

HOUSING MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Housing Management Performance Report End of Year (and quarter 4)		
Date of Meeting:	14 June 2010		
Report of:	Director of Housing Culture and Enterprise		
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Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This is the fourth and final quarter for Housing Management performance for the financial year 2009/10. End of year figures are presented either as a collective figure for the year or as final end of year figure against a previously set target. The distinctions, and the reasons for it, are made clear in the body of the report.
- 1.2 As reported previously, and at City Assembly, the requirements of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) will entail a change in the presentation of this report in the coming year. Therefore we will be reviewing our performance reports during 2010 to ensure that it provides tenants and leaseholders a full picture of our performance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing Management Consultative Committee comment on the contents of this report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

3.1.0 Rent Collection and Current Arrears

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd Quarter	Targets	
				09/10	10/11
BV66a Rent Collection	98.16%	98.29%	Definition under review with HouseMark	98.50%	98.68%
BV66a Rent Collection (Central housing area)	98.35%	98.32%	n.a.	98.79%	99.03%
BV66a Rent Collection (East housing area)	97.73%	98.00%	n.a.	97.99%	98.13%
BV66a Rent Collection (North housing area)	98.35%	98.47%	n.a.	98.66%	98.82%
BV66a Rent Collection (West housing area)	98.43%	98.47%	n.a.	98.88%	99.12%
BV66a Rent Collection (Temporary Accommodation)	97.07%	98.65%	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
BV66b Those with arrears of more than 7 weeks	6.40%	4.91%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 3.79%	4.96%	4.13%
BV66c The NOSP figure	30.35%	26.97%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 22.94%	26.46%	23.80%
BV66d The Eviction Figure (% tenants evicted for	0.16%	0.12%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 0.13%	< than 35 evictions per annum: 0.29%	

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd Quarter	Targets	
				09/10	10/11
rent arrears)					
BV69 % rent lost due to vacant dwellings	1.33%	2.05%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 1.65%	n.a.	To be set
Total former tenant arrears (exclusive of Temporary Accommodation)	£784,753	£780,279	n.a.	n.a.	To be set
% Collection rate for former tenant arrears (exclusive of Temporary Accommodation)	28.70%	22.88%	RIEN	n.a.	To be set
% of Write Offs for former tenant arrears (exclusive of Temporary Accommodation)	18.66%	9.30%	n.a.	n.a.	To be set
Total recharge debt	£95,884	£190,138	n.a.	£125,484	£272,110
% collection rate for recharges	31.26%	19.63%	n.a.	35%	20%
% Leaseholder recovery rate	80%	84%	n.a.	82%	To be set
% Leaseholder Recovery Rate on Recoverable arrears	90%	92%	n.a.	90%	To be set

- The above figures are cumulative and therefore 4th quarter figures are the same as the end of year.

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd Quarter	Targets	
				09/10	10/11

- RIEN: Rental Income Excellence Network

3.1.1 BVPI66a

3.1.2 The end of year figures show a 2009/10 collection rate of 98.29% against last year's performance of 98.16% and the 2007/08 result of 97.75%.

3.1.3 Continuous improvement has been a challenge in the current economic climate, but a clear and steady focus on rent collection and arrears management has delivered positive results.

3.1.4 BVPI66b

3.1.5 The percentage of debtors with more than seven weeks rent arrears at the end of March 2010 was 4.98%. This compares favourably with the 2008/09 result of 6.40% and represents a reduction of 212 in the number of debtors with more than seven weeks rent arrears.

3.1.6 BVPI66c

3.1.7 Between April 2009 and March 2010 the number of tenants served with a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP) was 753 compared to 917 during the same period in 2008/09.

3.1.8 BVPI66d

3.1.9 The number of households evicted for rent arrears in 2009/10 was 14. Increasing the collection rate while sustaining tenancies and minimising evictions is aligned with the corporate housing strategy in preventing an increase in homelessness. Thus, in order to achieve this, the Income Management Team will continue to use the Rent Arrears Pre-Action Protocol and work with customers to address issues prior to taking legal action.

