

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee</p> <p>15th April 2021</p>	
<p>Report of Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place Directorate, Corporate and Capital delivery.</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Social Housing Landlords Performance Report – (Quarter Three)</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Shalim Uddin Affordable Housing Coordinator
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

Social Landlords in the borough produce quarterly performance data for key customer facing performance indicators so tenants and local residents can be assured they are delivering effective and customer focused services. The performance report attached at appendix 1 provides cumulative performance data to the end of Quarter Three (31 December 2020) of the Social Landlords with homes in the borough (including THH), who can provide performance data specifically for properties they manage in Tower Hamlets.

Recommendations:

The Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee is recommended to:

1. Review and note progress in the performance outturns achieved by individual Social Landlords and the overall performance trend.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee has requested the Social Landlord Performance be provided for every scrutiny meeting held to oversee the KPI performance of RP's and is improvement can be made to specific areas of delivery such as repair response times and resident complaint satisfaction levels.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Member review of Social Landlord performance to remain exclusively with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF), the Council works with key registered providers who manage social rented stock in the borough.

THHF through its Performance Management Framework has agreed a set of key performance indicators (KPI's); to review and assess performance and drive performance improvements through the THHF benchmarking sub-group. Quarterly performance information is presented to the Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing along with the Housing scrutiny Sub Committee for information. Good performance is an indicator of quality housing management and supports the Council in ensuring the borough is one that residents are proud of and love to live in whilst also support delivery of partnership priorities.

- 3.2 Each Registered Provider (RP) has its own governance arrangements for the scrutiny of performance and service delivery to residents. Targets for each service area are set at RP level by their respective Boards and Committees and the performance in the quarterly reports is scrutinised through their governance structures.
- 3.3 Cumulative performance information on the agreed list of measures below is attached at appendix 1.:
 - % repairs completed in target
 - % respondents satisfied with last completed repair
 - % appointments kept as % of appointments made
 - % properties with a valid gas safety certificate
 - % residents satisfied with how the ASB case was handled
 - % complaints responded to in target
 - % Members Enquiries answered in target
 - Average re-let time in days (General Needs only)
 - % General Needs Income collected
 - % of tall buildings (over 18m) owned by RPs that have an up to date FRA in place
- 3.4 Appendix 1 outlines cumulative performance for quarter three, five of the fourteen key registered providers who operate in the borough can produce borough specific data. These being Gateway, Poplar HARCA, Tower Hamlets Homes, Tower Hamlets Community Homes and Spitalfields. This is currently not possible for the remaining RSL's as they hold housing stock on a regional /national scale. In such instances, the Landlords are requested to manipulate data captured to provide the most accurate figure possible in relation to the borough.
- 3.5 Currently the Benchmarking subgroup are in the process of devising a new set of Key Performance Indicator's and to date have held two focus group meetings. It is envisaged further meetings will be required over the coming months as there are a number of variants which need to be considered and consulted with the entire group.
- 3.6 To support devising the new KPI's the Benchmarking group have decided to mirror HouseMark as they are a performance management service, jointly owned by the National Housing Federation and the Chartered Institute of Housing. For those unaware most Registered Providers use Housemark to

benchmark their housing management and maintenance performance to understand how they perform compared to their peers. This in term drives discussions on service improvement, targets, and value for money. Housemark has definitions for how performance should be measured to ensure benchmarking of different service areas is comparing 'like with like. The group are currently reviewing which performance indicators would best offer the greatest qualitative data for THHF benchmarking. In addition, clarity is being sought over how landlords capture the data, the methods used and how its calculated. The overall aim of the exercise is to ensure the collective group can define each KPI and every RP is aware of the time frame for reporting. For example, many Landlords differ their standard repair turnaround time some have ten working days whilst others may have 20 days as their timescale. Therefore, when data is captured the time frame in which it should be measured is different per RP and this needs to be the exact for all.

3.7 Although not finalised the new performance indicators could be changed to include the following below:

- Number of stage one and two complaints received
- Percentage of complaints responded to within target time
- Average re-let time in days (all re-lets, including time spent in works)
- Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end
- Percentage of repairs completed right first time.
- Number of blocks with certified Gas certification
- Blocks with 18 Meters or above with up to date FRA assessments in place
- Total number of housing stock in the Borough

3.8 Once the definitions and KPI questions have been agreed by the Benchmarking Group this will be put to the THHF Executive for consultation and further feedback. Furthermore, the KPI data sheet will be changed allowing additional tabs for supplementary commentary to highlight any anomalies during that quarter. This in turn will provide for a better report to this Committee.

3.9 With regards to quarter three some key points to note are:

3.10 Repairs completed in target remains a KPI which differs different turnaround times per RP. Nevertheless, Poplar Harca achieved the top quartile figure of 98.95% whilst on the other end of the scale Nottinghill Genesis only managed to achieve 80.50%. Spitalfields were unable to provide the data for qtr3 as the organisation has had no maintenance team in situ since December 2020. Spitalfields are currently in the process of trying to recruit however, experiencing delays in the process due to Covid and unable to source suitable candidates.

3.11 Complaints responded to in target indicated numerous RP's were still achieving below the minimum desired rate of 85%. The lowest figure coming from Clarion of 31%. Clarion received 137 complaints for Qtr3 with an average

turnaround time of 18 days compared to 12 in Qtr2 and 14 back in Qtr1. Staff capacity and Covid restrictions affect the ability to handle complaints however, they endeavour to improve this figure and lower the complaints received overall. Clarion are currently in the process of working through an Action Plan alongside the Mayor and other council members with regular bimonthly meetings taking place to keep the council updated of progress.

