

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, 13 May 2024 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

| Item | Business |
|------|--|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence |
| 2 | Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 3 - 6) |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest Committee members to declare an interest in any particular agenda item where applicable. |
| 4 | Housing Performance Report - Quarter 4 2023/24 (Pages 7 - 20) Report of the deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities. |
| 5 | Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023/24 (Pages 21 - 28) Report of the deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities. |
| 6 | Housing and Compliance Performance Monitoring - Quarter 4 (Pages 29 - 32) Report of the deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities. |
| 7 | Development of Work Programme for 2024-25 (Pages 33 - 36) Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services & Governance. |

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 11 March 2024

PRESENT: Councillor B Clelland (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, A Geddes, F Geddes, D Burnett, H Weatherley, H Kelly, J Turnbull, S Dickie, V Anderson, P Maughan, A Wintcher, S Gallagher, P Burns, D Welsh, K Walker and L Brand

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor(s): J Adams

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): K Dodds

CPL100 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last Committee held on 29 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

The Committee were also advised that a response was being awaited from Cabinet following the concerns and queries raised regarding street lighting and community safety at the last meeting.

CPL101 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CPL102 FLOOD & WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report providing an update on the implementation of the duties and responsibilities of Gateshead Council as lead flood authority.

From the report, the Committee received and noted updates in relation to:

- The local flood risk management strategy
- Investigation of flood incidents – the Committee were advised that a report is still being prepared following the storms at the Great North Run in 2023
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Consenting of ordinary watercourse works

A discussion took place on the responsibilities of housing developers and the importance of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for sustainable development. It was highlighted that The UK Government will shortly be undertaking a consultation for the adoption of new SuDS by local authorities.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the statutory responsibilities of Gateshead Council for local FRM and the measures taken to comply with those duties.
- (ii) The Committee agreed to receive a further annual update in March 2025.

CPL103 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN GATESHEAD (PRESENTATION)

The Committee received a presentation providing an update on housing developments in Gateshead.

Updates were provided in relation to the following:

- Tenure – it was noted that within Gateshead 20% of households reside in Council rented accommodation and that 4% are with a registered social landlord.
- Affordability – examples were provided illustrating the costs to buy and rent properties within Gateshead across a variety of schemes including rent to buy.
- Development progress – the Committee noted that developments are underway through a joint-venture at the Freight Depot, Hyde Park Street and the Hookergate School site. It was also explained that a developer has been secured for Askew Road and that marketing is underway for the Chandless site.
- Challenges – a number of challenges within the housing market were explained, this includes the need to support an aging population, climate change and contaminated ground conditions.

The Committee noted concern regarding the capacity of the national grid in providing an adequate supply to new housing developments; a comment was made noting that this issue has been found within the west of Gateshead.

A discussion took place regarding current vacant sites across Gateshead, the Committee noted that many sites had been vacant for years and had attracted anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Officers explained that whilst every effort is being made to market vacant sites, some are not attractive to developers due to contaminated ground conditions or the size of the plot. The Committee acknowledged that a lot of ground contamination was a consequence of Gateshead's industrial past.

A comment was made noting that the north east has one of the fastest growing housing markets in the country which is being complimented by the district energy scheme. The Committee were also reminded that the new mayoral combined authority will enhance cross-Council collaboration in terms of housing development.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the presentation.

CPL104 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which provided details on development of the work

programme for OSC's and the provisional work programme for Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC for the municipal year 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the Work Programme.

Chair.....

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Housing Performance Report - Quarter 4 2023/24.

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members of the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HEHC OSC) on Housing Performance results at the end of quarter 4, 2023/24, see appendix 1.

Background

2. A Performance Management Information Framework (PMIF) has been developed across the Council to support the achievement of the Thrive outcomes and performance measures have been developed in line with this new approach.
3. In addition, a separate suite of performance measures has been developed for the Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities (HEHC) directorate. These indicators have been developed to underpin delivery of the Council's strategic priorities across all tenures and not just limited to Council Housing.

Housing Performance Management Indicators Quarter 4

4. The performance results are colour coded, comparing performance against the targets for 2023/24. The Appendix 1 shows those performance measures that are achieving target (green), not achieving target (red), not achieving target but improving on 2022/23 performance results (amber) and those performance measures that are not yet reported or baseline for 2023/24 (grey).
5. Narrative is provided for each performance measure that details performance progression, actions to be taken to improve future performance and, where appropriate, an explanation regarding performance indicators that are in development or that will be reported later in the financial year.

Key Performance Indicator Analysis

6. There are currently 43 KPI's that are reported on a quarterly basis.
7. At quarter 4 our performance shows:
 - 21 indicators are traffic lighted green. This shows that we have achieved the annual targets for these indicators.
 - Five indicator is traffic lighted amber. Amber indicators show that we have not met the target set but performance has increased on the previous year.

- 14 indicators are traffic lighted red. Red indicators show that we have not met the target set and performance has decreased compared to the previous year.
- Three indicators are not measurable. All of these indicators are reported quarterly and are set with a baseline target. Data collected in 2023/24 will be used to set targets for 2024/25.

| | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2023/24 | 2023/24 | 2023/24 | 2023/24 |
| Not on Target | 12 | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| On Target | 8 | 7 | 19 | 21 |
| Not on Target but Improved | 3 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| Baseline Information/No Targets Set/No Activity | 20 | 18 | 5 | 3 |

8. The performance results therefore indicate that at quarter 4, performance relating to 26 out of the 40 measurable performance indicators can be traffic lighted as on target or improving, which relates to 65% of our measurable indicators.

Key Performance Indicator Summary

9. The KPI's listed below refer to the recruitment of additional employees as actions being undertaken to improve performance. It is important that we have sufficient capacity and expertise to improve service delivery and enhance housing service performance.
10. However, it is also important that we focus on the impact of those additional resources on performance including customer satisfaction. There will be a gap between the appointment of the additional resources and improved performance.
11. Future reports will highlight on the impact of the additional resources
- KPI 4 - % of households where homelessness prevention duty ended that maintained or secured accommodation for 6+mths
 - KPI 11 - % of tenants satisfied with the condition of their new Council home.
 - KPI 12 - Average days to let a home.
 - KPI 13 - Percentage of council homes empty for 6 months or more.
 - KPI 14 - Rent lost due to empty properties as a % of rent due.
 - KPI 16 - % of properties where damp and mould has been successfully resolved.

Recommendations

12. The views of HEHC OSC are sought on:
- a) The Key Performance Indicator results at the end of the fourth quarter 2023/24.

Contact: Martin Poulter ext 5380.

