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# Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Report for:</b>	Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of report:</b>	Q1 Housing Performance Report
<b>Date:</b>	15 August 2022
<b>Report on behalf of:</b>	Councillor Mrs Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing
<b>Part:</b>	I
<b>If Part II, reason:</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix A Housing Portfolio performance Report Appendix B Housing Risk Register
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</b>	Housing Transformation Improvement Plan (HTIP) Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) Department for Levelling Up Communities and Housing (DLUHC) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Target operating model (TOM) Total Asset Management (TAM)

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<b>Corporate Priorities</b>	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities
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	Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery Climate and ecological emergency
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Purpose of the report:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To provide members with an overview of the performance of the Housing Service for Q1 2022-23</li> <li>2. To present the interventions and actions undertaken to address any performance concerns</li> </ol>
<b>Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That members consider the report and note the actions to address any performance concerns highlighted</li> </ol>
<b>Period for post policy/project review:</b>	Quarterly performance reporting

## **1 Introduction/Background:**

- 1.1 This report details the performance of the Housing Service during the first quarter of 2022/23, measured against the suite of performance indicators. The performance indicators are extracted from In-Phase and contained in Appendix A for the Housing Service portfolio.
- 1.2 The performance is reviewed on a monthly basis through the In-phase reports, which combined with any complaints and compliments received, provide an overview of the housing service. The service is progressing activity linked to the Housing Transformation Improvement Plan (HTIP), containing 8 work streams delivering activity that supports the HTIP vision: "To provide outcomes for residents in the Borough of Dacorum that enable them to live in the best possible homes that they are able to and to take part in a vibrant community, supported by the improvements and transformation the Housing Service will make over the next one to two years". The HTIP programme is governed by the HTIP Board through periodical meetings and reporting to Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- 1.3 The Operational Risk Register is to be revised and aligned with the performance indicators and service plans. The register will be reviewed quarterly, to reflect any changes internally or externally that have impacted upon the identified risks. To reduce the potential of the risk occurring and the impact, mitigations are in place to reduce the risk's likelihood and severity. The current operational risk register is under review with the Chief Housing Finance Officer in collaboration with the wider organisation to define strategic and operational risks.
- 1.4 This report also outlines any newly arising service pressures and feedback to Members on action taken to address matters arising.

## **2 Key Issues/proposals/main body of the report:**

2.1 Appendix A shows performance against the 'Service Critical' performance indicators for the Quarter 1 of 2022/23 across the Housing Service. InPhase structures have been reviewed to align with Service Plan development and SLT key performance indicator reviews, to ensure focussed reporting. Further development will be undertaken to refine management information reporting and other relevant local performance indicators.

## **3 Performance highlights**

3.1 Property related activities continue to be challenging however performance in some areas has improved or remains strong. In particular PP05 Quality Assurance relating to planned works has remained at 100%, PP12 and PP13a relate to Percentage of repairs completed within target and although these indicators remain in the RED there has been a positive increase of +7%, and a +9% positive shift. In relation to PP13b completed repairs right first time this indicator remains green at 83.67% achieving target for the quarter.

3.3 The percentage of the rent roll collected continues to be on track to be above 100% at the end of the financial year and shows a consistent approach to recovery of the arrears. This performance is good when compared to other local authorities and registered providers. To continue the progress being made, the use of the housing management IT system is being extended and an analysis of the arrears by geographical area and customer segment will be implemented.

3.4 The ASB cases continue to be monitored and action taken in line with the current process. The service provided has been affected by changes in staffing and this will be resolved in Q2. The changes to the measurements of the service will be addressed through the HTIP.

3.5 The Tenancy Sustainment Team continue to experience high demand, with an increasing number of households placed into temporary accommodation that require support. There is continued support and resettlement activity to increase the independence of the resettled Syrian Refugee households, including the successful resettlement of a fifth household via the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). The fifth household has been resettled into a private sector property and fulfils our pledges via the ACRS. The Humanitarian Response Lead Officer is proactively engaging with colleagues from Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire district and boroughs in addition to the East of England, Strategic Migration partnership. This is to ensure a collaborative and consistent response to asylum and resettlement activity, whilst having regard to the additional pressures and impacts for the Council.

3.6 The Homeless Prevention Team have been successful through in preventing increased households from needing to access temporary accommodation. Positive action has resulted from collaborative working arrangements and increase success in accessing the private sector for households where this is an affordable option. This positive action has helped to maintain a steady number of households occupying temporary accommodation, which at the end of the quarter stood at 181 households.

3.7 The Private Sector Housing Team have continued to undertake Ukraine accommodation Checks to that households arriving are occupying safe accommodation – as at end of Q1 2022/23 a total of 132 checks had been undertaken since commencement week effective 18 April 2022. The service is proactively leading collaborative investigations involving the Community Safety Team, Planning Enforcement and representatives from Fire and Police service in relation to suspected breach of Housing Act 2004, which relates to potential unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupation and alleged modern slavery activity.

## **4 Performance challenges**

4.1 Performance in relation to average time to re-let homes SH03a (general needs) and SH03c (sheltered) has not improved despite Osbornes Property Services being successful in increasing the number of operatives working across empty homes, it is considered that it will take some time to realise the benefit of increased workforce on the performance outturn.