3.2.0 Former tenant arrears

3.2.1 In 2008/09 the national average collection rate for former tenant arrears was 9.12% (Rent Income Excellence Network national figures). The 2009/10 collection rate for BHCC Income Management Team of 22.88% reflects the commitment of the Former Arrears Team and the work being

done by the Current Arrears Team to ensure that all legal obligations are met on the ending of a tenancy.

3.2.2 Recharges

3.2.3 Due to the increased emphasis on recharges the number of tenants who were recharged for the cost of repairs due to deliberate damage or neglect between April 2009 and March 2010 was 249. As a result the total recharge debt has increased by £94,254. This however, reflects the Housing Management policy, which places emphasis on the responsibility remaining with the tenant in order to ensure that properties are left in a reasonable condition, and no longer tolerates damage to our properties. Whilst the collection rate for 2009/10 was 19.63% the income management team will continue to implement the recharge policy with vigour.

3.3 Leaseholders' service charges - % collection rate on gross arrears

3.3.1 Throughout 2009/2010 there has been an increased emphasis in supporting leaseholders so that they can meet their service charge obligations. As a consequence of this focused work, the average gross arrears were £156 per leaseholder in 2009/10. This is the lowest amount recorded for this indicator against previous yearly totals.

3.3.2 There will be a need for an increased focus in the management of service charges in the forthcoming year to maintain the high level of success. There is a high level of works anticipated throughout the service in order to meet the decent homes standard. In order to achieve this we will be working with our partners Mears to anticipate the potential impact of charges on leaseholders to ensure that accurate information is available at the earliest opportunity.

3.3.3 Leaseholders' service charges - % collection rate on recoverable arrears

3.3.4 The 'recoverable' arrears figure excludes the costs that have been passed to legal services for recovery. The legal recovery is subject to charging orders and formal payment arrangements that have been arranged, or those that are being disputed.

3.4.0 Empty home turnaround time

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	Fourth quarter 09/10	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd quarter	Targets	
					09/10	10/11
BV212 average re-let times in days (all properties)	28	24	25.5	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 25 Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 23.38	26	24
General needs	25	24	23	n.a.	26	24
Sheltered	38	29	38	n.a.	26	24

*Empty property turnaround figures are quarterly whilst the end of year is cumulative.

3.4.1 The Lettings Team has continued meet the challenge of reducing the overall empty home turnaround time from 28 days to 25.5 days during the past year. And whilst it is acknowledged that this falls just outside the upper quartile figures for both the major cities and stock retained benchmarking clubs, it exceeds our target for the year.

3.4.2 In order to address the challenges faced in letting sheltered properties a number of flats within some of the schemes, such as Hazel Holt, have been made into self contained homes providing residents with their own shower facilities. This is an ongoing project, and all schemes, with shared facilities will be reviewed during the next year.

3.4.3 Looking to the year ahead, the team has set a challenging turnaround target of 24 days on average turnaround time.

3.4.4 The Lettings Team is looking forward to achieving the objectives on its service plan for the coming year, this includes:

- making improvements to our customers' experience of the letting's service by working with newly moved in tenants to discuss, for example, their expectations, satisfaction levels, and suggestions for improvement.
- involving customers more in the work of the team, and in developing our local service pledges and remedies.
- improving communications in order to improve the service delivered

- taking extra steps to ensure tenancies get off on the right footing and are sustainable.
- meeting the target of 24 days.

