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Subject: Council Housing Compliance and Performance – six monthly update
June 2022

Report to: Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee, 14th July 2022

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SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper provides a six-monthly compliance and performance update in relation to the Council's housing stock.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee:

1. Are asked to note the contents of the report and the work in progress to address areas of poor performance.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 15 July 2021, committee considered a report which set out the Council's compliance and performance for its housing stock for the 2020/21 financial year. This information provided a benchmark for the ongoing monitoring and scrutiny by committee of compliance and performance through six monthly reports. This report provides the position for the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.2 The Council maintains 5766 homes across 341 sites. These include a range of property types from family houses to single-person flats, and vary widely in age.

2.0 Regulatory Compliance

- 2.1 The table below provides updated information on the Council's compliance against each of the Consumer Standards and the Rent Standard. Compliance is RAG rated to

identify where the Council is fully compliant (green), compliant but there is a need for further improvement (amber) and where the Council is non-compliant (red). The current position is shown below, along with the position reported in November 2021:

Standard	Sub area	Current Rating June 22	Previous Rating November 21
Neighbourhood and community			
	Neighbourhood management	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Local area co-operation	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Anti-social behaviour	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Overall rating	Fully Met	Fully Met
Tenancy			
	Allocations and mutual exchanges	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Tenure	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Overall rating	Fully Met	Fully Met
Home			
	Quality of Accommodation	Non-compliant in one area	Not compliant in one area
	Repairs and maintenance	Non-compliant in one area	Met - improvement required
	Overall rating	Non-compliant (two areas)	Met - improvement required
Tenant involvement and empowerment			
	Customer service, choice and complaints	Fully Met	Fully Met
	Involvement and empowerment	Fully Met	Met - improvement required
	Understanding diverse needs	Met - improvement required	Met - improvement required
	Overall rating	Fully Met	Fully Met
Rent Standard			
	Setting rents	Fully Met	Fully Met

- 2.2 The Council's compliance against the requirements of the five regulatory standards has changed over the last six months resulting in some non-compliance against the home standard. The assessment also recognises some areas where progress has been made and where further improvement is required. Further information on the changes is provided below:

Home Standard

This standard relates to the standard of homes and delivery of a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service. There has been a change in the overall rating to non-compliant as outlined below:

Quality of Accommodation

- A temporary decrease in the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard from 93% to 85% over the past year. This is a result of not delivering improvements to components in line with the Decent Homes Standard timeframe, largely due to Covid restrictions.
- The reasons behind the decrease for last year are variable and include:
 - An underspend of £2 million last year (21/22) due to the reduced work programme resulting from Covid and challenges gaining access to complete works
 - Difficulties with contracting to complete works. Capacity of contractors has reduced following the pandemic
 - The main component impacting decency is windows and doors accounting for 8% of all homes under management (469 homes)
 - There are 135 boilers (2% of all homes under management) requiring an upgrade. All have up to date gas safety certificates and working efficiently
- To increase the number of homes meeting the standard the following actions are being taken:
 - The programme this year includes bathroom and kitchen replacements, upgrading windows and doors with a focus on fire doors., Last year's underspend is being rolled over into this year's programme. This is expected to have a positive impact.
 - Development of a revised Asset Management Strategy setting out the investment priorities for the service with a focus on meeting the Decent Homes Standard
 - Stock condition Surveys are planned for the autumn to make sure the council is able to effectively plan for the future and continue to make sure all homes meet the relevant standards
 - A 5-year capital investment programme to be developed to achieve and maintain 100% compliance. The programme will prioritise those homes which do not currently meet the relevant standards and those that may fall below it over time

Repairs and Maintenance

- Most areas are fully compliant, however the following need attention:
 - the timely completion of fire safety remedial works. Currently, the Council has identified 179 outstanding actions resulting from Fire Risk Assessments. Almost all these outstanding actions are low risk and the

Council has no high-rise accommodation. The 8 priority 1 and 2 actions (higher risk) should be completed by the time this committee meets in July

- the management of Legionella. An independent review was undertaken by Morgan Lambert last year that identified the current risk assessments were not sufficient to manage water hygiene in sheltered schemes communal areas
- the frequency of EICR inspections. The council has identified 207 homes with an outstanding electrical safety check (over 5 years) – again this has been impacted by the difficulty of inspecting during the pandemic and subsequent levels of demand on contractors
- the overall management of compliance data and monitoring
- To ensure that the Council is fully compliant with key resident safety requirements the following actions are being taken:
 - Legionella - The Council is in the process of implementing the recommendations from the external report including updating the risk assessments that were identified as not being sufficient. Assurance can be provided that testing is being carried out regularly in line with the requirements
 - Fire risk assessments – a more robust process of monitoring is in place to make sure all outstanding actions are completed and where completion has occurred evidence is clearly provided to sign off the actions. The majority of actions relate to checks and further investigation which are in progress
 - EICR inspections – all outstanding checks will be completed during the financial year. A current programme of checks is in place with 99.74% of homes with a valid certificate
- Further work over the next six months will strengthen our approach
 - There is an ongoing audit of compliance that will set the parameters for an overall review of compliance including fire safety management
 - A new singular management system for all compliance programmes and remedial works will be introduced
 - The development of a suite of performance measures across the whole of property compliance to be monitored and reported. This will improve identification of any slippage in meeting requirements and support quick address. It will also monitor, and track resolution of remedial works identified through fire risk assessments

