

The Highland Council
Caithness Committee - 22 November 2016

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	CC/23/16

Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report provides information on how the Housing Section performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 30 September 2016.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.
- 1.2 This report provides key performance information based on the reporting framework recommended by the SHR. Information on other performance indicators for housing management is presented in tabular format at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 Further performance information by Council Ward can be found on the Highland Council Intranet ward reporting pages.
http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/info/13/members_intranet/37/ward_reporting/2
- 1.4 In accordance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter guidance, the Repairs, Tenancy Management and Rent Arrears figures are cumulative, while the Homeless Presentations figures are given for each separate quarter.
- 1.5 Scottish Quality Network (SQN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

2. Repairs

- 2.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete Emergency repairs and Non-emergency repairs.
- 2.2 The average length of time taken to complete Emergency repairs is calculated in hours.

2.3 Performance overall in this category is very positive and all wards are well within the 14 hours Highland target. All wards are below the overall Highland average of 7.2 hours.

2.4 Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)
Target 14 hours
2015/16 SQN Benchmark – 5.1 hours

	No of Houses	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Thurso	587	7.6	7.6	7.2	6.3	3.5	5.6	8.0	7	6.1	5.2
Wick	938	6.1	5.1	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.7	3.9	3.9	4.3	4.8
Landward Caithness	576	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.4	3.7	3.8	4.8	5.1	4.3	4.6
Highland	13980	14.8	11.1	9.3	9.1	6.2	6.9	7.1	7.9	6.6	7.2

2.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days.

2.6 Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)
Target 8 days
2015/16 SQN Benchmark – 7.5 days

	No of Houses	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Thurso	587	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.4	4.9	5.7	6.0	7	6.6	7.7
Wick	938	5	5.9	5.8	6.2	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.7	6
Landward Caithness	576	5.4	6.2	6.3	6.7	5.1	5.2	5.7	6.2	5.3	6.5
Highland	13980	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.5	7.5	6.6	6.9

2.7 Performance is within the Highland Target in all Caithness Wards.

2.8 In gathering the information for repairs indicators, we do not include instances where we have been unable to gain access to properties. This is in accordance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter guidance.

3. Tenancy Management

3.1 The chart below provides information on the average re-let time showing the trend back 6 years and highlighting the same quarter in previous years for comparison.

3.2

**Table 3 : Average re-let time (days) Target 35 days
2015/16 SQN Benchmark – 35.4 days**

	No of Houses	No of relets	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
			Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2
Thurso	587	61	37.67	37.14	34.91	36.42	46.74
Wick	938	94	32.59	51.12	99.63	128.65	87.28
Landward Caithness	576	44	38.97	45.79	53.07	57.77	39.52
Highland	13980	436	39.85	41.00	38.90	48.29	43.63

- 3.3 The relet time for Thurso, Wick and Landward Caithness remain challenging due to lack of demand and some properties lie empty for significant periods of time.
- 3.4 The Choice Based Lettings scheme has now been operating since February 2015 and has evidenced some success. Many long term voids have been allocated. However the high turnover of tenancies does mean the number of void properties at any given time remains of concern.
- 3.5 Scrutiny of the position, at the end of Quarter 2, revealed 49 void properties across Caithness. An additional 4 properties in Wick, having been identified as surplus to requirement, are currently being marketed for sale on the open market.
- 3.6 Of the 49 void properties 29 are in the East of the county and the remaining 20 are on the West.
- 3.7 Of the 29 East Caithness voids all became void in 2016 with the exception of 4 low demand properties which became void in 2015. There are no longer any void properties which became void before 2015 and this improvement can be attributed to the Choice Based Lettings initiative. Of these 29 void properties no interest has been expressed in 13 of those properties.
- 3.8 Of the 20 void properties in the West of the county all became void in 2016 and no interest has been expressed in 5 of those voids.
- 3.9 Following agreement from the Community Services Committee to allow disposal of 4 surplus properties in Wick consideration is now being given to further stock disposals. Any further proposals will be discussed with Members in more detail.

4. Rent Arrears

4.1 A key indicator for rent arrears is considered to be the value of current rent arrears. The table below shows the comparative figure for the same quarter in the previous five years. The Caithness Housing Team continue to maintain a robust approach to maximising rental income, however the increasing impact of welfare reform and, in particular, Universal Credit, is having a negative impact on this work. To minimise this impact the local team are committed to applying to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) for alternative payment arrangements (APA's) for vulnerable tenants. The Highland Council is part of a Trusted Partner Status pilot and under this pilot the DWP will automatically give the tenant an alternative payment arrangement. The Highland wide current arrears figure is £1,590,977.

4.2 **Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears**

	No of Houses	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
		Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2	Q2
Thurso	587	30817	38138	31919	27483	30790
Wick	938	73347	101359	71501	63163	73896
Landward Caithness	576	28036	36868	29132	26319	27369

