

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Housing and Neighbourhoods
2.	Date:	29 <sup>th</sup> September, 2014
3.	Title:	Housing and Neighbourhoods Year End performance 2013-14 and 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter outturns for 2014/15
4.	Programme Area:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

### 5. Summary

This report outlines the 2013/14 Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results for the Housing and Neighbourhood Service elements of the directorate; the report also shows a comparison to performance last year and gives the performance outturn up to the first quarter of 2014/15.

There are fifteen indicators managed by Housing and Neighbourhood Services; of these 10 (**67%**) achieved year end targets with 9 of the measures improving on 2012/13 outturns. Performance improvement action plans helped maximise outturns.

By March 2014 the number of void properties had reduced to less than 190 – in comparison to 300 empty properties at the end of December 2013 and the income service collected an additional income of £3.9m.

Performance improved in key areas such as completing more repairs right first time, increased customer satisfaction, managing anti-social behaviour and resolving longstanding cases.

Over the last 12 months the total number of complaints received for Housing and Neighbourhood Services was 341 (Total received in 2012/13 was 325).

Overall **100%** of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales.

There was a **5%** increase in the number of complaints received, although **35%** fewer of these were fully upheld than last year. The quality of complaint investigation and resolution continues to improve with only one case progressing to stage three of the complaints procedure and no full investigations being conducted by either the Local Government Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman Service. All this is built on the last year's strong performance, which saw a 12% reduction in new complaints and the number of complaints reaching stage two.

### 6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member notes the year end position and the improved outturns of performance from Year 2012/13 to 2013/14 and up to the 1<sup>ST</sup> quarter of 2014/15.

## 7. Proposals and Details

During the year progress has been made in delivering initiatives to improve performance and the customer experience with the highest levels of customer satisfaction.

The following KPI's achieved year end targets and also improved on last year's performance:

### **NAS 54 - % of repairs completed right first time**

- Cumulative partnership year end performance of **97.73%** against a 92% year end target
- This indicator is measured from 2 of the questions on the repairs satisfaction survey completed by customers following the completion of their repair. Both questions must receive a positive response to register as right first time
- Performance has improved on the year end outturn in 2012/13 of 95.39%
- Nationally ranked amongst the best – 25 against 162 other organisations

Areas of improvement include:

- Call centre staff received technical repairs training to increase their skills in diagnostic of repairs at first point of contact
- Carrying out quality assurance checks with partners to help reduce the number of minor defects

Performance for first quarter of 2014/15

- 98.46% continuous improvement against the revised target of 93%

### **NAS 55 - % of gas safety certificates outstanding**

- Performance of **99.97%** – this equates to 6 properties with a gas safety certificate outstanding. The best ever performance in this area
- In 2012/13 the year end outturn was 99.91% (19 properties with certificates outstanding)
- Over the last 3 years performance has shown significant improvement. *At the start of 2011 there were 472 properties without a valid certificate*
- Put in place a robust procedure to identify where a property has not received a safety test and reviewed customer access letters which has resulted in a reduction in the costs of taking legal enforcement action

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 99.98% compliance up to end of June 2014

### **NAS 57 - % of all repairs completed within target**

- Year end partnership performance of **99.29%** against a 99.00% target
- This has improved on the performance in 2012/13 of 99.01%
- Nationally ranked **amongst the best** – 51 against a sample of 227 in Housemark

Improvements include:

- Work has been done with the Call Centre to improve scripts and diagnosis of repairs
- Allocation of specific areas to Technical Officers – named point of contact for repairs

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 99.35% against the 99 target, continues to improve

### **NAS 58 - % of repairs appointments made and kept**

- Partnership performance of **99.21%** exceeding the target of 98.50%
- The year end outturn performance has improved when compared with 98.52% in 2012/13
- Nationally ranked **amongst the best** - 49 against a sample of 140 organisations in Housemark

This has been achieved by:

- Adopting Text Messaging notification of repairs
- Increasing take up of mutually agreed appointments and operatives phoning customers direct out of hours to arrange a convenient appointment time

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 99.95% of appointments kept against the revised target of 99%

