



Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 28 June 2018

**To the Chair and Members of the
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

SLHD Performance & Delivery Update: 2017/18 Quarter Four (Q4)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As part of the Management Agreement and governance arrangements for St. Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) an Annual Development Plan is produced in agreement with DMBC officers, the Housing Portfolio holder and the Mayor. This Annual Development Plan identifies the key deliverables, outcomes, milestones and the measures by which performance is assessed. There is an agreed governance framework part of which is a quarterly report of key performance indicators to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
2. This report provides an opportunity to feedback on performance successes and issues against the suite of 2017/18 key performance indicators.

EXEMPT REPORT

3. This report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. That the Committee note the progress of SLHD performance outcomes and the contribution SLHD makes to supporting DMBC strategic priorities.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

5. As this report includes the current progress on the St. Leger Homes Performance indicators, the implications of the contents may ultimately affect the delivery of services to the people of Doncaster.

BACKGROUND

6. Appendix A summarises the SLHD 2017/18 Quarter 4 (Q4), January to March 2018, performance management report.
7. As per the Quarter 3 (Q3) update, there are now twelve indicators. New indicators were added to measure performance around homelessness, and there were changes in the approach to measuring complaints.
8. Key performance elements to note are:
 - six of the twelve revised key performance indicators are on target (green);
 - three are within acceptable tolerance levels (amber);
 - two are below target (red); and,
 - one is not measured against a target (KPI3).
9. Overall, performance declined slightly compared to Q3 when there were eight 'green', two 'amber' and two 'red'. However, performance is strong in the key areas of voids, homelessness and complaints, with sickness at its lowest level since the ALMO was established.
10. Targets were updated for 2017/18 and are considered more challenging than those set in 2016/17. Commentary covering the performance against all twelve indicators is provided below and summarised in the table at Appendix A. Targets for all indicators have been reviewed and set for 2018/19.

11. Performance

11.1. Performance measure: Percentage of Current Rent Arrears against Annual Debit (within tolerance – amber)

Performance at the end of Q4 was 2.62% (£1.95m) against the end of year target of 2.50%. Performance declined throughout the year with Q4 performance the same as Q3 compared with the end of Q2 (2.52%) and Q1 (2.41%). Performance at the end of 2016/17 was better at 2.44% (£1.83m).

Whilst the level of arrears has increased during 2017/18, it is important to recognise that we have outperformed our benchmarking peers (up to and including Q3 as Q4 benchmarking is not yet available). SLHD arrears have increased by only 0.2% compared to the average increase of 0.5% across organisations in all other quartiles.

This level of performance and outperforming other housing organisations is testament to the changes introduced by SLHD in response to national Welfare Reform changes and the significant efforts made by staff. The rate of tenants transfer onto Universal Credit (UC) has also been greater than forecast, meaning we have had to collect more rent at this stage than originally anticipated. The transition of UC cases has been 46% higher than the forecast provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

A new approach to triaging and supporting tenants as they move on to UC has been implemented, alongside a more focused approach for tenants who need more help. This has included the creation of a new Tenancy Sustainment Team, funded through the creation of efficiencies elsewhere within the organisation. Further efficiencies have been identified to implement the next phase of the Tenancy Sustainment Team during 2018/19 enabling support to

continue for new UC claimants. New ways of working were trialled during March, including bringing Customer Service Advisors together into a single team to focus on low-level arrears and early intervention. Performance management is also changing, with more localised targets for officers to focus on. This approach will be evaluated to measure its success.

At the end of Q4 there were 1,373 UC cases (compared to 695 at the end of Q3), of which 75% are in rent arrears. Work is underway with tenants and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide intensive support including applying for Alternative Payment Arrangements (APAs) where appropriate.

