

## HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

**Monday, 8 March 2021**

**6.00 pm**

**Virtual Meeting Via Zoom**

Membership:	Councillors Gary Hewson (Chair), Pat Vaughan (Vice-Chair), Liz Bushell, Christopher Reid, Edmund Strengiel and Loraine Woolley
Substitute member(s):	Councillors Biff Bean and Susie Parry
Lincoln Tenants Panel member(s):	Mick Barber (Chair of LTP), Steven Bearder (Member of LTP), Caroline Coyle-Fox (Vice Chair of LTP), Debbie Rousseau (Member of LTP) and Sheila Watkinson (Member of LTP)
Officers attending:	Democratic Services, Yvonne Fox, Matthew Hillman, Andrew McNeil, Chris Morton and Daren Turner

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### VIRTUAL MEETING

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:  
Please click this URL to join.

<https://zoom.us/j/94506091122?pwd=amITN1NMZjFISzFsZXJRNjGdvamNtdz09>

You may be asked to quote the following meeting ID and password:

Webinar ID: 945 0609 1122

Passcode: 369251

Alternatively, please join the meeting via telephone by calling 0330 0885830 quoting the above Webinar ID and password when prompted

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- Present:** Gary Hewson (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Pat Vaughan, Liz Bushell, Christopher Reid, Edmund Strengiel and Loraine Woolley
- External Representatives:** Mick Barber, Steven Bearder, Caroline Coyle-Fox and Debbie Rousseau
- Also Present:** Councillor Donald Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing
- Apologies for Absence:** Sheila Watkinson, LTP Member

**97. Confirmation of Minutes - 2 November 2020**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2020 be confirmed.

**98. Matters Arising**

Mick Barber, Chair of LTP noted that due to Sheila Watkinson LTP Member having Wi-Fi connection issues, she would be represented by Caroline Coyle-Fox Vice Chair of LTP at meetings for the meantime.

**99. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**100. LTP Matters**

Caroline Coyle Fox, Vice Chair of LTP updated Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on a pilot proposal to erect a noticeboard on Winn Street, off Monks Road to improve communications between tenants and the Council. The notice board would include key messages for example on housing officer contacts, block cleaning, fire regulations, and LTP information.

The notice board would be A2 in size and lockable to meet fire safety regulations. The pilot would last for 3 months, followed by a resident's survey by LTP to assess its effectiveness with the potential for the scheme to be extended to other parts of the city.

Concerns were raised by the Director of Housing and Investment in relation to lack of funding available for noticeboards in this year's Housing budget.

Mick Barber, Chair of LTP agreed to withdraw this proposal until further notice pending further discussions on funding streams.

**101. LTP Grass Verge Survey Proposal**

Mick Barber (Chair of LTP), and Caroline Coyle-Fox (Vice Chair of LTP):

- a. presented members of Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee with a report initially presented to Policy Scrutiny Committee on 24 November 2020 raising concerns that tenants were parking their cars on grass verges in city estates
- b. advised that all estates in Lincoln suffered from a lack of parking space available for cars, this caused a number of issues including blocked roads, junctions and parking on grass verges
- c. referred to paragraph 2.3 of their report explaining the number of different solutions to address the problem and advised that before any solutions were decided, an equality and diversity impact assessment would be carried out as part of the options appraisal
- d. reported on a pilot survey proposed by LTP on Hartsholme to gain a better understanding as to the scale of the problem and capture residents' views on possible solutions
- e. added that the survey could possibly be extended into other areas of the City if it was successful
- f. highlighted the questions that the survey aimed to answer as detailed at paragraph 3 of the report.
- g. reported on the 3 main methods to be used as part of the consultation:
  - An online survey advertised through Facebook but conducted through the City of Lincoln Council's website
  - Postal surveys sent out if a low response rate was received from online surveys
  - Zoom calls with residents conducted by LTP as part of a public meeting
- h. advised that the LTP would consult with residents of Hartsholme Estate and other local stakeholders such as local schools and the police
- i. advised that the next steps following the survey would be to report the results back to Policy Scrutiny Committee once collated and analysed
- j. invited member's questions and comments.

Members discussed the survey proposals in further detail. The following comments emerged:

- Comment: A hard standing for residents' cars had been installed in Woodfield Avenue, Birchwood which was a great improvement compared to Dellfield Avenue just around the corner where unsightly grass verge rutting could be viewed for 100's of yards.
- Comment: It was doubtful what the survey would achieve as the potential solutions were already outlined within the report. An online survey would not be truly representative of public opinion.
- Comment: Parking on grass verges was a real issue across the city. Warning notices should be issued then vehicles towed away that didn't take heed.

Mick Barber, Chair of LTP emphasised that parking on verges on council estates in terms of risk to health and safety was a long established problem which was in need of attention. LTP members did not have all the answers however the survey was the most it could do at the present time due to the pandemic.

LTP members asked whether there were any available funds to address the issue of people parking on grass verges.

Daren Turner, Director of Housing and Investment advised that the Council had resorted to fencing off areas with bad parking problems in the past although there were no specific pots of capital money available. The proposal to hold a survey in Hartsholme was a good data finding exercise to understand the level of responsibility communities would like to see, data which members could then evaluate.

Members highlighted that the Highways Authority were happy to install dropped kerbs to people's properties if they were willing to fund the cost themselves, which was an option.

Daren Turner added that the City Council would offer financial assistance for dropped kerbs to people with disabilities under the aids and adaptations budget.

RESOLVED that members of LTP would discuss options to address issues of parking on grass verges further with Chris Morton, Resident Involvement Manager in order to seek a majority view regarding any potential further action.

## **102. Verbal Update-Cleaning of Communal Areas-Covid Restrictions**

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director, Housing gave a verbal update as requested at the last meeting of Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the cleansing of communal facilities within the Council's Sheltered Accommodation during Covid-19, covering the following main points:

- A cleansing regime had now been reintroduced, following advice taken from the Corporate Health and Safety Team.
- Guidance and work practices had been reviewed to enable the full cleaning of communal areas on a 6-8 week cycle.
- There had been no complaints received about the cleanliness of communal areas.
- Requirements for any additional cleansing needs were discussed between the caretakers and Keeley Johnson, Tenancy Services Manager.
- Keeley and Mick Barber would carry out spot checks of communal areas in future months.