3.12 KPI of members enquires answered to in target the lowest figure (Clarion 57%) with them receiving 137 ME's and average response time of 11 working days. The overall lowest quartile figure for this KPI was of 77%. The highest being 100% achieved by three RP's who were Swan, Providence Row and Nottinghill Genesis. Peabody were unable to report on this KPI as their database has new fields added, which are currently being completed, but will not be possible to report on these retrospectively.

3.13 Relet times continue to remain problematic due to Covid restrictions and the condition of certain void properties requiring extensive repairs / major works, this significantly impacts the turnaround time. Poplar Harca had the longest figure recorded at 146 days. They stopped social lettings for a while due to the Pandemic, which significantly affected the void loss and lettings performance. Poplar Harca were only allowed to let properties on licences to help move residents into self-contained flats from communal living due to Covid-19 which helped reduce the overall impact of voids. If you exclude the period when they were unable to let properties, the performance would be on average 48.4 days.

Some positive notes for the report were:

3.14 Providence Row managed to achieve 100% in responding to member enquiries. Peabody HA achieved 100% in number of properties with a valid Gas (LGSR) certificate and Swan managed to obtain 100% in responding to complaints within target.

3.15 All RP's omitting Spitalfields have up to date Fire risk assessments in place for blocks above 18 Meters. Furthermore, THCH achieved 100% in ensuring appointments made were kept throughout the duration of qtr3.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The measuring tools used to capture feedback such as texts survey's phone calls are carried out to all residents irrespective of their age, gender, status, social, economic, and ethnic background.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
- 5.2 There are no direct Best Value implications arising from these reports, although if performance is further improved for performance indicators 1, 2 and 3 which relate to repairs, this may lead to improvements in working practices that will in turn improve efficiency and potentially reduce costs for Social Landlords.
- 5.3 Another indirect Best Value Implication is a landlord's ability to ensure its general needs income target (rent collection) is achieved.
- 5.4 The percentage of properties with a valid gas safety certificate directly relates to health and safety risks to residents. It is important that statutory compliance of 100% is achieved, and that landlord performance in this area shows continued improvements.
- 5.5 The percentage of tall buildings (over 18m) owned by Registered Providers that have an up to date Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) in place also has a direct health and safety impact. It is a statutory requirement to ensure an FRA has been completed and is up to date.
- 5.6 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report or recommendations.
- 5.7 Resident satisfaction with the handling of anti-social behaviour cases has an indirect relation to crime and disorder reduction matters. Unfortunately, these surveys are conducted either every six months or once a year by many social landlords. Thus, when asked to report upon on a quarterly basis the RP's have little or no data to report back. Going forward this KPI will be taken off and be present ONLY within the annual KPI sheet.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 This report provides an update to the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the performance of various providers of social housing (Social Landlords) that operate within the borough. This includes the comparative data for Tower Hamlets Homes which manages the Council's housing stock. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 This report is recommending that the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee review the performance of individual Social Landlords during 20-21.
- 7.2 Regeneration agency Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH), focus of their regulatory activity is on governance, financial viability and financial value for money as the basis for robust economic regulation. The objectives of the social housing regulator are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.
- 7.3 The regulatory framework for social housing in England from the 1st April 2005 is made up of: Regulatory requirements (i.e. what Social Landlords need to comply with); Codes of practice; and Regulatory guidance. There are nine (9) categories of regulatory requirements and these are:
1. Regulatory standards – Economic (i.e. Governance and Financial Viability Standard; Value for Money Standard; and Rent Standard)
 2. Regulatory standards – Consumer (i.e. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard; Home Standard; Tenancy Standard; and Neighbourhood and Community Standard)
 3. Registration requirements
 4. De-registration requirements
 5. Information submission requirements
 6. The accounting direction for social housing in England from April 2012
 7. Disposal Proceeds Fund requirements
 8. Requirement to obtain regulator’s consent to disposals
 9. Requirement to obtain regulator’s consent to changes to constitutions
- 7.4 In addition to RSH regulation, there is a Performance Management Framework (‘PMF’) agreed with the Council which also reviews the performance of the Social Landlords in key customer facing areas. These are monitored cumulatively every three months against 8 key areas that are important to residents. This has a direct bearing on the Council’s priority to ensure that Social Landlords are delivering effective services to their residents who are also, at the same time, residents in the local authority area. This provides re-assurance for the Council that the main Social Landlords in the Borough are delivering effective services to their residents.
- 7.5 The Council has no power to act against any Social Landlord (other than THH which it monitors already) but one of its Community Plan aspirations is for Tower Hamlets to be a place where people live in a quality affordable housing with a commitment to ensuring that more and better-quality homes are provided for the community.

7.6 The review of the Social Landlords performance though not a legal requirement fits in with the above Community Plan objective and the regulatory standards as stated above. The standards require Social Landlords to co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental, and economic wellbeing in the area where they own properties.

The review of housing matters affecting the area or the inhabitants in the borough fall within remit of the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee and accordingly authorised by the Council's Constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Social Housing Landlords Performance Report Quarter Three table 2020-21
- Supporting commentary and explanations from social landlords accompanying their KPI submissions.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

- Shalim Uddin RP Coordinator