Housing Environment and Healthy Communities - Key Performance Indicators 2023/24

| | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 2023/24 | 2023/24 | 2023/24 | 2023/24 |
| Not on Target | 13 | 16 | 15 | 15 |
| On Target | 9 | 8 | 20 | 22 |
| Not on Target but Improved | 3 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| Baseline Information/No Targets Set/No Activity | 18 | 15 | 2 | 0 |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 1 | % of self-service transactions - responsive repairs | 11.60 | 13.00 | | 12.20 | 12.18 | 11.76 | The online repair reporting service was suspended from 9 January 2023 to upgrade the system. This was to address the duplication of works orders and misdiagnosis of repairs by tenants using the MyHousingAccount which impacted on the delivery of the service. The system was relaunched on 21st June 2023 and performance information was not reported in quarter 1 due to insufficient data. Since resuming the service 4,510 works orders have been raised using the online service. We have set a target of 13% for annual performance. Whilst we did not meet this this year, further phases of development continue to be in progress to incorporate improvements in diagnostics, the ability to report more types of repairs, the addition of more customer friendly video guides, and a redesign of repairs content on the council website. Customer feedback surveys are to be sent in May to customers who have used the system to log a repair in the last 12 months. We aim to use this information to drive changes in the reporting tool. A communications campaign will run alongside this to gain customer involvement and promote any changes. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 2 | Total households initially assessed as owed a homelessness duty | 1588.00 | 1750.00 | 367.00 | 714.00 | 1051.00 | 1397.00 | If a person is threatened with homelessness, the authority has a duty to help prevent homelessness (the prevention duty). If a person is homeless, the authority has a duty to help secure accommodation for at least six months (the relief duty). We provided advice & assistance to 3180 households who presented as being homeless or at risk of homelessness. This is a 5% increase on 2022/23 where 3017 households approached us. Of the 1419 households we assessed, 1397 were initially assessed as being owed a homeless duty. This is lower than last year; 1609 households were assessed in 2022/23 with 1588 households assessed as being owed a homeless duty. We have seen an increase in approaches, but experiencing a decrease in owed duty acceptance rates as we are giving clients advice & sign posting before they require a full homelessness assessment. In Gateshead, people are waiting longer for rehousing due to the pressures on social housing, so we are seeing more people for advice. In quarter 4 the 3 main reasons for homeless presentations were Domestic Abuse (21.4%), Family/Friends evictions (19.8%) and end of Private Rented tenancies (17.3%). In Quarter 4, from both new and existing cases, we placed 502 households into nightly paid accommodation (473 households into B&B and 58 households into holiday lets). Please note that there will be crossover where some households will have been placed in both types of accommodation. In comparison with 22/23, this is a rise of 41 households placed (461 in 22/23 and 502 in 23/24). 154 of these households had children, this is an increase on the figures seen in 22/23 of over 10%. The percentage of households with children in nightly booked accommodation is 29% this year & was 18% in 2022-23. In quarter 4 the average length of stay was 26 nights for single households (11 nights for households with children) in B&B, with the average length of stay in other nightly paid accommodation being 60 nights. The length of stay for households has increased which is a continuing trend seen since 21/22. The approval process for placing in B&B was reviewed in 2023/24 & we no longer place non-priority applicants. We continue to face challenges in managing demand for temporary accommodation due to several issues including system pressures lack of move on options. |
| 3 | % of households that remained in existing accommodation | 17.00 | 20.00 | 12.00 | 13.19 | 11.58 | 10.60 | Of the 1036 households where prevention duty ended, the service prevented 48 households (10.59%) from becoming homeless by maintaining their existing accommodation. This is roughly half of the target of 20%. Please see KPI % of households where homelessness prevention duty ended that maintained or secured accommodation for 6+mths for further details. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 4 | % of households where homelessness prevention duty ended that maintained or secured accommodation for 6+mths | 47.00 | 52.00 | 45.00 | 46.16 | 44.92 | 43.00 | In quarter 4, 1036 homelessness prevention duties were ended. This is a cumulative of the prevention duties ended across the year. 453 (43.72%) households had their prevention duty ended due to the household maintaining or securing alternative accommodation for at least 6 months. The KPI target for 2023-24 was 52% so we have not met this target. This is linked to the demand for social and affordable housing, longer waiting times for people to be rehoused and the lack of available housing in Gateshead. This is for some resulting in prevention not being possible and they are becoming homeless and moving into the relief duty and often temporary accommodation. This is reflected in the increase in temporary accommodation placements this year, increasing from 461 households placed in 2022-23 to 502 households placed in 2023-24. This is a 15.1% increase. This is an area in which performance has been consistently declining. We are aware of this and have a plan to address this issue. The Housing Solutions team is in the process of increasing resources within the team to enable more prevention work, we are introducing a triage system to improve the level of information and advice we provide people with when they first approach. We are looking to increasing capacity within the team and currently we are recruiting 2 additional posts to assist in the development of our homeless prevention pathways which includes exploring opportunities to work with private landlords and develop access to the private rental sector. Employees will not in place until quarter 2 and the impact of these appointment will not be realised until later in the financial year. |
| 5 | Households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act Child and Maternal Health | New in 2023/24 | New in 2023/24 | 4.72 | 9.54 | 13.80 | 18.60 | Of the 1419 households assessed as owed a duty, 421 (18.6) were households with dependent children. This means that 18.6 Gateshead households with dependent children were owed a duty per 1000 Gateshead households. This was a new measure implemented in 2022-23. In comparison to that year, the figures this year have decreased. This is a positive move as shows that fewer households with children in Gateshead are threatened with homelessness. It is important to note, however, that these figures are in relation to the whole population of Gateshead, figures given in KPI 1 regarding households with children only refers to those households in Gateshead who have had a homelessness assessment. Comparator data is taken from ONS of total Gateshead households with dependent children in Gateshead. |
| 6 | Total households assessed and owed a homelessness duty who were sleeping rough at time of application | 24.00 | 29.00 | 6.00 | 8.00 | 9.00 | 17.00 | Of the 1397 households assessed as owed a duty, 17 were recorded as sleeping rough in the judgement of assessor at the time of the assessment. This figure does not include households who are believed to be at risk of rough sleeping or those we know frequently sleep rough. The year end result is below the target of 29 households. This shows that less people are sleeping rough in Gateshead at the time of assessment. This positive outcome is attributable to the partnership working approach we take in Gateshead to rough sleeping. We have Rough Sleeper Initiative funding which allows us to deliver services to reduce rough sleeping and improve local responses. In addition to the monthly and annual rough sleeper count we are now working in partnership with Basis to complete weekly counts, being proactive in approaching the rough sleeper community and offering advice, support, and guidance. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|--|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 7 | New homes built in the Borough in the period 2022-2027 | New in 2023/24 | 500.00 | | 468.00 | 468.00 | 468.00 | <p>The KPI relates to the number of homes delivered in 2022/23 which has become available in the previous quarter following updates to Council Tax records and notifications from Housing developers and Registered Housing providers for this period.</p> <p>This is 32 below the target, which will be directly attributable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nervousness in the development market following increase in interest rates impacting on mortgage payments, - increased costs of materials and labour over the period - the difficulty in progressing sites within the borough due to ground conditions and visibility. <p>The number of new homes projected to be built within the period 2022/27 is detailed in the Housing Development Strategy and Programme.</p> <p>As part of the strategy and programme, to overcome some of these barriers, Council officers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - look to bring forward Council owned sites for housing development as soon as practicable, - apply for grant funding where appropriate to overcome viability issues on sites and - continue to work with developer partners to optimise site development across the borough <p>It is anticipated that 3500 homes will be built during this period. Achieving this is dependent upon a buoyant housing market.</p> <p>The performance data is annually reported for each year. Data becomes available in the 2/3rd quarter of the following year (ie 2023/24) due to the reconciliation lag in reporting from Council tax. A staggered delivery will be delivered for future years with 500 being expected in 2023/24.</p> |