RESOLVED that the content of the verbal update be noted.

## **103. Update on Housing Service Status**

Daren Turner, Director of Housing and Investment introduced an update on the current housing service status due to the pandemic, covering the following main points:

- The Housing Directorate was committed to continued provision of services.

- Despite being in a difficult situation due to recent further restrictions imposed due to Covid-19, service delivery had been reasonably successful, balanced against the safety of residents and our own workforce.
- The service tried to abide by the Government ethos to stay at home where possible.
- Top line PPE equipment was issued to all staff working in a mobile environment.
- There had been few outbreaks of Covid in City Hall although there were staff self isolating which caused issues.
- It was excellent news that key workers at the authority would be tested for Covid regularly to ensure their safety and that of others.
- Progress and performance were both going well under very difficult circumstances.
- There were no plans to furlough staff at the current time.

Andrew McNeil, Assistant Director, Strategy and Investment:

- a. presented a report to update Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the current services provided by the Directorate for Housing and Investment, taking into account the restrictions required in response to the current national lockdown requirements as a consequence of Covid-19
- b. highlighted that in advance of government restrictions in which local authorities in England had been moved into Tier 4 in December 2020, the scope of services that could be delivered had been further reviewed taking into account potential increases in Covid response restrictions
- c. advised that this preparation had enabled a swift move by Housing Services to the current lockdown requirements and in all cases had looked to maintaining service delivery in a way within the current government requirements to ensure the safety of residents and staff.

Each Assistant Director reported on the current service status within their own key housing areas as detailed within paragraphs 3-5 of the report as follows:

- Assistant Director Investment, Matt Hillman
- Assistant Director of Strategy and Investment, Andrew McNeil
- Assistant Director of Housing, Yvonne Fox

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail. Questions/comments were raised which received officer responses as follows:

- Comment: The new homes at Markham House were brilliant.
- Response: Thank you for your comments. Member input had been invaluable in shaping the final design of the build.
- Question: How was the Covid Testing facility at Sincil Bank funded?
- Response: The Covid-Testing station project was paid for by the Government through public health.
- Question: The work of housing repair staff formally at Sincil Bank Covid testing station, and now at Croft Street Community Centre was magnificent. Was the cost for these projects repatriated to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)?

- Response: Yes indeed. Staff had not been involved in the physical set up of the testing stations. Supplies used during testing would be recharged to SERCO.
- Question: Looking at the Strategic Housing Function to deliver Next Steps move-on accommodation for rough sleepers; would the properties purchased belong to the HRA or be part of a separate scheme?
- Response: The Next Step homes would be HRA properties. Funding would be received in the form of grants for each property and the rent paid for by the properties. There was also revenue funding available to help. The accommodation would be self-funding. Adequate income would be available to deliver our own repairs under the HRA. These would be predominantly one bedroomed flats for rough sleepers and occupants would not receive full Council tenancies due to the homes being temporary accommodation only.
- Question: Did the authority plan to retain blue collar apprentices?
- Response: The housing service still has apprentices, although there had not been any further recruitment due to Covid. The contracts of those apprentices due to finish in October 2020 were extended until Christmas 2020. The authority encouraged apprentices to apply for any vacancies and would advertise when vacant posts became available.
- Question: How long were voids properties empty during the current pandemic before being re-let?
- Response: The properties should be vacant for 72 hours, although the City Council carried out an enhanced cleaning regime to reduce the timescale to 48 hours.
- Question: In terms of supported housing visits, where was the line drawn between emergency visits which were continuing during the pandemic and non-emergency visits temporarily suspended?
- Response: Each case was assessed on individual merits together with knowledge and history held regarding the tenant's need. For example, if a tenant fell and injured themselves and did not have family members to wait with them for an ambulance, our staff would attend.

RESOLVED that the content of the report and discussions held be noted.

#### 104. Sustainment Report

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director, Housing/Keeley Johnson, Tenancy Services Manager:

- a. presented a report to update Members on the current position regarding the sustainment of tenancies, which continued to be a key priority for City of Lincoln Council with an increased need to provide tenants with essential support and guidance in light of the Covid-19 pandemic
- b. advised that there had been a continued reduction in income for many tenants with ongoing reductions in welfare benefits and an increase in zero hours contracts together with added financial difficulties of Covid-19 meaning that those people not only unemployed but in low paid employment faced significant challenges trying to sustain a tenancy
- c. reported that prior to the national government ban on evictions at the start of the pandemic the City of Lincoln Council had made a very clear promise not to evict any tenant due to Covid-19 where an individual was engaging;

evictions had already halved in the 2019/20 financial year with a significant emphasis placed on multi-agency working to keep tenants in their homes

- d. presented figures on the current position regarding sustainment of tenancies and government assistance available as detailed at paragraph 3.1-3.3 of her report
- e. reported further on several measures that had been put in place as a local authority to support tenants covering the following areas:
  - Rent Free Weeks
  - Discretionary Rental Hardship Payment Fund
  - Befriending Service
  - Community Helpline
  - Early Intervention
  - Communications
- f. advised on the development of the Sustainment Team now approved with the pre-tenancy process completed in preparation for recruitment of the team hopefully in the next six months as detailed at paragraph 4 and Appendix A to the report
- g. highlighted that the Allocations/Voids and Tenancy teams had worked together to develop this new streamlined and effective support mechanism to help tenants particularly in the first three months of their tenancies
- h. added that the authority was also in the process of working with external agencies to provide a furniture donation service
- i. requested that members note the actions taken to support tenants in order to improve levels of tenancy sustainment.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail.

The following discussions took place:

- Question: How did the council recover charges for under occupancy in cases of tenants struggling due to having lost their jobs during Covid or on zero hours contracts?
- Response: The housing service would normally look at moving those tenants to more suitable accommodation but this was not possible during the pandemic. Working with welfare advice officers made sure all eligible benefits had been applied for. If it was the case that Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) was not applicable in a particular circumstance the authority would meet the full charge for over occupancy until the end of Covid. The Tenancy Support Team had assisted with over 100 applications for DHP in the last few months. It wanted to maintain tenancies for those people engaging and help as many people as possible on a case by case basis.

Staff had also helped to claim welfare payments under the severe disability premium project amounting to £309,000 backdated into claimants' bank accounts. This benefit was frequently under claimed.



