



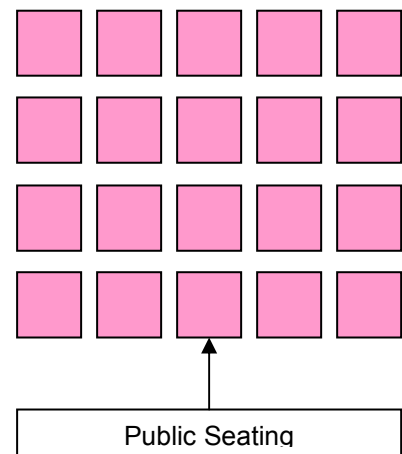
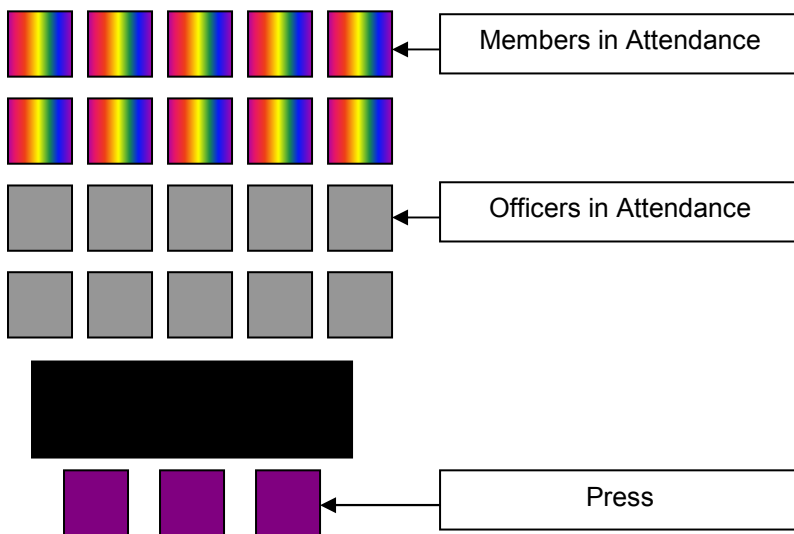
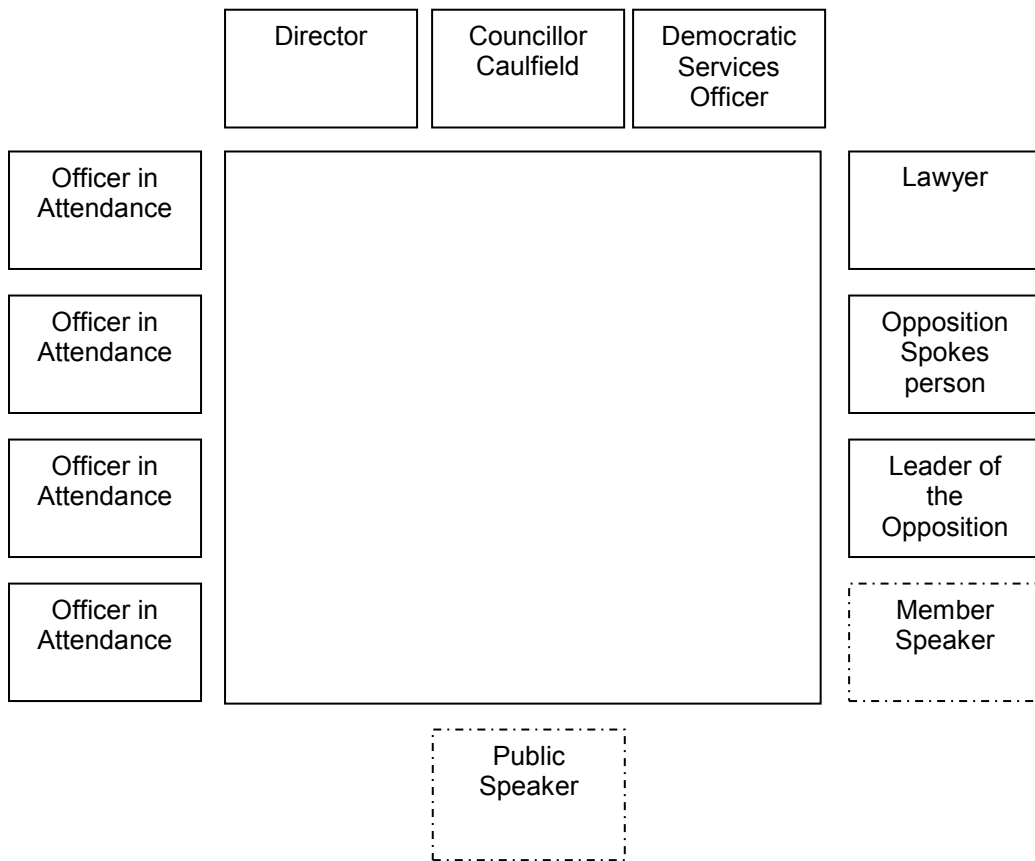
**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Cabinet Member Meeting

Title:	Housing Cabinet Member Meeting
Date:	22 July 2008
Time:	4.00pm
Venue	Committee Room 1, Hove Town Hall
Members:	Councillor: Caulfield (Cabinet Member) (or following the conclusion of the Housing Management Consultative Committee)
Contact:	Martin Warren Senior Democratic Services Officer 01273 291058 martin.warren@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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Democratic Services: Meeting Layout



AGENDA

15. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

- (a) Declarations of Interest by all Members present of any personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Members regard the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- (b) Exclusion of Press and Public - To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is exempt from disclosure and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

16. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1 - 6

To note the minutes of the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting held on 4 June 2008 (copy attached).

17. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

18. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- (a) Items reserved by the Cabinet Member
- (b) Items reserved by the Opposition Spokesperson
- (c) Items reserved by Members, with the agreement of the Cabinet Member.

NOTE: Public Questions, Written Questions from Councillors, Petitions, Deputations, Letters from Councillors and Notices of Motion will be reserved automatically.

19. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(the closing date for receipt of public questions is Tuesday 15 July).

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

20. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

(the closing date for receipt of written questions from councillors is 10.00am on Thursday 10 July).

No questions had been received by the date of publication.

21. PETITIONS

22. DEPUTATIONS

(the closing date for receipt of deputations is noon on Tuesday 15 July.)

23. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

(the closing date for receipt of letters from councillors is 10.00am on Thursday 10 July).

No letters had been received by the date of publication.

24. NOTICES OF MOTIONS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

No Notices of Motion have been received.

25. MATTERS REFERRED FOR RECONSIDERATION

No matters have been referred.

26. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

No reports have been received.

27. HOUSING GREEN PAPER OPTIONS STAGE 1 REPORT 7 - 18

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Martin Reid *Tel:* 29-3321

Ward Affected: All Wards

28. TENDER FOR A CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF A SECURITY WHEEL CLAMPING SERVICE WITHIN BRIGHTON & HOVE 19 - 28

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: David Rook *Tel:* 29-3271

Ward Affected: All Wards

29. HOUSING STRATEGY 2008-2013: HEALTHY HOMES, HEALTHY LIVES, HEALTHY CITY 29 - 34

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: Andy Staniford *Tel:* 29-3159

Ward Affected: All Wards

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

30. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT 35 - 74

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: *John Austin-Locke* Tel: 29-1008

31. EXTERNAL ENVELOPE REPAIRS TO SOMERSET & WILTSHIRE HOUSE 2008 75 - 78

Report of the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing (copy attached).

Contact Officer: *Simon Throp* Tel: 29-6806

Ward Affected: *Queen's Park*

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fifth working day before the meeting.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Martin Warren, (01273 291058, email martin.warren@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication - Tuesday, 15 July 2008

Item 16 on agenda

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00PM, 4 JUNE 2008

ROOM ONE HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Caulfield, Cabinet Member for Housing.

Also in attendance:

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mears, Leader.

Other Members: Councillors; Simpson (Opposition Spokesperson), Elgood, Morgan and Wrighton.

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declarations of Interests

1a.1 There were none.

1b Exclusion of Press and Public

1b.1 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A, Part 5A, Section 100A(4) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

1b.2 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the Terms of Reference of the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting (for copy see minute book).

2.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Terms of Reference be noted.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Committee held on 27 March 2008 be noted
- 3.2 In response to questions from the Opposition Spokesperson the Cabinet Member explained that written reports on the Housing Green Paper and the Procurement Strategy would be considered by both the Housing Management Consultative Committee and the Housing Cabinet Member meeting in due course.
- 3.3 Cabinet Member was aware of issues being discussed in the press and local community about Sheltered Housing. Formal feedback from the Sheltered Housing Focus Group and related matters would be considered by the appropriate body in due course.

4 CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet Member welcomed everyone to the inaugural Housing Cabinet Member Meeting introducing officers and members.
- 4.2 Cabinet Member noted that the agenda for the first meeting was slight as it was planned that everyone could take the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new arrangements.
- 4.3 Cabinet Member noted that housing would remain client focussed, with tenants at the heart of housing management.

5 ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- 5.1 **RESOLVED** – All items were reserved for discussion.

6 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 6.1 There were none.

7 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 7.1 The Cabinet Member reported that one written question had been received from Councillor Morgan.
- 7.2 Councillor Morgan asked the following question:

'Following the focus group review, can the Cabinet Member for Housing confirm that an estate warden is being appointed to cover the Craven Vale estate, and give a date for that warden taking up his/her post please?'

7.3 The Cabinet Member replied,

'In Autumn 2007, a short-term focus group of residents was established at the request of the Chairman of Housing to review the Estates Service, on a citywide basis. The results of this review were presented to Housing Management Sub-Committee in January 2008.

The main role of a Community Warden is to link local communities with the council and other organisations and act as the 'eyes and ears' of the housing management service. The residents' focus group reported the following findings in relation to the post of Community Warden:

- That residents' experiences of Community Wardens varied widely across the city, from excellent to unsatisfactory
- That the work of the Community Wardens has more in common with the work of the local housing offices than the Estates Service
- That parts of the Community Wardens' job description duplicates tasks carried out by other people working in the same communities e.g. PCSOs, Mobile Wardens and Housing Officers.

To address these issues, the focus group recommended that the post of Community Warden was moved from the Estates Service and reviewed. Community Wardens and tenancy management staff welcomed this proposal and the opportunity to work more closely together.

Following the focus group, the Community Warden post for Craven Vale was kept vacant whilst a detailed review of the Estate Service took place to introduce the recommendations of the focus group. The outcome of this exercise would be reported to the Housing Management Consultative Committee and Housing Cabinet Members Meeting.

As an interim measure, the Community Warden for the Albion Hill area was covering the Craven Vale area. From this June, fortnightly surgeries were being held at a community centre in Craven Vale. The warden would also have weekly meetings with the Housing Officer for Craven Vale and spend between one and two days per week on the Craven Vale estate. These arrangements would continue until the Estate Service review was completed.'

- 7.4 Councillor Morgan asked a supplementary question noting the length of time afforded to the review and asked if it could genuinely be considered 'short-term'.
- 7.5 Cabinet Member responded that getting the service right was key, and that the long-term outcome was more important than making a quick decision. The length of the review was in part, due to the summer recess and the timetabling of decision-making meetings. She concluded that the interim arrangements had been provided in recognition of the extensive review and that Tenants would continue to monitor the service once the review had concluded.

8 PETITIONS

- 8.1 There were none.

9 DEPUTATIONS

- 9.1 The Cabinet Member reported that two Deputations had been received. The first Deputation concerned 40 & 50 Brunswick Place, Hove and had been presented at Council on 24 April 2008 by Mr. Pope.
- 9.2 The Cabinet Member welcomed Mr Pope to the meeting and noted the deputation as presented at Council. She explained that a cross-party working group had been set up to look at the area as a whole and would meet in June.

Discussions were taking place with Hove YMCA and the Children and Young Peoples Trust Board regarding management of the property.

Since the incident with a tenant prior to Easter the buildings continued to be managed as general needs temporary accommodation.

Overnight security had continued and there had been no further serious incidents of nuisance at either properties.

Since April a few issues which had been reported and resolved forthwith.

A tenant who caused the damage immediately prior to Easter was removed and legal action was being fast-tracked. Repairs at the property were near completion.

- 9.3 Mr Pope thanked the Cabinet Member for her comments.
- 9.4 The second Deputation concerned consultants, targets and 'value for money' and had been presented at Council on 24 April 2008 by Mr. Melson.
- 9.5 The Cabinet Member welcomed Mr Melson to the meeting and noted the deputation as presented at Council.
- 9.6 She confirmed that consultants would only be appointed following approval of a clear business case and cost benefit analysis. Members would not make unnecessary use consultants, preferring to maximise officers' expertise and experience. Cabinet Member was committed to reducing the costs of consultancy fees in housing revenue and accounts budgets by £20M over the life of the thirty year business plan.

9.7 Cabinet Member was committed to ensuring Housing Management services improved and would use targets to measure improvement, though she agreed that targets should not be overused. It was acknowledged that reaching a target did not always accurately reflect customer values. Cabinet Member was keen to maintain open dialogue with customers to set local performance targets and ensure that performance reports were discussed at the new Housing Management Consultative Committee.

9.8 Mr Melson thanked the Cabinet Member for her comments.

10 LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

10.1 There were none.

11 NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

11.1 There were none.

12 MATTERS REFERRED FOR RECONSIDERATION

12.1 There were none.

13 REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13.1 There were none.

14 REPORT OF THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE 11 MARCH 2008

14.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the decisions taken by the Housing Management Sub-Committee on 11 March 2008 (for copy see minute book).

14.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4.25 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2008

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 27

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Housing Green Paper Options Stage 1 Report
Date of Meeting: 22 July 2008
Report of: Director of Adult Social Care and Housing
Contact Officer: Martin Reid Tel: 29-3321
E-mail: Martin.reid@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Key Decision: Yes Forward Plan No: Cab 2165
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The council has reviewed the options set out in the Government's Housing Green Paper *Homes for the Future: more affordable, more sustainable*, with the support of external financial and legal expertise from Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) and Trowers & Hamlins (Trowers). Stage 1 – the detailed assessment of options for meeting the council's strategic objectives and development of a proposal for the council to set up a viable Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) that meets these objectives – has now been completed.
- 1.2 The joint analysis undertaken by PwC and Trowers concludes that there is a range of workable options for an LDV to meet the council's corporate priorities and strategic housing objectives. Financial modelling undertaken by PwC indicates there is the potential for a viable business model which could raise up to £45 million for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Housing approves to proceed to the proposed development and finalisation phases of Stage 2 of this review and authorises the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing to take all steps necessary to progress the work.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member for Housing notes that any decision to implement the finalised proposals would be made by Cabinet and the Cabinet Member for Housing further notes the provisional outline timetable to set up any asset-backed LDV, as outlined in section 3.17 of this report.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member for Housing approves consultation arrangements with tenant and leaseholder representatives before the Cabinet takes any final decision to establish an LDV, as outlined in section 4 of this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1 Following the outcome of the tenants' stock transfer ballot, officers have reviewed strategic housing options to reflect the decision that the stock will be retained by the council. The objectives for this review are:

- (1) To obtain best value from assets;
- (2) To bring in additional investment;
- (3) To meet housing need;
- (4) To promote regeneration; and
- (5) To assist with meeting Decent Homes.

3.2 Given tenants' overwhelming rejection of the stock transfer proposal, the council is also very clear there should be:

- (1) No RSL involvement;
- (2) No freehold transfer; and
- (3) No transfer of tenanted properties.

3.3 In parallel, the Government has been setting out various options for local authorities to play a stronger role in addressing the housing needs of all their residents. The Housing Green Paper *Homes for the Future: more affordable, more sustainable*, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in July 2007, outlines various types of local delivery or similar special purpose vehicle councils could set up to make the most of existing homes and land to lever in investment. Fourteen councils are in the process of creating Local Housing Companies with government support via English Partnerships and another 14 Community Land Trusts are also being piloted.

3.4 In light of that consultation paper, and in response to notices of motion to Policy & Resources Committee in November 2007 concerning Community Land Trusts, Housing Management Sub-Committee, Housing Committee and Policy & Resources Committee were updated on the range of opportunities offered in the Housing Green Paper.

