

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenants Strategic Group – 27 Sept 2021

2021/22 Housing Scorecard Quarter 1

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Housing

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the housing performance for the first quarter of 21/22 (April-June 2021).

2 Recommendations

2.1 To note content of the housing scorecard.

3 Housing Scorecard

3.1 The Housing Scorecard is a tool to measure our performance in key areas. The scorecard was presented to Tenants' Strategic Group in July 2021 covering the performance of the 20/21 financial year. This report covers the first quarter of 21/22.

3.2 Over the last 18 months Covid has had a significant impact on some areas of our performance, but we can now see a pathway to returning to full and normal service delivery however demands on the service remain high and increasing.

3.3 This report covers a total of 17 measures. Customer 5, Rent Recovery 2, Supported Housing 1, Lettings and Voids 1, Housing Repairs 2, Tenancy Management 3, Compliance 2, Development 1.

3.4 Customer

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Customer					
% of complaints closed in 10 working days (as per policy)	100%	95%	81%	80%	92%

Improvement in complaint response times has been significant now that clearer routing and monitoring of complaints is in place. There was a dip in performance during April and May due to significant service pressures, staff sickness and leave where it has not been possible to investigate and close all complaints within the 10 working day deadline. Extensions that are agreed are not reflected in the figures. June has seen an

improvement towards our targets.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Customer					
% of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property	85%	82%	95%	100%	100%

In April 2021 we “let” 33 properties, we have had 22 responses to our satisfaction questions. Of the 22 responses, 18 were very satisfied with the standard of the property and 3 were satisfied. In May and June all respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the standard of their new property.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Customer					
% of tenants satisfied with most recent repair	85%	78%	95%	95%	91%

We continue to use an electronic questionnaire sent to repair customers as soon as the repair completes. Results returned 95% satisfaction in both April and May. During April and May this decreases slightly to 91%, response sizes are growing and it is encouraging to note that those who choose to respond are responding positively.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Customer					
Number of compliments received	6 per month	4 per month	11	6	6

We have been receiving a steady number of compliments recorded formally since July 2020. In June we turned a complaint into a compliment as the tenant was so impressed with our complaint response.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Customer					
Overall tenant satisfaction (STAR results)	82%	81%	83%	83%	83%

Our STAR survey during November/December 2020 recorded 83% tenancy satisfaction overall. This is an improvement on our satisfaction rating recorded in 2018 which was 81% and exceeds the target of 82%. Two years ago, our target was to improve satisfaction and we have achieved that in our latest survey.

3.5 Rent Recovery

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Rent Recovery					
Income collected as a % of rent owed excluding arrears brought forward	99%	98%	101.6%	103.22%	103.85%
Total number of all evictions	n/a	n/a	1	0	0

The performance is over 100% because tenants have paid more than is due in the period i.e. they are paying towards their rent arrears as well as paying the current rent due in the period – in setting the target the formula assumes arrears balances brought forward are being excluded but the income tenants have actually paid towards their arrears is not being excluded.

There has been 1 eviction executed since April 2021, this eviction was due to rent arrears.

3.6 Supported Housing

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Supported Housing					
Sheltered housing - % of tenants receiving annual reviews of support plans	100%	99%	98.8%	99.1%	98.9%

Our performance continues at just below 100% reporting 99% in May. In April we set a new amber threshold of 99%. The team had a peak of cases to complete reviews over a limited period, but this peak has been smoothed. We are confident that vulnerable tenants are receiving regular contact based on a current assessment of their need.

3.7 Lettings and Voids

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Lettings and Voids					
Average re-let time in calendar days (key to key)	44	48	54	49.8	53.9

The average re-let time for council properties over the past quarter was 52.1 days and did not achieve the target of 44 days. This performance indicator is widely used by housing providers, and the target has been set to reflect national best practice. Good progress is being made towards achieving specific targets for both Major voids and Minor voids. However, there have been a higher proportion of major voids, which take longer, and this has a negative impact on the average re-let time which is why it is above target. This is a large area of work with approximately 100 voids every quarter. There are a number of challenges facing void work, particularly regarding some of the compliance issues, which are having an impact across the housing sector.

3.8 Housing Repairs

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Repairs					
Completion of housing emergency repairs within 24 hours	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%

Data for this indicator is taken from Open Contractor software system (which is used to hold repair jobs against the core property database). As reported in March and July, this data is unfortunately temporarily not currently available for reporting purposes. A detailed validation process has established that there are a number of data and software issues which are still being verified and work to resolve this is ongoing. Working with our software providers we hope to be able to report this data as soon as possible. We are confident that this is a data reporting issue and that our service delivery of repairs in the context of Covid restrictions remains good.

