

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>10.</b>
<b>Report No</b>	<b>CC/13/19</b>

**Committee:** Caithness Committee

**Date:** 15 May 2019

**Report Title:** Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

**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 31 March 2019.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

### 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 Housing Network (SHN) 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. Emergency repairs continue to remain a priority for this service with both areas either meeting or exceeding targets.

- 4.4 **Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)**  
**Target 14 hours**  
**2017/18 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 5.3 hours**

	No of Houses	2017/18				2018/19			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	2.8	4.2	4.4	4.5	10.7	5.1	4.6	5.6
Wick and East Caithness	1207	3	3	3.5	3.5	9.8	8.2	7.1	5.8
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14062</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>5.8</b>

- 4.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days, with a target of 8 days. Performance has improved in the last quarter and reducing average completion times to below the Highland target remains a priority.

4.6 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**  
**Target 8 days**  
**2017/18 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.9 days**

	No of Houses	2017/18				2018/19			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	8.4	8.6	9.2	8.6	9.9	9.4	8.7	8.5
Wick and East Caithness	1207	10.2	9.1	9.3	7.9	8.9	8.3	8.1	7.8
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14062</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.2</b>

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**  
**2017/18 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 38.2 days**

	No of Houses	No of Relets	2017/18	2018/19
			Q4	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	51	54.52	48.1
Wick and East Caithness	1207	182	73.11	63.72
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14062</b>	<b>1229</b>	<b>40.86</b>	<b>39.91</b>

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 Caithness housing team continues its robust efforts to allocate vacant properties using the Choice-based Lettings scheme and this has resulted in some success. The Caithness area has 14.8% of the total stock however the number of relets in Caithness accounts for 26.8% of the total relets highland wide. This demonstrates the very high turnover of properties in Caithness.

## 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 Quarter 4 arrears figures below now include landward Caithness. The Highland wide current arrears figure is £2,120,982.

6.2

**Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears**

	No of Houses	2017/18	2018/19
		Q4	Q4
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	59930	58456
Wick and East Caithness	1207	113465	135958

6.3 While the Caithness Housing team continues to maintain a robust approach to rent arrears management, the Quarter 4 rent arrears figure has increased by £53,512 from same period 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.

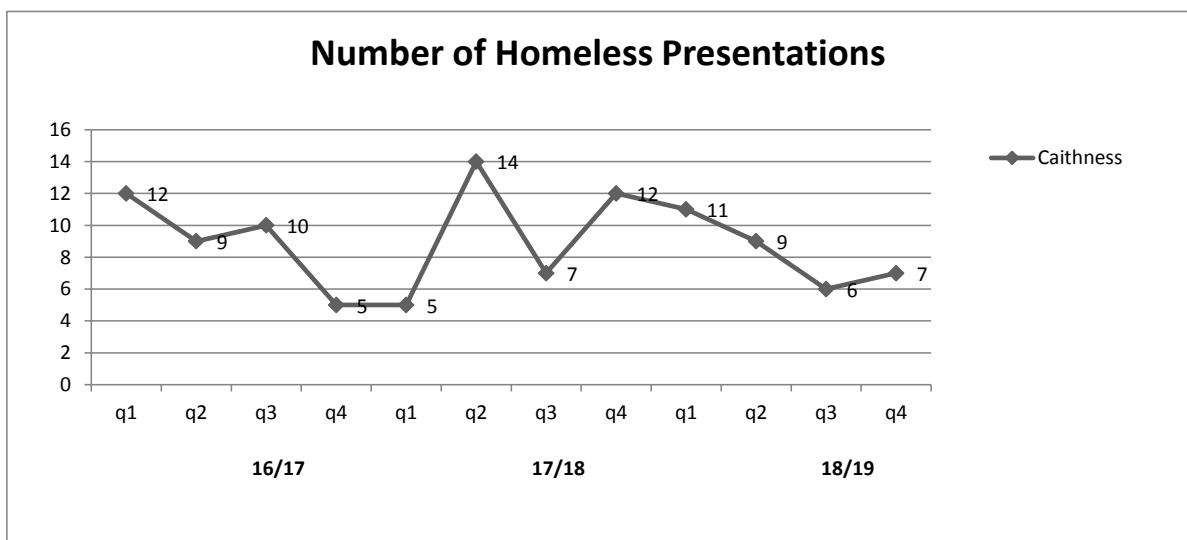
**7 Homelessness**

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. Housing options advice services continues to provide a key role in homelessness prevention work in Caithness. It is an approach which combines assessing a person’s legal rights to a home with a broader look at all the possible options open to them which could include perhaps renting privately, support to stay where they are and home ownership. Applicants are given clear, impartial advice, the aim being to empower them to make the choice that is right for them.

7.3 There were 259 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 4 2017.

**Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



**8 HRA Capital Programme**

8.1 An update on the HRA Capital Programme is being provided separately to Members and will be presented through attendance at ward business meeting. Updates on the 2019-20 HRA Capital Programme will be provided to Caithness Area Committee as required. Progress on the HRA Capital Programme is also reported quarterly to Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee.

## **9 Implications**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 3 May 2019

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

APPENDIX 1

SPI 18/19	18/19	Scottish Average	Target	2018/19				2017/18
				Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	92.23	92	93.96	93.45	92.78	91.68	94.41
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	AMBER	95.45	95	92.14	92.14	91.81	92.38	91.24
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	AMBER	99.38	99	98.96	98.16	98.04	99.35	98.19
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	5.41	5	4.12	4.54	4.43	3.93	3.79
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	RED	0.85	1	2.01	2.36	3.96	5.11	3.46
ASB Cases reported and resolved - Caithness	RED	87.88	85	78.05	77.78	83.33	40.91	80.43
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	RED	88.66	90	79.86	80.59	78.95	80.60	82.97
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	AMBER	35.86	38	40.91	39.76	39.00	37.80	42.23
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness	AMBER	8.6	8.9	10.62	11.54	11.64	12.06	11.15
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer Caithness	GREEN		100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Ave time in temp/eme accomm Caithness				21.38	19.32	21.38	24.42	24.68