- 4.2 The current performance of Tunstall on the lifeline service has continued to be below the target in the contract. Regular contract meetings are in place and discussions are focussed on the full range of performance indicators in the contract, of which the majority have been met. Discussions continue with Tunstall about the approach in place to address the current shortfall and their arrangements to achieve this through staff recruitment. The contract for this service is being reviewed and an options appraisal is being developed.
- 4.3 The level and type feedback on the anti-social behaviour (ASB) service continues to be low and the format of the feedback requested will be reviewed as part of the target operating model (TOM). The intention is to move from seeking satisfaction responses and a focus on the achievement by the team against a defined service standard and timescales. This help focus on the service provided and the level of communication, rather than satisfaction with the outcome of the process which is more difficult to achieve in cases of ASB. This is in line with the good practice of other social housing providers.
- 4.4 Whilst there has been an increase in successful prevention and relief activity within the period, there has also been an increase in homelessness applications to the service – this is an indicator of the number of cases where prevention was unsuccessful, placing an administration pressure in respect of detailed homelessness investigations. In addition it should be noted that the service has seen an increase in presentations for households where Ukraine Sponsor placement has broken down, to date a total of 12 placements and an indication that as the scheme reaches the 6-month point approximately 60% of sponsors are reported as unlikely to continue to support the scheme due to rising pressures in particular many citing the cost of living.
- 4.5 The service continues to see repeated cycles of homelessness and entrenched rough sleeping, despite interventions. Bi-monthly rough sleeper counts have identified 6 rough sleepers within the borough who are known to the service and local agencies. Rough sleeping impacts negatively on the local community and is often seen alongside other activity or behaviour such as street activity (begging), anti-social behaviour or crime.
- 4.6 There continues to be a significant cross service focus on response to increased service requests, complaints and MP activity, as a result additional agency capacity is to be established in Quarter 2 to support the service response.

## **5 Interventions to address performance challenges**

- 5.1 OPSL and DBC continue to work hard to address performance across all areas of the Total Asset Management (TAM) contract. There has been, and will continue to be significant internal challenge of process and procedure to prioritise what matters to our residents, tenants and leaseholders. The journey to reshape the service provision is not a short one but incremental change is happening to facilitate the provision of Customer Centric services. As previously advised we are mapping out the customer journey for repairs and Empty Homes to highlight duplication, parts of a process that could be improved, challenge to the mind set for all to establish what good looks like and the implementation of corrective actions. We have made some changes to the front end of the Empty Homes process to streamline throughput to OPSL. Visibility and oversight of Empty Homes numbers and the relevant stages of the property has been introduced for discussion at weekly performance meetings chaired by senior staff from both DBC and OPSL. Planned and cyclical works remain a key area of focus and progress to fit new kitchens and bathrooms is being made despite the supply chain and financial challenges.
- 5.2 The contract with Tunstall will continue to be monitored monthly and action will be taken through the contract meetings where the contract's performance indicators are significantly below the required target.
- 5.3 In Quarter 2 the mobilisation of the Rough Sleeper Initiative will be undertaken, this will see go live of the new Dacorum Outreach Service in partnership with DENS following successful recruitment to the

dedicated outreach posts, these Officers will work in partnership with the Council and the wider Community Safety Partnership to undertake targeted actions with a view to preventing rough sleeping.

- 5.4 The HTIP workstream for Strategic Housing has identifies focussed activities to enable achievement of increased affordable housing in the borough and clear strategic direction across the service. A housing needs assessment is being scoped and will enable the identification of clear objectives to support extensive stakeholder engagement and the development of a new Housing Strategy.
- 5.5 In relation to monitoring and management of complaints, an action plan has been developed to support outcomes of complaints and ensure that the Housing Service embeds learning from issues raised by residents. The outcomes will be incorporated into a 'you said, we did' approach which will be fed into annual reporting. Additional resource has been recruited internally commencing week in August to support resident engagement, response and outcomes related to complaints. Additionally Osborne Property Services have committed to identifying additional resource to support resolution of customer concerns and learning from complaints.

## **6 Operational Risk Register**

The current Operational Risk Register is contained in Appendix B, the Assistant Director, Housing Operations (Interim) is leading a review of the operational risks and a revision will be completed for presentation in Q2 reporting.

## **7 Financial and value for money implications**

Post pandemic, the sector are experiencing unprecedented price increases and a reduction in contractors available. These two factors alone will create a significant cost pressure on available budgets. For example with specific regard to planned and cyclical works, the programme of works may need to be rephased over a longer period of time leading to potential re-procurement or amendment of existing contracts.

## **8 Legal Implications**

The Housing Service are required to comply with all statutory and regulatory legislation relating to the delivery of the Housing Operations and Strategic Housing Service. This includes the statutory functions for management of Compliance activity, Homelessness and interim (temporary) accommodation, Housing Allocations, Strategy and Private Sector Housing. This also includes the regulatory functions for the consumer standards and rent setting.

## **9 Equalities, Community Impact and Human Rights:**

Community and equality Impact Assessments are developed whenever there is a requirement to change or create a new policy or procedure or significant change to service delivery

Human Rights – There are a number of services that are provided to tenants, residents and leaseholders which involve entering their homes. The policies adopted by the Council are subject to consultation or oversight to make sure that the right to respect for private and family life is considered and balanced against other landlord responsibilities for health and safety.

## **10 Sustainability implications (including climate change, health and wellbeing, community safety)**

Investment programmes are contained in the HRA Business Plan and include sustainability. The performance report includes the responsibilities of the Housing Service in relation to community safety and the health and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable tenants and residents.

## **11 Council infrastructure (including Health and Safety, HR/OD, assets and other resources)**

The HRA and general fund stock management of the asset is undertaken across the housing service. In line with the HTIP further work is underway to develop a stock investment review process and programme, which will inform future investment decisions.

The management of health and safety related matters are reported into the Corporate Health and Safety Working Group.

**12 Conclusions:**

The interventions outlined in this performance report have been developed to address any areas of performance below target, and include the HTIP, contract interventions to monitor the Osborne Improvement plan and regular monitoring of the Tunstall contract. The impact of these will be monitored through the monthly performance indicators, the Residents Services Board and the Performance Board.