

SUBJECT:	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 – 2023/24
DIRECTORATE:	HOUSING AND INVESTMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	CORPORATE POLICY AND TRANSFORMATION TEAM

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee a report on performance indicators for the Directorate of Housing and Investment, for Quarter 1 of 2023/24 (April – June).

2. Summary

- 2.1 Regular monitoring of the Council's performance is a key component of the Local Performance Management Framework and supports its ongoing commitment to continuous improvement of council services. This report provides an overview of the Council's performance against all performance indicators monitored by the Directorate of Housing and Investment (DHI), and covers measures related to the Council's responsibility as a landlord.
- 2.2 There are, in total, twenty-one performance indicators monitored by DHI. An overview of performance for the first quarter of 2023/24, against these indicators, is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.

3. Overview of Quarter 1 Performance Indicators

- 3.1 Performance measures in '**Appendix A**' that are highlighted green are those performing at or above the agreed target. Measures shown highlighted amber are performing close to target, and those highlighted red are performing below target. Performance measures within '**Appendix A**' are grouped into categories, and for comparison purposes includes the previous year's outturn. Where applicable, it also shows progress throughout each quarter of the current year; this does not apply to the current report as it summarises the first quarter only.
- 3.2 During this first quarter, eight performance measures have met or exceeded their agreed target and eleven have performed below target. Three of the measures found to be performing below target are 'year-end' measures; one of these measures records the proportion of homes not at 'decent homes standard,' and the remaining two cumulatively record expenditure on maintenance and capital works. These 'year-end' measures will therefore continue to accumulate and change as the year progresses.

4. Overview of Performance Indicators Performing at or Above Target

- 4.1 For some measures performing at or above target (green), additional commentary is provided below:

4.2 Arrears as a Percentage of Rent Debit

At the end of Quarter 1, current arrears owed stood at £1,249,578 compared to £1,248,709 for quarter one last year. This represents an increase in arrears of £869. Given the increase in the cost of living and the impact this is likely to have on the Council's tenants, this increase is smaller than expected. Arrears as a percentage of the debit at the end of quarter one is 3.83%, compared to 4.14% in Quarter 1 of 2022/23. This is an improvement of 0.33%.

4.3 Percentage of All Priority Repairs Carried out within Time Limits (1 Day)-HRS

This measure has remained above target. To achieve this, the Council has increased the number of operatives carrying out Priority and Urgent repairs. This has helped to maintain performance despite an increase in priority repairs being reported.

5. Overview of Performance Indicators Performing Close to Target

5.1 For the measures performing close to target (amber), additional commentary is provided below:

5.2 Percentage of Non-Decent Homes

As a result of additional stock surveys and referrals from Housing Repair Service (HRS), the overall number of properties not meeting the decent homes standard at the end of the Quarter 1 is 105 properties. These properties have been placed onto the appropriate programmes for remedial works, although it may take several months for all required remedial works to be completed. A contract has been procured to survey a further twenty percent of properties, and it is expected that this will identify further remedial works. The key property features responsible for this measure performing close to target are:

- 35 properties – doors
- 33 properties – Windows (includes one property that also failed in relation to doors);
- 32 properties – Electrics; and
- 6 properties – Chimneys

5.3 Complete Repairs Right on First Visit (Priority and Urgent Repairs) – HRS

Performance is not as high for first time fixes as the Council aims to achieve. The Council is taking steps to address this by introducing a new stock control system, via use of an app called 'Avail JPS.' This app provides automated restocking for vehicle impress stock items and is expected to improve the availability of materials to operatives on site. This should enable operatives to complete jobs through easier and quicker access to materials, reducing occurrences where they have to return at a later date.

5.4 Rent Collected as a Percentage of Rent Due

In-year collection as at the end of Quarter 1 stands at 96.81% compared to 98.60% in Quarter 1 of 2022/23. The recent rent increase has made collection more challenging, however the overall target is still expected to be achieved due to steps being taken to reduce arrears.