3.5 At Housing Management Sub-Committee on 11 March, Housing Committee on 27 March and Policy & Resources Committee on 3 April 2008 members noted:

- (1) the range of options and opportunities offered in the Housing Green paper and that these were to be examined in detail in order to ascertain whether a sustainable case could be made for further development in order to support strategic housing and other priorities in the City;

- (2) that external financial and legal advice was being sought in order to support officers to undertake detailed analysis of the practicalities of taking forward any Housing Green Paper options or opportunities; and
- (3) that the Chairman of Housing was committed to ensuring that a detailed report on this analysis of options be brought forward through the council decision making process and the case made to enable the further development of any appropriate model.
- 3.6 PwC and Trowers successfully tendered in a competitive procurement process and were appointed as financial and legal advisers for Stage 1. Their role is to support officers in the assessment of options with their specialist expertise and financial modelling. Both firms have extensive experience of advising local authorities on setting up LDVs to meet their housing priorities. They also liaise directly with government departments on the new models being developed to access funding for investment in housing without the need to use (or transfer stock to) RSLs.
- 3.7 The council's brief set out the objectives for the review, together with the requirement that there should be no RSL involvement, no freehold transfer and no transfer of tenanted properties (see paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 above). In addition, the council would work within the limit under the relevant legislation of letting an LDV use a maximum of 499 empty properties over a five year period.
- 3.8 PwC and Trowers' analysis of the options and opportunities referred to in the Housing Green Paper started with an assessment against key criteria to filter out those options which are not appropriate to meet the council's current objectives. Those options which are not suitable for the proposed scale of the project were discounted at this stage. This analysis and the criteria used are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.9 After consideration, Community Land Trusts (CLTs) were not recommended as the appropriate initial vehicle. The primary purpose of CLTs is to hold land and other assets to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability of a specified local geographical community, usually at neighbourhood level. Increased land value is retained and reused by the CLT for the benefit of its community. Members of the CLT would normally be drawn from the local community, as would a significant proportion of the board, and the CLT would report to the local community and be accountable to it in a variety of ways. As investment is required across the council's stock, it would be difficult to create the local geographic focus that is suggested for a CLT at this time. However, three potential options were identified for including CLTs at a later date and these are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 3.10 The advisers concluded that there is a range of workable options for an LDV to meet the council's objectives, including a variety of both potential delivery structures and of the legal form an LDV could take. In particular, advice has been received on local authority control over the LDV which

would impact on the classification, powers to facilitate the setting up of an LDV, the benefits and restrictions of charitable status and procurement and contracting issues. There are a number of choices which the council can make as to the LDV's set up and relationship with the council, which would be taken during Stage 2 of the review.

- 3.11 Financial modelling indicates a proposed business model could be viable. The model is based on the council initially leasing to the LDV 106 HRA units currently used for Temporary Accommodation, followed by up to a maximum of 393 empty HRA properties over a 5 year period. The model includes a payment by the LDV to the council of c. £92,000 per property leased, a total capital receipt of up to £45 million into the HRA. This receipt would be exempt from the government's pooling of housing capital receipts regime provided the council passes a resolution to use the receipt for affordable housing - which could include improvements to existing HRA stock - or for regeneration projects.
- 3.12 The Temporary Accommodation units are scattered street properties owned by the HRA, many having shared facilities and high maintenance and repair requirements. They are currently occupied by non-secure tenants, whose tenancy lasts around six months on average. Other HRA properties which may be identified as suitable for leasing could include units currently held empty due to the need for funding for major repairs. Leasing of any HRA properties would require the consent of the Secretary of State and full Council.
- 3.13 The maximum number of units for leasing to an LDV over a five year period would represent only 4% of HRA stock and a small proportion of turnover of affordable social rented housing in the city; by way of illustration, 782 council homes were let in the last financial year (excluding Temporary Accommodation). In addition, the city's supply of affordable rented housing is projected to increase by over 500 new properties over the coming four years, subject to planning consent etc., plus other social housing development in the pipeline for that period.
- 3.14 As well as providing funding for the HRA, the model includes provision for the LDV to refurbish the leased properties. The refurbished leased stock would be used to provide a stable supply of good quality accommodation to homeless households and other clients for whom the council has a duty to provide housing, from the Children and Young People's Trust, Learning Disabilities and Adult Social Care. The council would have nomination rights to the leased properties and there is an option for the council to be the landlord for a proportion of these tenancies, under a leaseback scheme.
- 3.15 In conclusion, Stage 1 of the review indicates that there is potentially an economically viable, legally robust way of achieving the council's objectives while working within the parameters set – in particular, that there should be no freehold transfer, no RSL involvement or transfer of tenanted stock. The proposed model could deliver:
- up to £45 million capital receipts to the HRA;
 - funding to refurbish leased stock; and

- a stable supply of temporary accommodation for homeless households and other groups for whom the council has a duty to provide housing.
- 3.16 The practicalities of taking forward any Housing Green Paper options have been analysed and a sustainable case has been made for further development of this model in order to support strategic housing and other priorities in the city. The next step is to progress this work to enable the council to select a structure and vehicle tailor made to fit the council's specific financial circumstances and strategic objectives.
- 3.17 The provisional timetable for Stage 2 of the project is to develop and finalise the proposals over the summer and early autumn, after rigorous testing of assumptions and assessment of the impact on the LDV, HRA and General Fund. Housing Management Consultative Committee and Area Panels are to be consulted on the finalised proposal in the autumn, prior to seeking Cabinet Member for Housing's approval and the Cabinet taking the final decision whether to establish an LDV later this financial year.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Leader of the council has stated her commitment to openness and transparency with tenants on proposals for the future of the housing stock. The proposal to review Housing Green Paper options was presented to and agreed by Housing Management Sub-Committee at its meeting on 11 March 2008, with tenant representatives in attendance.
- 4.2 The Housing Management Consultative Committee will consider the report on the outcome of Stage 1 of the review prior to the Cabinet Member for Housing meeting. HMCC will be asked to note the progress of the review and proposed timetable, consultation and decision-making arrangements and to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Housing approves to proceed to the proposed development and finalisation phases of Stage 2 of this review and authorises the Director of Adult Social Care and Housing to take all steps necessary to progress the work.
- 4.3 Area Panels and the Housing Management Consultative Committee will be consulted on finalised proposals before approval is sought to set up, or lease any council stock to, any LDV.

FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The Base case financial model and business case developed as part of Stage 1 includes a number of key assumptions. These assumptions, which include asset values, conversion costs, revenue flows, funding costs and operational costs will need to be vigorously tested and refined to establish a final business case that is sufficiently robust to be used to secure competitive commercial funding for the LDV. This work will form part of the

Stage 2 process should the Cabinet Member for Housing agree to proceed to the next stage.

The Stage 1 financial model is based on the council granting 125 year leases to the LDV with the option of a break clause after 30 years. The model projects debt outstanding at 30 years of c £40 million. The LDV would therefore need to refinance the outstanding debt at year 30.

Key project risks identified by PwC and Trowers will be fully assessed in the course of Stage 2.

Peter Sargent, Loans and Technical Manager, Strategic Finance

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The recommendations in this report require the progress to date on seeking a suitable LDV model to be noted and authority to progress the work to the next stage. The LDV model selected during Stage 2 will not proceed to implementation without consultation with tenants and Cabinet approval, thus at this stage there are no further legal implications arising from the report itself. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report

Alison Leitch, Contract Lawyer

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct equalities implications to this report. Eventual actions in regard to the Housing Green Paper will be taken with regard to equalities issues.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The proposal to pursue the setting up of an LDV, enabling access to funding to refurbish properties and meet strategic housing needs, would contribute to achieving the following council priorities to address sustainability as an integral part of all service delivery and contribute to the UK's Sustainable Development Strategy:
- (1) *Sustainable Consumption and Production* - considering the impact of products and materials across a whole life cycle;
 - (2) *Climate Change and Energy* – greater fuel efficiency and reduction in CO2 emissions;
 - (3) *Sustainable Communities* - using engagement and partnership to reduce poverty and environmental degradation.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no implications for crime and disorder.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Risks and opportunities will be fully assessed when proposals are finalised during Stage 2. Key project risks include appropriate consents, availability of funding, EU procurement, interest rates, rental income and demand.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The outline proposal for setting up an LDV giving access to funding to refurbish up to 499 properties in need of investment would support the following council corporate priorities:
- (1) protect the environment whilst growing the economy;
 - (2) make better use of public money;
 - (3) reduce inequality by improving opportunities;
 - (4) open and effective city leadership.
- 5.8 The impact on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account will be fully worked through in detail during Stage 2.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 This information is contained within the report and appendix.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To proceed to the next stage of this key project to meet the council's corporate priorities and strategic housing objectives.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Stage 1: Analysis of Housing Green Paper options

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Stage 1: Analysis of Housing Green Paper options

1. PwC and Trowers started their analysis of the options and opportunities referred to in the Housing Green Paper with an assessment against key criteria to filter out those options which are not appropriate to meet the council's current objectives. Those options which are not suitable for the proposed scale of the project and were therefore discounted at this stage are as follows:
 - (1) Urban Regeneration Companies, which are focused on specific geographic areas in economic decline.
 - (2) Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), which are non departmental public bodies established under the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980 with a broad remit to secure the regeneration of their designated areas.
 - (3) City Development Companies, which relate to city or city-region wide economic development.
 - (4) Single Estate Transformation Models, which focus on estates and the establishment of sustainable mixed communities. This would be likely to involve selective demolition; provision of new housing supply for home-ownership, market sale and low-cost home ownership; social rented and possibly council housing. Provision of new local infrastructure would also be likely, such as a community centre, health centre, recreational facilities and open space.
 - (5) Community Land Trusts (CLTs) were not recommended as the appropriate initial vehicle due to their very local geographic focus. The primary purpose of CLTs is to hold land and other assets to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability of a specified local geographical community, usually at neighbourhood level. Increased land value is retained and reused by the CLT for the benefit of its community. Members of the CLT would normally be drawn from the local community, as would a significant proportion of the board, and the CLT would report to the local community and be accountable to it in a variety of ways. As investment is required across the council's stock, it would be difficult to create the local geographic focus that is suggested for a CLT. However, three possible options were identified for including CLTs into an LDV structure at a later date, set out in section 5 below.

CABINET MEMBER MEETING

2. Temporary to Settled Homes initiatives, which use rental income to repay borrowing that has been used to buy a home instead of going to a private landlord to pay for renting a property as temporary accommodation, were identified as possibly achievable but more difficult to deliver than some of the other viable options.
3. Local housing companies, local authority-owned companies, limited liability partnerships and strategic housing and regeneration partnerships met the initial assessment against key criteria and were then subjected to a more detailed analysis.

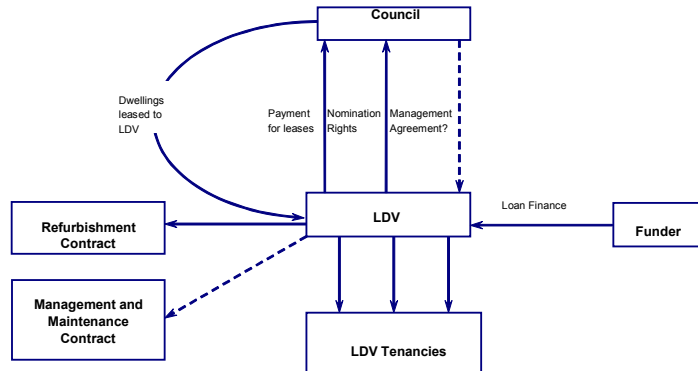
Assessment of LDV options against key criteria	Local Housing Company	Community Land Trust	Local Authority -Owned Company	Limited Liability Partnership	Strategic Housing and Regeneration Partnership	Urban Regeneration Company	Special Venture Vehicle	Urban Development Corporation	City Development Company	Single Estate Transformation Model	Temporary to settled initiatives
Suitable for proposed scale of project	✓	●	✓	✓	✓	✘	✓	✘	✘	✘	✓
Flexible and adaptable to meet future strategic objectives	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓**
Potential to help meet current investment gap	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Capable of raising finance	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓**
Able to support refurbishment costs to meet required standards	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Flexible to meet Council's responsibilities to a diverse range of client groups	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Enables fast delivery of project	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓**
Complementary to other Council strategic policies (e.g. Procurement)	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Within Council's powers	✓	n/a	✓	✓*	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Capable of satisfying VFM	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓

Legend

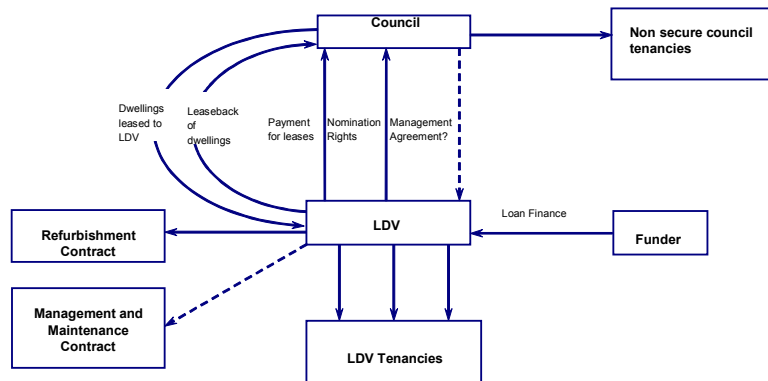
- This option has not been taken forward at this stage, but it has the potential for consideration in future projects.
- The council cannot set up the LDV as a Limited Liability Partnership solely to take advantage of this type of legal structure's potential tax efficiency.
- ** This option may be achievable but could be more difficult to deliver than some of the other viable options.

CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4. The proposed structure would be based on the following, with the council deciding on the legal form of the vehicle and whether it would be a charity during the course of Stage 2 of the review.



An alternative structure with a leaseback arrangement would be as follows:



5. The above structures and options would not preclude a CLT being introduced to play a part in the future. Three possible ways of bringing a CLT into the structure in the future were identified, as follows:

- (1) Passing on the council's freehold interest in leased properties to a CLT, leaving the LDV in place. This could be made difficult by funding issues and the LDV inhibiting the CLT's ability to exercise its community role.
- (2) Converting the LDV to a CLT. This could be impractical if the LDV's stock is scattered.
- (3) Passing the lease or a sub-lease on to one or more CLTs, which would become the landlord of the properties. This seems the most practicable option and it would be possible for the main lease between the council and LDV to permit sub-leases to CLTs.

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 28

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Tender of a Contract for the Provision of a Security Wheel Clamping Service within Brighton & Hove

Date of Meeting: 22 July 2008

Report of: Director of Adult Social Care & Housing

Contact Officer: Name: David Rook **Tel:** 29-3271

Head of Housing Management
(Central)

E-mail: david.rook@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Key Decision Yes **Forward Plan Reference:** HSG 2156

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 That the Housing Management Consultative Committee are invited to comment on the proposal to request permission to tender for a contract to provide a secure clamping service for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) managed car parking and garage areas let to licence holders. Permission is also sought that other directorates who would benefit from clamping on their land, for example office car parks, could use the service.
- 1.2 Clamping is currently used to protect 25 HRA parking sites as a deterrent to stop other drivers parking illegally. Other departments have also expressed an interest in utilising clamping to protect their own sites, for example Property and Design.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Cabinet Member approve the tendering for a Security Wheel Clamping Service within Brighton & Hove. This will enable these services to commence on 31 January 2009.
- 2.2 That the comments of the Housing Management Consultative Committee are noted at Housing Cabinet Member Meeting.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Clamping was introduced as a pilot scheme to HRA managed car parks in 2004 in order to address the continued problems experienced by residents who were renting spaces from the council but were frequently unable to access them due to illegally parked vehicles.

- 3.2 The pilot scheme was initially set up to run for one year. To date 25 housing sites have clamping provision, each one being set up in consultation with local residents associations.
- 3.3 Clamping has proven to be the most cost effective and efficient way of providing secure parking and has enabled the Housing Management division's Car Parks & Garages team to maximise income from many centrally located parking areas by ensuring that those who pay for their spaces are able to access them.
- 3.4 It has become apparent in recent months that there are other areas of the city that would benefit from inclusion in the clamping contract. As this current contract has been running for several years it is the right time to re tender in order to secure a well managed and cost efficient service for the council as a whole.
- 3.5 The existing contract for clamping on HRA land was terminated in November 2007 when the Clamping Contractor (SIG) withdrew services from the Brighton Area. There is an ad-hoc service currently in place which is provided by Guardian. This will be terminated once this contract has been awarded.
- 3.6 The proposed tender evaluation will be split 60/40. This split represents the quality of the service and the charges made to vehicle owners who are clamped, respectively.
- 3.7 The proposed contract will not provide clamping on public highways where parking enforcement is contracted out to NCP. It would instead be used to control parking on council owned sites such as car parking areas attached to offices and HRA land.
- 3.8 The proposed contract period is three years with an option to extend for a further one year at the council's discretion.
- 3.9 All contractors are required to be registered with the Security Industry Authority and operatives applying clamps are required to hold an individual license from under the terms of the Private Security Authority Act 2001.

3.10 The timetable for procurement and implementation of the contract is shown below. The contract would therefore be in place on 31 January 2009.

Task	Duration (days)	Start Date
Place Adverts in relevant journals	1	11/09/08
Receipt of expressions of interest	30	12/09/08
Evaluation of expressions of interest	15	13/10/08
Send out Tender Documentation	1	29/10/08
Receipt of Tenders	31	30/10/08
Evaluate Tenders	15	01/12/08
Award of contract	1	16/12/08
Handover period	45	17/12/08

3.11 This report was considered earlier this year by Housing & City Support DMT, TMT and P & R Chairs. Immediately before P & R Committee on 6 March 2008 a number of questions were raised by Councillors. It was felt prudent to withdraw the report in order to allow time to answers to those questions. Those questions related to:

- Consideration of an in-house clamping team (see Section 6)
- The appeals process (see below)
- The proposed release fee (see below)
- Concerns that the current contractor has been involved in the tender specification and may bid for the contract (see below)

3.12 **Appeals Process**

The current appeals process in the existing contract and in the draft contract specification has been agreed through the Car Parks and Garages Working Group. The group consists of 8 elected tenant and leaseholder representatives across the city.

