

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 3 – 2024/25

DIRECTORATE: HOUSING AND INVESTMENT

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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 3 of 2024/25 (October - December).

2. Lincoln Tenants' Panel Consultation

- 2.1 LTP have been consulted about this report and have made the following comments /questions (answers have been supplied by relevant services):

- A) No access to properties - equates to 37%. Do we know what the issues are and what we are doing about it and are Housing Repair Service (HRS) teams working with relevant areas such as Housing Officers to understand the issues?

It is very difficult to give a specific reason for the no access as this will be a combination of reasons. The service re-book all no access appointments now with a written letter advising of the new appointment date and the requirement to provide access for these repairs. It also advises that failure to cancel any appointment may lead to being charged as per clause 5.4.4 of the tenancy agreement. This new process is allowing us to record those who repeatedly fail to provide access and when these cases are identified the team work with Housing officers to gain access or assess if there are any safeguarding concerns. A plan has been developed with the Communication team to share information on No access and the cost and time implications with customers, similar to doctors' surgery's information on failed appointments. These are scheduled prior to school holiday periods where there is often an increase in no access visits.

- B) All the work we are doing with damp and mould – we should be detailing the good things we are doing also.

A series of social messaging has been agreed and will be published regularly through the Communications team, giving residents tips and hints on managing condensation and damp and mould in their homes. Interviews will take place in March for a building surveyor to join maintenance and investment teams providing detailed property surveys and building defect reports and providing expert evidence in disrepair cases received.

C) Detail the 4 props that are 100 days plus voids

Property 1: void works were completed in 36 days, but it could not be let due to high risk safety concerns regarding a nearby resident which needed to be/ need to be resolved before it can be re-let.

Property 2: completed void works 05/09/2024 the investment team needed to complete major works to this address including kitchen and bathroom and experienced delays with their contractor.

Property 3: there was a delay in the property having an isolator switch fitted by British Gas and without this, the periodic electric test could not be completed. The property needed a kitchen, bathroom and asbestos removal. Processes have been updated for properties needing isolation switch/meter exchange and moving forward this issue should not lead to delays in future properties.

Property 4: on hold for a long period due to infestation.

Property 5: This property only had one month in the void process; the rest of the time was awaiting an offer.

D) Referred to 50 week payment schedule – have any communications on this been prepared and shared with tenants?

The annual rent letter goes out each year along with the rent calendar. A Christmas period arrears letter will go out to those in arrears encouraging payment over the rent-free weeks.

E) Para 10.2 refers to an internal review - will this be made available ?

The Council will be completing an automated review of all applications every year. At the moment there are some challenges with the software used for this so officers are running a report for individuals who have not bid for a property for a number of years to manually assess some of the applicants. The review is to check circumstances are still the same and they wish to remain on the register. Failure to respond will result in removal from the waiting list.

F) Para 11.1 Do the Council carry out a check on the property after the tenant has been in a while?

The Tenancy Team carry out courtesy visits at the 3 weeks mark - mainly involves an inspection of the home, to confirm their details, rent, animals, support needs, repairs.

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 Directorate of Housing and Investment (DHI) and reported quarterly to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee in 2024/25. An overview of performance for this third quarter is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.
- 3.3 The template for Appendix A includes performance 'direction of travel' information, to aid interpretation of how performance fluctuates between quarterly reporting periods. Benchmarking comparisons will be provided annually each fourth Quarter.

4. Overview of Quarter 3 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 third quarter of 2024/25, 16 performance measures met or exceeded their agreed target; 4 were performing close to target; and 5 performed below target. The remaining measures are volumetric.
- 4.3 Of the 5 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 Measure 'HSSC3' relates to Anti-Social Behaviour and consists of 16 sub-measures. This is further explained in section 9 of this report.
- 4.5 Sections 5 to 12 of this report highlight the key conclusions drawn from '**Appendix A**'.

5. Housing Repairs Service

- 5.1 All but one of the HRS targeted measures performed above target in Quarter 3.

Performance for urgent repairs completed in time (3 days) has seen a slight reduction since quarter 2 figures, this is predominantly down to a change in reporting no access. These are logged on the system, but we keep the original Job reference open and schedule up to 3 times prior to cancelling the order, this then provides a better audit trail of attempts and greater record keeping. However, this can mean a few priority repairs go out of target due to having to be rescheduled due to tenant availability.

Throughout the quarter 37% of reactive repairs not completed within target time were as a result of no access due to tenants not being home at the time of the appointment booked.

Additionally, there has been an increase in the volume of damp and mould inspections, due to being within peak season. The service area is currently training new starters on processing records for completion data, and expects to see an improvement for quarter 4.

The service is working to mitigate the impact no access has on the figures longer-term and increase the access rate. Additionally, further communication around no access figures and the impact this has on lost time/number of appointments and costs.

- 5.2 The outturn for priority repairs completed in time (24 hours) has delivered an improvement when compared quarter 2. The service area attributes the improved performance on the focused efforts of a priority team, who have led a review on resource, cover for staff leave or sickness from other HRS areas, in order to attend and action priority repairs within timescales.

Performance for repairs completed first time remains high and above target. The service area reports they continue to focus on ensuring the team have correct materials and impress stocks to achieve adequate repairs on first visits, to support the department in achieving consistent first time fix rates.