- Question: Was the Sustainment Team only available to Council tenants?
- Response: The initiative was extended to NK and city wide. A working group was already active made up of the Allocations/Tenancy and Homelessness Teams, so that once the Sustainability Team was set up it could hit the ground 'running'. A press release would be made as soon as this was possible.
- Question: How did the Sustainability Team operate?
- Response: The Tenancy Sustainability Team was open to all tenants although not all tenants needed it. Tenants that hit the vulnerability criteria were offered help automatically. It was also particularly helpful for new tenants. People required different levels of support. No tenant would be threatened with eviction before first being supported by a Tenancy Officer and offered free legal advice.
- Question: This initiative was very welcomed. Would the team be able to manage success in terms of performance?
- Response: Yes there were key performance indicators in place for the Sustainability Team e.g. level of support/cost of evictions reducing/ average level of debt/ number of referrals/customer satisfaction. Happier tenants made for happier communities which aided income collection and a reduction in anti-social behaviour.

RESOLVED that the content of the report and members comments be noted with thanks.

#### **105. Work Programme Update 2020-21**

The Chair

- a. presented the work programme for the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee for 2020/21 as detailed at Appendix A of the report
- b. advised that this was an opportunity for committee to suggest other items to be included on the work programme.

RESOLVED that

1. The content of the work programme be noted.
2. The following reports be scheduled into the work programme
  - Update on delivery costs being repatriated to HRA from NSAP scheme
  - Setting of Performance Targets: 2021/22.

#### **106. Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because it was likely that if members of the public were present there would be a disclosure to them of exempt or confidential information.

#### **107. Performance Update-Homelessness and Rough Sleeping**

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director of Housing:

- a. advised members on the current performance of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Teams, which was particularly challenging during the current Covid-19 pandemic
- b. reported on continued prioritisation of homeless households and former rough sleepers for accommodation in line with Government guidance as detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report
- c. highlighted that as at 11 January 2021 there was nobody sleeping out in the city
- d. detailed the current position in respect of homelessness and rough sleeping at paragraph 3 of her report
- e. reported on anticipated challenging times ahead for the teams during quarter 4 as detailed at paragraph 4 of her report
- f. requested that members note the current position relating to homelessness and rough sleeping.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

#### **108. Rents Report**

Yvonne Fox, Assistant Director for Housing:

- a. updated member of the current position regarding the collection of rent and rent arrears at the end of Quarter 3 31 December 2020, as detailed at paragraph 3.2 of her report
- b. outlined next steps to maximise rent collection and minimise rent arrears as detailed at paragraph 4 of her report
- c. requested Members' comments and feedback.

Members discussed the content of the report in further detail.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted.

**HOUSING SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE**

**8 MARCH 2021**

**REPORT UNDER RULE 2(VI) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

**Report by Councillor Donald Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing**

**INTRODUCTION**

The last 12 months have been an extraordinary time for everyone with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting all aspects of life. In terms of housing the service we have been able to offer has varied in relation to what level of lockdown we have been in at the relevant time. The situation has changed a number of times and at the time of writing this we are in a period of “lockdown” although this is not as severe as the lockdown imposed in March 2020. Many areas have been operating in different ways and where possible staff have worked from home with some areas such as supported housing services being delivered via telephone. Construction work, after the initial lockdown, has continued at De Wint Court, as allowed under the current regulations, and the new homes on the former Markham House site have been completed and are tenanted. However, we are only able to run a restricted repair service dealing with essential and priority repairs. Some services such as Lincare have continued as normal, with some additional staff trained to help if required, while the homelessness service has also continued its very important work. Housing staff were involved in the Community Help scheme and the Befriending Service. There have been disappointments most notably being the fact that we have been unable to celebrate the Centenary of Council Housing in Lincoln which we had hoped to mark in November on the anniversary of our first house being tenanted. We have also made progress in some areas including the completion of our new Housing Strategy. I thank the many members of council who contributed towards the production of this important strategy. Members have also recently been consulted on another important area of work namely fire safety. At various times some of our housing staff have either been furloughed or redeployed. The pressure on allocations continues to be immense as I detail later in this report. We currently have 7,617 council properties but over 1,000 people on the housing register. In terms of performance the Council’s executive has taken the decision that performance data for quarters one and two should be published but the information for quarter three should be delayed and published with quarter four. There are 19 measures for housing of which five were reported as below target for quarter two, and two reported above target. The fact that we have been able to keep services operating as much as possible is an achievement in itself and I pay tribute to every single member of staff who have done some extraordinary work over the last 12 months. I would also like to thank the members of our Tenants Panel for the valuable work they have carried out.

**HOMELESSNESS**

Homelessness continues to be a significant issue in Lincoln as in many towns and cities across the country. Rough sleepers have in recent years been the most visible aspect of this and at the start of the pandemic the Government introduced its “Everyone In” campaign which has led to additional accommodation funded by Central

Government being provided for people sleeping out. We successfully offered accommodation to every person as part of the campaign and we continue to provide accommodation for former rough sleepers. Due to the efforts of the team, at the start of the New Year we were able to report to MHCLG that we had no one sleeping out in Lincoln which is a fantastic achievement.

In addition to those people who are sleeping out, the number of people presenting to the City Council as homeless varied in the first two quarters of the current year from a low of 21 in April to a peak of 52 in July. The team has been working remotely during the year and dealing with cases by phone. Lockdown has reduced the options available for temporary accommodation and that has been an issue. A further issue that will have effects long-term is the County Council decision to cut £1 million from its housing related support budget. This is the funding that provides the extra support required to help homeless people improve their lives, many of them having complex problems which are not possible to resolve without help. We have responded to all of the various Government homeless and rough sleeping initiatives during the pandemic and continue to do so. The recent imposition of SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) saw every rough sleeper on Lincoln's streets being housed for the cold weather period. Our track record in homeless prevention and intervention has enabled us, as a trusted partner of MHCLG, to draw down funding as part of the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. This will provide 15 units of "move on" accommodation in the City and I am very pleased to tell members that we were the first Council in the country to purchase properties under this scheme. Further, we have been able, due again to our excellent service, to draw down significant funding in rough sleeping grant which is more than last year and will enable us to continue assisting some of the most vulnerable people in our City.