| 8 | % of planned repairs | 48.80 | 48.80 | | | | 48.02 | <p>It is best practice to have a higher proportion of work delivered in a planned way rather than responsively. At year end of 2023/24 48.02% of work was delivered in a planned way and 51.98% responsively. This represents a slightly lower outturn compared to the end of 2022/23.</p> <p>While the amount of work delivered in a planned way increased in comparison to the previous year, this was off set by significantly higher spend on void properties and a smaller increase in response repairs.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to analyse the cost increases, collaboratively across Construction, Asset and Housing Services. Looking specifically at the social and built environmental factors that are leading to higher responsive cost. This is supported by the ongoing review of the end-to-end void property management process.</p> <p>An accelerated programme of condition surveying is being developed to increase stock intelligence further, this will support planned investment before instances of responsive repairs start to increase.</p> <p>Alongside increasing data analysis, an asset referral process is being further embedded providing Construction Services with a process for escalating potentially developing repairs trends and better informing the planning of the 5 year HRS capital programme.</p> |
| 9 | % of residents satisfied with planned/investment works | 94.87 | 97.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 99.35 | 100.00 | <p>At the end of quarter 4, 159 customers had returned satisfaction surveys for improvement works. The customer feedback was related to capital investment work to replace kitchens, boilers, bathrooms and other improvements like wiring upgrades and roof replacements.</p> <p>All customers were completely satisfied with the work that they received and how that work was delivered, managed and how they were supported through it by the Asset Management and Construction Services teams.</p> <p>The positive feedback and approach will be used to ensure that satisfaction remains high and excellent customer service is consistently delivered within the Capital Works Programme.</p> |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 10 | % stock with a negative Net Property Value (NPV) | 10.40 | 10.00 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 8.00 | Year end performance is not available for the % of stock with a negative NPV. The performance figure is a conglomerate of 12 separate performance and business intelligence metrics that are processed outside of core IT systems and system integration. The resource needed to produce the figure has been directed towards other business priorities that are aligned to the preparations for the new Housing Regulatory Framework. The figure for the end of 2023/24 will be reported in quarter 1 of 2024/25. |
| 11 | % of tenants satisfied with the condition of their new Council home | New in 2023/24 | New in 2023/24 | | 62.85 | 67.02 | 66.67 | To date 162 customers responded to the survey. 108 customers were satisfied, 39 dissatisfied and 15 were neither satisfied/nor satisfied. Of the 14 dissatisfied customers for quarter 4, we were unable to make contact with 2, 1 customer was a succession and 1 customer refused to provide further detail. Of the 10 we spoke to, 3 requested décor that is above the lettable standard 2 had small repair issues which have since been rectified 2 had to wait longer than expected for a new tenants gas safety check. This was due to resource issues and higher than normal gas repairs within the service. 1 had repair following a mutual exchange 1 had an issue with noise from their neighbour 1 had an issue with the property size being too small however the size of the property matches the household composition and our lettings policy The review by consultants Campbell and Tickell will offer a new approach to the lettable standard in regards to decoration which should have a positive impact on some of the dissatisfaction above. Alongside this Construction Service are currently in the process of recruiting 20 additional staff into the voids service which will allow us the capacity to offer above lettable standards including decent homes standard properties while also continuously feeding the waiting lists. The additional staff should be in place by May 2024 however it is likely to be quarter 3, 2024/25 before we see the impact of these changes on the service and performance figures. Issues raised with regards to housing and lettings have been passed to those services to follow up where it is required. |
| 12 | Average days to let a home | 109.00 | 100.00 | 123.00 | 124.00 | 132.00 | 138.00 | The average time to let a home has increased from 109 days in 2022/23 to 138 in quarter 4 2023/24. - Average 95 days from Tenancy End date to Ready to Let (81, 2022/23). - Average 43 days from Ready to Let to New Tenancy start date (28, 2022/23). The number of vacant properties increased from 571 at the start of the year to 618 at year end. Of the year end vacant properties, 310 have already been vacant for 3 months or more and 140 of these for 6 months or more. Assuming that they will be let in the year 2024/25, these properties will impact on future performance and it will be difficult to significantly reduce the overall average days in 2024/25. The approach will be to clear backlogs of properties in 2024/25 and aim for better performance in 2025/26. Construction Services are progressing with recruitment of 32 additional trades and expect to have them in post by end of May 2024. Additional employee resources have been sought and a decision is pending. The team have a number of vacancies and are working on the post-implementation plan of a new lettings system which aims to better join up vacant property and lettings work. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 13 | Percentage of council homes empty for 6 months or more | 0.73 | 0.50 | 0.61 | 0.66 | 0.79 | 0.77 | <p>The number of properties vacant for 6 months or longer was 140 at the end of the year (0.77% of the housing stock).</p> <p>To be on target, the number would need to reduce by 49 to 91.</p> <p>69 of the vacant properties were in the process of being advertised, offered and let.</p> <p>21 are undergoing structural or major work to ensure compliance and health and safety.</p> <p>10 are being assessed for viability (whether it is viable for work to be carried out to enable reletting)</p> <p>32 are undergoing general repair work</p> <p>8 are undergoing major repair work.</p> <p>Construction Services are progressing with recruitment of 32 additional trades and expect to have them in post by end of May 2024.</p> <p>Additional resources for the lettings team are also now being sought. The team have a number of vacancies and are working on the post-implementation plan of a new lettings system which aims to better join up vacant property and lettings work</p> |
| 14 | Rent lost due to empty properties as a % of rent due | 2.98 | 2.00 | 3.33 | 3.46 | 3.44 | 3.50 | <p>Vacant property rent loss for the full year was £3,327,080.</p> <p>The Housing Revenue Account budget setting report in January 2024 noted that whilst there are planned improvements including investment in additional internal trade staffing resources focused on vacant property repair works and a planned reduction in contractor works, these will take time to deliver. The void loss target has therefore been remodelled to 3% for 2024/25 and further reducing by 0.5% per year thereafter to 2027/28.</p> <p>A comprehensive review of vacant property processes, classifications/standards and performance has been carried out with external support from consultants Campbell Tickell. An implementation plan is being rolled out.</p> <p>Construction Services are progressing with recruitment of 32 additional trades and expect to have them in post by end of May 2024.</p> <p>Additional resources for the lettings team are also now being sought. The team have a number of vacancies and are working on the post-implementation plan of a new lettings system which aims to better join up vacant property and lettings work.</p> |
