

Agenda Item	18
Report No	PLA 16/17

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Places Committee

Date: 15 June 2017

Report Title: Community Services Performance Report - 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Report By: Director of Community Services

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides information on how Community Services performed in relation to performance indicators up to 31 March 2017.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are invited to:

- note the information provided on Community Services performance from 1 April to 31 March 2017; and
- agree that flat numbers 2, 4, and 6 Wellington Street, Wick, be declared surplus to requirements and offered for open market sale.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator has set out the performance indicators that it will use in its scrutiny of landlords.
- 3.2 Further relevant Performance Indicators for Community Services, whilst not all statutory, are also provided within this report.
- 3.3 Information on the key performance indicators is set out in the report below together with benchmarking data where available.
- 3.4 Further housing performance information is available at Ward level on the Council's intranet
http://www.highland.gov.uk/staffsite/info/13/members_intranet/37/ward_reporting/2

4. Complaints

- 4.1 This indicator provides information on the percentage of 1st and 2nd stage complaints, including those related to equalities issues, responded to in full in the last year. We are also required to report on the percentage of complaints upheld.
- 4.2 Complaints are recorded through the Council's corporate complaints system (netcall).
- 4.3 *Table 1*

	Target	2016/17			
		Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
Stage 1 (5 days)	80%	44.5	31.3	25.3	45.7
Stage 2 (20 days)	80%	81.3	55.6	38.9	100

- 4.4 Progress has been made with the reporting facility and reports are now produced weekly by type of contact and who it has been allocated to. This is giving much better visibility and performance within the Service is being better managed.

5. Waste Management

- 5.1 *Table 2*

	Target	2016/17				2015/16				2014/15			
		Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1
Household Waste – Collected (Tonnes)	36500	30184	29387	37076	36047	29166	29815	36794	35358	28199	29391	35937	36949
Household Waste – Composted %	15%	6.3	9.4	17.2	14.8	6.4	9.4	15.8	15.2	7.1	10.0	16.4	18.3
Household Waste – Recycled %	35%	33.6	31.9	31.5	32.7	32.8	32.8	31.9	32.0	32.6	32.8	32.7	32.4
Total Composted and Recycled %	50%	39.9	41.3	48.7	47.5	39.2	42.2	47.7	47.2	39.7	42.8	49.1	50.7

5.2 The Quarter 4 figures show an increase of 3.5% in household waste collected compared to the same period last year, but the previous six months show only a 1% increase. This discrepancy may be attributed to the way collections are arranged over the Christmas and New Year period.

5.3 The annual household recycling rate has remained virtually unchanged for three years. The household waste collected has increased by around 5.0% between 2013/14 and 2016/17, landfill has increased by 6.7% and recycling collected increased by 3.5%.

6. Enforcement Notices

6.1 There were 2 fixed penalty notices for littering issued during the quarter, 2 dog fouling fixed penalties and 7 dog control notices.

6.2 The number of pest control service requests decreased to 89 in Q4 this year from 104 in Q4 in the previous year and the number of pest control enquiries decreased from 81 in 15/16 to 58 in Q4 16/17.

7. Dog Nuisance cases

7.1 *Table 3*

	2016/17				2015/16				2014/15			
	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1
Number of dog control complaints	96	120	143	137	167	203	246	210	189	172	252	257
Number of dogs caught	42	50	71	42	62	81	74	64	62	53	54	57

7.2 The number of stray dogs dealt with during the quarter was significantly down on the same period in 15/16 – i.e.42 compared to 62 in Q4 of 2015/16. There has also been a significant reduction in the number of overall dog related complaints down to 96 compared to 167 in Q4 last year. The number of dog control notices issued increased significantly from 2 in Q4 of 15/16 to 7 for Q4 this year.

7.3 It should however be noted that there have been two officers on long term sickness absence during the quarter and this will have impacted on the activities of the Enforcement Section.