3.13 In the first instance the complainant is required to appeal directly to the clamping company as they are in a position to investigate the matter. The contractor uses the appeal system as an opportunity to check that their patrol officers are carrying out the immobilisation of vehicles according to agreed policies and procedures and those of the client, in this case Brighton & Hove City Council.

3.14 Under the current arrangements Guardian have an appeals panel made up of four staff members including the Company Director who meet on a weekly basis to discuss any appeals that have been received. This meeting

considers appeals across all managed sites and not just those belonging to Brighton & Hove City Council. The evidence from each particular clamping incident is reviewed including timed photographs of the vehicle. These cover the time it was discovered and the time of clamping; their decision is based on this evidence and the circumstances surrounding the incident in question. A letter confirming the outcome is then sent directly to the claimant.

- 3.15 For Housing Management sites and in instances where the appeal has been turned down the letter from Guardian contains the following paragraph:

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your appeal you can make a formal complaint to Brighton & Hove City Council. The address to write to is Brighton and Hove City Council Standards and Complaints Team FREEPOST SEA2560 BRIGHTON BN1 1ZW or by email to complaints@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

- 3.16 Once the complaint is received a further investigation is undertaken including requesting copies of all documentation, timings and photographic evidence from the clamping company. Thereafter a decision as to whether the clamp was applied in accordance with the contract and Housing Management's arrangements with the contractors. The decision to clamp will either be upheld or rebuked. If it is rebuked the clamping charge is refunded in full. If the vehicle owner is not happy with the response at this stage they may escalate their complaint to Stage 2 of the corporate complaints procedure and can ultimately request an Ombudsman enquiry.
- 3.17 On balance it is important that the contractor initially reviews if the clamp was applied correctly and only after that is the independent review carried out by a council officer.

3.18 **The Proposed Release Fee**

The proposed release fee has also been agreed by the Car Parks and Garages Working Group and will initially remain at the current level of £100. There will be scope within the contract to raise the release fee to £125, which is in accordance with recommendations from the British Parking Association.

3.19 **Consultation with Guardian in Drawing up the Contract Specification**

Concerns were expressed that the previous report (Section 4) refers to Guardian being involved in the consultation process. This is perhaps an erroneous statement and apologies are offered for any confusion officers may have caused. Guardian were brought in to provide a clamping service to Housing sites after the original contractors, Security International Group, withdrew from the Brighton area at very short notice in November 2007.

- 3.20 At that time Housing Management were already considering retendering the contract and had a new draft contract in place. This had been agreed

internally and by the Tenant and Leaseholder Car Parks and Garages Working Group. Guardian were asked for their views on the new contract and any operational issues it may have raised. No changes were made to the draft contract specification as a result of this discussion. Guardian have not been involved in the writing of the contract or been consulted in any way other than described.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1

Consultation is currently underway with a view to determining:

- A specification with quality criteria which meets stakeholder needs
- Evaluation criteria and weighting for determining the most economically advantageous tender (an appropriate mix of cost and quality)

4.2

Those who have been, or who are, involved in the consultation process include:

- Current contractor
- Similar Local Authorities
- Stakeholders – Car Parks & Garages Working Group (made up of tenants and leaseholder representatives and council staff).

4.3

Other departments who have expressed an interest in joining this contract include Housing Strategy, Adult Social Care and Property and Design. Examples of the sites where clamping would be desirable include the car park attached to offices at 86 Denmark Villas, Hove; New Steine Hostel, Brighton; commercially let car parking spaces in Chapel Street, Brighton.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1

There will be no direct costs to the council in operating a security wheel clamping service, the contract will be funded by the contractor keeping the revenue generated by the service. There will be some internal staff time required to manage the contract but this will be absorbed within existing staffing resources. This is a 3-year contract with the option to extend for a further 1 year.

The contract will allow the Housing Revenue Account to maximise the income from its car parks, as the service will minimise illegal parking.

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks, Principal Accountant Date: 31 March 2008

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Despite the zero value of this contract to the council, it should be tendered in accordance with a contract that is above the EU threshold for services contracts. The procurement strategy and the procurement timetable as set out in the report comply with both the EU procurement legislation and the council's Contract Standing Orders. The council must also take the Human Rights Act 1998 into account in respect of its actions, but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Section 21(1) of the Housing Act 1985 empowers council to control parking on HRA land. (Akumah -v- Hackney LBC)

Lawyer consulted: Alison Leitch Date: 25 May 2007

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An equalities impact assessment has not been carried out on the current clamping service.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are no direct sustainability implications.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Car parking is often a contentious issue and can lead to disorder when a resident cannot access the space for which they are paying. Clamping will ensure there is a real deterrent to prevent illegal parking, particularly for spaces that are let and managed by Housing Management.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The Key Risks are: -
- Failure to let the contract
 - Failure to provide the service and protect licence holders spaces
 - Failure to manage this contract effectively leading to complaints

- Failure to maximise income for housing management in terms of unprotected spaces being unlet.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The contract supports the council's need to supply parking for specific workers and service providers through the council as well as in HRA owned car parks. The contract will not be used to protect the public highway.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 Consideration of an in-house bid

The council does not have an in-house clamping team. This service has always been contracted out to a professional clamping company. Although there has not been full consideration of the legal, practical and financial issues in setting up an in-house unit it is not felt such a team, dealing with council owned car parks, would be the most cost effective way to provide clamping protection where it is required. This is because the clamping contractors are required to provide: a 24-hour service for 365 days of the year; vehicles; towing facilities; signage; vehicle storage facilities; equipment; insurance; fuel; personnel; management support; training. The overheads are likely to be far higher than the income from this single contract. There is then a requirement to attract an existing company that can add B&HCC sites to its current operation and benefit from economies of scale which would not be available to an in-house team.

- 6.2 To help illustrate this point the basic costs of leasing a van and providing a 24 hour service using scale 4 operatives are shown below. These costs do not include the various other expenses set out above.

Cost of leasing a van	£2,448
Costs for front line personnel	£131,184*

* This includes the council's responsibilities in terms of National Insurance and pension contributions. It also takes account of enhancements set out in the green book, which confirms:

- Time and a third is paid for working between 8.00 pm and 6.00 am
- Time and half is paid for working weekends and bank holidays

- 6.3 It is estimated that current contract covering Housing Revenue Account sites will generate an income of £64,000 per year. There is some interest from

other departments to introduce clamping and there are opportunities to maximise income. It is not known how many new sites would be included if a corporate clamping scheme were introduced or how much income will be generated. From the illustration above it is evident that the income would need to be more than double for an in-house team to break even. There is then an inherent risk that such a team could be a financial burden to both the HRA and the General Fund, at least in the early years when the scheme is expanding.

- 6.4 If the proposals contained in this report are agreed the council may wish to revisit an in-house team towards the end of the contract. This would allow the successful contractor to take on the risks of maximising income to the point where an in-house team could take over and enjoy a profit.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To continue to protect car parking spaces that are let and managed by the HRA on HRA land
- 7.2 To allow other department to benefit from a clamping service.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

There are none

Documents In Members' Rooms

- 1.
- 2.

Background Documents

There are none

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 29

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Strategy 2008-2013: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city		
Date of Meeting:	22 July 2008		
REPORT OF:	Director of Adult Social Care & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Andy Staniford	Tel: 29-3159
	E-mail:	andy.staniford@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision	Yes	Forward Plan Reference: 2160	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report is focussed on the development of the draft Housing Strategy and the draft specialist housing strategies relating to Older People, the city's BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities and the city's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) communities.
- 1.2 Development of these strategies began in 2007 to replace the previous Strategy that was developed in 2001 and updated in 2004. This report is to inform Housing Management Consultative Committee (HMCC) of the strategic development process and invite their participation in upcoming consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Cabinet Member note the progress on the development of the city-wide Housing Strategy 2008–2013 and the consultation undertaken to date.
- 2.2 That the Housing Cabinet Member note the engagement of the Housing Management Consultative Committee and tenant representatives in detailed consultation / review of the draft Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy, BME Housing Strategy and LGBT Housing Strategy.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 Our last housing strategy was developed in 2001 and updated in 2004. The development of our new housing strategy began in 2007.
- 3.2 To ensure our services are working together as effectively as possible, the development of the new housing strategy has been the springboard for a larger strategy development and consultation review. This review is covering 8 key strategy and service areas during 2007 and 2008:

Overarching Housing Strategy

- Housing Strategy 2008-2013: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city
- BME People's Housing Strategy
- Older People's Housing Strategy
- LGBT People's Housing Strategy

Core Strategies

- Supporting People 5-year Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy

Homelessness Sub Strategies

- Single Homeless Strategy
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy

3.3 This report is focussed on the overarching Housing Strategy and the specialist strategies relating to Older People, the city's BME communities and the city's LGBT communities that are being developed in recognition of the particular needs faced by these groups. These strategies are currently in development and will be submitted for approval later in the current year.

3.4 The strategy development timetable was stretched to take advantage of new government guidance that was expected in June 2008. Unfortunately, as a result of the announcement in May that the housing reform green paper is due to be published towards the end of 2008, it is now unknown if this guidance will be produced. However, our planned timetable will now allow us to reflect in the strategy relevant parts of the green paper and also the Community Empowerment, Housing and Economic Regeneration Bill expected shortly.

3.5 The Homelessness Strategy, Supporting People Strategy Review and Temporary Accommodation Strategy were approved at Housing Committee in March 2008.

3.6 We recognise that housing plays an important part of all aspects of people's lives, particularly health and wellbeing. To support the new strategy the Primary Care Trust is carrying out a Health Impact Assessment on the city's housing stock and housing needs. The results of this assessment are helping us to ensure that our strategy and action plans contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

3.7 Day to day management of the strategy development process has been overseen by the Strategic Housing Partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership which has been acting as the Project Board.

3.8 The Housing Strategy 2008-2013: healthy homes, healthy lives, healthy city will be submitted for joint approval to both Council and the Local Strategic Partnership and will become a key component of the Community Strategy.

4. CONSULTATION:

- 4.1 Our strategies have been developed in stages to maximise opportunities for local people, advocacy groups, partner organisations, staff and other stakeholders to engage in the process.
- 4.2 The first round of consultation was undertaken over 3 months in summer 2007. The consultation was shaped around a Briefing Pack developed to highlight key areas of housing need to provide stakeholders with relevant information to help facilitate discussion. This pack was available on the council website and throughout the city in libraries and other public places. It was also sent out to many stakeholders, voluntary organisations and residents.
- 4.3 To support this consultation we also organised a 2 day Consultation Fair that included a Saturday, officers went out into the community, attended social functions, service user groups meetings and other events. Where possible we also linked in with other research and consultation being carried out across the city, such as the groundbreaking *Count Me In Too!* research looking at the needs and aspirations of the city's LGBT population.
- 4.4 In winter 2007/08 we published strategy frameworks outlining the proposed key priorities and actions for the Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy, BME Housing Strategy and LGBT Housing Strategy. These priorities and actions were developed from the Consultation Briefing Pack and findings of the first round of consultation. Consultation on the strategy frameworks together is being used to help develop the draft strategies and action plans.
- 4.5 To support the development of the specialist strategies, two Housing & Support Working Groups have been set up:
- Older People's Cross Sector Housing & Support Working Group
 - LGBT Housing & Support Working Group
- These groups are made up of representatives from a wide range of support and advocacy groups, the community and voluntary sector, the Primary Care Trust and the local authority. Whilst these groups have been instigated and facilitated by the local authority, they are led by our stakeholders.
- 4.6 These groups have reviewed each stage of the strategy development process and made many valuable contributions to our strategic priorities, action plan and equality impact assessment. We hope that these groups will have an ongoing monitoring and review remit once the strategies have been published.
- 4.7 We are working with the BME communities to explore the potential for a similar group to be a critical champion of the BME Housing Strategy.

- 4.8 Sub groups of the Strategic Housing Partnership have been looking at the role of housing co-ops and the issues around student housing. The findings of these groups are helping to inform the draft strategies.
- 4.9 In tandem with the strategy development process, a number of Chairman's Focus Groups have been set up to consider key issues affecting the council's social housing stock and impacting on the lives of tenants. These groups are looking at a number of issues such as sheltered housing, adaptations and allocations which are also helping to inform the draft housing strategies.
- 4.10 The draft Housing Strategy, Older People's Housing Strategy, BME Housing Strategy and LGBT Housing Strategy are expected to be published in the autumn for a final round of stakeholder consultation before being submitted for approval early in the new year.
- 4.11 We do not want consultation to end with the publication of our strategies, but would like it to be a part of an ongoing process, involving local people and other stakeholders throughout the life of the strategies helping us to monitor its implementation and review our services.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 Financial Implications: [Mike Bentley, Accountant, 16 June 2008]

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations made in this report. However the final published strategies will need to have close links with the various financial recovery plans in place/being developed across Adult Social Care & Housing.

5.2 Legal Implications: [Celine Hayden, Lawyer, 16 June 2008]

Under the Local Government Act 2003 the Council is required to produce a Housing Strategy (section 87–88) setting out the objectives, targets and policies on how the Council intends to manage and deliver its strategic housing role. The Housing Strategy document should also provide an overarching framework against which the Council considers and formulates other policies on more specific housing issues. The Council's Housing Strategies are made available and appraised by Government Officers for the region (section 65 Local Government and Housing Act 1989) to ensure they are fit for the purpose i.e. that they are capable of delivering the housing function to a standard demanded by Government. The Housing Strategy should also address energy efficiency issues in the housing stock (Home Energy Conservation Act 1995). Policies must be consistent with any national housing strategies at present.

5.3 Equalities Implications:

An equality impact assessment is being carried out on each strategy as it is being developed, with the strategy containing a summary of the assessment. Assessments will be completed during the last stage of consultation to inform the final drafts of the strategies. Additional Equality Impact Assessments will be

required as the strategy action plans are implemented over the next few years. Below is a summary of our approach to each of the 6 equality strands:

- **Race:** BME Housing Strategy in development.
- **Disability:** Strategy Statement on Physical Disabilities incorporated in Housing Strategy and Older People's Housing Strategy. Disability of all kinds, including physical disability, learning disability and mental health issues, are also a key feature of the Supporting People and Learning Disability Housing Strategies.
- **Gender and gender identity:** Actions from the Gender Equality Scheme have been fed into the strategic development process. Gender Identity is also a key feature of the LGBT Housing Strategy.
- **Age:** Older People's Housing Strategy in development. Youth Homelessness Strategy developed in 2007. Supporting People Strategy links to older people's services, youth homelessness services, and action to fund LGBT support worker for young people at risk.
- **Religion / Belief:** The BME Housing Strategy includes community safety objectives which also cover religion and belief.
- **Sexual Orientation:** LGBT Housing Strategy in development.

5.4 **Sustainability Implications:**

Housing is one of the 12 key objectives of the council's Sustainability Strategy which aims *to ensure that everyone has access to decent, affordable housing that meets their needs*. The Housing Strategy 2008-2013 and related specialist strategies support this aim.

5.5 **Crime & Disorder Implications:**

Ensuring appropriate housing and support is essential in helping to reduce antisocial behaviour and other crime and also to support the victims of crime. Specific actions within the LGBT and BME housing strategies recognise hate crime and aim to support victims and help develop safer communities.

5.6 **Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:**

The current economic climate brings with it the risks of increased levels of home repossessions, increased numbers of empty homes, increased overcrowding, reduced access to equity funding for maintenance and improvements and reduced levels of house building. This could increase pressures relating to homelessness, housing support and community cohesion. A robust housing strategy is essential to help mitigate these risks and resultant budgetary pressures.

5.7 **Corporate / Citywide Implications:**

Housing is a fundamental aspect of people's wellbeing affecting the daily lives of 250,000 residents in Brighton & Hove. Poor or inappropriate housing has a direct impact on the ability of residents to maintain their independence – this has implications for social care, education and the health. 22,000 households

in the city have someone with a support need and vulnerability affects 1 in 5 households. Housing also has a significant impact on the economy, with the housing stock currently valued at approximately £26bn. Homes worth more than £1bn are sold every year with around a further £1bn being spent on maintenance, rents, mortgages and other associated housing costs. Our housing aims support the priorities and aims of the 2020 Community Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents:

All available at: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1188834>

1. Draft Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
2. Draft Older People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
3. Draft BME People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
4. Draft LGBT People's Housing Strategy Framework, December 2007
5. Housing Strategy 2008: Consultation Briefing Pack, May 2007

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 30
Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: Housing Management Performance Report
Date of Meeting: 22 July 2008
Report of: Director of Adult Social Care & Housing
Contact Officer: Name: John Austin Locke Tel: 29-1008
E-mail: John.austin-locke@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report provides analysis of the performance of the Housing Management Division during 2007/08 and on general policy initiatives underway to improve performance within Housing Management.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Cabinet Member Meeting note the contents of this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 3.1 There follows a series of reports on specific areas of performance.