5. Homelessness

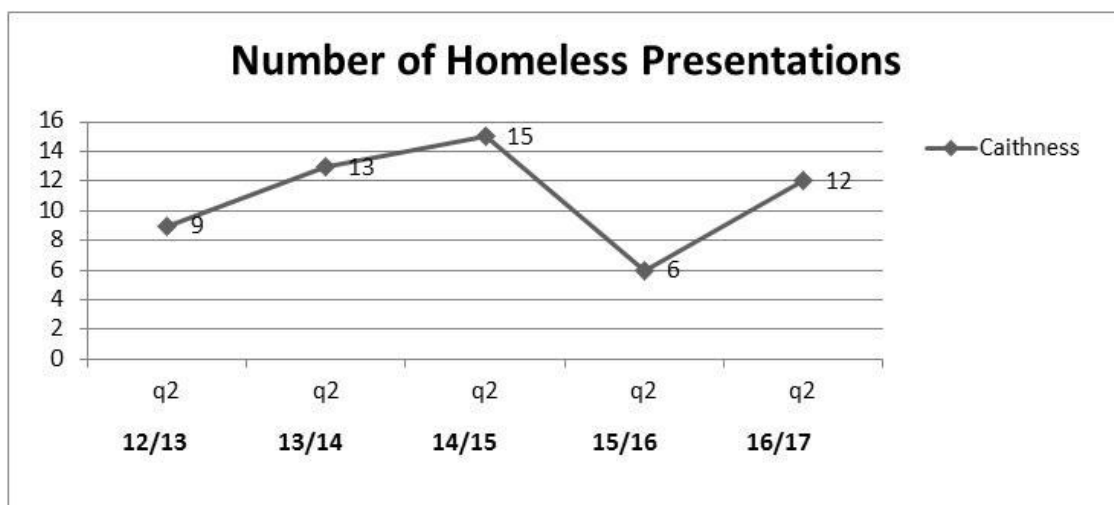
5.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter return, however a number of indicators have been agreed for reporting to Local Committees.

5.2 Table 5 shows the number of homeless presentations taken by the Caithness team, charting the same quarter in previous years. Homeless presentations in Caithness in Q2 2016 remained the same as Q1 2016 at 12.

5.3 There were 288 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 2 2016 at 30 September 2016.

5.4

Table 5 - Homeless presentations



5.5 Table 6 provides information on the cases opened and closed in the quarter. These figures are by quarter and are not cumulative.

5.6

Table 6 - Housing Options cases

	2015 Qtr1	2015 Qtr2	2015 Qtr 3	2015 Qtr4	2016 Qtr1	2016 Qtr2
Housing Option cases opened	13	12	20	2	1	2
Housing Options cases closed	27	26	18	3	9	11

6. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme Update

6.1 The HRA Capital Programme 2016-17 was approved by the Community Services Committee on 5 November 2015. The status of the 2016-17 HRA Capital Programme for the Caithness Area is detailed at Appendix 2.

7. Implications

6.1 Resources

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

6.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.3 Equality

There are no equality implications arising from this report.

6.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.

6.5 Risk

Risk is managed through regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken if necessary.

6.6 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

6.7 Rural

There are no rural implications arising from this report.

Recommendation

Members are invited to scrutinise the information provided on housing performance in the period 1st April 2016 to 30 September 2016.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 9 November 2016

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Background Papers: Scottish Housing Regulator: The Scottish Social Housing Charter: Indicators and Context Information

APPENDIX 1

SPI 15/16	16/17	Scottish Average	Target	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	91.3		96.2	96.1	97.2	96.4	96.9
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	RED	93.5	95.0	90.0	85.8	94.1	94.8	95.6
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	99.5	99.0	99.5	101.2	99.4	100.7	100.3
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	5.3	5.0	4.4	4.1	4.0	3.5	3.6
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	AMBER	10	1.0	3.7	5.8	3.3	4.1	4.6
ASB Cases reported and resolved - Caithness	RED	86.6	85.0	80.0	50.7	92.2	94.9	75.9
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	RED	88.1	90.0	84.4	81.8	79.2	77.7	76.0
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness		37.8		52.7	56.4	46.9	46.5	47.1
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness		8.7		13.6	14.2	14.3	14.6	14.0
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer - Caithness	GREEN		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ave time in temp/eme accomm Caithness	AMBER		15.0	16.2	11.6	13.1	12.9	9.2

APPENDIX 2

Project Number	Project Title	Number Of Houses	Budget 2016/17	Project Status	Additional Comments	RAG rating
	HRA Capital Programme 2016/17					
	Equipment and Adaptations					
BM	Equipment & adaptations Caithness	0	100,000	Design in progress	Works carried out on demand following occupational health assessment	GREEN
	Major Component Replacement					
BMCAITBAT2016	Bathroom replacement Caithness	48	231,663	Work on site 40% complete	Started May 2016	GREEN
BMCAIKIT2016	Kitchen replacement Caithness	46	231,663	Work on site 40% complete	Started May 2016	GREEN
CSH16001	Window & door replacement Caithness & Sutherland	55	412,500	Tender stage	Out to tender but schedule anticipates completion on site by March 2017; 42 Caithness houses at estimated £315,000	GREEN
BM	Individual bathroom and kitchens Caithness & Sutherland	12	69,981	Work on site 10% complete	Started May 2016; works demand-led following inspections	GREEN
	Heating/Energy Efficiency					
CSH16007	Heating replacement Caithness	88	858,000	Tender stage	Out to tender but schedule anticipates completion on site by March 2017	GREEN
	Insulation works Caithness	30	150,000	Surveys in progress	Awaiting survey results from E.on	GREEN
BMCAIINS2016	Loft insulation Caithness	35	17,500	Surveys in progress	Due to start imminently	GREEN
BM	Heating replacements Caithness & Sutherland	23	233,895	Work on site 10% complete	Demand-led replacements following breakdowns/inspections	GREEN
	External Fabric (Major Component Replacement)					
BMCAIROF2016	Works to roofs, soffits, fascia and downpipes Caithness	8	80,000	Work on site 10% complete	Demand-led following inspections	GREEN
BMC&SFAB2016	Individual external fabric works Caithness & Sutherland	Subject to survey	48,331	Surveys in progress	Demand-led following inspections	GREEN
	External Fabric (environmental improvements)					
BMCAIENV2016	Environmental improvements Caithness	Subject to survey	88,548	Project not yet started	Awaiting further Member consultation	GREEN