
Report of Director of Environment and Housing

Report to Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board

Date: 17 November 2015

Subject: Performance Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city and other performance areas relevant to the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board.

Recommendations

2. Members are recommended to
 - Note the most recent performance information in Appendices 1 and 2 and the issues which have been highlighted and consider if they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report presents a summary of the most recent performance data, and provides an update on progress in delivering the relevant priorities in the Best Council Plan 2015 – 20.

2 Background information

2.1 Members will note that the Best Council Plan (BCP) sets out the Council's key objectives and priorities. This report provides an overview of the relevant Environment and Housing performance relating to this plan, enabling the Scrutiny Board to consider and challenge the council's performance.

2.2 This report includes two Appendices showing a summary of the most recent performance information relevant to the new Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board.

3 Main issues

3.1 Appendix 1 shows the most recent 2015/16 performance data relating to Housing priorities. Members will see that some of the indicators are designed to track trends rather than report against specific targets, and for these reasons the trend indicators have not been rated. Appendix 2 relates to Community Safety, Waste and Environmental priorities previously within the remit of the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Board. The main performance issues arising from these progress reports are given below:

Appendix 1

3.2.1 Members' attention are drawn to the following performance areas:

- Empty Properties

The target for 2015/16 remains that the Council will return 3200 long term empty properties into use during the year, with 1000 of these to be returned by Private Sector Housing involvement. At the end of September 2015, the number of long term empty properties returned to use this financial year stood at 1,218, representing 38% of the target of 3200. 241 of these were returned by Private Sector Housing.

A further "stretch" target is to achieve by the end of March 2017, a net reduction of 2,000 (equivalent to 400 per annum) in the total number of private sector properties that have been empty for longer than 6 months in comparison to the figure of 5776 recorded at the end of March 2012. In March 2015 this figure stood at 4532

At the end of September 2015 the figure was 3,566, representing a net reduction of 966 (241% of target of 400) on the March 15 figure and a reduction of 2,200 (110% of target of 2000) on the March 12 figure.

This figure has a tendency to fluctuate throughout the year and can go up or down. The trend for this year mirrors that of last year's position which was over 100% of targeted net reduction at Q1 and over 200% at Q2. Previous years have shown an increase in the number of long term empty properties recorded between November and December. This is likely caused in the main by new students coming into properties in the summer, but not at the time completing the paperwork re the Council

Tax returns; thereby 6 months later it appears to Council Tax as those these properties may have been empty for the last 6 months.

- Fuel Poverty

Previously reported to scrutiny was the measure “Joint delivery of 5,000 energy efficiency measures in Leeds’ properties per year”. The Best Council Plan 2015-20 introduces the new indicator “Reduce the number of households in fuel poverty”. The DECC produces annual statistics at Local Authority level and a figure of 11.6% was published in June 2015 for Leeds based on 2013 data which reflects a static position compared with the previous year.

The 11.6 % fuel poverty figure is based upon the low income / high cost definition of fuel poverty which was adopted by the Government two years ago. It should be noted that this definition is based on average running cost and income thresholds, therefore it is designed not to fluctuate as wildly as the previous definition of fuel poverty in which households spending more than 10% of their income on heating fuel and electricity were defined as being in fuel poverty.

Nationally, 10.4% of households in England were in fuel poverty in 2013. However, we would expect Leeds to have a higher than average fuel poverty figure than the English average, because we have a relatively high proportion of low income households as well as a relatively large number of older, solid walled (high heating cost) properties within the City.

The tax credit changes are likely to push more households into the low income category and for fuel poverty in Leeds to rise as a result. However, as the statistics are modelled two years in arrears, we wouldn’t expect to see this until two years after the change.

- Homeless Preventions

Homeless Preventions occur when people are assisted through advice or a more intensive intervention to stay in their existing home or make a planned move to sustainable accommodation.