### **NAS 59 - % of tenants satisfied with the repairs service**

- Cumulative performance at year end saw satisfaction levels rise to **99.86%**
- This is the highest satisfaction level since the start of the contract in 2010
- Last year's performance was 99.75%

Improvement action:

- Increased RMBC quality checks
- Provided customer feedback to operatives in toolbox talks
- Workshops to review and challenge progress with frontline staff

Performance for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014/15

- Satisfaction up to 99.92% at the end of June 2014

### **NAS 65 – Food establishments broadly compliant with the food hygiene law**

- Year end performance of **85.00%** against the 85% target
- Performance on this indicator has been sustained however the number of high risk premises has increased compared to the year end position in 2012/13
- The out-turn for 2012-13 was 87%, however, there were **38 fewer** premises.
- There were **298 new premises/proprietors this year** and the economic climate has had an impact on businesses.
- In March 2014 there were 11 category A premises that were non-compliant; these will all receive a further inspection after 6 months
- There were 75 category B premises which were non-compliant; these will all be inspected during the next 12 months

Improvement action:

- Targeting inspections of high risk premises and carrying out quality assurance assessments
- Providing a step by step guide to premise owners on food safety management systems and relevant business packs

### **Future action**

- Obtained funding to provide coaching sessions for poorer premises
- To consider compiling informal inspection revisits and reporting both figures

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- Sustained compliance of 85%

### **NAS 66 – Satisfaction of business regulated services**

- Satisfaction of **99%** against year-end target of 96%
- This has improved on last year's performance in 2012/13 of 96%

Improvement action:

- Quality assessments and inspections continue to be carried out regularly on high risk premises

Performance for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014/15

- 100% satisfaction

### **NAS 79 – % of ASB Cases resolved**

- Cumulative performance of case resolution at the year end was **98.50%** against a 96% target
- The performance on this indicator has shown improvements when compared to the year end position 2012/13 which was 95.45%
- Nationally this compares us extremely favourably - **amongst the best** in HouseMark

Areas of improvement include:

- Ongoing quality assurance by service managers of complaints and casework management

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 98% of housing cases resolved within the timeline

### **NAS 82 – Number of households living in temporary accommodation**

- In March 2014 the best performance was achieved of **21** households in temporary accommodation
- Performance improved on 2012/13 of 23 (lower is better)
- **Over 1000 households prevented from becoming homeless**

This has been achieved by:

- Providing more support and advice in particular on the welfare reform changes that affect people especially in relation to concerns regarding under occupancy charges
- Continuing to work closely with partners to ensure that alternative permanent accommodation is available as soon as possible; these include housing associations, support providers and our own allocations

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- There has been an increase in number of people approaching the service threatened with homelessness and at the end of June the number of households in temporary accommodation increased to **28** - (*In 2011/12 there were 31 households in temporary accommodation*)

### **NAS 80 – Number of high risk premises due for trading standards inspection that are inspected within the required timescale**

- Performance at the end of March was **100%** against a target of 100%

Improvement Actions include:

- A training schedule was produced for staff on the system for entering data and analysing information
- Providing step by step guides to assist staff with data entry and system administration

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- Sustained 100% performance up to end June 2014

The following KPI's did not achieve year end targets although action to maximise individual progress outturn was made:

**NAS 34 – Average length of time waiting for major adaptations from assessment to work beginning (Weeks)**

- The overall **cumulative outturn for the year** is **16.53 weeks** which did not achieve the target of 11.25 weeks; this is primarily due to eradicating the backlog of work during the year from 2012/13
- Waiting time for a referral to be processed reduced from 21 weeks, in April 2013 down to 7 weeks by the end of March 2014
- The total number of referrals waiting to be processed at year end stood at 25 meaning that applications are now being processed within the same month for the first time in the services history
- For the current financial year 87% of respondents to satisfaction surveys were '*very satisfied with the service received overall*' and the remaining 13% were '*satisfied*'. Previously 79% and 17% respectively for 2012-2013, with 1.9% '*very dissatisfied*'