11.2. Performance measure: Void Rent Loss – Percentage of rent loss through vacant dwellings (performing well – green)

Performance at the end of Q4 was 0.78%, which is well within the target of 0.97% and continues the improving trend seen throughout the year (0.83% at the end of Q3, 0.98% at the end of Q2 and 1.16% at the end of Q1). This performance puts SLHD in the upper quartile compared to all housing providers based on last year's Housemark figure (0.8%). This is a cumulative target, meaning performance in Q4 was particularly good. Rent loss for the year was £580k, which is over £170k less than last year.

The re-let time for standard re-lets, as benchmarked with other organisations, has continued to improve over the last 6 months and was 36 days for the year as a whole, with performance in March considerably better than the average at 26.7 days. The average overall re-let times for void properties, which includes major works, stands at 40 days, which continues the improving trend seen throughout the year, and is 9 days less than at the end of last year. This improvement has been achieved by a cross-organisational effort focused on reducing turnaround times whilst maintaining quality standards.

11.3. Performance measure: Number of households placed in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation (no target)

There were 28 households placed into B&B accommodation in Q4, compared to 20 during Q3. The total number of nights in B&B accommodation also increased in Q4 to 80 compared with 58 nights in Q3, maintaining the average of 3 nights per household. In Q4, 13 households with children were placed into B&B accommodation.

The cold weather and activation of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for substantial periods of Q4 were contributing factors to the increase. By working with partners and providing an additional 20 crash beds through our own accommodation, increasing the number of units for temporary accommodation up to 40 at the height of the severe weather, we were able to minimise the use of B&B and still ensure that there were beds available for all homeless and rough sleepers who wanted to access them during the cold weather period.

The Complex Lives team are beginning to move away from a reactive outreach response (which was necessary during the cold weather), towards proactively managing the cohort. Approximately 50% of the Complex lives cohort who came to us during the cold weather period are still working with us and have not returned to rough sleeping.

Using B&B continues to be a last resort and tends to be where temporary accommodation and hostel placements are unavailable or unsuitable (e.g. families). There are a lack of accommodation placements within the commissioned support provision, and St. Leger Homes continues to work with providers to develop shared accommodation for individuals ready to move on to semi-independent living.

11.4. Performance measure: Percentage of decisions made within statutory timescales (33 days) (below target – red)

Homelessness cases have become increasingly complex with individuals often having many mutually reinforcing dependencies, which can delay the assessment process. Performance in Q4 improved to 92%, meeting the 90% target, and improving on the Q3 performance of 76%. This equates to 144 out of 157 decisions made within the 33 working day statutory timescales. The year-end position was 84% of decisions made within statutory timescales. This performance has improved significantly during the last 6 months of 2018/19 as a result of the restructure within the team and better working procedures and systems.

Whilst this indicator is relatively new (from October 2017 onwards), the final guidance (received in March 18) regarding the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 3 April 2018, has changed the legal framework around statutory homelessness decision. A new measure has therefore been agreed from April 2018, which is the number of cases where a household is deemed statutory homeless and awarded a 'full duty', which is where there is a legal duty to secure accommodation. The target for 2018/19 is to see a reduction of approximately 10%.

11.5. Performance measure: Number of households maintaining or established independent living (performing well – green)

This indicator is taken as a snapshot at the end of the quarter when there were 49 households supported to maintain or establish independent living, against the contractual target of 40. This is an increase compared to Q3 (46) and previous quarters, and higher than the 40 households at the end of Q4 last year, and above the contractual target of 40.

Linked to 11.2 above, the increase in homelessness and rough sleeping within the borough increased the pressures on staffing within this area of the business as previously reported. To counter this, the team have been moved within the Tenancy Sustainment function, which has improved referrals and shared learning.

11.6. Performance Measure: Complaints – Percentage of complaints upheld against customer interactions (performing well – green)

Complaints are reported one month in arrears to allow time for the complaint to be investigated and closed in line with our service standards. All complaints are investigated and either 'upheld' or not. Complaints are upheld where policies and procedures have not been followed.

