

Appendix C



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Report findings of the strategic review to Committee

Target - 1

Theme – Outcomes

Action – O5.4 Report findings of the strategic Housing Repairs Service review to Committee.

Target vs performance – A first draft of the report has been received from the Housing Quality Network, the consultants who are undertaking the review. The final report was presented on October 25 and is currently being considered prior to making recommendations to a future Committee.

Trend (compared to last quarter) – The Housing Quality Network undertook a full review of the Repairs Service during quarter one. The review included a detailed analysis of the repairs and improvements data, processes and consultation with staff and tenants.

Background – The scope of this review includes responses to repairs, planned and cyclical maintenance and the provision of adaptation services.

Key actions underway – The final report was presented to the service on October 25 and is currently being considered prior to making recommendations to a future Committee.

Opportunities/risks – The independent review will highlight the areas of the service which need to be improved upon. This will help to drive forward cost efficiencies and service improvements in the future.



88%

% of residents very or fairly satisfied with the quality of their new home.

Target - 90%

Theme – People

Action – PE1.1 % of residents very or fairly satisfied with the quality of their new home.

Target vs performance – 88% achieved against a target of 90%

Trend (compared to last quarter) – Reduced from 90% to 88%

Background – New tenants are visited after moving into their new home. Of the 33 responses to the survey, 29 reported they were very or fairly satisfied with the quality of their new home.

Key actions underway – A new property sign-off process is in place to ensure that properties meet the agreed standard for letting. A review of this standard will be carried out. A new contract for responsive maintenance, planned works and void repairs is being procured with a start date of 1 April, 2019. The issues raised by dissatisfied tenants are addressed directly with them.

Opportunities/risks – There is an opportunity through the procurement process to provide major void works to a higher standard. The major risk is that demand for flats, as the highest proportion of vacant properties, will decrease regardless of changes to the standard.



35.7 days

% of
tenancies
sustained
after the
introductory
period

Target - 21 days

PE 1.2 – Average time taken to re-let Council homes (excluding properties which have received major repair works)

Theme – People

Target vs performance – Target less than 21 days. 35.7 days achieved.

Trend (compared to last quarter) – 26 days achieved in quarter one.

Background

During quarter two there were 28 standard re-let properties, which took a total of 1,001 days to let.

On a monthly basis senior Housing managers review the reason a Council property is empty and categorises the length of time to re-let.

The majority of re-let days can be attributed to the following:

- 14 properties were re-let in less than 21 days (totalling 224 days).
- There were five hard-to-let properties for the over 60s which took 504 days to re-let (an average of 101 days per property).
- Four properties were delayed due to repairs (totalling 154 days).
- Four were delayed during the lettings process (including one applicant with an adaptation need). This totalled 161 days.
- One property was held for 98 days for assessment for the 'Hospital Avoidance Scheme' but was deemed by the Occupational Therapist who assessed the property as being unsuitable. In addition, the applicant's requirements changed.

Key actions underway

Short-term solutions include maximising the use of the notice to quit period, formalising the weekly void meetings to improve momentum, developing co-ordination of works and agreeing ownership of key parts of the re-let process with individuals and teams.

Different methods of advertising hard-to-let properties are being explored, along with the use of a Dedicated Voids Inspector/Co-ordinator.

Longer-term solutions include a project to review and revise the entire process for re-letting properties and to make better use of the housing management system to record and monitor empty properties more effectively.

The Allocations Policy is to be reviewed this financial year. This will include reviewing the age criteria on hard-to-let flats.

Opportunities/risks – Opportunities include reviewing the Council's re-let process to remove duplication of tasks and agree ownership of key parts of the re-let process, reduced void rent loss and improved customer service. Redesigning the Allocations Policy will help to contribute to excellent voids performance.

Risks of continued failure include increasing void rental loss, extended use of temporary accommodation for homeless clients, reputational risk in not meeting housing need quickly and potential for unoccupied properties being vandalised.



59 days

Average
length of time
for current
voids

Target - 21 days

PE1.3 Average length Of Time for Current Voids

Theme – People

Target vs performance – Target - 21 days. 59 days achieved

Trend (compared to last quarter) – 41.14 achieved in quarter one

Background

There are currently 41 properties that are vacant, 29 of which are flats.

Of the 41 properties that are currently empty eight are not incorporated into the figure for this performance indicator. These eight properties are currently void due to the Hospital Avoidance Scheme (x1), held for potential conversion (x2), properties reassigned for temporary accommodation use (x2) and held for potential redevelopment opportunities (x3).

Seven properties are vacant due to requiring major improvement works and have been empty for 497 days and six properties are flats for the over 60s age group which have been empty for 460 days. These are proving to be very hard to let. The Council currently has three properties being held at Holmes Court pending the conclusion of joint work with the Police.

Key actions underway –

Short-term solutions include maximising the use of the notice to quit period, formalising the weekly void meetings to improve momentum, developing the co-ordination of works and demonstrating accountability for key parts of the turnaround process.

Different methods of advertising hard to let properties are being explored, along with the use of a Dedicated Voids Inspector/Co-Ordinator.