3.1.1 Rent Collection and Current Arrears

- 3.1.2 This section of the report provides information pertaining to four statutory performance indicators relating to the collection of Housing Revenue Account rent. The four indicators are known as BVPI66a, BVPI66b, BVPI66c and BVPI66d respectively and concern:

- The proportion of rent collected during the year that was actually due (or charged) during the year.
- The percentage of tenants with more than 7 weeks rent arrears
- The percentage of tenants in arrears who have had a Notice of Seeking Possession Served on them during the year
- The percentage of tenants who have been evicted as a result of rent arrears

BVPI 66a. Proportion of rent arrears collected

BVPI 66a	
Brighton	97.75% (07/08)
All England – Top Quartile*	98.57%
All England – Bottom Quartile	97.07%
All England – Average	97.66%
Unitaries – Top Quartile	98.56%
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	96.88%
Unitaries – Average	97.74%

* N.B The benchmarking information is taken from national reported figures from 2006/07. Benchmarking information for 2007/08 is not published by the Audit Commission until autumn 2008.

- 3.1.3 This performance indicator relates to the proportion of rent collected as a percentage of the total rent due during the year. It does not take account of any cash collected to clear arrears from previous arrears or pre-payments taken to cover rent due in future years. This means that it is not possible for the result to exceed 100%.
- 3.1.4 The indicator result includes former tenancy arrears when a tenant moves during the year from one Housing Revenue Account property to another.
- 3.1.5 There are a number of examples where a tenant in arrears may transfer to another property. These include tenants who are relocated due to serious harassment or who are moved due to exceptional over-riding medical need. There are also circumstances where a new tenancy is granted at the same address, for example where a tenant succeeds the tenancy from a spouse or partner.
- 3.1.6 The results shown are the final results for 2007/08.
- 3.1.7 The graphs on pages 3-10 of the appendix show performance for the year. The monthly data for 2006/07 and 2007/08 is also shown as a comparator.

Neighbourhood	Performance 2006/07	Performance 2007/08	Difference Between 2006/07 and 2007/08
Brighton East	95.44%	97.07%	+1.63%
Central	97.30%	98.21%	+0.91%
North & East	97.27%	98.08%	+0.81%
West	96.19%	98.09%	+1.9%
Temporary Accommodation	93.06%	93.8008%	+0.74%
Citywide	96.44%	97.75%	+1.31%

- The table below shows what the percentages translate to in financial terms. Based on current performance it is forecast that the council will collect £36.18 million of the total collectable rent during the year that became due during the year.

Neighbourhood	Annual Rent Charged to Tenants (£)	Performance 2007/08	How much of the rent charged for the year that we collected (£)
Brighton East	12,536,060	97.08%	12,170,007
Central	7,554,072	98.21%	7,418,854
North & East	11,031,008	98.08%	10,819,213
West	7,487,056	98.09%	7,344,053
Temporary Accommodation	263,308	93.80%	245,087
Totals	38,871,504	97.75%	37,997,214

3.1.8 The figures above relate to rent collected from charges made through the year. It does not include any rent collected from arrears in previous years. The total amount collected was £39,349,984, which relates to an arrears reduction of £478,480 during 2007/08. Over the year the net total current tenant arrears has dropped from £1,384,155 to £905,675.

3.1.9. The housing Income Management Team has worked hard to achieve this result and have exceeded their target of 97.7%. All neighbourhood areas have improved on last years result demonstrating that after a period of settling into the role and resolving many long standing complex cases the team are obtaining the results that have been expected by tenants, leaseholders and members.

3.1.10 Although the performance for temporary accommodation is lower than other areas the significance of this is far less with arrears standing at £17,711 at year end. It also needs to be remembered that temporary accommodation staff have a high

turnover of residents and often only a very short period of time in which to deal with benefit claims and resolve arrears issues.

BVPI 66b. % of tenants with more than seven weeks arrears

BVPI 66b	
Brighton	7.85 (07/08)
All England – Top Quartile*	3.89%
All England – Bottom Quartile	7.69%
All England – Average	6.35%
Unitaries – Top Quartile	4.64%
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	8.40%
Unitaries – Average	6.94%

* N.B The benchmarking information is taken from national reported figures from 2006/07. Benchmarking information for 2007/08 is not published by the Audit Commission until autumn 2008.

- 3.1.11 This indicator shows the percentage of tenants with more than seven weeks' arrears. The indicator is an average over the year rather than a snap shot at anyone time i.e. the end of a month or quarter. This means that the figures shown are cumulative and we take weekly snapshots to calculate average to date.
- 3.1.12 For 2007/08 we have set a target of no more than 7.60% of tenants having more than seven weeks' arrears. In setting the target we have factored in the number of new tenancies each year, approximately 800, and the percentage of tenants who are in receipt of full and partial Housing Benefit. This is because a proportion of this debt will be as a result of Housing Benefit processing times and delays caused by some tenants not providing relevant information to allow their claim to be processed quickly.
- 3.1.13 At the year end performance stood at 7.85%, or an average of 954 debtors with arrears of more than 7 weeks.
- 3.1.14 Although it is disappointing the team were just off target members of this committee are asked to note that over the course of the year the number of debtors with more than seven weeks rent arrears dropped from 1068 to 852. This equates to a drop of 216 cases.

BVPI 66c. Tenants who have received a NOSP for rent arrears.

BVPI 66c	
Brighton	27.23% (07/08)
All England – Top Quartile*	16.55%
All England – Bottom Quartile	32.99%
All England – Average	26.46%
Unitaries – Top Quartile	17.01%
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	33.35%
Unitaries – Average	25.36%

* N.B The benchmarking information is taken from national reported figures from 2006/07. Benchmarking information for 2007/08 is not published by the Audit Commission until autumn 2008.

- 3.1.15 This indicator measures the percentage of local authority tenants who have had a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP) served on them for rent arrears. A NOSP is the first stage in legal action against tenants and gives notice that unless a tenant takes steps to address their arrears or enter into an agreement with the council to repay the debt then the council may proceed to court action. A NOSP will not be served without attempts to speak with the customer. These efforts will then continue after the NOSP has been served and through all stages until the case reaches court, if indeed it does go that far. The government calls for the indicator to be calculated as a percentage of the average number of tenants in arrears throughout the year.
- 3.1.16 The government is very clear that local authorities must adopt a preventative approach to rent arrears. The aim of this indicator is to ensure local authorities are only using legal action and threats of legal action as a last resort. The government expect local authorities to review policies and procedures to ensure that preventative measures are in place so that Notices of Seeking Possession are kept to a minimum.
- 3.1.17 Although the government's intentions here are clear, many landlords see the serving of a NOSP as an effective tool to collecting rent arrears, as it gives an obvious message to debtors that we are serious about collecting debts. It does not follow that the serving of a NOSP will lead to court action. Within a well thought out and proactive rent arrears procedure the serving of a NOSP can actually reduce the number of tenants taken to court.
- 3.1.18 Brighton and Hove's arrears procedures are well laid out, and do not lead officers into inappropriate court action. It does not therefore seem appropriate or desirable to artificially influence this indicator by not serving NOSPs, potentially at the expense of the overall collection rate. It is instead anticipated that our proactive policy of early intervention/prevention work will stop debts escalating to the 6-7 week point at when a NOSP is usually served.

Part of the project plan for the next 6 months is to review our arrears processes with a view to further streamlining the process. This will include looking at the time we take to serve a NOSP. At present the protocol prior to serving a NOSP is as follows:

Week 2	First Arrears letter
Week 4	Second Arrears letter
Week 5	NOSP warning letter
Week 6/7	NOSP served

The tenant is contacted by phone throughout this process, and will not serve a NOSP without attempting a home visit, even if that only results in us leaving a calling card.

- 3.1.19 As the year progresses, an increasing number of NOSP's will be served although consideration is always given to individual cases. To support this sensitive but legally rigorous approach we have set an annual target that at the end of the year there should be no more than 15% of tenants who are in arrears with a Notice of Seeking Possession. At the end of 2007/08 the performance was 27.23% against a target of 15%.
- 3.1.20 This is a new performance indicator and at the time of writing benchmarking information is only available for 2006/07. Extrapolating that data we estimate that this result would place Brighton & Hove in the lower median quartile.
- 3.1.21 Brighton & Hove's target was set taking into account that we will normally serve a notice where arrears are at the 6 – 7 week level. This gives a very clear message to a tenant who has not engaged that we are serious about debt collection. It also protects the council's interests as we cannot proceed to court, (if we deem that necessary) until four weeks after a NOSP has been served. The target has also been set based on the figures for BVPI66b, which measures those with more than 7 weeks rent arrears. The objective is to do well at BVPI66a whilst keeping BVPI66c as low as possible.
- 3.1.22 It is disappointing that we are well outside our target, however, members of the committee are asked to recognise the achievement for BVPI66a, which is the actual income that feeds into the Housing Revenue Account. It is not considered sensible, given our collection rate to keep BVPI66c artificially low (i.e. by not serving NOSP's) at the expense of BVPI66a.

BVPI 66d. Tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears

BVPI 66d	
Brighton	0.17% (07/08)
All England – Top Quartile*	0.20%
All England – Bottom Quartile	0.49%
All England – Average	0.45%
Unitaries – Top Quartile	0.23%
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	0.5%
Unitaries – Average	0.39%

* N.B The benchmarking information is taken from national reported figures from 2006/07. Benchmarking information for 2007/08 is not published by the Audit Commission until autumn 2008.

3.1.23 This indicator measures the percentage of all tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears. The denominator in this calculation looks at the number of tenancies at the end of each quarter.

3.1.24 It has been agreed that we do not wish to evict more than 35 households as a result of rent arrears. During 2007/08 Brighton & Hove Council evicted 23 households for rent arrears.

3.2 Empty Property Turnaround Time

3.2.1 This section of the report provides performance information for the full financial year 2007/08, for BV212, the Best Value Performance Indicator for the letting of empty homes.

BV212 Average time taken to re-let local authority housing	
Brighton	31 (07/08)
All England – Top Quartile*	26
All England – Bottom Quartile	46
All England – Average	39
Unitaries – Top Quartile	39
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	45
Unitaries – Average	28

* N.B The benchmarking information is taken from national reported figures from 2006/07. Benchmarking information for 2007/08 is not published by the Audit Commission until autumn 2008.

3.2.2 The full year turnaround time average for 2007/8 was 31 days, falling very slightly short of the annual target of 30 days, and an improvement on the

previous years average of 35 days. Please see Table 1. The team and repairs partnering contractors have been successful in recovering from high turnaround figures of 49 days in May last year to around 24 days on average for the last quarter of the year.

BV212 Average turnaround time in days - 2007/8

2007/8 Target – 30 days	Last Year	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	<u>Qtr 4</u>	Year end total
Average turnaround time	35	45	32	25	24	31
Lets within target	55%	30%	56%	74%	74%	60%

3.2.3 The table below demonstrates the difficulties experienced within the contract during the first few months of the last financial year, as previously reported to Housing Management Sub Committee in September 2007.

BV212 Average turnaround time in days - 2007/8

Target – 30 days	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Yr end total
General needs housing													
General needs	46	46	44	35	31	23	25	25	22	24	22	21	30
Total let	51	49	45	63	46	49	54	61	62	57	53	67	657
% Let in target	29%	22%	38%	46%	57%	76%	72%	74%	79%	61%	85%	82%	62%
Sheltered housing													
Sheltered	46	57	47	57	32	39	37	32	24	37	37	28	39
Total let	15	13	6	11	11	6	12	12	14	7	10	9	126
Let in target	26%	31%	33%	9%	64%	67%	34%	58%	86%	57%	50%	67%	50%
All properties													
All	46	49	44	38	31	25	27	26	22	26	24	22	31
Total let	66	62	51	74	57	55	66	73	76	64	63	76	782
Let in target	26%	24%	37%	41%	58%	75%	71%	71%	80%	61%	79%	80%	60%

3.2.4 The excellent focus on improving performance over the last half year has enabled us to rank 21st place out of the 61 housing organisations in the South East

Benchmark Club, and rank first place of 12 Major Cities Benchmark Club, in the last quarter of the year.

Table 3 below compares quarterly BV212 and shows the difference in sheltered properties with and without shared facilities. There remains a general pattern of sheltered properties of all types taking longer to let than general needs housing, as well as sheltered properties with shared facilities generally exceeding the average time for sheltered homes with their own facilities. There have been a few difficulties in letting some sheltered properties, even with their own facilities, in our less desirable blocks and those with two bedrooms.

BV212 figures with detailed sheltered accommodation comparison

2007/8 <u>Target – 30 Days</u>	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year end total
General needs	45	30	24	22	30
Sheltered own facilities	45	44	29	35	37
Sheltered shared facilities	72	39	49	25	49
Total sheltered	48	43	30	34	39
All properties	45	32	25	24	31
Let in target	30%	56%	74%	74%	60%

3.2.5 Number of empty properties

The number of empty council properties stood at 122 at the beginning of this financial year. This represents only 0.97% of the councils stock.

Empty properties at the beginning of the year

Time	Number	% of stock
April 2004	232	1.85%
April 2005	257	1.87%
April 2006	112	0.89%
April 2007	123	0.98%
April 2008	122	0.97%

3.2.6 Refusal of properties by housing applicants

We record detailed information on reasons properties are refused by applicants. These assist in a continuous review that aims to supply the most appropriate information to applicants.

In 2007/08, not liking the area is the principle reason given for refusing the offer of a property. Evidence suggests that a number of applicants do not look around an area until the day of the viewing. There is currently no penalty for applicants making multiple refusals.

It also remains of concern that such a high proportion of applicants make no response to offers. It appears that a proportion of these customers change their mind about wanting to move, but do not notify us of this change.

The other top reasons for refusal are set out in the chart below.

Top reasons for refusal during the year

2006/7	Reason given by applicant	As a percent of all refusals
1	Applicant has changed area of choice, subsequent to offer being made	15%
2	No response is received from applicant, subsequent to offer, despite efforts to make contact by staff	14%
3	Subsequent to offer being made, applicant declares that they want a different property	13%
4	After viewing the property, applicant declares it to be unsuitable for their purposes	10%
5	After viewing the property, the applicant declares it to be too small for purpose	8%

3.3 Repairs Update

3.2.1 The responsive repairs partnering contracts with Kier and Mears have now been in place for just over a year. Performance has greatly improved over the last six months following the mobilisation of the contract.

3.3.2 The table below shows the level of responsive repairs carried out in each quarter of last year and the percentage of repairs that were completed within the target time.

Responsive Repairs

	Q1 Apr – Jun 07	Q2 July - Sep 07	Q3 Oct - Dec 07	Q4 Jan - Mar 08
Emergency Repairs Completed in time	82.97 %	88.62%	97.87%	97.65%
No of Emergency Repairs completed	1427	1230	1846	2339
Urgent Repairs Completed in time	85.40%	87.89%	90.97%	94.02%
No of Urgent Repairs completed	2233	2114	1572	1756
Routine Repairs Completed within target time	86.14%	87.49%	90.75%	94.88%
No of Routine Repairs completed	1731	2143	3104	4667

- 3.3.3 The highest performing authorities are currently achieving 98.16% for emergency repairs completed in time, we finished the year slightly below that but in a good position to achieve that level in 2008/2009.
- 3.3.4 For urgent repairs completed in time highest performing cities are achieving 97%, we finished the year at 94%.
- 3.3.5 The highest performing authorities achieved above 93.70% for routine repairs completed in time, our responsive repairs contract is currently performing above that at 94.88%.
- 3.3.6 This benchmarking information is from the Major Cities group as at beginning of May 2008.
- 3.3.7 Other performance indicators for the responsive repairs contract are summarised in the table below and are from February 2008, which is the latest complete information available for these indicators.

Responsive Repairs

		Target	February 2008
1	Resident Satisfaction with Responsive Repair Service	95%	98.67%
2	Orders Repaired in First Visit	85%	91.78%
3	Orders Passing Quality Inspection	95%	96.04%
4	Reportable Health & Safety Incidents	0	0
5	Emergency and Urgent Repairs Completed within target time*	98.5%	93.51%
6	No of Days to Complete Routine Repairs*	14 days	14 days

*Target times as follows:

- Emergency repairs: 24 Hours
- Urgent repairs: 3 working days
- Routine repairs: 20 working days

3.3.8 All of the indicators reported for February have exceeded the set targets except for indicator 5 measuring the emergency and urgent repairs completed in time. Work is being undertaken by the partnership to address this area of performance, this includes the introduction of simplified emergency schedule of rates and early indications are that April has delivered a 2% improvement on the February figure.

3.3.9 In all areas the performance has improved over the course of the first year of the responsive repairs contract, and in a number of important areas Brighton & Hove City Council has exceeded top quartile performance. The partnership sees this level of performance as a good platform to achieve top quartile over the coming months.

