

SUBJECT: QUARTER 2 (2021/22) - PERFORMANCE & FINANCE REPORT

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT

REPORT AUTHOR: YVONNE FOX – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee with a quarter two report on Performance Indicators for the 2021/22 financial year (April 2021 – September 2021). See Appendix A.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report combines all performance relevant to Housing Landlord issues.
- 2.2 In total there are 21 measures and of these, against agreed targets, 7 are on or exceeding targets for the year (year-end), 13 have not met the normal targets set. Of the 13 measures that did not meet target, 6 of these were within 5% tolerance of their respective targets (Amber rating), 3 of the 6 are year-end target (Decent Homes and 2 Financial measures). One measure does not have a target (Complaints replied to in line with corporate policy).

3. Background

- 3.1 Over the last eleven years the Council has been working with the Lincoln Tenants Panel to improve external scrutiny and to meet the standards implemented by the Tenant Services Authority.
- 3.2 From 1 April 2010 all social landlords were required to have local offers in place alongside the national standards as set out in the new Regulatory Framework for Social Housing. The Framework was amended with effect from April 2012, but the principles remain the same.

4. Main Body of Report

- 4.1 Appendix A attempts to simplify the overall analysis by listing performance on a service functional basis (rents, repairs etc) and then showing the source of the indicator (reason).
- 4.2 For comparison purposes each indicator shows performance for the last year, target for current year (where applicable) and progress made in the current year.
- 4.3 Appendix A shows which targets have been met and those where we have not achieved our target. Particular areas to highlight are:

Anti-Social Behaviour

Indicators continue to show strong performance across the management and delivery of anti-social behaviour services. Procedures are continually reviewed in line with accreditation requirements.

% of rent collected as a percentage of rent due

Collection for quarter two stands at 97.61% which is ahead of target. Although income management has been challenging throughout the last 18 months Tenancy Services continues to prioritise rent collection. The rent-free weeks in December 2021 will also have a positive impact on the % of income collected.

Repairs Indicators

All our repairs' indicators with one exception (see below) are exceeding target

Prioritising repairs for our customers remain our priority and we are striving to ensure that despite difficulties securing some building products and materials, we continue to exceed repairs targets.

- 4.4 The following summary provides a brief explanation of reasons where we are close to achieving our targets (amber rating). Particular areas to highlight are:

Arrears as a % of rent debit

Current tenant arrears as a % of the debit stands at 4.88%, which is behind the target of 4.65%.

As members are aware, the pandemic and the Governments response to ensure that no evictions took place have resulted in arrears rising nationally. Some of the restrictions that have been in place have been removed and the notice period is now 28 days and the Courts have started to hear cases.

If there are no changes to eviction protocols going forward, we would anticipate that performance against this indicator would improve.

% of homes with valid gas safety certificate

We continue to have a small number of properties that we have failed to access, before deadline date each month. The team and our contractor have followed the gas servicing processes and these outstanding cases are now at the legal referral stage. We do have some failed access from households isolating due to Covid. We continue to work closely with these tenants to rearrange appointments in these circumstances.

Housing Investment and Programmed Maintenance

Housing Investment are currently working on a programme of procurement for the smaller Investment contracts and the areas with the Asset Management Plan that need renewing within the next 1-4 years, this includes door entry, communal

doors, and fire doors.

The team over the next 6 months will be assessing the requirement for the next round of Decent Homes renewals, due to start in 5 years' time, and the type of contract required.

- 4.5 The following summary provides a brief explanation of reasons where we have not achieved our targets (red rating). Particular areas to highlight are:

Voids Performance

The average number of days to repair properties including major works has increased to 53.7 on average against the target of 38.

As discussed with members, there have been a number of challenges facing the Voids Team when repairing properties. The loss of the Voids contractor has been addressed by the emergency procurement of local and regional companies to work alongside HRS to carry out the works as required to enable the properties to be relet. There has also been a national shortage of materials. This has resulted in additional delays when sourcing materials for properties requiring major works. Examples of materials in short supply include:

- Plasterboard
- Timber products
- Loft insulation
- Adhesives
- Sanitary items

HRS usually carry enough stock to manage for 5 days without the need for a materials order replenishment, however due to the current situation, items such as plasterboard for example, are on "allocation" and could be 4 weeks between deliveries. Availability of building supplies is a very fluid situation and HRS are working with their supplier to minimise disruption, but the market remains difficult.

The Voids Team are working to improve all aspects of the process to ensure the performance improves for year end and a working group involving the AD's and key staff will be driving improvements going forward.

% of urgent (3 days) repairs carried out within time limits (HRS)

Our recent performance figures fall below target; whilst there are some mitigating factors e.g. construction sector wide shortage of materials, difficult recruitment conditions etc, our priority focus is on quickly bringing this important measure back to previous high levels. We have introduced some actions to improve performance including flexible recruitment campaigns, communications on future supply warnings and/or issues to our customers and reviewing the vehicle stocks within our fleet. Once the labour is in place this will be reflected positively in year-end figures.

% of complaints replied to within target time

It has been acknowledged by the management team that for complaints

performance within the DHI Directorate is below target and has fallen from Q1. The Complaints Officer has spoken individually with Service Managers and further discussions have taken place at EDMT with an appropriate action plan drafted. The actions from this were agreed and are in the process of being implemented.

These include;

- Use of Microsoft Teams to give updates (implemented)
- New E-learning complaints course for all staff, (under construction)
- New templates for responses, (drafted)
- Use of 365 forms for outcome forms (drafted – in testing)
- Weekly updates to all service managers of open complaints (implemented)
- Service managers to discuss open complaints at team meetings (part implemented)
- Lead officer allocated for each complaint (implemented)

In April 2021, the % of complaints completed within target was 59%, by the end of September this had improved to 75% showing a positive upward trend in performance.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 Improve the Performance of the Council's Housing Landlord Function

There continues to be a strong commitment to improving the quality and efficiency of the service and this is a key aim in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance

Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, there are several indicators that do affect the HRA including the amount of rent collected and repairs and improvements.

We continue to monitor our financial position with our finance colleagues.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity

- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Due to the nature of this report, there are no equality, diversity and human rights impacts to be assessed however their impact will be considered as part of the service delivery at all times.

7. Risk Implications

- 7.1 (i) there is a risk as identified, to the maximisation of our income to the HRA from rents collected.
- 7.2 (ii) there is a risk that households are required to stay in TA longer than we would want them to due to the slow turnover of void properties.

8. Recommendation

8.1 Members are asked to note and comment on:

- a) The current performance outcomes during the financial year 2021/22;
- b) A commitment to continue reporting on a quarterly basis and to determine a programme to have more interim in-depth reviews of service specific performance

Is this a key decision? Yes/No

Do the exempt information categories apply? Yes/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

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