

SUBJECT:	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 1 – 2024/25
DIRECTORATE:	HOUSING AND INVESTMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	CORPORATE POLICY AND TRANSFORMATION TEAM

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee a report on performance indicators for the Directorate of Housing and Investment, for Quarter 1 of 2024/25 (April – June).

2. Lincoln Tenants' Panel Consultation

- 2.1 LTP have been consulted about this report and have confirmed they have no comments.

3. Summary

- 3.1 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 performance indicators monitored by the Directorate of Housing and Investment (DHI), and covers those measures related to the Council's responsibility as a landlord.
- 3.2 There are, in total, thirty-three performance indicators monitored by DHI and reported quarterly to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee in 2024/25. An overview of performance for this first quarter is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.
- 3.3 The template for Appendix A has been adjusted to include performance 'direction of travel' information, to aid interpretation of how performance fluctuates between quarterly reporting periods. In line with the RAG ratings used in other compliance reports presented to the Sub-Committee, the performance status column has also been updated. Benchmarking comparisons will be provided annually each fourth Quarter.

4. Overview of Quarter 1 Performance Indicators

- 4.1 Performance measures in '**Appendix A**' that are highlighted green were those performing at or above the agreed target. Measures shown highlighted amber were performing close to target, and those highlighted red were performing below target. Performance measures within '**Appendix A**' are grouped into categories, and for comparison purposes includes the previous year's outturn.

- 4.2 During the first quarter of 2024/25 seventeen performance measures met or exceeded their agreed target; three were performing close to target; and five performed below target. The remaining measures are volumetric.
- 4.3 Of the five measures performing below target, one is a corporate measure related to call handling in the customer contact centre. This measure 'CS3' relates to all calls received by the contact centre, and therefore includes data not linked to Housing services. This measure is also reported to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.4 A new measure 'HSSC3' relates to Anti-Social Behaviour and consists of thirteen sub-measures. This is further explained in section 9 of this report.
- 4.5 Sections 5 to 11 of this report highlight the key conclusions drawn from '**Appendix A**'.

5. Housing Repairs Service (HRS)

- 5.1 All HRS measures performed above target in Quarter 1. This is the first time all HRS measures have performed above target since Quarter 1 of 2019/20.
- 5.2 The improvement in performance is a result of recent changes within the service, with enhancements to the management of priority and urgent repairs. Changes to processes and a reshuffling of maintenance team leaders has improved efficiency, significantly reducing the number of priority and urgent repairs completed outside of target during Quarter 1. Only one priority repair was completed outside of the one-day target, and the average time taken to complete urgent (three-day) repairs has reduced to 1.88 days. Whilst external factors such as contractor availability, materials costs and weather events will inevitably continue to influence demands on the HRS, the recent service changes seek to ensure these improvements in performance can be sustained.

6. Investment, and Building and Fire Safety Assurance

- 6.1 Performance on Decent Homes remains above target, with only twenty-eight properties (excluding refusals) falling below the national standard. Similarly, the percentage of homes with a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating of C or above has continued to climb. With 93.25% of homes at this rating, the council is in a good position to achieve its 100% target by 2030.
- 6.2 Performance across the new set of building and fire safety measures is good overall, with most measures exceeding or meeting their respective targets. Staffing and contractor challenges have prevented the service achieving full compliance with asbestos management survey requirements; however, plans are in place to address this over the coming year.

7. Voids

- 7.1 Whilst the recent improvements to the voids process have continued, there has been a reduction in performance in re-let times in Quarter 1. Voids performance is very dependent on the condition of individual properties as they are vacated, and in Quarter 1 the drop in performance has been due to a combination of factors

specific to the properties that have gone through the re-letting process and been re-let in the quarter.

7.2 There has been a significant increase in the number of voids requiring major works when compared to the previous quarter, and these have included multiple properties in Quarter 1 affected by issues outside of the council's direct control. Examples of such properties include:

- Re-letting of one property being delayed by 148 days due to safety issues identified involving an external balcony. A decision was made, in the interest of the future tenant(s), to investigate and resolve this issue before the property was re-let;
- One property was found to have significant structural issues that needed to be investigated and resolved, causing a delay of 81 days re-letting it;
- Another property was found to have problems with its electricity supply. It took an additional 48 days for this to be resolved by National Grid; and
- The service made a conscious decision several months ago to hold a property vacant for an extended period due to a serious crime that had been committed within it and the impact this incident had on surrounding tenants. After being released by the Police, it was held for 143 days before being re-let.

7.3 If these delays were removed prior to calculating the outturn for measure 61, the average re-let time in Quarter 1 across all voids would have been 45.17 days.