3.3.10 From a slow start mobilising the new contract, it became evident quickly that poor performance completing repairs within their target time had a significant impact on the customer. We have worked with our partners on a regular basis to reduce the level of jobs overdue their target date, from a peak of 2800 to 453 by the year end. There is still a lot of hard work to do but our target is to reduce the level to below 200 by the end of the summer

3.3.11 Alongside the operational management of the Responsive Maintenance contract, The Repairs and Maintenance team are working to add value to the contract and improve the council's overall performance to three star rating.

3.4 Sickness Absence

3.4.1 The table below sets out the sickness absence across the council in the second half of the year.

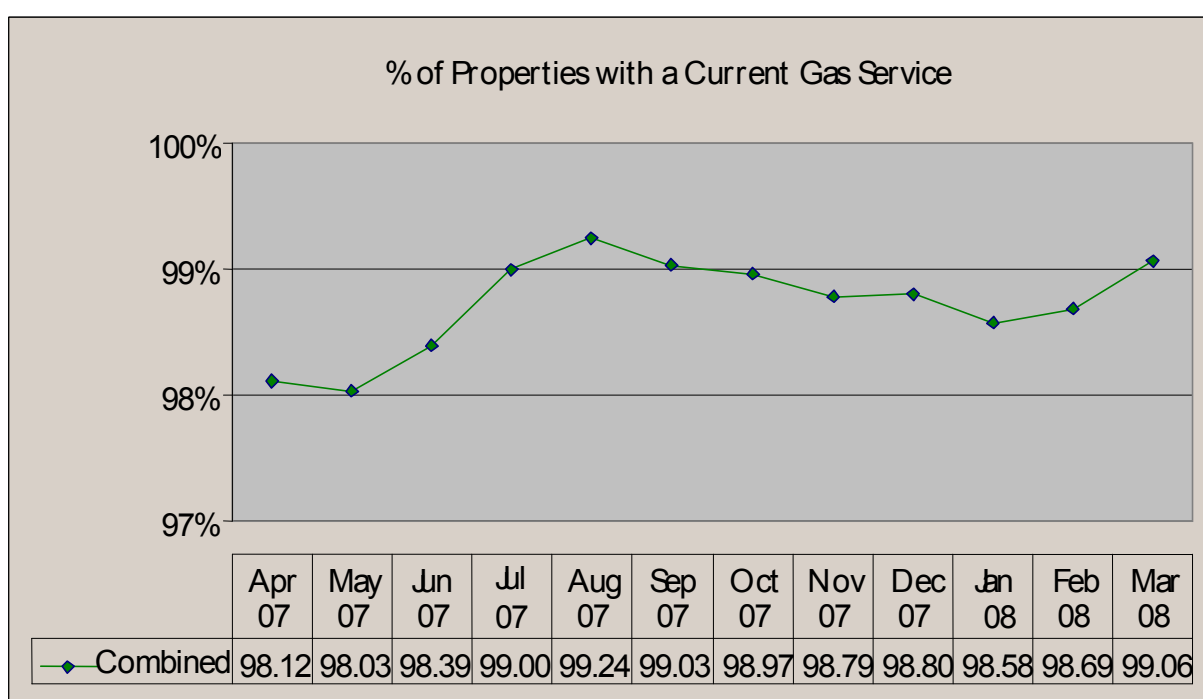
Directorate (BV12)	Q3 Average Days Lost	Q4 Average Days Lost	2007-2008 Average Days Lost
Adult Social Care & Housing	4.25	4.52	16.54
Children & Young Peoples' Trust	2.07	2.31	7.56
Cultural Services	2.88	2.81	10.85
EB4U	5.52	0.92	13.23
Environment	2.33	2.46	10.07
Finance & Resources	2.75	3.14	10.99
Strategy & Governance	2.11	2.19	7.79
All Council	2.63	2.84	10.12
Division	Q3 Average Days Lost	Q4 Average Days Lost	2007-2008 Average Days Lost
Adult Services	4.60	4.80	17.48
Community Care (S75)	2.12	3.03	9.22
Housing Management	5.04	4.45	19.32
Housing Strategy	5.05	6.03	18.09
Integrated Learning Disability	3.27	3.57	14.16
Adult Social Care and Housing Total	4.25	4.52	16.54

BV12 2006/7	
Brighton	10.78
All England – Top Quartile	8.09
All England – Bottom Quartile	10.73
All England – Average	9.44
Unitaries – Top Quartile	8.70
Unitaries – Bottom Quartile	10.78
Unitaries – Average	9.6

3.4.2 Initiatives are currently underway by Housing Management with the aim of improving attendance. The Housing Management division has undertaken a corporate pilot for a Stress Risk Assessment initiative. Human Resources are also assisting Housing Management Managers by improving the methodology by which absentees have their return to work interviews conducted.

3.5 Gas Servicing

The graph below shows the progress of Brighton & Hove City Council, Mears and PH Jones in servicing gas installations. The end of year (March) figure was 99.06%, the second highest achieved in the year.



3.5.1 The number of Council properties with a valid gas safety certificate has shown a year on year improvement. The March 2008 figure of 99.06% shows nearly a 1% increase on the previous year and is only 0.18% below the traditionally high August figure. Indications show that the improvement should continue this year. The partners continue to perform well and have consistently met their Key Performance Indicators. In a drive for continuous improvement and in consultation with the partnering contractors, the majority of KPI's have been raised for 2008/2009.

3.5.2 Investment in gas heating continues and during the year 2007-08 the partners replaced 698 gas boilers and installed 40 new systems. This investment will reduce ongoing service and repair costs, improve overall energy efficiency, and importantly, reduce tenant's fuel bills. Investment will

continue during the new financial year with greater emphasis on renewing older and less efficient boilers.

- 3.5.3 In March 2008 CORGI was invited to carry out a management audit on the Planned Maintenance and Engineer Section. The audit was carried out in conjunction with similar scrutiny of the partnering contractors, also by CORGI. The auditor reported:

“The organisation has a very effective access procedure and excellent service compliance rate of 98.75% on the day of the audit. These are very good results if benchmarked against similar social landlords where this exercise has been undertaken. Within the organisation there are dedicated staff who give gas safety issues a high priority and demonstrate high standards in the delivery of service to the tenants”

The audit also highlighted several areas where improvement could be achieved, including:

1. a more robust procedure in reporting gas leaks.
2. the gas administration staff to have a greater understanding of gas issues
3. the procedure for maintaining gas safety in empty properties (in particular monitoring of gas contractors where the partnering contractor is not involved).

An action plan is in place to ensure improvement in all these areas.

- 3.5.4 Housing officer involvement in the gas safety process has been particularly effective. Further improvement is being implemented to achieve even better access rates to those properties that are difficult to reach. Targets have been agreed for processing of referred no-access cases:

- 50-60% properties to be completed within 30 days of referral
- 85%- 90% to be completed within 90 days of referral

- 3.5.5 In order to assist in improving access rates, a trial is being undertaken for the fixing of awareness raising notices over tenants' door locks, and it is proposed that new boiler controls that incorporate a service reminder alarm should be fitted to properties where access has been difficult.

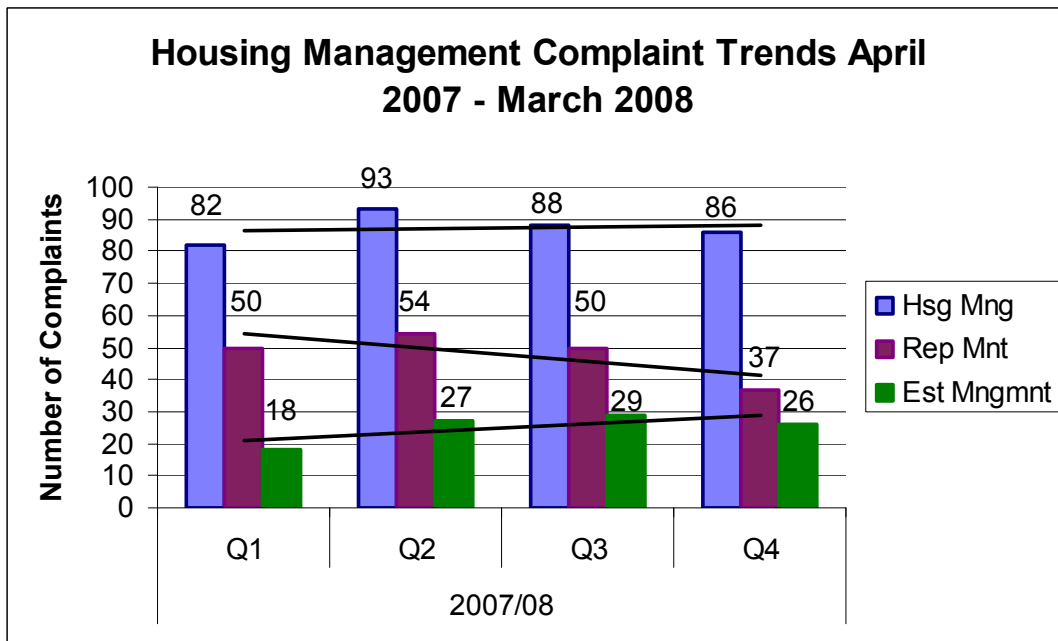
3.6 Correspondence performance in answering complaints

- 3.6.1 Complaints about Housing Management are dealt with under the Corporate Complaints procedure. Managers from the service investigate and reply to Stage One complaints. Standards and Complaints officers carry out Stage Two Investigations. Customers may then refer to the Local Government Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied.

3.6.2 Stage One Complaints; Trends, Themes, Issues

3.6.3 Chart 1 shows the trend for Housing Management complaints for April 2007 to March 2008. Complaints about the whole department have remained static over that period. Repairs and Maintenance shows a significant reduction over the year. For Housing Estate Management there has been a gradual increase in levels of complaint.

Chart 1



3.6.4 The table below, gives information about complaint numbers at all stages of the complaints process.

3.6.5 There have been noticeable levels of complaint about Garages & Car Parks (22). The increase has been as a result of customers being made aware that they can use the complaint process to appeal decision to clamp vehicles. Those complaints have resulted in no re-imbursements or findings against the clamping company.

Volume of complaints by service area.

Housing Management 2007/08	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
	S1	S2	LGO	S1	S2	LGO	S1	S2	LGO	S1	S2	LGO
Repairs & Maintenance	50	4	2	54	3	2	50	1	3	37	3	0
Housing/Estate Management	18	1	3	27	3	2	29	3	0	26	3	0
ASB	2	0	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	0
Garages/carparks	6	2	3	4	0	0	3	2	1	9	2	0
RTB/Leasehold	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0
Debt Recovery	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
New Tenancies	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0
Sheltered Housing	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	0
Total	82	8	8	93	6	4	88	6	6	86	9	0

3.6.6 Table 5, shows improvements in plumbing services and reduced delays in carrying out repairs have contributed to falling levels of complaints about Repairs and Maintenance.

Complaints relating to repairs and maintenance

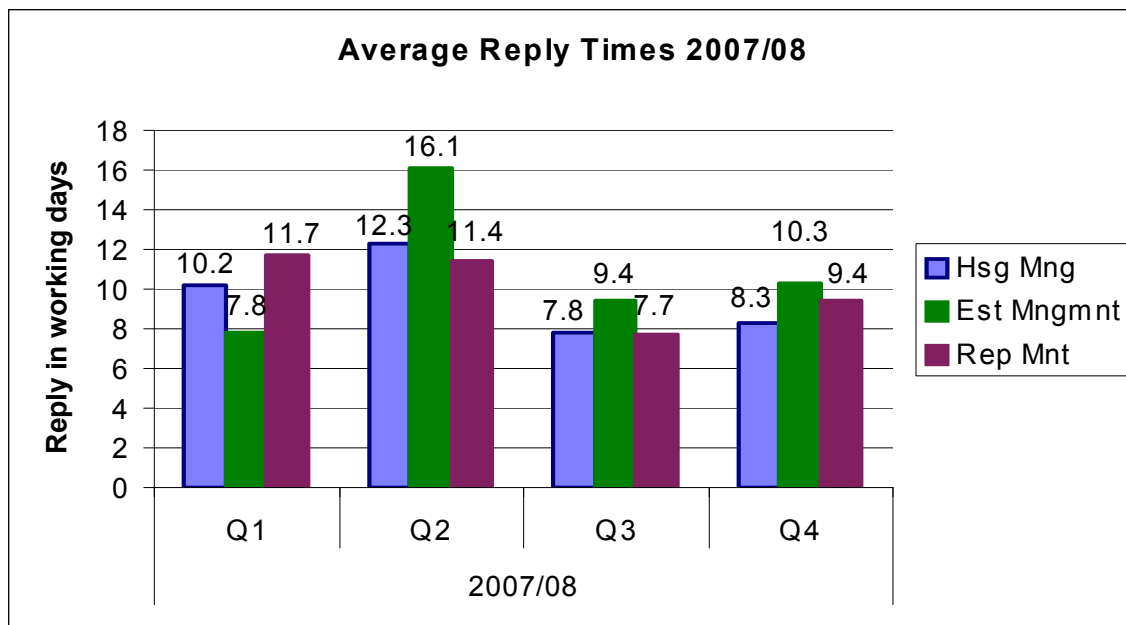
	Repairs and Maintenance Issues 2007/08			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Brickwork	3	2	0	1
Carpentry	3	2	1	6
Condensation Damp	3	9	4	4
Delay Carrying Out Repair	37	28	26	19
Electrical	4	4	4	3
Failure to Identify Problem	5	0	4	5
Heating	3	0	8	3
M&E (Lifts etc)	0	0	1	0
Missed Appointment	2	1	1	4
Plumbing	8	43	36	17
Refusal to repair	3	1	2	0
Roofing	1	2	2	0
Scaffolding	3	1	2	1
Staff Attitude	6	7	2	6
Total	81	100	93	69

3.6.7 Correspondence Performance

3.6.8 Correspondence performance is a useful indication of how much priority is placed on dealing with customer dissatisfaction with services.

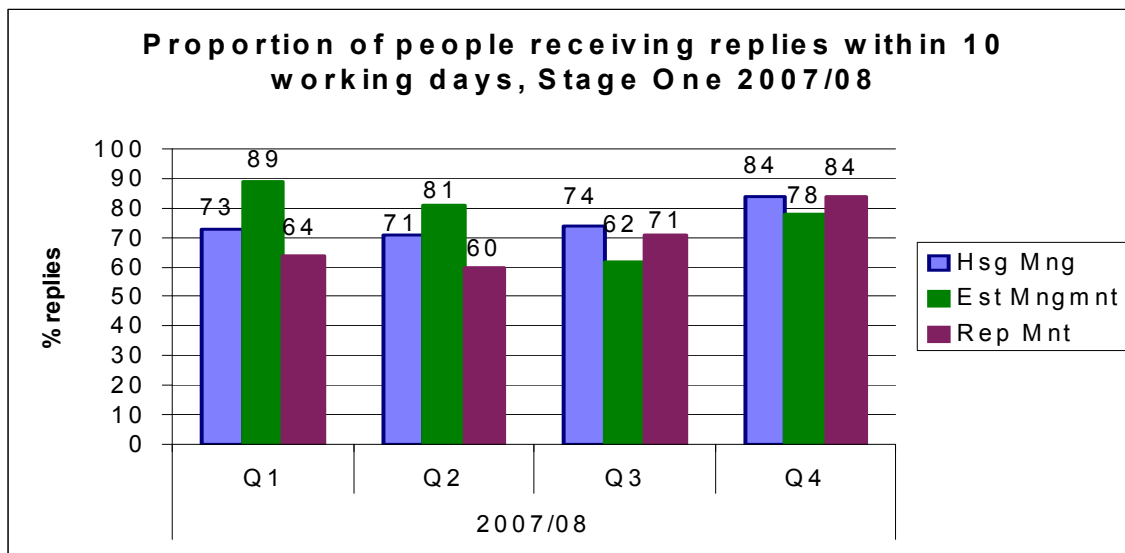
- 3.6.9 Chart 2 shows the average response times throughout the year. The Council's standard is to reply to complaints within 10 working days.
- Average reply times for the whole department improved until quarter 3 and increased slightly in quarter 4 to 8.3 days.
 - Average reply times for Estate Management have increased over the year and reached 10.3 days in quarter 4.
 - Average reply times for Repairs and Maintenance improved significantly in quarter 3 to 7.7 days but increased in quarter 4 to 9.4 days.

Chart 2



3.6.11 The small number of complaints that are taking an excessively long time to reply to are causing the average reply times to be unnecessarily high.

Chart 3



The second measure of significance is the proportion of people who receive a response within 10 working days. The chart shows that:

- For the whole department, replies sent within 10 working days increased from 73% to 84%.
- For Estate Management the proportion of replies fell from 89% to 62% in quarter three but increased to 78% in quarter 4.
- For Repairs and Maintenance replies within 10 working days have increased from 60% in quarter 2 to 84% in quarter 4

3.6.13 Stage Two Complaints

3.6.14 The proportion of Repairs and Maintenance complaints referred to Stage Two over the year was 7%. For the whole council 8% of cases were referred. There were no specific recurring themes at this stage.