6. Overview of Performance Indicators Performing Below Target

6.1 For the measures performing below target (red), additional commentary is provided below:

6.2 Percentage of Repairs Carried out within Time Limits (HRS only - 3 Days)

This measure has fallen below target during Quarter 1. As set out in paragraph 4.3, steps have been taken to increase the number of operatives carrying out priority and urgent repairs. Whilst this has improved performance in relation to the highest priority 1-day repairs, further steps are required to ensure performance against 3-day repairs is similarly addressed. Investigations have also determined that a significant percentage of scheduled repairs are being mis-reported or mis-recorded as 'urgent.'

A rota is currently being created, which will see a member of the Customer Services Team working weekly from Hamilton House alongside the Planning Team. In addition, a team leader or resource planner is being made available for those still based at City Hall, to provide additional support and guidance to ensure urgent repairs are reported correctly. The rota started during the week commencing 17th July 2023 and will be reviewed after an initial six-week period. It is hoped that this will deliver a positive impact against this performance measure.

It is noted that the Council is below its required establishment figures for key trades, including qualified electricians. Efforts continue to recruit across all trades, although a limited number of applications are being received.

6.3 Average Re-Let Period – General Needs (Excluding Major Works) – (Days)

Quarter one has seen the average re-let time for standard dwellings remain stable, with a small increase of 0.12 days. HRS has significantly reduced the 'awaiting allocation' time for voids and is working with contractors to further improve performance in relation to this target. To reduce the number of properties coming into the void process that require substantial cleansing works, the Council is in consultation with Lincoln Tenants Panel and Finance to explore recharge mechanisms.

6.4 Average Re-Let Period – General Needs (Including Major Works) – (Days)

There has been a notable reduction in the number of void days, from 55.73 at Quarter 4 2022/23 to 48.06 at Quarter 1. This is due to a number of efficiencies that have been made across the void process. The team will continue to work to ensure properties are ready to let as efficiently as possible. Void numbers are now at their lowest number for over 18 months, a direct result of positive system changes and additional resources being allocated. Performance is therefore

expected to move increasingly closer to target.

6.5 Percentage of Calls Answered (Housing)

In Q1 23/24 Customer Services answered 3,687 calls for housing solutions/homelessness and 11,416 housing calls. 27,860 calls were answered in total. At Performance Scrutiny Committee on 2nd March the new Customer Service targets were reviewed. Recognising the Council's channel shift ambitions, expectations and reduced staffing, the target for average call waiting times was increased to tie in with DWP and HMRC standards. This is a high target of 5 minutes (300 seconds) and a low target of 10 minutes (600 seconds).

This better reflects what is achievable and takes into account the increasing complexity of calls handled as more routine transactions switch to online. For Q1 2023/24, the average wait time was 457.67 which is an improvement on the previous quarter. The Council has recently adopted a new telephony system which is supporting the ongoing reduction in call wait times. This new system does not currently report on percentage of calls answered within a timeframe but if this is a measure that Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee would like to see in addition to the current Customer Services measures, this can be explored with the new system provider.

6.6 Percentage of Complaints Replied to within Target Time

The number of complaints received remains high and relate mainly to repairs or tenancy issues. Both areas have been reallocating resources to respond to outstanding complaints in addition to the service requests, Member and MP enquiries that continue to be received. Complaints are monitored by the management teams, and ways of improving the services and communication are being implemented with the intention to reduce the number of complaints being made.

7. Strategic Priorities

7.1 The City of Lincoln Council's Vision 2025 priorities are:

- Let's drive inclusive economic growth.
- Let's reduce all kinds of inequality.
- Let's deliver quality housing.
- Let's enhance our remarkable place.
- Let's address the challenge of climate change.

This report relates primarily to 'Let's deliver quality housing.' Monitoring and reporting performance provides the means for the Council to assess its progress against this corporate priority and identify areas for improvement.

8. Organisational Impacts

8.1 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.

The financial position of the HRA and HRS are continually monitored, with quarterly reports to Performance Scrutiny Committee and the Executive.

8.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8.3 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 continue to be considered as part of the service delivery.

9. Risk Implications

9.1 (i) Options Explored

Not applicable to this report.

9.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach

Not applicable for this report.

10. Recommendation

10.1 That Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee reviews and comments on the content of this report and the performance information contained therein.

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?

One
(Appendix A)

List of Background Papers:

None

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