3.5.0 Stock investment and asset management – Performance Quarter Three

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	Fourth quarter 09/10	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd Quarter	Targets	
					09/10	10/11
Emergency Repairs Completed in time	96.8 % 98.48 % (Mears) 94.49 % (Kier)	98.12% 99.53 (Mears) 96.2% (Kier)	98%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile	99 %	97%
No of Emergency Repairs completed	7,755 4,414 (Mears) 3,341 (Kier)	1,865 1,075 (Mears) 790 (Kier)	7,080 4,135 (Mears) 2,945 (Kier)	n.a	n.a.	
Urgent Repairs Completed in time	92.53 % 95.35 % (Mears) 89.18 % (Kier)	97.69% 98.94% (Mears) 97.03% (Kier)	97.6%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile	98 %	97%
No of Urgent Repairs completed	4,391 2,388 (Mears) 2,005 (Kier)	1,429 852 (Mears) 577 (Kier)	4,246 2,474 (Mears) 1,772 (Kier)	n.a.	n.a.	**
Routine Repairs Completed within target time	96.01 % 97.86 % (Mears) 93.53 % (Kier)	98.94% 99.87% (Mears) 97.03% (Kier)	98.9%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile	98 %	97%
No of Routine Repairs completed	19,697 11,305 (Mears) 8,419 (Kier)	4,448 2,999 (Mears) 1,449 (Kier)	18380 11,474 (Mears) 6,906 (Kier)	n.a.	n.a.	**
BV72 Right to Repair orders completed within target time	96.87 %	98.06%	98.3%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile	97 %	97%
BV73 Ave time to	15 days	12 days	12 days	HouseMark Major Cities	14 days	**

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	Fourth quarter 09/10	End of year performance 09/10	Top 25% of performing authorities figures 2 nd Quarter	Targets	
					09/10	10/11
complete routine repairs				Benchmarking: Upper Quartile Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile		
NI158 % of council homes that are non-decent	48.89%	39.48%	39.48%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile	36%	**
BV63 - Energy Efficiency (SAP Rating 2001)	75.9	76.5	76.5	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile Stock Retained Benchmarking: Upper Quartile 72.9 (target)	76.5	**
LPI G3 Citywide % of stock with up to date gas safety certificates	99.61%	99.68%	99.68%	HouseMark Major Cities Benchmarking: Upper Quartile target	100 %	**
Mears Area	99.49 %	99.74%	99.74%	n.a.	100 %	**
PH Jones Area	99.78 %	99.91%	99.61%	n.a.	100 %	**

3.5.1 Responsive repairs

3.5.2 Improvements in the completion of emergency, urgent and routine repairs continued over the last quarter of 2009/2010. These existing repairs contracts ended on the 31st March 2010 and despite the challenges of the closedown of the contracts performance for 2009/2010 has improved on the previous year across all of the above indicators.

3.5.3 Targets have been achieved for indicators BV72 (right to repairs completed within target), BV73 (number of days to complete routine repairs), and for

the completion of routine repairs. The targets for emergency and urgent repairs for the year however, were not met as a consequence of the performance in the first quarter of 2009/2010. Despite this, it is worth noting that our new partners Mears, performance in all areas exceeded the targets set for them.

3.5.4 Further, although the targets for 2010/11 were set ahead of the new repairs and improvement partnership with Mears and reflect the minimum position expected for the first year, Mears have asserted their confidence in exceeding the said targets.

3.6.0 **Decent homes and SAP**

3.6.1 Further improvements in residents homes have been delivered over the last quarter of the year with kitchens, bathrooms, doors and heating installations all contributing to improved performance in decent homes. At the end of the year 39.48% of homes were non-decent meaning that approximately 10% of the housing stock was made decent in 2009/2010.

3.6.2 Following the successful mobilisation of the repairs and improvement partnership with Mears there is a target of achieving decency in 75% of the stock by the end of 2010/11.

3.6.3 **Gas**

3.6.4 The percentage of homes with a current gas safety certificate remains high with excellent performance being delivered in partnership by Brighton & Hove City Council, Mears Group and PH Jones. Performance at the end of 2009/2010 was 99.68%; this is an improvement on last year's performance of 99.61%. At the time of writing this report a total of 34 properties have an overdue service however, the status of each of the properties is individually known.