| 15 | Rent collected from tenants as a percentage of rent due to date in the financial year (excluding arrears brought forward) | 97.79 | 97.50 | 94.33 | 97.31 | 97.27 | 98.19 | <p>£90,130,912 of rent was collected during the year from a total of £91,793,759 charged to tenants.</p> <p>The focus of the service has been on supporting tenants to sustain their tenancy against a backdrop of continued cost of living pressures. Working in partnership with other agencies and services, financial gains of over £3 million were made for tenants during the year (an increase of £1.1 million on the previous year).</p> <p>7,185 tenants were in receipt of Universal Credit at the end of the year (up from 6,878 the previous year). More tenants will move on to Universal Credit during 2024/25 and some will find that they have less income as a result. The government has recently announced that it wants to accelerate the rollout of Universal Credit. This will have implications for rent collection in 2024/25</p> <p>A further issue for 2024/25 will be that there are 53 weeks in the financial year (and 51 charging weeks), but Universal Credit claimants will not receive additional housing costs for the extra week.</p> <p>1,054 tenants are known to have benefit reductions for under-occupation and 46 are affected by the benefit cap.</p> <p>There have been 26 evictions this year for rent arrears.</p> |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 16 | % of properties where damp and mould has been successfully resolved | New in 2023/24 | New in 2023/24 | 71.17 | 74.77 | 76.11 | 78.43 | <p>During this quarter, the total number of damp and mould cases raised was 3,324. The total number of damp and mould cases resolved was 2,607. This marks a continued improvement from quarter 3 2023/24.</p> <p>Changes in the process of how we diagnose damp and mould have been implemented which is making identification quicker and identify key repairs that contribute to dampness early on. We are continuing to work with a specialist contractor to carry out mould wash downs for first reports and a temporary measure whilst we plan more detailed work.</p> <p>We are developing online videos guides for customer on how to spot damp and mould earlier, preventative measures, and making improvements to our website content. We are consulting with customers in May 2024 to gain feedback.</p> <p>The recruitment of an additional six Building Technicians to increase our capacity of inspecting properties, provide post inspections and prioritise damp and mould cases, is reducing the time to resolves cases. We continue to carry out the installation of Positive Input Ventilation Units (PIVs) in properties to help customers manage high humidity in their home.</p> <p>We anticipate further changes to our overall approach in response to Awaab's Law. The changes are expected to come into force in 2024. Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) and IT Service employees are working closely to ensure we meet the requirements of the law. Development work beginning in 2023/24 and will continue into 2024/25.</p> <p>Accurate data realisation may not be evident until quarter 2, 2024/25 and that data gathered in 2024/25 will be used to develop targets for 2025/26.</p> |
| 17 | % of repairs completed right first time | 71.60 | 83.00 | 72.06 | 74.09 | 88.71 | 89.08 | <p>This quarter, of the 63,813 works orders completed, 56,842 were completed first time. 89.08% of repairs were completed right first time, marking a slight improvement from the previous quarter. We have reviewed the data capture to ensure that it meets the Housemark definition. The score reflects this.</p> <p>Changes previously made to the Online MyAccount Portal with more detailed diagnostics for customers have contributed to this. Improvements to our website and online reporting continue to be in development. We are also planning user feedback for the reporting tool to support additional phases of development and improved functionality.</p> <p>We have closely monitored out of hours service in the out ability to carry out repairs first time, with particular attention to the need for parts. This has helped inform what common parts our tradespeople require on van stocks.</p> <p>We expect to see this performance maintained in the next quarter.</p> |
| 18 | Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made | 92.70 | 94.00 | 93.72 | 93.01 | 93.17 | 93.08 | <p>During this quarter, 50,279 appointments made, 46,800 were kept marking a sustained performance from quarter 3 2023/24. The repairs service continues to go through a change process to make repairs delivery more efficient. To facilitate some of these changes we needed to free up some of the diaries in quarter 3, by holding some appointments until the new process was in place. This has had a knock-on effect to both our appointments kept and repairs completed in timescales, particularly around our routine appointments.</p> <p>The recruitment of tradespeople will aim to increase the available appointments, whilst work we are doing to around quotas for different repair priorities will aim to optimise trade resource.</p> <p>We hope to return to demonstrating improvements in the next quarter.</p> <p>Breakdown: Emergency Repairs – 4,361 appointments made, 4,182 were kept = 95.90%. Urgent Repairs – 17,787 appointments made, 16,725 were kept = 94.03%. Routine Repairs – 28,131 appointments made, 25,893 were kept = 92.04%.</p> |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--|--|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 19 | % of tenants satisfied with their most recent repair (transactional repairs) | 83.58 | 80.00 | 84.17 | 84.37 | 84.72 | 84.44 | This indicator is measured by a text survey. In this quarter, of the 9,458 returned surveys 7,341 were very satisfied and 645 fairly satisfied with the most recent repair. Overall satisfaction has declined slightly since quarter 3, 2023/24. The continued level in satisfaction from customers reflects the ongoing work to improve the service, the recruitment of additional operatives and a focus on learning from tenant feedback. Trends in satisfaction around amount of time to complete repairs have been identified. It is anticipated that the recruitment of tradespeople will assist in improving the time taken to complete repair. |
| 20 | % of residents satisfied with how their anti-social behaviour case is handled (transactional ASB case) | 54.55 | 62.00 | 28.59 | 40.00 | 43.48 | 48.39 | During this period 1018 ASB cases were closed. Of these, 700 customers were linked to cases that were closed (some cases had no customer and others had more than one). Of these, 163 customers had opted in to receiving a satisfaction survey by text message and a total of 31 responded to the satisfaction question. Of the 31 responses, 10 customers expressed dissatisfaction with the service provided and they were then contacted to discuss further. Customer feedback highlighted the need to update customers on case management progress. Managers have discussed this with individual Officers during their supervision to ensure Officers keep in contact with Customers more regularly. ICT have implemented changes to several screens within the NEC ASB case closure/customer survey process. This will make the selection of Customers that are to be surveyed on each case mandatory. These changes have led to an increased number of customers contacted to complete a survey however, this has not been reflected in the customer willingness to take part in the text survey. |
| Tenant Satisfaction Measure - Perception Survey | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Overall satisfaction, taking everything into account | 44.00 | 73.00 | | | 64.00 | 64.00 | Registered providers of social housing are required by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to carry out an annual perception survey against 12 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's). from 2023.24. The survey was carried out by telephone and Kwest Research Ltd were appointed to undertake this on the Council's behalf. Overall satisfaction has increased from 44% in 2022.23 to 64% in 2023.24, a 20% increase. |
| 22 | Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect | 47.00 | 77.00 | | | 80.00 | 80.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 47% in 2022.23 to 80% in 2023.24, a 33% increase. |
| 23 | Satisfaction that the home is safe | 51.00 | 65.00 | | | 72.00 | 66.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 36% in 2022.23 to 66% in 2023.24, a 30% increase. |
| 24 | Satisfaction that the home is well maintained | 36.00 | 60.00 | | | 68.00 | 66.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 36% in 2022.23 to 66% in 2023.24, a 30% increase. |
| 25 | Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained | 55.00 | 63.00 | | | 69.00 | 68.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 55% in 2022 to 68% in 2023, a 13% increase. |
| 26 | Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them | 45.50 | 71.00 | | | 69.00 | 71.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 45.5% in 2022.23 to 71% in 2023.24, a 23.5% increase. |
| 27 | Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them | 29.00 | 57.00 | | | 65.00 | 64.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 29% in 2022.23 to 64% in 2023.24, a 35% increase. |
| 28 | Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods | 34.00 | 56.00 | | | 64.00 | 64.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 34% in 2022 to 64% in 2023, a 31% increase. |
| 29 | Satisfaction with repairs | 52.00 | 80.00 | | | 65.00 | 69.00 | The two questions directly relating to repairs and maintenance were answerable by only those tenants who had reported a repair in the last 12 months. Repairs and Maintenance is a key driver of overall satisfaction, and this has increased from 52% in 2022.23 to 69% in 2023.24, a 17% increase. |
