Agenda Item	**5**
Report No	**LA/18/22**

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HIGHLAND COUNCIL

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Committee:	**Lochaber Committee**
Date:	**7 November 2022**
Report Title:	**Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022**
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 September 2022

2   **Recommendations**

2.1   Members are invited to consider the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022

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.

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
2020/21 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 5.1 hours

EME	No of Houses	2021/22			2022/23	
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Caol and Mallaig	569	4.2	4.0	-	5.4	5.3
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	879	4.3	6.6	-	4.9	5.7
Highland	**14745**	**5.7**	**5.0**		**10.5**	**8.1**

5.4 The average response time for emergency repairs for both Lochaber wards is within the 14 hour target and better than the Highland wide average.

5.5 **Table 2: Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)**
Target 8 days
2020/21 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 9 days

NON-EME	No of Houses	2021/22			2022/23	
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Caol and Mallaig	569	14.9	10.9	-	7.4	6.2
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	879	12.9	9.6	-	6.4	5.1

Highland	14745	12.4	9.8		7.2	6.3

5.6 The average response time for non-emergency repairs for both Lochaber wards is within the 8 day target.

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 at table 3 provides information on the average re-let time for all void properties, showing the trend back two years and highlighting the same quarter in previous year for comparison, these figures are reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator. Table 4 provides information on the average re-let time for voids excluding new build properties and properties which have been converted from temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation.

6.2   **Table 3: Average re-let time (days) Target 35 days**
             2020/21 SHN Benchmark (Group) – 56.3 days

Avg relet time, ARC	No of Houses	No of relets	2021/22			2022/23	
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Caol and Mallaig	569	35	26.63	34.00	34.15	23.67	16.92
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	879	63	18.94	55.89	54.35	45.50	38.33
Highland	**14745**	**1507**	**29.52**	**34.51**	**35.49**	**40.55**	**35.14**

Table 4: average re-let times excluding conversions and new build properties	2021/22		2022/23	
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Caol and Mallaig	27.22	34.15	23.67	55.00
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	43.05	54.35	51.50	38.33
Highland	**50.22**	**37.23**	**43.88**	**41.62**

6.3 An additional table for re-lets is being reported to Members on this and future performance reports. We are required to report all void instances to the Scottish Housing Regulator in our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), table 3 reflects the data being reported to the Regulator on the ARC. The voids reported in the ARC include where we have taken handover of a new housing development, these new properties are on the Housing system but not yet allocated. These are not true void properties in terms of measuring area performance and therefore we have excluded these in table 4.

6.4 Where a household is occupying temporary emergency accommodation and it is established that this would provide a suitable home on a permanent basis we do on occasions convert the

property to permanent accommodation. To do this we need to convert the property to a void property for one day. To give a more accurate reflection of area performance we have excluded these properties in table 4.

6.5   Re-let performance in Ward 11 Caol & Mallaig was over target at 55 days. There were 5 void properties which exceeded the 35 day target. One void property was delayed due to an NHS Occupational Therapy assessment being required. The remaining 4 properties the Service took the opportunity to upgrade these properties, this extended the void period beyond 35 days.

6.6   Re-let performance in Ward 21 Fort William & Ardnamurchan is 38.33 days and slightly over the 35 day target. There were 2 void properties which exceeded the 35 day target. One property where the tenant had passed away and their family needed additional time to empty the property and one property where an offer was refused and the property had to be reallocated. As reported previously to Members the area team are attempting to minimise the number of refusals by contacting tenants pre allocation and by carrying out accompanied viewings.

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 5 – Current Rent Arrears**

Rent arrears	No of Houses	2021/22			2022/23	
		Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Caol and Mallaig	569	81,798	77,915	91,093	84,712	98,797
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	879	194,346	187,789	192,658	186,182	210,310

7.3   Rent arrears have increased across both wards in Lochaber when compared with Quarter 1 2022/23 and the same quarter in the previous year. This is the trend across Highland. We are seeing more cases of rent arrears with higher balances. This reflects the current economic situation and as a result financial pressure for tenants.

