

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 4 – 2024/25</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING AND INVESTMENT</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>BUSINESS MANAGER - POLICY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT</b>

## 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 4 of 2024/25 (January – March).

## 2. Lincoln Tenants' Panel Consultation

- 2.1 LTP have been consulted about this report and comments noted.

## 3. Summary

- 3.1 At the end of quarter 4 2024/25 of the 47 quarterly performance measures reported during the quarter (48 are reported which includes the customer services measure CS3 - Average time taken to answer a call to Customer Services)

- 3 measures were Red (below lower target boundary)
- 2 measures were amber (within target but perf has reduced)
- 19 measures were Green (meeting or exceeding the higher target)
- 23 measures were recorded as volumetric
- 0 measures were recorded as data not being available for this quarter

- 3.2 From the measures detailed above, 5 of those, 3 red measures deteriorating (HV1/2/3) and 1 amber deteriorating (HM1b)

Out of the performance measures monitored, 19 were within or exceeding the targets set.

### Background

- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 This report provides an overview of the Council's performance against indicators monitored by the Directorate of Housing and Investment (DHI), and covers those measures related to the Council's responsibility as a landlord.
- 3.5 An overview and direction of travel of performance is attached as '**Appendix A**' to this report.

#### **4. Performance Measure Outturns – Quarter 4 (with yearly outturn)**

##### **4.1 Housing Repairs Service**

HM1B - Percentage of reactive repairs completed within target time (urgent 3-day repairs only). There has been a slight reduction in performance for this measure with of 93.22% of repairs completed on time against a target of 97.5%, it is understood that staffing pressures within the team is likely to have had an impact through a combination of long term sickness and some operatives working on restricted duties.

The number of repairs completed this year is 5,980 with an overall performance outturn of 95.85%.

The average time taken complete urgent Repairs (3 days) remains within target for quarter 4 at 2.19 days with overall outturn of 2.06 days.

- 4.2 34 (HM2) Percentage of repairs fixed first time (priority and urgent repairs) - HRS) has seen further improvements in Q4 delivering above both the high target for the quarter, 98.29% and the year to date at 97.79%

Operatives have received their new impress stocks this quarter and the service area have implemented the stock management system to ensure this is kept up to date to further aid the team's abilities to complete repairs first time.

- 4.3 37 (HM2) Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made (priority and urgent repairs) - HRS only. In Q4 this measure has overachieved at 97.73%, the yearly outturn is 98.78%. To give some context the number of appointments this year is 10,581.

The service area has proactively re-allocated appointments due to operative availability, which has been impacted particularly within the repairs team, due to the staffing pressures outlined in section 4.1.

Recent recruitment is expected to support this area to continue to reduce failed appointments.

- 4.4 34 (HM2) Percentage of all priority repairs carried out within time limits (1 day) (Aaron Services) remains at 100%.

- 4.5 HSSC7 Average time taken to complete damp and mould repairs (days), against a target of 20 days, this measure is overachieving with quarter 4 being at 4.77 days with overall outturn of 4.87. The teams are experiencing a slight increase due to stock condition surveys which highlighted previously unreported damp and mould. However, the team is now in place with new processes and is working well.

#### **5. Investment, and Building and Fire Safety Assurance**

- 5.1 50 (HI1) The percentage of council properties that are not at the 'Decent Homes' standard (excluding refusals). This measure has overachieved at 0.26% against a target of 1%. The number equates to 20 (excluding refusals)

Overall levels have fallen despite additional failure being identified from stock condition surveys undertaken in the final quarter of 2024-25. Progress has also been made gaining access for electrical testing.

There are now a total of 20 failures (including 2 properties failing 2 criteria) due to

- 9 electrics
- 9 doors
- 1 windows
- 2 Chimneys
- 1 roof

5.2 As a volumetric figure the percentage of properties at SAP rating C or above (HSSC4) is 94.87% . This is a slight increase in the number of properties reaching band c or above, following the delivery of planned improvement works during the course of the year.

5.3 The fire safety suite of measures are all exceeding their targets.

## **6. Voids**

6.1 69 (HV1) – Percentage of rent lost through dwelling being vacant - 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, 120 voids were held in the process during this quarter, all impacting rent loss. The number of properties entering the void process does not show any signs of slowing down with an estimated 47 sets of keys expected in by the end of April. It is worth noting that properties awaiting decisions on disposal orders remain within this outturn figure which are out of control of the void team.

6.2 The team have been working hard and have successfully relet 116 properties during this quarter with a low refusal rate. This demonstrates that the standard of properties is good and that combined with the housing allocations teams focus on matching properties with suitable tenants, a positive outcome in terms of relet is being seen.

6.3 61 (HV3) The average re-let time calendar days for all dwellings (including major works) for quarter 4 is 58.78 with overall outturn at 52.53 days. It is worth noting that February and March 2025 have seen the highest number of void properties in the system since July 2022 and this is impacting capacity within the repair team. A significant number of void properties are still requiring cleansing prior to repairs being undertaken further which does have an impact on the overall timeframes.