3.7.0 Estates Services

Satisfaction	Total inspections /reports	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very poor/fail
Estate Inspections	54	26	13	13	2
Estate Cleaning Service	50	23	18	8	1
Grounds Maintenance	18	2	9	6	1

3.7.1 Cleaning

3.7.2 The last performance report advised members of this committee that changes were being considered as to the way the Estates Service cleaning performance is recorded. The proposal was to include residents' assessments of the quality of the work carried out.

3.7.3 The Turning the Tide project are pioneering this approach through the 'Rate Your Estate' initiative, where resident assessors will score the environmental quality of their estate, or part of it, and the services that contribute to its overall appearance.

3.7.4 The table above shows feedback on the housing related elements from the recent 'Rate Your Estate' Resident Assessor training day that was organised by the Turning the Tide project. This data was gathered from a test inspection of 3 small areas in Moulsecomb and are an example of the type of report that will be available when 'Rate Your Estate' is finalised and rolled out across the city. Residents were given guidance on how to carry out this type of estate inspection using a photo book to score quality, and then asked to test the procedures and forms that support the inspection process. Residents who attended this event were very positive about this style of estate inspection, and have made suggestions on how the forms and procedure can be improved. Work is ongoing to make these changes and test them out before the procedure is introduced on a city wide basis.

3.7.5 The figures for estate inspections provide a summary of the overall categorisation of each of the 54 reports that were carried out on the training day. This ranges from Good to Very poor/fail. From the results of the inspections the overall feedback, reflected up to 72% either good or moderate.

3.7.6 The Estate Cleaning service results reflect up to 82% of areas either good or moderate, with 16% reported as poor and a further 2% fail.

3.7.7 The Grounds maintenance service results reflected 61% of areas either good or moderate, with 33% reported as poor and a further 5.5% fail.

3.7.8 This type of reporting also provides the facility to identify areas that need a higher concentration of input in order to bring them up to an acceptable standard.

3.7.9 When the 'Rate your Estate' procedure is finalised the assessments will be reported back to the Housing & Estates Forum where resident representatives in the Turning the Tide area will meet with service providers, to agree the actions that need to be taken to improve the lower scoring areas.

3.7.10 Bulk Refuse & Graffiti removal

Indicator	End of year performance 08/09	Fourth quarter 09/10	End of year performance 09/10	Future targets	
				09/10	10/11
Bulk refuse removal	Emergency 77%	Emergency 100%	Emergency 98.6%	E 100%	E 100%
Targets met within timescales	Routine 84%	Routine 99.1%	Routine 97.3%	R 95%	R 96%
Graffiti removal	Emergency 100%	Emergency 77.8%	Emergency 84.3%	E 100%	E 100%
Targets met within timescales	Routine 88%	R Routine 93.8%	Routine 75.6%	R 95%	R 96%

3.7.11 Performance by the bulk refuse removal team has been particularly strong this year. This team has played an important role in improving fire safety in blocks of flats by working with the local housing offices to remove abandoned goods from the common parts of buildings to keep common ways clear and free from obstructions.

3.7.12 The graffiti team has not reached the targets that were set this year. This is mainly due to the vehicle being off the road for repairs during the

summer of 2009. Further delays in the removal of graffiti may be upon further inspection, a result of the need for specialist contractors to carry out the work. The trend, however, for routine removal is one of improved performance and should it continue, would indicate that the target of 96% for 2010/11 is achievable.

3.8.0 Anti-social behaviour

Current high profile ASB cases	Number of new cases	Number of Notices of Seeking Possession served	Number of evictions	Number of closed cases
48	9	6	2	5

3.8.1 The main focus of the “Turning the Tide” pilot is to operate within the area serviced by the Selsfield Drive Housing Office. Both the city wide ASB and Tenancy Support teams have been brought together as part of the systemic change in the delivery of housing management services that forms a key aspect of the pilot.

3.8.2 The intention of the pilot is to ensure that all of the city’s tenants can benefit from the refocused approach to ASB and tenancy sustainment. This includes robust and assertive actions to actively challenge ASB and to ensure that there is consistency city wide.