7.4   The local housing team have had a focus on contacting tenants to offer advice and assistance and signposting to specialist advice services. Specialist advice services include Citizens Advice Bureau and the Councils Welfare Team. Jointly with Lochaber Housing Association the Lochaber area also ran a pilot scheme with Alienergy (Argyll, Lomond and the Islands Energy Agency) who provided an Affordable Warmth Service for Lochaber Housing Association and Highland Council Lochaber tenants. The Affordable Warmth Service has a focus on the alleviation of fuel poverty. The scheme proved successful, remains in place in Lochaber and has also been rolled out Highland wide.

7.5   Ongoing support to tenants who have rent arrears remains 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 6 shows the number of homeless presentations received.

8.3 There were 344 presentations across Highland at the end of Quarter 2 2022/23. 24 Homeless presentations were in Lochaber.

8.4 **Table 6 - Homeless Presentations**
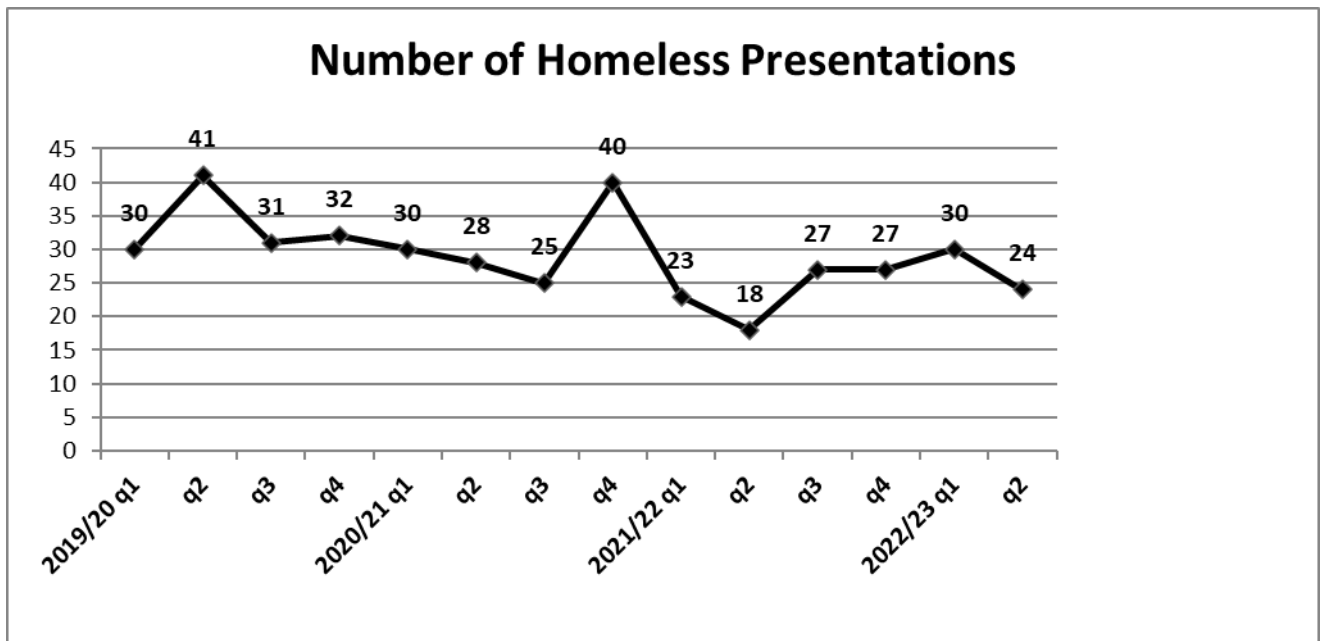
Designation:	Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property
Date:	18 October 2022
Author:	Sandra MacLennan, Housing Manager
Background Papers:	Scottish Housing Regulator: The Scottish Social Housing Charter: Indicators and Context Information