 Agree to receive six monthly updates on the progress of the Action Plan.**

#### **3 Purpose and Decision Making Route**

- 3.1 Committee must retain sight of the key areas of focus for the Housing Service. This report clarifies areas for improvement.
- 3.2 The Housing Action Plan is brought before Communities Committee at six monthly intervals and updated following receipt of benchmarking data. The Housing Service work on improvements continuously, with a clear action plan being a key part of retaining focus on specific areas for improvement.

#### **4 Discussion**

- 4.1 The Housing Service report to the Scottish Housing Regulator annually by way of the Annual Return on Charter (ARC). The ARC documents how well the Housing Service is performing against the Scottish Housing Regulator's Indicators.
- 4.2 The Housing Service provides data to two benchmarking organisations throughout the year. The two organisations are Scottish Housing Network and Housemark. Both organisations provide in-depth analysis of the Housing Service.
- 4.3 An Action Plan showing the areas for improvement is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 4.4 The Action Plan ties in with the Local Housing Strategy adopted by Aberdeenshire Council in December 2017.

#### **5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

- 5.1 This report helps deliver:

Council Priority 6 – Have the right mix of housing across all of Aberdeenshire.

Council Priority 9 – Deliver responsible, long-term financial planning.

Council Priority 10 – Having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.

- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		x	
Staffing		x	
Equalities			x
Fairer Scotland Duty			x
Town Centre First			x
Sustainability		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommendations do not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

- 5.4 This report is intended to look at performance and actions and should not impact on risks at a corporate or strategic level.

## 6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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 this matter relates to a decision on policy and resource matters.



**Stephen Archer, Director Infrastructure Services**






Report prepared by Rob Simpson, Head of Housing and Building Standards  
Date 9 January 2020



**List of Appendices** – Appendix 1 – Actions from Annual Benchmarking

### Appendix 1

#### Actions from Annual Benchmarking

No	Issue Arising from Benchmarking	Action	Responsible Service Area	Lead Officer	Deadline	Comments	Status	Outcomes Expected	Trend	
1	Major Works Costs second highest in peer group.	Continually assess value for money	Asset Management	Housing Manager, Asset Management & Repairs	Autumn 2020	Considerable work undertaken to date which has led to a new procurement route being utilised. Savings from this yet to show through benchmarking process. Reduced period to complete major works and energy efficiency works (Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) contract has also led to a spike in costs.	Green	Reduced average actual costs		17/18 = £2,299 per property 18/19 = £508
2	EESH (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) – compliance below peer group	Assess current position. Put in place plan for EESH 2 once requirements are announced. Report to Communities Committee on future requirements at appropriate time.	Asset Management	Housing Manager, Asset Management & Repairs	TBC once announcement made on EESH 2	Aberdeenshire has large numbers of non-traditional housing, stone built houses and off gas areas, all are expensive to treat and impact on speed and ability to deliver EESH. EESH 2 details to be factored in once known. Team are reviewing the stock condition database in light of anticipated EESH2 targets and the feedback from the HIP.  Compliance remains lowest in peer group.	Green	Production of a plan for EESH2 compliance.		17/18 = 44.5 compliance 18/19 = 47.8
3	Responsive repairs – costs	Report to HMT on the issue, reasons	Asset Management	Housing Manager,	Summer 2020	New system being introduced to enhance efficiency of workforce and	Green	Lower costs		17/18 = £1,080

	higher than peer group	behind this and action plan for the future.		Asset Management & Repairs		new procurement method in place for supplies which will produce savings. New system in place for all areas and statistics being compiled it is recommended that data for a full year be collected prior to full analysis.				18/19 = £1042
4	Tenant Satisfaction		All Housing Services	Housing Manager, Tenancy Services	Continuous drive to improve	New Tenant Participation Strategy agreed by Communities Committee. New groups set up with tenants to look at scrutiny and communication.	Green	Enhanced level of meaningful tenant engagement, scrutiny and involvement		17/18 = 79.7% satisfied 18/19 79.7% (not measured in the last year)
5	Emergency Repairs taking longer than they did in previous years	Recording issue identified and being addressed.	Asset Management	Housing Manager, Asset Management & Repairs	Autumn 2019	This has mainly been due to a failure to close of emergency repairs and open a new works order for follow up works. This is being addressed through the new system.	Green	Accurate use of system.		17/18 = 8.3 hours 18/19 = 5.3
6	Lengthening average re-let time	Review of void process to be arranged together with a deep dive into examples with relevant team members to fully understand issues and possible solutions.	Asset Management, Tenancy services, Options & Homelessness	Housing Manager, Asset Management & Repairs	Autumn 2019	The process of engagement in the R RTP (Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans) development process has resulted in additional work to examine methods of streamlining current approach. Consultant to be appointed and new post being recruited to focus on expediting high demand voids.	Green	Hope to have a reduction in re-let time. Streamlined voids process.		17/18 = 48 days 18/19 = 55
7	Time taken to undertake medical	Create a complex cases forum to review and	Tenancy Services,	Housing Manager, Strategy	June 2019	The average time taken to deliver a medical adaptation in the local authority stock has reduced	Green	Reduction in time taken to undertake		LA Stock 17/18 = 100 days

	adaptations both in local authority and private sector.	accelerate delivery, implement housing solutions training to ensure housing issues and solutions are identified at an early stage, improve and streamline minor adaptations process, improve recording of need, timelines and outcomes.	Strategy, Asset Management			significantly from 100 days in 2017/18 to 33 days in 2018/19. This is below the local authority average in Scotland of 38 days and places Aberdeenshire 2nd amongst large local authorities. This is both a result of improvement activity to streamline processes and reflects more accurate data recording.  In the private sector the time taken has fallen from 162 days in 2016/17 to 137 days in 2018/19. By streamlining processes and the introduction of a complex cases forum where partners meet on a monthly basis to improve communication and problem solve it is anticipated this timescale will reduce further. This is not yet fully reflected in 2018/19 figures and is due to a very small number of cases that had complexity around client needs, design and construction.		medical adaptations on a tenure neutral basis.	18/19 = 33 days  Private Sector 16/17 = 162 18/19 = 137
8	Value for Money	Continue to monitor value for money	Tenancy Services	Housing Manager, Tenancy Services	March 2021	Rent rises have been agreed by tenants based on priorities of upgrades and new build. The ongoing sustainability of rent rises must be measured against lost rents and tenant satisfaction.	Green	No significant drop in tenant satisfaction with value for money.	 17/18 = 74.6 of tenants felt rent represented good value for money. 18/19 = not measured
9	Arrears	Continue to monitor arrears	Tenancy Services	Housing Manager,	March 2021	As rents increase and universal credit impacts it is imperative that arrears levels are monitored.	Green	No significant change in arrears levels	 17/18 = 2.8% of rent due 18/19 = 2.9%

				Tenancy Services						
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= Performance improving



= Performance stable



= Performance getting worse