## TENANCY SERVICES

Tenancy Services staff have worked extremely hard to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on rent arrears and collection. The two-week rent-free period, which is normally over the Christmas/New Year period was brought forward to the start of the financial year. We also set up a discretionary rental hardship fund which assisted 182 tenants. Although this was brought to an end at the conclusion of the first national lockdown, this was revived for the current lockdown with the assistance being provided to those who have difficulty paying their rent as a direct effect of COVID-19. Our response has been featured by ARCH (the Association of Retained Council Housing) in their monthly magazine and on their website. We have also been able to use funds from our Discretionary Housing Payment allocation to assist tenants. At the end of quarter three rent arrears were £340,000 above the same period in 2019-20 with the rent collection rate being 98.9%. However, compared to the councils we benchmark with we have fared much better. The number of tenants on Universal Credit continues to increase and is now over 2,000. More than half of the total rent arrears of £1.1 million is owed by tenants on UC. The number of tenants that are under occupying their property continues to decrease due to work with tenants to ensure accommodation is adequate for the number in the household. Instances of under-occupancy have reduced from 436 to 364 when comparing the data for quarter two between 2019/20 and 2020/21. We have been putting significantly more emphasis on tenant sustainability with a team

of officers working on this. This is early intervention work with tenants to help them maintain their tenancies. Before the onset of COVID this had begun to have an effect and this is evidenced by the fact that the number of evictions reduced by half in 2019-20 compared to the previous year. In March 2020 the Government suspended evictions and this ban has recently been extended through to the end of this month. This is a regulation which affects not only local authorities and other social housing providers but also the private rented sector. Councils up and down the country are anticipating a significant increase in demand for local authority properties when the ban is eventually lifted.

## HOUSING REPAIRS

The Housing Repairs Service has been subjected to a number of limitations in the way it can operate due to COVID and this has affected performance. The number of workers able to operate in a single property has been restricted due to social distancing, there have been increases in the costs of some supplies and a significant increase in demand for PPE. In addition, Government guidance has changed on many occasions. One effect of COVID appears to have been a reduction in the number of repairs reported with some tenants, particularly those who are shielding, being reluctant to have operatives working in their homes.

In terms of performance the percentage of repairs fixed first time at the end of quarter two was 90.11%. The percentage of appointments kept was 99.95% in quarter two which is an almost perfect figure.

During the current financial year, we have introduced on a trial basis a system of Scheduled Repairs which means that repairs covered by this system will be carried out area by area at set times. We are continuing to carry out our priority repairs within 24 hours and urgent repairs within 3 days. The Schedule Repair system allows us to plan all the work in each area and ensure that we have all the right resources and materials in the right place so we can complete any repairs reported in one visit. This gives everyone more certainty that the repair will be carried out on the expected date. It also drives down delivery costs and will drastically reduce our carbon footprint as we scale back journeys across the city. The initial indications are that this system has had a positive effect in terms of both financial and service delivery.

To conclude on this section, we are currently carrying out procurement exercises for the vehicle fleet and managed stores provider. The new fleet will be greener, this linked to a reduction in the number of journey's around the city as a result of the move to scheduled repairs will help towards meeting the council's climate goals. As of 4 April Jewson Partnership Solutions will be the managed stores provider replacing Travis Perkins.

## VOIDS

At the end of quarter two there were 65 properties in voids. The process of bringing back into use has been substantially affected by the COVID-19 restrictions. The number of workers able to work within one property at the same time has been restricted causing delays in work being completed and COVID also affected the supply chain. These two factors have resulted in the performance being 50 days (keys

handed in to keys handed out) for voids when the target is 32 days. Since my last report to this committee, we have changed voids contractors. There were some initial teething problems with the incoming provider which have now mostly been resolved. I have asked the Director of Housing to specifically target void turnaround going forward as we must seek to maximise our housing supply in these difficult times.

## HOUSING INVESTMENT

Two key areas in this section are in red as far as performance is concerned but, in both cases, this has been a direct effect of COVID. Firstly, the number of Council properties that are not at the Decent Homes Standard. The data showed 0.81% at the end of quarter two excluding refusals. However, in a further 207 instances the tenant had refused to allow work to be carried out – often due to the tenant shielding or concerned about visitors to their home during lockdown periods. A similar situation has arisen with the figures for the number of properties with a valid gas safety certificate. This was down to 85.84% at the end of quarter one but had increased to 95.05% at the end of quarter three. As with the Decent Homes Standard work, we expect to catch up as time goes on although further refusals are likely during lockdown periods as we are experiencing at the time of writing. The Council's executive has taken the decision to implement the break clause in the planned maintenance contract with Kier Services. As a result, this contract will end on 31 March. The intention is that some of the work under this contract will be carried out in-house with some being contracted to smaller, local companies helping boost the local economy and again supporting our carbon reduction agenda.

## NEW BUILD/ALLOCATIONS

The pandemic has slowed up work on new properties. The five new properties on the site of the former Markham House building on Swift Gardens were completed in December and have been tenanted. Although the timetable for completion of De Wint Court extra care unit has been affected we are still hoping to be able to finish this during the current calendar year. Progress is continuing to be made on the next proposed development at Rookery Lane.

The pressure on allocations continues to be immense. On 3 February we had 1,144 on the housing register of whom 170 were in band one. This continuing pressure only serves to show how much the Right to Buy legislation affects our ability to provide Council housing for those who need it. When the 1980 Housing Act came into being, we had around 11,000 Council homes for rent in the city. Right to Buy has reduced this by about 30% to approximately 7,800. Sales have consistently outstripped any efforts we have been able to replace them. There are several effects of this. One is that in all likelihood, in line with national trends, around half of the properties that were sold to tenants have ended up in the private rented sector. Private rents in the City can be around 80 to 90% higher compared to an identical Council property. Further to this the properties are being sold at a discount with restrictions on how we can spend the receipts. For example, a tenant of 10 years standing who purchases a property valued at £100,000 with the statutory discount (35% plus, after five years of being a tenant 1% per year of tenancy) potentially acquire the property for £60,000. However, the regulations mean we are then considerably restricted on the way we can use that

receipt to build a replacement. Before the 1980 Act local authorities were able to sell Council houses, and did, but there was no discount and there was no restriction on spending the receipt to build replacements. I fully accept that aspirational tenants living in a council house will aspire to own their home but equally many other people aspire to live in a council house or are current tenants of ours who need more suitable properties. The restriction on the use of receipts has meant that over the years our housing stock has reduced although the demand remains considerable.

