



REPORT TO: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE ON 25 JUNE 2024

SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT (HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES) – PERIOD TO MARCH 2024

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Council in terms of Section III (A) (4) of the Council's Scheme of Administration to monitor performance of the services within the Committee's remit in accordance with the Council's performance management framework.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2024; and**
- (ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.**

3. BACKGROUND

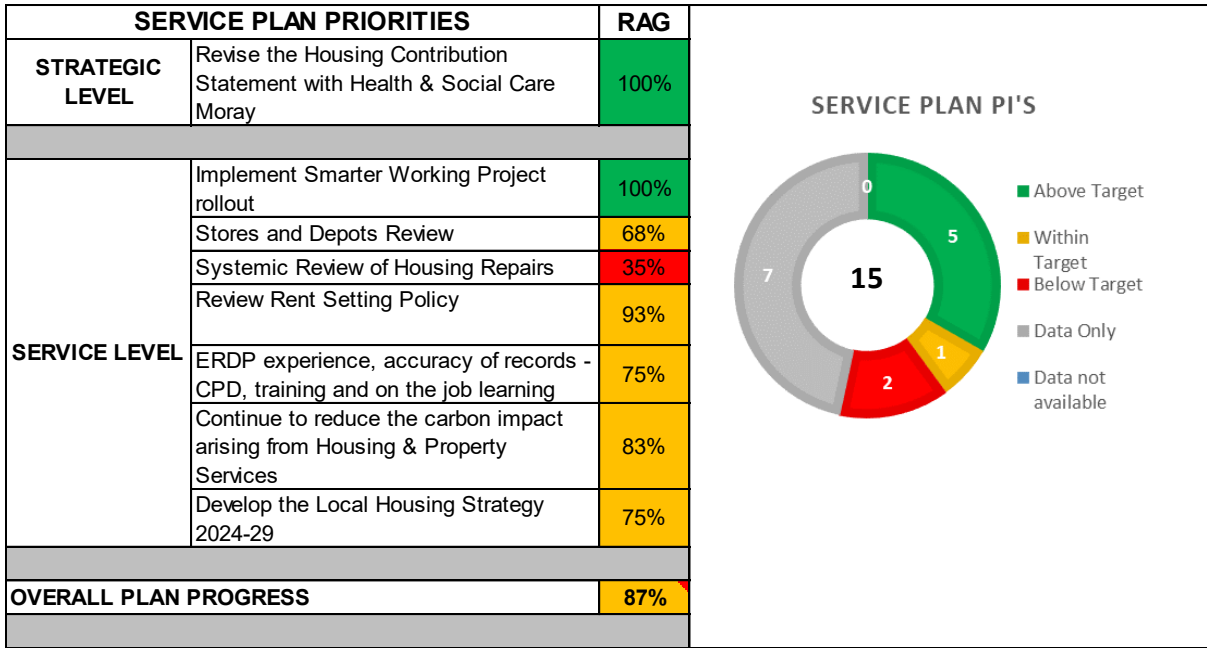
- 3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Moray Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

4. SERVICE PLANNING

- 4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year, aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. The Committee is invited to review progress to secure assurance that it is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

4.2 Latest Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Indicators covering 2022/23, initially published in February 2024, will be refreshed in June. The full suite can be viewed via the [LGBF Dashboard](#). In total, there were six indicators covering Housing Services and Assets published, four indicators ranked in the top 16 local authorities when compared nationally and the same four indicators ranked in the top 4 when compared in our family group of 8 local authorities. Overall, results improved to a greater extent than those that have worsened from previous year performance. Published indicators for this service have been incorporated within the relevant section of this report depending on whether used to evidence progress against strategic, service plan or service performance priorities. 2023/24 LGBF data will be available early 2025.

4.3 The narrative included is by exception, links to Service Plan Actions and Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Backing Papers of this report.



