



<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Communities Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020</b>
<b>PART:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>2019/20 Quarter 4 Performance Report, Service Plan Update &amp; Operational Risk Register – Housing</b>
Contact:	Councillor Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing Author/Responsible Officer – Fiona Williamson – Assistant Director - Housing
Purpose of report:	1. To update the Committee on the Performance of the Housing Service - Quarter 4 2019/20 2. To inform the Committee on the progress of the 2019/20 Housing Service Plan and Operational Risk Register
Recommendations	That the Committee note the Performance Report, Service Plan and Operational Risk Register
Corporate objectives:	Affordable Housing – the provision of good quality affordable homes, by investing in existing stock and developing new.
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> All areas of the service are subject to Monthly Budget Monitoring Meetings with the HRA Financial Accountant. Budget Reporting is quarterly to Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
'Value For Money Implications'	<u>Value for Money</u> The Housing Service & its costs are reviewed annually through a national benchmarking organisation (Housemark)
Risk Implications	Housing Operational Risk Register details the risks associated with the management of the housing service.
Equalities	Community Impact Assessments are developed whenever there is a requirement to change or create a new policy or

Implications	procedure or significant change to service delivery.
Health And Safety Implications	Health & Safety is an identified key risk for the Housing Service.
Consultees:	<p>Mark Gaynor – Corporate Director, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Alan Mortimer – Group Manager Property and Place</p> <p>Natasha Beresford – Group Manager Strategic Housing</p> <p>Layna Warden – Group Manager Tenants and Leaseholders</p> <p>David Barrett – Group Manager, Housing Development</p>
Background papers:	n/a
Historical background <i>(please give a brief background to this report to enable it to be considered in the right context).</i>	In consultation with staff and members of the Tenants & Leaseholder Committee, a set of performance indicators are agreed, approved by the Portfolio Holder for Housing. These indicators are monitored monthly and reported to the HCOSC quarterly. In addition, there are suites of contractual performance indicators used to monitor the performance of the contractors delivering the services and these are linked to their profit.
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report and appendices:	<p>TLC – Tenants &amp; Leaseholder Committee</p> <p>SIE – Strategy, Improvement and Engagement Team</p> <p>CMT – Corporate Management Team</p> <p>TAM – Total Asset Management</p> <p>IT – Introductory tenancy</p> <p>UC – Universal Credit</p> <p>CA – Citizens Advice</p> <p>DWP – Department for Work and Pensions</p> <p>CPN – Community Protection Notice</p> <p>HRA – Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>TAM – Total Asset Management</p> <p>ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>HMO – Houses in Multiple Occupation</p>

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0.1 This report details the performance of the Housing Service during the fourth quarter of 2019/20, against the performance indicators. Performance indicators are extracted from Rocket, the performance-reporting tool, and contained in Appendix A
- 1.0.2 The report also details the Housing Service Plan and Operational Risk Register. The Service Plan and Risk Register are reviewed quarterly and updated to reflect the progress against the various milestones and establish if there have been any changes to the risk rating or likelihood of occurrence of any of the risks. In order to reduce the potential of the risk occurring, various mitigations are in place to reduce the likelihood or severity of occurrence. The Service Plan and Risk Register are contained at Appendix B.
- 1.0.3 The impact of lockdown, arising as a result of the Coronavirus restrictions, did have a slight impact on performance in a few areas. The housing service was anticipating that the UK would be subject to restrictions and had instructed contractors to complete all internal works and not open any new jobs.

## **2.0 Housing Performance Report – Q4 2019/20**

- 2.0.1 Appendix A shows performance against the ‘Service Critical’ performance indicators for the 4th Quarter of 2019/20.
- 2.0.2 **Performance Highlights:** The level of rent collected in year, 101.75%, exceeded the target and also exceeded the outturn figure for last year. This is a very positive result and reflected the work of the income team to address any issues with arrears so that tenants were encouraged to make regular payments.
- 2.0.3 Repairs and improvement programmes continued to have high levels of customer satisfaction, quality levels and within target timescales, but there were a few kitchens and bathrooms that were not 100% complete when the lockdown was announced. All were left in a working condition, but it is likely those that did not have all of the tiling and decorations completed may have lower levels of satisfaction, which will be identified in the Q1 report. All emergencies were attended within the 4 hour time limit.
- 2.0.4 The number of tenancy sustainment cases that have been supported to prevent rent arrears was 100% and the team worked closely with a number of vulnerable residents to support them through the initial phases of lockdown, as a number found the restrictions difficult to adhere to and understand.
- 2.0.5 The number of rough sleeper approaches increased to 26 following the initiative from Government to get “everyone in”. The homelessness service responded well to the dramatic influx of homeless presentations, but quickly filled all of the council owned temporary accommodation and a number of bed and breakfast rooms were secured.
- 2.0.6 The performance of the lifeline call service remained high at 98.04% of calls being answered within 60 seconds, which was positive and reassuring for tenants and the private customers, some of whom have been in lockdown on their own.