A further pressure on allocations is that a major effect of lockdown has been a reduction in the number of properties that are available. We had at one stage dropped from an average of 20 sets of keys being handed in per month to just two or three, many of which were in sheltered housing schemes. This is now slowly improving but the pressure on voids has restricted turnaround times. We are now doing limited bidding cycles and a small number of emergency mutual exchanges. In addition, government advice has been to restrict lettings to emergency cases only. This has been a source of frustration for many people seeking to move but we simply have not had enough properties available to operate as normal. We have been helped to some extent by our purchase and repair scheme but this does not solve the problem and never will do. Between April 2019 the end of January 2021 we bought 65 properties through this scheme and a further four properties are, at the time of writing, in conveyancing.

Councillor Donald Nannestad, Portfolio Holder for Quality Housing

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**PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**18 FEBRUARY 2021**

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – QUARTERLY MONITORING</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE &amp; TOWN CLERK</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>JACLYN GIBSON, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER</b>

**Extract regarding Housing Revenue Account:**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To present to Members the third quarter's performance (up to 31st December), specifically including the financial impact of the Covid19 pandemic, on the Council's:

- General Fund
- Housing Revenue Account
- Housing Repairs Service
- Capital Programmes

1.2 Financial Procedure Rules require members to receive, on a quarterly basis, a report prepared jointly by the Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Management Team commenting on financial performance to date. This report is designed to meet this requirement. Whilst quarterly performance reporting for the third quarter has been paused in light of the Covid19 pandemic response, due to the challenging financial circumstances the Council currently faces it has been necessary to continue work on reporting the latest financial position.

**EXTRACT**

**4. Housing Revenue Account**

4.1 For 2020/21 the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) net revenue budget was set at a £75,000 use of balances, resulting in an estimated level of general balances at the year-end of £921,071, after allowing for the 2019/20 outturn position.

4.2 The HRA is currently projecting an in-year variance of a £772,391 underspend, which would increase the General Balances to £1,693,462 at the end of 2020/21.

4.3 Although the forecast position is an underspend there are a number of forecast year-end variations in income and expenditure as a result of Covid19 along with variances arising from measures taken to address the budget pressures. Full

details of the main variances are provided in Appendix D while the table below sets out the key variances:

	<b>Forecast £'000</b>
Increased expenditure arising as a result of Covid19	77
Income losses as a result of Covid19	458
Reduced repairs and maintenance expenditure	(605)
Measures approved at Q1 (budget review, furlough)	(369)
ToFS Savings	(44)
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (in addition to Q1)	(61)
2020/21 national pay award implications	46
Increased rental income arising from Buy-Backs	(130)
HRS Repatriation	(69)
Net other variances	(76)
<b>Overall forecast budget surplus</b>	<b>(772)</b>

4.4 The following paragraphs, 4.5 – 4.6 set out further detail on the key financial challenges arising as result of Covid19 that the Council is facing in 2020/21.

#### 4.5 **Exceptional costs of dealing with Covid19**

In response to the pandemic, the Council has had to adjust its service provision in order to meet the needs of its tenants. This has increased costs as follows:

- **Establishment of Housing Rent Hardship Fund** – in support of the existing Discretionary Housing Payments scheme the Council established an additional hardship fund specifically for Council tenants who were experiencing problems with meeting their housing rent payments.
- **Provision of PPE and COVID secure status for HRA services and buildings** – Whilst the majority of Council officers are able to continue to deliver services from their homes there were still a number of service areas where this was not possible, in these such circumstances the Council has to ensure that sufficient measures are in place to protect both the officers as well as service users. The Council must ensure that its offices and buildings meet the COVID secure status which has required additional cleaning regimes, physical changes to public spaces, signage etc. and that the officers and service users are sufficiently protected through the use of PPE and other measures whilst services are being delivered.

4.6 The more significant pressure facing the HRA is in relation to its income streams, primarily it's housing rent income, as follows:

- **Housing Rents** – in order to provide assistance to the Council's housing rent payers the Council undertook a number of positive actions by moving the 2-week rent free period usually awarded in December to the beginning of April as well as establishing a specific hardship fund. These positive

actions helped in keeping rent arrears in a positive position. However, as the impact of these measures has already been applied and as the financial impacts in the economy begin to take effect it is estimated that the level of rent arrears will increase to around £1.2m-£1.5m by the end of March 2021 (from £0.825m at March 2020), as at the end of December arrears are £1.131m. Whilst a provision for bad debts is maintained this increase in arrears will require additional contributions to the provision of approx. £375,000. The Council will though continue to support its housing tenants with the aim of keeping arrears as low as possible.

- **Housing Voids** – during the period of the initial lockdown it was not possible to re-let a number of void properties in the Council's housing stock resulting in a loss of rental income. Although the restrictions of the first lockdown have reducing the Council is still experiencing a higher than average level of voids due to social distancing measures in place increasing the amount of time that it takes for newly void properties to be prepared for re-letting.
- **Treasury Management** – following the drop in interest rates on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 0.1% the level of investment interest earned by the Council is set to reduce. Although a number of fixed term deposits are currently in place as these expire during the course of the year the level of interest earned on new investments will fall away.
- **Court Cost charges** – as a result of the initial closure of the Court service the and limited court time since reopening, the Council has been unable to progress on Housing Rent arrears through the court system and has subsequently not generated fees payable by the rent payer in addition to the arrears.

4.7 As per the General Fund, the HRA could not absorb this level of budget shortfall without a range of measures aimed at reducing expenditure in the current year. The measures taken to ensure the HRA maintains a balanced budget for 2020/21 were similar to those in the General Fund and are summarised as follows:

- **Budget Review** – A review of all of the Council's revenue budgets undertaken to identify one off budget reductions.
- **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** – a range of staff from primarily income generating areas were placed on furlough.
- **Savings through Repairs and Maintenance** – further savings in addition to the budget review.
- **Earmarked Reserves** - When announcing the Rent Hardship Fund, as set out above, funding for the initiative was agreed from a specific earmarked reserve.

