

Present: Councillors Councillor Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*), Liz Bushell, Christopher Reid, Edmund Strengiel and Pat Vaughan

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Loraine Woolley and Debbie Rousseau

Also in Attendance: Sheila Watkinson (Member of LTP), Mick Barber (Chair of LTP), Steven Bearder (Member of LTP) and Caroline Coyle-Fox (Member of LTP)

1. Confirmation of Minutes - 19 March 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019 be confirmed.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Vaughan declared a Personal Interest in Financial Performance – Outturn 2018/19 as his Grand Daughter worked in the Council’s Finance Department.

Councillor Strengiel declared a Personal Interest in Financial Performance – Outturn 2018/19 in relation to the Western Growth Corridor as he was a Lincolnshire County Councillor.

3. LTP Matters

No update.

4. Quarter 4 2018/19 - Performance Summary

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director of Housing

- a. presented the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee with an end of quarter report on performance for the fourth quarter of the year (January 2019 – March 2019)
- b. advised that of the 21 measures 12 were on or exceeding targets for the year and 8 had not met the targets set and 1 did not have a required target.
- c. referred to paragraph 4 of the report and highlighted areas of good performance:
 - Arrears as a percentage of rent debit
 - Percentage of all repairs carried out within time limits
 - Average days to resolve ASB cases
- d. further highlighted areas that had not achieved their target and explained the reasons for this:

- Average re-let period – All dwellings (including major works) – (days)
- Percentage of non-decent homes
- Percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds

e. invited committees questions and comments.

Question: Referred to performance indicator 85A in relation to allocations and highlighted that the target was 80% and Qu4 was 82.50%, and asked if this should read better than target?

Response: This would be double checked.

Question: Referred to the percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds and asked why calls were taking longer to be answered?

Response: Customers were using the website for basic queries which meant that Customer Services were dealing with more complex and multiple queries which were taking longer.

Question: Referred to the year-end arrears of £737,531 and asked how much would be written off and how much was recoverable?

Response: We tried to recover as much of the arrears as possible. Most write offs were when people had been made bankrupt and the courts determined how much of the debt to write off.

Question: Referred to performance indicator 48 relating to percentage of homes with valid gas safety and asked why the target was set at 99.96% and not 100%?

Response: There was always 1 or 2 properties that we could not get access to, therefore, a 100% target would be unachievable.

Question: Referred to paragraph 4.3 of the report and asked for clarification on how the ASB cases would be dip tested?

Response: A percentage of ASB cases would be pulled out and checked that the correct procedures were being adhered to and in accordance with the ASB accreditation requirements.

Question: Referred to voids and asked how sheltered accommodation affected the figures?

Response: Peoples aspirations had changed and they were choosing not to move to sheltered accommodation. When the sheltered accommodation properties were left empty for a while it would have an effect on void properties.

Question: Did the Lincoln Tenants Panel still view voids properties?

Response: Yes tenants inspected some voids properties once the repairs had been completed. The work was completed to a high quality and we could not understand why people did not want the sheltered accommodation.

Comment: This was common across the Country, peoples aspirations had changed.

Question: Had the Lincoln Tenants Panel been involved in the changes to the targets?

Response: Yes it would be considered at the next Lincoln Tenants Panel meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5. Financial Performance - Outturn 2018/19

The Chair explained that the report on Financial Performance Outturn 2018/19 had been considered at Performance Scrutiny Committee and he felt that the elements of the report that related to Housing should be available for consideration by the Lincoln Tenants Panel. Therefore he had asked for the report to be circulated to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee for consideration.

The committee considered the report and discussed the following:

Question: Referred to the Western Growth Corridor detailed in paragraph 7.4 of the report and asked for clarification on why the number of properties differed to the Planning Application?

Response: The 52 units in the report related to Lindum properties and not to Council properties.

Question: Referred to the financial position of the Council for the financial year 2018/19 and asked why was there a variance of £6,472,000 in the Housing Investment Programme?

Response: This had been carried forward from previous years.

Question: Referred to the HRA and asked why there was variance of £931,000?

Response: This was due to Capital Receipts.

Question: Referred to Housing Repairs and asked why there was a surplus of £271,534?

Response: Some of this related to new properties and some related to faster than anticipated void turnaround times.

Question: Asked for clarification on the revised Housing Investment Programme?

Response: It included both overspends and underspends. For example there was an underspend on door replacements due to production of the doors being stopped which made them unavailable therefore the money would be re-profiled into next year's budget.

Comment: Councillors should be provided with a list of planned works to assist them with answering queries from tenants.

Response: Suggested that an all Member workshop be held on the planned schedule of works.

Question: Why was the Council now buying miscellaneous properties?

Response: A number of properties had been purchased over the past year, there had to be a good reason to purchase a property for example a privately owned flat that was within a Council owned block of flats, it would make sense to have it back to being Council owned. The new Acquisition Policy had been agreed by Executive recently.

Question: Why had more money been spent on decent homes decoration than in the previous year?

Response: The figure included void properties, there was an increased number of voids properties due to the new build properties.

RESOLVED that

1. the report be noted
2. the end of year financial figures be incorporated into the Quarter 4 Performance Summary Report each year.

6. Work Programme Update

The Chair

- a. presented the work programme for the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee for 2019/20 as detailed at appendix A of the report.

- b. advised that this was an opportunity for the committee to suggest other items to be included within the work programme.

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director of Housing suggested the item on Homelessness/ Action Lincs/ Rough Sleeper Interventions be moved to the November meeting due to Officer availability.

RESOLVED that the

1. work programme be noted
2. Homelessness/ Action Lincs/ Rough Sleeper Interventions be moved to the 4 November 2019 meeting.