

The Highland Council
Caithness Committee - 14 February 2017

Agenda Item	7.
Report No	CC/ 05/17

Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016

Report by the 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 31 December 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 **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	Q3
Thurso	587	7.6	7.6	7.2	6.3	3.5	5.6	8.0	7	6.1	5.2	4.9
Wick	931	6.1	5.1	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.7	3.9	3.9	4.3	4.8	4.2
Landward Caithness	576	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.4	3.7	3.8	4.8	5.1	4.3	4.6	5
Highland	13898	14.8	11.1	9.3	9.1	6.2	6.9	7.1	7.9	6.6	7.2	6.9

2.4 The average response time to complete emergency repairs is below the Highland Councils benchmark of 5.1 hours.

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	Q3
Thurso	587	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.4	4.9	5.7	6.0	7	6.6	7.7	7.7
Wick	931	5	5.9	5.8	6.2	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.7	6	6.2
Landward Caithness	576	5.4	6.2	6.3	6.7	5.1	5.2	5.7	6.2	5.3	6.5	7.1
Highland	13898	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.5	7.5	6.6	6.9	6.9

2.7 Average response times to non-emergency repairs are below the Highland Council's target of 7.5 days except for Thurso. We have experienced some pressure on the repairs service in Caithness due to volume of repairs requests and some staff absences / vacancies. A further plumber has been appointed, and we will continue to seek to fill any vacant trades posts and are hopeful that we can improve on the average time it takes to complete non-emergency repairs.

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 three 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	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
			Q3	Q3	Q3
Thurso	587	77	37.10	37.26	45.06
Wick	931	121	106.31	139.72	85.19
Landward Caithness	576	60	53.42	59.93	41.78
Highland	13898	931	39.20	49.28	41.53

3.3 The re-let times for Thurso, Wick and Landward Caithness remain challenging due to lack of demand and some properties lie empty for significant periods of time. Other than one bed properties which are always in demand, demand in Thurso and West Landward is reducing across all types of properties. The choice based lettings initiative has certainly played a part in reducing the re-let times in Wick although the number of void properties remains concerning.

3.4 Four properties in Wick, having been identified as surplus to requirement, are currently being marketed for sale. Some viewings have taken place and a closing date of 10 February 2017 has been set.

3.5 Following agreement from the Community Services Committee to allow disposal of these 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 three years. The Caithness Housing Team continue to maintain a robust approach to maximising rental income, however increasing numbers of tenants are being moved onto Universal Credit, and this is having a negative impact on rent payment because of extended timescales for payment of benefits set by the DWP. The recent establishment of a Rent Arrears Working Group aims to review current Policy and procedure to ensure that the impact of Welfare Reform on rent payments is minimised. The Highland wide current arrears figure is £1,501,827.

4.2

Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears

	No of Houses	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
		Q3	Q3	Q3
Thurso	587	28114	22332	26404
Wick	931	69837	55354	72248
Landward Caithness	576	26305	17200	23727