3.6.15 For Estate Management 10% of complaints were referred to Stage Two. Of the ten cases referred for investigation four related to dissatisfaction with the way neighbour nuisance was being dealt with.

- Two cases were in part upheld
- One case was not investigated. The complainant had a restraining order against him and was making counter allegations
- The fourth case has not yet been concluded

3.6.16 Ombudsman Complaints

- 3.6.17 There have been no findings of maladministration against Housing Management.
- 3.6.18 Complaints about Repairs and Maintenance resulted in three Local Settlements.
- In one case the Ombudsman recommended that R&M Stage One response letters should be reviewed to ensure complainants are informed of how to access Stage Two of the complaint process.
 - Two cases resulted in recommendations of payments totalling £250. Each complaint related to delay in carrying out repairs.
- 3.6.19 One complaint about Housing Management resulted in a Local Settlement by way of an apology and payment of £200 for the delay in dealing with noise nuisance caused by an ineffective door closure.
- 3.6.20 There were four complaints to the Ombudsman about Garages and Car Parking. One case resulted in a Local Settlement in which the Ombudsman considered the Council had taken reasonable action to deal with obstruction of the complainant's garage.

3.7 Estates Service

- 3.7.1 Following the recommendations of the Chairman's Focus Group on the Estates Service, work is ongoing to review the way that the cleaning of common parts is organised and monitored. Residents on the focus group said they wanted to see more accountability for cleaning and better performance monitoring. To meet this aim, dedicated cleaners for groups of high rise buildings are being trialled. This is getting positive feedback from residents. A report providing a detailed update on this work will be brought to the next meeting of this committee.

3.7.2 The Graffiti and Bulk Refuse removal teams continue to provide a responsive service with all urgent jobs being carried out within the set response time of one working day. Tables showing the number of jobs and their performance record are set out below.

Estate Services Monitoring Figures					
Bulk Waste Removal November 07-March 08					
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Urgent jobs	0	2	4	6	8
Routine jobs	197	149	193	235	225
Total	197	151	197	241	233
Target met for urgent jobs	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%
Target met for routine jobs	99%	96%	99%	100%	97%
Target - urgent jobs removal in 1 working day of report					
Target - routine jobs removal within 7 working days of report					

Estate Services Monitoring Figures					
Graffiti Removal November 07-March 08					
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Urgent jobs	5	3	14	0	0
Routine jobs	65	38	68	28	70
Total	70	41	82	28	70
Target met for urgent jobs	100%	100%	100%	0% N/A	0% N/A
Target met for routine jobs	82%	95%	97%	100%	97%
Target - urgent jobs removal in 1 working day of report					
Target - routine jobs removal within 7 working days of report					

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Performance report will be presented to customers at the next round of Housing Management Area Panels.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Financial information on performance is included in the main body of the report.

Most performance measures discussed in this report have financial implications. For example, any improvement in turnaround times or reductions in empty property numbers increases the amount of rent collected. Improvements in performance will, in general, lead to more resources being available for tenants services in the future.

Legal Implications:

There are none.

Lawyer consulted: Deborah Jones Date: 28 May 2008

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct Equalities Implications arising from this report

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.2 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct risk and opportunity management implications arising from this report

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 There are no direct Corporate or Citywide implications arising from this report.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Alternative options are integral to the processes of performance improvement discussed in this report.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 These are contained within the body of the report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

Housing Management Performance Report - charts for 2007/08

June 2008

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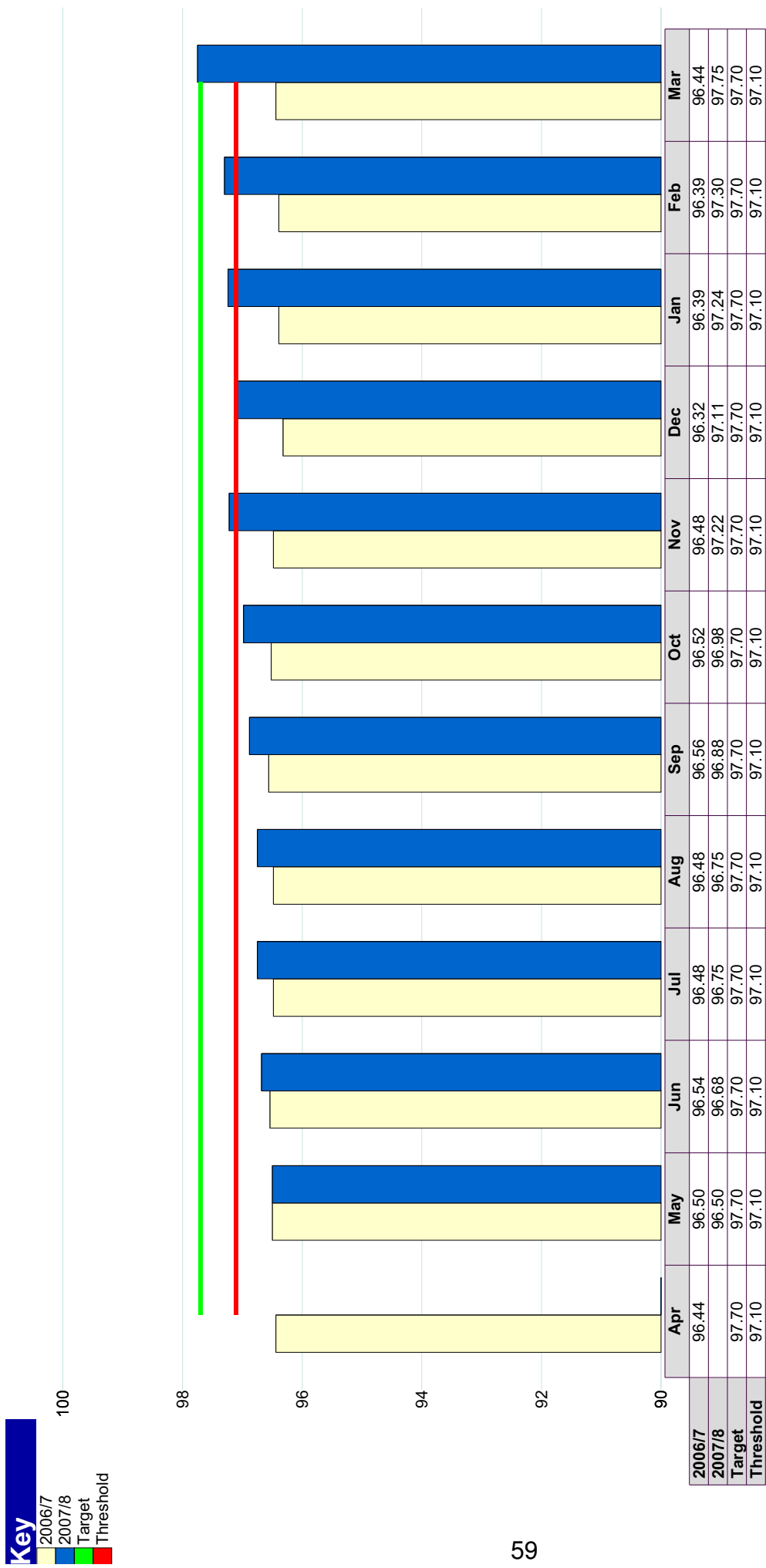
Key to Graphs

The graphs shown on pages 3-15 display the council's performance against the indicators listed above. The green line on the graphs represents the target we aim to achieve, which is set each year in agreement between service managers, directors and elected members.

The red line denotes a "threshold" level of performance, which represents a significant variation from target and means action needs to be taken to bring about improvement. This level is set in agreement between service managers and the corporate performance team.

The yellow bars show monthly performance during the financial year of 2006/07, and the blue bars show performance during each month of 2007/08.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (Citywide)



Comment

This indicator measures the rent collected by the Authority as a proportion of the rents owed on local authority-owned dwellings across the city.

Citywide, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was £40.26m. The council's target was to collect 97.7% of this amount over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph). The final month result excludes rent arrears for tolerated trespassers.

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (North)



100

98

96

94

92

90



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2006/7	97.50	97.50	97.51	97.46	97.48	97.49	97.49	97.32	97.18	97.22	97.17	97.27
2007/8	98.30	97.29	97.40	97.46	97.36	97.65	97.65	97.80	97.69	97.82	97.72	98.08
Target	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30	98.30
Threshold	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30	97.30

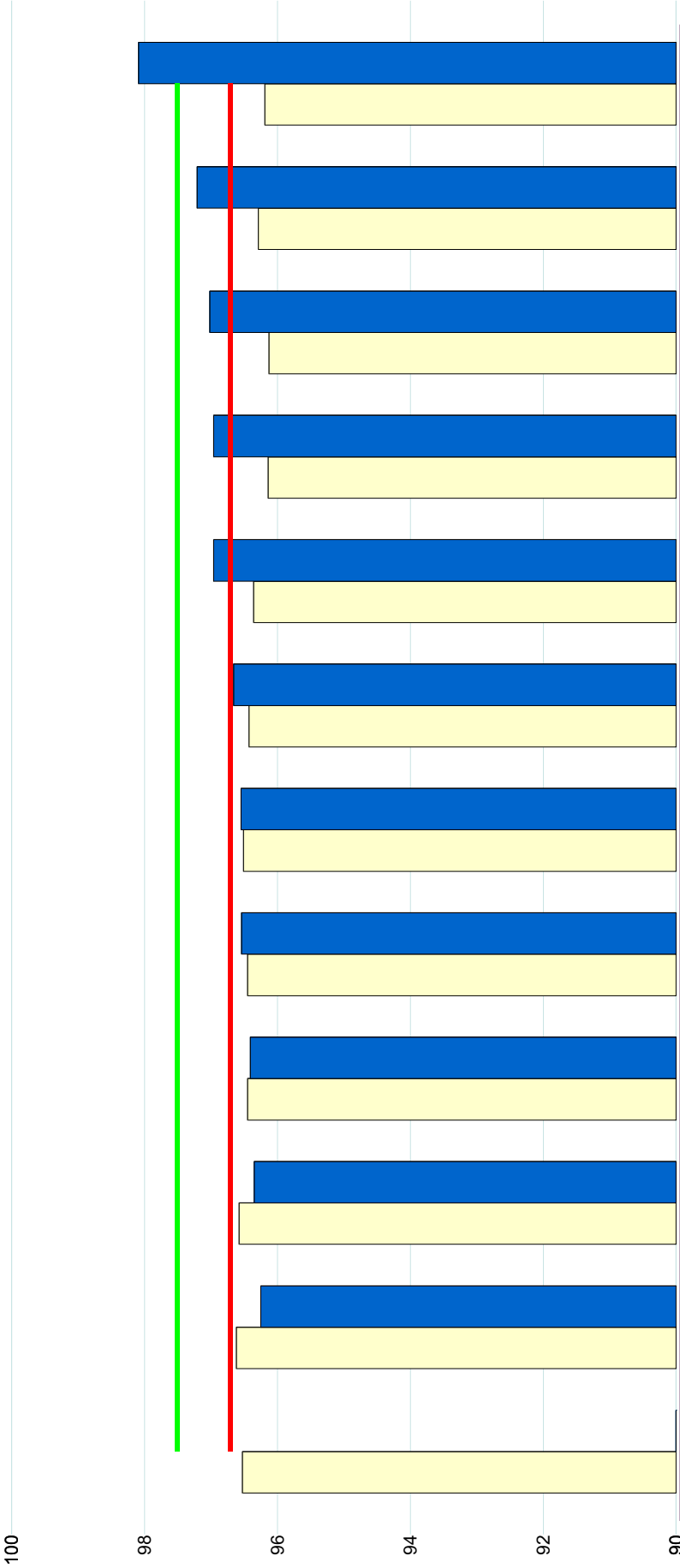
Comment

In the North region of the city, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was approximately £11.3m.

The council's target is to collect 98.3% of this amount in this region over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph).

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (West)

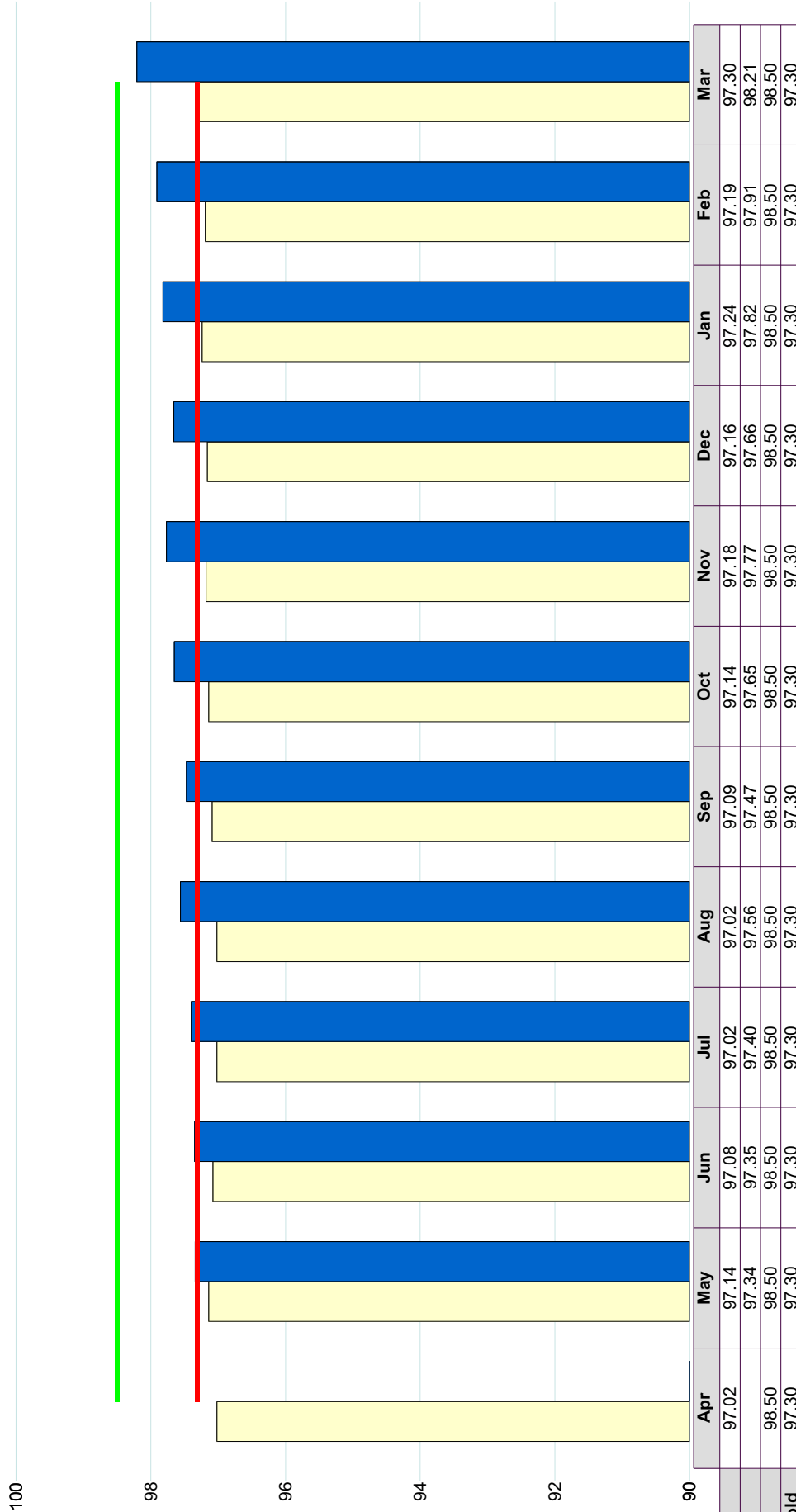


	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2006/7	96.53	96.62	96.58	96.45	96.45	96.51	96.43	96.36	96.14	96.13	96.29	96.19
2007/8	97.50	96.25	96.35	96.41	96.54	96.55	96.66	96.96	96.96	97.02	97.21	98.09
Target	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50	97.50
Threshold	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70	96.70

Comment

In the West region of the city, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was approximately £7.8m. The council's target is to collect 97.5% of this amount in this region over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph). See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (Central)