- 2.0.7 Although the response to the Coronavirus does not feature in the overall performance report, the service responded to the restrictions and migration to home working very well. The challenges of maintaining an emergency repairs service and cyclical maintenance of all of the compliance work streams, required close liaison with the contractors to make sure all had developed risk assessed method statements for works, to minimise the risk of infection transmission. The increased demand on the homelessness service and the need to triage cases, mainly using the phone or video conferencing, has resulted in innovative ways of working to reduce face-to face contact.
- 2.0.8 **Performance challenges:** Whilst there was an improvement in the average key to key time for general needs properties, at 32 days, this was still slightly above the target. The letting of sheltered properties continues to be a challenge, with many of those out of target being advertised multiple times before an offer is accepted. The review of the sheltered schemes have identified a number of blocks, which due to their location and no lift access to upper floors are being considered for re-designation to general needs. Additionally the empty homes review is continuing, after a short suspension of activity, albeit in the knowledge that whilst restrictions remain in place, it is unlikely there will not be an improvement in the key to key times.
- 2.0.9 The empty homes project, being delivered by Sopra Steria, has identified a number of interventions and reorganisation of the process that should improve the overall key to key time. All work, except statutory cyclical servicing and emergency repairs was suspended upon the announcement of the lockdown on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, including work to void properties. The impact of this suspension will be reflected in the Q1 results for the current financial year.
- 2.1.0 Satisfaction with the outcome of the ASB remains below target. The introduction of a new satisfaction survey for all medium and high ASB cases will provide more detail behind low levels of satisfaction, and give opportunity to make improvements. Additionally a new procedure for the referral and management of cases has already shown an improvement in communication with complainants and should lead to increased levels of satisfaction.
- 2.1.1 The gas servicing was impacted by a number of people self-isolating, who were due an annual service. The details on each case have been fully recorded and appointments rebooked as soon as the period of self-isolation expires. The Health and Safety executive have not relaxed any of the requirements for compliance works and the team are working closely with the gas servicing engineer to ensure
- 2.1.2 The timescale to respond to stage 1 complaints exceeded the target and only 52.27% were responded to within the 20 day target. There had been an increase in complaints received, some of which were complex in nature and took longer than anticipated to investigate. The backlog of complaints have now all been addressed and responses sent, so it is expected that the performance will improve in Q1 of 2020-21.

### **3.0 Interventions to address performance below target and other initiatives**

- 3.0.1 Sopra Steria are continuing the next steps in the re-engineering of the empty homes process and focusing on the new ways of working that have been introduced as a result of remote working since COVID lockdown. Digital sign-ups, use of key safes and verification of scanned or photographed documents have been introduced to reduce face to face contact, some of which are more efficient and have a positive impact on the timescale. Although there have been a number of positive changes in the administration of the key to key process, these are likely to be offset by additional time to complete works in properties because of the reduced number of operatives able to work in properties to maintain adequate social distancing.
- 3.0.2 Consolidated work was undertaken to address the backlog of complaints, which has now been completed and the new Group Manager for Property and Place commences with the Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and will oversee complaints for this area of the service.
- 3.0.3 In order to understand the impact of the Coronavirus on the service, Housing have been providing data on various areas of the service to Housemark, who provide cross sector benchmarking and consultancy support. Housemark are collating the data from the first 3 months post lockdown and this will be used to assess the performance of organisations in response to the virus and the impact on tenants and services that are delivered. The findings from this analysis will be included in the Q1 report for 2020-21

### **4.0 Housing Service Plan & Operational Risk Register**

- 4.0.1 The 2019/20 Housing Service Plan and Operational Risk Register are contained in Appendix B and provide an update on progress during the 4th quarter against the various service objectives and an update on the operational risks.