

Agenda Item	<b>9.</b>
Report No	<b>CC/11/17</b>

## **HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Caithness Committee

**Date:** 16 June 2017

**Report Title:** Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

**Report By:** Report by the Director of Community Services

### **Purpose/Executive Summary**

1. This report provides information on how the Housing Section performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 31 March 2017.

### **Recommendations**

2. Members are invited to scrutinise the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

### 3 Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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](http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/info/13/members_intranet/37/ward_reporting/2)
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 Scottish Quality Network (SQN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

### 4 Repairs

- 4.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete Emergency repairs and Non-emergency repairs.
- 4.2 The average length of time taken to complete Emergency repairs is calculated in hours.
- 4.3 Caithness continues to perform well in regards to responses to emergency repairs and are within both the target of 14hrs and benchmark of 5.1hrs

4.4 **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	Q3	Q4
Thurso	586	7.6	7.6	7.2	6.3	3.5	5.6	8.0	7	6.1	5.2	4.9	4.8
Wick	930	6.1	5.1	4.9	4.9	5.0	4.7	3.9	3.9	4.3	4.8	4.2	3.9
Landward Caithness	574	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.4	3.7	3.8	4.8	5.1	4.3	4.6	5	4.8
<b>Highland</b>	<b>13951</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.9</b>

- 4.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days.

4.6 **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	Q4
Thurso	586	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.4	4.9	5.7	6.0	7	6.6	7.7	7.7	7.5
Wick	930	5	5.9	5.8	6.2	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.7	6	6.2	6.6
Landward Caithness	574	5.4	6.2	6.3	6.7	5.1	5.2	5.7	6.2	5.3	6.5	7.1	7.2
<b>Highland</b>	<b>13951</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.8</b>

4.7 Caithness continues to perform well in response to non-emergency repairs and is within both target and benchmark.

4.8 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.

## 5 Tenancy Management

5.1 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.

5.2 **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
			Q4	Q4	Q4
Thurso	586	103	38.71	38.07	47.54
Wick	930	137	112.22	137.16	84.41
Landward Caithness	574	57	54.03	58.10	45.65
<b>Highland</b>	<b>13951</b>	<b>1243</b>	<b>42.01</b>	<b>47.50</b>	<b>40.78</b>

5.3 The re-let times for Thurso, Wick and Landward Caithness remain challenging due to lack of demand and some properties continue to lie empty for significant periods of time. With the exception of one bedroom properties, which are always in demand, we are seeing a reduction in demand across all other types of property. We are now into our second year of the Choice-based Lettings initiative in Caithness which has certainly played a significant role in reducing re-let times in Wick.

Four properties in Wick which were identified as being surplus to requirement were marketed for sale and subsequently sold – those sales are now in the final stages of conveyancing.

A further three Wick properties, deemed surplus to requirement, will also be offered for sale in the near future.

## 6 Rent Arrears

6.1 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 team continue to maintain a robust approach to maximising rental income with the success outcome noted in Table 4. However, the challenges will increase as many more tenants are migrated to Universal Credit. A negative impact on rent payments is likely to be seen due to extended timescales for payment of benefits as 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 rental income is minimised. The Highland wide current arrears figure is £1,501,827.

6.2 **Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears**

	No of Houses	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
		Q4	Q4	Q4
Thurso	586	31744	31393	25933
Wick	930	78143	73063	72993
Landward Caithness	574	28058	21840	20957

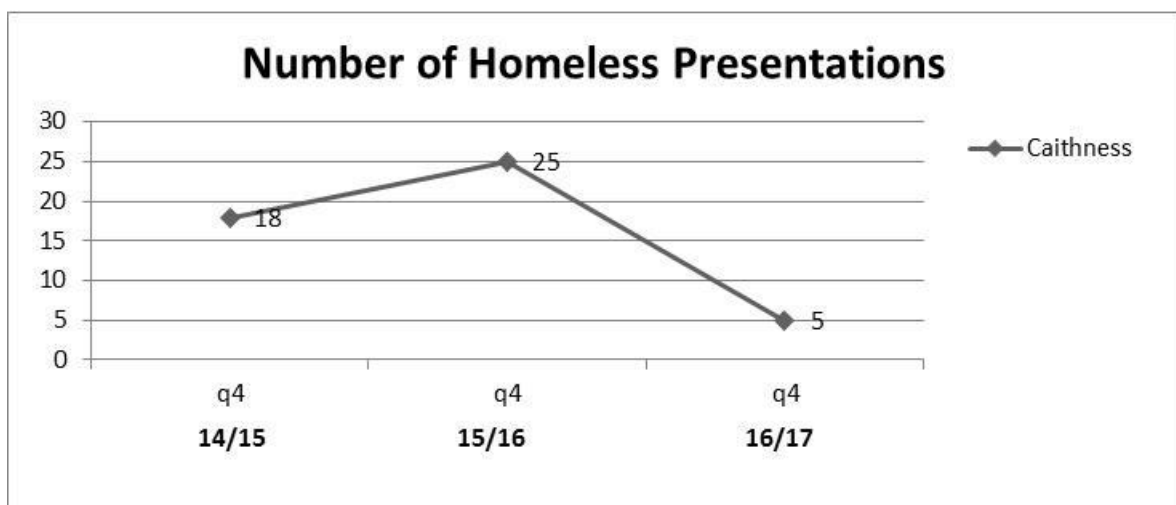
## 7 Homelessness

7.1 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.

7.2 Table 5 shows the number of homeless presentations received by Local area charting the same quarter in previous years. Homeless presentations in Caithness in Quarter 4 of 2016 were significantly reduced from Quarter 4 of 2015, primarily due to healthy availability of housing in Caithness and also because of increased resources applied to the housing options approach.

7.3 There were 293 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 4 2016.

7.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



7.5 The HRA Capital Programme 2017/18 was approved at Community Services Committee in November 2016. A report showing progress to date against the programme will be reported to the Caithness Local Committee on 29 August 2017. Members will be consulted about proposals for the post-2018 HRA Capital Programme during the next quarter.

## **8 Implications**

8.1 Resource – There are no resource implications arising from this report.

8.2 Legal - There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) - There are no equality implications arising from this report.

8.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.

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

8.6 Gaelic - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 26 May 2017

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

**APPENDIX 1**

SPI 16/17	16/17	Scottish Average	Target	2016/17				2015/16
				Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	90.2	92.0	96.5	96.2	96.2	96.1	97.2
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	RED	92.4	95.0	89.3	89.8	90.0	85.8	94.1
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	99.5		99.4	99.5	99.5	101.2	99.4
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	5.3		3.9	4.2	4.4	4.1	4.0
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	RED	1.1		2.8	3.8	3.7	5.8	3.3
ASB Cases reported and resolved - Caithness	GREEN	83.2		95.8	94.8	80.1	50.5	92.3
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	AMBER	88.8	90.0	85.2	85.0	84.4	81.8	79.2
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	GREEN	42.0	38.0	46.2	50.6	52.7	56.4	46.9
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness	RED	8.9	8.9	14.2	13.1	13.6	14.2	14.3
% households requiring temporary accommodation who receive offer - Caithness	GREEN		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ave time in temporary accommodation - Caithness				20.9	19.7	16.2	11.6	13.1