

Non-Executive Report of the: Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee 9 September 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of Ann Sutcliffe, Corporate Director, Place	Classification: Unrestricted
Social Housing Landlords Performance Report – (Quarter 1,2,3 & 4)	

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 from quarter one to four of the Social Landlords with homes in the borough.

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 quarters 1-4, 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** As previously mentioned the Benchmarking subgroup have been working on a KPI definition Handbook since December 2020 with a focus group made of subgroup members from various RP's. The group has finalised a definition handbook to help complete the KPI form and revised the structure and questions of the KPI sheet. The new form will be sent to all THHF member RP's as of QTR1. The form is very much still in its early stages therefore, some adjustments are likely to be made to the form in the upcoming months however, the overall structure should remain the same. The Benchmarking subgroup going forward will decide what colour grading should be used once the KPI's have been submitted. This colour grading will be applied to all data

sheets and enable all RP's and the council some commonality in terms of the colours and what they represent.

- 3.6** The new Handbook contains the definitions for each KPI to make it easier for the RP to understand what they need to report on for clarity. Furthermore, each and every RP has been asked to ensure they provide data specific to Tower Hamlets only. Where this data cannot be borough specific due to the RP holding stock nationally the RP has to provide commentary as to why. The KPI sheet will consist of data which is represented in number format rather than percentage for majority of KPI's in order to make sure both large and small RP's are represented as equally as possible. The new KPI form will contain a column labelled MLAP (Minimum levels of acceptable performance). This column will indicate if the RP is meeting their own set targets as it's not possible to set one target for every RP. This column should also help both Scrutiny Committee and the RP to track where RP's have consistently met or fallen short of their own targets.

3.7 Please see below the finalised questions for the new KPI sheet.

1. Number of stage 1 complaints received
2. Percentage of complaints responded to within target time
3. Number of stage 2 complaints received
4. Number of ME/MP enquiries received
5. Total number of re-lets
6. Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)
7. Average re-let time in days (major works units, including time spent in works)
8. Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end
9. Total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date
10. Total number of non-emergency repairs completed year-to-date
11. Number of repairs appointments made
12. Number of repairs appointments kept
13. Satisfaction with repairs
14. The number of properties which had their gas safety record renewed by their anniversary date
15. FRA on percentage of buildings over 18 metres

- 3.8** The table below displays the KPI's and in what format the RP has been asked to report back. As previously mentioned within this report the group have focused on trying to make sure data accurately takes into consideration RP capacity and stock size. Within the old format Rp's were reporting percentage's this meant smaller stock RP's often looked to be achieving very high levels in comparison to their counterparts that held larger stock. Where Percentages apply this is due to RP's using different methods to capture data and this making it difficult to specify in number format.

Code	KPI Component	Detail
1.	Number of stage 1 complaints received	Number
2.	Percentage of complaints responded to within target time	%
3.	Number of stage 2 complaints received	Number
4.	Number of ME/MP enquiries received	Number
5.	Total number of re-lets	Number
6.	Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	Number
7.	Average re-let time in days (minor and major works units, including time spent in works)	Number
8.	Number of units vacant but unavailable for letting at period end	Number
9.	Total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date	Number
10.	Total number of non-emergency repairs completed year-to-date	Number
11.	Number of repairs appointments made	Number
12.	Number of repairs appointments kept	Number
13.	Customer Satisfaction with repairs as a % of completed repairs	%
14.	The percentage of properties with LGSR	%
15.	Percentage of FRAs for buildings over 18 metres	%

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

3.10 Clarion have improved in their Members response by going from 57% for Qtr 3 to 65% in Qtr4 an increase of 13.1%. However, their complaints response times has seen a decline going from 31% in Qtr3 to 26% in Qtr4. Spitalfields once again were not able to provide any data for KPI's 1,2 and 3. However, their THHF representative has confirmed they finally have a maintenance team in place and will be able to provide data from Qtr1 onwards.