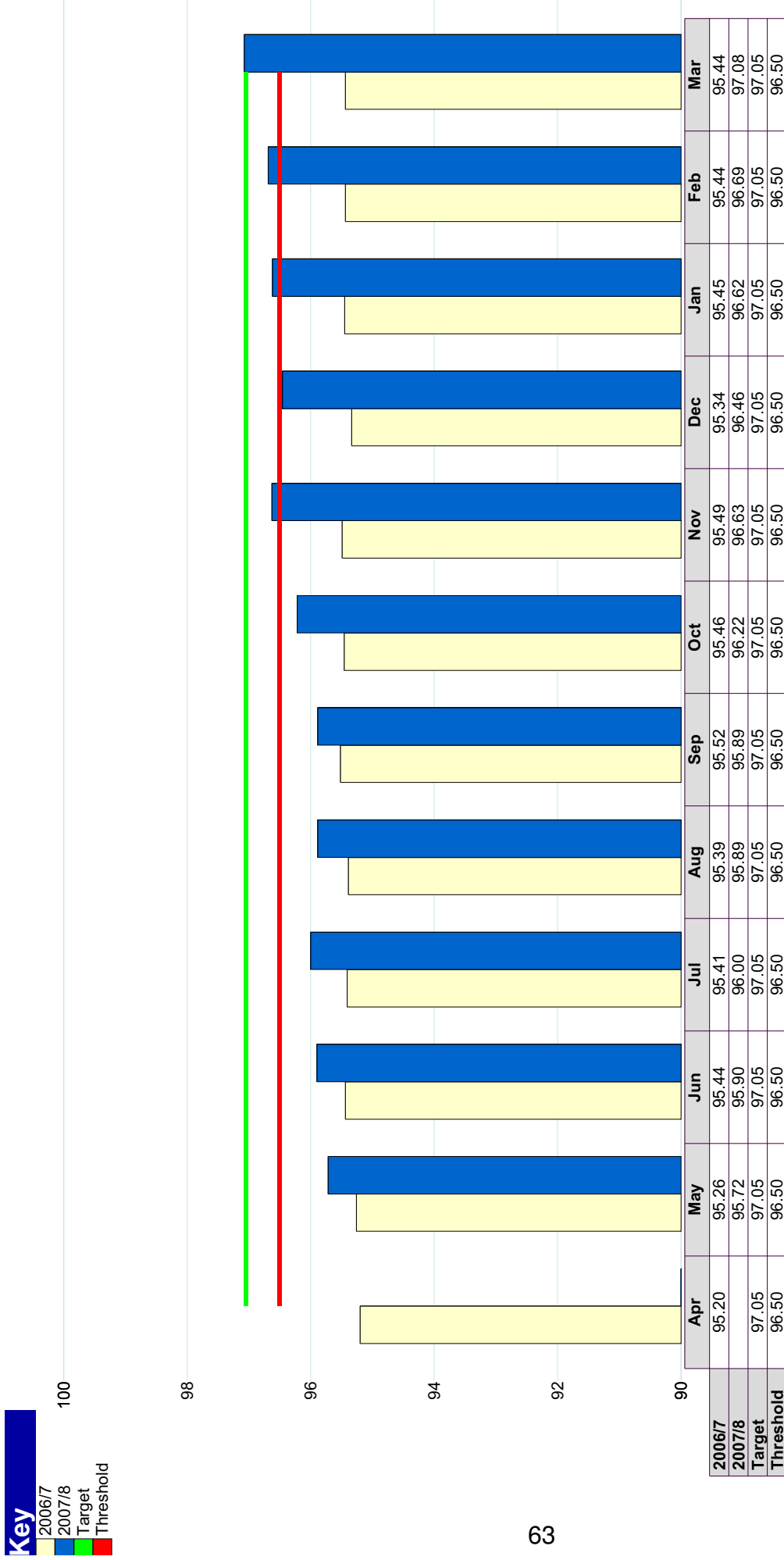
Comment

In the Central region of the city, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was approximately £7.8m.

The council's target is to collect 98.5% of this amount in this region over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph).

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (East)



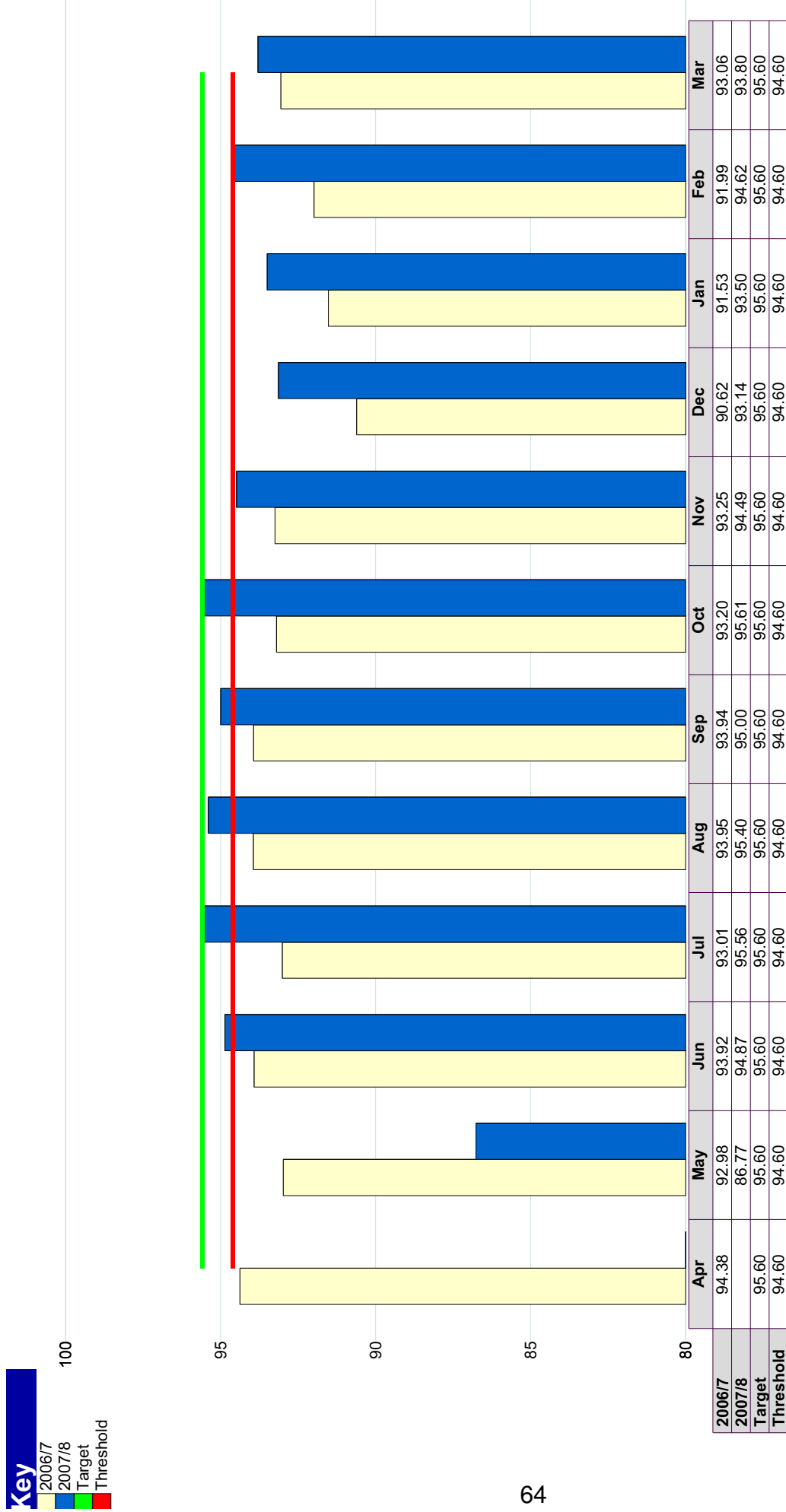
Comment

In the East region of the city, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was approximately £13.1m.

The council's target is to collect 97.05% of this amount in this region over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph).

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66a - Proportion of rent collected (temporary accommodation)



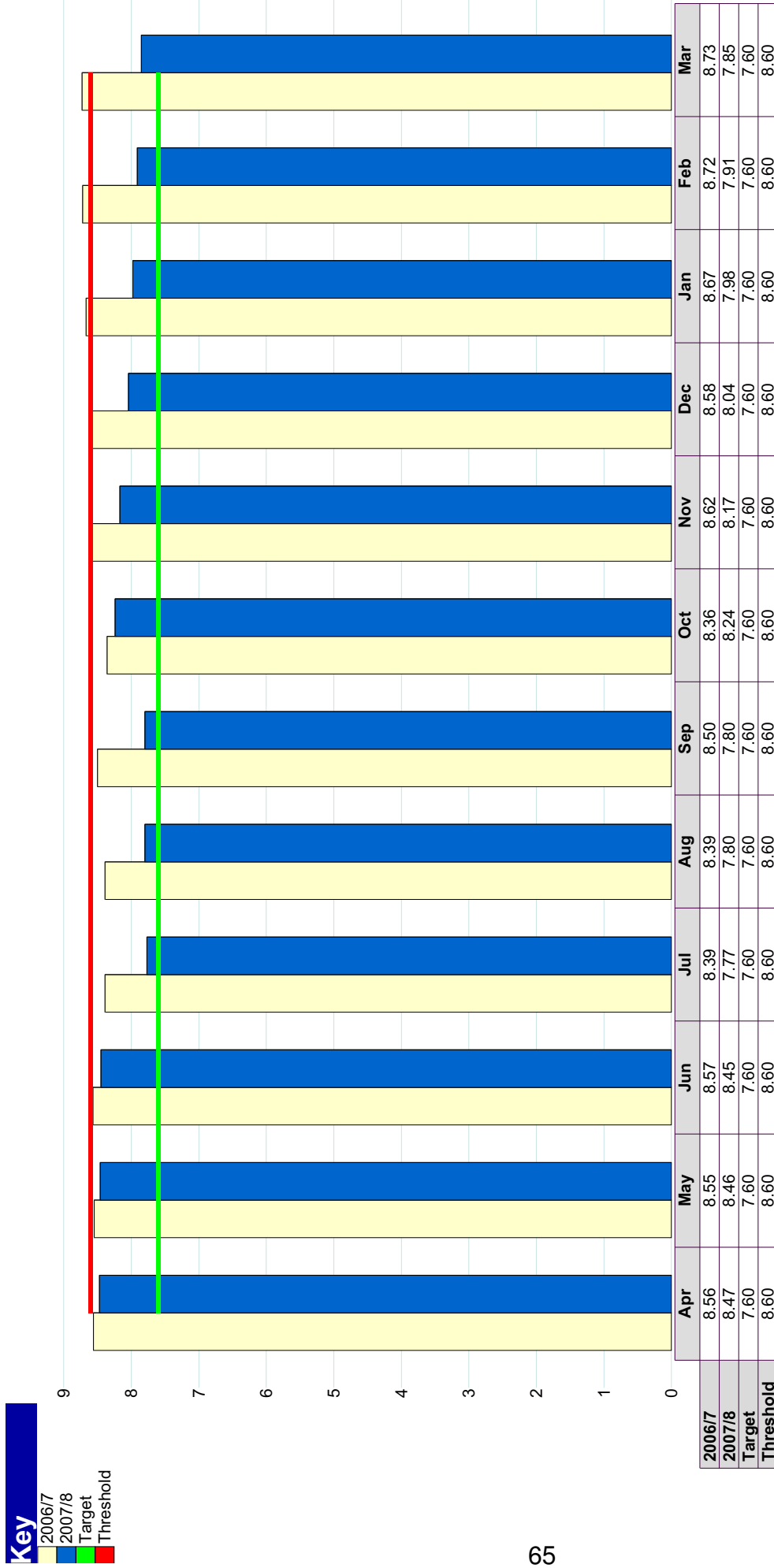
Comment

For temporary accommodation, the total rent and arrears due to the council after empty properties are taken into account in 2007/08 was £285,797.

The council's target is to collect 95.6% of this amount from temporary accommodation over the course of the year (as represented by the green line on the graph).

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66b - % of tenants with more than 7 weeks' rent arrears



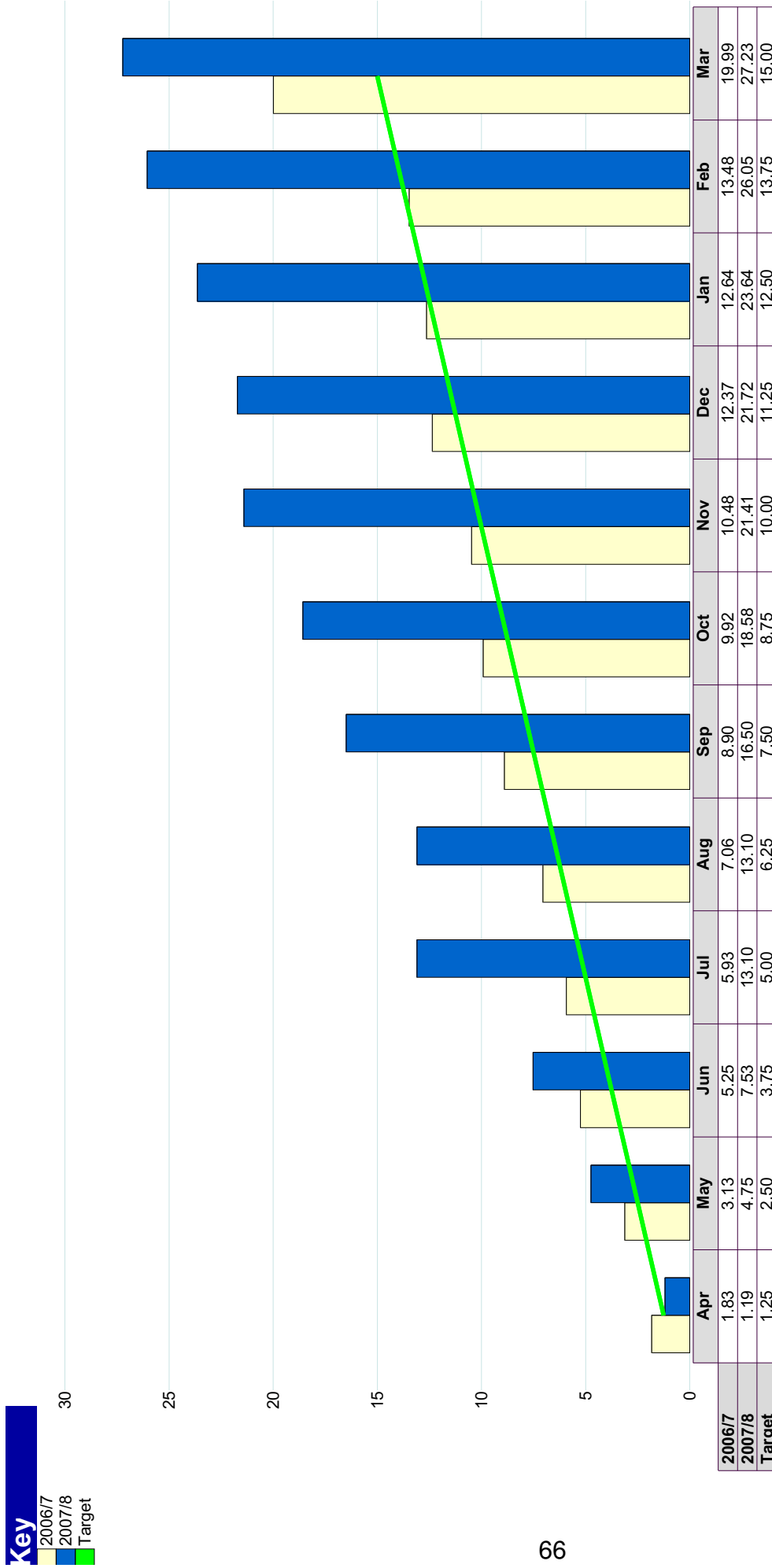
Comments

This indicator measures the number of tenants with 7 weeks or more gross rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of tenants.

In Brighton & Hove, there are roughly 12,200 tenants, of which around 950 (7.8%) are in more than 7 weeks gross rent arrears.