3.8.3 During the last quarter the pilot can report that it has successfully closed 5 cases, with 2 cases resulting in eviction. A clear priority of the pilot is to ensure that anti-social behaviour ceases as quickly as possible. Eviction is not an ideal outcome and the pilot aims to use targeted and firm interventions in order to change behaviour and, if possible, to maintain tenancy. The pilot seeks to ensure sufficient support is provided to victims and witnesses and is currently in the process of assigning additional staff resources in order to provide an improved support service to residents.

3.8.4 The success of the pilot has very much been a result of adopting a multi agency approach and utilizing the various enforcement powers available whilst ensuring that the necessary support is provided for victims, witnesses and perpetrators, who may be presenting with complex needs. The enforcement measures that have been adopted have included Brighton and Hove’s first premises Closure Order made under the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (as amended by Section 118 of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008). This ensured an immediate end to a situation of serious anti-social behaviour prior to obtaining outright possession of the property through the court.

3.8.5 Other examples of utilising the enforcement options through this approach have included working with the Environmental Health team to obtain an ASBO on conviction following seizure of noise making equipment under the Noise Act 1996. The Order was breached, the council returned to court and the perpetrator was remanded in custody in January pending trial. This provided an immediate end to continuing noise and anti-social behaviour. Another case incorporated obtaining an injunction with powers of arrest under the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. In order to protect vulnerable and elderly residents this, upon breach of the order, resulted in a 2 month custodial sentence and court costs of £862.50,.

3.8.6 Turning the tide will continue to develop performance indicators in-line with our benchmarking colleagues at HouseMark whilst placing emphasis on outcomes.

Satisfaction	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
How satisfied are you with the way your complaint / case was dealt with	4	2	2	2	2
How satisfied are you with the outcome of your work with the service	6	3	1	1	1
How satisfied are you that your case officer was always helpful	7	1	2		2
How satisfied are you that you were kept informed about what was happening throughout your work with the service	5	3	1	1	2
How satisfied were you with the support given to you by your case officer	5	3	2		2

3.8.7 Thus, emphasis is placed on effective outcomes and in order to ensure that the pilot is a success all victims and witnesses will be contacted when a case is closed to determine whether they have been satisfied with the way in which the case has been managed.

3.8.8 Following the closure of the cases from the last quarter of all satisfaction questions asked, the percentage of victims of anti-social behaviour either very satisfied or dissatisfied ranged between 60% and 75%, with one response rate of 50%.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Service specific groups will continue to monitor performance on a regular basis.

4.2 The consultation on the new resident involvement strategy will also emphasise continued customer involvement in analysing and scrutinising performance.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Most performance measures discussed in this report have financial implications which have been included in the monthly financial monitoring reports. An example is the improvement in the rent collection and arrears management over the past two years, which has contributed to a saving in the HRA Budget for the bad debt provision requirement. Another example is any improvement in turnaround times or a reduction 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

5.2 *Finance Officer Consulted:* Sue Chapman *Date:* 1/06/2010

Legal Implications:

5.3 There are no significant legal implications arising from this standard performance report.

5.4 *Lawyer Consulted:* Liz Woodley *Date:* 1/06/2010

Equalities Implications:

5.5 These are contained within the body of the report. For example ensuring that due note is taken of equalities considerations in sustaining tenancies

and minimising evictions. In each area of the service, where performance information is provided, an Equalities Impact Assessment has either been carried out or is currently being planned and is timetabled within the corporate framework.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report or its publication. Relevant comments are made within the body of the report, where appropriate.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.7 There are no direct crime & disorder implications arising directly from this report. Relevant comments are made within the body of the report, where appropriate.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.8 There are no direct Risk and Opportunity Management Implications arising directly from this report. Relevant comments are made within the body of the report, where appropriate.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.9 The performance report takes account of corporate priorities, in particular, making better use of public money, reducing inequality by increasing opportunity and fair enforcement of the law.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None

