

Agenda Item	6.
Report No	CC/18/17

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Caithness Committee

Date: 21 November 2017

Report Title: Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017

Report By: Director of Community Services

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 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 2017.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2017 to 30 September 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 The information presented in this report for quarter 1 has been amended to reflect the new Council Ward boundaries. 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
- 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 performance is within the target of 14 hours.

4.4 **Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)**
Target 14 hours
2016/17 SQN Benchmark – 4.6 hours

	No of Houses	2017/18	
		Q1	Q2
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	849	2.8	4.2
Wick and East Caithness	1218	3	3
Highland	13916	6.4	6.3

	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso	7.6	7.6	7.2	6.3	3.5	5.6	8.0	7	6.1	5.2	4.9	4.8
Wick	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	7.3	6.4	7.1	6.4	3.7	3.8	4.8	5.1	4.3	4.6	5	4.8
Highland	14.8	11.1	9.3	9.1	6.2	6.9	7.1	7.9	6.6	7.2	6.9	6.9

4.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days, with a target of 8 days. In the first quarter of 2017/18 performance has been below the target. This is being investigated by the Repairs Manager, and every effort will be made to improve future performance.

4.6 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
Target 8 days
2016/17 SQN Benchmark – 7.0 days

	No of Houses	2017/18	
		Q1	Q2
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	849	8.4	8.6
Wick and East Caithness	1218	10.2	9.1
Highland	13916	7.6	7.3

	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso	5.7	6.2	6.2	6.4	4.9	5.7	6.0	7	6.6	7.7	7.7	7.5
Wick	5	5.9	5.8	6.2	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.8	5.7	6	6.2	6.6
Landward Caithness	5.4	6.2	6.3	6.7	5.1	5.2	5.7	6.2	5.3	6.5	7.1	7.2
Highland	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.5	7.5	6.6	6.9	6.9	6.8

4.7 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**
2016/17 SQN Benchmark – 31.8 days

	2015/16	2016/17		No of Houses	No of Relets	2017/18
	Q2	Q2				Q2
Thurso	36.42	46.74	Thurso and Northwest Caithness	849	68	48.26
Wick	128.65	87.28	Wick and East Caithness	1218	124	72.83
Landward Caithness	57.77	39.52	Highland	13916	697	37.71
Highland	48.29	43.63				

5.3 The re-let times for all parts of Caithness continue to exceed the Highland target because of low demand and some properties remain un-let for significant periods of time. The exception to this is one bedroom properties, which are always in demand. The Caithness housing team continues its efforts to allocate vacant properties using the Choice-based Lettings scheme. Further discussion will take place with Caithness Members over local approaches to address low housing demand.

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. It should be noted that due to the recent changes to Caithness Wards, the Q2 arrears figures below now include landward Caithness. The Highland wide current arrears figure is £1,933,343.

6.2 **Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears**

Arrears	2015/16	2016/17		No of Houses	2017/18
	Q2	Q2			Q2
Thurso	27483	30790	Thurso and Northwest Caithness	849	44677
Wick	63163	73896	Wick and East Caithness	1218	88718
Landward Caithness	26319	27369			

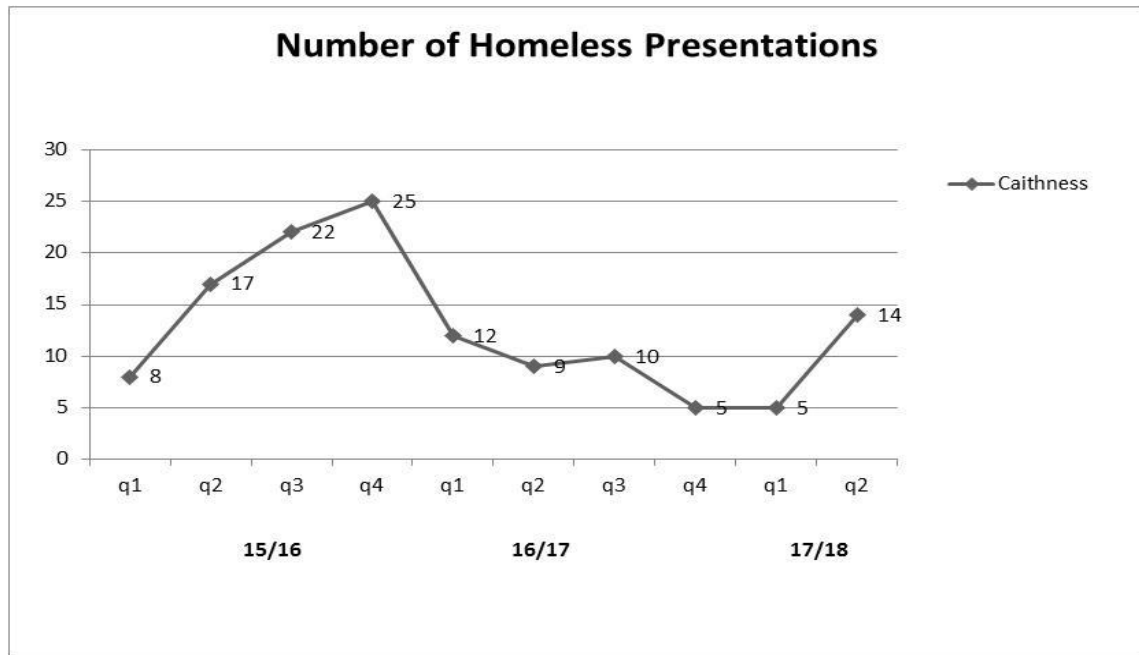
6.3 While the Caithness Housing team continues to maintain a robust approach to rent arrears management, and the Q2 rent arrears figure has increased by £1,340 from Q2 in 2016/17. As reported previously, the impact of Universal Credit on rent arrears continues to be of concern and is being closely monitored. Any actions that can maximise rental income are prioritised by the team.

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, particularly of individuals with multiple or complex needs, have increased in Caithness since June 2017. Housing staff work closely with these individuals to maximise the chances of sustainable tenancies being created.

7.3 There were 273 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 2 2017.

Table 5 - Homeless presentations

7.5 An update on expenditure on the HRA capital programme will have been provided to Members at a Ward Business meeting prior to this Committee meeting.

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 community 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: 3 November 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	2017/18		2016/17		
				Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	90.7	92	93.3	92.0	97.4	97.2	97.2
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	RED	95.9	95	89.0	87.8	89.6	90.2	90.4
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	99.6	99	98.6	101.7	99.3	99.4	99.4
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	5.1	5	3.9	4.0	4.2	4.5	4.7
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	RED	0.9	1	4.7	4.6	3.3	4.5	4.4
ASB Cases reported and resolved - Caithness	RED	87.2	85	46.7	43.8	95.8	94.8	80.1
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	RED	88.8	90	83.1	84.6	85.1	84.8	85.4
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	GREEN	36.3	38	43.4	48.4	48.7	52.6	55.5
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness	AMBER	8.5	8.9	9.8	10.3	15.8	14.6	14.1
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer - Caithness	GREEN		100	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Ave time in temp/eme accomm Caithness				24.5	26.2	20.9	19.7	16.2