

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Tenancy Board

Date **22 April 2014**

Report of: **Director of Community**

Subject: **TENANCY SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2013/14**

SUMMARY

This report sets out Performance Monitoring data for Tenancy Services covering Rent Arrears and Repossessions, Void Property Management including Void Rent Loss, Estate Inspections and Satisfaction Levels for Estates Services, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenant Consultation and Involvement.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board notes and scrutinises the information contained within the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. This report for Board members' information and review provides information across a range of housing management services, including rent arrears, empty homes, anti-social behaviour, estate management and tenant involvement.

CURRENT TENANT ARREARS

2. As at 6 April 2014 the level of current tenant arrears stood at £255,814.67. This is a decrease of £67,877.85 since the last quarter's report.

Period	Arrears Total (£)	Arrears as % of Collectable Debt	Arrears compared to previous period	Arrears compared to similar period in previous year
Jan – Mar 2014	£255,814.67	2.30	↓	↓

3. A breakdown of current tenant arrears by patch area is shown in the table below:

Arrears Banding (£)	Portchester & SW Fareham	North Fareham	Stubbington & SE Fareham	Western Wards
< 100	£991.31 (33 cases)	£1185.63 (34 cases)	£1357.83 (34 cases)	£1150.69 (31 cases)
100 - 249	£5752.35 (33 cases)	£5840.23 (34 cases)	£4226.99 (25 cases)	£3516.59 (21 cases)
250 - 499	£6786.23 (18 cases)	£8689.29 (24 cases)	£8791.77 (24 cases)	£5226.19 (13 cases)
500 - 999	£11184.83 (15 cases)	£18505.19 (26 cases)	£9717.99 (14 cases)	£8315.72 (12 cases)
1000 - 1999	£27817.24 (20 cases)	£19192.91 (13 cases)	£20632.94 (14 cases)	£18584.22 (12 cases)
➤ 2000	£14665.10 (6 cases)	£15262.85 (5 cases)	£15230.89 (6 cases)	£23189.69 (7 cases)
Total	£67197.06 (125 cases)	£68676.10 (136 cases)	£59958.41 (117 cases)	£59983.10 (96 cases)

RENT ARREARS RECOVERY ACTION

4. The table below provides Board members with information about legal action taken to recover rent arrears.

Period	Notices Seeking Possession / Notices to Quit	Comparison to previous period	Possession hearings at court	Comparison to previous period
Jan – Mar 14	90	↑	25	↑

5. The possession hearings at court resulted in 8 Stays of Eviction (where the tenant was successful), 8 Suspended Possession Orders being granted, 1 Outright Possession Order granted, 7 cases were Adjourned on Terms, and 1 Stay Of Eviction was dismissed (where the tenant was unsuccessful).
6. Since the last meeting of the Board there have been 2 evictions – both were due to rent arrears.

EMPTY HOMES - RELETTING TIMES AND RENT LOSS

7. The average time taken to relet the Council's empty homes from January to March 2014 is shown in the table below. The target time to relet homes is 21 days.
8. Properties deemed "hard to let" have been excluded from the relet times shown below:

Jan – Mar 2014	Relet Times (Calendar Days)	Comparison to previous period	Comparison to previous year
General Purpose	25.64	↓	↑
Sheltered	32.51	↑	↑
General Purpose and Sheltered	27.79	↑	↑

9. The average time to re-let properties in 2013/14 was 27.95 days; this is an increase on that achieved in 2012/13. Policy changes for sheltered housing allocations are believed to have been a contributing factor to the increase.
10. At the end of March 2014, there were 35 empty properties – of which 15 were general needs housing and 20 were sheltered housing properties.
11. In terms of rent loss due to empty homes, the annual rent loss as a percentage of the annual rent debit was 1.14%. In cash terms this equates to £118,761.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

12. The table overleaf provides Board members with incidents of ASB. The main complaints involved loud music being played during late evening/early morning and noisy visitors entering and leaving the premises. Currently there are 4 tenants on Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and no cases are subject to possession proceedings.

