

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	CC/10/20

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Caithness Committee

Date: 22 October 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 Section 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
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	10.7	5.1	4.6	5.6	3.8	4.8	6.7	7.0	5.2
Wick and East Caithness	1205	9.8	8.2	7.1	5.8	4.9	5.4	6.1	5.9	8.4
Highland	14191	7.6	8.3	6.4	6.4	4.7	4.8	5.3	6.0	4.5

- 5.4 There has been a reduction in response times for Thurso & Northwest Caithness with an increase in Wick and East Caithness. Performance during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic has however continued to remain well within the target of 14hrs. Emergency repairs remain a priority for this service.
- 5.5 Non-emergency repairs are measured in working days.

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
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	9.9	9.4	8.7	8.5	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.8	3.3
Wick and East Caithness	1205	8.9	8.3	8.1	7.8	5.8	5.6	5.8	6.0	4.2
Highland	14191	8.0	7.6	7.5	7.2	5.1	4.8	5.0	5.3	7.9

5.7 Performance in non-emergency repairs continue to be below the target of 8 days and below the benchmark of 6.64 days. Non-emergency repairs remain a priority for the service. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic did however result in a reduction of completed non-emergency repairs.

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 three years and highlighting the same quarter in previous years 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
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	16	46.63	44.21	39.32	48.1	37.58	47.81	46.13	45.91	36.44
Wick and East Caithness	1205	8	81.33	73.92	50.05	63.72	57.42	49.27	48.19	52.91	63.38
Highland	14191	99	39.07	39.43	31.48	39.91	36.00	34.60	32.89	35.77	45.86

6.3 Caithness re-let times continue to be affected by hard-to-let properties, but the exceptional circumstances which prevailed during Q1 resulted in a much reduced figure of 24 completed relets, compared with 61 relets in Q1 of 2019.

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 three years.

7.2

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
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	57013	68959	66130	58456	63791	80988	65341	75333	99029
Wick and East Caithness	1205	111624	133591	149762	135958	143880	162270	122508	150628	179178

7.3 The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 significantly restricted the ability of Housing staff to escalate rent arrears recovery by banning Court action for eviction. This has resulted in an increased in rent arrears in Q1. In addition local teams have been unable to meet tenants face to face. Throughout the quarter and beyond, the Rent Arrears Working Group has guided and supported staff who have strived to maximise all other opportunities to enage with our tenants so that they prioritise rent payment.

8 Homelessness

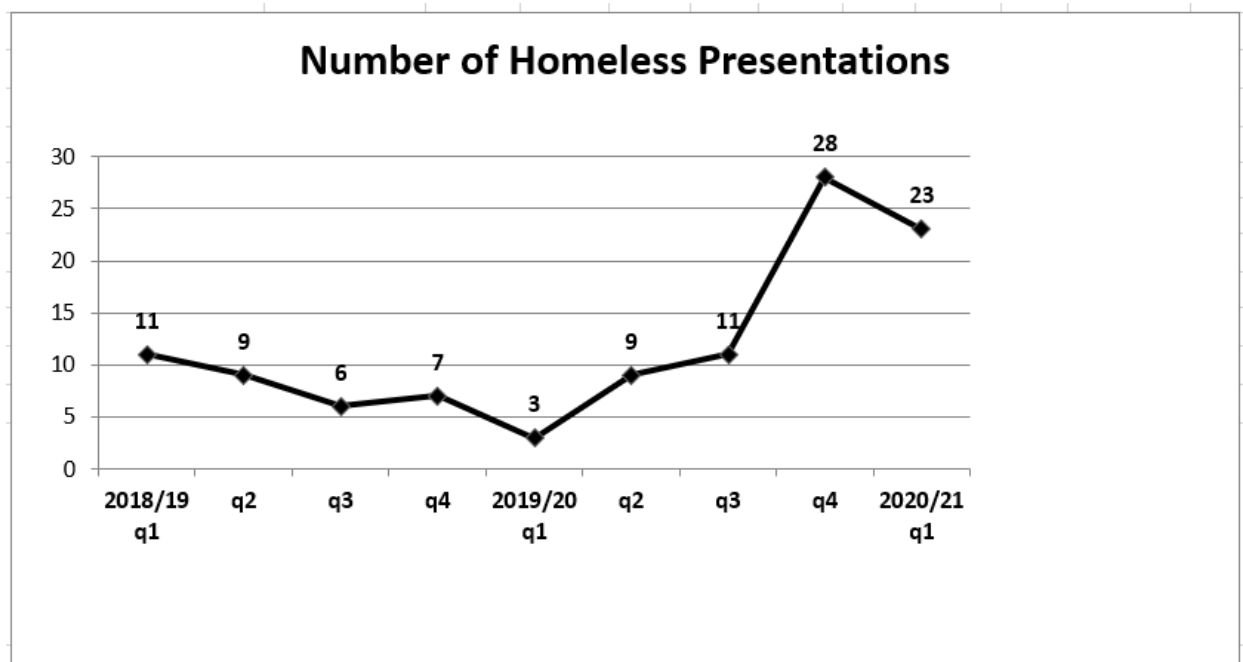
8.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter return, however a number of indicators have been agreed for reporting to Local Committees.