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 66c - % of tenants in arrears who have had notices seeking possession served

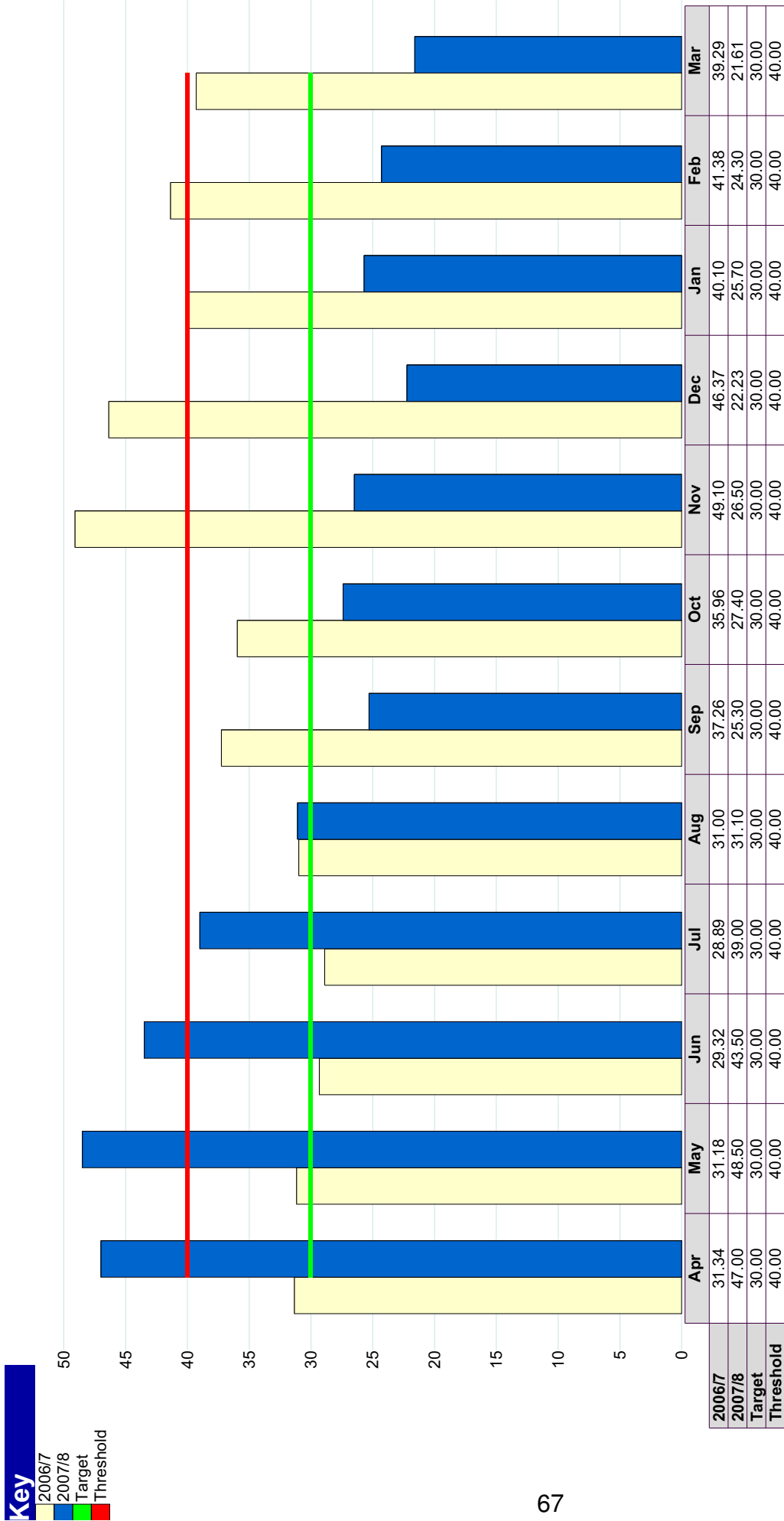


Comments

This indicator measures the number of tenants who have had notice seeking possession served as a result of being in arrears as a percentage of the total number of tenants who are in arrears. Notices seeking possession are served as necessary throughout the year, so the number the council serves increases as the year progresses from April to March. Over the course of the year, the council aims to serve notices seeking possession to no more than 15% of tenants in arrears (as indicated by the green line).

See the "Rent Collection and Arrears" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

BV 212 - Average time in days to relet local authority housing



Comments

This indicator measures the average number of days to relet local authority homes once they have become vacant. This includes supported and sheltered accommodation, but excludes properties undergoing major repairs.

The council aims to achieve an average relet time of 30 days or less (as represented by the green line on the graph). Very good performance from September onwards was offset by slower times at the start of the year, giving a final result just over target of 31 days.

See the "Empty Property Turnaround Time" section of the Housing Management sub-committee report for further information on work contributing to performance against this indicator.

% of properties with a current gas safety certificate (Citywide)

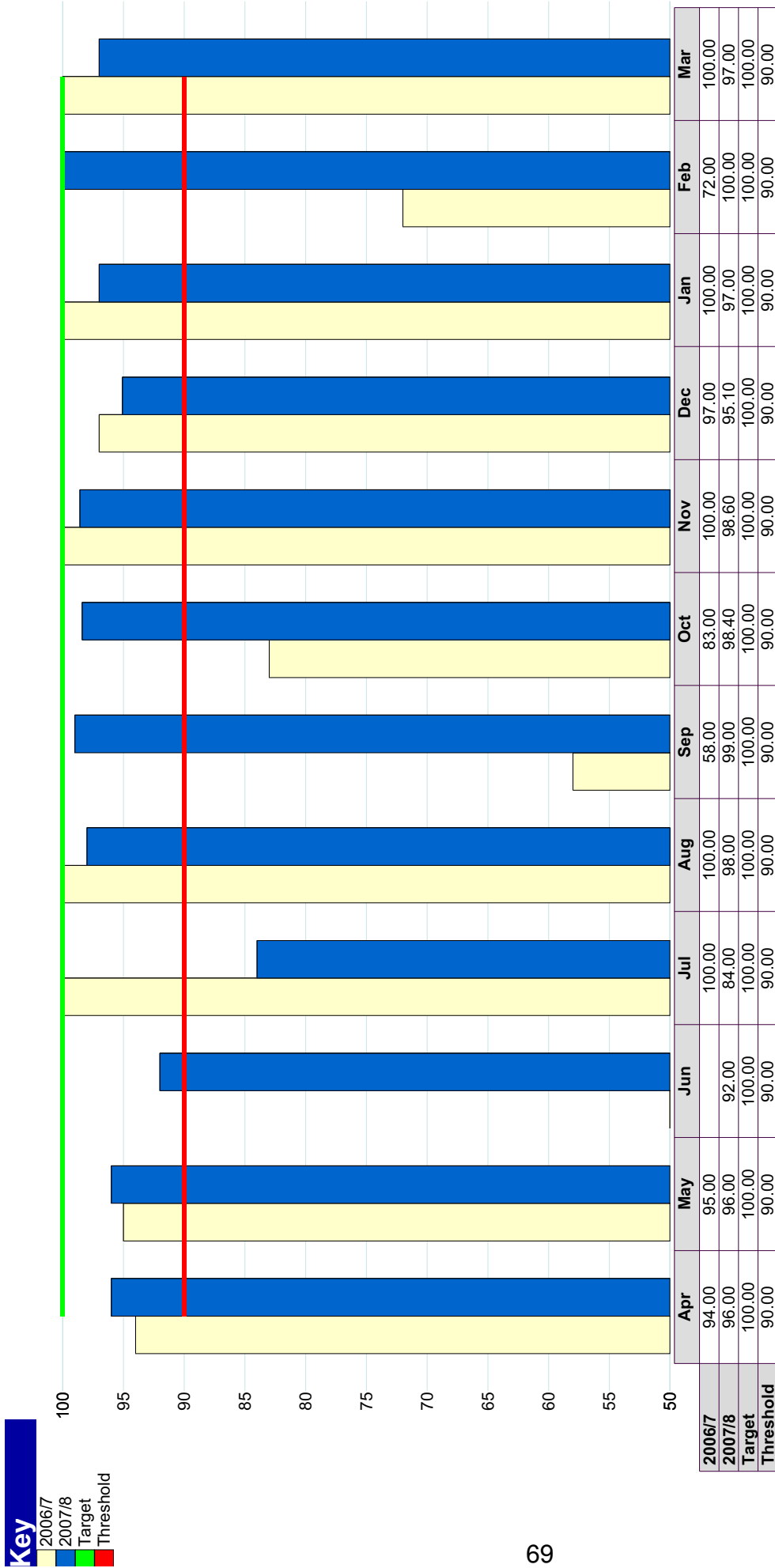


Comments

This indicator measures the percentage of local authority homes with gas pipework or equipment for which there is a current gas safety certificate. The council aims to ensure that all relevant properties have up to date gas safety certificates. There are approximately 10,600 such properties in Brighton & Hove.

The blue portions of the bars above represent those properties for which there is a current gas safety certificate, while the yellow portion at the top of the bar shows the proportion of properties where the certificate is overdue.

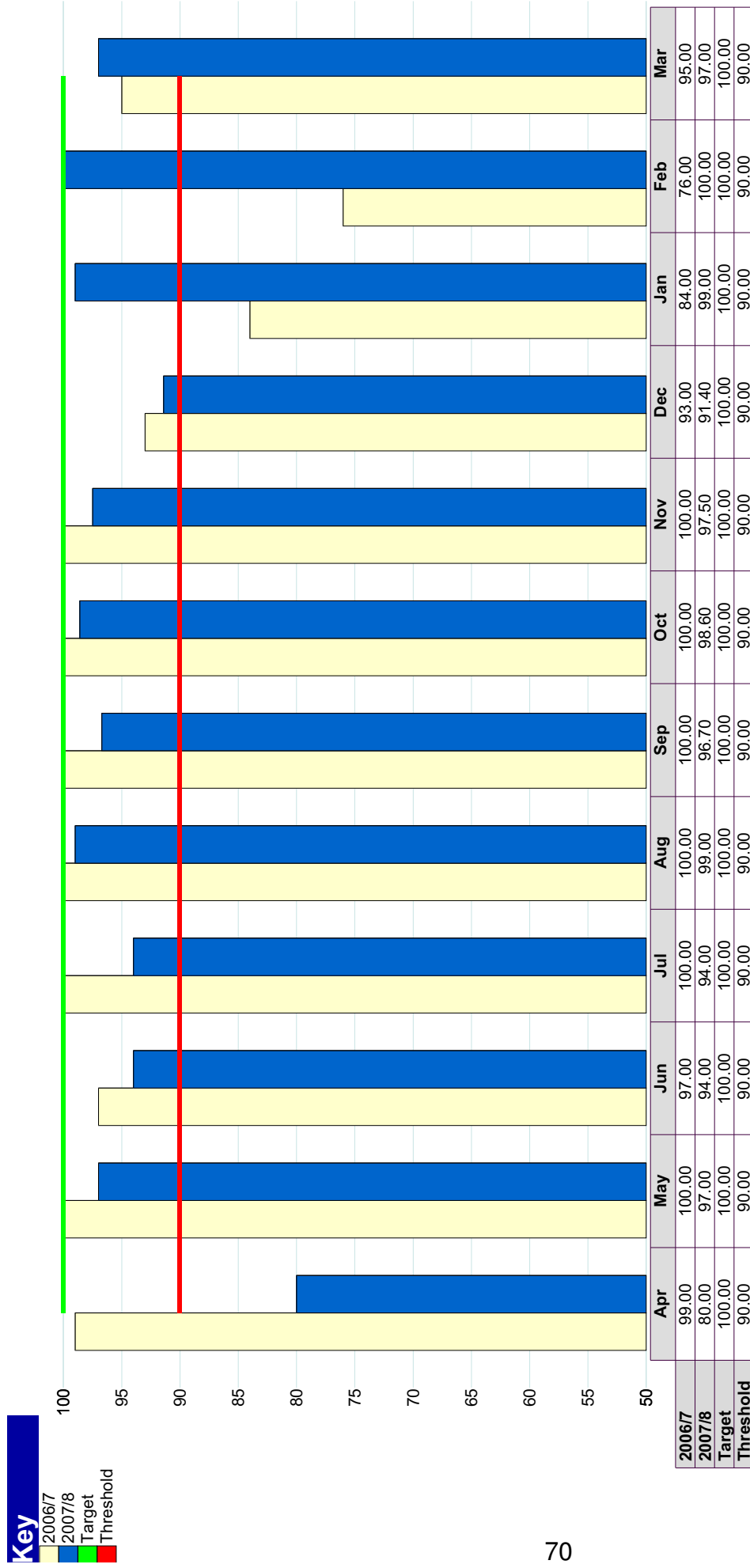
% of graffiti removal jobs completed within target times



Comments

This indicator measures the response times of the graffiti removal team. Graffiti that are perceived as offensive, racist or discriminatory are classified as high priority and removed within 1 working day of being reported. Other types of graffiti are removed within 7 working days of being reported.

% of bulk refuse removal jobs completed within target times



Comments

This indicator measures the response times of the bulk refuse removal team. Bulk refuse that is causing a health & safety hazard or obstructs key pathways are classified as high priority and removed within 1 working day of being reported. Other types of graffiti are removed within 7 working days of being reported.

HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 31

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: External envelope repairs to Somerset & Wiltshire House 2008

Date of Meeting: 22 July 2008

REPORT OF: Director of Adult Social Care & Housing

Contact Officer: Name: Simon Throp Tel: 29- 6806
E-mail: Simon.throp@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Key Decision: Yes Forward Plan No. 2186

Wards Affected: Queens Park

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To seek approval of the housing cabinet to give delegated authority to award a contract for repairs to the external envelope of Somerset & Wiltshire house to the best value supplier following a mini competition, procured through the London Housing Consortia (LHC) in accordance with Contract Standing Order CSO 9.3

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- (1) That the Cabinet Member for Housing authorise that the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing be given delegated powers to approve the award of the contract for external envelope repairs to Somerset & Wiltshire House, following financial due diligence and cost comparisons of the tenders offered under mini competition from contractors on the LHC external envelope repairs framework, following consultation with the Cabinet member for housing.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following reports of water ingress around windows to various flats within these blocks, a number of inspections were undertaken to identify the source of the ingress by the council's planned maintenance team.
- 3.2 These inspections have identified a breakdown of the pointing to the external brickwork and to the cavity trays above the windows which is allowing water into the cavity which then travels across the window heads into the flats.
- 3.3 The 2008-09 approved capital programme allowed £2,000,000 excluding fees for the external envelope repairs to these blocks. It was further agreed with the chair of the previous Housing Committee that the council will look to undertake any additional work identified as being needed, such as new lightning conductors, roof repairs etc to maximise the use of the scaffolding during project.

- 3.4 To enable the council to complete these works within this financial year, allowing for leaseholder consultation and tendering, it is proposed to use the London Housing Consortia's (LHC), external envelope repairs framework. The LHC is a specialist public sector building procurement consortium set up for use, free of charge, by any public sector organisation wishing to achieve efficiency savings in line with the Gershon review.
- 3.5 Contract standing orders (CSO) 9.3 allows the council to procure works to any value in collaboration with other local authorities or other public or voluntary sector bodies. Where the council is not the lead buyer, procurement procedures shall follow the spirit of the CSO's, and be in accordance with EU Public Procurement Regulations.
- 3.6 In addition to their assistance in procuring the contract the LHC as part of their role as a procurement network also carry out random inspections of the installations on our behalf to ensure compliance with their framework KPIs reducing our management costs while maintaining quality.
- 3.7 The LHC framework allows individual clients to choose their own specific contract terms. In this instance it is proposed to use a traditional JCT intermediate form of contract.
- 3.8 The draft timetable of events is as follows:

Event	Completion date
Appointment of consultants (Delegated authority)	21 July 2008
Mini competition	1 September 2008
Tender report	8 September 2008
2 nd stage S20 notice	11 October 2008
Pre start meeting	18 October 2008
Commencement on site	24 November 2008
Completion	April 2009

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Section 20 consultation has commenced with all leaseholders.
- 4.2 Residents will be consulted on the works through their residents associations and invited to nominate a number of representatives to form a site specific panel in line with the new resident involvement strategy which forms part of the new procurement strategy agreed by the P& R committee on 3 April 2008.
- 4.3 City Planning will be consulted on the repointing prior to commencement on site.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

The Housing Capital Programme 2008/09, approved by Policy & Resources on 3 April 2008, includes £2.12m for Somerset and Wiltshire High rise blocks essential health and safety repairs to brickwork to maintain the exterior of the building. Approval was also given to the commencement of the tender process for these essential structural works.

Any Additional works identified as being required will be carried out to maximise the use of the scaffolding with the additional costs of the works and how these will be funded being reported through Capital Programme Monitoring reports during 2008/09.

The risk of not awarding the contract in August would result in the delay of the project commencement and cause slippage of the approved Housing Capital Programme.

Finance Officer: Susie Allen, Principal Accountant. Date: 16 May 2008

5.1

Legal Implications:

This contract is a 'works' contract for the purposes of the EU Procurement Directive., and its value (£2m) falls below the threshold for works contracts (£3.49m). Nevertheless, the council's CSOs and the EU Directive require that sub-threshold procurement processes comply with the 'spirit' of the Directive. The proposed tender process does so comply. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer consulted: Alison Leitch / Date: 19 May 2008

5.2

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An equalities impact assessment will be completed by the winning contractor prior to commencement on site, as this is subject to their chosen method of access.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The specifications will require contractors to submit a sustainability impact statement on the contractor's proposals to reduce waste, recycling, and the reduction in CO2 emissions for this project.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Specific security requirements for the scaffold and site compound will be built into the specification prior to tender.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Using the council's risk & opportunities management methodology the significant risks and opportunities have been assessed and where amber or red a risk register has been produced detailing action & delivery that will inform the project.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 This work meets one of the strategic goals of improving the housing stock and ensuring that residents have a health living environment

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 None considered

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To enable the council to complete as much of the programme of work within this financial year it will need to enter into a contract no later than the end of October 2008. The cabinet preparation timetable does not allow enough time for completion of the analysis, consultation with leaseholders and residents or dealing with issues arising during negotiations or financial diligence, as well as being ready to request approval to award the contract by the deadline date of 15 August for the September cabinet members meeting or for the prior housing management consultative committee on 23 June. (See contract timetable above)).
- 7.2 In view of this it is requested that authority to enter into the contract be delegated to the Director of Adult Social Care & Housing in consultation with the Cabinet member.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None