**Actions for improvement include:**

- During 2012/13 it came to light that there was a backlog of 395 referrals with a waiting time of more than 6 months – an action plan was put in place to clear the back log and this was finally completed during 2013/14

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- Improved performance of 4.66 weeks, well below the revised 8 weeks target

**NAS 17 – Average re-let time**

- The cumulative average re-let time performance for year end is **29.85 days**- this calculation is different from the national benchmark measurement and will be aligned going forward for 2014-15.
- For the month of **March 14** in line with the national benchmarking criteria the performance outturn was **25.93 days**
- The year end outturn remained similar to last year at less than 30 days although this year we have seen a 30% increase in turnover of void properties
- The reported cumulative annual outturn ranked above average - 43 against 102 other organisations of all re-lets (including any time spent on major works)

**Action**

- Weekly performance clinics ensured voids performance remained at less than 30 days
- Reduced the number of voids to 190 (300 at end of December)
- Introduced back to back lettings- repairs completed within a 5 day turnaround time
- Ongoing support from P&Q on quality assurance data and pending voids
- Implemented a new utilities process – British Gas provide supply to all properties – Staff training provided on new process. This new process has reduced delays in carrying out safety testing and cut down the allowance of rent free weeks

Performance for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014/15

- Below target with performance of 21.81 days against the reduced 25 days turnaround time – this now puts us **amongst the best** on Housemark

### **NAS 78 - % of rent loss through dwellings being vacant**

- Cumulative Void Rent Loss performance for the year end was 1.14% against a target of 0.9% (lower is better)
- Performance just for the month of March 14 was 1.09% - a reduction and improvement on previous months in the year
- There is a direct link with the number of vacant properties which significantly reduced during the last quarter of the year

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- Improved performance of 0.87% at the end of June 2014 against the revised target of 2.1%

### **NAS 76 – Rent collected as a percentage of rent owed**

- A year end performance outturn of 99.77, 0.54% below the target of 100.31% - for this indicator higher is better
- Performance has deteriorated by 0.53% since March 2013 ; however, within the year the income service still collected an additional income of £3.9m
- The overall increase in income collected stems from the ongoing recovery of debt from previous years in addition to an increase in the general value of payments owing to higher rent charges in 2013/14
- Nationally this places us **average** HouseMark

Action that has contributed towards improvement in rent collected:

- Carrying out affordability checks prior to new tenancy sign-up
- Developed a court action approval protocol - Independent case reviews conducted prior to all court applications where there are children in the household and/or the tenant requires multi-agency support
- Referrals to the Tenancy Support Officer, Money Advice and other agencies where possible prior to instigation of court proceedings

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 98.64% of rent collected up to June 14 below the monthly control and year target of 99.80%

### **NAS 77 – Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit**

- The 2013/14 year end outturn is 2.18% and is 0.60% above the target (a lower outturn is better) – 1.58% target
- This represents a deterioration in performance since March 2013 of 0.59%
- The removal of the spare room subsidy for Housing Benefit claimants resulted in additional arrears
- Nationally this compares us **above average** in HouseMark
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Improvement action includes:

- The income team have increased the take up of customers paying by direct debit by almost 300
- There is closer working with CYPS & Homeless team including the development of joint-working protocols
- The Income team have increased contact with customers making more telephone calls and carrying out more visits

Performance for 1st quarter of 2014/15

- 2.58% performance at 30<sup>th</sup> June 0.48%; above the control target of 2.1%

## **8. Risks**

Since the introduction of the Housing Benefit under Occupancy in 2013 more than 2500 tenancies have been affected and as a direct result of the removal of the spare

room subsidy for Housing Benefit claimants it should be noted that it resulted in additional arrears of £306k.

The proposals to roll out Universal Credit nationally are still planned although specific dates and numbers of people initially affected are not yet known.

### **9. Background Papers and Consultation**

The performance report has been discussed with Neighbourhoods and Adult Services Directorate Leadership Team.

Appendix 'A' contains the performance results for the year end of 2013/14. The indicators rated 'on target' are shown as a star and those that were rated 'off target' are shown as a red triangle.

The Performance and Quality Team continue to support the operational management arrangements within Housing and Neighbourhood Service teams.

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