3.11 Southern Housing achieved the lowest figure of repairs completed to in target (KPI 1) of 75% for Qtr4. This was a decline from their previous quarter submissions as they managed to achieve 95% for Qtr3 thus a decline of 23.5%.

3.12 L&Q operate the following service and operational level agreement in line with the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code. Stage 1 Complaint: Acknowledgement of a customer's complaint with 24hrs and provide a resolution within 10 working days. On the basis of these two SLAs and OLAs L&Q report that in Q4 of last financial year, they achieved 88.3% (January & February) 88.4% (March) against the target of 90% for 24hr acknowledgement of a customer's complaint. 72.2% (January) 73.8% (February) 80.7% (March) against a target of 90% for resolution provided to the complainant with 10 working days. They have seen marginal improvement with both SLAs and OLAs for complaints across the board through a greater emphasis from the Exec Group to their front-line teams/depts and cross departmental collaboration in resolving complaints effectively and efficiently.

3.13 Some positive notes for the report were:

3.14 Peabody and L&Q managed to achieve 100% in responding to member enquiries. Swan managed to obtain 100% in responding to complaints within target. Providence Row achieved 100% for ASB satisfaction levels and THCH achieved 100% of properties with a valid Gas (LGSR) safety certificate.

3.15 All RP's omitting Spitalfields have up to date Fire risk assessments in place for blocks above 18 Meters. Furthermore, relet times are improving across the board with all RP's only L&Q had 113-150 days for major or minor repairs for general needs only. Notting hill Genesis improved their appointments kept and made times from 59.8% in Qtr3 to 84 % in Qtr4 an improvement of almost 35%.

3.16 The THHF forum continues to be exemplary forum and a huge success, currently Pam Bhamra Chair of the forum is working with the council and LFB to promote better community engagement and will be supporting the LFB to set up their own forum/s consisting of stakeholders, residents. The LFB is hoping to replicate a similar forum to THHF due to its success. It will ensure lessons learned from incidents are shared and encourage long lasting change and a shift in residents' mindset and behavioural habits for the foreseeable future. In addition, it will ensure LFB have a better connection to their local community as recently an opinion poll carried out indicated people felt the LFB are only seen as "putting out fires".

3.17 The THHF exec and subgroups are in the process of creating the THHF Annual 2021 Report. The Report will capture the work carried out by the Exec and eight subgroups over the past year. Upon completion the Report will be distributed to all Idea stores council members and any council run sites in the borough. Digital copies will be circulated to the majority keeping in line the council's sustainability agenda. The report celebrates the hard work and success of council and RP partnership working, and as previously mentioned within the report the forum continues to set a precedent for other boroughs to try and emulate.

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.

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

The focus of the regulatory activities of the Regeneration agency Homes England and the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) is on governance, financial viability, and financial value for money. The objectives of the social housing regulator are set out in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

The regulatory framework governing social housing is made up of regulatory requirements, codes of guidance and regulatory guidance. The nine (9) categories of regulatory requirements 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

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.

The regulatory requirements comprise standards including the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017 which states that social housing providers should ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the formation of their landlord's housing-related strategic priorities, decision-making about how services are delivered, performance scrutiny.

The regulatory powers will only be used if a standard has been failed and there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a failure has resulted in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants (or potential tenants) or there is a significant risk that, if no action is taken by the Regulator, the failure will result in a serious detriment to the provider's tenants (or potential tenants).

Although, the Council has no power to act against any Social Landlord (other than THH which it monitors already), the Council has enforcement powers to ensure that properties including Social landlord accommodation meet certain standards, contained in the Housing Act 2004. For instance, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk assessment system focusing on identifying and tackling the hazards that are most likely to be present in housing to make homes healthier and safer to live in.

Therefore, although the review of the Social Landlords performance is not a legal requirement, it fits in with the Council's Community Plan aspirations 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.

The review also fits with regulatory standards requiring 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 falls 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 stats Quarters 1,2,3 & 4 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