It should, however, be noted that all housing emergency repairs have continued to be undertaken during the Covid lockdown periods and there are no backlog emergency repairs outstanding. To support this view a manual exercise to reconcile the emergency jobs is now ongoing and has confirmed 100% attendance for emergency jobs.

It should also be noted that internal housing non-emergency repairs were placed on hold during the latest Covid lockdown period and that a backlog of these jobs has therefore inevitably arisen. MD group have been contracted to assist clearing the backlog.

3.9 Tenancy Management

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Tenancy Management					
Total new ASB cases in the month	n/a	n/a	8	6	2
Total number of ASB cases that were closed in the month	n/a	n/a	0	1	16
Number of ASB cases open on the last day of the month	n/a	n/a			50
Number of new ASB cases reported per 1,000 properties	n/a	n/a			0.04
Number safeguarding referrals	n/a	n/a	0	2	0

ASB - These figures represent “high level” ASB cases opened and closed in the month. We are happy with our performance in this area but ideally would like the numbers to be as low as possible. Work has commenced to start recording lower-level nuisance/ASB cases so that these can be reported and provide a more detailed picture of nuisance/ASB on estates. We are working closely with the ASB team to refine our data for ASB and confirm the figures that our reports are providing. This work is ongoing and accounts for the gaps in the data above.

Safeguarding – We currently raise low numbers of safeguarding referrals to Somerset County Council. This quarter they have been particularly low with just 2 referrals in the quarter. Where we do have concerns, we will frequently help to address these through a multi-agency approach to provide the required support and interventions to the affected households. We have just refreshed our Safeguarding Policy and are re-launching awareness and training in the Council to ensure that all incidents are identified and managed within policy.

3.10 Compliance

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Operations					
Compliance					
% of housing dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate (LGSR)	100%	n/a	100.00%	99.98%	100.00%
% of communal areas with a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) in place and FRA Review complete (where applicable)	100%	n/a	100.00%	98.59%	100.00%

There was a requirement to maintain gas safety inspections during lock down and we have successfully managed to maintain this apart from where Covid isolation or shielding has preventing access. July 2021 figures maintain this trend at 100%.

Our trend from last year of high performance with FRAs in place has continued, we have achieved 100% of communal areas with an FRA in place and FRA review complete at the end of the quarter. There was a slight dip in May 2021 however this was resolved a week later at the start of June.

The 100% performance of both indicators has continued for July and August.

3.11 Development

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21
Development					
Number of SWT HRA new home completions since April 2019	1000 by 2049	20 per year	62	62	62

62 new homes have completed since April 2019, the performance indicates this cumulative number of homes built. Contractors are now onsite delivering 47 new properties in North Taunton. In June 2021 planning permission has been secured for 54 new homes at Seaward Way in Minehead.

4 Finance Performance

- 4.1** This report provides an update on the projected outturn financial position of the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year 2021/22 (as at 30 June 2021).
- 4.2** The revenue position is under significant pressure as it continues to be affected by the ongoing impact of COVID and operating within an environment of economic recovery. The service has a backlog of responsive and planned maintenance and compliance works to be undertaken. Costs are escalating in terms of materials, staffing, compliance, and servicing costs. Future financial pressures are still to be confirmed in terms of staff pay award, income collection, cost of implementing regulatory changes, and the cost of implementing a unitary authority. A thorough analysis of risks and uncertainties facing the HRA has been undertaken and careful monitoring of these will continue for early indications of emerging financial pressures.
- 4.3** There is currently sufficient capacity in general reserves to cover new in-year pressures identified to date and the current forecast outturn position. However, this significantly reduces the HRA's headroom to react to any new pressures that may emerge in this or future financial years.
- 4.4** Whilst best endeavours to forecast with as much accuracy as possible we have seen a historical change in forecasts each quarter and to year end. However, action is required to control spending to ensure the outturn is on or close to budget.

- 4.5 The housing senior management team are currently working through options to see what can be done to contain the overall position.
- 4.6 The current HRA Revenue Budget forecast is a projected overspend of £610k.
- 4.7 The HRA Capital Programme has a total approved budget of £118m. The profiled budgeted spend for 2021/22 is £29m and this is currently forecast to underspend by £7.7m.
- 4.8 The unearmarked reserves are projected to be £2.273m which is £273k above the recommended minimum balance of £2m.
- 4.9 The earmarked reserves opening balance is £1.1m. It is proposed that £869k of earmarked reserve balances will be returned to general reserves to mitigate in-year budget pressures.

Democratic Path:

- **Monthly Housing Performance Meeting – 21st September 2021**
- **Tenants Strategic Board – 27 Sept 2021**

Reporting Frequency: Quarterly

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