Strategic Outcomes - successes

4.4 The five-year rolling average percentage of newly completed social dwellings which are accessible exceeded the target of 30%. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment has been completed and was appraised by the Scottish Government as robust and credible. Up to date key demographic, affordability and economic factors are being used to plan the Local Housing Strategy. **(ACTION: H24-4.1a&b, INDICATOR: H1.9c).**

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

4.5 Nothing to report.

Service Level Outcomes – successes

4.6 Roll-out of the Smarter Working project has been completed on target with equipment being procured and extensively tested. This has helped formalise

new working practises which began with the necessities of the pandemic into a “business as usual approach” that embraces and embeds flexible and hybrid working. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.1)

Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

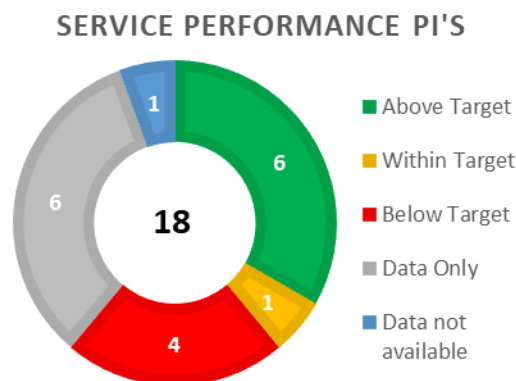
- 4.7 As part of improving how the Council manages its assets, five depots were identified for rationalisation in a report to the Economic, Development and Infrastructure Committee in June 2023 (para 13 of the Minute refers) with the Outline Business Case presented to the committee on 30 April 2024 (item 13d of the Agenda refers). The first phase of reducing the number of depots to three has been subject to some slippage due to delays with demolition of the Dava depot and final relocation from Dufftown depot linked with salt barn development, both sub-actions will carry forward to the 2024/25 service plan. Likewise, submission of the Full Business Case will also carry forward. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.2)
- 4.8 The systemic review of housing repairs has not progressed within original due dates as planned. A revised Project Plan has been implemented with a new completion date of January 2025. There is evidence of good performance in timescales to complete emergency and non-emergency repairs, the percentage of repair appointments kept, and repairs completed right first time, all indicators exceeding targets year on year. However, customer satisfaction is perhaps reflected in the level of complaints received with 63% of all complaints closed relating to repairs and maintenance. The Repairs Review Group meets regularly to explore options to reduce the level of complaints. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.3, **INDICATORS:** H2.7, H2.8, H2.11, H2,12, H1.8a-c)
- 4.9 All but one of the sub-actions relating to the Rent Setting Policy review have been completed. The Policy was approved by this Committee at its meeting on 13 February (item 7 of the Agenda refers) and implemented from 1 April. The sub-action to increase satisfaction with property condition for new tenants by 5% using tenant survey results has not been achieved following a reduction from 83% to 71%. The result is based on a small number of tenant survey responses that can significantly impact on overall percentage results. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.4, **INDICATOR:** H2.3)
- 4.10 In continuing to reduce the carbon impact arising from Housing and Property Services, scope 1 carbon emissions from buildings reduced by 9% in the year to March 2023, with a further reduction anticipated in the period to March 2024. In addition, the number of council dwellings meeting energy efficiency targets has improved. Work to phase in improvement of energy efficiency will carry forward to the 2024/25 service plan, the design for decarbonising and fabric improvement work for 4 schools is awaited, a grant funding application to support works at one school has been submitted, proposals for solar PV project for corporate buildings is developing. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.6)
- 4.11 Delivering the revised Local Housing Strategy 2025-2030 will carry forward to next years’ Service Plan, where the intention is to procure consultancy to assist with development of the strategy and facilitate public consultation. (**ACTION:** HP24-5.7c)

4.12 As at 31 March 2024, gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due for the year increased from 4.5% to 4.7%. In cash terms this equated to £749k for current tenants and £177k for former tenants. It is however important to emphasise that this remains significantly below the national average (9.6% in 2022/23) and maintains top quartile ranking against all local authorities and family group comparator authorities. In line with the national position, rent arrears had been on an increasing trend until October 2023 and has been steadily reducing since then. Performance remains below the local target (2.8%), and consideration will be given to reviewing this to reflect the higher baseline. (**INDICATOR:** H5.3 (HSN01b))

5. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

5.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.