There were 591 homeless preventions in September 2015 which represent a 78.7% prevention rate out of the 751 cases closed by Leeds Housing Options. The cumulative position so far for 2015/16 (end of quarter 2) stands at 3,488 preventions. This compares to the Q2 2014/15 position of 2,425. The average prevention rate over the first two quarters of this year is 76%.

Of the 160 non-prevention cases in September, outcomes were as follows:

- 47 statutory homeless cases (full housing duty accepted and Band A award);
- 104 homeless but not priority need (no statutory housing duty and Band B award);
- 5 intentionally homeless cases (no full statutory duty and Band B award unless non qualifying for council housing on grounds of behaviour); and
- 4 not eligible cases (no housing duty and non-qualifying for council housing as no recourse to public funds).

- Homeless Acceptances

There were 47 Homeless Acceptance in September 2015. The cumulative position so far for 2015/16 (end of quarter 2) stands at 304 acceptances. This compares to the Q2 2014/15 position of 214.

There has not been a successful legal challenge against a LHO homelessness decision made in the last three years. Leeds Housing Options continues to work with housing applicants who are found intentionally homeless/not in priority need/ineligible; although the housing options found are not recorded in the prevention figures.

- Temporary Accommodation

As of 13th October 2015, 102 households were placed in temporary accommodation. 4 of these were PSL (Private Sector Lease) self-contained accommodation. The services used are those that the local authority would describe as emergency accommodation used to fulfil a housing duty to a homeless household. The exception to this is the Stonham Women's Refuge (25 out of the total) which takes referrals from a variety of sources including those outside of the city.

The number of people in temporary accommodation continues to decrease: there were 147 placements at the end of July 2015 as opposed to the current number of 102 – this represents a 30% reduction. The most significant change is the phasing out of 50 LEAP (Leeds Emergency Accommodation Provision) units without an accompanying increase in placements in other services. The key to reducing temporary accommodation placements is a focus on homeless prevention and timely move-on from temporary into more settled accommodation.

The comparative figure for Birmingham council is 872 households in temporary accommodation.

- % Capital Programme Spend

Housing Leeds actual spend and commitments at period 6 is £38.4m, equating to 49.5% of the revised available resources. The 2015/16 programme has been adjusted down from £90.9m to a more deliverable level on what can realistically be achieved within the year, circa £77.5m.

- Rent Collection

Rent and Arrears collection stands at 96.70% as at September 2015. This compares to a stronger position of 97.70% in September 2014. However, there has been an overall increase over this quarter. It represents a shortfall of £2.63m against potential rental income.

Arrears currently stand at £6.41M which is £.17M higher than the May figure and £1.55m higher than for September 2014 (£4.86m).

Rent Collection and Arrears performance has improved during Q2, but the pace needs to improve at a faster rate for the city to achieve the 98% Collection year-end target. Income Recovery Action Plans have been instigated; these focus on training, support and robust management.

- Annual Home Visits

As of September 2015, 63.08% visits have been completed. This compares to a September 2014 position of 43.45%. Housing Leeds is on target to carry out most Annual Home Visits by the end of December 2015, allowing sufficient time in quarter 4 to make contact with tenants where we have not been able to make contact to arrange the visit.

- Repairs Completed Within Target

Citywide performance for Repairs completed within target stands at 89.16% for September 2015 which is below target for this indicator but is an increase on the

previous month (86.77% in August). There have been some performance issues in the East of the city over recent weeks which has had a negative effect on the overall citywide position. Analytical work has now identified the main issues causing poor performance, which includes a significant backlog of bricklaying jobs for which recruitment is now taking place, and actions are being put in place to remedy any further issues.

- Re-let Days

Citywide re-let days stand at 31.38 (September 2015). There has been a month on month improvement over this quarter and this figure represents an almost 4.5 day improvement on the May 2015 position previously reported to the Board. The corresponding figure for September 2014 stood at 29.30.

- Lettable Void Properties

The number of lettable void properties at the end of September 2015 stands at 576, showing an increase from the May position of 532 previously reported to the Board. Voids account for 1.01% of stock and the % rent loss from voids is 0.94%.

