



# Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Report for:</b>	Housing & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of report:</b>	Q1 2023-2024 Housing Performance Report
<b>Date:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
<b>Report on behalf of:</b>	Councillor Simy Dhyani Portfolio Holder Housing and Property Services
<b>Part:</b>	I
<b>If Part II, reason:</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices:</b>	N/A
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</b>	

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<b>Corporate Priorities</b>	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
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	<p>Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need</p> <p>Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery</p> <p>Climate and Ecological Emergency - working to deliver net zero carbon.</p>
<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 2023-24</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 2023/24, measured against the suite of performance indicators. The performance indicators are extracted from InPhase and contained in Appendix A for the Housing & Property Service portfolio. Future reports will provide updates on new government measures, known as the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, which will be reportable from 2024.
- 1.2 Performance is reviewed on a monthly basis via InPhase reports, which provide an overview of the housing service. The Operational Risk Registers are also reviewed by the relevant teams at least quarterly, to reflect any changes internally or externally that have impacted upon the identified risks and to include new risks. Robust mitigations are in place to reduce the risk's likelihood and severity.
- 1.3 This report also outlines any newly arising service pressures and feedback to Members on action taken to address matters arising.

## **2 Performance highlights**

### Housing Operations

- 2.1 The average time spent in temporary accommodation has been reducing throughout the quarter. The team have been working with the Empty Homes Team to ensure that all households who have a direct offer of accommodation are moved from their temporary accommodation property as soon as possible. They have also worked with the Homeless Prevention Team to ensure that all applicants are actively looking for alternative accommodation.
- 2.2 The number of placements in temporary accommodation has been decreasing over the quarter. This is due to households moving into their direct offer accommodation. The team are continuing to work with the Empty Homes Team to prioritise all direct offer Dacorum Borough Council properties where possible.
- 2.3 The current arrears level stands at 3.93% (£2,391,369.05) of the annual debit which is lower than this time last year when the figure was 4.16%.

### Safe Communities

- 2.4 In the quarter, officers in the team supported and shadowed the HMO licensing officer to learn what is required with this work as the team build up towards the next financial year where there a large number of projected renewals with licenses ending after 5 years in 2024.

### Asset Management

- 2.5 This percentage of emergency repairs completed within four hours has been above target and has been improving throughout the quarter. The team are completing diagnostics when calls are received to ensure repairs are allocated to the correct trades and correct level of emergency is reported.

### Safe Homes

- 2.6 The percentage of Fire Risk Assessments in place has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.
- 2.7 The percentage of valid landlord gas safety records in place has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.
- 2.8 The percentage of communal areas with a current Electrical Installation Condition Report has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.
- 2.9 The percentage of Water Hygiene inspections completed has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.
- 2.10 The percentage of annual Asbestos re-inspections completed has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.
- 2.11 The percentage of lift inspections completed has remained at 100% for the whole quarter. This is on target and no further improvements can be implemented, just a continuation of the current work being done.

## **3 Performance challenges**

### Housing Operations

At the beginning of the Q1 it was necessary to focus on establishing a revised Estate Inspection schedule and to do so, 'neighbourhoods' were created which has allowed the team to establish the schedule based on priority and risk. This focus had an impact on the number of inspections completed in the quarter, however it has allowed us to focus inspections on the areas most needed.

- 3.2 The number of households in B&B's has fluctuated over the quarter. Unfortunately there are limited adapted properties and none that are currently with the Empty Homes Team. It is likely that the households waiting for wheelchair adapted properties will be in B&B accommodation for some time. Of the 12 households in B&B in May, 10 were able to be moved to temporary accommodation. Those still in B&B's have medical conditions with one requiring ground floor accommodation.
- 3.3 The average time spent in B&B's has been increasing across the quarter. This increase has been due to a mixture of households requiring a particular property due to medical/other requirements and also a lack of available properties in temporary accommodation to place households.

- 3.4 The cost of B&B's increased significantly from April to May due to the large number of temporary accommodation referrals that came through on the day accommodation was required.

#### Safe Communities

- 3.5 The number of incidents of Dacorum High Risk Domestic Abuse cases heard at the Multi-Agency Conference has increased to 51 from the previous quarter where the number was 35 cases.
- 3.6 The team linked the increase in ASB cases to the season/ good weather. There was also a link to garages, vehicles and noise nuisance.
- 3.7 There were a low number of ASB cases closed in May due to the high number of bank holidays which impacted client contact.
- 3.8 In May, there was a big jump in homelessness applications which could be due to the increase we have seen in Section 21 notices being issued

#### Asset Management

- 3.9 The average time to re-let a HRA property has increased due to a number of properties needing major works or adaptations.
- 3.10 The percentage of responsive repairs completed right first time KPI has been underperforming and reducing throughout the quarter.

### **4 Interventions to address performance challenges**

#### Housing Operations

- 4.1 In May, the Temporary Accommodation team have recently started a draft of a Service Level Agreement with The Empty homes Team which aims to reduce the average time spent in B&B's.
- 4.2 The Tenancy Management team have now defined the estate inspections into neighbourhoods to create a more robust inspection regime with a focus on high priority risk areas.
- 4.3 The Rent & Income team are carrying out further work to review the rent arrears procedure with proposals being made to streamline the process.

#### Safe Communities

- 4.4 The Homeless Prevention Team are currently looking into their data collection to ensure that there are no discrepancies. This is also part of the Service Improvement Plan.

#### Asset Management

- 4.5 There will be a review of the common materials needed to action repairs will and this will help to ensure that more repairs are completed right first time.
- 4.6 There is an improvement plan in place to improve the percentage of repairs that are completed within target.

### **5 Operational Risk Register**

The Operational Risk Register has been revised and the updated risks for Housing Operations will be amended from the reporting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. The updated risk register has been revised and aligned with the performance information, management information and service plans.

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

As members will be aware the impact of the pandemic, inflation and interest rates have significantly impacted the sector and we are experiencing unprecedented price increases across all areas of Council activity. This fiscal impact is compounded by the lack of skilled people and materials driving continued escalation of costs. These two factors alone will create a significant cost pressure on available budgets. We are reviewing service levels and demand to assess the impact on current and future budgets and considering what additional mitigating actions may need to be introduced.

## **7 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.

## **8 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.

## **9 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.

## **10 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.

## **11 Conclusions:**

This report provides an overview of service performance, key highlights, challenges and interventions implemented to address key areas of performance below target. Key performance challenges will be subject to ongoing monitoring via the Housing Services Leadership Team, ensuring a collaborative approach to service delivery and ongoing performance.