

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Tenants Strategic Group – 24 January 2022

2021/22 Housing Scorecard Quarter 2

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 through key performance measures and financial information for the second quarter of 21/22 (July-Sept 2021).

2 Recommendations

2.1 To note content of the housing scorecard for quarter 2 (July-September) 2021.

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 September 2021 covering the performance in Q1 2021 (April-June). This report covers the second 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 18 measures. Customer 5, Rent Recovery 2, Supported Housing 1, Lettings and Voids 1, Housing Repairs 2, Tenancy Management 4, Compliance 2, Development 1.

3.4 **Customer**

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Customer					
% of complaints closed in 10 working days (as per policy)	100%	95%	80%	69%	75%

Improvement in complaint response times has fluctuated 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. September saw a recovery in performance in this indicator.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Customer					
% of new tenants satisfied with the lettable standard of the property	85%	82%	100%	92%	100%

During July, August and September 2021 we “let” 20, 25 and 23 properties respectively. Satisfaction surveys are sent to all new tenants. Satisfaction remains high, a small dip was experienced in August where we received 13 responses and 12 were satisfied or very satisfied. This is still well above target. In July we had 11 responses all either satisfied or very satisfied and similarly in September 13 responses responded with either satisfied or very satisfied.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Customer					
% of tenants satisfied with most recent repair	85%	78%	100%	84%	90%

We continue to use an electronic questionnaire sent to repair customers as soon as the repair completes. There is a technical problem (currently being fixed) that prevents up to date mobile numbers populating this area of the system but where we can send surveys we do so. Over the three months 24, 37 and 32 responses were received. Results returned indicate high levels of satisfaction except for a small dip in August. It is encouraging to note that those who choose to respond are responding positively.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Customer					
Number of compliments received	n/a	n/a	6	5	9

We have been receiving a steady number of compliments recorded formally since July 2020.

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-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	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Operations					
Rent Recovery					
Income collected as a % of rent owed excluding arrears brought forward	99%	98%	92.94%	98.85%	98.90%
Total number of all evictions	n/a	n/a	0	0	1

The performance decreased in July but has recovered in the two following months. Rent arrears at the end of September 2021 were reported as £653,502 which is 2.5% of rents owed.

There have been 2 evictions since April 2021, both are due to rent arrears.

3.6 Supported Housing

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Operations					
Supported Housing					
Sheltered housing - % of tenants receiving annual reviews of support plans	100%	99%	99.0%	99.2%	99.1%

Our performance continues at just below 100% reporting 99%. 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	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Operations					
Lettings and Voids					
Average re-let time in calendar days (key to key)	44	48	50.3	53	56.4

This performance indicator is widely used by housing providers, and the target has been set to reflect national best practice however many providers are reporting increasing voids turnaround times. There remains a higher proportion of major voids (which are properties requiring extensive work prior to relet). Our minor voids re-let time is nearer

target at 46.8 days). Detailed analysis has taken place in terms of the reasons for the delays and in each case (where longer times are reported) there are valid and varied reasons for those delays. Reasons for the delays range from delays allocating extra care properties, shortage of electrical contractors, awaiting asbestos surveys. The proportion of dwellings vacant but available to let was 0.35% which is top quartile performance against other providers taking part in “Pulse” benchmarking.

3.8 Housing Repairs

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Operations					
Housing Repairs					
Completion of housing emergency repairs within 24 hours	100%	95%	100%	100.00%	99.60%

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 non emergency repair reporting purposes. A detailed validation process has established that there are a number of data and software issues which are being progressed 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. The 99.6% reported in September represents one property that had its emergency repair completed 15 minutes late.

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	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21
Operations					
Tenancy Management					
Total new ASB cases in the month	n/a	n/a	10	9	12
Total number of ASB cases that were closed in the month	n/a	n/a	0	0	3
Number of ASB cases open on the last day of the month	n/a	n/a	60	69	78
Number safeguarding referrals	n/a	n/a	3	1	1

ASB - These figures represent “high level” ASB cases opened and closed in the month. We are content 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.

During the November Tenants’ Strategic Group meeting more detailed data was reported in response to requests for more data showing the number of ASB cases open over 3, 6 and 12 months. It is acknowledged that we have seen an increase in the number, complexity and severity of ASB cases over the last 12 months.

Safeguarding – We currently raise low numbers of safeguarding referrals to Somerset County Council. This quarter we have made 5 referrals. 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 are launching awareness and training in the Council to ensure that all incidents are identified and managed within policy (this was delayed due to trainer falling ill with Covid).

3.10 Compliance

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

We are pleased to report 100% compliance in these areas.

3.11 Development

Indicator	Target 2021-22	Amber Threshold	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-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 was secured for 54 new homes at Seaward Way in Minehead.

4 **Finance Performance (to be updated if finance is to be included)**

- 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 September 2021).
- 4.2 The current HRA Revenue Budget forecast is a projected overspend of £566k.
- 4.3 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 further financial pressures.
- 4.4 There is currently sufficient capacity in general reserves to cover new in-year pressures identified to date and the current forecast outturn position.
- 4.5 The unearmarked reserves are projected to be £2.493m which is £492k above the recommended minimum balance of £2m.
- 4.6 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, it is essential that action is implemented in the remainder of this year to control spending to reduce the forecast overspend and maintain adequate reserves. The housing senior management team are currently working through options to see what can be done to contain the overall position.
- 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 in the year by £11.5m due to slippage of costs/works into 2022/23.

- 4.8 The earmarked reserves opening balance is £1.1m. Of this £869k has been returned to general reserves to mitigate in-year budget pressures. A further £175k is being proposed to be returned to general reserves.

Democratic Path:

- **Housing Briefing – 7th December 2021**
- **Tenants Strategic Board – 24th January 2022**

Reporting Frequency: Quarterly

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