



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Committee Report

Public/Private* **Public**

Date of Meeting: **22nd November 2007**

Title: **MONITORING CARLISLE HOUSING ASSOCIATION CONTRACT**

Report of: **DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Report reference: **DS. 110/07**

Summary:

This report is to update Members of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding performance information for Carlisle Housing Association.

Questions for / input required from Scrutiny:

Questions relating to the performance data, especially the provision of data on environmental issues, as per section 2.6.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the report be considered

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Following the transfer of housing stock to Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) in December 2002 the City Council has monitored the performance of CHA over a 5-year period which is due to come to an end in December this year.
- 1.2 Previously it has been agreed that the comparable data from other housing providers provided by the Housing Corporation will be brought to Committee later in the year, as it is not currently available.
- 1.3 Performance information relating to CHA in this report comes from the following sources;
 - CHA Board data and narrative of general performance
 - Homelessness data
 - Specific requested information on Environmental Performance (to follow – see 2.6)

2.0 CHA Board Data

This report should be read in conjunction with Table A (*Appendix 1*), which summarises CHA performance information data to September 2007.

This report provides a summary for each performance indicator found in Table A. Where current performance falls below the target, the “Current Performance” box in Table A is highlighted in red even if the trend is better. The graphs show CHA’s actual performance month on month with a trend forecast.

This report provides an explanation for the change in performance between this month and last month where the performance has dipped, and outlines what CHA intend to do to improve next month’s performance.

2.1 Satisfaction with overall service provided by landlord

Overall satisfaction remains just below our target of 80%, but above the national average. Performance information in this area is collected quarterly so performance in this area will not change until October.

2.2 Average Time Void – Relets (days)

The number of days void are only included in the calculation for the average relet time once they have been let. As September saw a few 'hard to let' properties re-let, the figure has been skewed. It is anticipated that due to the hard work of the Property Improvement team (through the voids pilot) and the Allocations team (through the introduction of Choice Based Lettings) this performance measure will improve over the next few months.

2.3 Repairs

This month performance for both forms of emergency repairs has improved whilst urgent and routine has declined.

The downturn in performance is attributable to Repairline set-up issues, as the repairs figures are calculated on a 12-month rolling period 2 months in arrears. However the improvement in the Emergency categories demonstrates that Repairline is now starting to yield improved performance.

2.4 Current tenant arrears as a percentage of Gross Rent Roll

This performance measure has slowly increased since June 2007. The principal reason for this is that the housing benefit is received every 4 weeks, whilst the arrears are calculated per calendar month. Therefore the amount of arrears appears to increase from the receipt of housing benefit but overall the performance remains relatively constant. However this measure will be closely monitored.

2.5 Working days lost through staff sickness

In general the sickness figures continue to improve. The slight dip in this month's performance can be attributed to an increase in non-work related stress. Action has been taken where possible to assist these employees to return to work.

2.6 Environmental Issues

This was identified by members at a previous Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting as an area that they would wish to look at and discuss with a representative from CHA.

We have requested performance indicators on environmental matters (especially ground maintenance) from CHA. We have been advised that this information would not be ready in time to go in this report, however CHA have confirmed that this would be available in time for Committee, when officers from CHA will be available to discuss any issues, so they will be in a position to provide an update then.

3.0 HOMELESSNESS DATA

3.1 Information relating to homelessness nominations and lettings made by CHA are provided in the following table:

Date	Number of Homeless Nominations	Number of those Housed via Nomination
1/7/07 to 31/10/07	68	28 in total with RSLs (25 of which with CHA)

Between the period 1/7/07 and 31/10/07, a total of 68 homelessness nominations were made by the Council to Registered Social Landlords.

Those nominated had a duty accepted to them by the Council under the terms of the Homelessness Legislation to provide appropriate housing.

In total, 41% of those nominated by the Council have been re-housed of which 89% were housed by CHA. Of the 58% nominated and not re-housed, 82% are waiting for a suitable property. The remaining 18% have not been re-housed for a variety of factors including:

- Applicant ceased to be eligible for assistance
- Council discharged the duty to accommodate when offer of accommodation was refused or not responded to
- Applicant was re-housed by another provider e.g. private sector landlord
- Applicant found own accommodation or made alternative arrangements

4.0 LIAISON MEETINGS

4.1 Attached as *Appendix 2* are the notes from the liaison meeting held 16th July 2007.

Carlisle City Council / Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) Liaison Meeting
2.00 pm, 16/7/07 – Carlisle Housing Association, Carlisle

Present; Simon Taylor and Paul Taylor (CHA),

1. Minutes of last meeting agreed. Matters arising being dealt with in the meeting.
2. Future Meetings – 2.00 pm on 19/10/07 at Civic Centre
3. Council Community Overview and Scrutiny (COS) Committee - The next monitoring report (as previously discussed) had been moved back from the June meeting to the July meeting. CHA confirmed that two officers would be present at the meeting one to answer questions relating to environmental issues.

The Managing Director of CHA had been invited to a future meeting of the Committee. Because of clashes in diary dates this looks likely to be at the meeting at the end of August.

4. Five years on – Work on taking this document forward was to begin so that updates on progress made within the first five years will be available on or around the fifth anniversary of LSVT.
5. Empty Property Pilot – The scheme to bring empty CHA properties using monies from the Council's Housing Strategy Capital Programme has been progressed under the Housing Capital Programme and final works on properties had been done.
6. Tenant Involvement – CHA were still working with tenant groups as well as looking forward to a future way of working with their tenants and residents.
7. Choice Based Lettings – CHA are implementing the Riverside group scheme and are working as part of the Cumbria proposal which needs to be finalised by the 12/10/07
8. Decent Homes – Work progressing as part of the renovations programme
9. Development – A new Head of Development post is to be advertised which would concentrate on taking new schemes forward.

Appendix 1: Table A – Carlisle Housing Association Performance Information September 2007

31.3.07 where available	Measure	Target	Current performance	Trend	National average benchmark	Notes Reference (see above)
78.7%	1.Satisfaction with overall service provided by landlord	80%	79.9%	Better	79%	1
53.0	2.Average Time Void – Relets (days)	42	52.0	Better	40	2
95%	3.Emergency repairs completed the same day	97%	93.8%	Worse	95.4%	3
98.2%	4.Emergency repairs completed the next day	97%	96.6%	Worse	92.7%	3
89.9%	5.Urgent repairs completed within target	94%	90.3%	Better	92.7%	3
87.7%	6.Routine repairs competed within target	94%	84.8%	Worse	93.7%	3
81.3%	7.Repairs appointments made and kept	92%	84.8%	Better	93.8%	
4.9%	8.Current tenant arrears as % of Gross Rent Roll	4.75%	6.4%	Worse	5.1%	4
6.4%	9.Working days lost through staff sickness Total: Long-term sick: Short-term sick:	3% 1.5% 1.5%	5.3% 2.9% 2.4%	Better	4.6%	5

N.B. The trend comment relates to the change in performance between 2006/07-year end and current performance