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| Agenda Item | 5 |
| Report No | LA/15/21 |

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber Committee

Date: 9 August 2021

Report Title: Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021

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 2021.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021.

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
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 4.8 hours

| EME | No of Houses | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 |
| Caol and Mallaig | 533 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.1 |
| Fort William and Ardnamurchan | 862 | 4.0 | 5.1 | 5.5 | 4.9 | 3.9 |
| Highland | 14469 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 6.9 | 8.5 | 5.7 |

- 5.4 The average response time for emergency repairs in both Lochaber Wards is within the 14 hour target and below the Highland average. There is an improvement in time taken to complete emergency repairs when compared with previous quarters.
- 5.5 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
- Target 8 days**
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.6 days

| NON-EME | No of Houses | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 |
| Caol and Mallaig | 533 | 12.7 | 11.5 | 9.5 | 6.5 | 21.5 |
| Fort William and Ardnamurchan | 862 | 4.7 | 10.8 | 8.8 | 6.1 | 18.4 |
| Highland | 14469 | 7.9 | 12.4 | 10.8 | 7.9 | 16.2 |

5.6 There is an increase in the time taken to complete non-emergency repairs in Q1 as we continue to deal with the backlog of non-emergency repairs created during the lockdown period of the Covid crisis when, in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines, a suspension was placed on carrying out non-emergency repairs. Non-emergency repairs recommenced on 26 April 2021. It will take time to deal with the backlog which reflects on non-emergency repairs performance.

5.7 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.

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
2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 40.9 days**

| Avg relet time | No of Houses | No of relets | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 |
| Caol and Mallaig | 533 | 5 | 75.50 | 35.90 | 31.60 | 28.16 | 22.40 |
| Fort William and Ardnamurchan | 862 | 14 | 71.50 | 65.95 | 49.22 | 46.36 | 24.93 |
| Highland | 14469 | 284 | 45.86 | 53.24 | 46.01 | 44.23 | 33.51 |

6.3 Re-let performance in Lochaber is within the 35 day target and below the Highland average. Allocations were restricted during the lockdown period in line with Government guidelines, but the local team continue to prepare and allocate properties quickly, which reflects in the re-let performance.

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.

7.2

Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears

| Rent arrears | No of Houses | 2020/21 | | | | 2021/22 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 |
| Caol and Mallaig | 533 | 106,955 | 90,595 | 73,656 | 75,746 | 67,500 |
| Fort William and Ardnamurchan | 862 | 215,575 | 201,916 | 180,556 | 190,991 | 172,302 |

7.3 Rent arrears have improved in Q1 2021/22 when compared to previous quarters.

7.4 Previous reports to Committee have detailed the efforts of officers to provide a full service in relation to rent arrears management during the pandemic. With the easing of restrictions, visits to tenants in arrears have resumed, allowing officers to further progress arrears cases where face-to-face communication is crucial to resolving rent arrears issues. Officers are also reporting progress in individual cases with Universal Credit cases being processed quicker than before and tenants making more frequent payments to their rent accounts now furlough has ended and they have returned to work. These factors have all contributed to the reduction in rent arrears.

7.5 Officers remain supportive and sympathetic to all tenants facing financial hardship at this time and officers continue to signpost tenants to partner services who can provide specialist advice relating to income maximisation and benefit uptake.

7.6 A focus on rent arrears will remain a priority for the Lochaber Team.

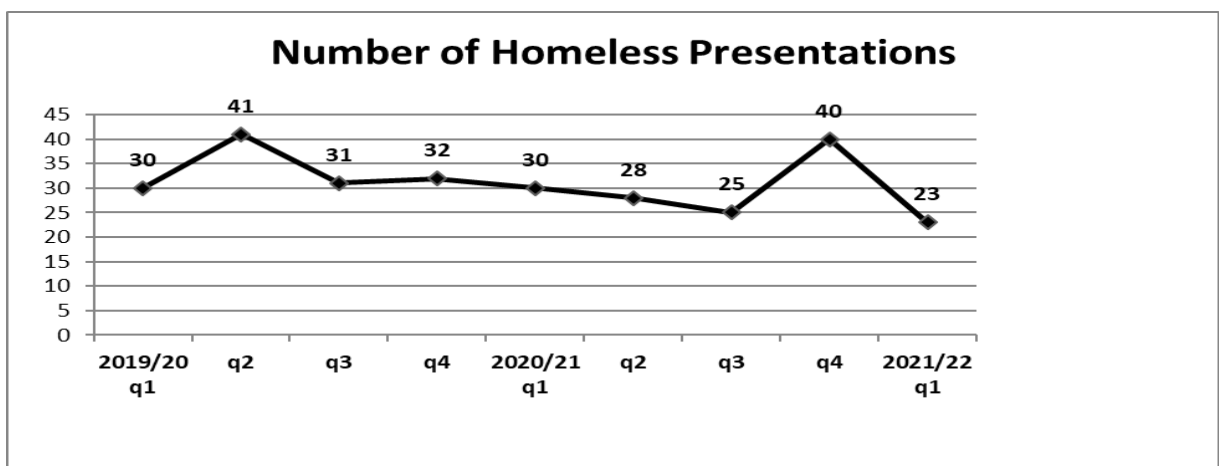
8 Homelessness

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 277 presentations across Highland at the end of Q1 2021 of which 23 Homeless presentations were in Lochaber. This is comparable to the same quarter in previous years indicating a return to normal levels of homeless presentation.

8.4 Table 5 - Homeless Presentations



9 HRA Capital Programme

- 9.1 In light of recent Scottish Government guidance, capital works restarted on site from 26 April 2021. Tenant Liaison Officers have contacted tenants involved and works are being carried out in line with safe working practices.
- 9.2 Officers are continuing to work with contractors to update project schedules in line with the easing of some of the Government restrictions. Further information will be provided to Lochaber Members in the coming months.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property

Date: 9 August 2021

Author: David Wood, Principal Housing Officer

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

APPENDIX 1

| SPI 21/22 | 21/22 | Scottish Average | Target | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | | |
|---|--------------|------------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| | | | | Qtr 1 | Qtr4 | Qtr3 | Qtr2 |
| Reactive repairs carried out first time - Lochaber | RED | 92.23 | 92 | 80.32 | 94.14 | 91.68 | 89.68 |
| Repairs appointments kept - Lochaber | AMBER | 95.45 | 95 | 91.04 | 92.13 | 90.75 | 91.93 |
| Rent collected as % of rent due - Lochaber | GREEN | 99.38 | 99 | 102.30 | 99.93 | 101.35 | 99.90 |
| Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Lochaber | AMBER | 5.41 | 5 | 5.26 | 5.97 | 5.81 | 6.43 |
| % rent loss through voids - Lochaber | GREEN | 0.85 | 1 | 0.45 | 0.60 | 0.64 | 0.73 |
| % of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Lochaber | GREEN | 88.66 | 90 | 88.43 | 90.67 | 90.07 | 92.17 |
| Tenancy offers refused - Lochaber | GREEN | 35.86 | 38 | 22.22 | 34.41 | 0.00 | 38.10 |
| % of lettable houses becoming vacant - Lochaber | GREEN | 8.56 | 8.9 | 5.59 | 5.04 | 5.12 | 5.72 |
| % households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer Lochaber | GREEN | | 100 | 100.00 | 99.06 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Ave time in temp/eme accomm Lochaber | | | | 33.01 | 25.89 | 24.39 | 29.59 |