4.8 The total of these measures along with other income and expenditure variances in year have resulted in the HRA currently forecasting a budget underspend at the year end. As with the General Fund there are a number of financial assumptions which may change during the course of the next 3 months and could

alter the current forecast position. At this point it is therefore proposed that the use of the earmarked reserve to resource the Rent Hardship is reviewed following the final outturn position and in addition that the underspend on repairs and maintenance is considered for allocation, subject to the final outturn position.

## **5. Housing Repairs Service**

5.1 For 2020/21 the Council's Housing Repairs Service net revenue budget was set at zero, reflecting its full cost recovery nature.

5.2 At quarter 3 HRS are forecasting a surplus of £204,670 in 2020/21 (appendix E provides a forecast HRS Summary), with full details of the main variances provided in appendix F. However, as with the General Fund and HRA this forecast is based on a number of assumptions which, due to uncertainties related to Covid19, may change during the next three months. In addition, there has been a delay in undertaking the internal billing process which provides a further level of uncertainty to the forecast position.

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FUND SUMMARY - AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Ref	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance
		£'000	£'000	£'000
Gross Rental Income	A	(28,666)	(28,688)	(22)
Charges for Services & Facilities	B	(306)	(299)	7
Contribn towards Expenditure	C	(50)	(30)	20
Repairs & Maintenance	D	8,959	8,354	(605)
Supervision & Management:	E	6,831	6,884	53
Rents, Rates and Other Premises	F	95	54	(41)
Increase in Bad Debt Provisions	G	297	672	375
Insurance Claims Contingency	H	106	106	0
Contingencies	I	514	0	(514)
Depreciation	J	6,637	6,637	0
Debt Management Expenses	K	12	12	0
HRS Trading (Surplus) / Deficit	L	(136)	(205)	(69)
<b>Net Cost of Service</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>(5,707)</b>	<b>(6,503)</b>	<b>(796)</b>
Loan Charges Interest	N	2,530	2,530	0
Investment/Mortgage Interest	O	(43)	(19)	24
<b>Net Operating Inc/Exp</b>		<b>(3,220)</b>	<b>(3,992)</b>	<b>(772)</b>
Major Repairs Reserve Adjustment	P	3,184	3,184	0
Transfers to/from reserves	Q	111	111	0
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit in Year</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>(697)</b>	<b>(772)</b>

### Housing Revenue Account Variances - Quarter 3

Many items of income and expenditure are demand led and difficult to predict. Consequently, judgement has been applied in order to provide the most realistic indication of the financial position at the year-end. Figures in brackets indicate an underspend of expenditure or additional income.

Ref		£	Reason for variance
<b><u>Reduced Expenditure</u></b>			
I	Contingencies – Budget Measures taken Q1	(369,835)	A combination of all the budgets measures approved at Q1 to offset the income and expenditure pressures as a result of the national lockdown and subsequent recovery period.
I	Towards Financial Sustainability Programme	(43,050)	Savings attributable to the HRA and HRS arising from savings reviews undertaken in the General Fund as part of the TFS programme.
I	Contingencies – Job Retention Scheme	(61,050)	Anticipated funding through access to Job Retention Scheme, income relates to August to February claims (previous months included in Q1 measures)
D	Repairs & Maintenance	(605,373)	External decoration & painting and asbestos survey savings incurred during lockdown and recovery period.
G	Rent, Rates and Other Premises	(40,771)	Reduction in Council Tax charges due to demolition of empty properties.
<b><u>Increased Expenditure</u></b>			
A	Supplies & Services	60,000	Discretionary housing rent payments due to hardship as a result of Covid-19.
O	Investment Interest	23,120	Expected reduction in interest received due to lower base rate.
H	Bad Debt Provision	374,460	Additional year end contribution forecasted due to anticipated increase in level of housing rent arrears arising due to Covid19.
E	Supervision Management	& 53,860	Additional staffing costs due to COVID19.
<b><u>Increased Income</u></b>			
L	HRS Trading Surplus	(68,680)	Estimated surplus as at Q3 from trading activities, see HRS variances for further detail.

<b>Ref</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>Reason for variance</b>
A	Gross Rental Income	(130,000)	Additional affordable and social rental income arising due to an increased number of property buybacks.

**Reduced Income**

A	Dwelling Rents	60,000	Increase in void numbers during lockdown and increased length of time voids being re(let due to social distancing requirements resulting in lost rental income.
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## HOUSING REPAIRS SERVICE SUMMARY - AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employees	3,222	2,968	(254)
Premises	40	40	0
Transport	760	761	1
Materials	1,415	1,415	0
Sub(Contractors	1,916	1,916	0
Supplies & Services	218	316	98
Central Support Charges	(137)	(137)	0
Capital Charges	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>7,434</b>	<b>7,279</b>	<b>(155)</b>
Income	(7,434)	(7,484)	(50)
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(205)</b>	<b>(205)</b>



### **Housing Repairs Service Variances - Quarter 3**

Many items of income and expenditure are demand led and difficult to predict. Consequently, judgement has been applied in order to provide the most realistic indication of the financial position at the year-end. Figures in brackets indicate an underspend of expenditure or additional income.

#### **£ Reason for Variance**

##### **Reduced Spending**

Employee Costs (264,150) Operative/labourer vacancies.

##### **Increased Spending**

Supplies & Services 59,305 Additional equipment hire costs.

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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>UPDATE ON ALLOCATIONS POLICY 2021</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND INVESTMENT</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>YVONNE FOX, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR</b>

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on the introduction of the Councils amended Allocations Policy in January 2021.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Following the review of the Council's Allocations Policy, an amended Policy was agreed by members in March 2020.

- 2.2 Initially the target date for implementation was June 2020 but due to the outbreak of Covid 19, our IT suppliers were unable to complete the IT amendments and testing as anticipated. This resulted in slippage in the implementation of the new Policy until January 2021.

## 3. Summary of Current Position

- 3.1 One of the main changes was the introduction of a 24 month residency qualification. This was included on advice from our MHCLG Homelessness Advisors and in line with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011

Letters were sent to 239 households who we considered would no longer be eligible to be included on the waiting list because they had not lived in Lincoln for 24 months. All households affected have been given the opportunity to appeal the decision or provide proof of their residency. Those that have not provided further proofs or awarded discretion due to their individual circumstances, have been removed from the waiting list.