| 30 | Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour | 31.00 | 47.00 | | | 61.00 | 60.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 31% in 2022.2023 to 60% in 2023.2024, a 29% increase. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|---|--|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 31 | Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints | 21.00 | 41.00 | | | 27.00 | 26.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 21% in 2022.23 to 26% in 2023.24, a 5% increase. Although satisfaction has increased, it remains comparatively low against the other TSM's. This is a trend widely reported across the social housing sector. In 2023.24 we have carried out training to over 100 officers and introduced a Power Bi dashboard to track open complaints. A discovery project has also been undertaken to identify barriers to performance and to identify solutions. This work will be completed in May 2024 and subject to a separate report. In addition Tenants are undertaking a scrutiny review of the Council's stage 1 Housing complaint responses to assess the quality and to ensure that all responses are fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code. |
| 32 | Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair | 42.00 | 60.00 | | | 60.00 | 63.00 | Satisfaction has increased from 42% in 2022.23 to 63% in 2023.24 a 21% increase. |
| 33 | Satisfied that their housing landlord, Gateshead Council, is easy to deal with | 44.00 | 70.00 | | | 70.00 | 71.00 | In addition to the TSM questions, Gateshead Council also included an additional quantitative question asking customers about their satisfaction that their landlord is easy to deal with. Satisfaction has increased from 44% to 71% a 27% increase. |
| Tenant Satisfaction Measure Management Generated | | | | | | | | |
| 34 | Anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases relative to the size of the landlord | New in 2023/24 | 56.00 | 17.64 | 31.21 | 42.76 | 54.74 | 2021/22 year-end data was used to develop this 2023/24 target of 56 and this was included in the Target Setting Report to HEHC OSC in June 2023. Year-end 2023/24 performance data of 54.74 ASB cases per 1,000 properties is therefore below the target of 56. The Regulator for Social Housing indicated when the TSM's were developed in September 2022 'We recognise that the total number of ASB cases in isolation will not necessarily be a clear indicator of performance but, after consideration of consultation responses, our view continues to be that it should be included in the TSM suite'. As this is the first year of formally reporting data to the Regulator there is likely to be a learning curve for the sector to discover how ASB service improvements are reflected once sector data is available in Autumn 2024. During this period 992 new ASB cases were opened. This is a decrease of 3% when compared to the same period last year when 1026 new cases were opened. Of the new cases, 965 (97%) cases related to general ASB and 27 (3%) cases related to Hate Crime. An ASB review is on-going and the outcome of the review, will lead to changes to ASB reporting procedures for reporting to one single point of contact. It is hoped that this will lead to improved access to service for customers experiencing ASB. ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord's housing stock provides the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with the number of complaints received per 1000 properties. This, alongside data from other Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) provides an indication as to how effective the current ASB Policy is. |
| 35 | Complaints relative to the size of the landlord | New in 2023/24 | 13.00 | 1.95 | 7.58 | 13.41 | 24.16 | Complaints relative to the size of the landlord's housing stock provides the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with the number of complaints received per 1000 properties. This alongside data from other Tenant Satisfaction Measures provides an indication as to how effective a landlord's complaint policy is being implemented. We have exceeded the target of registering 13 complaints per 1000 homes during 2023/24, which evidences a proactive approach to registering complaints. In quarter 4, 179 stage 1 complaints required a response, an increase from quarter 3 when 91 were registered. Of the 179 stage 1 complaints, 149 (83%) related to repairs and maintenance and 11 (6%) related to Neighbourhood Housing Services. The remainder related to Neighbourhood Relations, Homelessness, Lettings, Multi-Storey and Rent and Income. A total of 16 stage 2 complaints required a response in quarter 4, which is an increase from from the 9 requiring a response in quarter 2. Of the 16 stage 2 complaints, 14 (88%) related to repairs and maintenance, 1 (6%) related to Neighbourhood Housing services and 1 (6%) related to Planned Investment work. In total we received 195 complaints during this period. |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|---|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 36 | Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales | New in 2023/24 | 66.00 | 55.00 | 52.50 | 41.00 | 29.00 | <p>This KPI is reported annually to the Regulator of Social Housing as part of the new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures. It measures compliance with a requirement of the Complaint Handling Code (Housing Ombudsman) to answer stage 1 complaints within 10 working days. A total of 179 stage 1 complaints required a response in quarter 4. We responded to 28 (16%) within the target of 10 working days. The KPI figure reported is a cumulative % over the 4 quarters. The 10 day target is challenging and we are not meeting our target. To support officers, we have delivered complaint handling training to almost 100 employees and issued Team Briefs and Good Practice Guides. A Power Bi dashboard provides live complaint data to help officers manage complaint handling performance.</p> <p>A discovery project has also been undertaken to identify barriers to performance and to identify solutions. This work will be completed in May 2024 and subject to a separate report. In addition Tenants are undertaking a scrutiny review of the Council's stage 1 Housing complaint responses to assess the quality and to ensure that all responses are fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code.</p> <p>This KPI only relates to stage 1 complaints for 2023.24. However, we also collect data related to Stage 2 complaints which is also reported to the RSH annually. At the end of quarter 4, a total of 16 stage 2 complaints required a response. We responded to 56% of stage 2 complaints within the 20-day target. It is proposed to add this as a KPI for 2024.25.</p> |
| 37 | Asbestos safety checks | New in 2023/24 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 99.83 | 100.00 | 100.00 | <p>All Asbestos safety checks are completed for quarter 4. The asbestos team continue to utilise the asset management system and planned maintenance programme to ensure all asbestos reinspections are issued, residential blocks surveyed and reports are received. All surveys are then reviewed and actions processed to ensure any remedials are carried out in the correct timescales to maintain the safety of the residential blocks.</p> |
| 38 | Water safety checks | New in 2023/24 | 100.00 | 42.53 | 42.56 | 99.95 | 99.80 | <p>Total of 2060 made up of 36 blocks containing 2032 Dwelling units and 28 communal lounges. 1 Block outstanding with 4 Dwelling units, access is being arranged via warden for WRA to be carried out as soon as possible.</p> |
| 39 | Fire safety checks | New in 2023/24 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | <p>All Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) are completed for quarter 4.</p> <p>The FRA process is currently under review and will be moving into a new dedicated compliance database in the coming months. This will help to streamline the process and improve reporting.</p> |
| 40 | Gas safety checks | New in 2023/24 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | <p>A total of 16597 addresses made up of council, TGHC and 2 Shared ownership. All required gas safety checks completed for quarter 4.</p> <p>The gas servicing team continue to perform well and achieve full compliance. Where a non access is identified a robust non access process is enforced which would culminate in a warrant if required to ensure compliance and gas safety.</p> <p>The gas safety manager also has a full audit process in place to maintain the high standards of both the operational work on site and the quality of the certification, data and documents.</p> |
| 41 | Lift safety checks | New in 2023/24 | 100.00 | 82.81 | 62.01 | 71.00 | 85.98 | <p>There are a total of 2025 dwelling units across all blocks.</p> <p>As at quarter 4 there was a total of 8 blocks with 284 dwelling units overdue. Crowhall Towers has now been removed from the figures as the block is now empty.</p> <p>Management of passenger lifts will be moving out of the existing database and into a dedicated compliance management software solution database. This has now been procured and is currently in the set up process. This is expected to take around 3 months to implement. Meetings are taking place with the lifting contractor in relation to current performance, contractor performance will be monitored through monthly performance meetings to improve performance.</p> |