8.2 Table 5 shows the number of homeless presentations received.

The number of homeless presentations have decreased slightly in Q1. We continued to allocate to households with increased housing need throughout lockdown, whilst mainstream allocations were suspended. We have increased our stock of temporary furnished units over Q1 and the number homeless presentations remains manageable.

8.3 There were 287 presentations across Highland at the end of Q1 2020.

8.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



9 HRA Capital Programme

- 9.1 An update on the present year HRA Capital Programme will be provided separately to Members for consideration at Ward Business Meetings.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

Date: 8 October 2020

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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 - Caithness	GREEN	92.23	92	99.71	94.81	94.62	94.98
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	GREEN	95.45	95	95.53	92.15	91.57	92.00
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	AMBER	99.38	99	98.35	98.50	99.77	97.21
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	5.41	5	4.48	4.15	3.68	4.32
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	AMBER	0.85	1	1.95	1.97	1.84	1.79
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	RED	88.66	90	76.69	77.40	79.68	80.65
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	GREEN	35.86	38	34.62	39.73	39.85	39.66
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness	GREEN	8.6	8.9	8.54	9.66	9.95	9.71
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer Caithness	GREEN		100	100	100	100	100
Ave time in temp/eme accomm Caithness				10.53	8.58		9.08

APPENDIX 2

Project Title	Total budget 19-20	Spend year to date	estimated outturn 2019/20	Comments	RAG rating
EQUIPMENT & ADAPTATIONS					
Equipment & adaptations Caithness	£150,000	£61,797	£150,000	Works carried out on demand following referrals from Occupational Therapists. Anticipated full spend within financial year.	
FREE FROM SERIOUS DISREPAIR					
One-off Windows & Doors Caithness	£30,000	£0	£30,000	On demand budget being delivered through Building Maintenance. Anticipated full spend based on failure rates in previous years.	
Windows & Doors Caithness & Sutherland	£159,592	£89,277	£183,457	2018-19 joint contract with Sutherland area. Works now 95% completed on site.	
CSH19030 Windows & Doors replacements Caithness	£368,000	£7,652	£359,667	Oldest/worst condition windows & doors in Caithness. Survey works underway. Estimated start on site January 20 20 with anticipated completion in April 2020.	
External Fabric Caithness & Sutherland	£267,322	£51,432	£357,216	2019-20 Caithness roofing addresses added to existing contract. Original contract completed. Anticipated overspend of approx. £89k due to additional works required relating to asbestos removal.	
ENERGY EFFICIENCY					
Non-gas heating replacement Caithness	£230,000	£285,498	£320,000	High number of heating failures already within financial year. Anticipated overspend of approx. £90k.	
CSH19033 Heating - Caithness	£580,000	£26,074	£579,134	Survey works underway. Anticipated start on site October 2019. Tenant Liaison Officers continuing to advise tenants of updated timescales.	
Insulation works Caithness	£117,275	£0	£117,275	Works being progressed through Council's Energy Team. Works presently on site. Works to be completed within financial year.	

Project Title	Total budget 19-20	Spend year to date	estimated outturn 2019/20	Comments	RAG rating
MODERN FACILITIES & SERVICES					
Bathroom replacements Caithness	£250,000	£21,199	£250,000	Works being carried out through Building Maintenance. Anticipated full spend within financial year.	
Kitchen replacements Caithness	£250,000	£87,209	£250,000	Works being carried out through Building Maintenance. Anticipated full spend within financial year.	
HEALTHY, SAFE & SECURE					
Caithness rewires	£97,367	£45	£97,500	Preparatory works underway. Anticipated completion of works within financial year.	
STRUCTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL					
External Fabric – Caithness	£30,000	£0	£30,000	On demand external fabric repairs being progressed through Building Maintenance.	
Environmental improvements Caithness	£282,935	£129,348	£282,935	Member led budget being progressed through local Housing Management Team. Ward rate your estate inspections are underway. Anticipated full spend in financial year.	