There were a number of longer-term voids over 100 days signed up over this period that impact this average, whilst the Housing Repair Service try to limit the amount of properties going to subcontractors due to contractual cost increases, inevitably this is going to further increase void timeframes. In addition, the amount of time taken to relet properties between tenants is complex and strongly influenced by external factors.

- 6.4 The Average re-let time calendar days for all dwellings (minor works) at quarter 4 was at 48.88 days with an overall outturn of 45.71 days. This is against a target of 36 days. The number of relets completed this year is 274.

Whilst this is under achieving it is worth noting that those that are logged as minor works, on when investigated by the team, can on occasion flag up unexpected major works which does impact on performance. It is worth noting that these are only general needs voids and that there are a further 50 non-general needs which also need addressing that all serviced by the same team.

- 6.5 The housing repair service are seeing an increase in repair timeframes. However, the service is trying to limit the amount of properties going to subcontractors due to contractual cost increases and the impact this has on budgets. Inevitably this is going to further increase void timeframes as these properties move through the system and more being undertaken by the inhouse team.

## **7. Rents**

- 7.1 125B (RC1) Rent collected as a proportion of rent owed has exceeded its target for quarter 4 and yearly outturn 99.07% and (98.74%) respectively.

The amount of rent collected amounting to £35,794,800.23. The team have adapted well to the pilot structure of having specialist teams and have performed above target & in line with upper quartile benchmarking. The specialist team proactively contact tenants having difficulty paying their rent & supporting them with appropriate referrals to services to help with maximising income & dealing with debt.

- 7.2 126 (RC2) Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit is within target of 4% with a figure of 3.38%, with rent arrears of £1,208,448.74.

The team have kept areas below the target for three quarters this year. The rise in the percentage of arrears against the debit in Q2 coincided with the initial creation of the specialist teams and was only temporary while they adjusted to new ways of working which has now taken affect following those changes.

## **8. Antisocial Behaviour**

- 8.1 89 - Percentage of ASB cases closed that were resolved for quarter 4 were 97.70% with an overall outturn of 98.68% against a target of 94%. The team closed 682 ASB cases this year.

90 - Average days to resolve ASB cases for quarter 4 has risen to 71.15 days however the overall outturn is 58.01 days. The team have adapted well to the pilot structure of having specialist teams however there are several external factors which have impacted on the increase in cases:

- Associated legal action with any of the cases leaves us at the behest of the courts timetables and decisions and can add delays to resolution. All housing providers will face the same challenges around court availability.

- Legal cases are now included within the statistics e.g. drug dealing which has also impacted the length of time to resolve ASB cases.

8.2 A breakdown of those ASB measures HSSC3 (A – Q) are detailed in Appendix A and are all volumetric measures.

## **10. Allocations**

10.1 85A - The percentage of offers accepted first time – this is a volumetric measure but against a target of 85% and quarter 4 figure of 93.97% and overall outturn figure of 89.87%, the continued work the team are doing to ensure the property being offered is suitable is working.

10.2 HS1 - Number of people currently on the housing list is a volumetric measure and is currently at 2,227.

## **11. Strategy**

11.1 HSSC8 – Number of new properties delivered. In quarter 4 a further 4 properties were delivered bringing the yearly outturn figure to 24. This included 11 newbuild homes and 13 homes acquired as part of the established purchase and repair scheme. A further 9 newbuild homes at Boultham Park Road are expected to be delivered to the stock in May 2025.

11.2 HSSC9 -The Number of 'Right to Buy' transactions is a volumetric measure and at quarter 4 the number of transactions is 10, giving an outturn figure of 34. For context it should be noted that in October 2024 Government introduced a series of measures intended to reduce the rate at which social housing units are lost through Right to Buy (RTB). These included reductions in the maximum cash discounts available, resulting in a temporary surge in RTB applications prior to the changes taking effect. The overall number of homes lost through RTB in 2024/25 remained the same as the previous year and is expected to fall over the next 1 – 2 years as pending RTB transactions under the old regime complete and applications stabilise.

11.3 The Number of council properties currently stands at 7,785.

The net effect of acquisitions, newbuilds and RTB transactions has resulted in a small net loss in stock to the end of Q4. It is expected that the medium to long term impact of Government's RTB changes will reduce the number of council homes being lost in future years, allowing for acquisitions and newbuild schemes to begin to deliver an overall increase in stock numbers.

## **12. Complaints**

12.1 In April 2024, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code (The Code), became statutory for all social housing providers. The Council's policy was updated to ensure compliance with the Code and, as it represents best practice in dealing with customer complaints, the principles of the Code were adopted as a corporate policy across all directorates.

- 12.2 There are a number of elements in The Code which are designed to ensure that our complaint handling performance is both effective and transparent. The HOS has a statutory duty to monitor compliance with the Code and they have powers to issue Complaint Handling Failure Orders where they find that performance is not conforming with The Code.
- 12.3 The Code requires an annual self-assessment where each of the 78 elements of the Code is considered and certified as either “Complied with” or “Not Complied”.
- 12.4 The self-assessment shows that there is a high level of compliance with The Code. The 2024/25 [self-assessment](#) has been published on the council’s website.

