

Agenda Item	9
Report No	LA/17/20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber Committee

Date: 28 September 2020

Report Title: Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information on how the Housing Service performed in relation to Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 30 June 2020.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.

3 Implications

- 3.1 Resource - There are no resource implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 Legal - There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) - There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 3.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 3.5 Risk - Risk is managed through regular review and reporting to allow corrective action to be taken if necessary.
- 3.6 Gaelic - There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4 Background

- 4.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.
- 4.2 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**.
- 4.3 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
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 Scottish Housing Network (SHN) benchmark information, derived from the performance of all Scottish Landlords, has also been provided where available.

5 Repairs

- 5.1 The key indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete Emergency repairs and Non-emergency repairs.
- 5.2 The average length of time taken to complete Emergency repairs is calculated in hours.
- 5.3 **Table 1: Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)**

Target 14 hours
2018/19 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 4.91 hours

EME	No of Houses	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Caol and Mallaig	533	10.6	6.9	6.5	6.0	3.3	3.2	4.6	4.9	4.90
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	831	9.6	6.8	6.6	5.8	3.6	3.5	4.1	4.9	4.00
Highland	14191	7.6	8.3	6.4	6.4	4.7	4.8	5.3	6.0	4.5

- 5.4 The Housing Repairs Service response during the COVID-19 lockdown period provided a full emergency, high priority and external works service.
- 5.5 The average response time for emergency repairs for both Lochaber Wards is within the 14 hour target.

5.6 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
Target 8 days
2018/19 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.64 days

NON-EME	No of Houses	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Caol and Mallaig	533	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.3	4.6	4.2	4.7	5.3	12.70
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	831	8.6	8.1	7.5	6.6	4.6	4.0	4.5	5.1	4.70
Highland	14191	8.0	7.6	7.5	7.2	5.1	4.8	5.0	5.3	7.9

5.7 Restrictions on what non-emergency repairs could be safely carried out during lockdown means there is currently a backlog of work. We are actively dealing with this backlog, however this has had an impact on repairs performance in Quarter 1. Reported average times to complete repairs are likely to increase further over the second quarter as we continue to deal with work delayed by COVID-19 restrictions.

5.8 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.

6 Tenancy Management

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

6.2 **Table 3: Average re-let time (days) Target 35 days**
2018/19 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 39.64 days

Avg relet time	No of Houses	No of relets	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Caol and Mallaig	533	2	17.90	22.69	22.35	21.77	21.71	16.80	18.52	25.00	75.50
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	831	5	29.09	26.05	23.68	27.13	27.33	24.26	23.98	27.53	71.50
Highland	14191	99	39.07	39.43	31.48	39.91	36.00	34.60	32.89	35.77	45.86

6.3 Time taken to re-let properties has increased in Quarter 1. There were six void properties in the quarter. In line with Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance all allocation of social rented properties was suspended during the lock down period. There were also delays with void works, emptying properties etc due to COVID-19 restrictions. All six properties have now been allocated.

6.4 The Lochaber area team also created an additional seven temporary accommodation units from Council stock as part of our Covid-19 emergency response. Lochaber Housing Association and a local private landlord also assisted by making accommodation available to help with this local response.

7 Rent Arrears

7.1 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 two years.

Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears

Rent arrears	No of Houses	2018/19				2019/20				2020/21
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Caol and Mallaig	533	68672	83755	88486	84596	69759	81266	82142	96565	106955
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	831	168633	184566	187839	152314	153592	180612	163115	185032	215575

7.3 Rent arrears have increased significantly during Quarter 1 2020/21. During the COVID-19 lockdown period we continued to provide a full service in relation to rent arrears but without home visits. The Lochaber area team contacted all tenants in rent arrears and continue to do so, emphasising why it is important for tenants to pay their rent and where to go for help. Despite their efforts we are seeing an increase in rent arrears, this is the trend across Highland.