Period	Number of reported incidents	Comparison to previous quarter	No. of serious cases	Comparison to similar period in previous year
Jan – March 2014	5	↓	0	↓

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

13. In the period January to March 2014 inclusive, 6 estate inspections were carried out. Details of the sites visited, main issues identified and outcomes are shown below:

Areas Inspected	Issues Identified & Action Taken	Outcomes
Salerno House & Sicily House (11/02/2014)	Repair needed to upper floor communal door at Salerno House	Reported to Building Services and subsequently repaired.
St Michael's House (04/03/2014)	Ceiling in communal stairwell leaking	Reported to Building Services for an inspection. Repair in progress
Bishopsfield Road – all flats and maisonette blocks (25/02/2014)	Report of general waste bins being full long before collection is due at 3 blocks.	Reported to Waste Management to discuss a possible solution
Northmore Close (10/02/2014)	None - all communal areas clean and tidy and door-entry system in full working order	
Birchen Close & Beverley Close (13/02/2014)	Uneven tarmac in parking area Dropped kerb enquiry	Building Services to visit and assess for repair Tenancy Services to authorise in new financial year
Frosthole Close (25/03/2014)	Rubbish dumped in Recycling area Cars parked on pavement Hip tiles missing/need replacing Grounds behind flats 100 and 101 need tidying up	Order placed for removal of items – now complete AHEO has written to offenders Reported to Building Services Reported to Streetscene

14. The Communal areas of the Council's blocks of flats and maisonettes are cleaned on a weekly basis. Windows to the communal areas and individual units within sheltered housing blocks are cleaned on a 3-6 monthly basis. Feed-back is obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and housing staff and is collated to give an overall satisfaction rate.
15. Quarterly performance meetings are held with the service provider and the last meeting was held on 12 February 2014.
16. The table below provides Board members with information on the level of satisfaction for the last quarter and the overall satisfaction level for the past 12 months. The table also shows the percentage of all blocks where feed-back was obtained.

Period	Block Cleaning Satisfaction %	Comparison to previous quarter	Feed-back Sample Size %	Overall % satisfaction for year to date
Jan – Mar 2014	88	↓	68%	82%

17. The overall satisfaction level for the year was an improvement on that achieved in 2012-13.
18. The unsatisfactory responses were mainly regarding stairwell cleaning particularly at some of the maisonette blocks. This is being addressed in consultation with the service provider and is being closely monitored by officers.
19. The service provider has introduced periodic quality checks of their work whereby a manager will visit all sites over a period of time. The feedback to date is that the work being carried out largely meets the specification with just minor issues at some sites.
20. The external areas around housing blocks and general needs areas, including housing garage service areas, are maintained by the Council's Streetscene team who provide the grounds maintenance service. The service includes grass-cutting, weed treatment, litter-picking and sweeping of hard surfaces. Feedback is obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and is collated to give an overall % satisfaction rate.
21. Quarterly performance meetings are held with the service provider and the last meeting was held on 10 April 2014.
22. The table below provides Board members with information on the level of satisfaction for the last quarter – together with further information on how this compared with the previous quarter and the overall satisfaction rate for the year to date. The table also shows the percentage of all blocks where feedback was obtained.

Period	Grounds maintenance Satisfaction %	Comparison to previous quarter	Feedback Sample Size %	Overall % Satisfaction for year to date
Jan – Mar 2014	94%	↑	30%	78%

23. The overall satisfaction level for the year was an improvement on that achieved in 2012-13.
24. The percentage feedback in the past quarter has been low as grass cutting is not carried out in the winter months.
25. The only unsatisfactory response concerned sweeping. The service provider has produced a programme of work to address this issue and satisfaction levels for this specific area of work are improving.

TENANT INVOLVEMENT

26. Tenant and leaseholder representatives have attended the following events since the last meeting of the Housing Tenancy Board:

Date	Event	Purpose
23 January 2014	TSG Meeting	To discuss and review the gas service provided
13 February 2014	Tenant Forum Meeting	To discuss general housing service issues To raise awareness of housing matters
18 February 2014	Leaseholder Forum Meeting	To discuss leaseholder issues To raise awareness of leasehold matters
12 March 2014	Sheltered Housing Forum	To discuss sheltered housing issues
13 March 2014	Tenancy Agreement Working Group	To update and review the terms and conditions of all tenancy agreements
13 March 2014	Editorial Panel Meeting	To assist in the production of newsletters and service user leaflets
27 March 2014	Tenant Forum AGM	To acknowledge achievements for the past year and to review and update working practices

27. The main agenda items discussed at the last Tenants' Forum, Sheltered Housing Forum and Leaseholder Forum are outlined below:

TENANTS' FORUM (AGM)

- Review of Tenant Involvement structure
- Election of Chair

SHELTERED HOUSING FORUM (AGM)

- Feedback from Sheltered Housing consultation
- Funding for Sheltered Housing accommodation

LEASEHOLDER FORUM

- Cleaning contract issues
- Discussion of current newsletter and future articles

RISK ASSESSMENT

28. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

CONCLUSION

29. This report has provided Board members with performance monitoring information relating to tenancy Services. Board members are asked to note performance and put forward any suggestions which might improve the content and format of future performance monitoring reports.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Jane Cresdee. (Ext 4483)