

<b>HOUSING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item 54</b>
	Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Housing Committee workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 2 2021/22</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>19 January 2022</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods &amp; Communities</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Ododo Dafé</b>	<b>Tel: 01273 293201</b>
	<b>Email:</b>	<b>ododo.dafe@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>	
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 This report illustrates progress against Housing Committee work plan 2019-23 priorities and targets, as well as other Housing service targets. The report covers Quarter 2 of the 2021/22 financial year and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The Housing Committee workplan (Appendix 1) and joint programme (Appendix 2) were agreed at Housing Committee in September 2019. This report also reviews the progress against the goals of the joint programme (Appendix 2). The pandemic has disrupted progress in delivering the timetable approved in September 2019 and this needs to be updated to reflect the current position and resources. Rescheduling the timetable in a revised workplan presents an opportunity to review priorities and consider additions or subtractions to the plan for future years.
- 1.3 Information highlights from the quarter include:
  - **Customer feedback** – 59 compliments received from customers, and 85% of stage one complaints responded to within 10 working days.
  - **Private sector housing** – 53% of Houses in Multiple Occupation have met all special conditions (for licences issued over 12 months ago).
  - **Major adaptations** – waiting times for applications were 21.3 weeks for private sector homes.
  - **Housing needs** – there were 2,012 households in temporary accommodation at the end of September 2021. This includes rough sleeper and other Covid placements, which have reduced from 258 to 134.
  - **Housing supply** – 27 additional council homes delivered through buy backs.

- **Council housing management** – 103 council homes were re-let in an average of 66 days.
- **Council housing repairs and maintenance** – the proportion of ‘Decent Homes’ increased from 91.9% to 92.9%.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That Housing Committee notes the report and comments on the priorities for the work programme going forwards.
- 2.2 That a revised workplan is presented for consideration at Housing Committee in June 2022.

## **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 The report uses red, amber and green traffic light symbols to provide an indication of performance, and also trend arrows to provide an indication of movement from the previous quarter.

## **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION:**

- 4.1 This report went to Area Panels in December 2021 for residents to comment and enquire upon.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The financial implications are contained in the report. An area of performance with significant financial effect is the ability to collect rents from tenants as well as the impact of the length of time that properties are empty. Over the last two years the percentage of rent collected has fallen in the HRA, and although the performance still compares favourably when benchmarked against other stock holding councils around the country, this is of concern and a review is underway to identify actions that will help to improve this. The collection of rents at 15.1 in Appendix 1 show that in Quarter 2, there has been a 0.22% decrease in the collection of rents with collection now forecast at 96.16%. This will need addressing for the service to get back to anything like the 2018/19 collection rate of 97.8%. An improvement of 0.1% increase in collection equates to approximately £53,000 more rental income in 2021/22.
- 5.2 Indicator 15.9 shows that the average relet time (excluding those with major works required) has reduced from 88 last quarter to 66 days for Quarter 2 which is good news. However, there are currently 273 empty properties awaiting works and current forecasts suggest that this is causing an overspend of close to £1m for the HRA due to the loss of rent and extra council tax costs incurred. This forecast will be updated for month 9 Targeted Budget Management Report to P&R Committee in February. Having empty properties extends the time those on the Housing Register are waiting for council housing and increases the costs incurred on temporary accommodation in

the general fund. It is therefore crucial to reduce the numbers of empty properties and minimise re-let times so that the HRA can maximise its rental income, reduce waiting times and reduce the costs of temporary accommodation in the general fund. On average, one empty property costs the HRA an estimated £93 per week in lost rent and also further council tax costs are incurred. The service is working on the backlog of empty properties and extra staff have been recruited to assist in lettings. Recovery efforts to tackle the backlog of empty council homes include using approved procurement routes to increase contractor capacity and large-scale recruitment of new permanent staff who can carry out works directly. Therefore, this should improve this performance as the year progresses.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks      Date: 10-01-22*

Legal Implications:

- 5.2. There are no significant legal implications arising from this regular monitoring report to draw to the Committee's attention.

*Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley      Date: 13/12/2021*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 The average energy efficiency rating of council homes stands at 68.1 (out of a maximum of 100) and efforts to increase this rating contribute towards the council's sustainability commitments and help to reduce fuel poverty.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. Cases of anti-social behaviour involving criminal activity are worked on in partnership with the police and other agencies.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct risk and opportunity implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 Many services were stopped or significantly impacted in March 2020 in order to comply with Coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions and some impacts continue.

Corporate or Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 There are no direct corporate or citywide implications arising from this report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Housing Committee Workplan progress update and Housing performance report - Quarter 2 2021/22.
2. Appendix 2 - Joint – Labour/Green 2019-2023 Housing Programme – progress aligned to Housing Committee priorities & work plan 2019-23.

### **Background Documents:**

None.