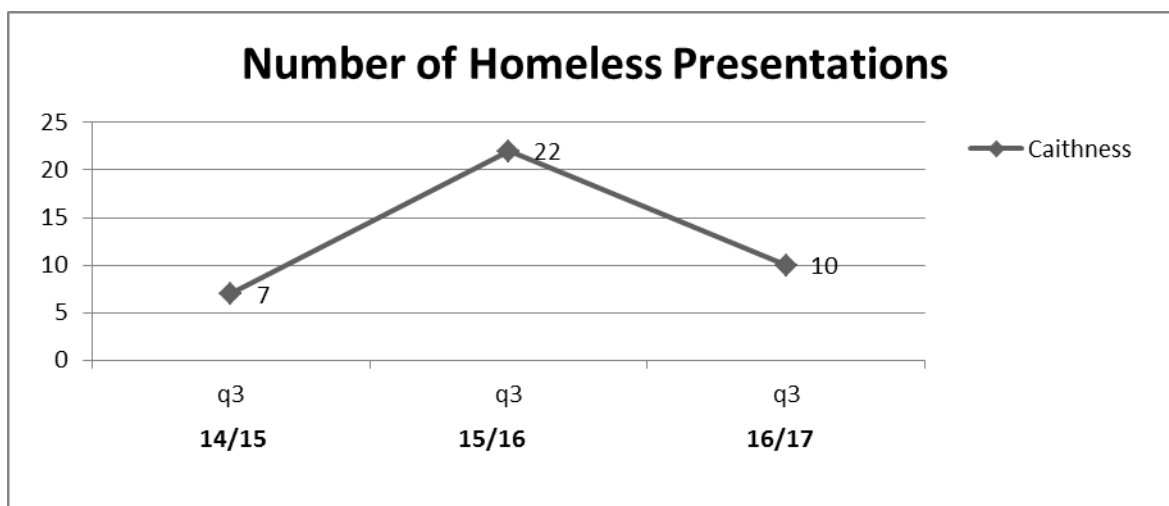
5. Homelessness

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 received by the Caithness Team, charting the same quarter in previous years. Homeless presentations in Caithness in Quarter 3 of 2016, of which there were 10 in number, have shown a slight decrease from the 12 presentations in Q2 2016.

5.3 There were 266 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 3 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 Qtr3	2015 Qtr4	2016 Qtr1	2016 Qtr2	2016 Qtr3
Housing Option cases opened	13	12	20	2	1	2	1
Housing Options cases closed	27	26	18	3	9	11	1

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

7.1 Resources

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Equality

There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever

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

7.5 Risk

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

7.6 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

7.7 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 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 26 January 2017

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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	2016/17			2015/16	
				Qtr3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	GREEN	90.2	92.0	96.2	96.2	96.1	97.2	96.4
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	RED	92.4	95.0	89.8	90.0	85.8	94.1	94.8
Rent collected as of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	99.5	99.0	99.5	99.5	101.2	99.4	100.7
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	5.3	5.0	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.0	3.5
No of housing options cases opened Caithness	AMBER	1.1	1.0	3.8	3.7	5.8	3.3	4.1
No of housing options cases closed Caithness	GREEN	83.2	85.0	94.5	80.0	50.7	92.2	94.9
Homelessness - Presentations received in period Caithness	AMBER	88.8	90.0	85.0	84.4	81.8	79.2	77.7
Gross rent arrears as of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	42.0	38.0	50.6	52.7	56.4	46.9	46.5
Ave time to complete non emergency repairs (days) - Caithness	AMBER	8.9	8.9	13.1	13.6	14.2	14.3	14.6
Ave time to complete emergency repairs (hours) - Caithness	GREEN	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ave time taken to re-let - Caithness	AMBER		15.0	19.7	16.2	11.6	13.1	12.9

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	Works on site	Works 70% complete on site	GREEN
BMCAIKIT2016	Kitchen replacement Caithness	46	231,663	Works on site	Works 50% complete on site	GREEN
CSH16001	Window & door replacement Caithness & Sutherland	55	412,500	Contract awarded	42 Caithness houses at estimated £315,000; works to commence on site in February and should be complete in April	AMBER
BM	Individual bathroom and kitchens Caithness & Sutherland	12	69,981	Works on site	Works demand-led following inspections; works 10% complete on site	GREEN
	Heating/Energy Efficiency					
CSH16007	Heating replacement Caithness	88	858,000	Contract awarded	Works due on site imminently and should be complete in first quarter of next financial year	AMBER
HEEPS	Insulation works Caithness	30	150,000	Surveys in progress	Awaiting survey results from Eon	AMBER
BMCAIINS2016	Loft insulation Caithness	35	17,500	Works on site	Works on site 10% complete but problems with non-access	AMBER
BM	Heating replacements Caithness & Sutherland	23	233,895	Works on site	Demand-led replacements following breakdowns/inspections; works on site 10% complete and will be complete within this financial year	GREEN
	External Fabric (Major Component Replacement)					
BMCAIROF2016	Works to roofs, soffits, fascia and downpipes Caithness	8	80,000	Works on site	Demand-led following inspections; works 10% complete on site but anticipated to be complete this financial year	GREEN
BMC&SFAB2016	Individual external fabric works Caithness & Sutherland	Subject to survey	48,331	Surveys in progress	Demand-led following inspections; anticipated to be complete this financial year	GREEN
	External Fabric (environmental improvements)					
BMCAIENV2016	Environmental improvements Caithness	Subject to survey	88,548	Works to start on site	Works to start on site imminently	GREEN