7.4 In addition to these property-specific issues, compared to the previous quarter the void properties re-let in Quarter 1 required more needle sweeps, and more properties had become vacant following service of 'notices to quit' (NTQs). Some NTQs, due to the reasons for the process having been initiated, will have resulted in properties being returned to the council in poorer condition.

7.5 There has been an increase in the number of NTQs in recent weeks, and the impact of this is expected to be seen in re-let times over the next few months. Three long-term void properties in the same communal block are also expected to be re-let in Quarter 2 which, due to the circumstances specific to that block, will be re-let as sensitive lettings. Performance against measure 61 will therefore likely be impacted by these properties, as they will disproportionately affect the average re-let time across Quarter 2.

7.6 Whilst the voids process will continuously improve, as highlighted in this section the amount of time taken to re-let properties between tenants is complex and strongly influenced by external factors. The voids process involves most services within the council's landlord function, and re-let times are a good example of both how these different services work together as a system, and how decisions made across this system can impact performance.

8. Rents

8.1 The annual pattern of rent collection tends to see performance improve throughout the year. This is due to rents being based on a 50 to 51-week payment schedule, resulting in a technical debt being carried throughout the year until the end of Quarter 3. Regular rent payments are adjusted and do not equalise until the non-

payment weeks during the Christmas period. Some tenants' ability to pay their rent will also still be impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

- 8.2 The current Tenant Census visit programme by the Tenancy Services team has also drawn from existing resources, reducing capacity for other aspects of the team's roles. Collectively, the team conducted 755 Tenant Census visits in Quarter 1.
- 8.3 The Rents measures set now includes two new measures related to garage rents and vacancy. These measures are volumetric; however, it is positive to note that garage rent collection is currently performing at over 99%.

9. Anti- Social Behaviour

- 9.1 The ASB measures set has been expanded for 2024/25, and now includes a volumetric measure to inform the Sub-Committee of the types of ASB reports the Tenancy Services team receive.
- 9.2 Noise is by far the most prevalent ASB issue reported by tenants, followed by verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation. The sub-measures listed under HSSC3 have recently been reviewed and changed, and therefore the list of ASB categories will be different from Quarter 2 onwards.
- 9.3 The established measure '90', which assesses performance based on the number of days taken to close ASB cases, continues to perform above target.
- 9.4 Recent changes to the Tenancy Services team include the creation of a team specialising in dealing with ASB. These changes were enacted shortly after the end of Quarter 1, and therefore performance information for this and previous quarters, combined with an analysis of tenant satisfaction and complaints data, will help the team to evaluate the impact these changes have on how ASB is handled within the council's housing stock and tenants' perceptions of this new approach.

10. Allocations

- 10.1 Measure 85A relates to the percentage of housing allocation offers accepted first time. This measure is continuing to perform above target. There has also been a small reduction in the number of people on the Housing Register. The number on the Register is expected to reduce further in the coming weeks, after the Housing Solutions team has undertaken an annual review of the Register and removed people who are not actively looking for accommodation. This annual review has been delayed this year due to some issues arising from a recent IT upgrade; these issues are expected to be resolved shortly, allowing for the review to proceed.

11. Strategy

- 11.1 The measures set for 2024/25 include, for the first time, measures related to Housing Strategy. The three measures in the set aim to help inform and monitor the availability of council housing in the city by measuring a combination of housing delivery, right to buy transactions and total housing stock. Reporting these measures will assist with monitoring of the Housing Revenue Account 30-Year Business Plan.

- 11.2 The performance data for Quarter 1 indicates a small net loss of available council housing. This data relates solely to completed schemes and transactions, and does not take account of property purchases including 'buy-backs,' nor the newbuild schemes such as Hermit Street that are in progress and will be recorded in future quarterly reporting.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 Measure 22 has seen a substantial improvement in performance since the end of the previous Quarter, with performance increasing to just over 94%. This is just short of the 95% target and is expected to further improve as the year progresses. Large scale improvements continue to make a positive impact on the complaints process, including the standard and consistency of complaint responses. Due to recent introduction of the national Complaints Handling Code it is expected that the number of complaints received will increase; this is due to a widening of the definition of what constitutes a complaint. These changes are intended to help councils better understand what drives customer dissatisfaction. All Stage 2 complaints received by the service are now reviewed, including responses, by an Assistant Director.

13. Strategic Priorities

- 13.1 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.

14. Organisational Impacts

14.1 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 and reported quarterly to this Sub-Committee.

14.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

14.3 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.

15. Risk Implications

15.1 (i) Options Explored – Not applicable to this report.

15.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach – Not applicable for this report.

16. Recommendation

16.1 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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