| KPI No | Performance Measure | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | Quarter 1 | Quarter 2 | Quarter 3 | Quarter 4 | Comments |
|--------|--|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | | Year End | Target | | | | | |
| 42 | Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard | New in 2023/24 | 3.20 | | | | 3.62 | <p>Capital investment work has been underway across the borough delivering improvements across the year. Those improvements have made homes 'decent' and prevent others from becoming 'non-decent' during the year. This work has resulted in an increase in the number of homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard.</p> <p>A five year investment plan is also in place to forecast and steer future investment in the stock. Work is also underway to further enhance the way that stock condition data is collected. A revised stock condition surveying programme is being developed for 2024/25 to increase the % of homes that we hold condition data on. Additional officers are being trained on collecting condition data and further surveys will now form part of the void property process.</p> <p>This additional information will enhance how investment work is planned and how the housing capital programme is developed to maintain homes as decent.</p> |

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TITLE OF REPORT: Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023/2024

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC with the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023.24.

Background

2. Registered providers of social housing are required by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to carry out an annual perception survey against 12 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's). In addition to the 12 survey questions there are a further 10 management information indicators measured directly by the landlord. Gateshead Council must collect and report on performance on all 22 TSM's from 2023.24.
3. The TSMs are designed to see how well landlords are doing at keeping properties in good repair, maintaining building safety, respectful and helpful engagement, effective handling of complaints and responsible neighbourhood management. The TSMs are grouped around these five themes.
4. In 2022.23 a survey was sent to all tenants who we hold an e-mail address for and completed via the Council's online consultation portal. The survey questions reflected the final set of TSM's published in September 2022 by the RSH. This provided an early understanding of how we are performing ahead of formal reporting to the RSH of the 2023.24 results. An additional question: satisfaction with how easy as a landlord we are to deal with, was retained from the 2021 survey as this has been identified as a key driver of overall satisfaction.

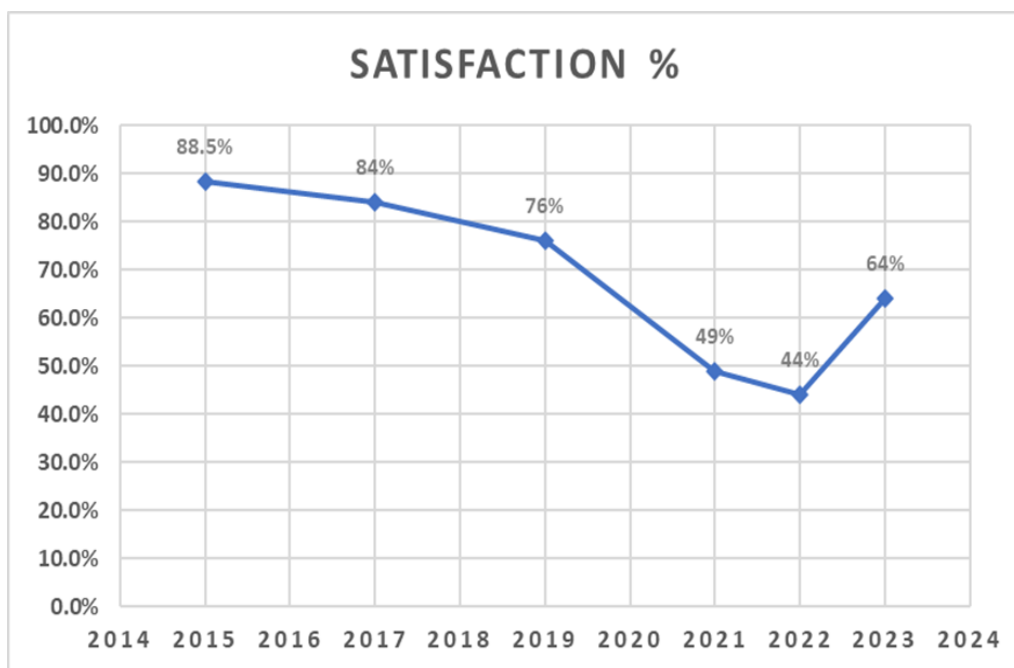
2023.2024 Satisfaction Survey

5. In 2023.24 the survey was carried out entirely by telephone and Kwest Research Ltd were appointed to undertake this on the Council's behalf. A telephone survey is a cost effective and efficient means of contacting households and allows the representativeness of the achieved sample to be easily monitored. The RSH requires that the sample of tenants surveyed is broadly representative of the landlord's tenant profile.
6. To provide a statistically valid sample Gateshead is required to collect a minimum of 1,050 responses each year and in total 1,150 were surveyed. The participants were selected at random by Kwest to reflect our tenant profile and the question wording and response scales set out in line with the TSM requirements.

7. The survey was conducted in two phases. The first phase was carried out in October/November 2023 and the second phase in February/March 2024. The aim of conducting the survey biannually was that we could use the insight from the first phase to help inform our communications which will focus on the steps we are taking to address areas of low satisfaction. The results of the two surveys have been collated to provide the final satisfaction results which will be submitted to the RSH.

Main Highlights

8. Compared to the 2022.23 results, performance has improved across all 12 TSM questions and the additional question, with increases between 5% and 35%.
9. In terms of overall satisfaction with housing services, the graph below shows how this has declined between 2015 and 2022 at Gateshead. Declining satisfaction has been a housing wide trend for some time and across many other service sectors. However, in 2023.24 overall satisfaction has improved significantly increasing by 20% from 44% in 2022.23 to 64%.



10. The two questions directly relating to repairs and maintenance were answerable by only those tenants who had reported a repair in the last 12 months.
- Overall satisfaction with repairs increased from 52% in 2022.23 to 69%.
 - Satisfaction with time taken to complete the most recent repair increased from 42% to 63%.
11. A question measuring satisfaction that home is well maintained was asked of all respondents and shows an increase from 36% to 66%.
12. Results of other key indicators include:

- Satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling ASB increased from 31% to 60%
- Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood increased from 34% to 65%
- Satisfaction that the landlord listens to views and acts on them increased from 29% to 64%
- Satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling complaints remains the TSM with the lowest level of satisfaction, improving marginally from 21% to 26%

13. The full results for all questions are included in the Appendix to this report.

Comparison With Other Housing Providers

14. In October 2023, Housemark invited English registered providers to take part in a project to compare their TSM results to date. 189 landlords took part, enabling Housemark to compile bespoke reports for participating organisations, based on results up to the mid-point in the year (April-Sept 2023), including the sector-wide results and those for a peer group of similar organisations based on stock size, landlord type and location.

15. It should be noted that some housing providers are conducting their TSM data collection as a rolling survey and others did not begin data collection until the second half of the financial year. Therefore, although the Housemark report represents the most up to date and accurate comparison available, the quartile boundaries are likely to change by the time the end of year results are compiled. This is particularly true for the peer group comparisons, which are, by nature, smaller groups and so more susceptible to change as additional organisations are included.

16. Compared to our peer group of large urban local authorities and ALMOs, outside of London, with 15,000+ stock overall, we are in quartile 1 for five questions, quartile 2 for one question, quartile 3 for five and quartile 4 for one.

17. The question where we are lowest ranked compared to our peers is satisfaction with the time taken to complete the most recent repair. Our performance ranked us in quartile 4.

18. Housemark have indicated that they will produce an early report for those landlords who submit their data by 10th May 2024. It is our intention to meet this deadline so that we gain an update into how we are performing against our peers.

19. The Appendix at the end of the report provides further details for each question.

Key Trends

20. An analysis of satisfaction against the profile of respondents shows that across most questions younger tenants are less satisfied than older tenants. When asked overall satisfaction, those aged 16-44 were only 57% satisfied compared with 72% for those aged 65+. This is a trend that continues to be reported widely across the housing sector.