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

This standard requires landlords to provide choices, information and communication which reflects the diverse needs of tenants, to have a clear approach to complaint handling and provide wide opportunities for tenant involvement and influence. Since the last report the new Resident Engagement strategy has been approved with associated action plan. As a result, the status has changed to ‘fully met’.

Involvement and Empowerment

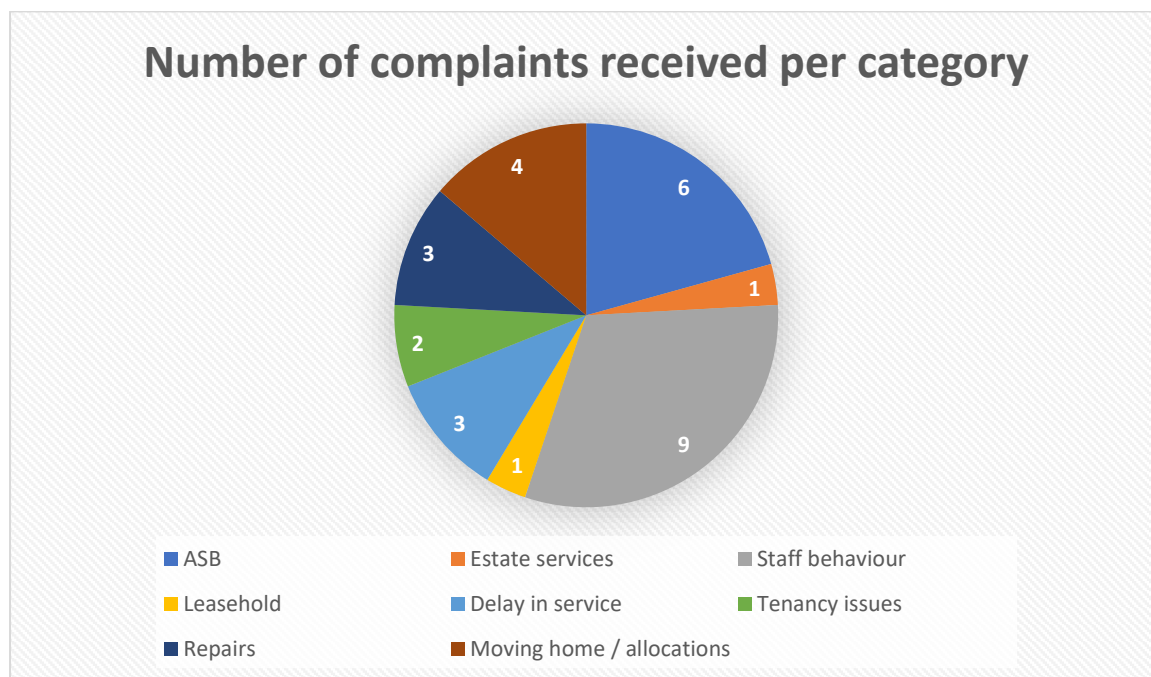
This has changed to fully met (Green). The new Resident Engagement Strategy has been adopted and progress is being made to strengthen the tenant voice. At the previous committee meeting, members received an update on the progress of obtaining views on services and the outcomes and changes as a result as part of the approach to increase insight.

Understanding diverse needs

There is no change in the status (amber) however progress is being made on the introduction of a new IT system that will enable more effective use of data to the benefit of service improvement.

3.0 Complaint Handling

- 3.1 For the last financial year, 89 Stage one and Stage two complaints have been recorded for Tenancy Services, Rent, Assets and Repairs in addition to 15 compliments.
- 3.2 Complaints relating to the Housing Service for stage one numbered 31, the categories of complaints received relating to Tenancy Services, Income Team, Leasehold and Estate Services