### **13. Lessons Learned**

- 13.1 When an individual complaint is investigated and responded to, the responding manager or team-leader is required to complete a Complaint Outcome Report. The Complaint Outcome Report asks for details about the response and the decision to uphold the complaint or otherwise. Where there is learning as a result of the complaint this is outlined on the report and details of changes to policies, processes, or information is described and recorded. As part of the complaint process, as set out in our Corporate Complaints Policy a random sample of complaints are scrutinised to check the quality of the response and the outcome. Outcomes outlined in the response letters are examined to ensure that they were carried out and any promises complied with. Learning points are also recorded, and a sample are checked to ensure that lessons learned are acted upon to improve future performance.
- 13.2 The Directorate of Housing and Investments received 433 complaints in total, which reflects the nature of the services provided, and the awareness of residents on how to make complaints. In terms of upheld complaints, last year there were 254 DHI complaints where the complainant’s case was upheld and in many of these there were lessons that led to corrective action on our part.
- 13.3 A random sample of 10% (26) of the upheld complaints were reviewed for details of the learning points and action plans. As part of the review, where remedial action or redress was offered to the complainant, this sample check followed the process through to the end to confirm that this action was completed.

The review found no instances where the promised solution, action or redress had not been carried out. In all cases reviewed, where the issue was an incomplete repair, a missed appointment, or a recurring issue the customer has now confirmed that they are satisfied with the completion of the works.

- 13.4 Where learning points identified a training need or a refresher briefing session for the tradesmen, checks have shown that this has taken place. One complaint referred to a data breach which was reported, and actions were taken to prevent a recurrence. Another example of remedial action taken included providing and reinforcing code of conduct information and details on standards of behaviour when visiting tenants’ homes to a new contractor.
- 13.5 Complaints about the Housing Solutions team are generally about the length of time that applicants wait, or the difficulty that they have getting responses to emails

or phone calls once individuals are on the waiting list. This has been identified as an issue, and the team are reviewing how they work to seek a resolution to the backlog of applications.

#### **14. Housing Ombudsman Complaints**

- 14.1 The Housing Ombudsman publishes its decisions and a summary of landlord performance on its website. They create individual reports for landlords with 5 or more findings in the year. These findings are counted individually and there may be multiple findings from a single complaint.
- 14.2 In 2024-2025 The Housing Ombudsman upheld 4 complaints made to it by council tenants.

#### **15. Complaints Trends**

- 15.1 There has been a marked increase in the overall number of complaints received compared to the previous year. This increase has occurred across all sections of DHI; Repairs, Tenancy, Investment and Housing Solutions have all seen a rise in the number of complaints compared to 2023-2024. This increase was anticipated due to changes made following the introduction of the Housing Ombudsman Service Complaint Handling Code and is seen by the Ombudsman as a good thing.
- 15.2 The council made changes to our complaint policy and, significantly, trained front-line staff to recognise and record expressions of dissatisfaction as formal complaints in line with the best practice outlined in the Code. Where the council might have previously received an “informal complaint” and dealt with it to the customers satisfaction without recording it as such, this is no longer how these issues are dealt with.

#### **16. Service Improvement Activity (Relating to Performance)**

There is currently a review taking place within customer services looking at customer call wait times. This measure is reviewed by Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee (HSSC) due to the service taking a considerable amount of housing calls and gives members oversight of performance within that area. HSSC members were notified of the review at the last meeting. This review directly links with housing and investment (as well as other directorates such as Directorate of Communities and Environment (DCE)

The review is currently reviewing calls, data collected, and emails received internally from service areas and externally from customers and residents, with a focus on understanding underlying factors, identifying root causes, and assessing the impact of the issues the service is facing. There is a specific focus on data and customer satisfaction not as well as fulfilling Housing Ombudsman/Regulator expectations.

By way of information, the review commenced in March and is being led by the Policy and Service Improvement Team, consisting initially of business intelligence officer, a business analyst and customer services. It is understood this may widen to other officers, as necessary. The phasing of the review is detailed below:

- Phase 1: Discovery and data collection
- Phase 2: Data analysis and issue diagnosis, root causes including feedback sessions
- Phase 3: Report and recommendations to service area for agreement to move forward
- Phase 4: Changes to be trialled for specific time periods, with specific data collection and comparison. Multiple rounds where necessary to fine tune changes to processes required resolving the issue, with area agreement.
- Final review and presentation, provide an executive summary of the key issues risks and opportunities, a detailed report outlining the findings from data analysis and service review, changes and successes or challenges of each, actionable recommendations for maintaining any improvements and improving service performance ongoing.

HSSC will be updated accordingly once the review has been completed.

## **17. Strategic Priorities**

17.1 The City of Lincoln Council's Vision 2030 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.

## **18. Organisational Impacts**

### **18.1 Finance**

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

The financial position of the HRA and Housing Repairs Service (HRS) are continually monitored and reported quarterly to this Sub-Committee.

### **18.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **18.3 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.

## **19. Risk Implications**

### **19.1 (i) Options Explored**

Not applicable to this report.

### **19.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach**

Not applicable for this report.

## **20. Recommendation**

- 20.1 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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