The increase is due to the number of PFI / New build properties that will be discounted once relet. In total there were 195 PFI / new build properties; if these were removed it would leave 381 voids in total and the % of stock would be under 0.7%.

- Adaptations

The performance measure relating to major adaptations (costing more than £1k to install) starts at the point when an application for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is made to the date of works completion. Housing Leeds' responsibility, once a social care assessment of need has been carried out, is to draw up an adaptations scheme and to deliver it – either internally or through an approved external contractor. Housing Leeds has 70 calendar days to draw up and deliver an 'urgent' adaptation scheme and 182 calendar days to do the same for a 'non-urgent' case. The target timescale relates to the urgency of need rather than the type of works required. This means that the building of an extension for one applicant must be done within the same 70 day time period as the installation of a ramp or wet floor shower for another if both customers are assessed as having an urgent need. 83% of schemes, for both council and private housing, have been designed and delivered with target timescales in the time period April to September 2015.

Housing Leeds is committed to looking at ways to improve performance, notwithstanding the challenges associated with large schemes, such as looking at adaptation work to existing homes and re-housing to alternative adapted housing concurrently and the performance of contractors.

Performance for Housing Leeds (Health & Housing assessment and P&C delivery) is currently running at 79% for public and 93% for private (September figures).

- Unauthorised Encampments

In 2014/15 there were 40 total encampments (26 LCC land / 14 private land). Since May 2015 there have been 40 total encampments (32 LCC land / 8 private land). There has been a group of Travellers in Leeds since June 2015 who originate from London and Ireland that have stayed in the Leeds boundary and therefore have increased the statistics. In addition last years' encampment figures were the lowest since 2003/04 which is the furthest back that records are available.

A reduction in encampments (during the winter months) is anticipated for the remainder of 2015/16.

- Under Occupation

A count of all under occupation cases stands at 5,047 at September 2015 with 54% of cases in arrears. The number of tenancies affected by under-occupation has reduced from May 2015 (5,174) and from the 2014/15 Q4 position of 5,255.

3.3 **Appendix 2**

3.3.1 Members' attention are drawn to the following performance areas (please note further detail is provided in Appendix 2):

- Burglary

In the 12 months to the end of September 2015 there were 5,227 recorded offences, up 30.2% (1,211 more offences) when compared to the previous year. In the last quarter (Jul-Sept), there were 1,164 recorded burglary dwelling offences in Leeds (74 more offences than the previous quarter and 152 more offences than for the same quarter in 2014).

In mid-2014, following a reinterpretation of the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) around Burglary Dwelling, several changes were made to West Yorkshire Police recording practices. These changes resulted in the number of Burglary Dwelling offences recorded increasing, and a number of subsequent audits identified and recorded additional historic offences. This had the greatest effect in Leeds, as the changes in recording practices mainly affected 'Homes in Multi-Occupancy'. This change is still having an impact on overall performance.

Plans are in place for the 'Darker Nights' and daily performance counts for October are very positive.

The monthly total for September 2015 of 367 offences is a reduction of 86 offences on the previous month and compares with the September 2014 total of 366.

- Anti-Social Behaviour

In the 12 months to the end of September 2015, there were 19,665 recorded nuisance and damage incidents (WYP), down 20.3% (5,022 fewer incidents) when compared to the previous year. In the last quarter (Jul-Sept) there were 5,244 recorded incidents (122 more incidents compared to the last quarter – an increase of 2.4%).

There were 1,607 incidents recorded for the month of September 2015 which represents a 14.7% decrease from the previous month (276 fewer incidents).

- Domestic Violence

In the 12 months to the end of September 2015, the twelve month rolling repeat victimisation rate was 36% (5,528 repeat victims). This is up by 588 incidents from the previous 12 month period – at the end of September 2014 the repeat rate stood at 35%.