Longer-term solutions include a project to review and revise the process for re-letting properties and to make better use of the of the housing management system to record and monitor empty properties more effectively.

The Allocations Policy is to be reviewed this financial year and this will include reviewing the age criteria on difficult to let flats.

Opportunities/risks – Opportunities include reviewing the Council's re-let process to remove duplication of tasks and agree ownership of key parts of the re-let process, reduced void rent loss and improved customer service.

Redesigning the Allocations Policy will help to contribute to excellent voids performance.

Risks of continued failure include increasing arrears, extended use of temporary accommodation for homeless clients, reputational risk in not meeting housing need quickly and potential for unoccupied properties being vandalised.



96%

Number of
successful
introductory
tenancies

Target - 97%

PE2.2 Number of successful introductory tenancies

Theme – People

Action – % Tenancies sustained after the introductory period

Target vs performance – 97% Target, 96% achieved

Trend (compared to last quarter) – 96% achieved in quarter one

Background – One tenancy out of 26 was held back due to rent arrears in quarter two. This is in line with Council procedures.

Key actions underway – Ongoing monitoring. A review of the tenancy change process will be held to ensure that systems in place are timely and accurately reflect performance.

Opportunities/risks – Opportunities include continued improvement to this performance indicator, demonstrating preventative measures and a commitment to tenancy sustainability.

Risks of continued failure include increased arrears and higher probability of tenancy failure, leading to increased homelessness, voids and associated costs.



424

Reduce anti-
social behaviour
(ASB) incidents
in Swadlincote
Centre

Target - 400

Theme – Place

Action – Reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents in Swadlincote Centre (Civic Way) Local Super Output Area.

Target: 400 incidents per quarter

Performance: 424 Incidents in quarter two

Background – Current ASB issues in Swadlincote Town Centre are centred on groups of young people, street drinkers and known offenders/ drug users.

Key actions underway – Two Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) have been obtained on two prolific town centre shoplifters in September 2018. Both are banned from entering any town centre premises for a two-year period. They are also banned from associating with each other.

One of these offenders breached his CBO within two days and received a 19 week prison sentence.

A new leaflet has been produced for all shops and businesses in the town centre detailing all existing enforcement orders that are in place and how to report ASB, crime incidents and any breaches of the orders.

Opportunities/risks – Excellent attendance at latest Town Team meeting, where a large number of businesses were offered the chance to raise any concerns with local Safer Neighbourhood Team officer. There is an opportunity to build on this relationship between police and local businesses.



13 plaques

Install at least 20
plaques and
three lecterns as
part of
Swadlincote
Heritage Trail

**Target - 20
plaques**

Theme – Place

Action – Install at least 20 plaques and three lecterns as part of Swadlincote Heritage Trail.

Performance: 13 wall plaques have been installed but the Highways Permit (application submitted in May 2018) for the pavement plaques is outstanding. Plaques have been with the installers since June.

Plans to install lecterns at the Pipeworks, Maurice Lea Memorial Park and the Delph Public Square are in hand but not yet complete.

Background

Plaques

7 Feb 2018 - Planning permission received for more than 20 plaques and three lecterns.

March-May 2018 - Permission was sought from individual property owners for installation. This was received from all parties except Derbyshire County Council (DCC) by the end of June 2018.

Feb-April 2018 – all funding in place.

June-July 2018 – plaques received from manufacturer and wall plaques installed. Pavement plaques left with installer as no permissions forthcoming from DCC. Written requests, followed up by phone calls, were sent to DCC on July 21, September 4, October 2 for updates.

The delay has been explained and understood. The Council is hopeful of a resolution in the near future.

Lecterns

- The lectern on the Pipeworks was installed on October 29. This did not require a DCC permit as it is on private land. Permissions have been gained from the land owners.
- The lectern on the Delph will be installed over the forthcoming weeks. This is at the final design stage and will be issued to be manufactured.
- The lectern on Maurice Lea Memorial Park has been delayed due to design concerns. A need for two lecterns has been identified but funding is only in place for one. It's likely the Council will be able to use section 106 funding for the second lectern.

Key actions underway – The Council has been following up the permit request with DCC on a three to four weekly basis since June 2018. This will continue until the permit is received or reasons given for rejection.

Opportunities/risks – The Swadlincote Heritage Trail is designed to take participants on a journey through the Town Centre's past, sharing stories of some of its significant people, industries and buildings.



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Hold
Community
Partnership
Scheme
Grants Panel

Target - 1

Theme – Progress

Action – Deliver the Community Partnership Scheme and award capital funding totalling £250k to meet local need.

Target: Hold first grants panel and further workshop. Successful applications to be reported to committee.

Performance: Grants panel has not been held due to an issue with the membership.

Background – A member of the grants panel has changed committees. The panel is recognised as a sub group of the Housing and Community Services Committee, meaning only its members are eligible.

Key actions underway – A replacement Councillor needs to be appointed onto the panel at Full Council in November.

Opportunities - The applicants have been spoken to and have been offered the chance to amend their applications if applicable.

Risks – All applicants have been contacted and spoken to ensure the delay will not have a detrimental impact on their projects.

There are eight actions for Housing and Community Services.