21. Those living in houses are also less satisfied than those living in bungalows and flats, possibly reflecting the age profile of those living in different types of accommodation.
22. Tenants living in bungalows also return a higher level of satisfaction in terms of feeling safe and that their views are listened to and acted on.
23. In terms of location, when the results are analysed by neighborhoods there are some notable variations between the highest and lowest satisfaction scores.
 - Tenants in the East neighbourhood are significantly more satisfied (71%) with the time taken to complete their most recent repair than those living in the West (57%)
 - Tenants in the east are also more satisfied (78%) than those living in the Central neighbourhood (69%) that their home is safe.
 - In contrast those living in Central are more likely (27%) than those in East (17%) to have made a complaint in the last 12 months.
 - Tenants living in the east who have made a complaint in the last 12 months are more satisfied (44%) about the way their complaint has been handled compared to those in the West (16%).

Drivers of Satisfaction

24. Feedback and insight from previous satisfaction surveys and customer engagement has consistently highlighted that repairs and maintenance, tackling anti-social behaviour, environmental factors and customer communication are key drivers of satisfaction.
25. In this survey customers were asked to provide comments in response to the overall satisfaction question. Consistent with previous years repairs and maintenance featured in a high percentage of comments.
26. The top reasons respondents gave for dissatisfaction are listed below:
 - Waiting for repairs to be completed
 - Speed of response when issues raised.
 - Damp and mould in the home.
 - Communication and being kept informed.
 - Quality of repairs
 - Other repair related issues.

Summary

27. The results of the 2023.24 survey show a marked improvement on the results from 2022.23. Key drivers of satisfaction including repairs and maintenance, and handling of anti-social behaviour have improved significantly. Whilst available comparative data is still limited, comparison with our peers show that in some areas we are performing well. Repairs and Maintenance and more specifically the time it takes to complete a repair is the key driver of satisfaction and an area to focus on. Linked to this is communication with the customer and more generally customer service.
28. It should be noted however that social housing does not exist in a bubble and the expectations of tenants will be informed by their interaction with organisations and

businesses outside of the housing sector. As those organisations change the way they deliver services the expectations of tenants will also change, ultimately impacting on satisfaction. This will also be true when tenants engage with different Gateshead Council services and receive different levels of customer service. It is important that we continue to engage with tenants to understand their needs and continually adapt and improve service delivery. We understand that digital is here to stay and we must improve our offer but also respond to expectations around forming stronger, empathetic relationships with customers.

Next Steps

29. The survey highlights some key areas where further improvement to the customer experience is required, and work is currently ongoing. For example, repairs and maintenance have an improvement plan in place and are implementing a range of changes that will further improve performance. An in-depth review of Complaint handling is currently underway and will include recommendations aimed addressing poor performance and low satisfaction. A customer contact project will commence during 2024.25 aimed at addressing issues raised by customers. The aim will be to create a more efficient and effective “front door” to housing services. Also, key is improving our digital offer including the website and reviewing “back office” functions that support delivery. Updates on progress with the above and all service improvement work streams will be brought periodically to Portfolio and the Strategic Housing Board.

30. In terms of reporting the results, we are required to submit the results of all 22 TSM’s to the RSH by 30th June 2024. This includes both the results and methodology used to collect the data. The RSH will then publish the results for all landlords by autumn 2024.

31. The results will be shared internally including:

- HEHC Portfolio
- HEHC Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Strategic Housing Board
- All elected members briefing.

32. Employee engagement with the results and insight provided by the survey is also vital. Research shows that high levels of employee engagement does have a positive impact on service delivery and ultimately satisfaction. A team briefing will be issued to all employees outlining the results and the steps we are taking to improve satisfaction. Workshops for managers are also planned which will provide an opportunity to discuss in more detail the results and our service improvement plans.

33. It is a requirement of the RSH that we also share the results with customers, and we will do this through a variety of communication channels including the Council website and a Tenant newsletter. The results will also be shared and discussed with the Resident Influence Panel including how we should use the feedback and insight provided to improve services.

Recommendations

34. The views of HEHC OSC are sought on the results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2023.24

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Appendix – TSM Survey Results

| Tenant Satisfaction Measure | 22.23 | 23.24 | Change +/- | Indicative Quartile (Housemark) |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--|
| TP01 -Overall satisfaction | 44% | 64% | +20% | Q3 |
| TP02 – Satisfaction with the repairs service | 52% | 69% | +17% | Q3 |
| TP03 – Satisfaction with time taken to complete their most recent repair. | 42% | 63% | +21% | Q4 |
| TP04 – satisfaction that home is well maintained. | 36% | 66% | +30% | Q3 |
| TP05 – Satisfaction that home is safe. | 51% | 73% | +22% | Q3 |
| TP06- Satisfaction that landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them. | 29% | 64% | +35% | Q1 |
| TP07- Satisfaction that landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter. | 45.5% | 71% | +23.5% | Q1 |
| TP08 -Agreement that landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect. | 47% | 80% | +33% | Q2 |
| TP09 - Landlord’s approach to handling of complaints. | 21% | 26% | +5% | Q3 |
| TP10- Landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained. | 55% | 68% | +13% | Q1 |
| TP11- Landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood. | 34% | 65% | +31% | Q1 |
| TP12- Satisfaction with landlord’s approach to handling ASB | 31% | 60% | +29% | Q1 |
| Satisfaction that landlord is easy to deal with – Additional Gateshead question not a TSM. | 44% | 70% | +26% | N/A |

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TITLE OF REPORT: Building Safety and Compliance

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an overview on the current building safety and compliance position

Background

2. The Building Safety Act 2022 (The Act) came into law on 1st October 2023 and introduced new duties for the management of fire and structural safety in high rise residential buildings.
3. The Act applies to new and existing occupied buildings over 18 metres high, or containing 7 storeys or more, and with at least two residential units.
4. The Council is required to provide a building safety case for its high-rise blocks. The Building Safety Regulator can request this at any time over the next five years in various tranches.
5. The tranches are prioritised on the height of the building, the number of residents and various other factors that raise the risk profile. The categorization may change as the inspection process progresses.
6. The Council have in place schemes of work to complete risk assessments and servicing of equipment to demonstrate compliance with the key six areas of compliance – fire, water, asbestos, electric, gas, mechanical..

Building Safety Current Position

7. Redheugh and Eslington, Regent and St Cuthberts Court are in Tranche 1 for safety case reports.
8. Acomb, Bedale, Ripley, Willerby, Barford, Stretford, Bensham, Warwick, Newbolt and Tennyson are in Tranche 2.
9. Beacon, Lough and Fell, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sidney are in Tranche 3.
10. Park, Peareth and Priory are in Tranche 4.
11. There are no confirmed dates for when the safety cases will be requested by the Building Safety Regulator.
12. All Gateshead Council high-rise blocks were registered with the Building Safety Regulator by the deadline of 31st October 2023 and key structural and fire safety building information provided.

13. Further information was provided to the National Register of Social Housing fire safety remediation survey for the Regulator of Social Housing in April 2024.
14. A planned programme of fire risk assessments in high rise blocks is up to date.
15. External wall surveys have been carried out and audited by an external specialist company.
16. Fire strategies and block evacuation processes are in place and externally audited.
17. Customer vulnerability information is in place and shared with the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS).
18. High rise block audits by the TWFRS are in a rolling programme.
19. Resident engagement strategy, resident multi-storey safety group, complaints procedure and mandatory occurrence process are all in place.
20. 8 of 24 building safety case reports have been completed including those for the 4 tranche one blocks.
21. A quarterly inspection programme of 1,524 communal fire doors is in place.
22. An annual inspection programme of 1,850 flat front doors is in place with a 72% access rate. All non-accesses are in a follow up process with a legal route in place if necessary.
23. The high-rise fire detection system, within dwellings, complies with regulation but is under review for upgrading to a higher standard as part of future planned work.
24. New compliance software is in the process of implementation with a target date of April 2024. This will provide a major part of the golden thread of information directly from the various compliance and risk assessment programmes.