7.4 There were 73 new Universal Credit cases in Lochaber in the Quarter, this along with restrictions in raising legal action have impacted negatively on performance. At the time of writing this report the furloigh scheme was due to end it is predicted that this will also have a negative impact on rent arrears going forward.

7.5 The Rent Arrears Working Group is assessing the operational impact of increasing arrears. The Lochaber team continue to have a focus on rent arrears and contacting tenants to provide advice and assistance, however it is likely that we will continue to see a negative impact on rent arrears performance for some time.

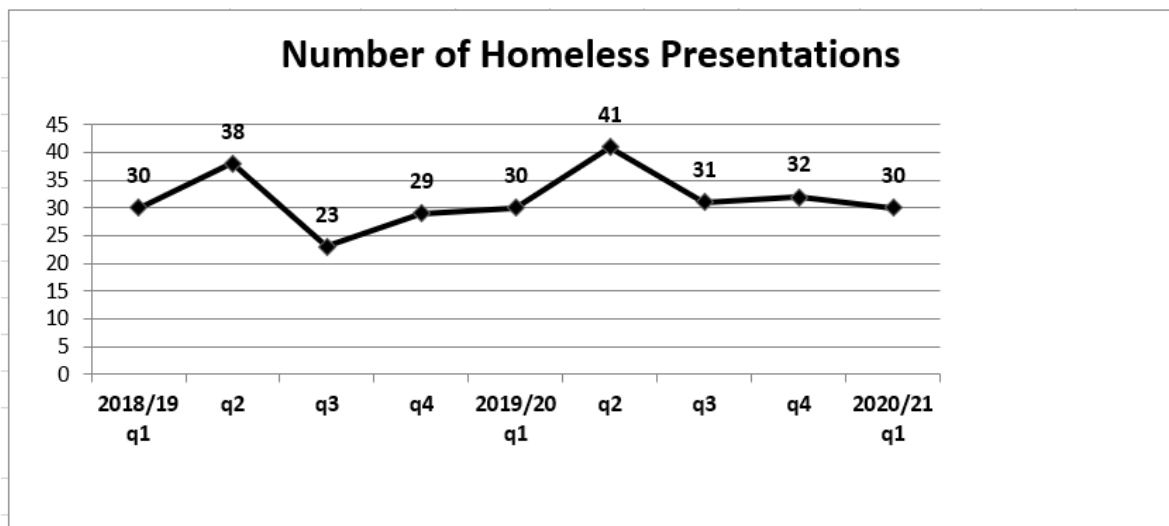
8 Homelessness

8.1 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.

8.2 Table 5 shows the number of homeless presentations received.

8.3 There were 287 presentations across Highland at the end of Q1 2020. 30 Homeless presentations were in Lochaber.

8.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



Designation: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

Date: 9 September 2020

Author: Sandra MacLennan, Housing Manager (South)

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

APPENDIX 1

SPI 20/21	20/21	Scottish Average	Target	2020/21	2019/20		
				Qtr1	Qtr4	Qtr3	Qtr2
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Lochaber	GREEN	92.23	92	94.90	94.91	95.35	96.11
Repairs appointments kept - Lochaber	GREEN	95.45	95	95.08	88.40	88.92	90.26
Rent collected as % of rent due - Lochaber	GREEN	99.38	99	99.06	97.98	99.84	97.25
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Lochaber	AMBER	5.41	5	7.09	7.51	6.54	6.86
% rent loss through voids - Lochaber	AMBER	0.85	1	1.09	0.67	0.53	0.47
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Lochaber	GREEN	88.66	90	90.35	86.84	87.60	88.15
Tenancy offers refused - Lochaber	RED	35.86	38	44.44	31.55	32.48	41.56
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Lochaber	GREEN	8.56	8.9	7.62	9.31	9.82	7.11
% households requiring temp/eme accommodation who receive offer Lochaber	GREEN		100	100	87.67	87.69	100
Ave time in temp/eme accommodation Lochaber				30.94	31.18		22.29