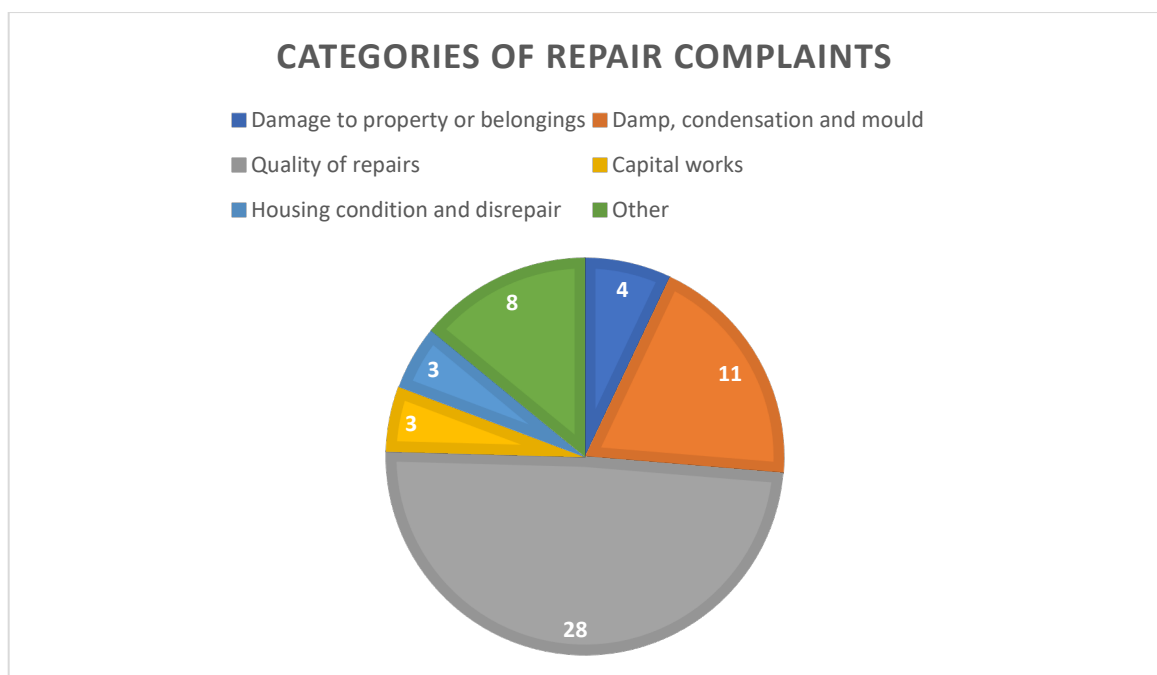


3.3 In responding to complaints, the Council continues to capture and implement identified improvements to the Housing Service and its processes or procedures. Recent examples of learning from complaints include:

- Being clearer when a complaint is treated as a service request to avoid confusion
- Improving information for garage licensees on contacting the tenancy team
- Improving the use of noise monitors to support cases where the noise is loud but too short a duration to be captured using noise app
- Change in process when visiting to inspect cases of damp and mould
- Improvement to process of RTB applications

3.4 There has been an increase in compliments (15) following a renewed focus on recording these over the past year. Compliments support us to recognise individuals and teams on delivering great customer service as well as enabling the service to learn from what is done well. Compliments received relate to Estates and Tenancy team members.

3.5 The number of complaints recorded relating to the repairs service was 58. The breakdown of categories of complaints is shown below:



4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

5.0 Risk Implications

5.1 The Council remains focused on ensuring it is compliant with the regulatory requirements for social housing. The most significant risk with maintaining compliance relates to the Home Standard reflecting the need to ensure the Council's Homes are safe, well maintained and meet the Decent Homes Standard. The Asset Management Strategy for 2022- 2027 is currently being written and anticipated to be considered by the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee in September. The Strategy will prioritise meeting the following requirements:

- Decent Homes Standards and any amendments
- Building Safety Bill
- Fire Safety Bill
- Government targets for carbon neutral new homes by 2025 and carbon reduction schemes in our current homes
- Smart technology – extending home automation to asset components

A review of the overall management of compliance is being undertaken including a compliance audit. A programme of works alongside performance measures will be introduced.

These actions, alongside the immediate pieces of work will provide a clear plan to achieve full compliance.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The report provides evidence and context on the changes to the councils' compliance with the consumer standards. The report identifies that in relation to the Home Standard there are areas where further improvement is required to ensure compliance and progress is being made.

Additional audits are in progress that further consider the Council's compliance with the consumer standards which are shortly due to be completed. At this point the Council will make a decision on whether self referral to the Regulator will be required. Members will be updated accordingly.

6.2 Background Papers

Council Housing Compliance and Performance report – 15 July 2021 and 8 November 2021 for the Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Via ELT

Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Via ELT
Existing Council Policies:	Tenancy Policy, Housing Allocations Scheme, Void Policy, Social Housing Tenancy Fraud Policy, Rechargeable Repairs Policy
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	None associated with the report.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	No legal implications associated with the report.
Risk Implications:	Set out in the report.
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	None
Crime & Disorder:	None
Every Child Matters:	None