The figure for the last quarter (Jul-Sept) stands at 1,526 which is 134 more incidents than the previous quarter - an increase of 9.6%. The total repeat incidents for

September 2015 stood at 496; this is an decrease of 25 from the previous month and compares to the September 2014 total of 415.

At September 2015, the twelve month rolling repeat suspect rate was 19.9% (3,063 repeat suspects) this is up by 823 incidents from the previous 12 month period – at the end of September 2014 the repeat suspect rate stood at 16.2%.

The figure for the last quarter (Jul-Sept) stood at 915 repeat suspects which is 94 more than for the previous quarter – an increase of 11.4%. The monthly total for September 2015 is 293; a small decrease of 6 from the previous month. This compares to the September 2014 total of 198 repeat suspects.

- Missed Bins

Overall missed bins (per 100,000) stands at 70.65 at Period 7 which is an improved position compared with the same period in 2014 (81.98). The percentage of bins collected without issue stands at 99.93%.

- Recycling

The Year to Date figure for July 2015 is 1.34% lower than for the same period last year. There are a number of variations which are contributing to this reduction.

On a positive note, and as a result of the successful implementation of AWC (Alternate Weekly Collection) phases 3 and 4, the volume of dry recyclables (Green bin material) has increased by around 15% which on its own would have increased the overall recycling rate by 1.4%. However, the volume of garden waste – which is very weather dependent – has declined significantly this year compared to last year (>9%) and this has taken 1.3% off the overall recycling rate.

Finally, some of the kerbside residual waste is also sorted for recycling by one of our contractors (AWM – Associated Waste Management); however the volumes being recycled are lower with more of the waste being sent for energy recovery. This has reduced the recycling rate by around 1.3%

The current projection for recycling for 2015/16 is approx. 42% which is slightly lower than the 2014/15 figure (42.8%) mainly as a result of the reasons outlined above.

- Landfill

July 2015 figures show 29,155t has been sent to landfill this year to date - this is better than targeted and is a reduction on the figure for the same period last year (49,656t). Members should note that as mentioned above, one of our contractors is now sending waste elsewhere for Refuse Derived Fuel rather than to landfill. Kerbside collected black bin waste stands at 56,528t as of July 2015. This is a decrease on the 58,497t July 2014 position.

- Street Cleanliness

The result from this summer's survey is that 90.6% of sites surveyed has acceptable litter levels; this is a slight reduction on the summer 14/15 survey (91.3%). Survey scores have been fairly consistent over the last 3 years, hovering a few % either side of the 90% mark. Details of the wards surveyed this summer are included in Appendix 2.

- Grounds Maintenance
Between 1st March and 1st October 2014 there were 830 enquires from members of the public, with 192 for the same period this year – a reduction of 76.9%. These issues include a broad range of quality concerns raised by local residents. Some of the improvement will be related to better weather, and some as a direct result of the work that has been undertaken to support contractor staff and skills retention via a winter mulching programme and efforts taken by contractor management to address staff behaviour and undertake additional training.

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1. This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. However all performance information is published on the council's website and is available to the public.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 This is an information report and not a decision so it is not necessary to conduct an equality impact assessment. However, some of the data provided will link to wider issues of equality and diversity and cohesion and integration, and there may be occasions when Scrutiny Board members will want to look more closely at these issues, and may request further information to inform their investigations.

4.3 Council Priorities

- 4.3.1 This report provides an update on progress in delivering the council priorities in line with the council's performance management framework.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no specific resource implications from this report, although some performance indicators relate to financial and other value for money aspects.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 All performance information is publicly available and is published on the council website. This report is an information update providing Scrutiny with a summary of performance for the strategic priorities within its remit and as such is not subject to call in.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There is a comprehensive risk management process in the Council to monitor and manage key risks. This links closely with performance management.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This report provides a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the council and city related to the Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- Note the most recent performance information in Appendices 1 and 2 and the issues which have been highlighted and consider if they wish to undertake further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year in any of these areas.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 Best Council Plan 2015 - 20

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.