

Agenda Item	<b>8.</b>
Report No	<b>CC/18/19</b>

## **HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** **Caithness Committee**

**Date:** **27 August 2019**

**Report Title:** **Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019**

**Report By:** **Interim Chief Officer (Resources) Community Services**

### **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 2019.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2019 to 30 June 2019.

### **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](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) – 4.91 hours**

EME	No of Houses	2018/19				2019/20
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	10.7	5.1	4.6	5.6	3.8
Wick and East Caithness	1205	9.8	8.2	7.1	5.8	4.9
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14101</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>4.7</b>

- 5.4 We continue to make good progress with our response to emergency repairs with Thurso & Northwest performing exceptionally well and Wick & East Caithness only slightly above the Highland average. 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**  
**2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 6.64 days**

NON-EME	No of Houses	2018/19				2019/20
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	9.9	9.4	8.7	8.5	5.8
Wick and East Caithness	1205	8.9	8.3	8.1	7.8	5.8
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14101</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>5.1</b>

5.7 Performance in non-emergency repairs continues to improve and is now only slightly above the Highland average.

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**  
**2019/20 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 39.64 days**

Avg relet time	No of Houses	No of relets	2018/19				2019/20
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	24	46.63	44.21	39.32	48.1	37.58
Wick and East Caithness	1205	33	81.33	73.92	50.05	63.72	57.42
<b>Highland</b>	<b>14101</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>39.07</b>	<b>39.43</b>	<b>31.48</b>	<b>39.91</b>	<b>36.00</b>

6.3 Steady progress is being made in reducing void re-let times, but hard to let properties are still having an adverse effect on the statistics.

## 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		2018/19				2019/20
	No of Houses	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	845	57013	68959	66130	58456	63791
Wick and East Caithness	1205	111624	133591	149762	135958	143880

- 7.3 The Caithness Housing team continues to maintain a robust approach to rent arrears management. As an increasing number of claimants are migrated to Universal Credit, there is a consequent impact on rent arrears, which continues to be of concern and is and is being closely monitored. The Caithness Housing team prioritises any actions which are likely to likely to maximise rental income.

## 8 Homelessness

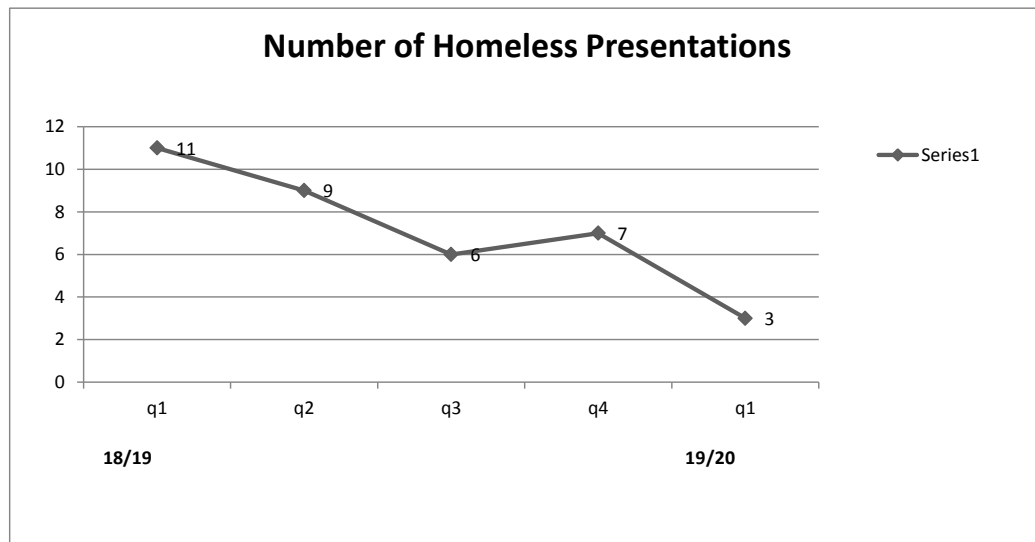
- 8.1 Performance information on homelessness is not collected as part of the Scottish Social Housing Charter return, however a number of indicators have been agreed for reporting to Local Committees.