The total number of interactions with tenants during December, January and February was over 80,000. There were 181 complaints in the period of which 34 were upheld. This means that performance in Q4 was 0.02%, which is a

significant improvement compared to Q3 and resulted in a year-end position of 0.06% against the 0.08% target (lower is better).

The total number of complaints for December, January and February was 181, which is lower than the previous three months (218) and lower than the same period last year (216).

Whilst complaints are received in a variety of service areas, the main areas are repairs and maintenance, and tenancy and estate management. This is not surprising given that these areas of the business have the highest levels of visibility to tenants and the highest volume of interactions.

11.7. Performance measure: Right first time (performing well – green)

Year to date performance at the end of Q4 was 99.50%, which continues the improving trend throughout the year (Q3 was 99.30%) and is better than the 98% target level. For the year as a whole performance was 99.24%, which is an improvement compared to the previous three years. Performance in 2016/17 was 98.19%, in 2015/16 it was 97.85% and in 2014/15 it was 97.33%.

Failure against this indicator is where a re-visit is needed within the 9-month guarantee period.

11.8. Performance measure: Scheduled repairs, percentage of promises kept (within tolerance – amber)

Performance during Q4 continued the improving trend from Q3, resulting in a very high year-end performance of 99.00% of promises kept, although this is below the 100% target.

The total number of jobs raised in Q4 was 2,531, of which just 21 were not on target. For the year as a whole, only 108 of the 10,823 jobs raised were not on target.

All jobs deemed not complete within target have subsequently been completed.

11.9. Performance measure: Gas servicing, percentage of properties attended against planned (performing well – green)

The annual gas servicing programme commenced in April and completed during Q3. All 19,383 properties requiring a service were visited and all have a valid landlord certificate, also all solid fuel services are complete. Access to almost 2,500 properties proved challenging due to a variety of customer related issues, but were completed using our managed legal process. Planning for next year's programme started during Q4 ahead of the April commencement.

11.10. Performance measure: Days Lost to Sickness per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) (within tolerance – amber)

Sickness levels deteriorated during January and February, but improved during March, reflecting similar trends in previous years. This resulted in a year-end performance of 8.04 days lost per FTE, which is slightly below the target of 7.90 days but an improvement on the 8.26 days at the end of last year and is the best performance since the ALMO was established.

The most common reasons for sickness absence continue to be:

- stress/depression/anxiety;

- infection/virus;
- musculo/skeletal; and,
- stomach/liver/kidney/digestive.

11.11. Performance measure: Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days (performing well – green)

Performance for Q4 was 94.61%, which is lower than previous quarters, but has maintained performance sufficiently to result in achieving 96.24% for the year as a whole. This is slightly below last year’s outturn of 97.21%. For the year, 19,662 of 20,431 invoices received were paid on time.

A large proportion of the relatively few invoices paid late are with a small number of suppliers, and we will continue to work closely with them to improve. Encouragingly, the number of invoices received without purchase orders has decreased throughout the year.

11.12. Performance Measure: Percentage of Local Expenditure (below target – red)

Performance was mixed during Q4, which brought the year-end spend to 58%, improving slightly from the 57% at the end of Q3. Whilst this is below the 66% target and below the 60% achieved for 2016/17, it does equate to £5,333,167 spent locally.

Whilst our policies and procedures have been developed to optimise local spend and social value. We continue to work with procurement colleagues at Doncaster Council, including attending events such as a ‘meet the buyer’ event during February. These events improve local suppliers awareness and understanding of our needs, and encourage them to tender for business.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

12. Not applicable

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

13. Not applicable

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

14.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <p>Better access to good fulfilling work Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish Inward Investment</p>	<p>Work of St. Leger Homes of Doncaster impacts on Council key priorities, with implications on the quality of life for Doncaster Council’s tenants and other residents and the communities they live in.</p>