- 3.2 As of the 23.02.2021, the table below shows numbers of applicants on the Waiting List of active applicants who are allowed to bid.

	Ground Floor Need				Non-Ground Floor Need				Total In Each Band
	1 BG	2 BG	3 BG	4 BG +	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed +	
Band One	50	26	5	0	20	8	25	22	156
Band Two	67	19	3	2	37	50	97	7	282
Band Three	97	9	2	0	306	185	53	6	658
									1096

1096 - Active applications allowed to bid Lincoln

(303 Transfer Applications and 793 Housing Register Applications)

3.3 All properties let since the introduction of the new policy have been let to households who have a local connection with Lincoln

40 Properties have been allocated since 26.01.2021 (and signed up) a summary of these allocations are below

	Independent living 1 Bed Ground floor flat	Independent living 2 Bed Bungalow	1 bed flat (1st floor and above)	1 bed ground floor flats / bungalows	2 bed flat/ house/ maisonette	2 bed ground floor flat	2 bed m/s flat	
band one - homeless	1	0	8	7	5	0	0	<b>21</b>
band one - medical	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
band one - additional needs	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	<b>5</b>
band two - homeless	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	<b>6</b>
band two - medical	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	<b>3</b>
band two - additional needs	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
band two - housing conditions	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Band three	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>

In total, we housed 28 households from band one, 11 from band two and 1 from band 3.

3.4 The majority of properties becoming available to let are 1 bed units as a result of the ongoing pandemic encouraging people to stay at home and only move in exceptional circumstances. Customer enquiries continue to be high particularly from family households who would like to move but we continue to have reduced turnover of stock particularly for 3 and 4 bed houses and it is difficult to predict when the supply of family accommodation will change.

3.5 We also continue to experience low demand for independent living properties. This is in part due to the reluctance of older people to move during the pandemic

#### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 That members note the implementation of the new Allocations Policy and information regarding the waiting list since the change in policy.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** 0

**List of Background Papers:** None

**Lead Officer:** Yvonne Fox Assistant Director, Housing Management

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**SUBJECT: TARGET SETTING 2021/22**

**DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT**

**REPORT AUTHOR: YVONNE FOX, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HOUSING**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise Members of the proposed performance indicator targets normally reported to Scrutiny for 2021/22
- 1.2 To agree the targets and consider how performance information can be monitored and reported throughout the year as Covid restrictions are eased.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Performance information is reported to the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on a quarterly basis. Targets are reviewed on an annual basis with both tenants and the Committee at the March committee meeting.
- 2.2 Throughout the lockdown period, normal management information has been collated but performance against targets has not been formally reported as this has not always been possible due to changes in service delivery. Management information has been provided wherever practically possible and members are aware of reasons for any changes to service and performance during this challenging year.

## **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 We are now in a position to note that Covid restrictions should be lifted at the end of June 2022. We will now be considering the various phases and how this may impact on our services.
- 3.2 Throughout 2020/1 there have been delays in repairing and allocating empty properties due to the pandemic and Government instructions on non-essential moves and holding empty properties for homeless households. Therefore we are currently reviewing the voids performance and procedures and considering these measures against external restrictions on performance

In addition, discussions with the Portfolio Holder regarding Scheduled Repairs have taken place and amended performance measures will be brought forward when the Working Group has concluded their work.

- 3.3 We have proposed realistic targets for 2021/2 based on current performance, national guidance and benchmarking with similar authorities. These targets are attached at Appendix 1.

- 3.4 Members received, in January 2021 an assessment of our current performance against key management indicators carried out by HouseMark which highlighted that, despite difficulties in the operating environment (due to the pandemic), performance had generally held up and compared to other LA's.
- 3.5 LTP have been asked to comment on the proposed indicators. They have raised some concerns about the change to the voids target and wanted to ensure that the complaints response target fell in line with the new national ombudsman target for complaints resolution. As a result, the Director of Housing has given assurances that the voids target as initially set will be reviewed at 3 and 6 months and if required will be brought down. It is expected that performance will be well below the parameters initially set but as we are not in full control of how we can deploy labour and receive materials the upper control limit should remain higher initially. The complaints target has been altered to fall in line with the ombudsman requirement, it is likely that the corporate complaints procedure will follow suit.

For information, the new Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code, outlines the following targets for responding to complaints:

- Logging and acknowledgement of complaint – five working days
  - Response within 10 working days unless the complainant has been notified of a need for an extension with good reason.
  - Stage two response – 20 working days from request to escalate – if this is not possible an explanation and a date when the stage two response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 working days without good reason
- 3.6 The Portfolio for Housing and Health, Councillor Donald Nannestad, has been consulted on the proposed indicators and agrees the proposed targets and review of targets after Q2.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 To note and approve the proposed performance targets for 2021/22
- 4.2 To approve a review of all targets, post quarter 2, October 2021.



**Is this a key decision?**

No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?**

No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?**

Yes/No

**How many appendices does the report contain?**

1

**List of Background Papers:**

None

**Lead Officer:**

Yvonne Fox  
Assistant Director – Housing Management

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**LANDLORD SERVICES – DRAFT PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2021/22 (HSSC)**

**APPENDIX A**

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PI	Description	Actual 19/20	Target 2020/21	20/21 Q1	20/21 Q2	20/21 Q3	21/22 Target	AD Comments	LTP comments
<b>Rents</b>									
125B	% of rent collected as a percentage of rent due	100%	98%	103.14%	100.75%	98.86%	<b>96.5%</b>	<p>Setting target based on experience and situation this year. Review targets at end of Q2 21/22 and assess performance and current landscape.</p> <p>Q3 20-21 Top quartile is 98.62% in line with our performance). 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile is 98.37%.</p> <p>There is no forecast modelling on rent collection for 21-22, however as there is a forecast increase on arrears then this will in turn have an effect on income collection.</p>	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
126	Arrears as a % of rent debit	2.87%	3.65%	3.26%	3.47%	4.00%	<b>4.5%</b>	<p>Setting target based on experience and situation this year. Review targets at end of Q2 21/22 and assess performance and current landscape.</p> <p>Q3 20-21 Top quartile is 3.8%, 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile is 4% (in line with our performance).</p> <p>Housemark's forecast modelling exercise states a sector average of 4.9% for year end and 5.1% for 21-22</p>	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
<b>Voids</b>									
69	% of rent lost due to vacant dwellings	0.85%	0.90%	0.90%	0.99%	1.07%	<b>0.90%</b>	<p>Keep target the same. In accordance with HRA business plan.</p> <p>0.90% is based on an annual rent debit of around 27 million pounds.</p>	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
58	Average re-let period – General needs (excluding	31.2 days	26 days	47.8 days	46.0 days	43.1 days (44.58 w/	<b>32 days</b>	Setting target based on experience and situation this year. Review targets	In agreement with the proposed target based