5.2 The narrative included in this report is by exception, links to Service Performance Indicators can be accessed within the Background Papers at the end of this report.



Operational Indicators - successes

5.3 Relocation of the traveller enforcement team to Forres earlier in the year had presented some challenges in reaching sites in the same day the incidents were reported; improvements to internal practices and processes allow officers to log incidents in real time resulting in improved, on target performance. (**INDICATOR:** H6.2)

Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

5.4 There has been some slippage in repairs completed within timescales. As at March 2024, 90% of emergency reactive repairs were completed within 4 hours, slightly below target (100%). The volume of out of hours repairs to heating over the winter months was a significant contributory factor. In the reporting year, 84% of reactive void repairs were completed within timescale, just short of target (90%) due to several major improvement works carried out that took longer to complete. The continued upgrade to dwellings to meeting

energy efficiency is expected to improve overall performance. (**INDICATORS:** H2.10a, H2.10e)

- 5.5 Two gas service failures occurred during 2023/24, as a proportion of all annual inspectors this represents 0.03%; nonetheless procedures and training have been updated. (**INDICATOR:** H2.13a)
- 5.6 As of 31 March 2023, 16% of housing stock is meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standards, below the national average of 71% and family group average of 53%, ranking in the lowest quartile. This increased to 22.6% by 31 March 2024. The Scottish Housing Regulator invited landlords to reassess compliance with electrical inspections and in Moray most properties fell slightly short of the required standard, frustrated by factors such as the availability of qualified contractors. An improvement action plan is in place to ensure compliance by November 2024. In addition, compliance with Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) is a contributory factor in achieving SQHS, significant programmes of work have not progressed as planned. (**INDICATOR:** H2.1)
- 5.7 Published benchmarking results show that the percentage of rent lost due to voids improved to 1% as of 31 March 2023, remaining below the national and family group averages of 1.7% and 1.6% respectively, achieving a top quartile ranking. Local results to 31 March 2024 show further improvement to 0.74%, slightly short of the ambitious local target of 0.63%. It is expected that the improving trend continue and for target to be achieved in the next update. (**INDICATOR:** H5.4)

6. OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA

6.1 Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

- 6.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to complaints tables can be accessed within the Backing Papers of this report.
- 6.2 A total of 105 complaints were closed in the half year to March 2024 of which 97 (92.4%) were frontline stage, 5 (4.8%) were investigative stage, and 3 (2.9%) were escalated. As a comparison, in the same period last year, 104 complaints were closed.
- 6.3 Of the 105 complaints closed, 76 (72%) complaints were upheld or partially upheld, the majority related to repairs, capital and planned maintenance.
- 6.4 A total of 61 MP/MSP enquiries were received during the second half of 2023/24 out of a 212 total to the Council as a whole (29%) and all but one were resolved. Most complaints related to the housing waiting list, transfers and issues with heating in dwellings.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

- 6.5 Nothing to report.

Case Studies

6.6 Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7 Nothing to report.

7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

None.

(e) Staffing Implications

None.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

There are no climate change/biodiversity impacts arising from this report.

(i) Consultations

The Head of Economic Growth & Development Services, Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment & Finance) and Service Managers, have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8. **CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 As of 31 March 2024 the plan overall is 87% complete, 17 actions or sub-actions having been completed. Most outstanding actions are well advanced and will be progressed through inclusion in the 2024/25 Service Plan.

Author of Report: Christopher Dewhurst, Research & Information Officer
Background Papers: [Service Plan Actions](#)
[Service Plan Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Performance Indicators](#)
[Service Complaints](#)
Ref: SPMAN-1285234812-1574