

HOUSING COMMITTEE	Agenda Item 14
	Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Committee workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 4 and end of year 2020/21		
Date of Meeting:	23 June 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Ododo Dafé	Tel: 01273 293201
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 This report illustrates progress against Housing Committee work plan 2019-23 priorities and targets, as well as other Housing service targets. The report covers Quarter 4 of 2020/21, alongside results for the end of the financial year, and is attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 Information highlights from Quarter 4 2020/21 (unless otherwise stated) include:

- **Customer feedback** – 82 compliments received from customers, and 71% of stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days
- **Private sector housing** – 49.8% of Houses in Multiple Occupation have met all special conditions (for licences issued over 12 months ago)
- **Major adaptations** – waiting times for applications were 19.8 weeks for private sector homes, and 5.6 weeks for council homes
- **Housing needs** – 535 people have moved on from Covid-19 placements since the start of the pandemic through to 6 June 2021
- **Council housing management** – 103 council homes were re-let, up from 46 during the previous quarter
- **Council housing repairs and maintenance** – 98.3% of emergency repairs were completed within 24 hours and 65.9% of routine repairs were completed within 28 days.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That Housing Committee notes the report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The report uses red, amber and green traffic light symbols to provide an indication of performance, and also trend arrows to provide an indication of movement from the previous quarter.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION:

- 4.1 This report went to Area Panels in May 2021 for residents to comment and enquire upon.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The financial implications are contained in the report. An area of performance with significant financial effect is the ability to collect rents from tenants as well as the impact of the length of time that properties are empty. Over the last two years the percentage of rent collected has fallen in the HRA, and although the performance still compares favourably when benchmarked against other stock holding councils around the country, this is of concern and a review is underway to identify actions that will help to improve this. The collection of rents at 15.1 show that in 20/21, 96.4% of dwellings rents were collected compared to 96.8% for 2019/20, a fall of 0.4%. This small percentage reduction equates to approximately £0.200m that would have been collected if we had continued to collect at the level for 2019/20. Given the pandemic, this is not surprising and indeed is a better collection rate than expected. For 2021/22, the service will be trying to get back to 2019/20 levels of collection.
- 5.2 15.15 shows that there are 311 empty council homes by the end of March 2021. This compares to 78 as at March 2020. The rent loss due to empty properties relating to general needs and seniors housing for 2020/21 was £0.914m compared to an average rent loss of £0.338m for 2018/19 and 2019/20. Therefore, an increase in costs of an estimated £0.576m. There are also further costs of council tax that are payable by the HRA if properties are empty. Costs of council tax have increased by £0.240m during 2020/21. Costs will be monitored as part of the monthly Targeted Budget Management (TBM) process.
- 5.3 Empty properties extends the time those on the Housing Register are waiting for council housing and increases the costs incurred on temporary accommodation in the general fund. These delays are largely caused by the pandemic and it is therefore imperative re-let times are improved going forward so that the HRA can maximise its rental income, reduce waiting times and reduce the costs of temporary accommodation in the general fund.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 11/06/21

Legal Implications:

- 5.2. There are no significant legal implications to draw to Members' attention arising from this regular monitoring report.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley Date: 04/06/21

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The average energy efficiency rating of council homes stands at 68.0 (out of a maximum of 100) and efforts to increase this rating contribute towards the council's sustainability commitments and help to reduce fuel poverty.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Cases of anti-social behaviour involving criminal activity are worked on in partnership with the police and other agencies.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 A large number of services were stopped or significantly impacted in March 2020 in order to comply with Coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions.

Corporate or Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 There are no direct corporate or citywide implications arising from this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Housing Committee workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 4 and end of year 2020/21

Background Documents:

None