6. Investment, and Building and Fire Safety Assurance

- 6.1 There has been a continued reduction in the percentage of non-decent homes since quarter 2. The service area reports progress on door replacements has been offset by new failures from door referrals as well as electrical certificates that have now expired. There are now a total of 35 failures comprising 16 Electrics, 13 Doors, 3 Windows, 2 Chimneys and 1 Roof.

The annual gas servicing programme continually runs twelve months a year. The Investment team along with the contractor SureServe (previously Aaron Services) have recently focussed on reviewing existing gas access procedures and service delivery. The number of failed access cases has been between four and seven addresses each month.

With the support of housing management and legal services we have obtained a small number of injunctions to address some of the outstanding failed access cases.

- 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. There continues to be staffing challenges to prevent the service achieving full compliance with asbestos management survey requirements. The service area has explored options and has plans in place to address this within the next quarter.

7. Voids

- 7.1 Performance for the measure has seen a slight improvement during quarter 3, however is impacted along with the above measure HV1, by the re-letting of long term (100+ days) voids throughout December. These long-term void properties required significant works to bring them back to letting standard, and consequently negatively impacts the timeframe of re-lets.

The service area have reported that now these long term voids have been re-let, it is anticipated that quarter 4 will report a more accurate reflection of the team's performance across all areas, including offer to sign performance, as their

performance is affected and impacts this figure more when repair times are reduced.

- 7.2 As highlighted in the previous quarterly performance report, 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.
- 7.3 Rent lost through vacant dwellings has increased on the previous quarter, due in part to some of the service challenges experienced in the re-letting process, including a number of long-term voids (100+ days) which were completed and re-let in December to enable a fresh start for January, which has significantly impacted the figure for the measure outturn.
- 7.4 It is also important to note that Miscellaneous properties, which are outside of the control of the voids team, such as properties awaiting decisions on disposal orders remain within this outturn figure, although meetings have been ongoing during January to resolve a number of these long-standing decisions, which further impacts the outturn performance.

8. Rents

- 8.1 The service area reports performance of this measure has increased above target, with overall performance in line with the outturns of peers within Housemark benchmarking.

The arrears amount has decreased since the end of quarter 2 by just over £400,000 and the percentage of income collection is showing an increase of 13% on quarter 2.

- 8.2 The outturn for 'current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit' has performed well against the target, with arrears at the end of quarter 3 of 3.33% arrears against the annual rent debit, which is an improvement of 1.14% compared to the previous quarter.

9 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 9.1 Performance for both 'Percentage of ASB cases closed that were resolved' and 'Average days to resolve ASB cases' remains well above target and consistent with previous quarters. The service closed 194 anti-social behaviour cases in quarter 3, compared to 186 in quarter 2 and 85 in quarter one.
- 9.2 The categories of ASB, nuisance and other tenancy breaches have been expanded meaning we can improve recording, managing and reporting on cases. For example, we have categories now for recording untidy gardens, misuse of communal areas, issues with parking & property conditions.
- 9.3 Of the 240 cases opened in the quarter, the most common category were noise related incidences with 85. Also, reports of verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation

(48) and drugs/substance misuse incidences (37) were a common theme throughout the quarter.

10. Allocations

- 10.1 Measure 85A relates to the percentage of housing allocation offers accepted first time. Performance has improved when compared to Quarter two. The Housing Solutions team are continually working hard on verifying the information that has been provided and completing all necessary checks including input from the Tenancy team, which helps to ensure a suitable applicant is offered the property.
- 10.2 The number of applications active on the housing register has dropped slightly when compared to the previous quarter. The Team are in the very early stages of an annual review of all applications, hence the very small drop in numbers.

11. Strategy

- 11.1 The Council completed 11 newbuild properties at Hermit Mews in Q3, in addition to 4 'buy-backs' of former Council homes. We are aiming to buy back around 10 homes per year, in addition to our newbuild programme. The next newbuild homes to be delivered in the city are 9 properties at the former Victory public house on Boultham Park Road, which are being purchased off-plan and expect to be available from Q1 of 2025/26.
- 11.2 The Government's budget announcement in October 2024 introduced restrictions on the maximum cash discounts available for Right to Buy. This resulted in a temporary surge in Right to Buy applications, and the Council is now seeing the effect of this in transactions. Long term, Government's changes are intended to reduce the number of social homes lost through Right to Buy and therefore the impact of losing more homes than usual is expected to be temporary.
- 11.3 Fortunately, the Council delivered a small surplus in additional homes in Q3 compared to homes lost through Right to Buy. Due to the ongoing effects of the recent Right to Buy changes, the Council may see a temporary reduction in its stock over the coming months; this will be mitigated through delivery of buy-backs and newbuild schemes, with fewer homes expected to be lost through Right to Buy in the future.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 Measure 22 has seen improvement in resolution times since Quarter two, although performance is still below the target of 95%. The service has responded to 96 complaints (Level 1 and Level 2) this quarter, and 371 total complaints year to date.
- 12.2 The introduction of the national Complaints Handling Code changes the definition of what constitutes a complaint, meaning complaint numbers will remain high. These changes are intended to help councils better understand what drives customer dissatisfaction, and both the Ombudsman and the Regulator of Social Housing view high complaints volumes as positive.

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 Housing Repairs Account (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 the 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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