	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <p>The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster More people can live in a good quality, affordable home Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</p>	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <p>Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</p>	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <p>Children have the best start in life Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</p>	
	<p>Connected Council: A modern, efficient and flexible workforce Modern, accessible customer interactions Operating within our resources and delivering value for money A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</p>	

	Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance	
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

15. Specific risks and assumptions are included in Section 8 of this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

(SF, Asst. Director Legal & Democratic Services, 11.5.18)

16. There are no legal implications for this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

(NF, SLHD Head of Finance, 14.5.18)

17. In 2017/18 St. Leger Homes received management fees of £28.7m from DMBC. This is made up of £27.7m from the Housing Revenue Account and £1.0m from the General Fund to pay for the general fund services managed by SLHD.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

(AC, HR & OD Business Manager, 14.5.18)

18. There are no Human Resource Implications for this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

(ET, Programme Support Officer, 14.5.18)

19. There are no specific Technology Implications for this report.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

(KH, 23.5.18)

20. The home environment is an important contributor to health and wellbeing and allows access to other health improving opportunities, for example employment, social networks, essential services and amenities such as green space. Access to decent and adequate housing is critically important in terms of health and wellbeing and it is positive to see that majority of indicators are on target to achieve the desired outcomes. However, those in relation to the following indicators can impact negatively on the health and wellbeing of some of our most disadvantages and vulnerable residents.

11.3. Performance measure: Number of households placed in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation.

The first 1001 days are critical to a child's development therefore a stable, consistent home that is safe and comfortable is important and is reflected in the 1001 days Place Plan. Therefore any measures to reduce the number of people and families living in bed and breakfasts and temporary accommodation should provide a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.

It is concerning that the number of placements in B&B accommodation has increased this quarter, in particular households with children. What measures are being put in place in order to mitigate this and ensure that longer term housing is sought?

11.4 Performance measure: Percentage of decisions made within statutory timescales (33 days).

The health of people experiencing homelessness is significantly worse than that of the general population, and the cost of homelessness experienced by single people to the NHS and social care is considerable. A recent audit found that 41 per cent of homeless people reported a long term physical health problem and 45 per cent had a diagnosed mental health problem, compared with 28 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively, in the general population. It is pleasing to see that plans that have been put in place are improving performance over this quarter, however going forward we would like to see this downward trend continuing.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

21. Equality implications are considered in line with the Equality Act 2011 for the delivery of all St. Leger Homes services.

CONSULTATION

22. Consultation has taken place with key managers within St. Leger Homes, the Lead Member for Housing and Senior Officers within the Council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

23. None

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Appendix A - St. Leger Homes Key Performance Indicator Summary

KPI	Indicator	Period	Value	Target	DoT	R/AG
1	Percentage of current rent arrears against annual debit	Q4	2.62%	2.50%	↔	⚠
2	Void rent loss (lettable voids)	YTD	0.78%	0.97%	↑	✅
3	Number of households placed in B&B accommodation	Q4	28 (80 nights)	No Target		
4	Percentage of decisions made within statutory timescales (33 days)	YTD	84%	90%	↑	❌
5	Number of households maintaining or established independent living	Q4	49	40	↑	✅
6	Analysis of complaints received – percentage of complaints upheld against customer interactions	YTD	0.06%	0.08%	↑	✅
7	Right first time	YTD	99.24%	98%	↓	✅
8	Scheduled repairs – percentage of promises kept	YTD	99.00%	100%	↑	⚠
9	Gas servicing - percentage of programme completed against plan	YTD	100%	100%	↔	✅
10	Days lost through sickness per FTE	YTD	8.04	7.90	↓	⚠
11	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days	YTD	96.24%	96%	↓	✅
12	Percentage of Local Expenditure	YTD	58.27% £5,333,167	66%	↑	❌

Notes:

- Direction of travel (DoT) is against performance in the previous quarter.

↑ = improving

↔ = no change

↓ = declining

- Year to Date (YTD) is performance since April 2017.