- 8.2 Table 5 shows the number of homeless presentations received.

Housing options advice services continues to provide a key role in homelessness prevention work in Caithness. It is an approach which combines assessing a person's legal rights to a home with a broader look at all the possible options open to them which could include perhaps renting privately, support to stay where they are and home ownership. Applicants are given clear, impartial advice, the aim being to empower them to make the choice that is right for them.

- 8.3 There were 309 presentations across Highland at the end of Q1 2019.

- 8.4 **Table 5 - Homeless presentations**



## 9 HRA Capital Programme

- 9.1 Appendix 2 provides an update on the 2019-20 HRA Capital Programme for Caithness to the end of June 2019.
- 9.2 The HRA Capital Programme 2019-2021 was approved by Caithness Committee on 20 November 2018. Members are updated on the present financial year programme of 2019-20 and are advised that preparatory works will be carried out on 2020-21 contracts in advance of the next financial year.
- 9.3 Members will note the high number of heating failures within the present financial year. This is largely due to replacement of a number of ageing Baxi gas heating systems being beyond economical repair. This overspend will be managed through underspends on other parts of the programme.
- 9.4 Where works have yet not commenced on the 2019-20 programme, tenant engagement is underway with through Tenant Liaison Officers and the local Housing team. Timescales for commencing works are being communicated to tenants through our Tenant Liaison Officers.

### 9.5 Environmental Capital

The environmental capital budget is disaggregated to ward level, with each ward allocated a proportional budget for ward spend.

For 2019-20 the allocation for each ward is:-

Ward 2 - £42,229

Ward 3 - £60,320

Members will be aware that local teams have commenced 'rate your estate' walkabouts in order to identify priority projects for HRA estates. Identified projects are being costed and officers will attend or provide information to ward business meetings to finalise planned works for this financial year. Members will note that the underspend from the previous year continues to be available to spend in 2019-20.

Designation:	Interim Chief Officer (Resources) Community Services
Date:	15 August 2019
Author:	Jim Holden, Housing Manager (North) Colin Sharp, Repairs Manager (North)
Background Papers:	Scottish Housing Regulator: The Scottish Social Housing Charter: Indicators and Context Information

# APPENDIX 1

				2019/20	2018/19			
SPI 19/20	19/20	Scottish Average	Target	Qtr1	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 2	Qtr 1
Reactive repairs carried out first time - Caithness	GREEN	90.07	92	96.38	93.96	93.45	92.78	91.68
Repairs appointments kept - Caithness	AMBER	97.23	95	92.26	92.14	92.14	91.81	92.38
Rent collected as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	99.02	99	99.39	98.96	98.16	98.04	99.35
Gross rent arrears as % of rent due - Caithness	GREEN	6.46	5	3.73	4.12	4.54	4.43	3.93
% rent loss through voids - Caithness	AMBER	1.08	1	1.92	2.01	2.36	3.96	5.11
Ave time in temp/eme accomm				13.36	21.38	19.32	21.38	24.42
% of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - Caithness	RED	87.01	90	79.68	79.86	80.59	78.95	80.60
Tenancy offers refused - Caithness	RED	51.46	38	44.58	40.91	39.76	39.00	37.80
% of lettable houses becoming vacant - Caithness	AMBER	9.22	8.9	10.54	10.62	11.54	11.64	12.06
% households requiring temp/eme accomm who receive offer Caithness	GREEN		100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

## Appendix 2

Project Title	Total budget 19-20	Spend year to date	estimated outturn 2019/20	Comments	RAG rating
<b>EQUIPMENT &amp; ADAPTATIONS</b>					
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.	
<b>FREE FROM SERIOUS DISREPAIR</b>					
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.	
<b>ENERGY EFFICIENCY</b>					
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.	
<b>MODERN FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>					
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.	
<b>HEALTHY, SAFE &amp; SECURE</b>					
Caithness rewires	£97,367	£45	£97,500	Preparatory works underway. Anticipated completion of works within financial year.	
<b>STRUCTURAL &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL</b>					
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.	