PI	Description	Actual 19/20	Target 2020/21	20/21 Q1	20/21 Q2	20/21 Q3	21/22 Target	AD Comments	LTP comments
	major works) – (days)					sheltered)		<p>at end of Q2 21/22 and assess performance and current landscape</p> <p>Q3 20-21 Top quartile is 53.7 days. 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile is 58.0 days (this is both GN and Sheltered minor works only). Housemark's forecast modelling exercise states a sector average of 45 days for 21-22</p>	on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
	Average re-let period – General needs (major works only) – (days)	60 days	39 days	50.5 days	54.2 days	56.2 days	45 days	<p>Setting target based on experience and situation this year. Review targets at end of Q2 21/22 and assess performance and current landscape</p> <p>No quartile info as this is an annual measure on Housemark.</p> <p>No forecast module for this measure.</p>	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
61	Average re-let period – All dwellings (including major works) – (days)	39.9 days	32 days	49.4 days	50.0 days	50.3 days	38 days	<p>Setting target based on experience and situation this year. Review targets at end of Q2 21/22 and assess performance and current landscape</p> <p>No quartile info as this is an annual measure on Housemark.</p> <p>No forecast module for this measure.</p>	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
<b>Allocations</b>									
85A	% of offers accepted first time	85.19%	85%	89.61%	85.96%	83.51%	85%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
<b>Repairs (Housing Repairs Service only)</b>									
29A	% of all priority repairs carried out within time limits (1 day tickets) – HRS only	100%	99.5%	100%	100%	100%	99.5%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22

PI	Description	Actual 19/20	Target 2020/21	20/21 Q1	20/21 Q2	20/21 Q3	21/22 Target	AD Comments	LTP comments
									(6 month review)
32	% of all repairs carried out within time limits (Priority / Urgent tickets)	96.71%	97.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	97.5%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
33	Average time taken to complete Repairs (Priority / Urgent tickets)	10.5 days	8 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 days	This measure only includes 1 and 3 day tickets. In line with Housemark it is measured in calendar days.	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
34	Complete repairs right on first visit. (Priority / Urgent and 3 day tickets)	94.07%	90%	89.57%	90.11%	89.85%	90%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
37	Repair appointments kept against appointments made (%) (Priority / Urgent tickets)	97.89%	95%	99.74%	99.95%	99.96%	95%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
44	Tenant satisfaction with repairs (1 and 3 day tickets)	97.15%	95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	Remove indicator. Working on new ways to deliver customer insight and collect feedback.	
<b>Decent Homes</b>									
29B	% of all Priority repairs carried out within time limits (1 day tickets) – Aaron Services only)	100%	99.5%	99.18%	99.43%	99.46%	99.95%	Recommended to have Aaron's repairs as a separate indicator to HRS repairs.	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
50	% of non-decent homes	0.23%	0% (year-end target)	0.88%	0.81%	0.89%	0% (year-end target)	Keep target the same 79 current non-decent homes (1% of 7,763 properties)	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at

PI	Description	Actual 19/20	Target 2020/21	20/21 Q1	20/21 Q2	20/21 Q3	21/22 Target	AD Comments	LTP comments
									the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
48	% of homes with valid gas safety certificate	99.89%	99.96%	85.84%	93.58%	95.45%	99.96%	Keep target the same. Due to C-19 pandemic and isolation guidelines the target will not be attainable. We can breakdown in the commentary the performance excluding isolation cases.	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
<b>Complaints</b>									
22	% of complaints replied to in 10 working days	83.78%	95%	90.00%	87.8%	90.5%	See comments	Recommend to remove this measure and report on the measure below (23)	
23	Average number of working days to respond to complaint		10 days			6 days	10 days	Recommend we measure average number of days to respond instead of '% responded to in time'  10 day target (Local Housing Offer)	New Housing Ombudsman recommendations for complaint reporting introduced therefore how this indicator is reported may change in line with the recommendations which clearly sets out timescales. Corporately, these timescales may be introduced across all services
<b>ASB</b>									
89	% of ASB cases closed that were resolved	97.12%	94%	98.80%	98.77%	97.06%	94%	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)
90	Average days to resolve ASB cases	51.88	70 days	41.8 days	43.2 days	48.2 days	70 days	Keep target the same	In agreement with the proposed target based on the proviso that the target be reviewed at the end of Q2 2021/22 (6 month review)

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE - LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021/22</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>ALI HEWSON, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER</b>

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise members that a draft work programme for 2021/22 has been circulated to officers for comments and will be forwarded to the Chair of Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Chair/Vice Chair of Lincoln Tenant's Panel in due course for individual input/comments ready for use as a working document at the first meeting of the new Municipal Year.
- 1.2 To note this is the last meeting of the current Municipal Year 2020/21.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The work programme for 2021/21 will be available at the start of the new Municipal Year to keep members aware of the forthcoming business at future meetings of the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee. The work programme will be regularly updated in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee and Chair/Vice Chair of Lincoln Tenants Panel.
- 2.2 The work programme includes those areas for scrutiny linked to the strategic priorities of the Council and housing matters, to ensure that the work of this committee is relevant and proportionate.

**3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 That Members note that the work programme for 2021/22 has been circulated to officers for comments and will be forwarded to the Chair of Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Chair/Vice Chair of Lincoln Tenant's Panel in due course for individual input/comments ready for use as a working document at the first meeting of the new Municipal Year.

**Access to Information:**

Does the report contain exempt information, which would prejudice the public interest requirement if it was publicised?

No

**Key Decision**

No

**Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply**

No

**Call In and Urgency:** Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

No

**Does the report contain Appendices?**

Yes

**If Yes, how many Appendices?**

1

**Lead Officer:**

Ali Hewson, Democratic Services Officer  
Telephone 873370