8. Grounds Maintenance and Public Convenience Cleaning

Table 4

	2016/2017									
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Total	
	No Inspected	% Failed	No Inspected	% Failed	No Inspected	% Failed	No Inspected	% Failed	No Inspected	% Failed
Grounds	720	51.52	638	59.71	80	33.75	–	–	1438	54.17
PCs	25	40.00	41	63.41	29	79.30	–	–	95	62.10

8.1 Due to the work being undertaken in relation to the change of service provision no inspections were undertaken during Q4.

9. Road defects (potholes)

9.1 The following data is taken from the Roads and Transport asset management database. The figures relate to the number of pothole repair instructions and not the total number of potholes encountered; a single instruction can be raised for multiple potholes. Note that the response time for an instruction created within a specific quarter may roll into another quarter. A table of the response times is contained in **Appendix 1**. Some instructions may be completed but have not yet been closed off in the asset management system.

9.2 The following table shows the number of pothole instructions per defect response category for quarter 4 as at 31/03/17.

Table 5

	2016/17 – Qtr 4					
	Defect Response Category					
	Total	1	2H	2M	2L	3
Number of pothole instructions created	612	7	75	228	288	14

9.3 The following table shows the total number of instructions for each quarter.

Table 6

	2016/17				2015/16			
	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1
Number of pothole instructions created	612	214	476	1,221	1,089	737	503	1,380
Number of pothole instructions completed	136	207	260	926	712	815	281	580

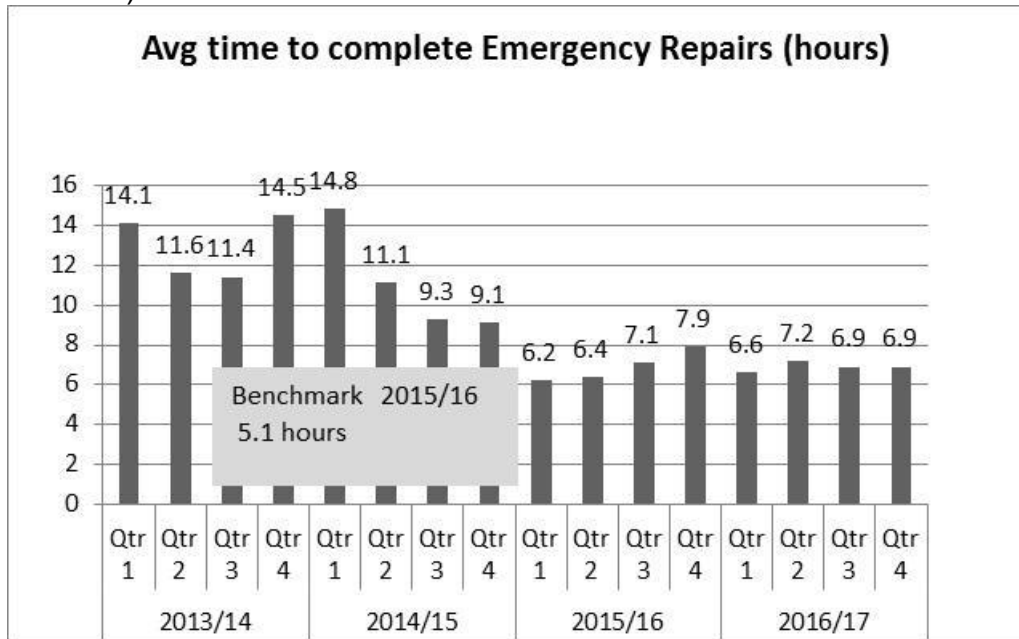
9.4 There has been a decrease in the number of pothole instructions raised in quarter 4 of 2016/17 compared to the same quarter in 2015/16. The increase from quarter 3 of 2016/17 is expected after the winter weather. The Service has invested in spray injection technology by purchasing a specialised vehicle to effect a more durable pothole repair. The repairs undertaken by this vehicle are not recorded electronically in the asset management database but using its own tracking software. Therefore, the number of instructions closed off appears to be low but the actual number of repairs is higher. Reconciliation of the information is a manual exercise and therefore the Service is working on an electronic solution. The Service is encouraging reporting of potholes by members of the public, through the Service Centre and on-line.

10. Housing Repairs

10.1 The key current indicators for measuring repairs performance are considered to be the average time taken to complete emergency and non-emergency repairs.

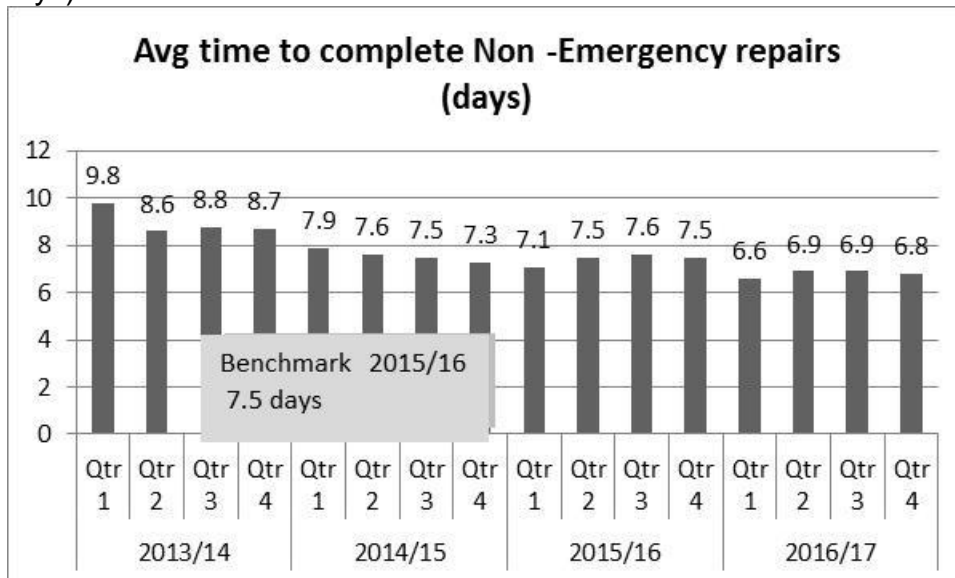
10.2 Table 7 details performance on the average time taken to complete emergency repairs and Table 8 details the average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs. Both graphs contain national benchmark figures for these indicators based on published 2015/16 figures.

10.3 *Table 7* – Average time to complete Emergency Repairs (Target 14 hours)



10.4 Performance on emergency repairs remains within the Highland target.

10.5 *Table 8* – Average time to complete Non-Emergency Repairs (Target 8 days)

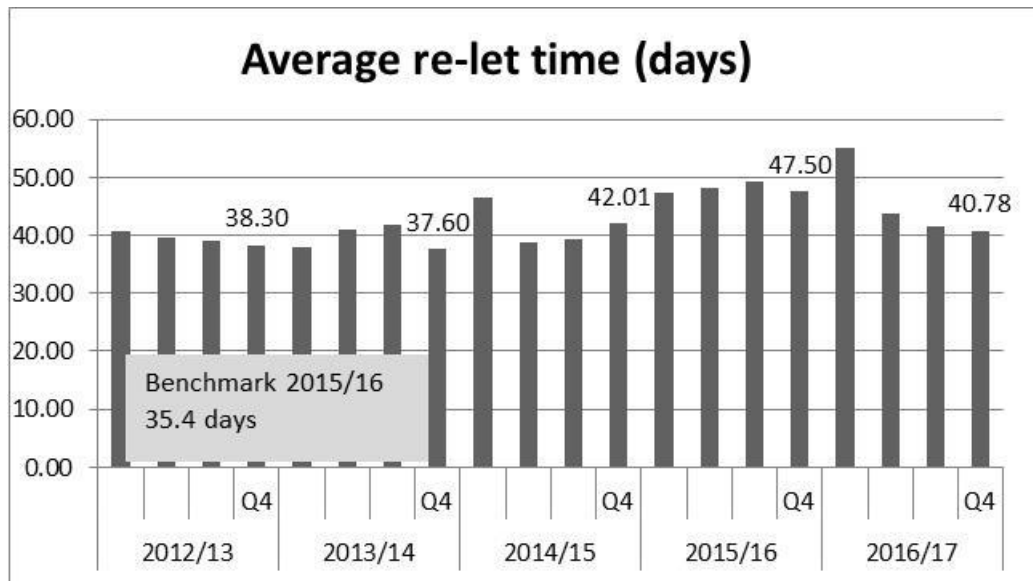


10.6 Average performance on non-emergency repairs remains within the target timescales.

11 Tenancy Management

11.1 Table 9 below provides information on the average re-let time showing the trend back 5 years and highlighting the same quarter in previous years for comparison.

11.2 *Table 9* – Average re-let time (Target 35 days)



11.3 We have seen a reduction in the average re-letting time in the last quarter, and performance is better than for the same quarter in the previous year. Improving re-letting times continues to be a key priority for local housing teams.

11.4 There continues to be a problem with low demand for housing in some areas of Caithness and Sutherland. As previously noted at Committee there is a particular issue of low demand in parts of Wick. Local Members agreed an approach for selective disposal of vacant property last year which has resulted in the open market sale of a block of 4 flats in Wick in February 2017.

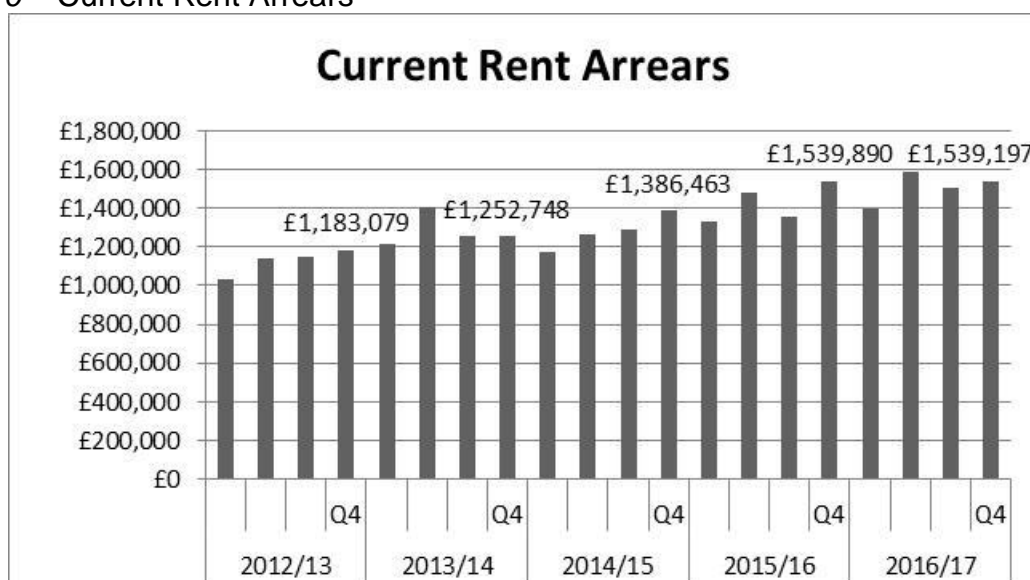
11.5 Following consultation with local Members and with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee in April 2017 it is now proposed to market a second block for open market sale. The properties are a block of 3 flats at numbers 2, 4, and 6 Wellington Street, Wick. Two out of three have been empty since 2015 and the third has recently been vacated. There is no local demand for these properties, which have also become the target for vandalism.

11.6 It is recommended that the flats should be declared surplus to requirements and sold on the open market.

12. Rent Arrears

12.1 The key performance indicator for rent arrears is considered to be the value of current arrears. Table 10 below provides information on current rent arrears going back 5 years and shows the comparative figure for the same quarter in previous years.

Table 10 – Current Rent Arrears

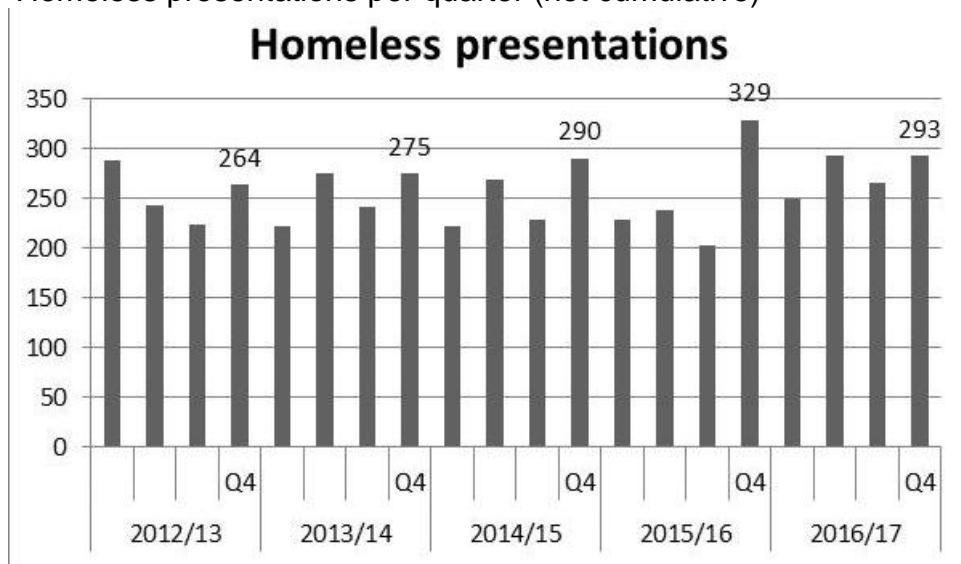


- 12.2 As previously reported we are seeing a gradual increase in rent arrears. This does reflect a national trend and there are likely to be a number of external factors involved, such as the impact of Welfare Reform. We are currently undertaking a more detailed analysis of rent arrears and reviewing current policy and practice.
- 12.3 Rent arrears associated with Universal Credit continue to create a pressure on rental income. Currently 4,894 working age households receive help towards their rent through full or partial housing benefit. Of these households 1,369 (28%) are in arrears. The average rent arrear is £260 per household. This is in comparison to the average rent arrear of £799 for those households in arrears on Full Service Universal Credit, where 80% of households in receipt of Universal Credit are in arrears.
- 12.4 Between July 2016 and March 2017, there were 518 Highland Council mainstream tenants who were recorded as having claimed Full Service Universal Credit, an average of 57 new claims per month. We estimate that approximately 1,200 Council households will move to Full Service Universal Credit across the Highlands during 2017/18.
- 12.5 If arrears trends for new Universal Credit cases matches the experience to date it is estimated that by the end of 2017/18 rent arrears for mainstream Council properties could reach £2.1m. That would be a 40% increase in current tenant arrears.
- 12.6 Reports on the impact of Universal Credit on Council housing rent arrears and any housing policy changes required will be reported to Committee.

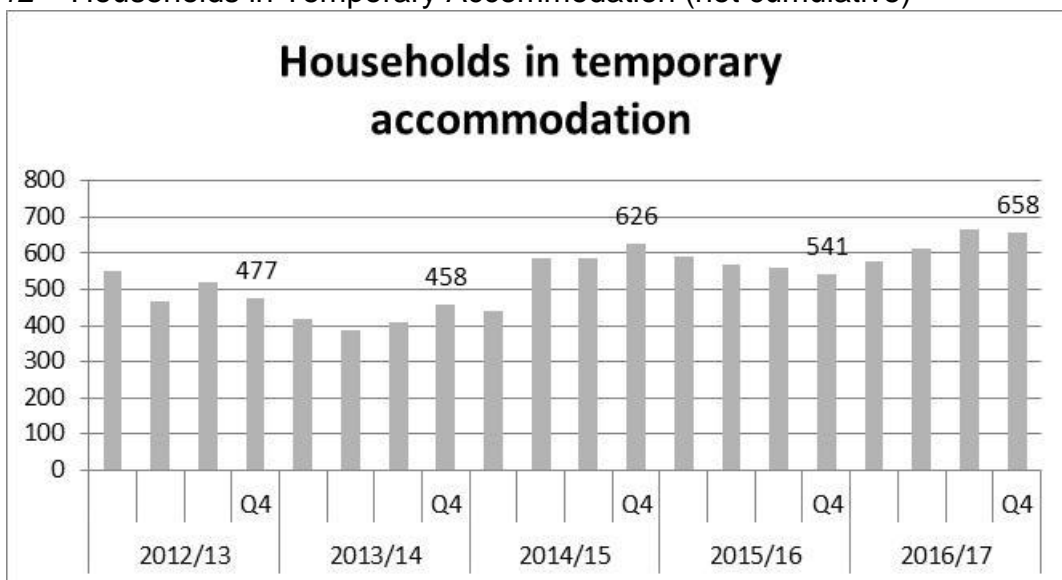
13 Homelessness

- 13.1 Performance information on homelessness is noted in tables 11 and 12.

13.2 *Table 11 - Homeless presentations per quarter (not cumulative)*



13.3 *Table 12 – Households in Temporary Accommodation (not cumulative)*



13.4 We are continuing to see high levels of homeless presentations. We are seeing an increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation, and this is largely as a result of the lack of housing to make offers of permanent accommodation. A number of initiatives are in place to improve our services to homeless households, and these are subject to separate regular reports to Committee.

14. Staff Absence

14.1 Table 13 records performance against the absence target for the Service. Work is on-going to develop targets that are reflective of each part of the Service and focus on improvements and savings related to reduction in absence.

Table 13

Target – average days lost/employee	2016/17				2015/16			
	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1
2.5 days	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.6	2.7	3	3

- 14.2 The age profile across the Service is high, and combined with a high proportion of manual workers, reducing the absence rate remains challenging.
- 14.3 The Community Service's Workforce Planning Action Plan has an action to improve attendance management (an update on our Workforce Planning Action Plan will be presented to the November committee). Managers have undertaken specific training in attendance management with the objective of dealing more effectively with attendance issues.

15. Implications

15.1 Resources

There are resource implications arising from the need to set up new performance monitoring systems relating to Scottish Housing Charter Performance Indicators. This will be managed within the current HRA budget.

15.2 Legal

The need to set up new performance monitoring and reporting systems relating to Scottish Housing Charter performance indicators is a legal requirement under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010.

15.3 Community, Risk, Climate Change/Carbon Clever and Gaelic

There are no known specific community, risk, climate change/Carbon Clever or Gaelic implications arising from this report.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 23 May 2017

Author: Caroline Campbell, Head of Performance and Resources

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

Defect Response Category

The table below states the response times used for road defects recorded in the asset management system.

Category	Description	Response
1	Immediate / imminent hazard or risk of short term structural deterioration.	Immediate action to protect public if necessary. At least temporary repair within 24 hours ⁽¹⁾ .
2H	High level of hazard or risk.	7 days
2M	Medium level of hazard or risk.	21 days
2L	Low level of hazard or risk.	42 days
3	Negligible impact	Annual planned work as resources permit.

Note (1): 24 hours will be interpreted as the end of the following day.

The risk matrix in the table below is derived from the national guidance 'Well-maintained Highways: Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management', which is used to determine the level of risk for category 2 defects. Inspectors use their training and experience to determine which category a defect should be given.

Impact: the extent of damage likely to be caused should the risk become an incident.

Probability: the likelihood of users encountering the risk.

Probability	Low	Medium	High
Impact			
Negligible	2L	2L	2L
Low	2L	2M	2M
Noticeable	2M	2H	2H
High	2M	2H	1