Risks and mitigations

25. There are two high rise blocks with window panels that do not meet current standards. Both are in the process of decommissioning and have acceptable mitigation in place agreed with the TWFRS. 32 of 166 flats in Redheugh are currently occupied and 40 of 166 at Eslington.
26. During the flat front door inspections, a failure of the door locking mechanism was identified. This is currently in dispute with the responsible contractor. A selection of flats has been reviewed by an independent consultant and will be used in support of any litigation. This issue has been reported to TWFRS and is considered a negligible risk.
27. A remediation plan for inadequate fire door smoke seals to 1,390 flat front doors has been agreed with the TWFRS. This is considered a negligible risk.
28. The TWFRS has considered four fires in properties affected when agreeing to the remediation plan. In all cases there was no spread of smoke from the fires. A 9-12 week programme of replacement commenced on 8th April 2024.

Compliance

29. Of the six key compliance areas there are no areas of high risk.
30. Fire risk assessments are within target. All remedial actions are within acceptable completion action plans. The programme comprises of 24 high rise blocks, 104 mid rise blocks, 308 low rise blocks, 9 aged person units and 27 communal lounges.
31. Gas Servicing is 100% compliant – 16,594 properties. Solid fuel servicing is 100% compliant – 10 properties.
32. 947 new boiler installations were carried out for the financial year 2023/24.
33. 379 properties in Gateshead have open flued gas fires, 116 have been removed this financial year as part of a safety improvement plan.
34. 99.22% of properties have an electrical condition report that is less than five years old – 18,078 of 18,219 properties. The 141 with 3 access refusals will be re-visited in next year's programme. 3,767 properties are considered safe but are not compliant with the latest electrical regulations. These properties are reinspected every two years and are on a rolling upgrade programme.
35. Fire alarm and emergency lighting testing are compliant.
36. The programme of inspecting known asbestos containing materials in communal areas of 413 blocks is compliant.
37. Two domestic dwellings have high risk asbestos contained within service risers. This is a controlled hazard and negligible risk due to near impossible access. These continue to be monitored until planned works takes place.
38. The domestic property water risk assessment programme is on target. This has prioritised properties which are at higher risk due to stored water systems. The team continue to carry out water risk assessments in vacant properties and where changes are made to the water systems in properties. This builds data used to identify any additions needed to the programme.
39. Passenger lift servicing and inspection was 100% compliant at end of March 2024
40. Personal lift and lifting device servicing remains at 87.76% complete. As reasonable endeavours can be evidenced the programme is considered compliant.
41. LOLER/thorough insurance inspections of lifting devices have similar access issues and are currently 77.27% complete.
42. Lack of access to service and inspect personal lifting equipment can be due to customer illness and devices awaiting removal and are not always due to the customer failing to cooperate.

43. New compliance software is in the process of implementation with a target date of April 2024. This will report on all areas of compliance.

Proposal

44. Continue to meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and regulation.

45. Monitor progress of mitigation measures.

Recommendations

46. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note this report.

Contact: Ian McLackland, Service Director, Repairs and Building Maintenance.

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| TITLE OF REPORT: | Development of Work Programme for 2024-25 |
| REPORT OF: | Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance |

Summary

This report details the Overview and Scrutiny work programme setting process for 2024-25 and a list of suggested topics for inclusion in the work programme, relevant to the remit of the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC).

1. A key component to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function is work programme planning that seeks input from a wide variety of sources and identifies priority areas where scrutiny can seek to add the most value.
2. Ideas for topics for scrutiny to consider can be gathered from a wide range of sources including:
 - Elected Members
 - Senior Officers
 - Partner Organisations
 - Corporate Plans and Strategies
 - Complaints system and Ombudsman
 - Evidence from Councillors on issues affecting neighbourhoods
3. Elected Members and relevant officers were invited to submit suggestions for inclusion in the work programme between 20th February 2024 and 5th March 2024.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC performs the overview and scrutiny role in relation to the following functions:
 - economic development and vitality
 - lifelong learning including education, training and learning outside the school environment; people into work
 - culture, leisure, the arts, sports and recreation
 - the safety of communities and people in the Borough
 - matters relating to housing, including management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock and private housing stock
 - the physical development and regeneration of the area
 - transport planning and the promotion of public transport
 - the quality of the local environment, including refuse collection, street cleaning, ground maintenance, highway maintenance and the cleaning of Council buildings

- the protection of the environment, including Climate Change
 - Homelessness, rough sleeping and asylum matters.
5. A list of suggestions received relevant to the remit of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC is appended to the report.

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

1. As per the Council's Constitution, the following principles govern the Overview and Scrutiny Function:
 - It will be an integral part of the Council's framework, working within it not outside or against it
 - It will be a constructive process which is open and accountable
 - It will work alongside the other parts of the Council's structure in making a contribution to policy
 - It will enhance rather than duplicate activity
 - It will look outwards to broader issues affecting local people rather than just internal Council issues
2. This is underpinned by the four fundamental principles of good scrutiny set out by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny:
 - provide constructive "critical friend" challenge;
 - amplify the voice and concerns of the public
 - be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
 - drive improvement in public services.
3. Members of the Committee are invited to highlight any additional topics they wish to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the work programme. Work will then be undertaken, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to allocate topics to the Committee's meeting schedule in a timely manner and scope the content of reports. A further work programme report will then be submitted for approval at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.
4. It is acknowledged that, whilst the majority of the work of overview and scrutiny will be planned in a structured way, there will be flexibility within work programmes for committees to respond to any issues that arise throughout the year.

Recommendations

1. The Committee is asked to:
 - a) Comment on the emerging issues for this OSC's 2024-25 work programme and highlight any additional issues for consideration.

Contact: Emma Fagan - 4479

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme development 2024/25 – Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC

Remit: To perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to the Council's functions as:

1. Economic development and vitality
2. Lifelong learning including education, training and learning outside the school environment; people into work
3. Culture, leisure, the arts, sports and recreation
4. The safety of communities and people in the Borough
5. Matters relating to housing, including management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock and private housing stock
6. The physical development and regeneration of the area
7. Transport planning and the promotion of public transport
8. The quality of the local environment, including refuse collection, street cleaning, ground maintenance, highway maintenance and the cleaning of Council buildings
9. The protection of the environment, including Climate Change
10. Homelessness, rough sleeping and asylum matters.

Suggestions:

- Six monthly HEHC KPI updates
- Performance Management and Improvement Framework – end of year and 6 monthly progress
- Annual Target setting
- Tenant Scrutiny Review
- Complaints update
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Repairs and Voids Improvement Plan
- Housing Allocations
- Update on Homelessness Review

- Update on Environmental Enforcement
- Street Scene Investment Impacts
- Potholes – identification and processing
- Gateshead local plan for series violence (joint item with Families)
- Review of disabled parking bay applications
- Community Safety update
- Future Homes Standard – energy efficiency relating to Council housing stock
- Street lighting
- Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan