



Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

13 October 2020

A meeting of the **Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Webex Virtual Meeting Room** on **Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 2:00pm**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest
3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business
4. Confirm Draft Minutes of Meeting of Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 04 February 2020 (herewith).
5. Scrutiny of Police Scotland Performance in West Lothian Q4 2019-20 - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
6. Scottish Fire and Rescue Local Plan Performance Report - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
7. Financial Performance - Month 12 Monitoring Report - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
8. Housing Allocation Policy Review - report by Head of Housing, Customer

and Building Services (herewith)

9. Performance Reporting - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
10. Scottish Government Consultation on Ministerial Statement for modifying local connection referrals in Scotland - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
11. Property Turnover Quarter 4 2019/20 and Quarter 1 2020/21 - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
12. Safer Neighbourhood Performance - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
13. Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21 - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
14. Workplan (herewith)
15. Scrutiny of Police Scotland Performance in West Lothian Q1 2020-21 - report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)

NOTE **For further information please contact Val Johnston, Tel No.01506 281604 or email val.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk**

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

This form is to help members. It is not a substitute for declaring interests at the meeting.

Members should look at every item and consider if they have an interest. If members have an interest they must consider if they have to declare it. If members declare an interest they must consider if they have to withdraw.

NAME	MEETING	DATE

AGENDA ITEM NO.	FINANCIAL (F) OR NON- FINANCIAL INTEREST (NF)	DETAIL ON THE REASON FOR YOUR DECLARATION (e.g. I am Chairperson of the Association)	REMAIN OR WITHDRAW

The objective test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor.

Other key terminology appears on the reverse.

If you require assistance, please ask as early as possible. Contact Julie Whitelaw, Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, julie.whitelaw@westlothian.gov.uk, James Millar, Governance Manager, 01506 281695, james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk, Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor, 01506 281626, carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk, Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621 committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF KEY TERMINOLOGY FROM REVISED CODE

The objective test

“...whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor”

The General Exclusions

- As a council tax payer or rate payer or in relation to the council's public services which are offered to the public generally, as a recipient or non-recipient of those services
- In relation to setting the council tax.
- In relation to matters affecting councillors' remuneration, allowances, expenses, support services and pension.
- As a council house tenant, unless the matter is solely or mainly about your own tenancy, or you are in arrears of rent.

Particular Dispensations

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- Specific dispensation granted by Standards Commission
- Applies to positions on certain other public bodies (IJB, SEStran, City Region Deal)
- Allows participation, usually requires declaration but not always
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

The Specific Exclusions

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- The position must be registered by you
- Not all outside bodies are covered and you should take advice if you are in any doubt.
- Allows participation, always requires declaration
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

Categories of “other persons” for financial and non-financial interests of other people

- Spouse, a civil partner or a cohabitee
- Close relative, close friend or close associate
- Employer or a partner in a firm
- A body (or subsidiary or parent of a body) in which you are a remunerated member or director
- Someone from whom you have received a registrable gift or registrable hospitality
- Someone from whom you have received registrable election expenses

MINUTE of MEETING of the SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 4 FEBRUARY 2020.

Present – Councillors George Paul (Chair), Andrew McGuire, Alison Adamson, Frank Anderson, Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Peter Heggie, John McGinty

In Attendance: - Jessie Duncan, Alison Kerr, David Rintoul, Tenants Panel Representatives, John Sives, West Lothian Joint Forum of Community Council's representative

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The panel confirmed the Minute of its meeting held on 10 December 2020 as a correct record. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Councillor McGinty noted that in relation to minute item 5, information asked for in relation to the Contact Assessment Model and solvency rates, had not been received and requested that officers follow this up with Police Scotland.

3. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON HOUSING TO 2040

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing the proposed response to the Scottish Government's consultation on their draft housing vision and consultation paper "Housing to 2040: Consultation on outline policy options". The closing date for responses to the consultation document was 28 February 2020.

The report recommended that the panel:

1. Note the council's response as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
2. Note that a report would be submitted to Council Executive on 25 February 2020 seeking approval to submit the response to Scottish Government by 28 February 2020.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and agreed that the report and its recommendations be forwarded to Council Executive on 25 February 2020 for approval.

4. PROPERTY TURNOVER OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2019

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing details of the property turnover for the third quarter (October to December) of 2019/20

The report recommended that the panel note the current levels of activity relating to property turnover for the third quarter of 2019/20 and in particular:

1. Note a decrease in property lets compared to the same period last year;
2. Note that of the 47 communities in West Lothian, five had only one mainstream property to let and 15 had none; and
3. 57% of lets were allocation to people who were homeless.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

5. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND RENT LEVEL 2020/21 TO 2022/23

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing an update on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financial plan for the period 2020/21 to 2022/23, and the proposed HRA budget, rent and service charges for 2020/21.

The report recommended that the panel:

1. Note the proposed 3% rent strategy for the period 2020/21 to 2022/23, encompassing HRA properties and garages, which would fund service needs and the Housing Capital investment programme;
2. Notes the proposed 3% rent strategy for Sheltered Housing and Homelessness properties, as well as related service and support charges, for the period 2020/21 to 2022/23; and
3. Notes the proposed rent increase of 3% in 2020/21 and the updated 2020/21 to 2022/23 HRA budget.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

6. HOUSING CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2020/21 TO 2022/23

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing an update on the Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23 and the proposed exemption for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework.

The report recommended that the panel:

1. Notes the proposed updated 2020/21 to 2022/23 Housing Capital Investment Programme and related funding as detailed in the report; and
2. Notes the updated exemptions for works under the terms of the Best Value Framework, as outlined in section D6 of the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

7. LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN REVIEW 2020

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services providing the proposed response to the Scottish Fire and Rescue service questionnaire relating to the Local Fire and Rescue Plan Review 2020.

The report recommended that the panel

1. Note the council's proposed response as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
2. That a response would be submitted to Council Executive on 25 February 2020 seeking approval to submit the response to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Decision

To note the contents of the report and agreed that the report and its recommendations are forwarded to the Council Executive on 25 February 2020 for approval.

8. WORKPLAN

The Panel considered a list of items that would form the basis of the panel's work over the coming months.

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan.



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

SCRUTINY OF POLICE SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE IN WEST LOTHIAN

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to update Panel Members on the Performance of Police Scotland in West Lothian for the period 1st October 2019 – 31st March 2020.

B. RECOMMENDATION

Panel members are asked to note the contents of the report covering the period 1st October 2019 – 31st March 2020.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable; Focusing on our customers' needs; Making best use of our resources; and Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The production and Council approval of the Local Police and Local Fire and Rescue Plan is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None at this stage.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no direct impact however this report is part of the agreed process for strategic performance reporting.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators: We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities; People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life changes.
VI Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes to directly and in partnership to the delivery of the plan.
VII Consideration at PDSP	N/A

VIII Consultations

Council Executive, Community Planning
Partners, Elected Members.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Police Scotland Strategic Plan sets out the local Policing priorities and objectives for West Lothian and is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Council Executive has agreed that the monitoring of performance against the plans will be reported and considered on a quarterly basis by the Services for Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. This report covers the period 1st October 2019 – 31st March 2020.

E. CONCLUSION

This report updates the Panel on the performance framework which will be used to enable members of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) to scrutinise the work of Police Scotland.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendix 1: West Lothian Policing Scrutiny Performance Report.

G. Contact Person:

Ann Marie Carr
Head of Housing Customer and Building Services.

Date of meeting: 20th October 2020



West Lothian Area Command

The Lothians and Scottish Borders



Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

Combined Quarter 3 & 4 – 2019/2020

The data provided in this report is for information purposes only. This is to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. Due to delayed reporting or recording of crimes, incidents or road accidents and the management of crime enquiries, there is likely to be minor amendments between the information in this report and the final Police Scotland statistics. The extraction date from recording systems can also differ so it would not be appropriate to refer to, quote or use any data in the report as official statistics.



Our Vision

Sustained excellence in service and protection.

Our Purpose

To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland.

Our Values

Integrity, Fairness and Respect.

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Executive Summary

People Most at Risk are Supported to Achieve Improved Life Chances

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**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA

J Division Policing Priorities 2019/20



West Lothian

1. Protecting People
2. Reducing Antisocial Behaviour
3. Reducing Violence
4. Tackling Substance Misuse
5. Road Safety
6. Tackling Serious and Organised Crime
7. Tackling Acquisitive Crime

East Lothian

1. Reducing Antisocial Behaviour
2. Tackling Substance Misuse
3. Reducing Violence
4. Protecting People
5. Tackling Serious and Organised Crime
6. Making our Roads Safer
7. Reducing Housebreaking

Local Area Command Priorities

Scottish Borders

1. Protecting People
2. Reducing Violence, Disorder & Antisocial Behaviour
3. Tackling Substance Misuse
4. Road Safety
5. Tackling Serious Organised Crime
6. Tackling Acquisitive Crime

Midlothian

1. Tackling Substance Misuse
2. Protecting People
3. Reducing Violence
4. Making our Roads Safer
5. Reducing Antisocial Behaviour
6. Tackling Serious and Organised Crime
7. Reducing Housebreaking

J DIVISION PRIORITIES FOR POLICING

ENABLE, empower and develop our PEOPLE through the provision of support, training and the delivery of effective change

Work together with LOCAL communities and partners, to deliver a quality service which responds to their needs by;

- Protecting the most vulnerable people
- Reducing Violence & Anti-social behaviour
- Tackling Serious & Organised Crime
- Improving Road Safety
- Tackling Acquisitive Crime

Protecting vulnerable People

Supporting people considered vulnerable and working with partners to reduce harm

Working with communities

Engaging with the public and communities to build resilience and prevent crime

POLICE SCOTLAND PRIORITIES FOR

POLICING

Tackling cyber related Crime

Building Capability to address the threat from cyber related crime

Support for operational Policing

Delivering change that enables our people to deliver an effective and sustainable service

Introduction

This document is intended to provide a summary of the performance of West Lothian Area Command for a combined period of Quarter 3 and Quarter 4 2019/2020 (1st October 2019 – 31st March 2020), and in effect is the end year report.

The document will be submitted to the West Lothian Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel for the meeting, which due to Covid-19 delay, has been set for 8th September 2020.

The report aims to provide information and a brief assessment of performance, with accompanying context. Numerical comparisons will be provided based upon the same reporting period for the previous year.

The report references the themes from West Lothian Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and the aligned police priorities within the Local Police Plan for West Lothian 2017 – 2020, namely:

People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances:

- Protecting People

We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities:

- Reducing Antisocial Behaviour and Hate Crime
- Reducing Violence
- Tackling Substance Misuse
- Reduce Home Fire and Road Casualties
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism

The data provided in this report is for information purposes to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. All data is sourced from Police Scotland internal systems and is correct as at 07/04/2020.

Complaints against the Police

West Lothian Council area allegations received by category and period

Allegation category and type	PYTD	YTD	% change from PYTD
Off Duty - TOTAL	0	1	-
Crimes of Indecency	0	1	-
On Duty - TOTAL	189	222	17.5%
Assault	5	12	140.0%
Discriminatory Behaviour	0	7	-
Excessive Force	16	13	-18.8%
Incivility	30	48	60.0%
Irregularity in Procedure	111	122	9.9%
Neglect of Duty	3	0	-100.0%
Oppressive Conduct/Harassment	7	4	-42.9%
Other - Criminal	3	4	33.3%
Other - Non Criminal	12	4	-66.7%
Traffic Irregularity/Offence	1	5	400.0%
Unlawful/Unnecessary Arrest or Detention	1	3	200.0%
Quality Of Service - TOTAL	77	72	-6.5%
Policy/Procedure	11	6	-45.5%
Service Delivery	29	21	-27.6%
Service Outcome	37	45	21.6%
GRAND TOTAL - Allegations Received	266	295	10.9%

In relation to complaints against officers within West Lothian, please see above table for West Lothian allegations received, with category breakdown.

A total of 202 complaint cases were received for West Lothian during 2019/20, an 11.6% increase on the PYTD. As per table above, key factors in this overall increase in complaints are Irregularity in Procedure and Incivility. Assault allegations also increased however this is believed in some part to be due to increased confidence in reporting.

Please note that this data is correct as of 01/04/2020. Data is subject to change.

Lothian and Scottish Borders Divisional Crime Overview

Lothian and Scottish Borders Division	2018/19 end of Q4	2019/20 end of Q4	Per 10,000 end of Q4 2019/20	Detection Rates 2019/20
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	528	565	11.59	81.77
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	-	3	0.06	100.00
Culpable homicide (at common law)	-	1	0.02	100.00
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	3	6	0.12	83.33
Attempted murder	16	13	0.27	100.00
Serious assault	263	252	5.17	82.54
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	109	93	1.91	75.27
Domestic Abuse (of female)	-	66	1.35	77.27
Domestic Abuse (of male)	-	2	0.04	100.00
Domestic Abuse (Total)	-	68	1.40	77.94
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	65	72	1.48	111.11
Threats and extortion	40	24	0.49	54.17
Other group 1 crimes	32	33	0.68	48.48
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	975	1052	21.59	58.27
Rape	174	220	4.51	63.18
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	12	8	0.16	62.50
<i>Rape and attempted rape - Total</i>	186	228	4.68	63.16
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)*	22	20	0.41	80.00
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)*	271	289	5.93	54.33
Lewd & libidinous practices*	96	121	2.48	62.81
<i>Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total</i>	389	430	8.82	57.91
<i>Prostitution related crime - Total*</i>	-	2	0.04	0.00
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	43	52	1.07	90.38
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)*	83	58	1.19	55.17
Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	22	14	0.29	57.14
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)*	24	37	0.76	64.86
Public indecency (common law)	17	7	0.14	100.00
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)*	146	142	2.91	45.07
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)*	15	23	0.47	65.22
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image*	50	59	1.21	38.98
Other Group 2 crimes	-	-	-	x
<i>Other Group 2 crimes - Total</i>	400	392	8.04	56.12
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	9668	9224	189.26	32.97
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	489	439	9.01	37.59
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	351	325	6.67	13.54
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	569	372	7.63	34.68
<i>Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total</i>	1409	1136	23.31	29.75
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	269	234	4.80	20.09
Theft of a motor vehicle	469	516	10.59	37.02
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc.)	675	641	13.15	20.59
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	38	37	0.76	8.11
<i>Motor vehicle crime - Total</i>	1451	1428	29.30	26.12
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	147	151	3.10	15.23
Common theft	2470	2591	53.16	19.95
Theft by shoplifting	2905	2387	48.98	53.29
Fraud	660	873	17.91	26.92
Other Group 3 Crimes	626	658	13.50	43.01
GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc.	4235	4202	86.22	25.84

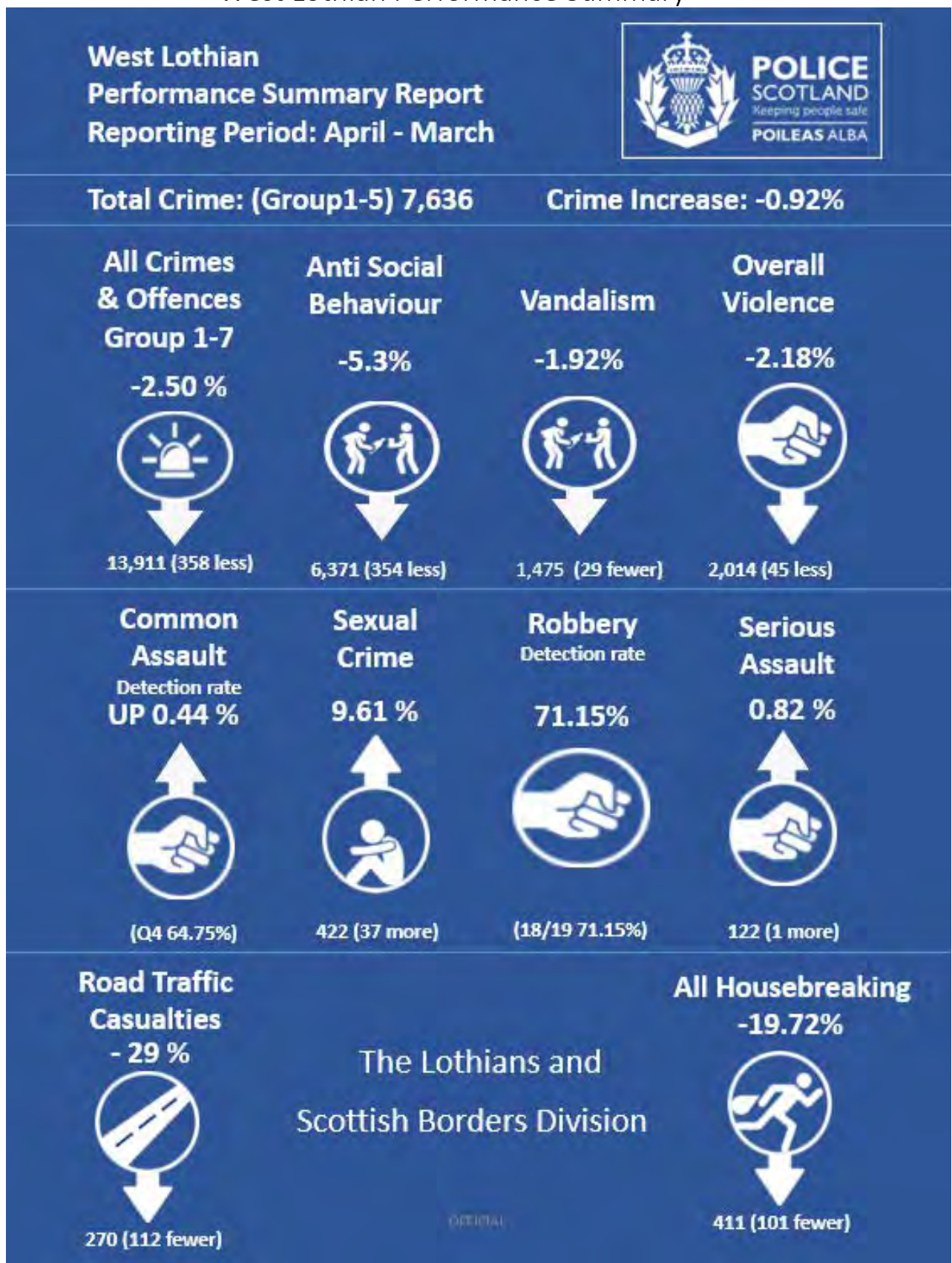
Fireraising	227	225	4.62	23.11
Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	3839	3770	77.36	24.96
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	4	3	0.06	100.00
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	159	189	3.88	47.09
Other Group 4 Crimes	6	15	0.31	6.67
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	4453	4087	83.86	95.40
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	161	150	3.08	96.00
Handling bladed/pointed instrument	155	153	3.14	95.42
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)*	96	130	2.67	83.85
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)*	68	69	1.42	82.61
<i>Total offensive/bladed weapons</i>	480	502	10.30	90.84
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	83	61	1.25	98.36
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	319	201	4.12	100.50
Bringing drugs into prison	5	18	0.37	50.00
<i>Supply of drugs - Total</i>	407	280	5.75	96.79
Possession of drugs	2080	1920	39.40	95.05
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	14	16	0.33	31.25
<i>Total drugs crimes</i>	2501	2216	45.47	94.81
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	1	4	0.08	100.00
Bail offences (other than absconding)	705	676	13.87	98.37
Other Group 5 crimes	766	689	14.14	97.68
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	9435	9532	195.58	75.81
Common Assault	3987	4034	82.77	66.26
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	391	395	8.10	99.24
<i>Common Assault - Total</i>	4378	4429	90.88	69.20
Breach of the Peace	126	95	1.95	100.00
Threatening & abusive behaviour	3391	3413	70.03	82.71
Stalking	130	84	1.72	95.24
<i>BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total</i>	3647	3592	73.70	83.46
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct*	120	134	2.75	94.78
Drunk and incapable	56	41	0.84	97.56
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	40	32	0.66	100.00
Other alcohol related offences*	47	51	1.05	100.00
<i>Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)</i>	143	124	2.54	99.19
Wildlife offences*	25	32	0.66	28.13
Other Group 6 offences	1122	1221	25.05	74.04
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	6529	6806	139.65	83.03
Dangerous driving offences	203	227	4.66	91.63
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	506	547	11.22	94.52
Speeding offences	551	522	10.71	98.85
Driving while disqualified	124	129	2.65	96.90
Driving without a licence	471	488	10.01	97.75
Failure to insure against third party risks	1263	1363	27.97	98.46
Seat belt offences	127	137	2.81	88.32
Mobile phone offences	183	173	3.55	96.53
Driving Carelessly	519	554	11.37	92.42
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	211	187	3.84	93.05
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	732	681	13.97	98.97
Other Group 7 offences	1639	1798	36.89	45.49

West Lothian Recorded Crime Overview


West Lothian	2018/19 end of Q4	2019/20 end of Q4	Per 10,000 end of Q4 2019/20	Detection Rates 2019/20
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	231	257	14.27	75.49
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	-	1	0.06	100.00
Culpable homicide (at common law)	-	1	0.06	100.00
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	-	2	0.11	100.00
Attempted murder	9	8	0.44	100.00
Serious assault	121	122	6.77	74.59
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	52	52	2.89	71.15
Domestic Abuse (of female)	-	20	1.11	85.00
Domestic Abuse (of male)	-	-	-	x
Domestic Abuse (Total)	-	20	1.11	85.00
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	18	21	1.17	100.00
Threats and extortion	16	11	0.61	27.27
Other group 1 crimes	15	19	1.05	68.42
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	385	422	23.43	58.29
Rape	64	92	5.11	64.13
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	3	7	0.39	57.14
Rape and attempted rape - Total	67	99	5.50	63.64
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)*	7	5	0.28	40.00
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)*	99	118	6.55	55.08
Lewd & libidinous practices*	32	39	2.17	64.10
Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total	138	162	8.99	56.79
Prostitution related crime - Total*	-	-	-	x
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	14	19	1.05	89.47
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)*	41	20	1.11	50.00
Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	11	7	0.39	42.86
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)*	13	19	1.05	47.37
Public indecency (common law)	4	5	0.28	60.00
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)*	64	64	3.55	53.13
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)*	6	9	0.50	77.78
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image*	27	18	1.00	44.44
Other Group 2 crimes	-	-	-	x
Other Group 2 crimes - Total	180	161	8.94	56.52
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	3781	3947	219.12	25.79
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	170	140	7.77	30.00
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	95	99	5.50	15.15
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	247	172	9.55	22.67
Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total	512	411	22.82	23.36
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	110	110	6.11	18.18
Theft of a motor vehicle	185	240	13.32	23.33
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc.)	330	371	20.60	19.14
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	17	20	1.11	5.00
Motor vehicle crime - Total	642	741	41.14	19.97
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	69	74	4.11	13.51
Common theft	1042	1140	63.29	12.81
Theft by shoplifting	1029	961	53.35	42.98
Fraud	261	383	21.26	26.11
Other Group 3 Crimes	226	237	13.16	44.30

GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc.	1657	1673	92.88	22.18
Fireraising	85	110	6.11	10.91
Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	1504	1475	81.89	22.44
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	-	1	0.06	100.00
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	68	82	4.55	32.93
Other Group 4 Crimes	-	5	0.28	0.00
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	1653	1337	74.22	95.59
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	69	60	3.33	95.00
Handling bladed/pointed instrument	67	54	3.00	92.59
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)*	60	77	4.27	79.22
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)*	46	41	2.28	80.49
Total offensive/bladed weapons	242	232	12.88	86.64
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	58	35	1.94	100.00
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	118	74	4.11	121.62
Bringing drugs into prison	5	18	1.00	50.00
Supply of drugs - Total	181	127	7.05	105.51
Possession of drugs	715	593	32.92	97.13
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	4	9	0.50	44.44
Total drugs crimes	900	729	40.47	97.94
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	-	2	0.11	100.00
Bail offences (other than absconding)	266	173	9.60	95.95
Other Group 5 crimes	245	201	11.16	97.01
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	3785	3633	201.69	69.45
Common Assault	1707	1700	94.38	62.18
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	170	130	7.22	98.46
Common Assault - Total	1877	1830	101.59	64.75
Breach of the Peace	39	22	1.22	95.45
Threatening & abusive behaviour	1336	1211	67.23	76.22
Stalking	49	41	2.28	85.37
BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total	1424	1274	70.73	76.84
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct*	64	69	3.83	94.20
Drunk and incapable	11	1	0.06	100.00
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	8	2	0.11	100.00
Other alcohol related offences*	6	13	0.72	100.00
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)	25	16	0.89	100.00
Wildlife offences*	6	2	0.11	0.00
Other Group 6 offences	389	442	24.54	62.90
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	2777	2642	146.67	82.02
Dangerous driving offences	70	83	4.61	81.93
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	225	219	12.16	93.15
Speeding offences	199	160	8.88	98.75
Driving while disqualified	52	43	2.39	90.70
Driving without a licence	169	194	10.77	96.39
Failure to insure against third party risks	512	576	31.98	97.92
Seat belt offences	88	93	5.16	84.95
Mobile phone offences	118	84	4.66	97.62
Driving Carelessly	223	184	10.21	90.22
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	81	68	3.78	94.12
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	341	276	15.32	99.28
Other Group 7 offences	699	662	36.75	42.60

West Lothian Performance Summary



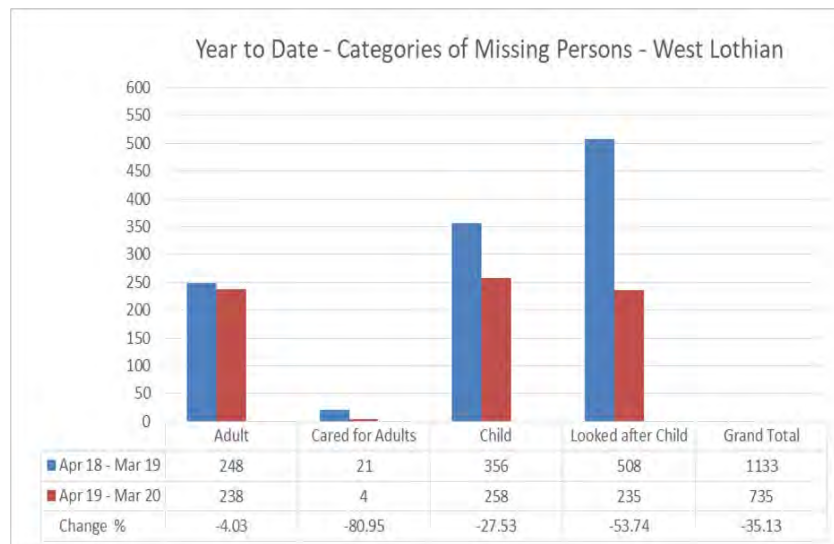
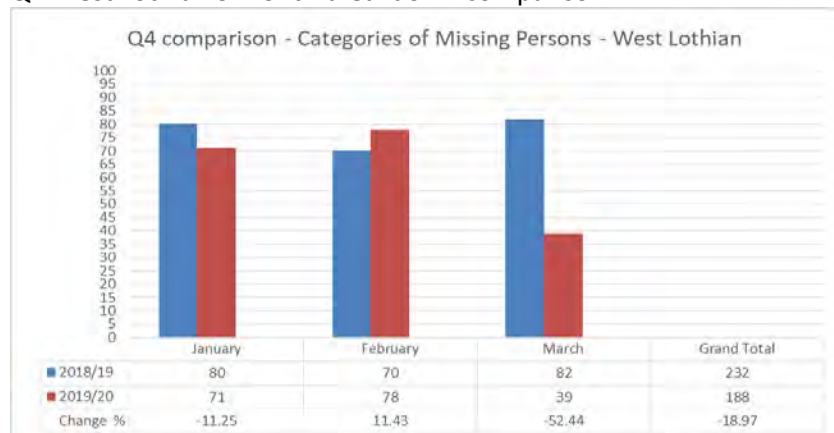
People Most at Risk are Protected and Supported to Achieve Improved Life Chances

Protecting People	Executive Summary																	
<div>Missing Person Incidents</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>2018/19 YTD</th><th>2019/20 YTD</th><th>Change</th><th>TYTD Per 10,000 population</th></tr><tr><td>232</td><td>188</td><td>-18.97%</td><td></td></tr></table>	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	232	188	-18.97%										
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<p>The recent establishment of the West Lothian Missing Young Person’s Review Group, should deliver interventions to develop bespoke young person centred plans to seek to prioritise their safety and wellbeing, and prevent repeat missing persons reporting.</p>																		
<p>Although at an early stage, discussion in relation to better partnership approaches, including the use of “not at home” (absent) protocols, and the implementation of YPU (or other non-police) led return interviews, will progress into 2020/21.</p>																		
<p>It is of note that as at the end of Q3 2019/20, there are no residents at Letham YPC. This will clearly alter the future missing persons reporting patterns.</p>																		
<p>Recognising the vulnerability associated with missing people, particularly those that are young or suffering from mental health challenges, Police Scotland has adopted a rigorous investigation structure and management approach to missing person incidents.</p>																		
<p>Significant work has been undertaken in respect of engaging with children identified as repeatedly being reported missing. This has led to several partnership meetings being convened to support these young people. Input has also been provided to establishments for looked after children. This has led to a significant reduction in reported incidents involving such children and ensured support for them.</p>																		

Missing Person Incidents**Continued**

This is also the case in respect of one looked after adult who had historically been reported missing multiple times. Risks were identified, not only to this adult but also to members of the public, which caused multi-agency discussions to be progressed. This led to more robust management of the male resulting in a significant decrease in reports and risk presented.

During both reporting quarters the co-ordinated use of specialist resources and local police officers to search for several High Risk missing people resulted in them being found with positive outcomes.

**Q4 West Lothian 3 month breakdown comparison**


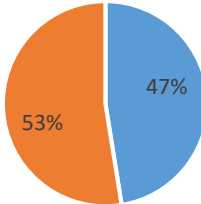
The Lothians & Scottish Borders (J) Division and the communities of West Lothian recognise that protecting people, particularly those considered vulnerable, is a policing priority. Within the remit of protecting people is the work and investigations carried out to trace people who are reported missing. To put the scale of this work into context;


- Police Scotland, on an annual basis undertake over 22,000 investigations into missing people.
- In the Lothians and Scottish Borders Division this equates to the following;


Year 2017 / 2018 – 2390 missing person investigations

Year 2018 / 2019 – 2581 missing person investigations


Year 2019 / 2020 – 1786 missing person investigations


Protecting People	Executive Summary											
<div>Sexual Crimes (Group 2)</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>2018/19 YTD</th><th>2019/20 YTD</th><th>Change</th><th>TYTD Per 10,000 population</th></tr><tr><td>385</td><td>422</td><td>9.61%</td><td>23.43</td></tr></table>				2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	385	422	9.61%	23.43
	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population								
	385	422	9.61%	23.43								
	<p>*Total number of group 2 crimes recorded.</p>											
	<div><div>West Lothian Recent vs Non Recent</div><div></div><div><div>■ Non-recent</div><div>■ Recent</div></div></div>											
<p>Tackling criminality that poses the greatest threat and risk is, and will always be, a priority for officers in West Lothian. Rape and Sexual Crime is an area of focus in terms of providing confidence to report, undertaking professional investigations, providing victim support, pursuing perpetrators and managing offenders.</p> <p>During 2019/20 the overall number of reported Group 2 (Sexual) Crimes increased by 37 from 385 to 422 compared to the previous year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Within that total, Rape and Attempt Rape increased by 32 offences to 99 compared to LYTD. Solvency in what can be particularly challenging investigations, rose to 63.645% by the end of Q4.• Rape and Sexual Crime is typically underreported and Police Scotland continue to work closely with partner agencies to ensure victims of crime are supported in reporting these crimes• The figures contained in this section relate to crimes that were reported in 2019/20, but more than half (53%), relate to historic reporting, having occurred in some cases years previously.• The overall solvency rate for Group 2 crime in West Lothian at the end of the year increased to 58.29% from 54.89% at the end of 2018/2019, and improvement of 3.4%. <p>The investigation of rape and sexual crime, alongside the management of offenders is achieved through close partnership working. This continues to be the case in West Lothian and we will continue to work with all partners and explore further collaborative working opportunities.</p> <p>In relation to specific Public Protection Unit enquiries, 9 offenders were reported during Q4 for child sexual abuse and 3 offenders were reported for other offences against children. The Unit dealt with 137 child and 35 adult Initial referral Discussions in Q4, working with partners to agree and action investigations, provide support and deliver interventions.</p>												


Protecting People	Executive Summary						
<div>Dishonesty (Group 3)</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>2018/19 YTD</th><th>2019/20 YTD</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>3,781</td><td>3,947</td><td>4.39%</td></tr></table> <p>Dealing with Acquisitive Crime, and as such working to Protect People by reducing the impact (both financial and personal) that it has on our communities remains a priority for the Lothians & Scottish Borders (J) Division and West Lothian.</p> <p>By the end of 2019/2020 overall Group 3 Crimes of Dishonesty had increased by 166, and detection rates slightly decreased by 2.2% compared to the end of Q4 2018/2019. This figure includes all housebreaking crimes, which are described specifically in the following section.</p> <p>Thefts of vehicles rose during the year by 55 to 240. By the end of Q4 thefts from insecure motor vehicles was at 371 crimes which is also a slight increase from the previous year. Overall motor vehicle crime rose to 741, up by 99 crimes, an increase of 15.4%.</p> <p>In particular, the area was a spate of theft of Transit vans, stolen during the hours of darkness during Q3. Operation Hutchen, was established to liaise with colleagues across Lanarkshire and Glasgow divisions. Through intelligence gathering and targeted operations, a twenty-three year old male was arrested and charged for numerous vehicle and drug offences. This also resulted in over £50,000 of stolen property being recovered. Further intelligence is being developed in relation to linked criminality across the central belt of Scotland, and we are continuing to deliver online crime prevention messaging.</p> <p>Quad bikes have also been targeted throughout 2019/20, with 9 recorded thefts. This trend focused from November to January in particular, with thefts having occurred from more rural settings across the Local Authority area. Thanks to community intelligence a number of Quad and motor bikes were recovered, and four males have been reported to date. We will continue to provide attention to rural locations and target bail enforcement opportunities.</p> <p>Common Theft and Theft by Shoplifting remain the volume crimes under the Dishonesty heading, accounting for 2101 of the 3947 crimes, a marginal reduction of 30 on the same period 2018/2019. There were no significant changes in typical recording levels over the Festive period, and officers worked with retailers, CCTV operators and security throughout.</p> <p>Rural crime, including the theft of plant and equipment is at comparatively low levels, however they have a high impact on local small businesses. During Q3 and Q4, Uniform and Roads Policing officers undertook a series of planned road checks in relation to metal and vehicle thefts, including that of catalytic converters, which although comparatively few in numbers, has featured more recently.</p> <p>Crimes of Fraud has seen a significant increase from 261 in 2018/2019 to 383 by the end of 2019/2020. The vast majority of these incidents related to online or telephone crimes. In addition to reviewing vulnerabilities and supporting victims, we continue to support national campaigns, including in Q4, “Shut out Scammers” and “International Safer Internet Day”, along with offering individual, group and online advice, in particular in relation to Cybercrime and online offences.</p>	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	3,781	3,947	4.39%
2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change					
3,781	3,947	4.39%					

Protecting People	Executive Summary					
Housebreaking 	Crime Type	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 TYD	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	2019/20 Detection Rate
	Dwelling HB	170	140	-17.65%	7.77	30.00%
	Non Dwelling (Sheds, garages) HB	95	99	4.21%	5.50	15.15%
	Other (Business) HB	247	172	-30.36%	9.55	22.67%
	All HB	512	411	-19.73%	22.82	23.36%
<p>*All Crime Types include attempt thefts</p> <p>Housebreaking remains a Local Policing Priority in West Lothian. During both Q3 and Q4 we undertook uniformed and plain clothes patrols, bail checks, the prioritisation of the enforcement of arrest warrants for those responsible for Housebreaking, and pro-active road checks.</p> <p>Significantly, by the end of the reporting period, there was a fall of 101 housebreakings and attempt housebreakings, (a noteworthy decrease of 19.73%). Of particular note, within these figures, there was a 15.1% reduction in domestic housebreakings by the end of Q4, which equates to a 17.2% reduction, and 30 fewer household victims. The Division has established Operation Rampion to focus on these crimes, and build on 2019/20 successes.</p> <p>Housebreakings to Business premises during Q4 fell by 75. Officers continue to promote target hardening, preventions and security advice to try to promote further improvement. During both quarters, we again promoted a number of national prevention campaigns, and undertook physical crime prevention visits relating to building security, at commercial and domestic premises.</p> <p>December in particular saw business and domestic housebreakings in Linlithgow and Broxburn, and evening and nightshift patrols were focused to these areas. Due to the excellent work of the Pro-Active Crime Team during Q4, a recidivist 50 year old male was identified as being responsible for these and similar crimes throughout the UK. He was thereafter traced and charged with numerous housebreakings in Linlithgow which occurred at the turn of the year. The accused was thereafter remanded.</p> <p>Other recent trends continue to include metal thefts from premises where gas boilers, copper piping and water cylinders were stolen, mainly from new build building sites. The Pro-Active Crime Team is leading enquiries into these matters.</p> <p>During November 2019 Community Safety and PSYV (Police Scotland Youth Volunteers) were involved in a housebreaking leaflet drop within West Lothian, offering homeowners advice and guidance on crime prevention and keeping their property safe. This was well received by local communities and we continue to promote preventative messaging local alerts through our social media accounts.</p> <p>The implementation of COVID-19 restrictions has slowed this aspect of our preventions activity, but as PSYV return, we will again press for increased community awareness of housebreaking and crime prevention.</p>						


We Live in Resilient, Cohesive and Safe Communities

Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime	Executive Summary			
<div>Anti-Social Behaviour</div> <div></div>				

Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime	Executive Summary																			
<div>Racially Aggravated Conduct</div> <div></div>	<div>West Lothian</div> <table><tr><td></td><td>2018/19 YTD</td><td>2019/20 YTD</td><td>Per 10,000 YTD</td></tr><tr><td>Hate Incidents</td><td>215</td><td>208</td><td>11.80</td></tr><tr><td>Hate Crimes</td><td>209</td><td>170</td><td>11.5</td></tr><tr><td>Hate Crime Detection Rate</td><td>74.60%</td><td>81.60%</td><td></td></tr></table>					2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Per 10,000 YTD	Hate Incidents	215	208	11.80	Hate Crimes	209	170	11.5	Hate Crime Detection Rate	74.60%	81.60%	
		2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Per 10,000 YTD																
	Hate Incidents	215	208	11.80																
	Hate Crimes	209	170	11.5																
	Hate Crime Detection Rate	74.60%	81.60%																	
	<p>Please note that in respect of recorded Hate Crimes, this section references;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CRIM LAW CONSOLID 1995 S50A(1)(B)&(5)CAUSE DISTRESS & ALARM• RACIALLY AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT (CRIMINAL LAW (CONSOLIDATION) (S) ACT 1995 S50A(1)(A)) RACIST																			
<p>Official Hate Crime statistics include all crime types which have a hate crime aggravator added to the crime. The aggravators are Disability, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation and Transgender Identity.</p>																				
<p>Throughout Q3 and Q4, preventions officers promoted the continued roll-out of Keep Safe Campaign, raising awareness of disability hate crime, and in support of hate crime awareness. Officers also delivered safety inputs to EARS Advocacy service, and work is ongoing to refresh Third Party Reporting.</p>																				
<p>The overall number of hate crimes and incidents during 2019/20 fell significantly. Not all reported incidents result in crimes, and Hate incidents fell by 7.</p>																				
<p>Hate Crimes fell by 39 (18.7%) to 170; although all such matters are of concern, they remain few in total. The limited patterns generally relate to the verbal abuse of staff at a small number of shops and businesses, with some neighbour issues, and this is where support and preventions advice is focused.</p>																				
<p>We recognise that underreporting remains a reality, and through presence in the communities and work with other agencies we aim to make ourselves available to all victims. We continue to focus our attention to these crimes and incidents to build confidence in reporting, and lead roles are given to our Community Officers to undertake professional investigations, provide victim support, pursue perpetrators and manage offenders.</p>																				
<p>We will refocus our attention to this key area throughout 2020/21, in support of national campaigns, but also as day to day activity regarding our Local Police Plan priorities.</p>																				


Reducing Violence	Executive Summary					
Crimes of Violence (Group 1) 	Crime Type	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	2019/20 Detection Rate
	Group 1	231	257	11.26%	14.27	75.49%
	Serious Assault	121	122	0.01%	6.77	74.59%
	Robbery	52	52	-	2.89	71.15%
	Common Assault	1,877	1,830	-2.50%	101.59	64.75%
*Common assaults not recorded as group 1 crimes, but will be referenced in this section						
<p>Reducing violence is a policing priority for all areas within The Lothian & Scottish Borders Division of Police Scotland. We recognise the impact violence has in our communities and the desire from these communities that we work to prevent such incidents and where they have occurred, swiftly identify the perpetrators.</p> <p>Detection rates for crimes of violence remain strong, led predominantly by CID and Proactive Crime Team officers, but all our officers have a key role in this priority area. In particular, this is the first year that the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, which reports within Group 1, has been applied – with West Lothian officers reporting 20 higher tariff crimes of coercive and controlling behaviours.</p> <p>By the end of Q4 the West Lothian Serious Assault rose by one, although solvency ended the year at a strong 74.59%. These figures include incidents that occurred within HMP Addiewell, which recorded a rise in 2019/20.</p> <p>Focused, intelligence led patrols linked to the licensed premises and the night-time economy were in part responsible for a fall of 47 crimes of Common Assault in West Lothian, compared to the end of Q4 last year. Solvency increased from last year to 64.8%. Around 55% of crimes of Assault occurred indoors in residential properties, and over 30% of all assaults were domestic in nature.</p> <p>Reports of Robbery were static at 52 crimes, as was solvency, which finished at 71.15%</p> <p>In Q3, Operation Arbach, an 8 week enforcement activity, commenced which targeted perpetrators of violent crime. This involved uniformed officers stepping from general duties to focus solely on this priority area. During this time, the team solved 74 crimes of violence and domestic violence, executed 41 apprehension warrants relating to crimes of violence, completed several bail checks and concluded 54 enquiries to their completion.</p> <p>A template of good practice, Operation Arbach will be re-visited in 2020 in support of our local policing priorities of reducing violence and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The Lothians and Scottish Borders Division is proactively working to reduce violence through a variety of methods, including but not exclusively;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of Violence Reduction plans across J Division, including in West Lothian, where officers deploy with an intelligence-led focus to licensed premises and open-space violence in higher tariff areas, including the night-time economy. - Interventions and targeted disruption activities, such as proactive bail checks, are also being carried out with violent offenders to deter further criminality. This activity seeks to reduce violence. - Targeted warrant enforcement days/days of action, including at HMP Addiewell 						


- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Establishment of a new Domestic Abuse prevention action plan – and supporting the White Ribbon Campaign, and Violence Against Women and Girls group- Focused intervention and high visibility presence to licensed premises; unfortunately due to COVID-19 restrictions the 2020 Best Bar None Awards were postponed, but BBN will resume in 2021, and we will support its reinvigoration.- Continued attention to pre and post-match disorder patrols and licensed premises checks during Livingston FC football games. Again, the impacts of COVID-19 affected events during the latter part of Q4. |
|--|---|





Reducing Violence	Executive Summary			
Domestic Abuse Incidents 		2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	% Change
	Number of Domestic Abuse Incidents	2,242	2,290	2.10%
	Total Crimes and offences in domestic abuse incidents	1,227	1,281	4.40%
	Percentage of Domestic Incidents that result in a crime	45%	42%	-3.50%
	Total crimes and offences detection rate	66%	69%	2.40%
	Total Detections for Domestic Bail Offences	107	80	-25.20%
<p>*Domestic abuse incidents reported to police.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse remains a priority matter for all West Lothian officers, and we will continue to focus on incidents of Domestic Abuse and work collectively to protect victims and pursue perpetrators.</p> <p>By the end of Q4, officers had recorded 2290 incidents, 2.1% higher than the previous year. Not all incidents involve a crime however. Of the 2290 reports, 1281 (42%), resulted in crimes being identified, an increase of 4.4% from the same period 2018/2019.</p> <p>In terms of preventative activity the following points are highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Lothian Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) is a regular local meeting where information is shared about domestic abuse perpetrators who pose the highest risk, which continues to be a feature of partnership prevention activity. The objective of MATAC is to protect people at risk of harm through the targeting of perpetrators. During Q3 and Q4 there were three MATAC referral in respect of a high tariff offenders, which were allocated to East Command Domestic Abuse Task Force. <p>The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland has two main triggers for disclosure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Right to Ask is open to anyone who has concerns about a new partner's abusive past or has concerns about another person's new partner. An example of this would be a parent concerned about their child's new partner. The Power to Tell is when we receive information or intelligence about the safety of a person who may be at risk. During the Q3 and Q4 period there were 64 applications recorded under DSDAS with 53 meeting the criteria for disclosure. <p>Officers from across West Lothian supported the 16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence, and White Ribbon Day campaigns, between 25th November and 10th December. To mark the start of the campaign, along with partners, West Lothian Police supported a parade from Howden Park Centre to the Civic Centre, and attended the speeches from key partners and victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>During each of Q3 and Q4, DAIU officers held a pro-active enforcement days of action, resulting in the arrests of two higher tariff individuals for breach of bail (domestic).</p>				

Joint awareness raising Stalls with DASAT and Women's Aid took place within Xcite centres (Livingston, Bathgate and Linlithgow) during the campaign. Additionally, although unrelated, prevention officers delivered Bystander training at West Lothian College.

Numerous enquiries were also undertaken in through Operation Barkenbrough which relates to threats and Honour Based Violence (HBV). Investigations are still ongoing and will continue into Q1.

Reducing Home, Fire and Road Casualties	Executive Summary																																						
<div>Road Casualties</div> <div></div>																																							
	<table><tr><th></th><th>2018/19 YTD</th><th>2019/20 YTD</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>Fatal</td><td>8</td><td>4</td><td>-50%</td></tr><tr><td>Serious</td><td>52</td><td>63</td><td>21%</td></tr><tr><td>Slight</td><td>330</td><td>207</td><td>-37%</td></tr></table>				2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	Fatal	8	4	-50%	Serious	52	63	21%	Slight	330	207	-37%																				
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	<table><tr><th></th><th>2018/19 YTD</th><th>2019/20 YTD</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>Dangerous driving</td><td>65</td><td>68</td><td>4.60%</td></tr><tr><td>Speeding</td><td>197</td><td>158</td><td>-19.80%</td></tr><tr><td>Disqualified driving</td><td>51</td><td>39</td><td>-23.50%</td></tr><tr><td>Driving Licence</td><td>169</td><td>187</td><td>10.70%</td></tr><tr><td>Insurance</td><td>512</td><td>564</td><td>10.20%</td></tr><tr><td>Seat Belts</td><td>100</td><td>79</td><td>-21.00%</td></tr><tr><td>Mobile Phone</td><td>116</td><td>82</td><td>-29.30%</td></tr><tr><td>Drink/Drug Driving Detections</td><td>225</td><td>219</td><td>-2.67%</td></tr></table>				2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change	Dangerous driving	65	68	4.60%	Speeding	197	158	-19.80%	Disqualified driving	51	39	-23.50%	Driving Licence	169	187	10.70%	Insurance	512	564	10.20%	Seat Belts	100	79	-21.00%	Mobile Phone	116	82	-29.30%	Drink/Drug Driving Detections	225	219	-2.67%
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	<p>Sadly Q3 saw the third fatality and Q4 the forth of 2019/20 on West Lothian roads. By the end of the year the number of collisions that resulted in Serious Injury rose by 11 compared to LYTD, an increase of 21%, but this should be seen within a wider context where there was a significant downturn in the number of Slight Injury collisions during both quarters.</p> <p>In relation to all Group 7 offences (Offences related to motor vehicles), end of year figure for there was a slight drop in the number of offences reported from 2777 to 2642 in comparison with 2018/2019, which equates to a slight decrease of 4.9%. Detection rate for 2019/2020 sits at 82%</p> <p>We continued to support National Roads Safety campaigns, including the festive Drink Drive Campaign which continued into January along with the Insurance Enforcement Week, Speed Seatbelt and Mobile Phone campaign and the National Vulnerable Road Users Campaign.</p> <p>As lockdown commenced in late Q4, officers switched focus to high visibility patrols in relation to COVID-19</p>																																						

Tackling Substance Misuse	Executive Summary		
Drugs Supply, Production and Cultivation 	2018/19 YTD	2019/20 YTD	Change
	181	127	-19.60%
	<p>*Total crimes in relation to drugs supply, Production and Cultivation</p> <p>The number of Drugs Supply and/or Cultivation charges can be a misleading figure, as in many cases officers must await lab reports before charging or reporting the accused.</p> <p>During Q4, there was 127 drugs Supply, Production and Cultivation offences, compared to Q4 2018/2019 figure of 181. By the conclusion of 2019/2020, total drug crimes showed 729, a reduction of 171 compared to 2018/19</p> <p>In Q3, officers from Proactive Crime Team, Community, Force Reserve, Operational Support Division and Dog Handlers undertook drugs enforcement activities, designed to tackle the local supply of heroin, crack cocaine, cannabis and diazepam, under Operation Caneball. Addresses at Broxburn, Bathgate, Whitburn and Livingston were searched under drugs warrant. Six individuals were arrested and quantities of drugs and money recovered, in addition to an illegally held air weapon. On receipt of lab test results, it is anticipated that 4 individuals will be reported for drugs supply offences.</p> <p>In Q4, a joint operation with Welsh Regional Crime Unit and officers from Proactive Crime Team resulted in a 29 year old female being arrested and charged with conspiracy to supply class A drugs. If convicted, she faces a lengthy prison sentence in excess of 7 years for these offences. A child protection case was also instigated in relation to other occupants of the address.</p> <p>Furthermore, Q4 saw a MDA Warrant executed at an address in Livingston in relation to a 36 year old female suspected of importing controlled drugs in bulk from overseas. A quantity of Drugs were seized and it is likely she will be charged under Importation of Controlled Drugs Customs and Excise Management Act 1979, Section 170 (2).</p> <p>Another media worthy drug recovery was undertaken by Community Officers in the West, in relation to a large scale Cannabis Cultivation discovered during a MDA Warrant enforcement operation in Armadale. 200 mature plants were discovered with a value of £45,000. Investigation is ongoing in relation to a Vietnamese suspect, who has since been arrested for a similar offence in the north east of England.</p>		

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism	Executive Summary
<p>National Terror Threat - Substantial</p> 	<div data-bbox="391 392 917 728">  </div> <div data-bbox="933 392 1492 728">  </div> <p>As of Monday 4th November 2019, the National Terrorism threat level is SUBSTANTIAL. Police in West Lothian continue to evaluate and review our responses to incidents, working with partners to provide expert advice, training and support.</p> <p>The current UK Government website provides extensive guidance on the current threat level (SEVERE – an attack is highly likely) and critical guidance for the public can be accessed by following this link</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counterterrorism-security-office.</p> <div data-bbox="470 1064 526 1131">  </div> <p>The National Threat Level is SUBSTANTIAL.</p> <p>The UK threat level structure was revised in July 2019.</p> <p>There are no longer separate threat levels for “international terrorism” and Northern Ireland-related terrorism in the UK. There is now just one National Threat level which reflects all aspects of terrorism regardless of the motivation, including Islamist, Northern Ireland, left-wing and right-wing terrorism.</p>



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to update Panel Members on the Local Plan Performance for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in West Lothian for the period 1st April 2020- 30th June 2020

B. RECOMMENDATION

Panel members are asked to note the contents of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable; Focusing on our customers' needs; Making best use of our resources; and Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The production and Council approval of the Local Police and Local Fire and Rescue Plan is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None at this stage.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no direct impact however this report is part of the agreed process for strategic performance reporting.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<p>This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators:</p> <p>We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.</p> <p>People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life changes.</p>
VI Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes directly and in partnership to the delivery of the plan.
VII Consideration at PDSP	Yes.
VIII Consultations	Council Executive, Community Planning Partners, Elected Members.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

The West Lothian Scottish Fire and Rescue Local Plan set out the local fire and rescue priorities and objectives for West Lothian and is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Council Executive has agreed that the monitoring of performance against the plans will be reported and considered on a quarterly basis by the Services for Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. This report covers the period from 1st April 2020- 30th June 2020

E. CONCLUSION

This report provides an update on the performance to enable panel members to scrutinise the work of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Appendix 1: Local Plan Performance Report for West Lothian Q1 1st April 2020- 30th June 2020

Appendix 2: Local Plan Performance Report for West Lothian Q4 1st January 2020- 31st March 2020

Appendix 3: Local Plan Performance Report for West Lothian Q3 1st October 2019- 31st December 2019

G. Contact Person: Alison Smith alison.smith@westlothian.gov.uk T: 01506 281367.

Ann Marie Carr
Head of Housing Customer and Building Services

Date of meeting: 20th October 2020



LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR WEST LoTHIAN



Year to Date Report, 1st April 2020 – 30th June 2020

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

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Introduction

The national priorities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2019-2022 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.

The priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018 contribute towards the priorities within the West Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 and the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2015-18.

The aims of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in West Lothian are to reduce fire deaths throughout the West Lothian area and to reduce injuries from fire and other emergencies in the community. We aim to achieve this by working in partnership, being pro-active and targeting our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence.

Within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, seven objectives for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to work towards have been identified for 2018 onwards (listed below):

Priority i: Local Risk Management and Preparedness

Priority ii: Domestic Fire Safety

Priority iii: Deliberate Fire Setting

Priority iv: Non Domestic Fire Safety

Priority v: Road Safety

Priority vi: Unintentional Harm and Injury

Priority vii: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Area Commander Dave Sharp
Local Senior Officer for Falkirk & West Lothian
David.sharp@firescotland.gov.uk

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No.6

Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using 7 key indicators, depicted below

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Key performance indicator	Apr to (& incl.) Jun					RAG rating
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	YTD
All accidental dwelling fires	31	50	41	25	24	●
All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal)	8	7	6	5	3	●
All deliberate fires	223	389	239	322	215	●
Non domestic fires	18	21	15	17	17	●
Special Service - RTC casualties	20	18	9	27	4	●
Special Service - Non RTC casualties	20	20	10	16	15	●
False Alarm - UFAs	258	255	222	245	134	●

RAG rating - KEY

◆	RED DIAMOND	10% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
▲	YELLOW TRIANGLE	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
●	GREEN CIRCLE	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent quarter (or YTD period), or local target achieved.

Note

Quarterly comparison RAG Rating = the reporting period compared to the average of the three previous reporting periods.

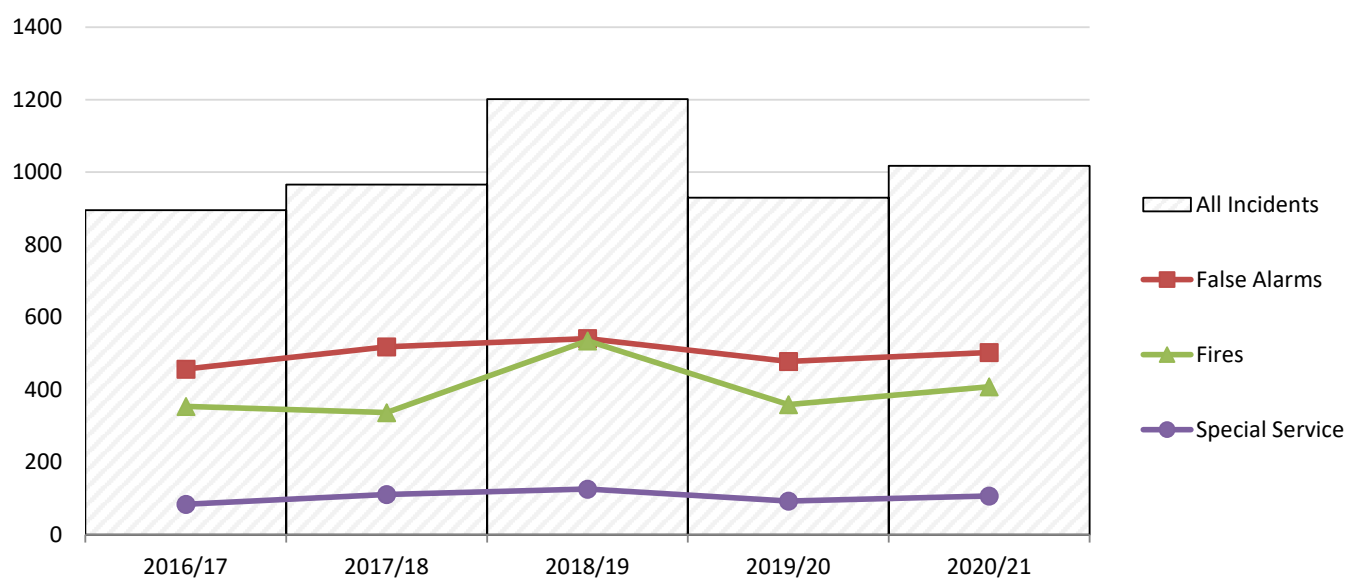
Year to Date RAG Rating = the cumulative total of all quarterly performance in current year compared to cumulative total of all quarterly performance in previous year.

Incident Overview

SFRS has responded to a total of 873 incidents within the West Lothian area year to date 2020/21.

This is a reduction of 15% when compared to the corresponding period 2019/20.

The chart below illustrates incidents YTD attended within West Lothian council over the last 5 fiscal years



The Service must identify, prioritise and plan to meet the risks in each local community.

We said we would:

- train our staff to deal with our local risks
- gather and analyse risk information
- work with partners to mitigate risks
- deal with major events.

Train our staff to deal with our local risks

Our operational staff continue to undertake routine and risk specific skill acquisition and maintenance training. All firefighters have participated in the modular 'Training For Operational Competence' programme.

Firefighter safety is one of the Values of SFRS and this underpins all our activities. Theoretical inputs are confirmed with practical sessions and exercises. Our firefighters continue to exercise at local venues that present a risk in order to prepare for any operational emergency.

Gather and analyse risk information

Our operational staff continue to gather and analyse local risk information and operational intelligence which is used in our preparations to ensure the successful resolution of operational incidents.

We conduct Post Incident Debriefs through the use of a Structured Debriefing process, to identify any lessons that can be learned from our preparedness and response to emergency events.

Work with partners to mitigate risks

We continue to be an active member of the Lothians and Borders Local Resilience Partnership and share appropriate information.

We share information with local authority partners and other key stakeholders (e.g. Police Scotland) to ensure emergency event risks are mitigated and prepared for.

Deal with major events

During this reporting period, SFRS responded to a wide variety of incidents across the West Lothian area. During Quarter 1 of this reporting year 2020-21, a number of significant wildfire events occurred at the end of May over a four day period, most notably at Falahill and Benhar Forest in the Fauldhouse area. Over the course of these two specific incidents in excess of 70 appliance movements were required with resources being drawn from across Scotland to support the efforts to contain the fires which impacted across several acres of Woodland and Scrub. A multi-agency response was instigated with assistance from several partner agencies including helicopter support to provide aerial water drops across the affected areas. Engagement with Police Scotland and neighbouring Local Authorities has been ongoing in an attempt to mitigate these types of incident.

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
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Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) can have devastating effects on our community. The SFRS is committed to keeping people safe in their homes. We have developed information sharing protocols and referral processes with our partners to ensure that SFRS access the homes in our community, particularly those who are vulnerable due to age, isolation or addiction. Reduction of ADFs contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce ADFs in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing ADFs.

Results

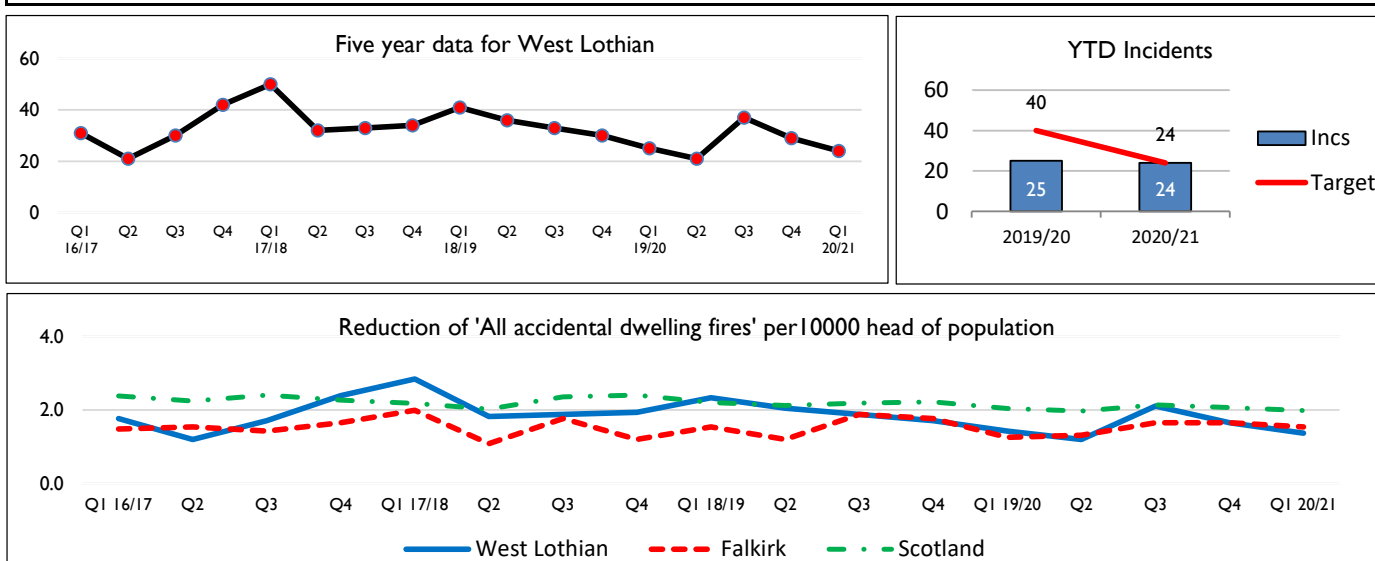
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2020/21. There has been a decrease of 1 incident [4%] when compared to Q1 2019/20 and a decrease of 5 incidents [18%] compared to the previous reporting Q4 2019/20. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous five years shows the West Lothian area is generally below that of Scotland and a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The vast majority of fires attended relate to cooking, with 12 incidents [50%] involving burning foodstuff as the main cause of the fire. 7 incidents [29%] were caused by a person over the age of 65 years, with a further 13 incidents [52%] in the age group 18 - 64 years. In 6 incidents [25%], the consumption of alcohol or drugs was suspected as being a contributory factor.

Actions

SFRS will continue to seek out new ways to reduce accidental dwelling fires. Appendix 1 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 3	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	31	50	41	25	24	
Linlithgow	1	5	2	1	2	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	4	4	1	3	3	
Livingston North	2	5	4	2	3	
Livingston South	1	5	8	4	3	
East Livingston & East Calder	1	8	4	3	3	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	7	6	4	3	3	
Whitburn & Blackburn	6	5	5	3	2	
Bathgate	6	8	6	2	3	
Armadale & Blackridge	3	4	7	4	2	

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualty and Fatality rates provide an indication of the amount of serious, life-threatening injuries that occur due to fires in the home. This can indicate not only the success of SFRS in reducing the number of life risk fires through community fire safety and similar activities, but also their success in response activity in saving lives. We aim to reduce Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fire Casualties.

Results

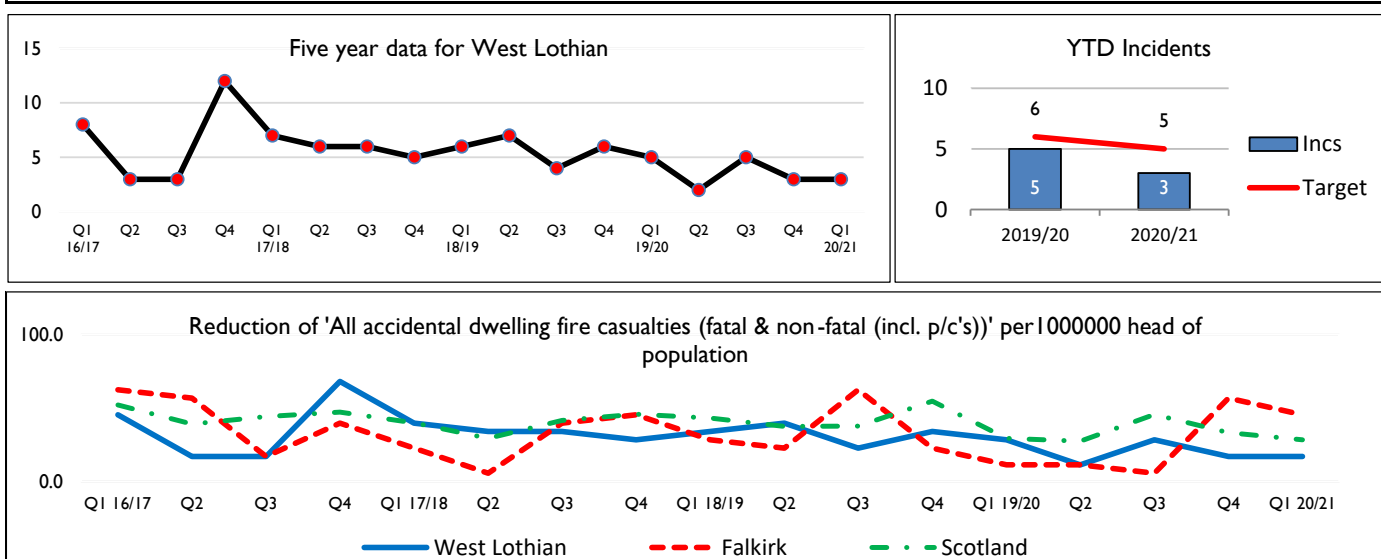
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2020/21. There has been a decreased of 2 casualties [40%] when compared to Q1 2019/20 and no decrease with the same number of casualties when compared to the previous reporting Q4 2019/20. The per 1,000,000 population trendline five year trendline over the previous five years shows the West Lothian area is below that of Scotland and that of a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The number of persons reported to SFRS as having sustained injury due to being involved in an Accidental Dwelling Fire (ADF) remains low, with 3 casualties being reported during Q1 2020/21. These 3 casualties were as a result of separate ADFs. 1 casualty was over 65 in age with the other 2 being between 18 - 64 years old. All incidents started in the Kitchen area due to cooking. At one incident 1 casualty went to hospital for further treatment with all other casualties being treated at the scene.

Actions

Our Home Safety Visit (HSV) referrals and Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) programmes continue to provide the main platform for accessing homes to provide fire safety advice. Partner referrals facilitate SFRS access to the more vulnerable members of the community, where we can provide life saving advice and install smoke detection within domestic premises. Appendix I provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 0	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	8	7	6	5	3	
Linlithgow	0	1	0	0	0	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	0	0	0	0	0	
Livingston North	0	1	0	2	0	
Livingston South	0	1	0	0	1	
East Livingston & East Calder	0	1	0	0	0	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	0	1	0	1	2	
Whitburn & Blackburn	3	0	2	1	0	
Bathgate	3	1	3	1	0	
Armada & Blackridge	2	1	1	0	0	

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the SFRS and partners in West Lothian. In the main, deliberate fires are secondary fires categorised into either refuse, grassland or derelict buildings incidents. There is a close link between deliberate secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population and SOA1304_37 Antisocial Behaviour Incidents per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce Deliberate Fires in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Deliberate Fires.

Results

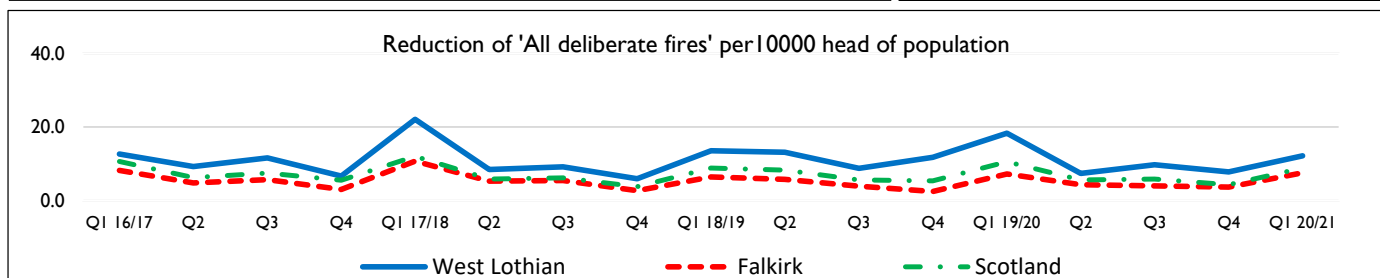
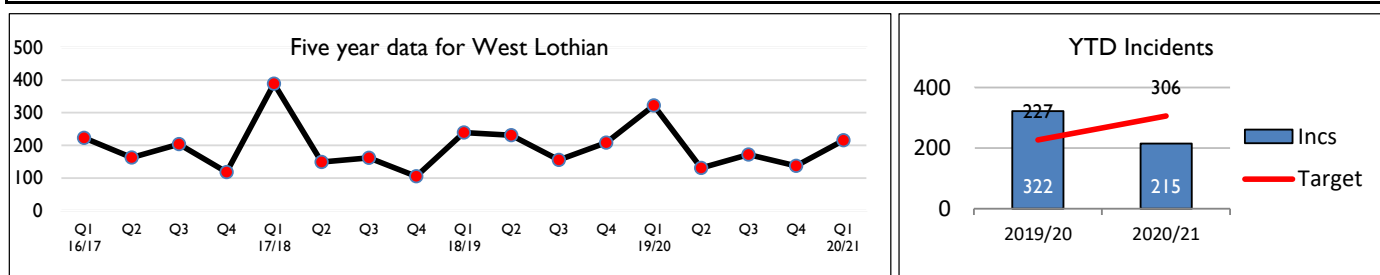
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2020/21. There has been an decrease of 107 incidents [44%] compared to the Q1 2019/20 and an increase of 78 incidents [56%] compared to the previous reporting Q4 2019/20. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous five years shows the West Lothian area to be higher than that of a comparator local authority and Scotland.

Reasons

The majority of deliberate fires involved Grassland, Woodland, Refuse and Wheelie Bins which are recorded as deliberate secondary fires. SFRS attended 176 deliberate secondary fires which correlates to 81% of all deliberate fires in the West Lothian area during this reporting period. Very dry and warm weather over the period and the change in behaviours and peoples activities due to lockdown and the COVID-19 restrictions are contributory factors to the rise in the incident type. The majority of deliberate Primary fires involved Dwellings, woodland areas and light vehicles including cars.

Actions

We use a range of methodologies and local initiatives as part of our Thematic Action Plans throughout the year. Knowledge input to schools plays a key part in reducing Deliberate Fire Setting and anti-social behaviour. Linking in with our partners on initiatives to provide a more targetted approach. SFRS are endeavouring to use social media to deliver community safety messages to augment messaging through GLOW. Appendix 2 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 24	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	223	389	239	322	215	
Linlithgow	1	9	5	11	15	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	13	41	23	36	22	
Livingston North	34	94	24	30	24	
Livingston South	28	43	22	36	14	
East Livingston & East Calder	32	47	39	44	30	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	37	52	25	45	32	
Whitburn & Blackburn	23	49	27	42	30	
Bathgate	37	23	38	38	14	
Armadaile & Blackridge	18	31	36	40	34	

Reduction of 'Non domestic fires'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Fires in Non-Domestic Property can have a detrimental effect on the built environment and the prosperity of the local area. Non-domestic fires are classed as fires which took place in buildings that are not domestic households. Reduction of Non Domestic Property contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce fires in Non Domestic property in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fires in Non-Domestic Property.

Results

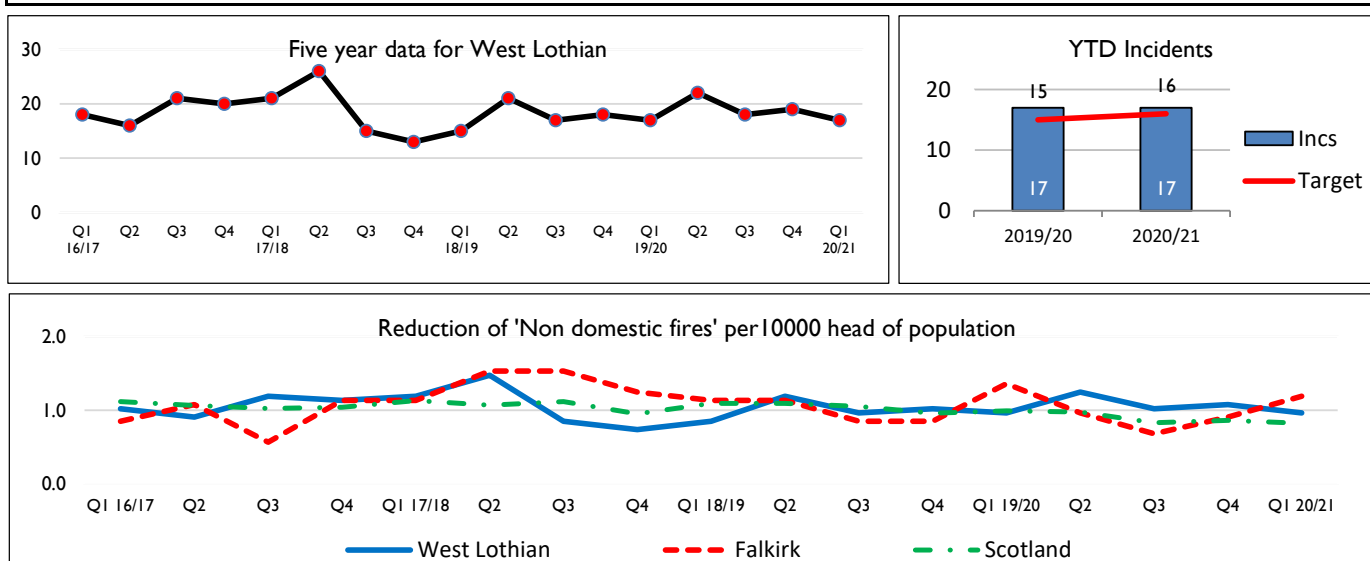
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2020/21. There has been 17 incidents and no change when compared to Q1 2019/20 and a decrease of 2 incidents [11%] compared to the reporting period Q4 2019/20. The majority of these incidents occurred within Out Buildings, Garden Sheds and Secure Premises. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous shows the West Lothian area being below that of a comparator local authority but above Scotland.

Reasons

The number of incidents remains low against this priority. The main sources of ignition have been identified as heat sources and combustible materials brought together [6 incidents] following by faulty appliances and overheating fittings [4 incidents]. This equates to 58% of all incidents recorded across this reporting period.

Actions

SFRS engagement with duty holders is assisting in reducing incidents of this type. Appendix 3 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 2	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	18	21	15	17	17	
Linlithgow	1	3	1	1	1	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	4	3	4	1	2	
Livingston North	1	0	1	2	1	
Livingston South	1	4	4	4	2	
East Livingston & East Calder	3	5	1	2	2	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	1	1	1	5	2	
Whitburn & Blackburn	2	2	0	2	0	
Bathgate	3	2	3	0	3	
Armadaile & Blackridge	2	1	0	0	4	

Reduction of 'Special Service - RTC casualties'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Road Traffic Collisions contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We aim to reduce casualties and fatalities from Road Traffic Collisions in West Lothian by 2% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing casualties from Special Service.

Results

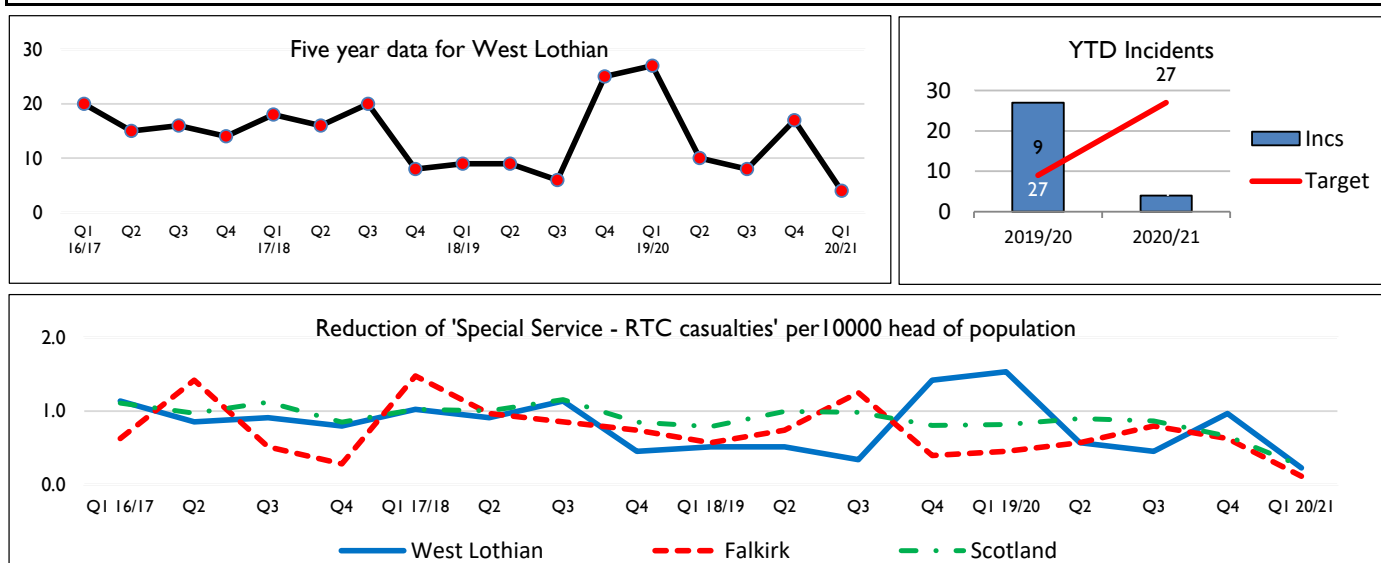
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2020/21. There has been a decrease of 23 casualties [86%] when compared to Q1 2019/20 and a decrease of 13 casualties [77%] compared to previous reporting Q4 2019/20. The change in behaviours and peoples restricted activities due to lockdown and the COVID-19 restrictions are contributory factors. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous five years shows the West Lothian area being similar to that of a comparator local authority and Scotland.

Reasons

Out of 4 casualties reported this period, 2 attended hospital for further treatment for serious injuries with 1 for more minor injuries. 1 further casualty received first aid on scene. 2 casualties were rescued by Firefighters through extrication. All casualties were as a result of Road Traffic Collisions involving Cars.

Actions

SFRS continues to work with partners to drive down Road Traffic Collision's and associated casualties. Appendix 4 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 0	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	20	18	9	27	4	
Linlithgow	4	6	0	2	0	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	2	0	4	2	0	
Livingston North	3	2	1	4	0	
Livingston South	0	0	0	1	1	
East Livingston & East Calder	1	1	2	3	0	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	3	0	2	3	0	
Whitburn & Blackburn	6	5	0	5	3	
Bathgate	1	4	0	5	0	
Armadaile & Blackridge	0	0	0	2	0	

Reduction of 'Special Service - Non RTC casualties'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Non-Fire Emergencies is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We will monitor the number of Non-Fire Emergency Casualties that we attend to and look to work in partnership with other stakeholders to put in place appropriate preventative activities.

Results

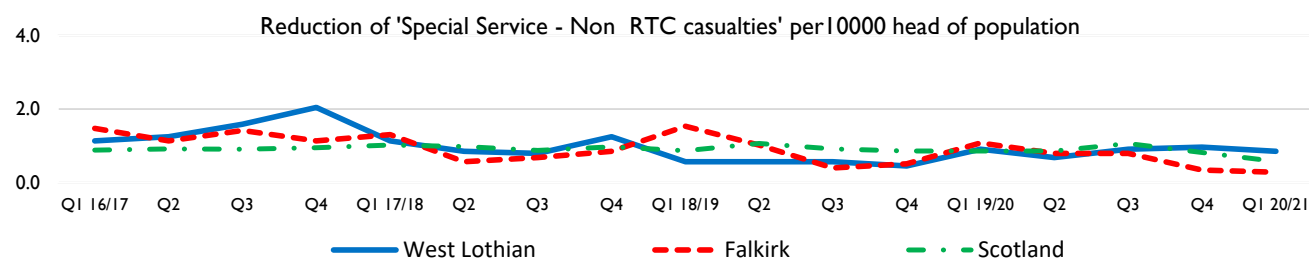
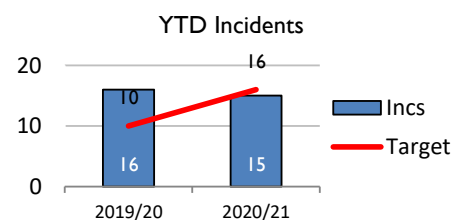
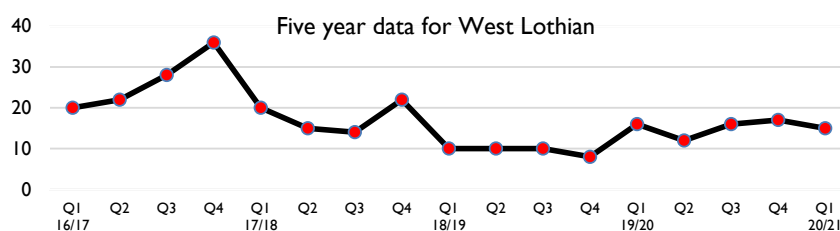
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2020/21. There was an decrease of 1 casualty [7%] when compared to Q1 2019/20 and a decrease of 2 casualties [11%] compared to the previous reporting period Q4 2019/20. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous five years shows the West Lothian area slightly above that of a comparator local authority and Scotland.

Reasons

Casualties numbers resulting from Non RTC special service incidents were relatively low against this priority and were as a result of the SFRS attending incidents to assist other partners.

Actions

SFRS continues to work with partners to identify opportunities to drive down the number of persons involved in Non RTC Special service casualties. Appendix 5 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 2	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	20	20	10	16	15	
Linlithgow	2	2	3	1	2	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	0	0	1	4	1	
Livingston North	2	2	1	0	1	
Livingston South	1	4	1	2	3	
East Livingston & East Calder	2	1	1	0	3	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	3	3	2	0	0	
Whitburn & Blackburn	3	2	1	2	1	
Bathgate	6	5	0	5	3	
Armadaile & Blackridge	1	1	0	2	1	

Reduction of 'False Alarm - UFAs'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
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Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, where the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. We aim to reduce UFAS in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing the number of UFAS incidents attended in non-domestic premises.

Results

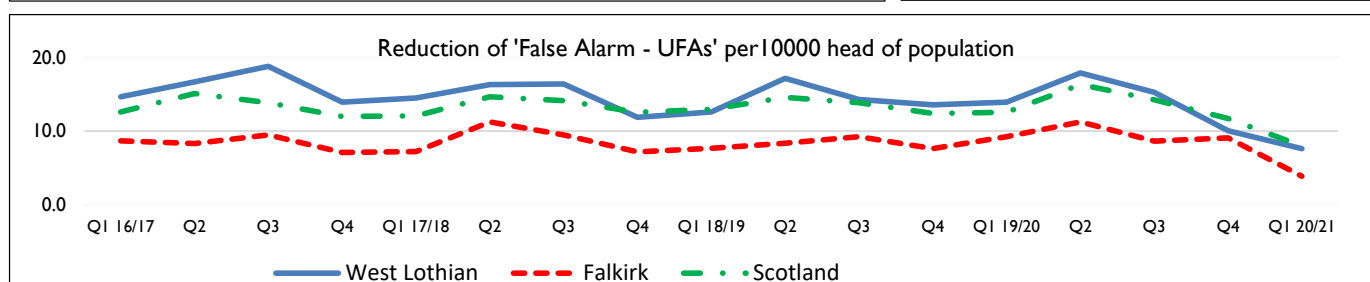
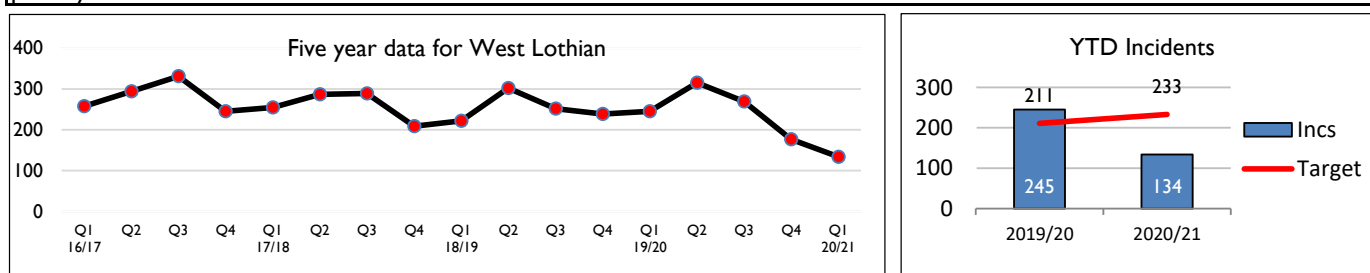
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2019/20 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2020/21. There was a decrease of 111 incidents [55%] when compare to Q1 2019/20 and a decrease of 43 incidents [24%] compared to previous reporting Q4 2019/20. The change in behaviours and peoples activities due to lockdown and the COVID-19 restrictions are contributory factors. The per 10,000 population trendline over the previous five year shows the West Lothian area to be higher to that of a comparator local authority but below that of Scotland.

Reasons

Common UFAS causes are: System Testing - 18 incidents (13%), accidental activation - 14 incidents (10%), Contaminants - 16 incidents (12%) and faults in system - 16 incidents (12%). A largest amount of UFAS incidents were in Warehouses/Factories - 21 incidents (16%), Hospitals - 18 incidents (13%) and Residential Care - 17 incidents (12.5%).

Actions

SFRS proactively monitor UFAS incidents and our Fire Safety Enforcement (FSE) Officers are actively engaged with dutyholders and alarm providers, to work collaboratively towards reducing the amount of UFAS incidents received and attended. This engagement includes education of duty holders in achieving technical, procedural and management solutions and identification of cost effective solutions in order to reduce future UFAS incidents. Appendix 6 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 15	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Sparklines
West Lothian	258	255	222	245	134	
Linlithgow	20	16	19	13	4	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	21	24	23	12	19	
Livingston North	21	24	19	26	12	
Livingston South	77	90	60	60	42	
East Livingston & East Calder	34	31	20	31	17	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	18	12	22	14	6	
Whitburn & Blackburn	32	20	37	51	24	
Bathgate	27	26	16	19	6	
Armadaile & Blackridge	8	12	6	19	4	



THE SECTION IS LEFT UNPROTECTED TO ALLOW YOU TO

LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR WEST LoTHIAN



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Year to Date Report, 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

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Introduction

The national priorities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-2019 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.

The priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018 contribute towards the priorities within the West Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 and the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2015-18.

The aims of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in West Lothian are to reduce fire deaths throughout the West Lothian area and to reduce injuries from fire and other emergencies in the community. We aim to achieve this by working in partnership, being pro-active and targeting our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence.

Within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, seven objectives for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to work towards have been identified for 2018 onwards (listed below):

Priority i: Local Risk Management and Preparedness

Priority ii: Domestic Fire Safety

Priority iii: Deliberate Fire Setting

Priority iv: Non Domestic Fire Safety

Priority v: Road Safety

Priority vi: Unintentional Harm and Injury

Priority vii: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Area Commander David Lockhart
Local Senior Officer for Falkirk & West Lothian
David.lockhart@firescotland.gov.uk

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
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Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using 7 key indicators, depicted below

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Key performance indicator	Apr to (& incl.) Mar					RAG rating
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	YTD
All accidental dwelling fires	131	124	149	140	112	●
All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal)	22	26	24	23	15	●
All deliberate fires	763	708	805	833	762	●
Non domestic fires	86	75	75	71	76	▲
Special Service - RTC casualties	67	65	62	49	62	◆
Special Service - Non RTC casualties	74	106	71	38	61	◆
False Alarm - UFAs	1068	1128	1040	1015	1006	●

RAG rating - KEY

◆	RED DIAMOND	10% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
▲	YELLOW TRIANGLE	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
●	GREEN CIRCLE	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent quarter (or YTD period), or local target achieved.

Note

Quarterly comparison RAG Rating = the reporting period compared to the average of the three previous reporting periods.

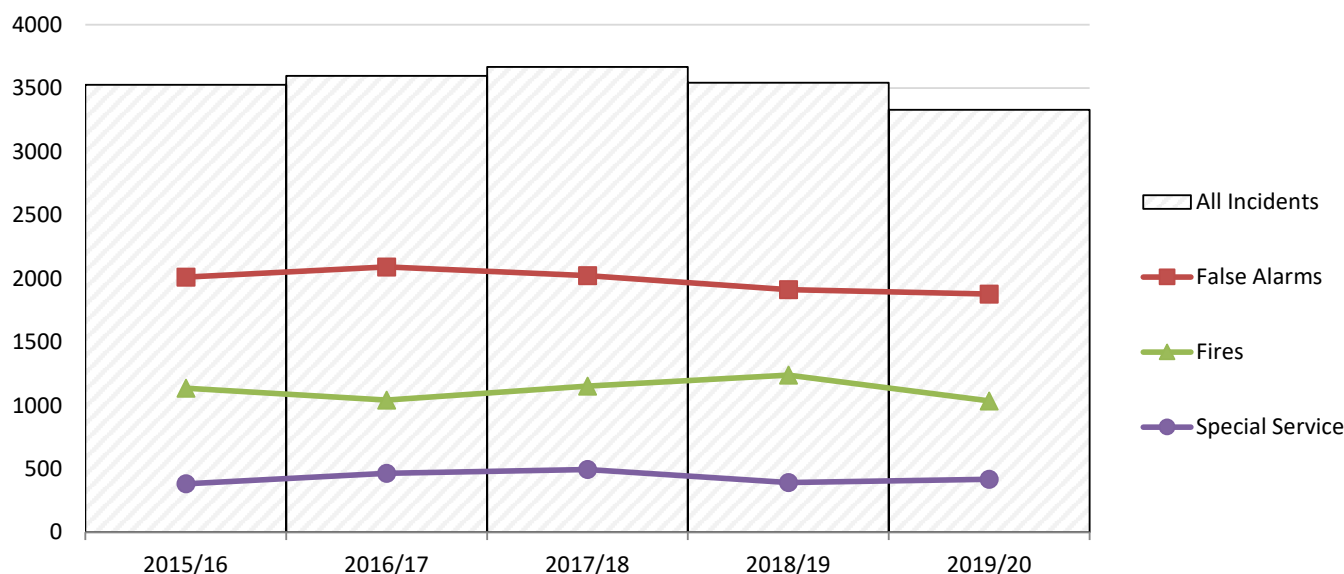
Year to Date RAG Rating = the cumulative total of all quarterly performance in current year compared to cumulative total of all quarterly performance in previous year.

Incident Overview

SFRS has responded to a total of 3,332 incidents within the West Lothian area year to date 2019/20.

This is a reduction of 6% when compared to the corresponding period 2018/19.

The chart below illustrates incidents YTD attended within West Lothian council over the last 5 fiscal years



Progress on local fire & rescue plan priorities	
Local Risk Management and Preparedness	Meeting Date - 20 October 2020 Item No 6
<p>The Service must identify, prioritise and plan to meet the risks in each local community.</p> <p>We said we would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train our staff to deal with our local risks • gather and analyse risk information • work with partners to mitigate risks • deal with major events. 	
<u>Train our staff to deal with our local risks</u>	
<p>Our operational staff continue to undertake routine and risk specific skill acquisition and maintenance training. All firefighters have participated in the modular 'Training For Operational Competence' programme.</p> <p>Firefighter safety is one of the Values of SFRS and this underpins all our activities. Theoretical inputs are confirmed with practical sessions and exercises. Our firefighters continue to exercise at local venues that present a risk in order to prepare for any operational emergency.</p>	
<u>Gather and analyse risk information</u>	
<p>Our operational staff continue to gather and analyse local risk information and operational intelligence which is used in our preparations to ensure the successful resolution of operational incidents.</p> <p>We conduct Post Incident Debriefs through the use of a Structured Debriefing process, to identify any lessons that can be learned from our preparedness and response to emergency events.</p>	
<u>Work with partners to mitigate risks</u>	
<p>We continue to be an active member of the Lothians and Borders Local Resilience Partnership and share appropriate information.</p> <p>We share information with local authority partners and other key stakeholders (e.g. Police Scotland) to ensure emergency event risks are mitigated and prepared for.</p>	
<u>Deal with major events</u>	
<p>During this reporting period, SFRS responded to a wide variety of incidents across the West Lothian area. During Quarter 4 of this reporting year 2019-20, none of the incidents attended required resourcing greater than a level 1D Response (Four appliances) or required the pre-determined attendance to be augmented.</p>	

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) can have devastating effects on our community. The SFRS is committed to keeping people safe in their homes. We have developed information sharing protocols and referral processes with our partners to ensure that SFRS access the homes in our community, particularly those who are vulnerable due to age, isolation or addiction. Reduction of ADFs contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce ADFs in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing ADFs.

Results

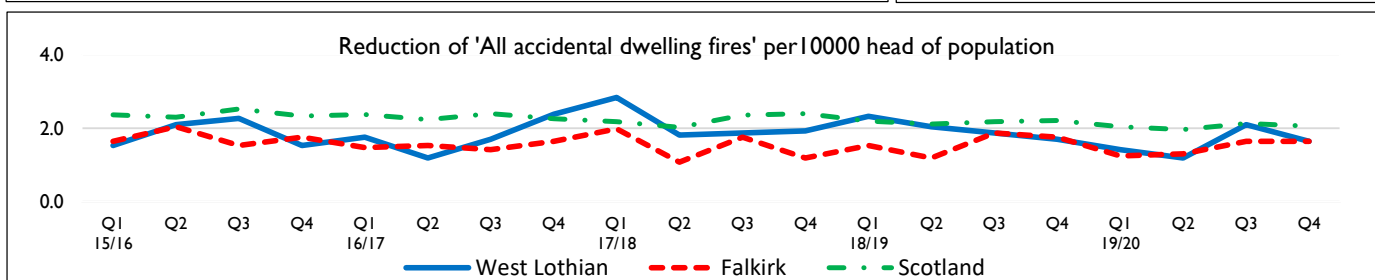
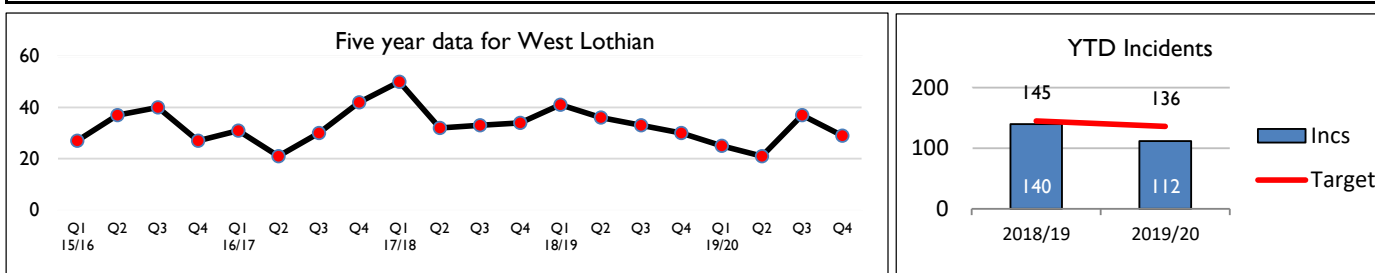
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen a decrease of 8 incidents (37 to 29) when compared to Q3 2019-20 but a reduction of 28 incidents when comparing the Year to Date figures. The trendline over the previous 5 years shows the West Lothian area is generally below that of the Scottish average and similar to a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The vast majority of fires attended relate to cooking, with 20% (6) involving burning foodstuff as the main cause of the fire and a further 20% (6) caused by the storage of combustibles next to a heat source. 28% (8) of fires were caused by a person over the age of 65 years, with a further 52% (15) of fires in the age group 18 - 64 years. 10% (3) of all fires in this category listed alcohol or drugs as a contributory factor.

Actions

SFRS will continue to seek out new ways to reduce accidental dwelling fires. Appendix I provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 12	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	131	124	149	140	112	
Linlithgow	6	9	12	10	8	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	12	9	12	8	9	
Livingston North	18	12	17	16	11	
Livingston South	13	18	17	15	12	
East Livingston & East Calder	14	10	14	15	13	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	12	20	21	18	12	
Whitburn & Blackburn	24	19	24	25	19	
Bathgate	19	15	17	17	16	
Armadaile & Blackridge	13	12	15	16	12	

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualty and Fatality rates provide an indication of the amount of serious, life-threatening injuries that occur due to fires in the home. This can indicate not only the success of SFRS in reducing the number of life risk fires through community fire safety and similar activities, but also their success in response activity in saving lives. We aim to reduce Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fire Casualties.

Results

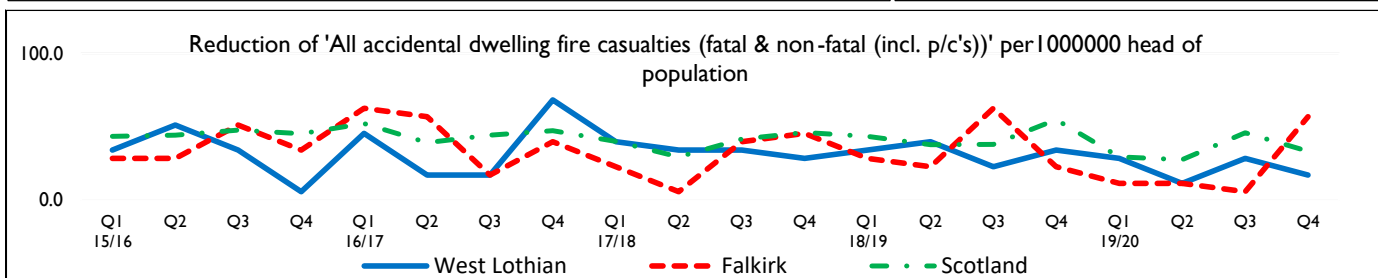
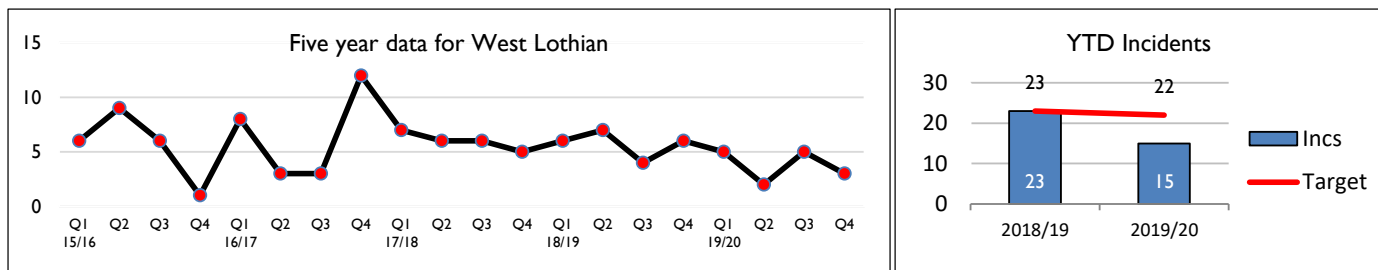
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. The number of casualties has decreased by 2 (5 to 3) from Q3 2019-20 and is a reduction of 8 when comparing the Year to Date figures. The five year trendline for the West Lothian area regarding the number of fire casualties per 1,000,000 population is below that of a the Scottish average and of a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The number of persons reported to SFRS as having sustained injury in an Accidental Dwelling fire remains relatively small. 63% (5) of the fires within this reporting period are known to have started in the Livingroom area through the use of matches and candles. All of these casualties received first aid at the scene as a precautionary check with 2 requiring medical oxygen, however none sustained injuries which required them to attend hospital.

Actions

Our Home Safety Visit (HSV) referrals and Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) programmes continue to provide the main platform for accessing homes to provide fire safety advice. Partner referrals facilitate SFRS access to the more vulnerable members of the community, where we can provide life saving advice and install smoke detection within domestic premises. Appendix I provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 2	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	22	26	24	23	15	
Linlithgow	3	3	2	0	0	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	1	0	2	0	0	
Livingston North	4	1	5	2	3	
Livingston South	1	1	1	2	0	
East Livingston & East Calder	1	3	2	2	1	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	2	0	1	1	3	
Whitburn & Blackburn	2	8	2	6	6	
Bathgate	5	3	3	7	2	
Armadale & Blackridge	3	7	6	3	0	

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the SFRS and partners in West Lothian. In the main, deliberate fires are secondary fires categorised into either refuse, grassland or derelict buildings incidents. There is a close link between deliberate secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population and SOA1304_37 Antisocial Behaviour Incidents per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce Deliberate Fires in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Deliberate Fires.

Results

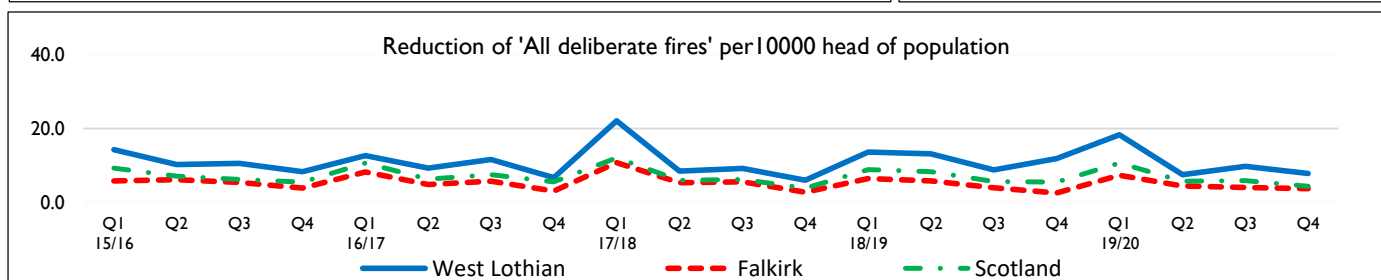
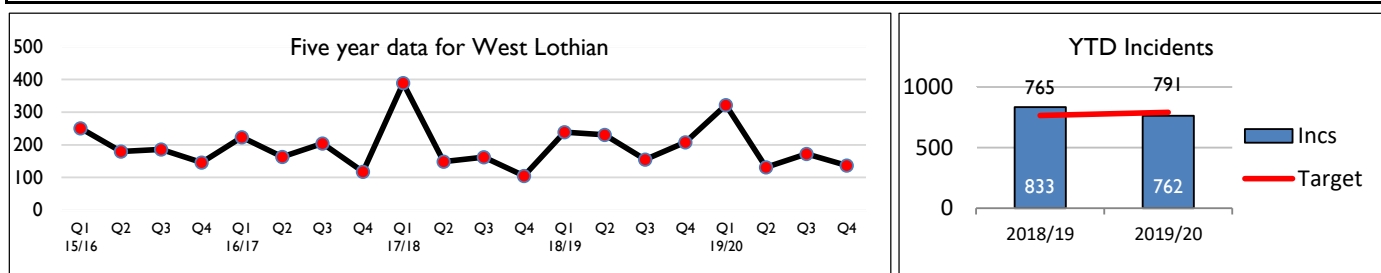
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen an decrease of 25% (35) incidents compared to Q3 2019-20 and decrease of 1.0% (71) incidents comparing the Year to date figures. It is noted that Deliberate Fire Setting /10,000 population trendline remains just above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

The majority of deliberate fires involve loose refuse, grassland and include Wheelie Bins which are recorded as deliberate secondary fires. SFRS attended 113 deliberate secondary fires which correlates to 83% of all deliberate fires in the West Lothian Council area during this reporting period, this is mainly aligned to the unusual period of fair weather experienced in February and March 2020 and the change in behaviour around the lockdown restrictions imposed due to COVID-19. The majority of the (24) deliberate primary fires involved light vehicles [cars], dwellings and cells within secure accommodation.

Actions

We use a range of methodologies and local initiatives as part of our Thematic Action Plans throughout the year. Knowledge input to schools plays a key part in reducing Deliberate Fire Setting and anti-social behaviour. Linking in with our partners on initiatives to provide a more targetted approach. SFRS are endeavouring to use social media to deliver community safety messages to augment messaging through GLOW. Appendix 2 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 85	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	763	708	805	833	762	
Linlithgow	16	8	22	29	27	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	125	72	70	102	79	
Livingston North	96	133	147	85	82	
Livingston South	141	116	112	105	92	
East Livingston & East Calder	108	95	109	148	101	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	83	86	90	87	137	
Whitburn & Blackburn	82	58	100	72	94	
Bathgate	46	93	92	117	80	
Armadale & Blackridge	66	47	63	88	70	

Reduction of 'Non domestic fires'

Fires in Non-Domestic Property can have a detrimental effect on the built environment and the prosperity of the local area. Non-domestic fires are classed as fires which took place in buildings that are not domestic households. Reduction of Non Domestic Property contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce fires in Non Domestic property in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fires in Non-Domestic Property.

Results

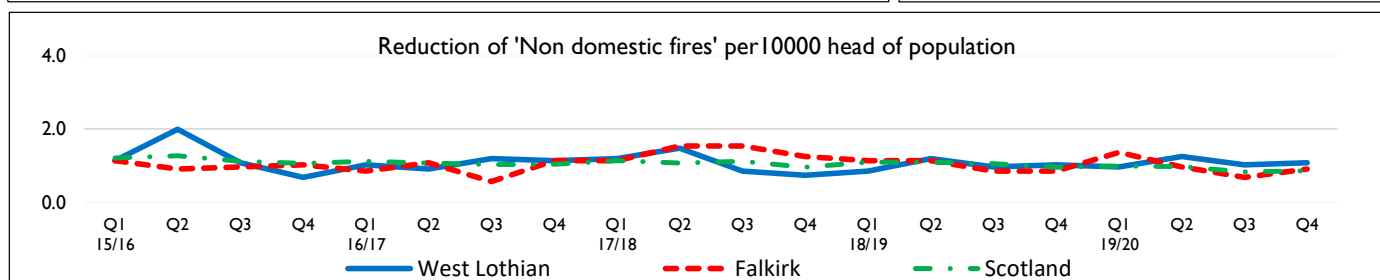
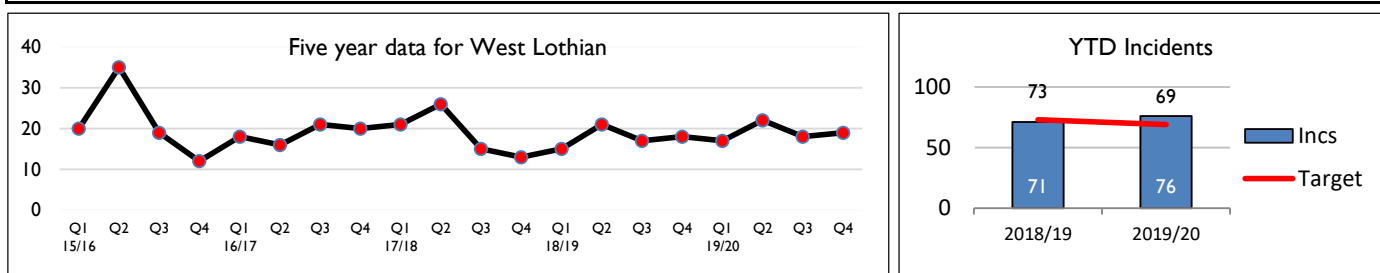
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. There has been an increase of 1 (18 to 19) incidents in non domestic fires compared to the previous reporting quarter, also this is an increase of 5 incidents when compared to the same reporting period 2018-19. The majority of these occurrences were within Secondary Education Premises with isolated incidents in Secure Accommodation, Private Garages, Residential Home and Public Toilets. The long term trend for fires in Non-Domestic Property /10,000 population in West Lothian is slightly above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

Although the number of incidents remains relatively low against this priority, the main sources of ignition have been identified as heat sources and combustible materials being brought together.

Actions

SFRS engagement with duty holders is assisting in reducing incidents of this type. Appendix 3 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 8	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	86	75	75	71	76	
Linlithgow	2	5	6	4	7	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	15	11	8	7	3	
Livingston North	8	4	4	8	4	
Livingston South	16	14	15	17	9	
East Livingston & East Calder	17	9	15	3	10	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	5	7	12	16	21	
Whitburn & Blackburn	14	6	5	3	11	
Bathgate	4	14	6	7	7	
Armadale & Blackridge	5	5	4	6	4	

Reduction of 'Special Service - RTC casualties'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Road Traffic Collisions contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We aim to reduce casualties and fatalities from Road Traffic Collisions in West Lothian by 2% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing casualties from Special Service.

Results

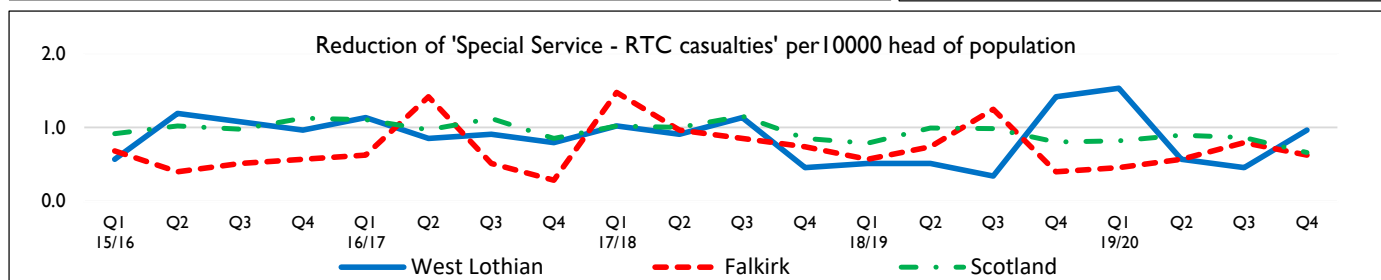
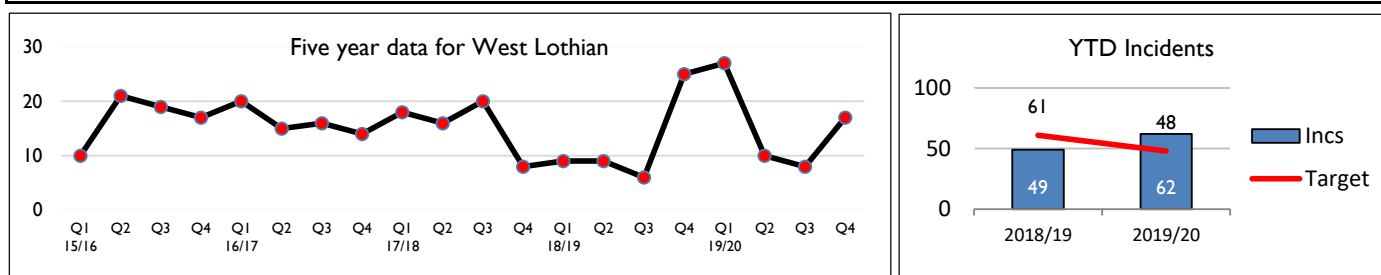
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. SFRS continues to work towards driving down casualties involved in Road Traffic Collision's, the overall number of casualties has increased by 9 from the previous quarter with 1 fatality. The number of casualties reflects an increase of 21% (49 to 62) when comparing the Year to date periods. This results in the West Lothian area trendline being above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

The numbers SFRS classified casualties resulting from Road Traffic Collisions were slightly higher against this priority and in the main resulted in minor injuries. Out of 17 casualties reported this period, 1 unfortunately was a fatality, a further 8 attended hospital for further treatment for minor injuries with 3 for more serious injuries with the remaining only requiring a precautionary check on scene. The majority of casualties were as a result of Road Traffic Collision's involving Cars, with six involving the release of trapped persons.

Actions

Appendix 4 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 7	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	67	65	62	49	62	
Linlithgow	12	8	9	5	6	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	12	10	1	9	5	
Livingston North	14	4	3	1	9	
Livingston South	2	6	6	2	3	
East Livingston & East Calder	12	4	6	4	8	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	3	11	5	9	4	
Whitburn & Blackburn	9	13	20	6	12	
Bathgate	2	9	11	1	10	
Armadaile & Blackridge	1	0	1	12	5	

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Non-Fire Emergencies is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We will monitor the number of Non-Fire Emergency Casualties that we attend to and look to work in partnership with other stakeholders to put in place appropriate preventative activities.

Results

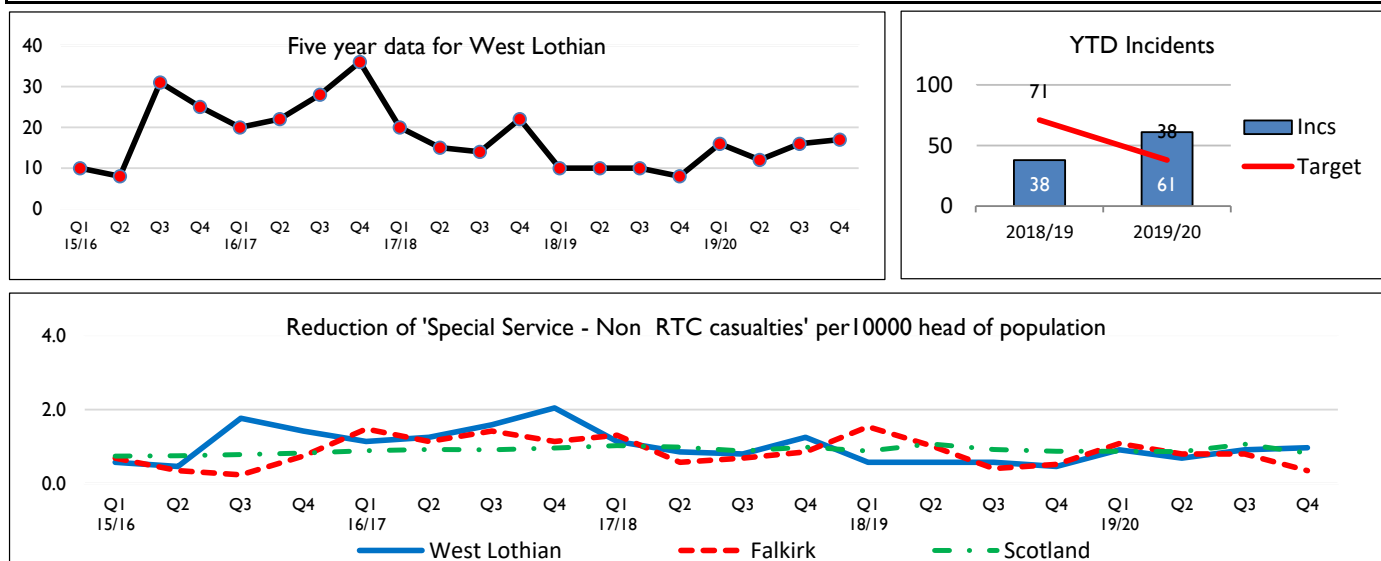
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen an increase of one casualty from the previous quarter and an increase of 60% (23 casualties) when comparing the Year to date periods. This identifies a trend of the West Lothian area being above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

Casualties numbers resulting from Non RTC special service incidents were higher against this priority with the majority of incidents as result of the SFRS assisting other partners to effect entry.

Actions

Appendix 5 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 7	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	74	106	71	38	61	
Linlithgow	9	10	9	5	5	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	6	7	6	6	9	
Livingston North	2	10	9	2	1	
Livingston South	3	6	6	2	6	
East Livingston & East Calder	10	11	3	2	3	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	6	9	7	5	4	
Whitburn & Blackburn	11	25	12	5	8	
Bathgate	17	20	13	6	16	
Armadale & Blackridge	10	8	6	5	9	

Reduction of 'False Alarm - UFAS'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
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Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, where the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. We aim to reduce UFAS in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing the number of UFAS incidents attended in non-domestic premises.

Results

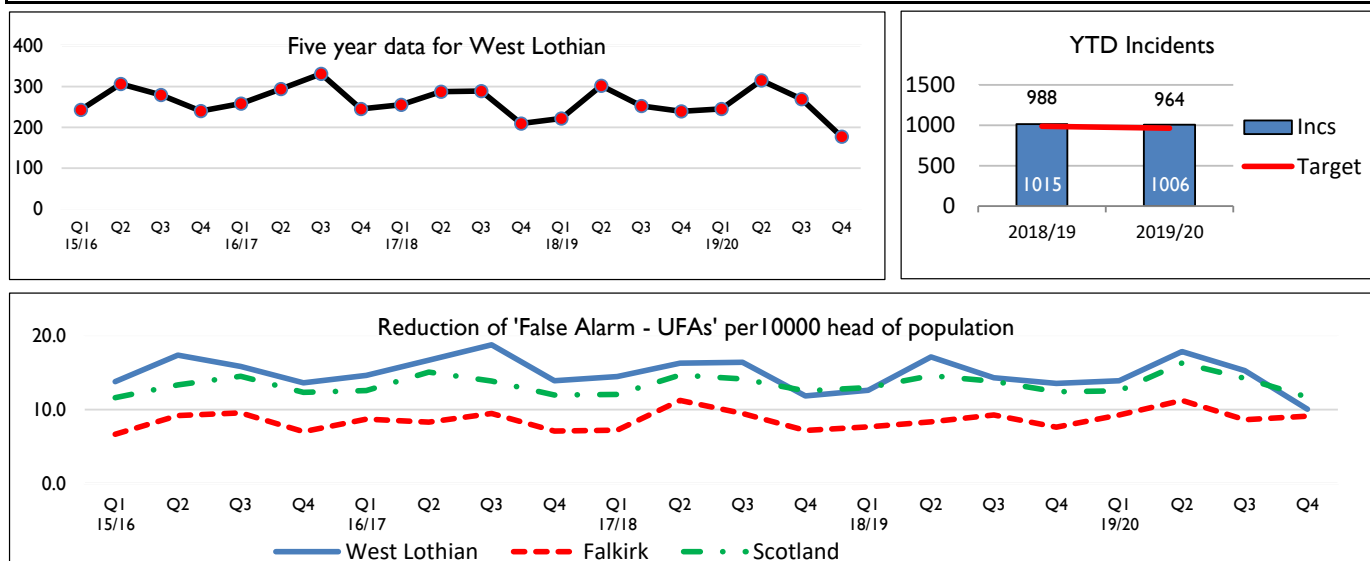
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. SFRS are actively engaged with dutyholders and partners to work collaboratively towards reducing the amount of UFAS incidents received and attended. We have seen a 35% decrease (269 to 177) from the previous quarter and a decrease of 0.1% comparing the Year to date periods. This highlights a trend of the West Lothian area being similar to that of a comparator local authority and below the Scottish average.

Reasons

Common UFAS causes are: Faulty apparatus, malicious or accidental activation, contaminants, System Tests and cooking. The top five UFAS categories were Factory (17%), Educational Establishments (14%), Offices (10%), Hospitals (9%) and Warehouses (9%). SFRS continue to analyse the trends for UFAS and are engaging with duty holders to ensure the buildings are effectively managed appropriately.

Actions

We continue to proactively monitor UFAS incidents and our Officers work closely with duty holders to reduce the impact of UFAS incidents. This includes discussing logistics and educating duty holders in achieving technical, procedural and management solutions in order to reduce future UFAS incidents. Our Auditing officers engage with duty holders and alarm providers to determine cost effective solutions and this work is ongoing. Appendix 6 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 112	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	1068	1128	1040	1015	1006	
Linlithgow	63	67	58	77	59	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	107	114	94	90	76	
Livingston North	92	114	90	90	105	
Livingston South	322	325	330	300	288	
East Livingston & East Calder	124	151	149	152	144	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	73	75	64	63	64	
Whitburn & Blackburn	156	131	109	132	138	
Bathgate	93	85	90	79	71	
Armadale & Blackridge	38	66	56	32	61	

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Appendix 1

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)' & Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal incl. precautionary check-ups)'

A primary activity related to improving the safety of our communities is delivering Home Safety Visits. Evidence identifies that dwelling fires occur more frequently in those premises that are occupied by the more vulnerable members of our community such as the elderly and those with substance and alcohol dependencies.

SFRS continue to deliver HSV and continue to develop Information Sharing Protocols with partners and increase the safety of residents with all agencies making appropriate referrals.

Home Fire Safety Programme visits completed (Year to date).

Year to Date Activity 2019-20	Low	Medium	High	TOTAL
Total HSVs	497	728	645	1870
Q4 2019/20	81	147	155	383

During this reporting period, SFRS continue to work with multi-agency partners including Social Work, Housing providers, Health etc. to target those most vulnerable within our communities, by seeking referrals.

SFRS frontline staff submitted several 'Adult Protection' forms to our partners within the Social Work Department to ensure appropriate support is delivered.

SFRS are expanding the HSV within the guidance set out in the Safer Communities Programme. This will see a further transition towards Home Safety Checks with fire crews submitting referrals for 'slips, trips and falls' and 'sensory impairment' in support of reducing unintentional harm where possible. It is envisaged that whilst keeping vulnerable residents safe in their homes, it will reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and ease the burden in the Health Sector.

The coming months will see an increase in knowledge input to partners in Housing Associations to identify vulnerable tenants. SFRS officers have commenced delivery of Hazard identification training to housing managers designed to upskill them to identify any persons at risk.

Whilst we seek to reduce Dwelling Fires even further, it should be noted that the severity of fires is often restricted to item first ignited or room of origin.

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Appendix 2

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Tasking and Coordinating Group (TAC)

During this reporting period SFRS along with multi-agency partners, continue to attend 'Tasking and Co-ordinating Group' meetings. The primary focus is on addressing tactical level issues using information sharing, problem profiling and the implementation of measures to reduce both fire related and other anti-social behaviour issues. This process greatly assists with addressing areas of high operational demand with the proactive targeting of those most vulnerable within our communities.

This group has already delivered improved outcomes. Information received within the meetings creates profiles of individuals responsible for anti-social behaviour. This informs diversionary activity and youth engagement through "fireskills" intervention initiatives and other joint initiatives with partners (i.e Youth Action Project).

Collaborative work with partners also attracts referrals for Home Safety Visits for the more vulnerable within our communities. There are ongoing case studies with interventions being discussed at present. The partnership has invested in letterbox blockers to assist households targeted by antisocial behaviour, which are fitted by SFRS on an intelligence and risk based approach.

Multi-agency Environmental Visual Audits (EVA's) continue to be used across West Lothian. These are the result of trends identified at the TAC group. Issues identified by partners are progressed to reduce fire related anti-social behaviour and make identified locations less attractive for youths to gather.

Youth Engagement

SFRS have developed positive relationships with locality Based Police Officers to ensure a more targeted approach in dealing with secondary fires and anti-social behaviour. SFRS Community Safety Advocates/Community Firefighters and Operational Firefighters, deliver an educational programme within schools to address any developing trends. The purpose of this is to deliver seasonal fire education with the focus on reducing fire related ASB and hoax calls. This will also reduce the financial impact on Local Authority Budgets and protects our built environment.

SFRS Crews pro-actively promoted local diversionary activities. This provided opportunities for our frontline crews to engage with youths and reduce ASB.

Information sharing within the Task and Co-ordinating Group and effective multi-agency partnership working is focussed on reducing deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour. This included initiatives aimed at preventing fires within derelict properties and fires involving refuse and wheelie-bins.

Wilful fire raising in wheelie disposal bins remains a problem and is being addressed at Task and Co-ordinating Groups with partners. Guidance has been given to partners and cascaded to residents to be more vigilant and to give consideration when they place bins out for uplift and to retrieve them as soon as possible thereafter.

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Our fire setter's intervention programmes continue to target our young people in West Lothian, creating diversionary activities tailored to the reduction of fire related anti-social behaviour.

Preventing young people at risk of fire related anti-social behaviour continues to be a focus of our engagement, through our Fire skills programmes which also improve employability and citizenship as well as providing self-confidence and a greater sense of achievement.

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Appendix 3

Reduction of 'All non-domestic fires'

Fire Safety Enforcement Activity

A Pre-Programmed Audit is an audit programmed at the commencement of the fiscal year, selected from premises held within the Service's database, based on a risk assessment as defined in the Service's Enforcement Framework.

A Non-Programmed Audit is an audit that can occur throughout the year. This type of audit would be undertaken because of the following: fire safety complaints, requests from partner agencies or joint initiatives with partners, following any fire within a relevant premise and the targeting of specific premises type in line with the Service's Enforcement Framework.

Our Programmed Audits remain on schedule for completion in 2019/20

FSEC Code	Premises Type	Number of premises in Local Authority area as of 1 st APRIL 2019*	Number of premises subject to pre-planned audit 2019/20	Number of premises audited Q1 – Q4 2019/20	% of Target Premises achieved
A	Hospital & Prisons	07	07	16	228 %
B	Care Home	44	44	45	102 %
C	House of multiple occupation (HMO) Tenement	26	06	12	200 %
E	Hostels	02	03	02	67 %
F	Hotels	119*	47	12	25 %
H	Other sleeping accommodation	01*	01	03	300 %
J	Further Education	02*	02	01	50 %
K	Public Building	32*	01	03	300 %
L	Licenced Premises	307*	14	09	64 %
M	Schools	119*	10	13	130 %
N	Shops	1064*	10	17	170 %
P	Other premises open to public	167*	18	22	122 %
R	Factories & Warehouses	330*	15	18	120 %
S	Offices	635*	06	04	67 %
T	Other Workplace	52*	00	03	300 %
	Total	2272*	184	180	98 %

*Pre-planned targets are only set for Hospitals, Care Homes, HMO's classed as 'high' risk or in line with licence renewals and other premises classed as 'high' or 'very high' risk.

**Where target is exceeded this is due to non-programmed auditing such as thematic auditing, fire safety complaints or post fire audits.

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Enforcement/Prohibition Notices

No Enforcement notices were served within the WL area during this reporting period. There are 2 prohibition notices remaining (served in previous periods) which are actively being policed by our Enforcement Team.

This is a positive picture as the duty holders across the area are largely in compliance with only recommendations being the main enforcement activities. Thematic Auditing is being carried out in West Lothian based on trend analysis.

Appendix 4

Reduction of 'Special Service – RTC casualties (fatal & non-fatal)'

SFRS will augment the learning outcomes of the Road Safety Initiative West Drive by implementing our “Make it or Break it programme” which is currently been rolled out in the school environment. This will come in the form of offering tuition to young people on the hazards encountered on our roadways and educating them on safer driving and the consequences of losing concentration at the wheel.

Appendix 5

Reduction of 'Special Service – Non RTC casualties (fatal & non-fatal)'

SFRS continues to work in collaboration with partners to support the local communities and assist other agencies in delivering services. The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) pilot has been paused across the West Lothian area with the outcomes being used to assess the ongoing SFRS Transformation Project in this regard. Through ongoing negotiations, it is hoped the delivery of this service can be rolled out soon across all community fire stations across West Lothian.

Appendix 6

Reduction of 'False Alarm - UFAS'

A reduction in UFAS incidents has many benefits namely, reducing road risk, reducing SFRS carbon footprint and increasing business continuity. UFAS incidents fall into a range of categories that include, Malicious, Failure of Equipment and Good Intent.

SFRS have developed a UFAS Policy to ensure that persistent UFAS incidents within premises are addressed appropriately. Engagement with key holders is key to reducing SFRS attendance. We have programmed engagement sessions with duty holders and alarm providers to discuss solutions to UFASs, with the most recent discussions taking place with West Lothian Council who account for roughly one third of the areas UFAS calls. SFRS have

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

a robust UFAS Policy and analyse trends and engage appropriately with Duty Holders of relevant premises.

A recent “staff alarms” initiative to reduce UFAS has seen a reduction in the number of false alarms in schools. This is being negotiated with other duty holders across the West Lothian Area.

Glossary

Primary Fire

Primary fires include all fires in non-derelict buildings and outdoor structures or any fires involving casualties or rescues or any fires attended by five or more appliances.

Secondary Fires

Secondary fires are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or if five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings but not chimney fires.

Accidental Dwelling Fires

Building occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostels and residential institutions. In 2000, the definition of a dwelling was widened to include any non-permanent structure used solely as a dwelling, such as caravans, houseboats etc. Caravans, boats etc. not used as a permanent dwelling are shown according to the type of property. Accidental includes fires where the cause was not known or unspecified.

Fire Fatality

A person whose death is attributed to a fire is counted as a fatality even if the death occurred weeks or months later.

Fire Casualty

Non-fatal casualties, injured as a direct result of a fire attended by the service. Includes those who received first aid at the scene and those who were recommended to go for a precautionary check. Does not include injuries to fire service personnel.

Deliberate Fire

Fires where deliberate ignition is suspected

Special Services

Special Services are non-fire incidents requiring the attendance of an appliance or officer. The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 placed a statutory duty on FRS to attend fires and road traffic accidents. It also included an additional function order that covers non-fire incidents such as rescues from collapsed buildings or serious flooding

CPP

Community Planning Partnership.

SOA

Appendices for WL Q4 2019-20

Single Outcome Agreement.

Year to Date (YTD)

Year to date is calculated from 1st April on the reporting year

RTC

Road Traffic Collision

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Seasonal Community Safety Calendar

The seasonal calendar depicts a range of initiatives and activities that the SFRS and CPP partners will undertake throughout the year as part of our preventative strategies.





LOCAL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR WEST LoTHIAN



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Year To Date Report, 1st April – 31st December, 2019

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



**West Lothian
Council**

DISCLAIMER

The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

Please ensure any external partners in receipt of these reports are aware of this.

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Introduction

The national priorities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-2019 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.

The priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018 contribute towards the priorities within the West Lothian Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023 and the Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2015-18.

The aims of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service in West Lothian are to reduce fire deaths throughout the West Lothian area and to reduce injuries from fire and other emergencies in the community. We aim to achieve this by working in partnership, being pro-active and targeting our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence.

Within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for West Lothian 2018, seven objectives for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to work towards have been identified for 2018 onwards (listed below):

Priority i: Local Risk Management and Preparedness

Priority ii: Domestic Fire Safety

Priority iii: Deliberate Fire Setting

Priority iv: Non Domestic Fire Safety

Priority v: Road Safety

Priority vi: Unintentional Harm and Injury

Priority vii: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Area Commander David Lockhart
Local Senior Officer for Falkirk & West Lothian
David.Lockhart@firescotland.gov.uk

Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using 7 key indicators, depicted below

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

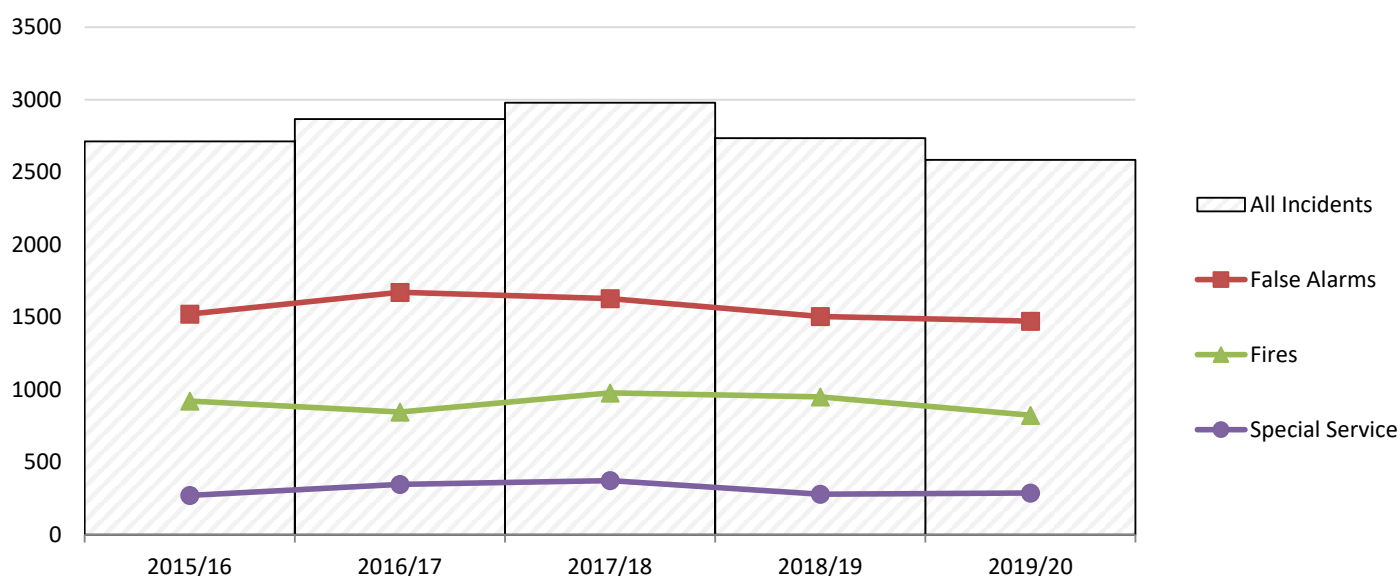
Item No 6

Key performance indicator	Apr to (& incl.) Dec					RAG rating
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	YTD
All accidental dwelling fires	104	82	115	110	80	●
All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p	21	14	19	17	11	●
All deliberate fires	617	590	700	625	613	●
Non domestic fires	74	55	62	53	55	▲
Special Service - RTC casualties	50	51	54	24	43	◆
Special Service - Non RTC casualties	49	70	49	30	40	◆
False Alarm - UFAs	828	883	831	776	807	●

RAG rating - KEY		
◆	RED DIAMOND	10% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
▲	YELLOW TRIANGLE	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
●	GREEN CIRCLE	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent quarter (or YTD period), or local target achieved.

Note
Quarterly comparison RAG Rating = the reporting period compared to the average of the three previous reporting periods.
Year to Date RAG Rating = the cumulative total of all quarterly performance in current year compared to cumulative total of all quarterly performance in previous year.
Incident Overview
SFRS has responded to a total of 2,585 incidents within the West Lothian area year to date 2019/20.
This is a reduction of 5.5% when compared to the corresponding period 2018/19.

The chart below illustrates incidents YTD attended within West Lothian council over the last 5 fiscal years



Progress on local fire & rescue plan priorities	
Local Risk Management and Preparedness	Meeting Date - 20 October 2020 Item No 6
<p>The Service must identify, prioritise and plan to meet the risks in each local community.</p> <p>We said we would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train our staff to deal with our local risks • gather and analyse risk information • work with partners to mitigate risks • deal with major events. 	
<u>Train our staff to deal with our local risks</u>	
<p>Our operational staff continue to undertake routine and risk specific skill acquisition and maintenance training. All firefighters have participated in the modular 'Training For Operational Competence' programme.</p> <p>Firefighter safety is one of the Values of SFRS and this underpins all our activities. Theoretical inputs are confirmed with practical sessions and exercises. Our firefighters continue to exercise at local venues that present a risk in order to prepare for any operational emergency.</p>	
<u>Gather and analyse risk information</u>	
<p>Our operational staff continue to gather and analyse local risk information and operational intelligence which is used in our preparations to ensure the successful resolution of operational incidents.</p> <p>We conduct Post Incident Debriefs through the use of a Structured Debriefing process, to identify any lessons that can be learned from our preparedness and response to emergency events.</p>	
<u>Work with partners to mitigate risks</u>	
<p>We continue to be an active member of the Lothians and Borders Local Resilience Partnership and share appropriate information.</p> <p>We share information with local authority partners and other key stakeholders (e.g. Police Scotland) to ensure emergency event risks are mitigated and prepared for.</p>	
<u>Deal with major events</u>	
<p>During this reporting period, SFRS responded to a wide variety of incidents across the West Lothian area. During Quarter 3 of this reporting year 2019-20, none of the incidents attended required resourcing greater than a level 1d Response (Four appliances) and required the pre-determined attendance to be augmented.</p>	

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) can have devastating effects on our community. The SFRS is committed to keeping people safe in their homes. We have developed information sharing protocols and referral processes with our partners to ensure that SFRS access the homes in our community, particularly those who are vulnerable due to age, isolation or addiction. Reduction of ADFs contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_14 Number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce ADFs in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing ADFs.

Results

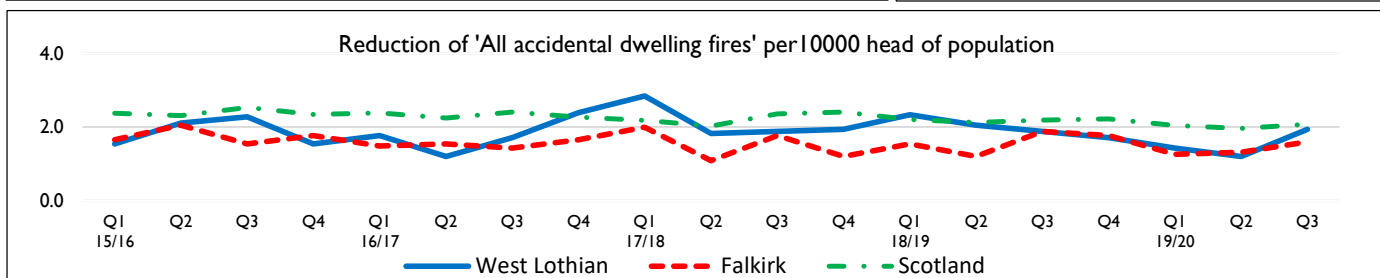
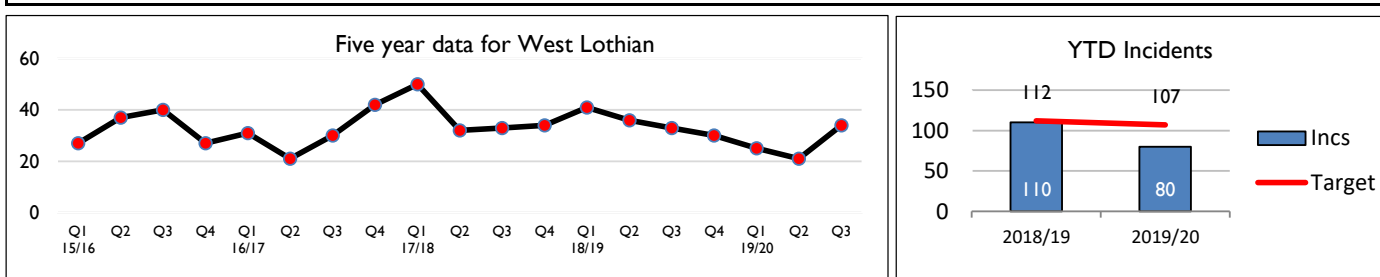
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen a increase of 13 incidents (21 to 34) when compared to Q2 2019-20 but a reduction of 30 incidents when comparing the Year to Date figures. The trendline over the previous 5 years shows the West Lothian area is generally below that of the Scottish average and similar to a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The vast majority of fires attended relate to cooking, with 33% (12) involving burning foodstuff as the main cause of the fire. 16% (6) of fires were caused by a person over the age of 65 years, with a further 63% (23) of fires in the age group 18 - 64 years. 13% (5) of all fires in this category listed alcohol or drugs as a contributory factor.

Actions

SFRS will continue to seek out new ways to reduce accidental dwelling fires. Appendix I provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 9	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	104	82	115	110	80	
Linlithgow	4	3	10	7	6	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	11	9	8	5	8	
Livingston North	13	7	13	14	9	
Livingston South	8	14	11	14	9	
East Livingston & East Calder	10	8	13	10	8	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	11	14	16	14	9	
Whitburn & Blackburn	18	13	16	18	13	
Bathgate	18	10	14	16	10	
Armadaale & Blackridge	11	4	14	12	8	

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualty and Fatality rates provide an indication of the amount of serious, life-threatening injuries that occur due to fires in the home. This can indicate not only the success of SFRS in reducing the number of life risk fires through community fire safety and similar activities, but also their success in response activity in saving lives. We aim to reduce Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fire Casualties.

Results

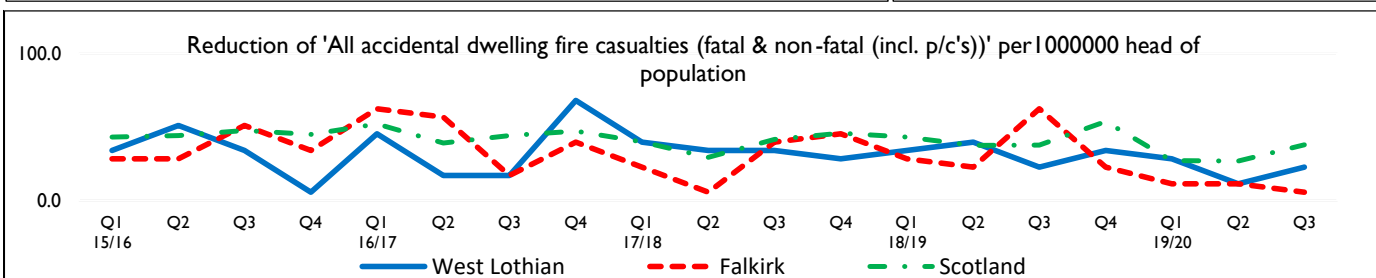
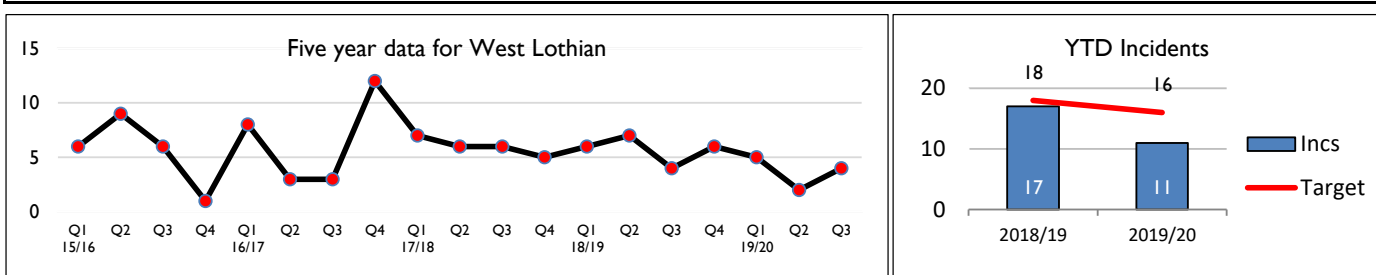
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. The number of casualties has increased by 2 (2 to 4) from Q2 2019-20 and is a reduction of 6 when comparing the Year to Date figures. The five year trendline for the West Lothian area regarding the number of fire casualties per 1,000,000 population is below that of a the Scottish average and similar to that of a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The number of persons reported to SFRS as having sustained injury due to fire remains relatively small. All four fires within this reporting period are known to have started in the Kitchen area. All four casualties received first aid at the scene and did not require to attend hospital.

Actions

Our Home Safety Visit (HSV) referrals and Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) programmes continue to provide the main platform for accessing homes to provide fire safety advice. Partner referrals facilitate SFRS access to the more vulnerable members of the community, where we can provide life saving advice and install smoke detection within domestic premises. Appendix I provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - I	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	21	14	19	17	11	
Linlithgow	3	0	2	0	0	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	1	0	0	0	0	
Livingston North	4	1	4	1	3	
Livingston South	0	1	1	2	0	
East Livingston & East Calder	1	3	2	1	0	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	2	0	1	0	2	
Whitburn & Blackburn	2	4	1	4	4	
Bathgate	5	3	3	7	2	
Armadale & Blackridge	3	2	5	2	0	

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the SFRS and partners in West Lothian. In the main, deliberate fires are secondary fires categorised into either refuse, grassland or derelict buildings incidents. There is a close link between deliberate secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Reduction of Deliberate Fire Setting contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population and SOA1304_37 Antisocial Behaviour Incidents per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce Deliberate Fires in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Deliberate Fires.

Results

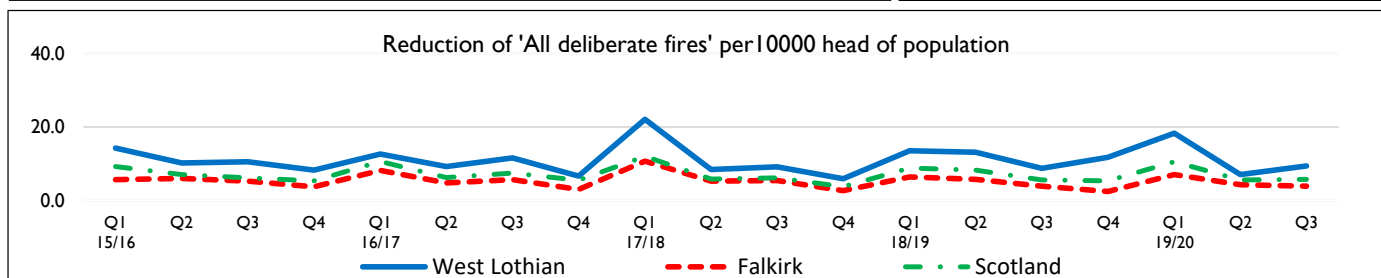
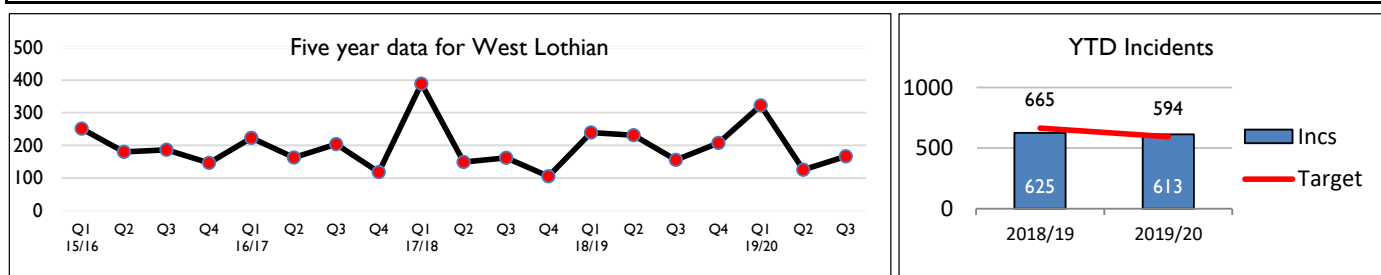
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen an increase of 32% (41) incidents compared to Q2 2019-20 and decrease of 1.5% (12) incidents comparing the Year to date figures. It is noted that Deliberate Fire Setting /10,000 population trendline remains just above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

The majority of deliberate fires involve loose refuse, grassland and include Wheelie Bins which are recorded as deliberate secondary fires. SFRS attended 149 deliberate secondary fires which correlates to 89% of all deliberate fires in the West Lothian Council area during this reporting period, this is mainly aligned to celebrations that take place at the end of October / beginning of November. The majority of deliberate primary fires involved light vehicles [cars], dwellings and cells within secure accommodation.

Actions

We use a range of methodologies and local initiatives as part of our Thematic Action Plans throughout the year. Knowledge input to schools plays a key part in reducing Deliberate Fire Setting and anti-social behaviour. Linking in with our partners on initiatives to provide a more targetted approach. SFRS are endeavouring to use social media to deliver community safety messages to augment messaging through GLOW. Appendix 2 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 68	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	617	590	700	625	613	
Linlithgow	12	6	17	21	17	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	104	60	62	58	63	
Livingston North	90	105	135	59	66	
Livingston South	94	101	102	78	85	
East Livingston & East Calder	88	84	89	117	81	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	65	69	78	69	114	
Whitburn & Blackburn	74	46	90	59	77	
Bathgate	36	82	72	87	56	
Armadale & Blackridge	54	37	55	77	54	

Reduction of 'Non domestic fires'

Fires in Non-Domestic Property can have a detrimental effect on the built environment and the prosperity of the local area. Non-domestic fires are classed as fires which took place in buildings that are not domestic households. Reduction of Non Domestic Property contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_13 Number of deliberate fires per 10,000 population. We aim to reduce fires in Non Domestic property in West Lothian by 3% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing Fires in Non-Domestic Property.

Results

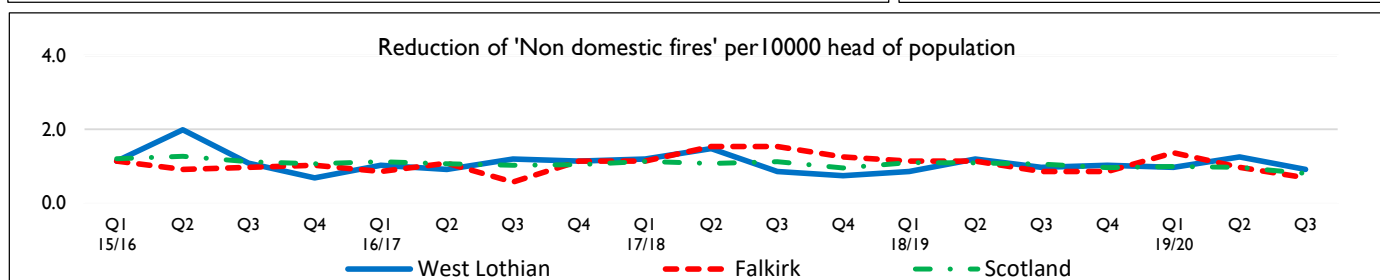
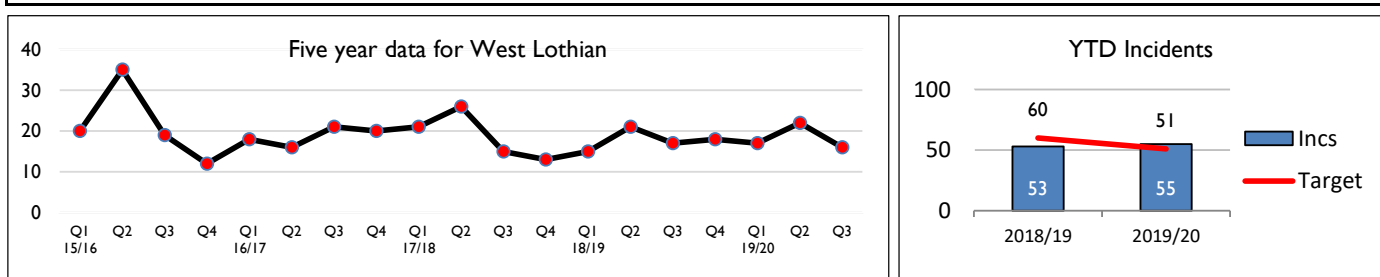
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. There has been an decrease of 6 (22 to 16) incidents in non domestic fires compared to the previous reporting quarter, however this is an increase of 2 incidents when compared to the same reporting period 2018-19. The majority of these occurrences (5 incidents) were within Secure Accommodation Premises with isolated incidents in Private Garages, Residential Homes, Offices and Retail outlets. The long term trend for fires in Non-Domestic Property /10,000 population in West Lothian is slightly above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish

Reasons

Although the number of incidents remains low against this priority, the main sources of ignition have been identified as heat sources and combustible materials brought together (8 incidents) followed by overheating of appliances (2 incidents).

Actions

SFRS engagement with duty holders is assisting in reducing incidents of this type. Appendix 3 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 6	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	74	55	62	53	55	
Linlithgow	2	5	6	4	4	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	11	7	5	7	2	
Livingston North	7	2	2	6	2	
Livingston South	15	7	13	9	8	
East Livingston & East Calder	14	7	14	2	9	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	4	5	8	13	17	
Whitburn & Blackburn	13	4	5	2	6	
Bathgate	3	13	6	6	4	
Armadale & Blackridge	5	5	3	4	3	

Reduction of 'Special Service - RTC casualties'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020

Item No 6

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Road Traffic Collisions contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We aim to reduce casualties and fatalities from Road Traffic Collisions in West Lothian by 2% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing casualties from Special Service.

Results

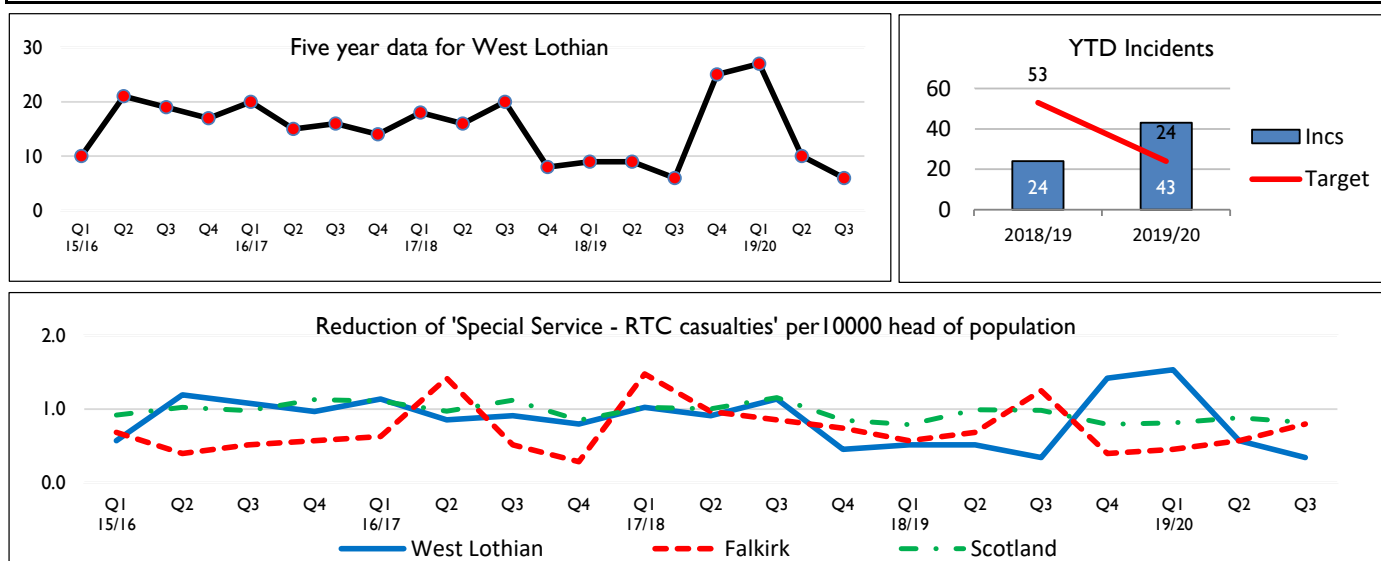
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. SFRS continues to work towards driving down casualties involved in Road Traffic Collision's, the overall number of casualties has reduced by four from the previous quarter with no fatalities. The number of casualties reflects an increase of 79% (24 to 43) when comparing the Year to date periods. This continues a trend of the West Lothian area remaining below the Scottish average and the similar to a comparator local authority.

Reasons

The numbers SFRS classified casualties resulting from Road Traffic Collisions were low against this priority and in the main resulted in minor injuries. Out of six casualties reported this period, four attended hospital for further treatment for minor injuries with two for more serious injuries. All casualties were as a result of Road Traffic Collision's involving Cars, with three involving the release of trapped persons.

Actions

Appendix 4 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 5	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	50	51	54	24	43	
Linlithgow	6	7	8	3	6	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	8	5	1	5	2	
Livingston North	8	4	3	1	6	
Livingston South	2	4	6	1	2	
East Livingston & East Calder	12	4	5	3	6	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	3	8	5	3	3	
Whitburn & Blackburn	9	11	16	5	11	
Bathgate	1	8	9	1	5	
Armadaile & Blackridge	1	0	1	2	2	

Reduction of 'Special Service - Non RTC casualties'

Meeting Date - 20 October 2020
Item No 6

Whilst much of this risk is outwith the control of SFRS, responding to Non-Fire Emergencies is a key part of our intervention activities. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to drive continuous improvement in this area. Reduction of Casualties from Non-Fire Emergencies contributes to the West Lothian CPP Local Outcome Improvement Plan, SOA1304_12 Number of People killed or seriously injured in road accidents. We will monitor the number of Non-Fire Emergency Casualties that we attend to and look to work in partnership with other stakeholders to put in place appropriate preventative activities.

Results

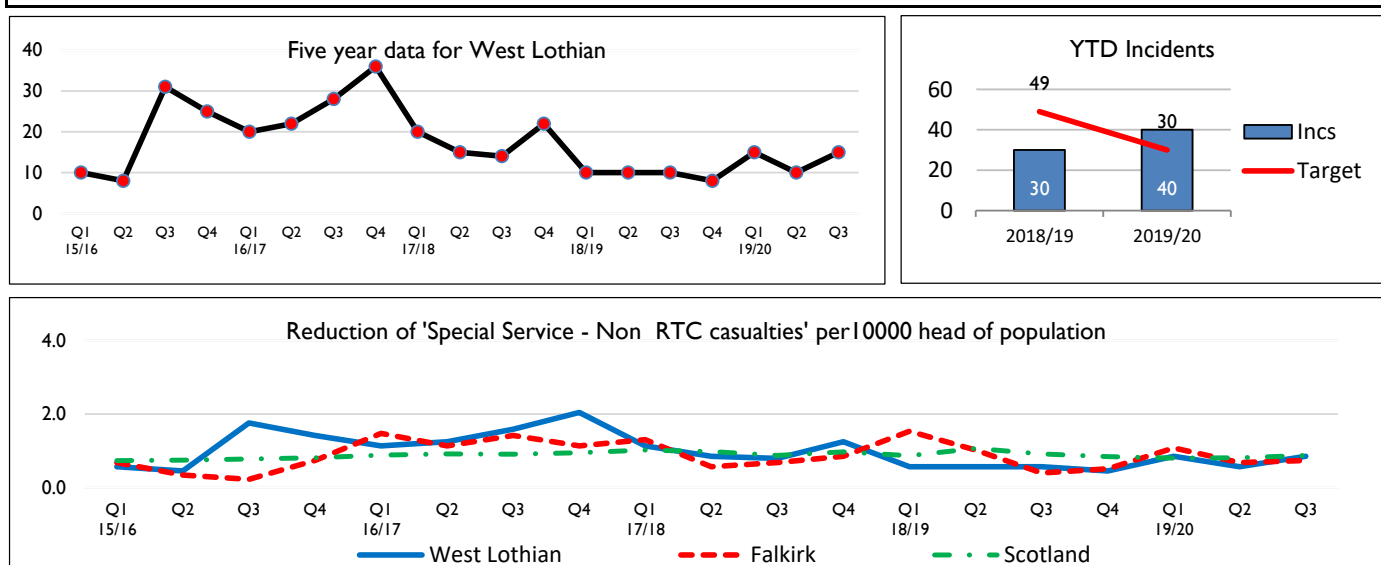
The YTD chart below shows the actual number of casualties during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of casualties and target for the same period for 2019-20. We have seen an increase of five casualties from the previous quarter and an increase of 25% (10 casualties) from the same reporting period 2018-19. This continues a trend of the West Lothian area remaining below a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

Casualties numbers resulting from Non RTC special service incidents were low against this priority and in the majority of incidents were as result of the SFRS assisting other partners to effect entry.

Actions

Appendix 5 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 4	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	49	70	49	30	40	
Linlithgow	4	9	5	5	3	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	4	3	3	6	5	
Livingston North	1	8	6	1	1	
Livingston South	2	2	4	2	5	
East Livingston & East Calder	7	9	2	2	1	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	4	6	4	4	2	
Whitburn & Blackburn	10	12	10	3	6	
Bathgate	13	15	10	4	11	
Armadaile & Blackridge	4	6	5	3	6	

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, where the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. We aim to reduce UFAS in West Lothian by 5% per year, which contributes towards the SFRS target for reducing the number of UFAS incidents attended in non-domestic premises.

Results

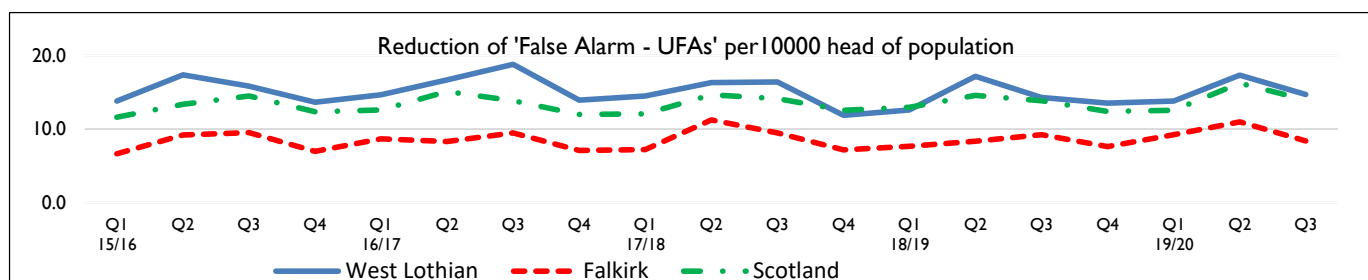
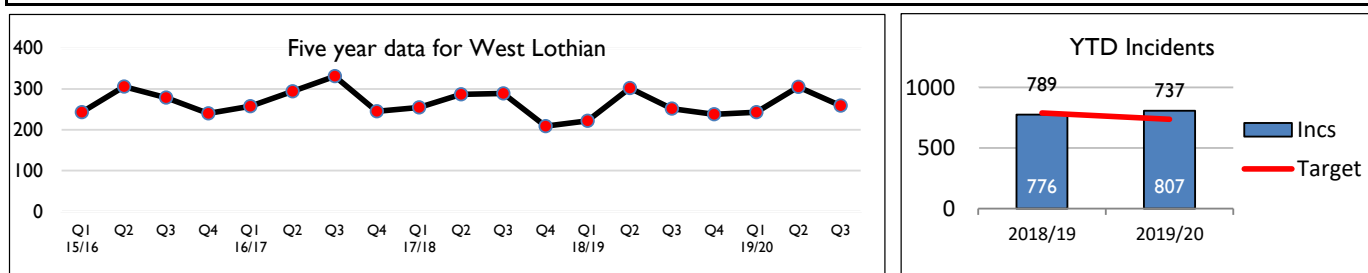
The YTD Incidents chart below shows the actual number of incidents during the year to date period of 2018-19 against the target for that period, aligned to the actual number of incidents and target for the same period for 2019-20. SFRS are actively engaged with dutyholders and partners to work collaboratively towards reducing the amount of UFAS incidents received and attended. We have seen a 15% decrease (305 to 259) from the previous quarter and a increase of 3% against the same reporting period 2018-19. This continues a trend of the West Lothian area being above that of a comparator local authority and the Scottish average.

Reasons

Common UFAS causes are: Faulty apparatus, malicious or accidental activation, contaminants, System Tests and cooking. The top five UFAS categories were Warehouses (10%), Educational Establishments (10%), Offices (9%), Factory (5%) and Hospitals (5%). SFRS continue to analyse the trends for UFAS and are engaging with duty holders to ensure the buildings are effectively managed appropriately.

Actions

We continue to proactively monitor UFAS incidents and our Officers work closely with duty holders to reduce the impact of UFAS incidents. This includes discussing logistics and educating duty holders in achieving technical, procedural and management solutions in order to reduce future UFAS incidents. Our Auditing officers engage with duty holders and alarm providers to determine cost effective solutions and this work is ongoing. Appendix 6 provides further details on our prevention activities in relation to this priority.



YTD ward ave. for West Lothian - 90	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Sparklines
West Lothian	828	883	831	776	807	
Linlithgow	43	56	47	59	44	
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	91	82	73	74	57	
Livingston North	63	90	74	69	84	
Livingston South	253	250	257	221	227	
East Livingston & East Calder	83	125	117	120	122	
Fauldhouse & the Breich Valley	62	61	54	45	49	
Whitburn & Blackburn	120	104	87	100	112	
Bathgate	83	65	77	65	59	
Armadale & Blackridge	30	50	45	23	53	

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Appendix 1

Reduction of 'All accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)' & Reduction of 'All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal incl. precautionary check-ups)'

A primary activity related to improving the safety of our communities is delivering Home Safety Visits. Evidence identifies that dwelling fires occur more frequently in those premises that are occupied by the more vulnerable members of our community such as the elderly and those with substance and alcohol dependencies.

SFRS continue to deliver HSV and continue to develop Information Sharing Protocols with partners and increase the safety of residents with all agencies making appropriate referrals.

Home Fire Safety Programme visits completed (Year to date).

Year to Date Activity 2019-20	Low	Medium	High	TOTAL
Total HSVs	416	581	490	1487
Q3 2019/20	119	179	221	519

During this reporting period, SFRS continue to work with multi-agency partners including Social Work, Housing providers, Health etc. to target those most vulnerable within our communities, by seeking referrals.

SFRS frontline staff submitted several 'Adult Protection' forms to our partners within the Social Work Department to ensure appropriate support is delivered.

SFRS are expanding the HSV within the guidance set out in the Safer Communities Programme. This will see a further transition towards Home Safety Checks with fire crews submitting referrals for 'slips, trips and falls' and 'sensory impairment' in support of reducing unintentional harm where possible. It is envisaged that whilst keeping vulnerable residents safe in their homes, it will reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and ease the burden in the Health Sector.

The coming months will see an increase in knowledge input to partners in Housing Associations to identify vulnerable tenants. SFRS officers have commenced delivery of Hazard identification training to housing managers designed to upskill them to identify any persons at risk.

Whilst we seek to reduce Dwelling Fires even further, it should be noted that the severity of fires is often restricted to item first ignited or room of origin.

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Appendix 2

Reduction of 'All deliberate fires'

Tasking and Coordinating Group (TAC)

During this reporting period SFRS along with multi-agency partners, continue to attend 'Tasking and Co-ordinating Group' meetings. The primary focus is on addressing tactical level issues using information sharing, problem profiling and the implementation of measures to reduce both fire related and other anti-social behaviour issues. This process greatly assists with addressing areas of high operational demand with the proactive targeting of those most vulnerable within our communities.

This group has already delivered improved outcomes. Information received within the meetings creates profiles of individuals responsible for anti-social behaviour. This informs diversionary activity and youth engagement through "fireskills" intervention initiatives and other joint initiatives with partners (i.e Youth Action Project).

Collaborative work with partners also attracts referrals for Home Safety Visits for the more vulnerable within our communities. There are ongoing case studies with interventions being discussed at present. The partnership has invested in letterbox blockers to assist households targeted by antisocial behaviour, which are fitted by SFRS on an intelligence and risk based approach.

Multi-agency Environmental Visual Audits (EVA's) continue to be used across West Lothian. These are the result of trends identified at the TAC group. Issues identified by partners are progressed to reduce fire related anti-social behaviour and make identified locations less attractive for youths to gather.

Youth Engagement

SFRS have developed positive relationships with locality Based Police Officers to ensure a more targeted approach in dealing with secondary fires and anti-social behaviour. SFRS Community Safety Advocates/Community Firefighters and Operational Firefighters, deliver an educational programme within schools to address any developing trends. The purpose of this is to deliver seasonal fire education with the focus on reducing fire related ASB and hoax calls. This will also reduce the financial impact on Local Authority Budgets and protects our built environment.

SFRS Crews pro-actively promoted local diversionary activities. This provided opportunities for our frontline crews to engage with youths and reduce ASB.

Information sharing within the Task and Co-ordinating Group and effective multi-agency partnership working is focussed on reducing deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour. This included initiatives aimed at preventing fires within derelict properties and fires involving refuse and wheelie-bins.

Wilful fire raising in wheelie disposal bins remains a problem and is being addressed at Task and Co-ordinating Groups with partners. Guidance has been given to partners and cascaded to residents to be more vigilant and to give consideration when they place bins out for uplift and to retrieve them as soon as possible thereafter.

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Our fire setter's intervention programmes continue to target our young people in West Lothian, creating diversionary activities tailored to the reduction of fire related anti-social behaviour.

Preventing young people at risk of fire related anti-social behaviour continues to be a focus of our engagement, through our Fire skills programmes which also improve employability and citizenship as well as providing self-confidence and a greater sense of achievement.

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Appendix 3

Reduction of 'All non-domestic fires'

Fire Safety Enforcement Activity

A Pre-Programmed Audit is an audit programmed at the commencement of the fiscal year, selected from premises held within the Service's database, based on a risk assessment as defined in the Service's Enforcement Framework.

A Non-Programmed Audit is an audit that can occur throughout the year. This type of audit would be undertaken because of the following: fire safety complaints, requests from partner agencies or joint initiatives with partners, following any fire within a relevant premise and the targeting of specific premises type in line with the Service's Enforcement Framework.

Our Programmed Audits remain on schedule for completion in 2019/20

FSEC Code	Premises Type	Number of premises in Local Authority area as of 1 st APRIL 2019*	Number of premises subject to pre-planned audit 2019/20	Number of premises audited Q1 -Q3 2019/20**	% of Target Premises achieved**
A	Hospital & Prisons	07	07	16	228 %
B	Care Home	44	44	44	100 %
C	House of multiple occupation (HMO) Tenement	26	06	18	300 %
E	Hostels	02	03	02	66.6 %
F	Hotels	119*	47	12	25.5%
H	Other sleeping accommodation	01*	01	03	300 %
J	Further Education	02*	02	01	50 %
K	Public Building	32*	01	03	300 %
L	Licenced Premises	307*	14	09	64 %
M	Schools	119*	10	13	130 %
N	Shops	1064*	10	12	120 %
P	Other premises open to public	167*	18	19	110 %
R	Factories & Warehouses	330*	15	18	120 %
S	Offices	635*	06	03	50 %
T	Other Workplace	52*	00	03	300 %
	Total	2272*	184	176	95.6 %

*Pre-planned targets are only set for Hospitals, Care Homes, HMO's classed as 'high' risk or in line with licence renewals and other premises classed as 'high' or 'very high' risk.

**Where target is exceeded this is due to non-programmed auditing such as thematic auditing, fire safety complaints or post fire audits.

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Enforcement/Prohibition Notices

No Enforcement notices were served within the WL area during this reporting period. There was one served in Q1. There are 3 prohibition notices remaining (served in previous periods) which are actively being policed by our Enforcement Team.

This is a positive picture as the duty holders across the area are largely in compliance with only recommendations being the main enforcement activities. Thematic Auditing is being carried out in West Lothian based on trend analysis.

Appendix 4

Reduction of 'Special Service – RTC casualties (fatal & non-fatal)'

SFRS will augment the learning outcomes of the Road Safety Initiative West Drive by implementing our “Make it or Break it programme” which is currently been rolled out in the school environment. This will come in the form of offering tuition to young people on the hazards encountered on our roadways and educating them on safer driving and the consequences of losing concentration at the wheel.

Appendix 5

Reduction of 'Special Service – Non RTC casualties (fatal & non-fatal)'

SFRS continues to work in collaboration with partners to support the local communities and assist other agencies in delivering services. The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) pilot has been paused across the West Lothian area with the outcomes being used to assess the ongoing SFRS Transformation Project in this regard. Through ongoing negotiations, it is hoped the delivery of this service can be rolled out soon across all community fire stations across West Lothian.

Appendix 6

Reduction of 'False Alarm - UFAS'

A reduction in UFAS incidents has many benefits namely, reducing road risk, reducing SFRS carbon footprint and increasing business continuity. UFAS incidents fall into a range of categories that include, Malicious, Failure of Equipment and Good Intent.

SFRS have developed a UFAS Policy to ensure that persistent UFAS incidents within premises are addressed appropriately. Engagement with key holders is key to reducing SFRS attendance. We have programmed engagement sessions with duty holders and alarm providers to discuss solutions to UFASs, with the most recent discussions taking place with West Lothian Council who account for roughly one third of the areas UFAS calls. SFRS have a robust UFAS Policy and analyse trends and engage appropriately with Duty Holders of relevant premises.

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

A recent “staff alarms” initiative to reduce UFAS has seen a reduction in the number of false alarms in schools.

Glossary

Primary Fire

Primary fires include all fires in non-derelict buildings and outdoor structures or any fires involving casualties or rescues or any fires attended by five or more appliances.

Secondary Fires

Secondary fires are the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involve casualties or rescues, property loss or if five or more appliances attend. They include fires in derelict buildings but not chimney fires.

Accidental Dwelling Fires

Building occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostels and residential institutions. In 2000, the definition of a dwelling was widened to include any non-permanent structure used solely as a dwelling, such as caravans, houseboats etc. Caravans, boats etc. not used as a permanent dwelling are shown according to the type of property. Accidental includes fires where the cause was not known or unspecified.

Fire Fatality

A person whose death is attributed to a fire is counted as a fatality even if the death occurred weeks or months later.

Fire Casualty

Non-fatal casualties, injured as a direct result of a fire attended by the service. Includes those who received first aid at the scene and those who were recommended to go for a precautionary check. Does not include injuries to fire service personnel.

Deliberate Fire

Fires where deliberate ignition is suspected

Special Services

Special Services are non-fire incidents requiring the attendance of an appliance or officer. The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 placed a statutory duty on FRS to attend fires and road traffic accidents. It also included an additional function order that covers non-fire incidents such as rescues from collapsed buildings or serious flooding

CPP

Community Planning Partnership.

SOA

Single Outcome Agreement.

Year to Date (YTD)

Appendices for WL Q3 2019-20

Year to date is calculated from 1st April on the reporting year

RTC

Road Traffic Collision

UFAS

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Seasonal Community Safety Calendar

The seasonal calendar depicts a range of initiatives and activities that the SFRS and CPP partners will undertake throughout the year as part of our preventative strategies.

Seasonal Community Safety Calendar 2020





SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2019/20 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – MONTH 12 MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the financial performance of the Services for the Community portfolio for the General Fund Revenue budget.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the financial performance of the Services for the Community portfolio for 2019/20;
2. Notes that the Services for the Community portfolio position for the year formed part of the outturn reported to Council Executive on 23 June 2020;
3. Notes any actions required to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on customers' needs, being honest, open and accountable, making best use of resources, working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Section 95; Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, section 1-14.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	No implications at this stage.
IV Impact on performance and performance indicators	Effective budget management is an essential element of service performance. Additional financial reporting provides elected members with information to allow for proper scrutiny of performance of services.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The revenue budget provides resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The outturn for the Services for the Community portfolio revenue budget for 2019/20 was an overspend of £547,000.
VII Consideration at PDSP	A financial performance report will be presented to the Panel twice yearly on an ongoing basis.

VIII Other Consultations

Depute Chief Executives, Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Introduction

This report provides an update on the general fund revenue financial performance in respect of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) portfolio of services. The council's revenue budget is operationally managed at a Head of Service level, and the financial position included within this report formed part of the overall council position reported to Council Executive on 23 June 2020. This report also includes the position on the delivery of approved budget reduction measures relevant to the Services for the Community portfolio for 2019/20.

The budget monitoring process is undertaken in line with the council's budgetary control framework and procedures, which places particular focus on a risk based and pro-active approach to budget monitoring.

This report focuses on the financial performance of council services which further enhances the information presented to elected members to allow scrutiny of service and financial performance. The report contains reference to key performance measures for service areas which are contained within Service Management Plans and referenced in the 2018/19 Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data-set. LGBF data for 2019/20 will be collated by the Improvement Service and will be made available later in the financial year.

D.2 Financial Information for 2019/20 Outturn

The table below summarises the position in relation to service expenditure for the portfolio area. The revenue position is an overspend of £547,000 for the Services for the Community portfolio. As part of the monitoring exercise, a number of key risks and service pressures have been identified and these are noted in the narrative for the relevant service area.

	2019/20 Budget £'000	2019/20 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES			
Community Safety Unit	602	442	(160)
Homelessness	3,899	4,606	707
TOTAL	4,501	5,048	547

D.3 Summary of Main Issues in Service Expenditure Budgets and Impact on Performance

D.3.1 Housing, Customer and Building Services

Community Safety Unit

The Community Safety Unit had an underspend of £160,000 in 2019/20, due primarily to staff savings within the unit.

Performance information for the Community Safety Unit indicates that the number of active antisocial cases ranged from 37 to 84 during 2019/20. This was an average of 60 per month against the target rate of 65 per month.

Homelessness

An overspend of £707,000 was recorded in Homelessness, primarily as a result of demand for Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation. This increased demand also contributed to an overspend of £104,000 in Homelessness Transport, which is not part of the Services for the Community portfolio but will be noted in the financial performance update report to the next Education PDSP in autumn 2020. As agreed by Council Executive on 26 June 2018, charging was introduced to bring equity across the different types of temporary accommodation.

The council's approved Housing Capital programme includes provision for additional housing stock through the new build houses project, open market acquisitions and the mortgage to rent scheme, all of which are intended to mitigate some of the pressures on the homelessness budget as more housing stock becomes available to be let. In addition, the general fund capital programme includes funding for new homeless provision which is anticipated to alleviate some of the pressure. Further actions will also be required to reduce expenditure on a recurring basis and fully mitigate the budget pressure, including changes in the allocations policy, increasing the number of private sector lets and increasing the number of available properties via registered social landlords. These measures will be considered in conjunction with the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019-2024 to reduce Homelessness, an update on which was reported to Council Executive on 23 June 2020.

Performance information for the homeless area indicates that in 2019/20, the percentage of repeat homeless presentations, meaning the percentage of households who are assessed as being homeless within 12 months of previously being assessed as homeless, rose to 2.0%, from 0.6% in 2018/19, although this was still below the target of 3%.

D.3.2 Monitoring of Approved Budget Reductions

For the Services for the Community portfolio, savings of £296,000 in 2019/20 have been delivered in full.

E. SUMMARISED BUDGET POSITION FOR 2019/20

The month 12 position was an overspend of £547,000 within the General Fund Revenue budget for the Services for the Community portfolio, mainly as a result of demand for B&B accommodation. The overall outturn was reported to Council Executive on 23 June 2020.

F. FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES AND RISKS

West Lothian Council approved a four year revenue budget strategy from 2019/20 to 2022/23 on 19 February 2019, which included approved savings measures for 2019/20 of £14.674 million. The significant level of approved savings, in addition to the impact of constrained funding and the financial consequences of the current Covid-19 pandemic, is resulting in an increased risk of overspends across council services and the ability to deliver approved budget reductions. In addition, there are currently recurring pressures of around £974,000, as reported to Council Executive on 18 August 2020. Mitigating actions have been agreed and are being implemented to ensure these pressures are managed on a recurring basis.

Council Executive has been provided with a number of update reports on the financial implications of the current Covid-19 pandemic on 26 May 2020, 23 June 2020 and most recently on 18 August 2020 as part of the 2020/21 General Fund revenue budget monitoring exercise for period 3. There is an estimated revenue pressure of approximately £4.334 million in 2020/21 even after confirmed additional funding is accounted for. Taking account of this pressure, Council Executive agreed that the £994,000 over and above the minimum approved General Fund Balance level of £2 million should be ear-marked for managing the

projected 2020/21 overspend and considered the potential actions available to manage and mitigate the financial pressures. Council Executive also agreed that officers should continue to monitor the financial impact of Covid-19 and engage with the Scottish Government and COSLA around further government funding for the council to mitigate the significant additional costs being incurred by the council. Further updates will be provided to Council Executive to allow consideration of the latest position and any action required to manage to the financial implications of the virus, the next of which will be included within the month four budget monitoring exercise to be reported to Council Executive in October 2020.

The overall position reflects the very challenging financial context the council is now facing after many years of funding constraints and requirements to make significant savings with demand for services continuing to grow. There are considerable risks and uncertainties around various aspects of council spending and income, particularly the impact of Covid-19, and also including the costs of demand led services in social care, the level of inflationary increases in budgeted expenditure and the waste recycling market. There are also major risks connected to the future level of UK and Scottish Government funding and of policy changes that impact on local government in Scotland.

Specifically for the Services for the Community portfolio, there are ongoing key risks around levels of homelessness provision. The main issue facing the homeless service both in West Lothian and in Scotland as a whole is the level of demand for accommodation compared to the available supply. The council has seen a sustained period of increased demand for interim or temporary accommodation from homeless applicants and this has resulted in increased Bed & Breakfast accommodation costs well in excess of budget.

In order to reduce the continuing financial and operational pressures, the service is developing a range of approaches in order to mitigate pressures and improve the position. With more new build council houses completing in 2018/19 and a firmer understanding of the demand levels for the service and supply of housing available, there is an opportunity to reduce the requirement to use hotels whilst developing partnership working and shifting the balance of homeless frontline operations to a more preventative approach. This remains a key area in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) to reduce Homelessness.

The council's risk based approach to budget monitoring will ensure that effective action is taken to manage risks during the course of the financial year. Officers will continue to provide updates on risks as part of the quarterly budget monitoring reporting to Council Executive at periods 4, 6 and 9.

G. CONCLUSION

The position for the Services for the Community portfolio was an overspend of £547,000. As noted, the position for the Services for the Community portfolio is part of the overall out-turn position for 2019/20 which was reported to Council Executive on 23 June 2020.

H. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

2019/20 Financial Performance – Month 6 Monitoring Report – Report by Head of Finance and Property Services to Services for the Community PDSP on 10 December 2019

West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019 – 2024 – Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services to Council Executive on 23 June 2020

Draft 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Budget Outturn – Report by Head of Finance and Property Services to Council Executive on 23 June 2020

Local Government Benchmarking Framework

Appendices/attachments: None

Contact Person: Pamela Bell, Senior Service Accountant
pamela.bell@westlothian.gov.uk - Tel No. 01506 281282

Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services
Date: 20 October 2020



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY REVIEW

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the panel of the outcome of the Housing Allocations Policy Review consultation and present a draft copy of the revised Housing Allocations Policy.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

The panel is asked to note and consider the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Note the outcome of Housing Allocations Policy Review Consultation;
2. Note the updated national/local position for housing allocations and homelessness along with the impacts of COVID-19;
3. Note the outcome of the Choice Based Letting (CBL) scoping exercise
4. Approve the updated Housing Allocations Policy (Appendix 5) for implementation in accordance with paragraph D.9;
5. Agree that a CBL approach is adopted as the council's letting process with appropriate procedures and guidance being introduced and maintained by officers within the terms of the new policy once the service has reviewed and renewed/replaced the existing housing management IT System, and
6. To agree that the new policy will be reviewed every three years with the outcome of the review and recommendations reported to PDSP and to Council Executive for approval

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values

- Focusing on our customers' needs
- Being honest, open and accountable
- Providing equality of opportunities
- Making best use of our resources
- Working in partnership

II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and in accordance with the Homelessness (etc.) (Scotland) Act 2003, Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. Integrated Impact Assessment Completed.

III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers

None

IV	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Increasing levels of homelessness will have an adverse effect on the council's performance. Quarterly performance returns are monitored by the Scottish Government.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 7 - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities
VI	Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Housing Allocations Service has a housing revenue account budget of £354,611 for 2020/21 and FTE of 10 staff.
VII	Other Consultations	Legal Services, Social Policy and other internal council stakeholders

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

In December 2019, Council Executive was asked to consider a review and proposed changes to the council's Housing Allocations Policy where by a consultation with tenants, applicants and stakeholder would subsequently be carried out. It was agreed that the revised policy and consultation results would be reported back to Service for the Community PDSP for scrutiny and to Council Executive for approval. The consultation process with tenant's and applicants commenced in January 2020 and concluded on the 16 April 2020.

The council continues to experience a significant demand from people applying for council housing. As of the end of July 2020 there were 8,375 applicants on the Common Housing Register and in 2019/20 the council received 3,764 new housing applications for housing and let 1,384 houses, including new build.

The need for social housing continues to remain high and there continues to be varying degrees of demand across different communities. Given the continued high level of demand for social housing there remains an inability for the council to be able to meet the needs of all applicants on the waiting list and the supply must be utilised effectively to ensure the council is meeting the need of applicants in the most urgent housing need. The revised Allocations Policy needs to therefore reflect current demand and be focused on those in most urgent need and have the ability to adjust to changes in local demand.

D.2 Changes in National Direction

The councils Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019-2024 was developed and submitted to the Scottish Government in June 2019 and aims were aligned to generate a better flow through the homeless system while shifting focus further to an early intervention and prevention approach. A key action within the RRTP was to carry out a review of the council's Allocations Policy and better prevent homelessness through shifting the balance of social rent lets for homeless to mainstream applicants over the period of the plan.

In May 2020, as a result of COVID-19, the Scottish Government brought forward the implementation date of the extension to Unsuitable Accommodation Order (UAO) by a year to May 2020. This will have a significant impact on the council and its ability to meet the order due to the continued high demand for homeless services, mismatch between supply and demand and subsequently reliance on the use of B&B

accommodation. A temporary extension to the Order has been granted until 31 January 2021 however the challenges for the council will continue well beyond this date and at least for the duration of the RRTP.

In June 2020, the council submitted to the Scottish Government an update to the RRTP for 2020/21 and reported the significant progress that had been made in delivering the actions in collaboration with our partners in the first year of the RRTP (2019/20). Through following the RRTP approach of increasing lets to homeless across the social rented sector, increasing dispersed temporary tenancies (TTs) through Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Private Sector Leasing (PSLs) as well as considering alternative permanent housing options to social rented, the council had delivered a reduced backlog of homeless cases, reduced length of stay in TTs and almost eliminated the use of B&B.

The Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning asked the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to reconvene in early June 2020 to make recommendations to inform an updated action plan considering the impacts of the pandemic. The HARSAG 2 report was published along with the 104 recommendations in July 2020. The report is grouped around four key questions and can be found in Appendix 1. The Scottish Government have accepted all of the recommendations in principle and are in the process of producing an updated plan.

Given the impact of COVID-19 and continued high demand for homeless services the recommendations in HARSAG 2 will be significantly challenging to deliver in West Lothian due to the ongoing local supply and demand issues. Through the updated RRTP agreed in June 2020, the council has agreed to match 87.5% of social rented housing to homeless households for Year 2 of the RRTP to enable people to move on from hotels and other emergency accommodation. It is anticipated that given the ongoing pressures of the pandemic it is projected that the level of lets may need to increase further to meet RRTP commitments.

The key challenge of the allocations policy will be the ability to meet the continuing demand for homelessness and the requirements of HARSAG as the council moves to a housing options/homeless prevention in order to shift the balance away from homeless demand and thus reprioritise the proportion of lets aimed at urgent housing need.

D.3 West Lothian Position

Demand for social housing and in particular homelessness continues to remain high. The requirement to continue with high percentage of lets to homelessness to reduce time spent in temporary accommodation and use of B&B has meant that the policy is failing to meet one of its main objectives in addressing housing need and promote the prevention of homelessness. The high percentage of lets whilst assisting to achieve throughput in temporary accommodation is also seen as a perverse incentive to present as homelessness to access social housing. The new policy will aim to shift this balance and better prevent homelessness with lets to homeless gradually being reduced as part of the RRTP model in line with reduced homeless demand.

Table 1 provides an update on the level of lets that went to each group in 2019/20 and in quarter 1 2020/21. The table shows a high percentage of lets to homeless, 55% in 2019/20, which remains the same as 2018/19. When removing new builds from these figures the percentage of lets in 2019/20 increases to 73.1% (762 units) compared to 76% (737 units) let in 2018/19.

Table 1: Lets

	2018/19		2019/20		Q1 2020/21	
Group	Lets No	% Lets	Lets No	% Lets	Lets No	% Lets
Homeless (HLWC)	737	54.9%	762	55.1%	41	76%
Transfer Lets (TL)	374	27.8%	342	24.7%	3	5.5%
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	204	15.2%	251	18.1%	10	18.5%
General Needs (GN)	27	2.0%	18	1.3%	0	0%
Sheltered (HWCA / HWCB)	0	0.0%	11	0.8%	0	0%
Outwith (OW)	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0%
Total	1343	100%	1384	100%	54	100%

The Council has formal nominations agreement in place to allow for referrals to other RSLs to be made for mainstream list and homeless applicants. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the lets RSLs made in 2019/20 and quarter 1 2020/21 and how many of these were allocated to homeless applicants. The table shows 48% of RSL lets went to homeless applicants in 2019/20 increasing to 95% in quarter 1 2020/21.

Table 2: RSL Lets

	2019/20	Q1 2020/21
	Lets No	Lets No
Total Lets Available	409	19
Total Lets to Homeless Applicants	200	18

D.4 Update on RRTP

Prior to COVID-19 some initial progress was evidenced at the end of year 1, 2019/20, of the RRTP when compared with the previous year.

- Reduction in the use of B&B Accommodation from 77 as of 31 March 2019 to 13 as of 31 March 2020;
- 3.4% reduction in homeless presentations between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020;
- Backlog of open cases reduced by 35% from 838 as of 1 April 2019 to 686 as of 31 March 2020, and
- Average length of stay in dispersed temporary tenancies reduced from 98.2 days in 2018/19 to 88.2 days in 2019/20.

Updated modelling has been undertaken for Year 2 onwards taking into account the impacts of COVID-19 in 2020/21 and the subsequent 3 Year period of the remainder of the plan. The revised targets for year two and three of the plan are as follows;

- 87.5% council lets to homeless in 2020/21 and 62.5% in 2021/22 to help deal with the impact of COVID-19;
- Reduce the use of B&B Accommodation to 23 places per night by end of 2020/21 and to 12 by the end of 2021/22;
- Ensure homeless presentations do not increase by more than 12.5% in 2020/21, due to COVID-19 and then reduce by 5% throughout the remaining 3 years for the plan;
- To reduce the backlog of open cases through a target of 77% of all social rented lets to homeless from 838 as of 31 March 2019 to 760 by end of 2020/21.

Updated RRTP let predictions were reviewed to expected level of lets over the next 4 years. This included the new builds and secondary lets that are expected to be

generated from these new builds. Table 3 shows the breakdown of predicated lets over the next 4 years.

Table 3: Lets Predictions

	Projected Lets			
	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Total Lets Available	877	1,010	958	807
Secondary Lets to Homeless	70	221	76	0
Total Available Lets	947	1,231	1,034	807

The predicted level of lets has been further broken down per group for the next 4 years to get a clearer picture of what lets to each group could look like. This can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Predicted Lets per Group

Group	Total Projected Lets per group			
	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
Homeless (HLWC)	824	769	517	404
Transfer Lets (TL)	78	291	317	248
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	36	138	175	135
General Needs (GN)	9	32	24	19
Sheltered (HWCA / HWCB)	1	1	1	1
Total Lets	947	1,231	1,034	807

Whilst lets to homeless are required to be increased to assist with the impact of COVID-19 it is still intended to remain focused on the objectives of the Housing Allocations Policy review and gradually reduce the percentage social lets to homeless to 62.5% in Year 3 (2021/22) and 50% in Year 4 (2022/23) and Year 5 (2023/24) of the RRTP to ensure the Housing Allocations Policy meets its main objectives of prevention of homeless. Progress will continue to be reviewed quarterly and adjusted over the life of the plan

D.5 Housing Allocation Policy Consultation Results

The Housing Allocation Policy consultation process was wide ranging and gave an opportunity for comments from all applicants, internal and external partners, RSLs, staff, tenant, Tenant's Panel and the Tenants network. The consultation concluded on 16th April 2020 with 2,724 people having responded. There were 9 questions set in the survey asking for views and comments on proposed changes to the point's framework this included choice for homeless applicants and the transfer led approach. The consultation questions can be found in Appendix 2 with a full summary of the results in Appendix 3.

Table 5: Housing Allocation Policy Consultation Result Summary

Question	Yes	No	Unsure
1. Increase homeless points	66%	14%	20%
2. Create a Strategic Needs Category	75%	8%	17%
3. Increase Below Tolerable Standard	67%	6%	27%
4. Increase Overcrowding	78%	8%	14%
5. Increase Sharing	66%	8%	26%
6. Increase Medical	84%	5%	11%
7. Increase Support	75%	5%	20%
8. Review Transfer Led Approach	63%	25%	12%
9. Review Homeless Choice	74%	8%	18%

10. Choice Based Letting	67%	8%	25%
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Upon review, the outcome of the consultation exercise was very positive with a high level of response agreeing with the proposed changes. Overall all questions were supported. There was a consistent theme through all of the comments in support of the recommendations that these changes would better prevent homelessness and create more opportunities for people to achieve housing before they reach crisis point.

The highest level of “Yes” response was to increase medical points as this was considered to be one of the top priorities for housing. Respondents felt those with the highest medical need should come first for housing. Although those responding who did not agree with this said that this was because mental health points were not being considered as the same level of priority as physical medical conditions.

The highest levels of “No” responses were against the decision to remove the transfer led approach. Respondents felt this was an effective way of making best use of stock. The respondents who agreed with the recommendation to reduce the transfer approach felt the current approach was unfair to those with a greater housing need who would have no chance of securing a better quality property and that houses should be allocated to those most in housing need or better mixed to create more balanced communities.

There was also an emerging theme of stigma associated to vulnerable groups such as homeless households, young people and prison leavers and it was also clear that the service needs to better address expectations versus reality and provide better quality advice about council housing need, demand and supply.

D.6 Revised Housing Allocations Policy

Appendix 4 provides a summary of the changes to the existing Housing Allocations Policy and the revised draft Housing Allocation Policy document can be found in Appendix 5. All the results and comments received through the consultation exercise have been fully considered and the current Housing Allocations Policy has been revised to update and reflect all the proposed changes. The draft Allocations Policy has been developed taking into account research from other council Housing Allocations Policies which include Perth & Kinross Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee City Council and Renfrewshire Council.

Applicants will continue to be assessed on need and categorised in accordance with their circumstances, taking account of legal reasonable preference. The council will continue to operate a cumulative point base system with the review making changes to the level of points awarded within the existing points framework. This is to ensure levels are weighted in accordance with legal requirements, priority need and the R RTP aim to prevent homelessness through targeting at risk of homeless applicants.

The changes include:

- The current threatened with homelessness and insecurity of tenure points category have been changed to strategic needs category. This reflect local urgent housing need and increases the points allocated to those who are at risk of homelessness from 200 points to 750 points.
- To reduce the use of exceptional circumstance points through increasing points awards from 200 to 500 for Below Tolerable Standard and 250 to 500 points for Medical A. Increase points for overcrowding from 150 points per room to 250 points per room. Increase Medical B points and Mental Health Assessment points from 200 to 250 points. Sharing points will be increase from 100 to 150 points per person and to give or receive support points would increase from 100 to 150 points.

- To provide incentive for people to compare the points which could be awarded through the cumulative points framework to prevent homelessness and to be housed quicker it is proposed that Homeless households would be awarded 750 points, but these would be non-cumulative.
- To increase homeless applicant's chance of being offered permanent housing while at the same time promoting choice homeless less applicants can select any three wards areas out of 8 ward areas, with Livingston South and Livingston North being combined as one ward area.
- Allocating 75% of new builds in the first instance to meet the needs of existing tenants and 25% to mainstream waiting list. This will continue to generate through put in existing stock whilst allocating some new build stock to those in most need on the mainstream list.

The policy has also been up dated to include the provision that all housing applicants will be entitled to have a Personal Housing Plan completed to discuss their housing options. To ensure that the service works with applicants in urgent housing needs, the revised policy identifies that all housing applicants qualifying for one or more of the strategic needs categories will be contacted to completed a personal Housing Plan.

In addition to this the service has also taken the opportunity to review the group plus approach to the council's cumulative points system in line with legislative requirements and the aims of the RRTP to shift to a prevention approach to homelessness. Housing allocations legislation states that the council must give reasonable preference to certain categories of applicants when letting houses which include:

- homeless persons and people threatened with homelessness with unmet housing needs;
- people living in unsatisfactory housing conditions with unmet housing needs;
- tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and we consider them to be under occupied as defined in this policy.

The Housing Allocations Policy has been revised to establish 4 categories which applicants will be placed in once their applications have been assessed. The 4 categories are:

- Homeless applicants;
- General Needs applicants;
- Transfer applicants; and
- Applicants out with West Lothian.

The council will set target lets annually to align with the RRTP and will monitor lets these on a monthly basis to ensure we are effectively letting properties to applicants with the highest housing need.

D.7 Choice Based Letting Scoping Exercise

Choice based letting (CBL) is an alternative approach to traditional allocation letting processes and is designed to place choice at the heart of the letting system determined by the applicant. Scottish Government practice guide to Social Housing Allocations has recognised CBL as a good model for allocating housing as it offers a greater degree of choice and control for applicants and can help support tenancy sustainment. Good practice guidance also suggests that meeting housing need and allocating properties in a fair and equal way should remain the underpinning principle to a CBL system which is linked to an organisations allocation letting policy. The full scoping report is included in Appendix 6.

In December 2019, Council Executive agreed, as part of the review of the council Housing Allocations Policy to explore a CBL approach and to report back to PDSP and

Council Executive. It was agreed as part of the consultation process to ask tenants and applicants if they agreed to further explore a CBL approach. Overall, responses were positive to a move to a CBL of the 2,438 people responded 66.7% supporting CBL, 8.4% did not supporting it and 24.9% were unsure.

Respondents who agreed with CBL felt it was a more transparent way of allocating housing, allowing people to choose the house they wanted to stay in which would reduce refusals. More choice was seen as a positive step for those in housing need and for creating sustainable communities. The CBL process was also seen to be more positive as applicants would know how many people they were competing against. Respondents felt it offered greater customer control and therefore greater satisfaction in being offered a house you chose to live in. Additionally, respondents felt it was in line with how other RSLs and local authorities allocated and a more modernised way of allocating housing.

In Scotland, several landlords have opted for this type of allocation system which includes Highland Council, Edinburgh City Council, Renfrewshire Council, Falkirk Council and Angus Council. A number of Registered Social Landlords also operate a CBL system including Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Grampian Housing Association, Sanctuary Housing and Castle Rock/Edinvar Housing Association.

The CBL approach is designed to allow applicants greater choice and control in deciding where they wish to live, in turn reducing refusal rates, decreasing void times, making inhouse efficiencies and creating more sustainable communities. CBL systems will not create more supply but it does allow the council to be more transparent about where houses are vacant and what the demand is, this in turns allows applicants to make more informed choices and better manage their expectations.

The respondents who did not support this choice felt that the current system was already a fair way of allocating housing and not everyone would have the means and ability to bid for housing therefore potentially losing out on offers. The respondents raised questions on how such a system would work for people who were not computer literate or had no access to PCs. In addition, respondents felt that the bidding system would provide a false sense of hope when they may have no chance of being successful for certain houses. For clarification it should be noted that the council will not be changing its cumulative points-based approach to housing need. The CBL approach would only change the letting mechanism.

There are concerns that CBL if not implemented with the correct supporting processes it can disadvantage more vulnerable groups who may miss out on housing opportunities. There are a number of good practices operating across councils and RSLs which are incorporated into CBL systems to mitigate this. Support systems can be developed to assist applicants to bid through the use of automatic bidding systems, specialise support teams to bid on applicants behalf, reminder systems and assisted bidding lists.

West Lothian Choice Based Letting System

The CBL approach compliments the council's priorities to shift to a housing options and prevention approach through its allocation policy and processes. As part of the Digital Transformation Strategy the council is committed to ensuring there are a range of options available to allow customers to interact with its services. The service has completed the online housing application allowing applicants to now directly apply online for social housing and is in the process of finalising an online mutual exchange system. A CBL system would support a move towards a more digital transformation and allow customers more control and choice in bidding for a house they wish to live in. A CBL letting system and online application would be part of a suite of self-service options for applicants applying for social housing.

The introduction of a CBL approach would not remove the Housing Allocation Policy's key priorities of meeting those applicants in greatest housing needs. The service is confident that a CBL system would enhance services and processes and is committed to ensuring that it incorporates best practice from around the UK to ensure the lettings system does not disadvantage any applicant who is vulnerable and could potentially miss out on housing opportunities.

Any CBL system will need to be incorporated as part of the wider Housing, Customer and Building Services management system. Currently the service is undergoing an options appraisal with a potential to replace the existing open housing system. Whilst this is ongoing it is anticipated that the letting process to support the revised Housing Allocation Policy if agreed will remain as it is, service led, with the gradual move to a fully integrated CB letting approach in line with the implementation of any new system or upgrade to the new system. It should be noted that CBL is a lettings approach and not a change to the Housing Allocations Policy.

D.8 Specialist Provision

The current Housing Allocations Policy caters for all need and specific areas of specialist provision for vulnerable people including older people, looked after children and young people leaving care, people with learning disabilities, mental health issues and people leaving care settings. The service has reviewed with West Lothian Health and Social Care Partners access to specialist housing provision and can advise the following:

- Housing with Care Policy - no change
- Sheltered Housing Policy/Assisted Living - no change
- Looked after children (Children (Scotland) Act 1995) – will be awarded 750 points under strategic needs category
- Core & Cluster – referral and assessment required from social policy
- Complex Care Housing Unit – referral and assessment required from social policy

Specialised provision can be found in Section 5.4.3(e) of the revised Housing Allocations Policy attached at Appendix 5.

D.9 Integrated Impact Assessment

An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was carried out against the draft Housing Allocations Policy linking into the previous IIA carried out for the RRTP and Local Housing Strategy. This is included in Appendix 7.

It is anticipated that overall the revisions to the Housing Allocations Policy should have a largely positive effect on all citizens in West Lothian and particularly those experiencing homeless or those threatened with homelessness through its aim to better prevent homelessness. The policy should have no adverse effect on any of the equality groups as the main aim of the policy is to provide housing to those most in housing need.

It has been identified that if lets to homeless applicants remain high this will be overly proportionate and potentially has a negative effect on other vulnerable groups. In order to mitigate this and ensure a more proportionate level of lets to all groups and better prevent homelessness the aim is to gradually reduce the level of lets to homeless in Year 3, 4 and 5 as per the RRTP model.

D.10 Next Steps

The table below outlines the next steps to be taken following on from the outcome of the consultation of the proposed changes to the council's Housing Allocations Policy. If Council Executive approves the revisions to the Housing Allocation Policy it is timetabled that the changes will be implemented by 29 February 2021.

Action	Date
Consideration at Council Executive and seek approval of revised Housing Allocations Policy.	27 October 2020
Commence Review of Housing List	30 November 2020
Develop and Finalise Processes	26 February 2021
Implement new Housing Allocations Policy & Points Framework	29 February 2021

The service will also commence work required to progress the choice based letting approach as the mechanism for letting council housing in West Lothian. This will include working with our common housing register partners and developing the detail of the system to be used as well as the support systems required to assist customers with this approach.

E. CONCLUSION

The review of the current Housing Allocation Policy has established that it doesn't meet the key aims of homeless prevention and the need to shift from the current position to a housing options approach. The consultation process has established that there is positive support for all the proposed changes to enable a shift to homeless prevention and housing options approach to ensure that council housing is allocated to those with the highest housing need. The changes in the revised Housing Allocation Policy will meet the local needs of the people of West Lothian as well as continue to meet legislative and good practice guidance and promote sustainability.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Council Executive Paper 17 December 2019: Housing Allocations Policy Review
Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: A Practice Guide, The Scottish Government, February 2019

A guide to choice-based lettings, Chartered Institute of Housing, November 2017

Fair allocations and choice based lettings, Shelter, December 2005

Choice Based Letting, Stirling University, January 2017

Ending Homelessness Together, The Scottish Government, November 2018

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: A Scottish Overview, Crisis, February 2020

Rapid Transition Plan: West Lothian Council, 2019-2024

Digital Transformation Strategy: West Lothian Council, 2018/19-2022/23

Appendices/Attachments: 7

Contact Person: Katy McBride, katy.mcbride@westlothian.gov.uk 01506 281070

AnnMarie Carr
Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services
20 October 2020

APPENDIX 1: HARSAG 2

The HARSAG 2 report was published along with the 105 recommendations in July 2020. The report is grouped around four key questions which are summarised in the table below along with the high-level response (A to O) to each question: The Scottish Government have accepted all of the recommendations in principle and are in the process of producing an updated plan.

A full copy of the report can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group-final-report-tackling-coronavirus/>

Qu1	What needs to already be in place for the ongoing emergency? <i>A - Ongoing access to suitable emergency self-contained accommodation to ensure people are not exposed to coronavirus by rough sleeping or staying in congregate settings</i> <i>B- Support, advice and advocacy for all people rough sleeping or in emergency accommodation during the coronavirus crisis period</i> <i>C- Full and frequent weekly audit of current situation</i>
Qu2	What needs to be done to ensure people move forward from emergency accommodation? <i>D- Ensure there is an immediate flexible supply of affordable housing for all in emergency accommodation or rough sleeping</i> <i>E - Maximise housing options for everyone</i> <i>F - Learning from the Covid19 response and sharing best practice</i>
Qu3	How can we do to prevent as much homelessness as possible? <i>G - Emergency immediate prevention activity for groups facing an increased risk of homelessness during and following the coronavirus crisis</i> <i>H - Extend emergency protections for renters created for the coronavirus pandemic</i> <i>I - Prevent rough sleeping for people with complex needs and those excluded from services</i> <i>J - Strengthen and accelerate prevention programmes</i> <i>K - Prevent migrant homelessness and destitution</i> <i>L - Urgent requests of the Westminster Government</i>
Qu4.	What needs to change in the National Action Plan to end homelessness to recognise the changing circumstances caused by coronavirus? <i>M - Continue to strengthen national plan for ending homelessness</i> <i>N - Strategic housing needs</i> <i>O - Rapid rehousing and maximum housing options for all</i>

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

House letting policy (or allocation policy) consultation
Please note that this consultation form is available in other formats, on request, such as in larger print.
Introduction
<p>At present, West Lothian Council's allocation policy prioritises those who have the highest need based on their points' award. This applies to mainstream applicants, tenants and homeless applicants.</p> <p>The proposed changes to the Policy aim to give a greater focus on the prevention of homelessness, better address those in greatest housing need, create faster through put of housing for those who are homeless whilst continuing to recognise reasonable preference categories as determined in law.</p> <p>The current policy operates a group plus points system approach. Properties are allocated to applicants with the greatest need and highest points.</p> <p>Our new allocation policy meets with all relevant legal provisions and good practice guidance.</p>
Issue 1: Housing needs
<p>Statutory Homeless</p> <p>It is proposed to award a higher priority of points to applicants of West Lothian Council who are currently homeless. Points will not be cumulative and houses will still be allocated to these applicants in date order.</p> <p>Do you agree with this approach?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p> <p>Please explain why:</p>
Issue 2: Categories
<p>Strategic Needs</p> <p>It is proposed to create a new points category which will include applicants who previously were considered as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital Discharge • Leaving support accommodation to community care • Medical A • Looked after and accommodated children (Children (Scotland) Act 1995) • Leaving Forces (leaving full time regular service and within 9 months of discharge) • Domestic Abuse • Prison Discharge • Leaving Care • Notice to Quit • People at risk of /experiencing serious harassment • Forced sale

- Witness protection
- Asked to leave/living in insecure accommodation
- Forced to Live apart

These applicants previously received 200 points and it is proposed to increase these to 750 points to increase the chances of achieving an offer of housing and support the prevention of homelessness.

Do you agree with this approach?

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

Below Tolerable Standard

Its is proposed to increase these points from 250 to 500 points to ensure a reasonable level of points are awarded based on the increases across all other categories.

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

Overcrowding

Its is proposed to increase these points from 150 points per room to 250 points per room to ensure a reasonable level of points are awarded based on the increases across all other categories.

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

Sharing

Its is proposed to increase these points from 100 per person to 150 points per person to ensure a reasonable level of points are awarded based on the increases across all other categories.

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

Medical Needs

Its is proposed to increase these points for Medical A from 250 to 500 points and Medical B from 200 points to 250 points and Mental Health Assessment from 200 points to 250 points to ensure a reasonable level of points are awarded based on the increases across all other categories.

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

Support

It is proposed to increase these points from 100 points to 150 points to ensure a reasonable level of points are awarded based on the increases across all other categories.

<p>Yes No Not sure</p> <p>Please explain why:</p>
<p>Issue 3: New Build Allocations</p>
<p>New Build Accommodation Transfer Approach</p> <p>The council currently allocates 100% of new build properties to existing council tenants this to ensure making best use of existing resources by generating secondary lets which can be allocated.</p> <p>It is proposed to allocate 75% of new build properties to existing tenants to continue to make best use of existing stock but allocate 25% to mainstream applicants in greatest need to better address housing need and create sustainable communities.</p> <p>Do you agree with this approach?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p> <p>Please explain why:</p>
<p>Issue 4: Homeless Choice</p>
<p>Homeless Choice</p> <p>The current allocations policy allows applicants assessed as homeless to chose between 10 and 47 areas of West Lothian.</p> <p>Within the new allocations policy, it is proposed that the choices will move from areas to wards whereby Livingston North and South will be combined and a homeless applicant will be able to choose a minimum of 3 wards areas within West Lothian.</p> <p>This will support the councils and HARSAG aims to create faster throughput to permanent accommodation for those who are Homeless.</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p> <p>Please explain why:</p> <p>Note: Homeless applicants will be considered for any type of housing on any level unless there is a medical reason. (This must be supported by a property needs application and assessment).</p>
<p>Issues 5: Letting Process</p>
<p>Choice Based Letting</p> <p>The council currently directly lets properties to applicants based on a short listing system. It is proposed to move away from this approach and implement a Choice Based Letting system. This will give applicants greater choice and control to chose the properties in which they wish</p>

to bid for but also reduce the time taken to shortlist and match properties against applicants who then chose to change their choices.

This will create better transparency, be more customer focused and reduce refusals.

At this stage the council is proposing to undertake further research to implement Choice Based Letting and is seeking views on whether you agree with this approach.

Do you agree with this approach?

Yes No Not sure

Please explain why:

General comments (please provide any general views):

Name (optional):

Contact details (optional):

If you give your name and contact details, may we contact you to discuss your views:

Yes No

Thank you for taking time to complete this consultation form.

APPENDIX 3: CONSULTATION REPORT

1.0 Overview of consultation questions

The Housing Allocations Policy consultation concluded on 16th April 2020 in total 2,724 people responded. There were 10 questions whereby respondents were asked to provide an answer to whether they agreed with suggestions answering yes, no or unsure and provide relevant comments. All questions had responses however comments were received for all questions except Support Points due to a technical issue with the online survey.

A summary of each question is provided as follows.

2.0 Homeless Points

- 2,677 people responded
- 65.9% (1,764) yes
- 13.7% (368) no
- 20.4% (545) unsure

This was the highest responded question. The vast majority of comments which supported this suggestion were in favour of this stating homelessness should be the top priority for housing and considered as an urgent need. Others commented that the points would help people's anxiety and help them understand with the high level of points they were being seen as a priority. Some comments also made reference to still ensuring allocations were made in date order of presentation.

The comments that were made against supporting this suggestion were related to concerns about the current system being abused by applicants who were not homeless and using this route as a means to get access to council housing faster. There were suggestions that homelessness shouldn't be the top priority for housing as some of the other categories were just as much in housing need if not greater.

The responses that were unsure varied. Some felt the points should only be increased for local homeless people and others commented points should only be awarded to people who were homeless for certain reasons such as armed forces and domestic abuse. However again there was an underlying theme of comments whereby respondents felt this system was openly being used by applicants who were not homeless to fast track into council housing. Suggestions were made that the council should carry out more stringent checks on why applicants have become homeless.

3.0 Strategic Needs

- 2,652 people responded
- 74.8% (1,983) yes
- 8.5% (226) no
- 16.7% (443) unsure

The majority of comments agreeing with this proposal state that it will support the prevention of homelessness ensuring there are earlier interventions. Many comments relate to people having been in these situations and not being able to obtain housing before they became homeless. There is a common theme of points should be in place for those most vulnerable and that the policy should support taking these areas forward for fast rehousing and to ensure they do not become homeless.

There was an overwhelming theme that prison leavers should not have any points and not be prioritised for housing. Other comments also suggested that lesser points should be awarded to lesser priorities within this group such as those with NTQ, asked

to leave or mortgage repossession as they are not immediately at risk. Those suggested this group would become too large if not appropriately vetted and monitored and would create a large amount of people with the same level of points making it unlikely any of the vulnerable groups would achieve housing. A number of other responses felt that single people or couples who have no other type of need are not included in this group of priority need applicants and are therefore unlikely to be rehoused and are being discriminated against. A number of other comments were made about people using this system to abuse it and get access to council housing.

The comments received from unsure responses were in relation to prisoners and whether they should be part of this category at all or whether there should be lesser points within this category for lesser priority reasons as described above such as 500.

4.0 Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)

- 2,620 people responded
- 67.3% (1,764) yes
- 6.2% (163) no
- 26.5% (693) unsure.

Most respondents felt this was a fair proposal to benefit the well-being of the tenants suffering BTS. A number of respondents felt it would help prevent homelessness. Some respondents commented that no one should have to live in sub-standards housing and not enough is being done to force landlords to carry out repairs. There were additional comments that the points should be as high as homelessness.

Those respondents who did not agree with this thought the survey was referring to WLC properties and felt that the council should review its own repairing standard to improve properties as opposed to moving tenants out. Other respondents felt the points were open to abuse and if the property standard was self-inflicted no points should be awarded or the owners should be forced to carry out repairs as opposed to rehousing the applicant.

The respondents who were unsure about their decision made comment that they did not understand the question and what was meant by Below Tolerable Standard.

5.0 Overcrowding

- 2,630 people responded
- 78.4% (2,063) yes
- 7.7% (201) no
- 13.9% (366)

Most respondents felt it was fair and reasonable to increase the points award although concern was also common in relation to 'reasonable vetting processes', that 'genuine evidence' should be sought. Some comments were specifically around studio flats that don't technically have 1 bedroom but this is not taken into consideration. Some comments felt points should only be awarded where the overcrowding situation is not self-inflicted. Other comments also suggested consideration should be taken in regards to individual bedroom sizes when assessing for points. A few responses suggested wait times were too high for larger properties and more stock was therefore required. A small number of comments also asked whether under occupation would be treated the same way.

Those respondents who did not support this suggestion were mainly on the basis that it was felt overcrowding points were being abused and not being checked enough to ensure accurate. Others felt that the points should be awarded on a case by case basis as some applicants were choosing to move into overcrowded situations to get

more points. There were concerns raised that single applicants would receive less points than those of larger households. Some respondents felt the points should be higher and that there was no real benefit if all points were being increased.

The respondents who were unsure about this suggestion were unclear on what difference the points increase would make if all points were being increased. There were additional comments on applicants placing themselves into overcrowded positions. However there was also a lack of general understanding of the question.

6.0 Sharing

- 2,606 people responded
- 66.3% (1,727) yes
- 8.3% (215) no
- 25.5% (664) unsure.

Most responses felt it was fair and reasonable to increase the current level of points awarded to give a better chance for those sharing to be reached with an offer of housing. Others felt that the award of sharing points should be dependent on the severity of sharing within a household e.g. 2 people sharing is not the same as having to share with 4 people. Suggestion that applications are pointed on a more individual basis taking account of bedroom sizes rather than assuming 1 bedroom is large enough for 2 people to share. A lot of responses also relate to children of the same household having to share a bedroom for which sharing points would not be awarded.

A strong theme of not understanding the question is present or what sharing points would be awarded for. There was confusion about sharing vs overcrowding points. Some responses felt sharing was not a reason for points to be awarded as long as there is no overcrowding. Other responses relate to the overall increase in points in all categories therefore there is no advantage to this. Other responses felt that the points should be higher than and some felt it should be less. There were additional comments again about applicants abusing the system.

Most comments did not understand the question or were unsure what the difference would be if all points were increased.

7.0 Medical

- 2,620 people responded
- 83.7% (2,193) yes
- 5.5% (145) no
- 10.8% (282) unsure

This response was the most supported question. The main theme from those respondents who agreed with this felt that increasing medical points were necessary and a high priority to ensure those most in need of housing are most likely to achieve this. A number of comments also suggested that the council should seek to request more detailed medical evidence to ensure points are awarded fairly and not as easily as currently awarded. A number of respondents felt that a serious medical condition should be classed as Medical A.

Those respondents who did not agree with the increase in medical points were in disagreement because mental health points were not being given the same level of priority as physical medical conditions. This was a very strong theme whereby respondents felt mental health should be an equal priority, medical A, and that this was discrimination. Other respondents felt the system was being abused and the service was too lenient on evidence.

Of the respondents who were unsure the main comment was they simply did not understand the question and asked for more information on what this would mean in practice.

8.0 Support

- 2,604 people responded
- 75.4% (1,963) yes
- 5.1% (134) no
- 19.5% (507) unsure

This question had no comments received due to a technical difficulty in the survey.

9.0 Transfer Led

- 2,588 people responded
- 63.6% (1,646) yes
- 22.2% (575) no
- 14.2% (367) unsure

The majority of respondents felt that new build houses should not solely be allocated to existing tenants as there are other people in more urgent housing need than tenants and some tenants have no housing need and or are adequately housed. Comments around this related to applicants with greater need waiting longer and being offered less desirable housing in less desirable communities, therefore never getting the benefit/quality of a newbuild tenancy. Respondents felt this was unfair. Respondents mainly felt houses should be allocated to those who most need it and in highest urgent housing need. Comments also suggested that communities should be better mixed with a range of different tenants which includes homeless applicants. A number of other respondents also commented on how more stringent checks should be carried out to ensure that applicants have a proven track record before matching to a new build. Some suggestions were made that the recommended split wasn't enough and suggested a 50/50 split.

The respondents who did not agree with this approach felt that the current approach was fair and allowed existing tenants to move and therefore free up their own housing. Comments suggested it was a positive way of encouraging tenants to look after their house knowing they would be rewarded with a new one and allow them to move out of an older house into a newer one. However there were a number of comments that tenants should only be allowed to move once, as some tenants were moving from one newbuild estate to another and that checks should be more stringent to ensure they were more likely to be a good tenant.

The respondents who were unsure related to applicants being unclear on which group should get the priority for newbuild housing. Some comments felt homeless applicants should be given a priority, other comments felt some applicants should but others shouldn't these were mainly around perception and stigma of certain groups such as prisoners and young people.

10.0 Homeless Choice

- 2,534 people responded
- 74.2% (1,882) yes
- 7.6% (192) no
- 18.2% (460) unsure.

Respondents felt that moving to three wards would be an improvement to the current system allowing applicants to be rehoused into permanent housing more quickly

therefore creating shorter waiting times and less time in temporary accommodation. There was an overwhelming response that homeless applicants needed to be rehoused quickly and spend too long waiting and therefore this would resolve these issues.

Respondents who did not agree with this approach felt that homeless applicants should have the same right to choose as mainstream applicants regardless to the time impact this would cause. Respondents felt applicants should be housed in local areas where there is support from their family and local networks which are more important factors for applicants who have experienced homelessness. Others felt that they would be unfairly disadvantaged in area where there is low stock. There was an underlying theme that homeless applicants should not be given any priority for housing as many are currently abusing the system and providing false information to use it as means to access social housing.

Those respondents who were unsure were unclear about what this actually meant in practice, whether this meant less choice or more choices, faster throughput to housing or housed in areas of lower demand.

11.0 Choice Based Letting

- 2,442 people responded
- 66.7% (1,629) yes
- 8.4% (205) no
- 24.9% (608) unsure

This response received the highest level of none agreements at 24.9%. The respondents who agreed with this question felt it was a more transparent way of allocating housing, allowing people to choose the house they wanted to stay in which would reduce refusals. Respondents felt it offered more customer choice and greater customer control and therefore greater satisfaction in being offered a house you chose to live in. Additionally respondents felt it was in line with how other RSLs and Local Councils allocated and a more modernised way of allocating housing. Other comments felt it was a more transparent way to see which houses were available.

The respondents who did not support this choice felt that the points system was a fair way of allocating housing and not everyone would have the means and ability to bid for housing therefore potentially losing out on offers. In addition respondents felt that the bidding system would provide a false sense of hope when may have no chance of ever being successful for certain houses.

The respondents who were unsure raised questions on how such a system would work for people who were not computer literate or had no access to pcs. Respondents were also unsure how the choice would be decided if several applicants bid for one property if points were not used.

12.0 Conclusion

There was a clear theme of stigma associated to vulnerable groups such as homeless households, young people and prison leavers. Through effective communication identified in the communication plan the service can work towards changing some of these views.

Another strong key theme was concerns about the current system and policy being abused calling for further checks and evidence to be gathered to ensure where points are awarded or homeless status is given this is validated. The review of existing processes and checks should ensure robust methods for evidence gathering.

However new processes will also need to be developed for the awarding of new points categories and consideration to whether these should be time limited.

The final point for action will be to better address expectations vs reality and provide better quality advice about council housing need and demand. There was a lack of understanding need and demand and this could be better addressed through advice given to applicants on the list who have little to no chance of council housing to help them understand this, along with what alternative options are available. This is another area the services communication plan will address through key messages on social media and other outlets.

Overall all questions have been positively supported to be taken forward however a number of points were identified for consideration and appropriate action.

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APPENDIX 4: REVISED HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY CHANGES

Policy Change	Current Policy	Proposed Changes
<p><u>Review of overall policy to align with RRTP.</u></p>	<p>Key aim was to promote the prevention of homelessness but this has failed due to high homeless presentations and lets to homeless.</p> <p>Number of people who could have been prevented from becoming homeless</p> <p>High use of exceptional circumstance to house people at risk of homelessness or in urgent housing need.</p> <p>Inability to promote choice and flexibility within the current policy due to pressure via homeless route.</p>	<p>Promote choice to prevent homelessness and focus on a housing options approach at point of application to the Common Housing Register to ensure all housing options have been explored, including the private sector. Ensure that information is provided to applicant on the likelihood of being housed by the council and other social landlords in West Lothian.</p> <p>Shift to a prevention of homelessness by providing sufficient cumulative points to those in acute and urgent housing need to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Shift to a prevention approach through providing greater priority to points to those at risk of homeless, but continue to give priority to other reasonable preference group in unsatisfactory housing such as overcrowding and under occupancy.</p> <p>Ensure people assessed as homeless are provided permanent accommodation as quickly as possible with fewer transitions in temporary accommodation and reduced length of stay through the agreed RRTP targets.</p>
<p><u>Review of Points Framework</u></p> <p>This would review the point's levels for specific categories of applicant to promote access to housing whilst avoiding / preventing homelessness.</p>	<p>The current points level range from 100 to 250 points with 1,500 points for exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>There are a number of groups who are prioritised by law that the council must give reasonable preference to if the household have unmet housing need. These are; homeless, threatened with homelessness, under occupying and living in unsatisfactory housing.</p> <p>There is no legal definition of unsatisfactory housing and the council will need to determine the type of housing need to include within the unreasonable category.</p> <p>Currently homeless applicants do not get an award of points, with applications held in date of decision to place them within the Homeless Group.</p>	<p>There are 4 proposed changes to the points framework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current threatened with homelessness and insecurity of tenure points category would change to a strategic needs category. This category has been revised to reflect local urgent housing need and would increase the points allocated to those who are at risk of homelessness from 200 points to 750 points. This would increase the applicant's position on the housing list and the likelihood for consideration of offer and reduce the number of exceptional circumstances currently being awarded. 2. A new strategic needs category would be created for applicants at risk of homelessness. This would include additional insecurity of tenure applicants based on local need e.g. applicants who have been asked to leave and living in insecure private let accommodation. Applicants in these circumstances would receive 750 points. 3. To reduce the use of exceptional circumstance points through increasing points awards from 200 to 500 for Below Tolerable Standard and Medical A. Increase points for overcrowding from 150 points per room to 250 points per room. Increase Medical B points and Mental Health Assessment points from 200 to 250 points. Sharing points will be increase from 100 to 150 points per person and to give or receive support points would increase from 100 to 150 points. 4. The current approach is not working to prevent homeless as it provides no incentive for people to compare the points which could be awarded through the cumulative points framework to prevent homelessness and to be housed quicker. It is proposed that Homeless households would be awarded 750 points, but these would be non-cumulative.

Policy Change	Current Policy	Proposed Changes
<u>Homeless Applications</u> This would review the choice of areas available to homeless applicants	Currently homeless applicants choose a minimum of ten communities from 47 available communities which include multiple areas in Livingston. After nine months on the list as a homeless applicant areas are extended to a simple East / West split.	It is proposed that the choice of area for homeless applicants will be reduced to a minimum of three wards and Livingston South and North will be combined to one ward.
<u>Cumulative Points System</u>	<p>Current policy is a group plus approach to the council's cumulative point system.</p> <p>There are five groups within the existing policy which consist of Homeless, Unsatisfactory Housing, General Needs, Transfer Led, Outwith.</p>	<p>The Housing Allocations Policy has been revised to establish four categories which are Homeless, General Need, Transfer Led and Outwith.</p> <p>The council will set target lets annually to align with the West Lothian RRTP. The aim is to increase the number of lets available to non-homeless applicants to prevent homelessness and to meet other reasonable preference groups.</p> <p>Year 1 (2019/20) = 75% Year 2 (2020/21) = 87.5% Year 3 (2021/22) = 62.5% Year 4 (2022/23) = 50% Year 5 (2023/24) = 50%</p>
<u>Applicants with special needs</u>	Older People's Housing People with learning disabilities People leaving care	Review the existing policy approaches for older people housing, housing for people with disabilities and people leaving care.
<u>Transfer Led</u>	All new build properties are allocated to existing tenants of West Lothian Council on needs basis, this in turn generates a secondary let which is then offered to an applicant on the mainstream waiting list.	Allocate 75% new builds to transfer applicants and 25% to mainstream waiting list to create throughput but also ensure targeting those most in need and balancing the community dynamic.
<u>Personal Housing Planning</u>	n/a	In completion of the housing application process all applicants have the right to a Personal Housing Plan and we will contact applicants where their reason for the application qualifies for one of the strategic housing needs reasons.

Appendix 5

West Lothian Council:

Housing Allocations Policy

20 October 2020

DRAFT

This document is available, on request, in a range of different formats such as in larger print, audio-format and Braille and in different languages, as appropriate.

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Section 1: Background issues

This section describes the context that explains why the allocation policy has been developed. This section also describes how this policy is structured.

1.1. Context

The allocation policy is a strategic policy document that explains how we address a wide range of housing needs in the West Lothian area. Although this policy is part of housing management practice, allocation practice has a crucial part to play in promoting sustainable and inclusive communities. Sustainable and inclusive communities are areas in which people want to live and work. This approach is closely linked to corporate council objectives to foster social justice and the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

The council experiences significant demand from people applying for council housing. To adhere to housing legislation social rented housing is let to people in the highest housing need.

This policy is based mainly on allocation law but also promotes other legislative provisions, for example, those relating to equal opportunities. The policy also incorporates good practice guidance, including guidance issued by the Scottish Government.

Allocation policy is also aligned to a wide range of other council strategies and policies. For example, the allocation policy aims to promote objectives contained in the council's local housing strategy, as well as its homelessness strategy and the West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) 2019/20 to 2023/24. This policy is, therefore, part of a holistic or unified approach to addressing housing need in the local area.

Notes

The term "allocation" is a technical term and refers simply to the policy and practices concerning the **letting** of houses.

West Lothian Council will generally be referred to as "we" throughout this document.

The word "house" is intended to refer to all house types unless this is otherwise stated.

1.2. Structure

This policy is divided into a number of sections to make the document more accessible; this also enables us to update the document more easily as required, for example, due to changes in allocation law or other related housing law. The main issues covered by each section are summarised below.

Section 2 is a very important section as it describes the key allocation objectives of this policy. These objectives are the framework on which all of our practices are based, for instance, commitments to meeting law.

Section 3 sets out, in plain language, the main law and good practice guidance that the allocation policy must satisfy. This is essential as the policy is based on allocation law and good practice guidance.

Section 4 summarises other organisational policies that are linked to allocation practice. This is to explain clearly that the allocation policy does not operate in isolation from our other services.

Section 5 explains how we let houses to applicants. This also explains important technical terms such as housing need. Applicants may be either existing tenants or applicants on the common housing register.

Section 6 covers our commitments to promoting equal opportunities through allocation practice. This includes a full explanation of the important principle known as positive action.

Section 7 outlines the types and variety of training that we carry out to ensure that our allocation policy objectives are implemented effectively.

Section 8 describes how we manage our allocation performance. This is achieved through having a range of performance indicators that allow us to monitor practice on an ongoing basis.

Section 9 explains the process for appealing allocation decisions and/or using our complaints system.

Section 10 covers our commitment to consultation on allocation policy review and describes how we review the policy.

Finally, the appendices provide general information for tenants and applicants, or to allow them to check sources or make contacts with other organisations.

Section 2: Allocation objectives

2.1. General

This section is very important as it describes our main allocation objectives, that is, our practical commitments. These objectives are incorporated throughout the allocation system that includes:

- allocation policy;
- allocation procedures;
- allocation documentation, for example, our application form and the summary allocation policy; and
- other policies that are linked to allocations, for instance, mutual exchanges and suspension of offers.

2.2. Our allocation objectives

Our allocation objectives cover **twelve** core commitments; these are described below.

Objective 1: Law and good practice guidance

We meet all appropriate legal and good practice guidance standards.

Objective 2: Promoting equal opportunities

We promote services to ensure that there is no unlawful or unfair discrimination on any of the issues covered by equality law.

Objective 3: Addressing housing need

We define housing need comprehensively in our policy and use this definition to address a wide range of housing needs.

Objective 4: Developing sustainable and inclusive communities

We implement allocation practices to assist in developing sustainable and inclusive communities in which people want to live and work.

Objective 5: Making appropriate use of our housing stock

We make appropriate use of our housing by promoting tenants' rights such as mutual exchanges, or by reducing under-occupation, whenever possible.

Objective 6: Establishing effective partnerships

We establish partnerships, at local and national levels, to address the needs of individual service users, as well as community needs.

Objective 7: Minimising lost income

We let empty houses in line with set timescales to avoid unnecessary loss of rental income; these timescales are contained in our void policy (empty house policy).

Objective 8: Providing advice and information

We provide service users with comprehensive advice and information about our allocation services; this includes assisting applicants with information on their housing options.

Objective 9: Providing training and development programmes

We provide comprehensive training to our housing staff to ensure that allocation services are delivered effectively and efficiently. Training is also provided to tenant groups through our tenant participation strategy.

Objective 10: Managing allocation practices

We manage allocation practices through an internal audit system that is based mainly on performance indicators and appropriate satisfaction surveys.

Objective 11: Dealing with appeals and complaints

We deal with appeals and complaints fairly in line with our organisational policy, including dealing with issues within set timescales.

Objective 12: Consulting on the policy and its review

We review the allocation policy every three years or sooner, if appropriate; we do this in consultation with service users and other relevant partner organisations.

Section 3: Legal and good practice framework

3.1. General

This section summarises, in plain language, the main legal provisions that this policy includes. This covers both allocation law and other law. The section also refers to the main guidance that our policy promotes.

3.2. Allocation law

This section summarises the main law on allocations that forms the basis of the allocation policy. These provisions cover:

- access to our common housing register;
- suspensions of offers to applicants;
- groups to be given reasonable preference when letting houses;
- matters to disregard when selecting tenants;
- publicity; and
- access rights to information relating to the housing application.

3.2.1. Access to our common housing register

People who are **sixteen** years or more can apply to join our common housing register. It is emphasised this does not give applicants a right to receive an offer of housing; offers of housing will depend on priority given to applications.

As part of our commitment to promoting equal opportunities, we offer applicants guidance in completing our application form. We also offer support to applicants to assist them to complete this form, as appropriate. This includes meeting the legal duty of making reasonable adjustments in service provision when providing information to disabled applicants.

We can also provide a wide range of information about our housing stock and housing options locally, as well as details of where further information can be obtained.

3.2.2. Suspensions of offers to applicants

Applicants are entitled to register on our housing list if they are sixteen years or over. We cannot exclude applicants from our common housing register. We may, however, suspend offers to applicants in line with law or good practice guidance. We have established a separate policy and procedure on this matter (see section 4.4). Information on this policy is notified to all of our housing applicants in our allocation pack.

3.2.3. Reasonable preference groups

We must give reasonable preference to certain groups when letting houses. The groups to which we must give reasonable preference are:

- homeless persons and people threatened with homelessness with unmet housing needs;
- people living in unsatisfactory housing conditions with unmet housing needs; and
- tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and we consider them to be under-occupied as defined in this policy.

In law, a person has unmet housing needs if we consider that the person has housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options which are available.

In practice, we give reasonable preference to applicants:

- who live in unsatisfactory housing; and
- whose preferred housing option to meet these needs is being allocated a council tenancy.

We also explore housing options with all applicants so that they can make informed decisions regarding their housing preferences in both public and private sectors.

It is also emphasised that there is separate law in relation to dealing with applications from people affected by homelessness. We have, therefore, established a homelessness policy to promote our legal duties and good practice guidance relating to homelessness. This policy is based on prevention and is aligned closely to our allocation system. This is explained in section 4.

3.2.4. Matters to disregard when selecting tenants

We must disregard certain matters when we select tenants; these matters are as follows:

- the length of time that applicants have resided in our area;
- any debt related to a tenancy not owed by the applicant, as tenant or former tenant, or any housing debt since paid back;
- any outstanding liability of the applicant not attributable to the tenancy of a house, for example, council tax arrears. And this applies also to anyone else that it is proposed will reside with the applicant;
- the age of applicants unless (a) housing has been designed or substantially adapted for persons of a particular age or (b) the housing is for persons who are – or will be – in receipt of housing support services for a particular age group; and
- the income of applicants, including income of other household members.

The law does enable us to take property ownership into account in limited circumstances. As a policy measure, however, we do not take account of any property owned by applicants or their family members when selecting tenants. This is our policy since applicants may have various forms of housing need irrespective of home ownership.

When letting houses, we must also take no account of whether or not an applicant resides in our area if she/he:

- is employed, or has been offered employment in our area;
- wants to move into our area to look for employment and we are satisfied that this is their purpose;
- wants to move into our area to be close to a relative or carer;
- has special social or medical reasons for being re-housed in our area; and
- wants to live in our area to avoid harassment or runs the risk of domestic abuse and wishes to move into the area.

In law, there are specific conditions that we cannot impose, namely that:

- applications must be active for a minimum period before considering applicants for housing (except in terms of our suspension policy);
- a judicial separation or divorce should be obtained, or a dissolution of a civil partnership or a decree of separation of civil partners be obtained; or
- applicants should no longer be living with, or in the same house, as someone else before they can be considered for housing.

When letting houses, we must also disregard any arrears of rent or other tenancy related debt which is less than one twelfth of the annual amount payable. For example, any rent arrears of less than one month will not stop an offer of housing being made. If an applicant is re-housed who owes us rent, we make appropriate repayment arrangements before the offer is made. This procedure is incorporated into our rent arrears management policy.

If rent arrears are more than one month's rent, this will not stop an offer of housing being made if applicants:

- agree an arrangement with us to repay the debt;
- pay the amount as agreed for at least **three** months; and
- continue to pay this amount.

As noted, this is incorporated into our rent arrears policy and repayments are linked to what are affordable to the person in arrears.

Note

Councillors (Elected Members) are not permitted to take part in the following actions. Firstly, councillors must not take part in allocation decisions involving local authority housing within their wards, that is, the wards where they have been elected.

Secondly, councillors must not take part in allocation decisions where the applicant for the house resides in the electoral division or ward for which the member is elected. This rule also applies to other housing to which the council can nominate applicants such as nominations to housing associations. Elected Members can, however, make representations to appropriate committees regarding their views on these matters.

3.2.5. Publicity

In law, we must both make and publish an allocation policy. This includes information governing:

- prioritising our allocation of houses among different applicant groups;
- transfer applicants, that is, how we deal with transfer applications and the transfer of tenants from houses owned by the council to houses owned by other bodies; and
- mutual exchanges that are concerned with existing tenants who want to exchange tenancies ("swap homes").

We must publish alterations to these rules within six months of making any alterations

A copy of our allocations policy can be found on the council's website at (insert link). Where a customer requires a physical copy of our allocations policy this, along with a summarised version, can be accessed at our principal offices. This a legal requirement. These rules are available for checking at all reasonable times. For instance, summary rules can be obtained during working hours, or are available on our website.

In order to promote access to our common housing register, we also keep copies of our allocation rules at a wide range of other offices and organisations. Examples of these are local libraries and our principle offices.

3.2.6. Access rights to information relating to the housing application

Applicants are entitled, on request, to inspect any information kept by the council that they have provided relating to their housing application. This information must be provided free of charge.

Applicants may also apply to access personal information that we process in line with the **Data Protection law**. We may refuse any requests to access personal information only as permitted by this law.

3.2.7. Other specific guidance

We take account of other specific guidance relating to consultation processes, as well as assessing our local housing strategy when considering allocation reviews. These consultation issues are explained in section 10.

3.3. Other law

Our allocation policy is based on (and largely determined by) housing law that covers legal provisions relating to allocating housing and homelessness. Our policy is also influenced by a wide range of other laws. Examples of these laws are summarised by reference to the key issues of:

- data protection;
- equal opportunity; and
- family law.

Note

Other law is also relevant such as law relating to immigration and asylum seekers and law concerning offenders.

(a) Data protection

We include data protection principles throughout allocation practice so that information gathered is processed in accordance with the law.

(b) Equal opportunity

Allocation policy is a key document for promoting council commitments to promoting equal opportunity, including taking steps to eliminate unlawful or unfair forms of discrimination. This commitment covers all of the grounds in law (now known as “protected characteristics”), as well as other possible forms of discrimination such as discrimination on social origin or class. Further information on how we do this is contained in section 6.

One example of how we promote equality matters is to have housing application forms available at all principal council offices, as well as at housing offices and on our website. Our application can be made available in different languages and in other formats such as in larger print.

In order to explain the questions in our application form, we can also arrange appropriate services to make it accessible to people such as:

- arranging for interpreting services for persons who require information in another language;
- arranging interpreting services for disabled people; and
- providing the information in other formats, for example, in larger print, audio-format or Braille.

(c) Family law

Family law is extremely important to protect the rights of individuals. For instance, we provide information concerning housing options to people involved in relationship breakdown to ensure that appropriate housing options are considered. This includes information to spouses, civil

partners and cohabiting partners (of the same or opposite sex). Advice and information concerning housing options is also made available, it should be noted, to single people.

3.4. Good practice

Good practice guidance to ensure that allocation practice meets quality standards is contained in a diverse range of documentation. Two key documents whose principles are embedded into allocation policy and practice are:

- the Scottish Social Housing Charter standards; and
- the Scottish Government guidance on allocations.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter standards

We embed the Scottish Social Housing Charter standards into this policy. The relevant Charter standards are shown in Appendix 1.

The Scottish Government Guidance

We take account of any guidance that is produced by the Scottish Government in respect of allocation matters.

3.5. Summary

Our allocation policy and its related procedures are based on allocation law, other law and good practice guidance. This is very important for two reasons. Firstly, this enables us to meet our statutory duties. Secondly, this ensures that we promote allocation services that contribute to meeting our corporate goal of developing inclusive and sustainable communities.

Section 4: Other related policies

This section describes four policies of specific relevance to allocations; while Appendix 2 lists the full range of policies to which allocation policy is closely linked. This includes a wide range of council policies, both at organisational level and within housing services itself.

The policies summarised below are:

- harassment;
- homelessness;
- mutual exchanges; and
- suspension of offers.

The section below summarises only the main aspects of each policy; full details are available publicly in separate policies and related documentation.

We have also noted beside each heading what policy objectives these policies address.

4.1. Harassment (allocation policy objectives: 1 and 2)

We regard harassment on any grounds as being inappropriate and we address harassment through various policies and related procedures. Allocation policy may be used, for example, to move those affected by harassment away from the area in which it is taking place.

Examples of other policies that we use to address harassment are:

- our anti-social behaviour policy; and
- our estate management policy.

We also address harassment on specific grounds contained in the Equality Act 2010. These grounds that are known, in law, as protected characteristics are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender re-assignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

We may also address harassment that could occur on other grounds such as harassment on grounds of someone's social origin or class, their personal characteristics or language.

A key objective that we promote is to adopt a supportive approach to people experiencing harassment. This includes providing them with access to information to consider and seek appropriate remedies.

4.2. Homelessness (allocation policy objectives: 1,3,4 and 8)

We have established a comprehensive homelessness policy that we use to address applications from people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. As part of our approach to prevent homelessness, we discuss housing options with applicants including options of being re-housed through the common housing register, other registered social landlords (RSLs), through the mid-market rented sector, private rented sector or the owner occupier sector.

4.3. Mutual exchanges (allocation policy objectives: 1, 3, 4 and 5)

Scottish secure tenants are entitled to apply to exchange their tenancies ("swap homes") with other Scottish secure tenancies anywhere in Scotland.

Although tenants must first obtain our written consent before exchanging homes, we can refuse consent only if it is reasonable to do so. We take account of reasons contained in law when considering applications, as well as other grounds that might be relevant. Each case is assessed individually taking account of the particular circumstances of the case. Full details are contained in our separate mutual exchange policy and its related procedures.

After we receive an application to exchange homes, we must provide our written decision within **one month**. If we don't formally reply within this timescale, consent is deemed to have been granted. If we refuse an application to exchange homes, we must provide reasons in writing. This is important to enable tenants to consider our written response and to prepare an appeal against our decision. This appeal is to the sheriff court. In line with our commitments to a fair hearing under the Human Rights Act 1998, we provide tenants with information about their appeal rights when informing them of our decisions.

4.4. Suspension of offers (allocation policy objective 1)

We have established a separate suspension policy and procedure that sets out when we might suspend making offers to applicants whose applications remain on our common housing register. There are three main reasons for suspending offers that relate to:

- an applicant's conduct;
- an applicant's eligibility; or
- deferred or delayed applications.

An applicant's conduct

We may suspend offers of housing to applicants if they are not complying with their tenancy conditions. For instance, we could suspend offering housing to a transfer applicant due to their anti-social behaviour that is causing a nuisance to other tenants.

In the case of rent arrears, we may suspend offers only if the rent arrears exceed one month's rent and arrangements to repay are not made and kept to as discussed in section 3.

Again, we might refuse offers to applicants who have refused a specified number of previous offers that were based on applicants' stated preferences.

If we suspend offers to applicants, this is subject to timescales as set out in our suspension policy.

In line with our commitments to a fair hearing, applicants can appeal our decision as explained in section 9.

An applicant's eligibility

We may defer offers of housing to applicants who fail to qualify for housing due to particular allocation policy rules. For instance, offers might be deferred if applicants do not meet the age or support criteria required to access specific housing types such as sheltered housing.

Deferred or delayed applications

An application could be deferred if an applicant wants to register on the common housing register, but does not want housing at present.

An application can be delayed if an applicant supplies insufficient information to enable us to process the application.

4.5. Summary

This section explains how we have established a number of specific policies and procedures to cover particular aspects of allocation practice. An overview of the diverse range of policies to which allocation policy is connected is given in Appendix 2.

Section 5: Allocation system: key elements

5.1. Introduction

This is a very important section of the allocation policy as it sets out our rules on:

- housing need;
- assessing housing need;
- our allocation system, including key procedures;
- our points system;
- local lettings initiatives; and
- partnerships with other social landlords.

5.2. Housing need

Housing need refers to standards that we use to assess an applicant's housing circumstances. For example, allocation law already sets out certain housing need factors such as overcrowding or unsatisfactory housing.

This section describes the various standards that we use to define housing need and covers a wider range of factors than those mentioned in allocation law. This is in line with good practice that recognises that housing need is also related to environmental and social factors, not simply housing conditions.

The standards that we use to define housing need are now explained by reference to standards that include legal, professional, socio-environmental and socio-economic standards.

Legal standards

Legal standards that we use to assess housing need exist in respect of homelessness, overcrowding and the tolerable standard. These standards are set out in law and we must meet such standards in practice, for example, we are required to deal with housing that does not meet the tolerable standard.

Professional standards

Professional standards relate to our own internal standards that can be higher than the legal standards. For example, in assessing overcrowding we consider a family that has to use their living room for sleeping accommodation as being overcrowded.

Socio-environmental standards

We recognise that people may be dissatisfied with their housing situation if the general environment in which they live is considered to be inadequate. This could include local infrastructure such as a lack of facilities, shops, schools, places of worship and/or transport links.

For example, a person's house may be in good condition, but an applicant who is isolated due to lack of local amenities and inadequate transport systems may prefer to move to other areas. This type of housing need is closely connected to individual applicants' choices and preferences.

Socio-economic standard

This standard relates to housing need linked to affordability of housing. For example, an applicant who cannot afford either their rent or mortgage payments may fall into arrears with their payments and risk losing their home.

5.3. Assessing housing need

We assess the various forms of housing need on an ongoing basis. We do this for four main reasons. Firstly, it is our statutory duty to evaluate specific types of housing need in West Lothian such as homelessness, overcrowding and housing below the tolerable standard.

Secondly, we are required to assess patterns of housing need existing in West Lothian, for example, the needs of disabled people.

Thirdly, we use housing need information that we collect to inform our allocation practices, as appropriate. For example, if housing needs are changing, we can use this information to amend how we prioritise applications.

Finally, we use information that we gather on housing need to inform applicants of their housing options. In practice we do this through our internal Lettings Plan. A Lettings Plan is our internal system to assess:

- the likely number of houses available for letting; and
- the number of applicants seeking access to that housing.

The Lettings Plan is used to set targets of lets to be made to our groups on a yearly basis.

5.4. Our allocation system, including key procedures

This section describes the type of allocation system that we have established to meet our allocation policy objectives. The second part of this section summarises key procedures to inform applicants of our practice. This section covers:

- our points system and policy objectives;
- our points system in practice; and
- key allocation procedures.

5.4.1. Our points system and policy objectives

When you apply for housing your position on the list is determined by the points you are awarded. Points are awarded under one of four categories dependent on your housing need. Your application will be placed in one of four categories of housing need as detailed in Section 5. Points are awarded on a cumulative basis unless stated otherwise. This system has been selected as it enables us to promote our policy objectives effectively. This is now explained below by reference to allocation policy objectives 1 to 5. The other allocation policy objectives are explained in detail through specific sections within this policy.

Objective 1: Law and good practice guidance

We meet legal requirements by including the reasonable preference needs as categories within our points system. We also meet good practice guidance by establishing categories that take account of the wider forms of housing need described in section 5.2.

Objective 2: Promoting equal opportunities

We promote equal opportunities through a variety of ways, for example, we regard housing that is not accessible for disabled people as being unsatisfactory housing. This recognises that the barrier that disabled people experience relates to inadequacies of the housing in which

they live. This approach also promotes the social model of disability in line with good practice guidance.

Objective 3: Addressing housing need

Our system has clearly defined housing need and uses this information to address a wide range of housing needs. By using categories, this enables us to monitor and analyse lets made to each of the categories to ensure we are effectively letting social housing and amend as housing need patterns change.

Objective 4: Developing sustainable and inclusive communities

Our system promotes this objective by spreading lets among a diverse range of categories that include different household types. This includes meeting the needs of existing tenants who may want to move house for a variety of reasons. This objective is also furthered as we align housing offers to applicant choice, whenever possible.

For example, we set target annual lets for all properties (new build and re-let accommodation) to applicants to ensure that applicants from all categories with a range of needs are re-housed. This will include applicants who are overcrowded, living in unsatisfactory housing and who are under-occupying their homes.

Note

Setting targets also enables us to monitor how effectively we are letting houses to the reasonable preference groups covered in law.

Objective 5: Making appropriate use of our housing stock

It is good practice to make appropriate use of our housing stock and promoting tenancy transfers of existing West Lothian Council tenants is an important part of this process.

Three management objectives that we achieve through this approach are now explained.

Firstly, we give extra priority to existing social housing tenants who want to move from under-occupied housing to other housing. This approach allows tenants to move to housing that may be more affordable. For example, rent levels and heating costs may be lower in smaller housing.

Secondly, if existing tenants transfer to other housing, then this enables other applicants to be re-housed in the accommodation vacated by the tenants. For example, when tenants leave under-occupied housing, we can let this to applicants with other needs such as people living in unsatisfactory housing. This could include people living in housing that is:

- below the tolerable standard;
- inaccessible for disabled people; and
- overcrowded.

This list is not exhaustive and details of all the needs that we cover are detailed below in 5.5. Thirdly, re-housing tenants within their areas of choice promotes sustainable tenancies by ensuring that we take account of the preferences of applicants when allocating houses.

Note

We support transfers of tenants with any of the forms of housing need identified above in

respect of all of our accommodation, including new build housing (see 5.4.3).

5.4.2. Points system in practice

Our system works by dividing applications into four appropriate categories.

Applications are pointed individually using our points system and placed within one of the categories (see 5.5.1. below).

Note

When allocating, if applicants in the same category have the same points level, then priority is given to the applicant who registers first on the common housing register.

5.4.3. Key allocation procedures

This section summarises, in plain language, what happens once an application is completed and returned to us. It is noted that we also have established detailed organisational procedures that our staff apply so that applications are processed consistently and against set timescales. Applicants can access these procedures, on request.

This section covers the following issues:

- admission to the common housing register;
- processing housing applications;
- offers and allocating houses;
- specific housing issues;
- reviewing applications; and
- information.

(a) Admission to the common housing register

We admit all applications from people who are sixteen or over onto our common housing register. This is in line with allocation law discussed above. This is not the same thing, though, as being offered housing that is determined by our allocation points system (see 5.5).

(b) Processing housing applications

Applicants can apply for a home using the council's online Housing Application Form and creating an account with password. Through this account applicants will have the ability to access and manage elements of their housing application through the council's Application Portal. For people who cannot access the online application a paper form is available from our principle offices. is available. After receipt the on-line application is assessed and applicants will be notified of their points awarded and any other relevant information based on their application.

The initial assessment is targeted to be done within five working days. We will provide applicants with information primarily through the on-line application system. We also communicate in other ways e.g. writing, that are mutually agreed to meet an applicant's specific needs.

If applicants do not provide us with sufficient information to process their application, this may affect their re-housing prospects, or lead to the application being "delayed" in line with our suspension policy.

As part of our commitment to equal opportunities, we ask applicants about any access needs they may have; and liaise with them about any support services needed. For instance, we may employ interpreters (that is, signers) to provide information to deaf or hearing-impaired applicants.

We process personal information received in line with data protection requirements. For example, we only share applicants' information with other organisations if they have given written consent, or if this is allowed or required in law.

If we contact other landlords or lenders (in the case of home owners) to confirm application details, we will also first seek applicants' consent. If applicants do not provide consent to contact other landlords, and this information is relevant to the application, this could result in our suspension policy being applied.

Home visits to check application details may be carried out before an offer is made. Such visits will be arranged in advance with applicants at appropriate times. This is in line with individuals' rights under human rights law, for instance, their right to privacy. If applicants live outside West Lothian, we may ask other landlords and/or agencies to check details.

Applicants have a legal right to apply for a sole or a joint tenancy; we provide applicants with information about their rights. In order to promote information about tenants' rights, we can also advise applicants of advantages and disadvantages of having a sole or a joint tenancy.

(b) Personal Housing Plans

On completion of the housing application process all applicants have the right to a Personal Housing Plan. All applicants have the right to have a personal housing plan in place and specifically we will contact applicants where their reason for the housing applications qualifies for one of the strategic needs reasons as detailed in Section 5.5.2.

(d) Offers and allocating houses

After we confirm application details, we point application forms and put the application into one of our four categories stated preferences, whenever possible.

Our allocation system – in line with good practice – is based essentially on applicant preference or choice. For instance, when selecting tenants for housing, we consider their stated preferences in the application form covering things such as:

- area of choice;
- type of housing and floor levels in the case of flats; and
- types of heating system.

We divide West Lothian into specific letting areas that applicants can refer to in selecting their areas of choice.

Specific information about local amenities can also be provided, on request. For example, applicants may not want to live in an area that is not easily accessible by public transport.

In order to ensure that applicants can make an informed selection, we also provide applicants with information on their re-housing prospects for different areas

An important part of this process is to encourage applicants to adopt a realistic approach as widening their areas of choice may increase their re-housing prospects.

(e) Specific housing issues

We apply specific rules in respect of certain house types as these are aimed to meet particular needs. These rules relate to age, adapted housing and new build accommodation.

Age

We may not discriminate on grounds of age when selecting tenants unless this relates to housing that has been designed or substantially adapted for persons of a particular age group; or housing for persons who are - or will be -- in receipt of housing support services for a particular age group. For example, such housing can include sheltered housing for older people.

Adapted housing

We allocate housing that has been adapted to meet particular housing needs to applicants with such needs, as appropriate. Housing that has been adapted to meet the needs of disabled people will be offered to disabled applicants with the appropriate needs. For example, housing that is adapted to be accessible to wheelchair users will be offered to wheelchair users.

Support Accommodation/Care in the Community

Working with West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (WLHSCP) and other social rented landlords, we provide a number of specialist housing provisions for vulnerable people, such as sheltered housing and assisted living for older people, housing with care for older people and supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities and people with mental health issues.

Sheltered Housing and Assisted Living: Applicants 60 years and over are eligible for council owned sheltered housing and assisted living can apply through completing of the housing allocations on-line application form.

Housing with Care: Older people who have housing and support needs may apply. Housing with Care provides a much higher level of support services than are currently available in sheltered or assisted living housing. A generic personal care and support on-site staff team provides the following:

- Housing Support Services
- Domestic Support
- On-site staff available during the hours of 7.30am to 10pm with overnight assistance supported by technology between 10pm to 7.30am

Housing with Care Application forms are available online and at all principle council offices as well as the housing with care developments. Application forms received by the council will be assessed by a Housing with Care manager as either Grade A, B or C depending on the number of hours of support and care outlined at assessment.

Core and Cluster Accommodation: WLHSCP and the council will identify a range of vacant tenancies that will support individuals with learning disabilities or mental health needs to ensure they are provided housing within their identified communities that will be suitable to their assessed support needs. Individuals who wish to be considered for a core and cluster tenancy should be supported by their allocated lead professional or their parent and carer to submit a housing application form. A Social Policy assessment and referral must be made to the Allocations Team for properties to be let.

Learning Disability Complex Care Housing Development: This development is a specialist housing resource for people with learning disabilities who have been assessed as meeting the council's eligibility criteria with complex needs and behaviours meaning that living fully

independently within communities may be more difficult for them. The development provides individuals with their own individual tenancy as well as 24-hour care that is proportionate and responsive to their assessed need and outcomes. Individuals who wish to be considered for the development should be supported by their allocated lead professional or their parent and carer to submit a housing application form. A Social Policy assessment and referral must be made to the Allocations Team for properties to be let.

New build accommodation

We ensure that existing council tenants receive priority when letting new build properties. This ensures that we meet, not only a diverse range of needs of local people, but also allow other applicants' needs to be addressed when tenants move to other housing. The effects of this policy are monitored carefully. Council's policy is that 75% of new builds in the first instance will be allocated to council tenants and 25% will be allocated as mainstream lets.

(f) Reviewing applications

The purpose of reviewing applications is to find out if applicants still want to be re-housed by us. A review system also helps the council manage our allocations processes effectively and minimise offers to people who have moved away or who no longer need or want to be housed. It also ensures that we have an accurate picture of housing need and demand.

Making unnecessary offers is a cost to the council and so reviewing applications is an important part of the council's best value duty. For example, this duty requires us to provide services that are efficient and effective.

The council has clear timescales for reviewing the housing list with an annual rolling review in place. We contact applicants on the monthly anniversary of their application, providing an opportunity to confirm that their housing needs have not changed.

Applicants are requested to advise us in writing within fifteen working days if they want their application kept on the common housing register.

A second reminder notification or letter is then sent out if we get no response; this allows the applicant another seven working days to reply. If no reply is given, we remove the application from the common housing register and a cancellation letter is sent advising applicants of this.

Applicants whose applications have been removed because of failure to respond may have their original applications re-instated by writing a letter of appeal explaining the reasons for failing to respond. This must be done within six months of the application being removed from the common housing register.

After this six-month period, applicants are requested to complete a new application form.

5.5. Our points system

Our points system is a system that is based on allocation law and good practice guidance. Our **four** main groups are people who:

- are homeless or threatened with homelessness (see note);
- have general needs including applicants who live in houses that are unsatisfactory
- are on our transfer list, and
- are applicants outside West Lothian.

The points that we set for individual needs is given at the end of this section (5.5.2).

Note

The phrase “threatened with homelessness” applies to applicants who are likely to become homeless in two months. We seek to prevent applicants becoming homeless by providing detailed advice to applicants about their housing options.

5.5.1. Applicant categories explained

This section explains each category. Before doing so, **three** general points are made. Firstly, an applicant is placed in one category only. This is done to ensure that applicants can easily understand the system and avoid confusion. For example, if an applicant is affected by homelessness then her/his application is placed in the homelessness category.

Secondly, although applicants are placed in one category, applications are awarded all relevant points to which they are entitled.

Finally, we set target annual lets to be allocated so that we can analyse and monitor the allocation of properties across the categories to ensure we are effectively using resources to meet housing demand and need locally. locally.

Category1: People who are affected by homelessness

Applicants in this category are assessed through the West Lothian Council homelessness approach and in accordance with statutory legislation. If an application is accepted onto Category 1 following the statutory homelessness assessment, then the application is registered from its date of application. Homeless applicants can select a minimum of three wards areas in West Lothian. The wards of Livingston North and Livingston South are classified as one ward area for homeless applicants. Ward categories area as follows;

- Armadale and Blackridge
- Bathgate
- Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh
- East Livingston and East Calder
- Fauldhouse and the Brieche Valley
- Linlithgow
- Livingston North and Livingston South
- Whitburn and Blackburn

Where a homeless application has not been provided with an offer within 9 months, they will be asked to open up their areas to a minimum of six wards. Application priority is determined by date of registration and a maximum of 750 points are awarded.

Homeless applicants are entitled to one offer of housing in law and we consider applications taking account of the statutory Code of Guidance on Homelessness ((2020) For example, we consider applicant preferences, although offers are also determined by availability of housing stock for letting. Homeless applicants are eligible for all types of housing accommodation, unless there is a specific medical, based on size.

Note

An applicant will be homeless if their home is legally overcrowded **and** may endanger their health. This applies if the house endangers the health of any occupant within the house.

Category 2: General Needs

This category covers all elements of the points framework with the exception of council tenants and homeless applicants. Applicants in this group include people with the following housing needs:

- Strategic need
- housing below the tolerable standard (BTS);
- housing conditions relating to overcrowding (see note); or
- housing that is unsuitable to meet the person's access needs such as disabled people (physical or mental health impairments), or a person's medical needs;
- people living in housing within West Lothian that is being demolished and applicants require to be re-housed; and
- social landlord tenants who are under-occupying their homes as defined by our occupancy policy standard.
- with shared amenities;
- wanting to move for affordability, social and employment reasons.

Note

Strategic Housing Needs identifies applicants who are in urgent housing needs with a requirement to meet their needs as quickly and successfully as possible to prevent homelessness. It covers a wide range of local housing need and we work in partnership with a range of agencies, both statutory and voluntary, to address them. For example, in the case of local support and care programmes, we work actively with health authorities and/or social workers. This approach is also important to prevent homelessness and we grant applicants points if they are being re-housed through these programmes

- Hospital Discharge
- Leaving support accommodation to community care
- Medical A
- Looked after and accommodated children (Children (Scotland) Act 195)
- Leaving Forces (leaving full time regular service and within 9 months of discharge)
- Domestic Abuse
- Prison Discharge
- Leaving Care
- Notice to Quit
- People at risk of /experiencing serious harassment
- Forced sale
- Witness protection
- Asked to leave/living in insecure accommodation
- Forced to Live apart

The BTS is a statutory standard and a house fails to meet this standard if it is defective regarding any of the relevant provisions.

Overcrowding covers people whose homes either fail to meet the statutory overcrowding standard, or our occupancy standard that is explained below (Table 1).

Our occupancy standard

Our occupancy standard is more progressive than present overcrowding law as it:

- excludes the living room as being viewed as suitable for use as sleeping accommodation; and
- considers that children aged eight or over should have separate bedrooms (see below).

Our occupancy standard explains how many rooms are needed by households of different sizes. Applicants are granted points if their present house is deemed to be too small to meet their needs. The occupancy standard is also used to assess if a house is being under-occupied. Table 1 indicates that, as soon as one child reaches **eight** years of age, overcrowding points will be granted if the child has no separate bedroom.

Table 1: Occupancy standard

Household Size	Bedroom Required
Single Person	One
Couple (of same or opposite sex)	One
Anyone else in applicant's household who is/are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged 8years and over Two people under 8years 	One One
Any other person	One

Note

A household refers to any person who wants to live on their own (or with someone else). For example, a family member wanting to apply for housing on their own would be a separate household.

Other policy provisions relating to overcrowding

An applicant can apply to move to other housing that does not reduce their overcrowding, but may meet other needs. For example, an applicant might want to live in another area for social reasons such as living closer to relatives. In such cases, however, no overcrowding points would be granted.

We take account of people who normally live with the applicant but living away temporarily when assessing overcrowding. For example, this could include people working away, or staying in some institutional setting.

In the case of shared care, the size of house that is offered to applicants will be determined by the terms of the actual arrangement. This is covered within our staff procedures and information is provided to applicants concerned.

If social reasons relate to applicants experiencing harassment, we assess each case individually and provide those affected with quality advice to enable them to make an informed decision regarding re-housing options. A point award may be made to applicants who seek to move house if – following detailed investigations – this appears to be the appropriate remedy. This serves to prevent homelessness and therefore accords with one of our key allocation objectives. Harassment could include applicants fleeing domestic violence.

Category 3: People who are on our transfer list

We have established a transfer list that consists of existing West Lothian Council tenants applying to move to another house. This is very important to meet the following allocation policy objectives:

- meeting the diverse range of housing needs of tenants that include unsatisfactory housing conditions as explained above;
- meeting tenants' housing preferences since "wanting to move" home is a form of need;
- promoting sustainable and inclusive local communities by meeting tenants' preference needs; and
- making appropriate use of our stock by reducing under-occupation.

West Lothian transfer applicants will receive points based on their assessed housing needs, for example, the condition of their property. West Lothian Council tenants will also qualify for under-occupation points to ensure that they receive reasonable preference.

Note

Applicants who are tenants of other social landlords, or tenants within the private sector, are placed in one of the other groups, as appropriate. For example, a tenant of another local authority wanting to move to West Lothian for preference reasons only would have their application placed in group 5.

Category 4: Applicants outside West Lothian

Applicants living outside West Lothian will be placed in one of the above categories if they satisfy the relevant legal rules. Residence in West Lothian must be disregarded when selecting tenants if any of the criteria below apply.

Local residence must be ignored if an applicant:

- is employed or has been offered employment in the area;
- wishes to move into the area to seek employment and we are satisfied that this applies;
- wishes to move into the area to be near a relative or carer;
- has special social or medical reasons for needing to be re-housed in the area;
- is subject to harassment and therefore wishes to move into the area; or
- runs the risk of domestic abuse and therefore wishes to move into the area.

If an applicant lives outside of the West Lothian area and does not meet any of the above, the application will be placed in category 4.

If an applicant lives outside of the West Lothian area and meets any of the above, then the application will be placed in one of the other categories.

Note

Points are added for each housing need factor so that applicants with more housing needs receive priority

5.5.2. The points framework

Our points framework takes account of a diverse range of housing needs in line with housing law and good practice guidance.

Non-Cumulative Points Category	Description/Housing Need	Points
Statutory homeless	<p>This category is for people assess as statutory homeless and is designed for the council to respond to homeless quickly. Applicants in this group must be assessed by the council as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unintentionally homeless (under part II of the Housing Scotland Act 1987 and the 2001 Act. 	750 Points

Care in the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing with Care – Social Policy assessment and Referral Core and Cluster – Social Policy Assessment and Referral Learning Disability Complex Care Housing Unit – Social Policy Assessment and Referral 	Grade A or B 0 points 0 points
Cumulative Points Category	Description	Points Awarded
Exceptional Circumstances	Situations can occur where the current allocations policy does not allow for swift action. These are extreme cases and will be dealt with on an individual basis	1500 points
Local Strategic Needs	<p>This category identifies applicants with urgent housing needs with a requirement to meet their needs as quickly and successfully as possible to prevent homelessness. These applicants will include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospital Discharge Leaving support accommodation to community care Medical A Looked after and accommodated children (Children (Scotland) Act 1995) Leaving Forces (leaving full time regular service and within 9 months of discharge) Domestic Abuse Prison Discharge Leaving Care Notice to Quit People at risk of /experiencing serious harassment Forced sale Witness protection Asked to leave/living in insecure accommodation Forced to Live apart 	<p>750 Points</p> <p>Applicants will be held in date of decision to reach to place them in this group</p>
Below Tolerable Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property assessed as not needing the statutory standard 	500 Points
Overcrowding/ large families	Based on bedroom definition (in line with who can share a bedroom)	250 points per room
Under occupation	Based on each bedroom unoccupied (only social rented sector)	250 points per room
Medical Needs	<p>Medical A</p> <p>Medical Property Needs Assessment B of Applicant</p> <p>Mental Health Assessment</p>	<p>500 Points</p> <p>250 Points</p> <p>250 Points</p>
Sharing	Based on household's composition	150 points per person
Support	To give or receive support	150 Points
No Housing Need	Assessed as having none of the above housing needs	0 Points
Preferred Area	Based on applicants one preferred area of choice, multiple areas can still be chosen on applicant choice but points are only eligible for one area	100 Points

Note: Needs not covered by the allocation policy

In allocation practice, it is possible that a situation arises where points have been maximised in accordance with this policy, but this is not enough to allow the person to be re-housed. Examples could include - but are not limited to - an approach by Police Scotland advising that a tenant's life may be in danger if she/he remains in their property; or the Council being asked to re-house someone through the National Witness Protection Programme. These are

extreme cases and a further point award may be granted following assessment of the particular circumstances. In order to ensure public accountability, such cases can only be authorised by the Head of Housing, Construction and Building Services, or other delegated senior manager. We will monitor the reasons for allocation of points under this section and review this policy where appropriate.

5.6. Local lettings initiatives

These are promoted under good practice guidance and are used to promote sustainable communities at local level. A key part of these initiatives is to address the needs of an area comprehensively so that, not just housing is considered, but environmental and social issues too (see Appendix 3).

We publish details of any initiative so that tenants and other residents understand how the initiative meets legal rules, as well as the processes involved.

5.7. Partnerships with other social landlords

We have established partnership arrangements with other social landlords through our common housing register. Details of how these partnerships operate are contained in:

- information that we supply to applicants through the information pack; and
- internal organisational procedures that govern the partnership working arrangements.

5.8. Summary

This section explains that we operate a points allocation system. This system is most appropriate for ensuring that we promote law and good practice guidance effectively.

Section 6: Promoting equal opportunities

6.1. Promoting equal opportunities: general

We promote equal opportunities throughout all of our housing services, including allocation practice. We seek to ensure that allocation practice does not discriminate, either unlawfully or unfairly.

We promote equal opportunities in our allocation policy in a range of ways by:

- providing information about the policy and related services in accessible ways, for instance, producing a summary allocation leaflet in plain language;
- working in partnership with other agencies to promote sustainable tenancies, for example, delivering appropriate support services tailored to individuals' needs;
- monitoring service provision to evaluate that allocation practice is not discriminatory, for instance, through our performance indicators; and
- implementing positive action programmes to promote access to our services (see below).

6.2. Positive action programmes

Positive action programmes are different from positive discrimination that is, generally, unlawful. Positive action refers to initiatives that are undertaken to address historic forms of discrimination against particular groups. For example, disabled people and people from black and minority ethnic groups have traditionally experienced various forms of discrimination in

housing. It should be noted that these are examples only and other people affected by discrimination include gay men and lesbian women.

Our positive action programmes are developed continually to address locally identified needs and present initiatives include:

- publishing the allocation policy in other formats and other languages, as appropriate;
- auditing the allocation policy against corporate equality standards (plain language, accessible formats and so on) to ensure that we promote equality objectives;
- publicising the allocation policy widely to promote access to the common housing register, as well as increasing awareness of its content and objectives;
- establishing active partnerships to promote awareness of barriers to accessing housing, for instance, promoting awareness of the social model of disability; and
- monitoring services so that there is no unlawful or unfair discrimination on any of the grounds covered in the Equality Act 2010 or the Scotland Act 1998.

Note

The Scotland Act 1998 defines equal opportunity as follows:

“Equal opportunities” means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions”
(The Scotland Act 1998, Schedule 5, L2)

6.3. Summary

We are required, as a public body, to take steps to eliminate unlawful forms of discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

We do this in allocations by developing accessible services and seeking to address the needs of a wide range of households, including those that have traditionally experienced discrimination in service delivery.

Section 7: Training and development

7.1. Our training programmes

We provide a range of training that is tailored to the jobs of individual staff and their role in allocation services.

Different types of training are provided, for instance, to cover allocation activities such as advising applicants about:

- the allocation policy;
- their housing options;
- preventing homelessness; and
- how to address harassment.

We have established a range of training programmes that are also used as part of tenant consultation procedures. Examples of these training programmes include training on:

- allocation and housing law;

- allocation policy and procedures;
- information technology systems; and
- monitoring and assessing data.

Note

All our training is linked to our customer care policy and our equality and diversity policy to ensure that staff provide services tailored to the needs of individual tenants and other customers.

7.2. Summary

We recognise that training should be seen as a developmental activity and our staff receive a wide range of training that is tailored to their particular job needs. This is done so staff can deliver quality services to applicants for housing who may be tenants or other customers.

Section 8: Managing our allocation performance

8.1. Managing performance: general information

In order to manage allocation performance effectively, we have established management measures as follows:

- data gathering and assessment;
- feedback from tenants and other service users;
- consultation;
- performance indicators; and
- reporting systems.

8.2. Data gathering and assessment

We gather a wide range of data as part of the allocation service, for example, numbers of applicants and lets to different applicant groups. In order to evaluate these data, we assess data both quantitatively and qualitatively. This is explained below.

Quantitative monitoring involves measuring data by reference to numbers. For example, we monitor additions and cancellations of applications to our common housing register to assess demand for housing.

Qualitative monitoring is concerned with quality issues and would include things such as (a) accuracy of advice that we provide to applicants, or (b) quality of written documentation that we provide.

8.3. Feedback from tenants and other service users

We also gather information on our allocation service through our tenants, applicants for housing and other service users. For example, we carry out regular satisfaction surveys to ascertain tenant views on the quality of our services, including allocation services.

8.4. Consultation

We use information gathered to produce reports to tenants' groups, individual tenants, housing applicants and other service users, as appropriate. This information is also used to inform

tenant consultation relating to policy review. For example, by providing tenants with accurate information about local housing needs' trends, this can inform debates on targets of lets to be afforded to the various housing groups (see section 10).

8.5. Our performance indicators

Our performance indicators measure a range of issues, both quantitatively and qualitatively. These include monitoring of issues relating to the Scottish Social Housing Charter (see Appendix 4).

8.6. Summary

Managing performance is an important part of our allocation policy and practice. Information that we gather is used to improve our services, as well as addressing any practices that could be discriminatory. Information on performance is also used to inform consultation with housing applicants, tenants and service users as part of allocation policy reviews.

Section 9: Our appeal and complaints system

In terms of appeals against allocation decisions, we have established a formal appeal system. For example, an applicant may appeal against an assessment we make concerning their housing needs.

We have also established a statutory appeal system in relation to homelessness applications. This ensures that any appeal relating to a homelessness decision is heard by a senior officer who was not party to the earlier decision.

We operate a complaint system that is different from appeals. This system addresses dissatisfaction that an applicant may raise in terms of allocation policy and practices. For example, an applicant may complain that their application has not been processed in line with set timescales.

Information about these systems is provided to applicants in their allocation information pack.

Section 10: Consultation and allocation review processes

The allocation policy is reviewed on an ongoing basis in line with West Lothian Council procedures. The review of the policy is linked to our tenant participation strategy to ensure comprehensive consultation with housing applicants, tenants and other service users.

Key consultation activities that we implement when carrying out an allocation review are as follows:

- consulting with a range of groups;
- publishing a formal consultation report; and
- taking account of the local housing strategy and other guidance.

10.1. Consulting with a range of groups

We consult with a diverse range of groups before allocation policy changes are made. The groups we consult include:

- tenants;
- applicants;

- registered tenant organisations; and
- any other bodies we deem to be appropriate, for example, other housing associations, equality groups and so on.

10.2. Publishing a formal consultation report

We publish a formal consultation report that assesses the feedback and implications for policy review of the consultation process. This report will include information on key findings and feedback gleaned through the consultation process. This consultation report will be used to inform decisions relating to the allocation policy review.

10.3. Taking account of the local housing strategy and other guidance

We take account of data from our local housing strategy when developing the allocation policy review. For instance, this will include information about housing trends at local levels. We also take account of published guidance to ensure that we are meeting good practice in allocation policy.

10.4. Summary

We promote consultation with a diverse range of groups and individuals when reviewing our allocation policy. This is in line with our commitments as contained within our tenant participation strategy.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Law and Good Practice

Appendix 2: List of policies to which allocation policy is linked

Appendix 3: Local lettings initiatives

Appendix 4: Performance indicators

Appendix 5: Useful contacts

Appendix 1: Law and Good Practice

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended)

Relevant good practice standards are contained in the Scottish Social Housing Charter, 2012 and The Scottish Government's: Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: A Good Practice Guide February 2019.

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Appendix 2: List of policies to which allocation policy is linked

Allocation policy is linked to a wide range of other Council policies including (in alphabetical order):

- antisocial behaviour policy;
- assignation of tenancy;
- estate management;
- exchange of tenancy;
- homelessness policy;
- letting plan;
- rent arrears management;
- subletting;
- succession to tenancy;
- suspensions; and
- taking in lodgers

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Appendix 3: Local lettings initiatives

Before we initiate a lettings initiative, we will:

- base its proposals on a sound rationale using clear statistical data sources;
- consult with tenants to obtain their agreement;
- discuss issues with our partners;
- implement a quality monitoring system; and
- review any initiative on an ongoing basis.

As well as housing issues, a local lettings initiative is likely to be concerned with any of the following issues:

- anti-social behaviour;
- low demand housing; and
- unemployment.

Unemployment levels are assessed using internal data that is gathered from various sources, including:

- applicant information forms;
- census information; and
- housing benefit information.

Appendix 4: Performance indicators

Indicators that we use are summarised in this section. These are used to provide regular reports to Councillors and tenant groups.

We present information on allocation practice to Council committee in line with set timescales.

We also provide information on allocation matters to tenants and other service users through methods agreed as part of our tenant participation strategy.

(a) Indicators to monitor the Scottish Social Housing Charter

- percentage of tenancy offers refused during the year;
- percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year, by source of let;
- percentage of lettable houses that became vacant in the last year;
- average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year;
- average length of time in temporary accommodation by type;
- percentage of households requiring temporary or emergency accommodation to whom an offer was made;
- percentage of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused in the last year by accommodation type; and
- of those households homeless in the last twelve months, the percentage satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation.

(b) Other monitoring (quantitative)

We monitor numbers of the following issues under the headings below.

Access to the common housing register

- applicants on the common housing register, including tenants seeking to transfer or exchange houses;
- new applications to the common housing register, including processing applications against set timescales; and
- deletions from the common housing register.

Offers and lets of accommodation

- numbers of offers to applicants, including information on accepted and refused offers;
- offers suspended and reasons, as well as appeals against suspensions and outcomes; and
- allocations to each housing group against targets.

Equality monitoring

- equality information to identify applications, offers and lets by reference to factors such as age, disability, ethnicity and race and gender.

Note

Full information on the extent of equality monitoring is contained in our internal reports; these are available publicly.

Appeals and complaints

- numbers of appeals and complaints, including outcomes.

(c) Other monitoring (qualitative)

This type of monitoring includes activities such as:

- the quality of our verbal advice and information about allocation matters; and

- the quality of our public information relating to written and electronic formats.

This includes meeting corporate quality standards such as producing information, as appropriate, that is:

- accurate;
- in plain language; and
- accessible to the needs of individual service users.

We also monitor specific issues to inform practice such as reasons why tenants are seeking to transfer to other houses, or to exchange homes with other tenants.

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Appendix 5: Useful contacts

These are provided to applicants in a summary leaflet in their information pack.

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APPENDIX 6: CHOICE BASED LETTING SCOPING REPORT

1.0 CHOICE BASED LETTING (CBL) OVERVIEW

CBL is an alternative approach to traditional allocation processes which was developed from the Delft model implemented in the Netherlands in the late 1980s (CIH: A Guide to Social Based Lettings). There is no universal definition of a CBL model since one of the benefits of its approaches is its ability to be adapted to local policies however CBL models that have retained elements of the Delft model have demonstrated stronger outcomes. The key elements are as follows:

- Vacant properties are advertised periodically
- Information on who is eligible to apply for properties is included in advertisements
- Applicants priority is decided in line with easily understood concepts
- The onus is on the applicant to seek out properties
- Applicants apply for specific advertised properties and their circumstances are verified against the landlords eligibility criteria
- The landlord ranks applicants for a specific vacancy to determine the highest priority
- The outcome of the process is published to show the level of demand and priority of successful applicant
- Personal support is available to applicants who require assistance
- A small number of properties are also set aside for people with emergency need

The CBL approach is designed to place choice at the heart of the lettings systems. It is an alternative method of allocating housing and is an internet based system where applicants can view properties for let. Available properties are listed on a website and on a hard copy list which may be published in various outlets. Applicants can see property details and choose to apply or 'bid' for a property via the website. There are different models of CBL however the main feature is that applicants have a choice to bid for a property that they want therefore reducing refusal rates and creating more sustainable communities. If there are multiple applicants for one property the allocation reverts to a points or banding system based on the councils Allocations Policy.

Scottish Government Practice Guide to Social Housing Allocations has recognised CBL as one of the models of good practice for allocating social housing. It describes CBL as an approach councils should take because they believe it offers greater choice for applicants and can help support tenancy sustainability. However it suggests that meeting housing need and allocating properties in a fair and equal way should remain the underpinning principles of a CBL system.

In Scotland, several landlords have opted for this type of allocation system which includes Highland Council, Edinburgh City Council, Renfrewshire Council, Falkirk Council and Angus Council. A number of Registered Social Landlords also operate a CBL system including Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Grampian Housing Association, Sanctuary Housing and Castlehill Housing Association.

There are also a number of other Local Authorities (East Renfrewshire, Aberdeenshire, Orkney and Mid Lothian) who are considering CBL within their RRTPs to improve their lettings and allocations processes and systems to maximise efficiency and, in particular, reduce void times which was highlighted in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: A Scottish Overview Report by Crisis in February 2020.

There are various types of CBL systems operating across different housing providers however they all mainly follow the same elements as described above. Whilst CBL is about empowering customers to make the choice about where they wish to live it is also

normal to continue with some direct lets under a CBL service as it is necessary to maintain some direct lettings. This may include specially adapted properties for physical disabilities, housing for older people and some units for certain household circumstances. Other examples are for reasons of housing management such as exceptional circumstances or public protection.

2.0 CBL ADVANTAGES

2.1 Greater Choice and Control

CBL provides customers with a greater degree of choice and control when deciding where applicants wish to live. CBL offers greater customer choice, more transparency, increased engagement and interaction between housing providers and customers, better management of customers' expectations, tackling low demand properties/areas, better acceptance rates and more sustainable neighbourhoods.

In 2019/20 the council had 27% of refusals compared to 51% in 2018/19. This is lower than the national average of 37% for 2019/20 and lower than the peer average of 41% in 2019/20. There has been significant progress in reducing refusals in 2019/20 however main reasons for refusals continue to be where the property is located; this is despite the property being in one of the applicants chosen communities. A move to a CBL approach means that vacancies are allocated to those who wish to live in the area/property which in turn would reduce the time taken to get to a permanent housing solution and improve sustainability.

Whilst applicants in traditional direct lettings systems can exercise a degree of choice by refusing offers of accommodation for normal lettings this can create a longer turnaround of voids and incur higher costs in voids. In 2019/20 average days to let a tenancy was 37 days compared to 37.5 days in 2018/19 this compares to 35 days nationally in 2019/20 and 41 days for our peer group in 2019/20. The critical shortage of housing stock means it is vital properties are accepted and void times are minimised to achieve maximum efficiency out of the council's stock.

2.2 Greater Transparency

A significant issue for West Lothian continues to be around the demand for social housing against supply particularly in certain areas where demand significantly outstrips supply.

Whilst CBL will not increase supply it does create more transparency around where properties are available and what the true demand is, this in turn can assist to inform applicants to make more realistic choices and better manage their expectations about where properties are available and whether they are likely to be successful. Allocations receive a large number of enquiries from applicants wishing to enquire about a property being empty or wanting to note an interest in the property despite operating a direct letting system. It is hoped that operating a CBL system will reduce these enquiries by being more transparent and making this information more readily available and allowing applicants to bid for the property themselves. It is imperative that information is accessible, easy to understand and up to date about stock and its availability to allow applicants to make informed and realistic choices about their housing options.

By being more transparent this can further assist to persuade people to move to locations they have not previously thought about once they access information about property demand in different areas. This can be used to help people achieve housing quicker and can also be useful for tackling hard to let properties and minimising re-let times.

2.3 Modernisation

As outlined in the Digital Transformation Strategy technology is changing our society and the way we live. The council faces challenges that simply cannot be addressed by doing things the way we have always done them. Budget constraints will continue to challenge the way in which services are delivered across the public sector, whilst at the same time the demand for services is growing and the public's perception of the quality of public services is increasingly influenced by their wider experiences as consumers. Citizens expect public services to be consistent, available, accessible and reliable.

A key commitment from the council is to ensure a range of options are available to customers to interact with council services. At present the range of options to consider your full housing options, apply for a house and obtain housing is limited.

To fully deliver sustainable transformation as outlined in the Digital Transformation Strategy the council needs to transform and integrate service delivery from end to end through the entire service journey, not just the front end. This will require embracing new technologies. With the already digitised Housing Application Form, CBL would further support a move towards a more transformational digital change and would align with the mutual exchange digitisation process which is close to completion.

2.4 Shift to Prevention and Alignment with Housing Options

Prevention of homelessness is fundamental in the delivery of the RRTP and reducing homelessness. Therefore one of the RRTPs objectives is to focus on Early Intervention, Prevention and Housing Options through evaluating existing prevention and early intervention activities via developing our Housing Options approach in partnership with the RSLs and private sector to capture all the housing options available. One of the key actions in order to achieve this will be reviewing how people can access Housing Options advice and enhancing this.

During the period 2018/19 to 2019/20 homeless prevention cases have reduced by 31.9% falling from 1,127 in 2018/19 to 767 in 2019/20. Increasing the level of homeless prevention cases is a key action in 2020/21 and during the remainder of the RRTP. A shift to a CBL system would be part of a suite of digital tools taken forward to develop and enhance how our customers can access a range of housing options via the council's website.

The service has reviewed a similar digital approach to Housing Options which is delivered by the Wheatley Group. Wheatley operates a fully digital housing information, advice and lettings service called MyHousing portal. Customers are directed to the portal when applying for housing or seeking housing advice. This ensures every person who is looking for a home is directed to the portal to get personalised and honest advice about their housing situation first, explore fully all the available and suitable housing options, and then create personal housing plans and view and bid for available homes.

A face to face Housing Options would continue to operate in West Lothian however by providing additional pathways to allow customers easier and quicker access to assess all their housing options and apply for and bid for council housing would hopefully strengthen the Housing Options approach and prevent homelessness.

2.5 Analysis of Local Housing Needs and Demand

The use of CBL systems also provides greater opportunity for the council to make better use of more accurate data which can support the council to make more informed assessments on where true demand lies and develop specific communication campaigns around these demands.

3.0 CBL CHALLENGES

3.1 Supporting Vulnerable Groups

One of the main challenges of CBL systems is potentially disadvantaging vulnerable customers who do not have access to the internet, IT equipment, IT skills or capacity to bid on properties meaning they are likely to potentially miss out on offers. However it is worth noting that the current and any future housing applications will be online, and support is put in place to assist those that do not have internet access or are not computer literate.

There are a number of good practice processes in place that aim to minimise this and ensure that vulnerable applicants are not disadvantaged. These include:

- Assisted lists
- Auto bidding
- Support to make bids, use of proxy bidders
- Dedicated staff to make bids on behalf of applicants
- Properties being advertised through alternative media channels and newsletters
- Reminder systems to make bids

All CBL systems need to ensure they adhere to relevant guidelines for people with sight loss and visual impairments along with ensuring they can be used in a range of languages.

Good practice recommends that councils maintain an 'assisted list', where the council establishes a list of applicants who are identified to require assistance to participate fully in the CBL service. These applicants could be identified through Housing Options Interviews, application forms or surveys of people who have not been engaging with the councils CBL service, to determine whether advice or support is required.

3.2 People not Bidding

CBL systems allow for auto bidding to be done on an applicant's behalf. Auto-bidding is a method that enables bids to be placed for an applicant without the need for them to physically do it themselves. Applicants can opt into this service when they apply. Once a suitable property is available for bids the CBL system will automatically bid on the applicant's behalf removing the need for the applicant to bid themselves. Applicants are also still able to bid for any other properties they deem suitable. This ensures that applicants still have a choice in their allocation. Placing an applicant on auto-bid should be assessed by the Allocations Team and in conjunction with the applicant's needs while taking a person-centred approach. It is imperative that applicants' choices are kept up to date and are genuine choices to ensure that they are not automatically bidding on properties they would not consider.

In addition to auto bidding further support can be provided to applicants with support needs such as assistance from their support worker to place bids on the applicant's behalf, a proxy on their behalf who can place bids or dedicated phone lines where the Allocations team would place bids on the applicant's behalf.

Whilst CBL is an online system meaning available properties are advertised on a website adverts can also be displayed in council offices, libraries, CAB offices, DWP, local newspapers, doctors surgeries and other voluntary organisations. Systems can also be set up to remind certain applicants to bid for properties by email, text or phone.

Some CBL systems require applicants most in urgent housing need to make realistic bids within certain periods of time such as 3 months in some councils to get housing as quickly as possible. Realistic bidding can be considered as bidding on a property that can be secured as soon as possible, sometimes for the lower demand areas. Once these timeframes have been reached the council will then start making bids on their behalf. The purpose of this is to ensure homeless applicants are rehoused as quickly as possible and spend minimum time in temporary accommodation. For homeless applicants, bidding unrealistically on properties that cannot be attained quickly, or refusing an offered property, is likely to lead to the council to discharge its homeless duty.

However when comparing this to the current lettings approach there is minimal difference. At present homeless applicants can chose a minimum of 10 communities, if after 9 months they are not successful in being shortlisted to housing the council will open their application up to either the east or west of West Lothian. Meaning they are potentially likely to be allocated a house in an area they did not initially chose if they have chosen high demand and low turnover areas. However the principle behind this approach is the same to ensure faster throughput of homelessness and minimum time spent in temporary accommodation.

It is inevitable these challenges will remain due to the supply and demand issues that face the council however CBL would actually allow applicants a higher degree of choice by allowing applicants to make bids themselves for an initial period as opposed to being made an offer in that period. Choice may be limited and communication with applicants will be vital to provide market information and details about the service which can better manage expectations. Applicant expectations may still exceed what can be delivered, but this is an issue of supply rather than allocation.

Depending on the model of CBL system used some systems can hinder applicants from getting preferred properties. For example priority status systems that shortlist housing based on length of time in that group as opposed to housing need can be disadvantageous for homeless applicants. As a homeless applicant may receive greater chance of receiving housing if they remain living in unsuitable accommodation if they have lived there for a long time as opposed to applying as homeless where their time in the homeless group could be less given them less points to bid. However this would not apply to West Lothian Council as waiting time points are not awarded and a groups plus points system will be maintained.

4.0 SYSTEM CHANGES

The changes moving from our current allocations process to a CBL process will require a further exploration whereupon the service will consult with the software supplier, currently Capita, to determine requirements of the service, cost, timescales and resources required.

The implementation schedule of a CBL system would be impacted by the necessity for other software improvements; currently the project couldn't be timetabled in until 2021 when Open Housing has completed its scheduled upgrade in Sep-Dec 2020.

However Capita's CBL module has been developed to respond to the needs of organisations who wish to use this method of allocations either instead of, or alongside a point based or banding system. Therefore there is capability within Open Housing to deliver CBL along with Assisted, or Auto Bids on behalf of Applicants.

5.0 CONCLUSION

There are clear advantages to a CBL system as outlined in the report which include greater customer choice, more customer control, better transparency and better managed customer expectations. CBL places choice at the heart of the lettings systems.

There are challenges in implementing a CBL system to be overcome to ensure applicants who are vulnerable to not miss out on housing opportunities and homeless applicants are bidding for housing to ensure the council meets its statutory duties. As already identified there are a number of good practice guides and research papers that have been developed to ensure services implementing such systems follow best practice to mitigate these challenges. Such systems can include automatic bidding, assisted bidding, supported bidding and a variety of advertisement channels however this list is not exhaustive. The service will also work closely with a number of other councils who operate CBL systems or are implementing such systems to learn and share best practice that is being adopted in other councils ensuring that the system that is developed in West Lothian does not disadvantage vulnerable applicants and remains true to the Allocations Policy objectives in meeting those most in urgent housing need.

The service is confident that CBL approach to letting will be more person-centred and in line with the councils Digital Transformation Strategy, better prevent homelessness and enhance Housing Options. It is hoped that by implementing a CBL system in West Lothian we will better empower customers, improve expectations, reduce the number of refusals for properties, reduce appeals, improve void times and create operational efficiencies.

The service is confident that following research into CBL that there are clear advantages to CBL which outweigh the challenges and that by following supportive guidance around best use of CBL these challenges will be able to be overcome.

6.0 BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: A Practice Guide, The Scottish Government, February 2019
A guide to choice-based lettings, Chartered Institute of Housing, November 2017
Fair allocations and choice based lettings, Shelter, December 2005
Choice Based Letting, Stirling University, January 2017
Ending Homelessness Together, The Scottish Government, November 2018
Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans: A Scottish Overview, Crisis, February 2020
Rapid Transition Plan: West Lothian Council, 2019-2024
Digital Transformation Strategy: West Lothian Council, 2018/19-2022/23

APPENDIX 7: INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Integrated Relevance Assessment Form

1. Details of proposal			
Policy Title (include budget reference number if applicable)		Allocations Policy	
Service Area (detail which service area and section this relates to)		Housing Needs Service	
Lead Officer (Name and job title)		Katy McBride	
Other Officers/Partners involved (list names, job titles and organisations if applicable)		Laura Harris, Service Development Officer Lynn Meek, Allocations Manager	
Date relevance assessed		05/08/2020	
2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?			
YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct • Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and • Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not NB: In this section you must also consider the Human Rights Act and the key PANEL (Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality) principles of Human Rights – (further detail on what these are, are provided in the guidance document)			
Which groups of people do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this policy? You should consider employees, clients, customers and service users (Please tick below as appropriate)			
Age - Older people, young people and children		Yes	
Disability - people with disabilities/long standing conditions		Yes	
Gender reassignment - Trans/Transgender Identity – anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at Birth		No	

Marriage or Civil Partnership – people who are married or in a civil partnership	No
Pregnancy and Maternity – woman who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave	Yes
Race - people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds	No
Religion or Belief – people with different religions and beliefs including those with no beliefs	No
Sex - Gender Identity - women and men (girls and boys) and those who self-identify their gender	No
Sexual Orientation – lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual/straight	No
4. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy will or may impact on socio- economic inequalities? Consideration must be given particularly to children and families	
Socio-economic Disadvantage	Impact – please tick below as appropriate)
Low Income/Income Poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing	Yes
Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future	Yes
Material Deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies	Yes
Area Deprivation – where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport)	Yes
Socioeconomic Background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income	Yes
5. Integrated impact assessment required? (Two ticks (✓) above = full assessment necessary)	
YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Decision rationale – if you have ticked no above, use this section to evidence why a full IIA is not required	
Signed by Lead Officer	Katy McBride
Designation	Housing Needs Manager

Date	
Counter Signature (Head of Service or Depute Chief Executive responsible for the policy)	AnnMarie Carr
Date	

- **No assessment required – process ends**
- **Include** a detailed summary of the decision rationale in any council reports and include a copy of the IRA with the background papers.
- **Full Assessment required – continue to Full Assessment Form**

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Full Integrated Impact Assessment Form

1. Details of proposal	
Details of others involved	Katy McBride Lynn Meek Laura Harris
Date assessment conducted	05/08/2020
2. Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes) including the context within which it will operate.	
<p>The council's Housing Allocation Policy is a strategic policy document that explains how the council addresses a wide range of housing needs in the area. It has a critical part to play in promoting sustainable and inclusive communities, promotes equal opportunities and incorporates good practice guidance. Its aims are aligned with a wide range of other council strategies and policies, including promoting the objectives of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan and the Local Housing Strategy which includes the Homeless Strategy. The policy is, therefore, part of a holistic approach to addressing housing need in the local area.</p> <p>The Housing Allocations Policy must adhere to legislative requirements in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by other law, in particular the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. These Acts determine the council's statutory duties in relation to Allocations and Homelessness. In particular, the Allocations Policy must ensure that reasonable preference is given to those in urgent housing need as define in law. These are;</p> <p>Homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs.</p> <p>People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions and who have unmet housing needs</p> <p>Tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and which the social landlord selecting its tenants considers to be under – occupied.</p> <p>The main aim of the policy is to address housing need by prioritising applicants based on their individual circumstances and levels of need. The policy is needed to ensure there is clear and transparent guidance on how to access social housing throughout West Lothian. The policy explains how we allocate housing, how we match people who apply for our homes with the homes that become available.</p> <p>The council needs the policy to ensure that anyone wishing to apply for housing with the council knows how to do it and understands the processes involved</p> <p>The allocation policy works upon a groups and points system and will allocate points based on individual circumstances, regardless of their ethnic background/sexual orientation etc. Therefore all groups are positively affected as the policy will assess the level of points they should be awarded on their individual circumstances, therefore meeting their housing need. The policy does recognise that there are circumstances were applicants may require to be considered for additional points to ensure equality of access to available housing suitable for their circumstances. For example, individuals with a</p>	

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physical or mental health condition can ask to be considered under our medical needs points. The policy also recognises that if an adapted property or property types such as amenity or sheltered housing for elderly people becomes available, that these properties will be offered to an applicant who meets the criteria for that type of accommodation. This is due to the availability of these types of properties being limited, therefore requires WLC to make best use of stock.

The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.

Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.

As part of the Allocations Policy review an extensive consultation was carried out over four months with applicants, tenants, staff and other stakeholders to consult on all the proposed changes a total of 2,720 people responded to the consultation.

3. Please outline any needs and/or barriers which equality groups (People with Protected Characteristics) may have in relation to this policy

Age	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people The Policy is likely to have a positive impact on this group.</p> <p>The Allocation Policy is not allowed to take into account the age of applicants unless (a) housing has been designed or substantially adapted for persons of a particular age or (b) the housing is for persons who are – or will be – in receipt of housing support services for a particular age group.</p> <p>The Policy will provide more positive solutions by increasing points across the board for applicants within the strategic needs category. This means young people leaving care or leaving the family home are awarded a higher degree of points than at present to minimise the need for the applicant to present as homeless, seek temporary accommodation and hopefully secure a secure tenancy before they are in crisis.</p> <p>The policy is also aiming to prevent homelessness and therefore reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation. This would therefore have a positive effect on any children who would have been placed into temporary accommodation by avoiding the homeless route through other avenues in the Allocations Policy.</p>
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	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>The Policy must adhere to the Housing Scotland Act 1987. Age is not allowed to be taken into consideration unless housing has been designed or substantially adapted for persons of a particular age or the housing is for persons who are or will be in receipt of housing support services for a particular age group.</p> <p>The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2017-2022, which is the overarching strategy for housing in West Lothian, sets out the joint and strategic approach of the local authority and its partners to delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures, to meet identified need in West Lothian. All housing provision proposed in the LHS will be built to Housing for Varying Needs Standards. This is to ensure the housing is accessible to as wide a range of the population as possible regardless of age. Fuel poverty is a keen consideration for the elderly and the LHS has a sharp focus on actions to address fuel poverty.</p> <p>The LHS also identifies actions as a consequence of changes in welfare, particularly in relation to changes affecting those under the age of 35 years with non-dependents (the shared room rate), and those under 25 whose benefit entitlement is restricted.</p> <p>Analysis of key homeless information confirms that 33% of homeless applications are from under 25s, 64% are from 26-59 year olds and 3% are from over 60s. The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) details a number of workstreams that are being taken forward to improve earlier interventions and the prevention of homelessness. This include the creation of Youth Conflict Resolution Services and a Schools Education Programme. The RRTP also recognises that young people leaving care and other vulnerable situations often lack housing options. A key aim in combatting this is to develop and implement a Moving on Model in conjunction with other services including the Advice Shop via their Access To Employment programme and other third sector organisations. Housing options are also being widened and will be available in council premises throughout West Lothian to ensure easier access to all services.</p>
Disability	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The Policy is likely to have a positive impact on this group.</p> <p>The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy allows for applicants to have medical needs assessed to determine which type of property would be most suitable and award an appropriate level of points based on the applicant's disability and therefore urgency to be rehoused.</p> <p>The reviewed policy will increase points to applicants who have medical needs providing a higher level of points inline with the general increase across the other categories. This will ensure medical needs are still taken into consideration and awarded an appropriate level of points based on need.</p>

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	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) is the overarching strategy for housing in West Lothian and identifies the need for specialist housing provision for people with disabilities in West Lothian and how this will be funded in relation to the provision of housing and related services for those with a disability. It includes an action plan for independent living.</p> <p>The LHS policy establishes a number of linkages with other strategies to ensure a consistent approach and establishes outcomes for people with disabilities to ensure that appropriate accommodation is planned and available for people with differing needs. This includes planned investment in housing which is “Core and Cluster” to support independent living in the community for people with disabilities.</p> <p>For people with physical disabilities the LHS highlights the continuing need to address the requirement for individual aids and adaptations to ensure people’s accommodation remains suitable.</p> <p>The affordable housing that is proposed through the LHS, whether it is built by RSLs or the council, will be built to Housing for Varying Needs Standards. This includes a high proportion of wheelchair specific provision in the Council’s own new build programme. Ground floor accommodation in cottage flats and terraced or semi-detached properties will also provide a flexible house type for people with a range of needs including those with some mobility issues.</p> <p>As part of the consultation process for reviewing the Allocations Policy 75.4% of responses felt that the council should prioritise medical needs and felt that increasing medical points was a positive approach.</p>
<p>Gender Reassignment – Trans/Transgender Identity</p>	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>How do you know that</p> <p>The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Housing Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of gender.</p>

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<p>Marriage or Civil Partnership</p>	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people unknown It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>How do you know that The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Housing Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of marital status.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people The Policy is likely to have a positive impact on this group.</p> <p>The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Asked to leave and relationship breakdown are the largest reasons for applying for homeless services in West Lothian accounting for 74% of all applications in 2019/20.</p> <p>The RRTP seeks to rehouse people by providing settled, mainstream housing as quickly as possible, better prevent homelessness and reduce time spent in temporary accommodation by creating better flow through the system with fewer transitions. With these aims in mind it is anticipated the need for use of unsuitable accommodation should be reduced for pregnant woman.</p> <p>How do you know that Due to the high numbers of homelessness demand there is a continued high use of temporary accommodation which includes the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation for pregnant woman. In 2019/20 22 women presented as homeless.</p> <p>The policy aims to reduce this and therefore the time in temporary accommodation and usage of unsuitable temporary accommodation which should have a positive impact on pregnant woman in unsuitable temporary accommodation by creating a strategic needs category and awarding higher amount of points to applicants who are asked to leave the family home or are forced to live apart.</p> <p>74.8% of people who responded to the Allocations consultation supported this recommendation and felt that these increased points could better prevent homelessness.</p>

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Race	What effect/difference will the policy have on people
	<p>It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>How do you know that The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of race.</p> <p>In addition, the LHS states that, in planning for housing and related services, the council and its partners have and will continue to take account of issues relating to ethnic minorities. These include particular demand issues, such as household size and age distribution as well as accessibility for these groups where language and communication may be an issue. As a result particular consideration has been given to census data which indicates the growing population in West Lothian of Polish immigrants; the age “bulge” of ethnic groups which is appearing in the elderly, as well as language barriers. The council continues to utilise translation options for non-English speaking people to ensure the service remains accessible.</p>
Religion or Belief	What effect/difference will the policy have on people
	<p>It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>How do you know that The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Housing Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of religion or belief.</p>

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Sex - Gender Identity	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>How do you know that The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Housing Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of gender identity.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people It is anticipated that there should be no impact on people with this protected characteristic.</p>
	<p>How do you know that The Policy is being reviewed to provide greater opportunity to better prevent homelessness from occurring.</p> <p>Houses are allocated on a points based system and are allocated to the applicant most in urgent housing need. Some properties are specifically adapted or for a certain age group or applicant with a specific medical need and will be allocated to those applicants who qualify for these types of properties with the highest need.</p> <p>The LHS, RRTP and Housing Allocations Policy apply to all citizens of West Lothian by providing access to housing and related services to all residents, regardless of gender. All allocation of housing developed by the council and its partners is subject to the relevant equalities legislation.</p> <p>Overall points are being increased to provide greater opportunity for those most in urgent housing need to obtain housing regardless of sexual orientation.</p>
<p>4. Please outline any needs and/or barriers which may affect vulnerable groups falling into poverty and disadvantage in relation to this policy</p> <p>Vulnerable groups may include the following;</p>	

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- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • Single parents and vulnerable families • People on benefits • Those involved in the criminal justice system • People in the most deprived communities (bottom 20 SIMD areas) • People who live in rural areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pensioners • Looked After Children • Carers including young carers • People misusing services • Others e.g. veterans, students • Single adult households • People who have experienced the asylum system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness • Homeless people • People with low literacy/numeracy • People with lower educational qualifications • People in low paid work • People with one or more Protected Characteristic |
|---|--|--|

What effect/difference will the policy have on people

It is anticipated that, overall, the Allocations Policy should have a largely positive effect on those experiencing homeless or those threatened with homelessness. As it seeks to provide more solutions to prevent homelessness from occurring, creating faster throughput into permanent housing for those applicants with the highest housing needs.

The policy has created a new strategic needs category which aims to better prevent homelessness for a number of new groups which include:

- Hospital Discharge
- Leaving supported accommodation to community care
- Medical A
- Looked after and accommodated children (foster/kinship care)
- Leaving Forces (leaving full time regular service and within 9 months of discharge)
- Domestic Abuse
- Prison Discharge
- Leaving Care
- Notice to Quit
- People at risk of /experiencing serious harassment
- Forced sale
- Witness protection
- Asked to leave/living in insecure accommodation
- Forced to Live apart

However there is potential to disadvantage some of the vulnerable groups outwith the homeless group if there is an overly high proportion of homeless lets compared to the other vulnerable groups.

Homelessness is a top priority for housing along with the prevention of homelessness however there also remains other urgent housing needs which require to be met.

Through amending the Transfer Led approach to a split between 75/25 tenants and waiting list applicants is considered to be positive as this allows other vulnerable groups and applicants with no housing tenure to secure new build housing. This also allows the council to continue to ensure it makes effective use of its tenancies and create secondary lets by continuing to allocate to existing tenants properties which can then be let to other vulnerable groups.

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How do you know that

The RRTP sets out the council 5 year plan to end homelessness. There are a number of actions within this to mitigate against poverty and deprivation, recognising the links between ending homelessness and tackling poverty.

In relation to unemployed households, households on benefits and those living in the most deprived communities, the RRTP acknowledges that Welfare Reform is further exacerbating inequalities, particularly in relation to Universal Credit. Issues also exist for people under age 35 in relation to single room rent regulations. The RRTP seeks to mitigate the impacts of Welfare Reform where appropriate / where possible and investigate alternative housing options i.e. Moving On Model, development of education programme, mediations services, development of a Joint West Lothian Housing Options approach with partners etc.

The RRTP acknowledges that people involved in the community justice system, particularly people leaving prison are at high risk of homelessness and to mitigate this, a key action is to refine the roll out of the SHORE (Sustainable Housing On Release for Everyone) standards to ensure suitable pathways for people leaving prison. The SHORE standards have been published to ensure that the housing needs of individuals in prison are handled at an early stage, in a consistent way across Scotland, regardless of where they come from, their housing status and how long they have been in prison or young offenders' institution. The standards are designed to ensure that people leaving prison can access services and accommodation in the same way as people living in the community.

The RRTP recognises that adults suffering from addiction / mental health issues may, in some circumstances, not currently be receiving the required levels of support to help them transition into settled and sustainable accommodation. A Housing First model for permanent accommodation has therefore been implemented where intensive support is provided which links into current commissioned services.

The RRTP also recognises that young people and young people leaving care and other vulnerable situations often lack housing options. One key aim in combatting this is to develop and implement a Moving on Model in conjunction with other services including the Advice Shop via their Access To Employment programme and other third sector organisations.

In the Allocations Consultation, 65.9% of people felt homelessness should be a key priority for housing and increasing points was therefore fair in addition to 74.8% of people agreeing that the council should also prioritise other vulnerable groups for social housing. The council is confident that this approach is the right approach to take to better address the varying degrees of housing need in West Lothian and better prevent homelessness.

In order to generate a secondary let and make better use of social housing the council operates a 100% transfer led approach, however the council recognises that this doesn't always make best use of stock, address housing need and create sustainable communities. The council proposed to change this to 75/25 split with tenants receiving the highest split. The respondents of the consultation agreed with this by 63.6% feeling it was a fairer way of ensuring everyone in housing needs has access to better quality housing in more desirable areas. The respondents commented that housing should be allocated based on need and not tenure and some suggested a 50/50 was more preferred.

When seeking views on the proposals to increase points for homelessness 13.7% did not agree with this suggesting that it was already a high demand and pressured area, seen as the only avenue to access social housing and sometimes abused. The council intends to reduce the proportion of lets to homeless applicants in 2021/22 Year 3 of the RRTP to better prevent homelessness whilst addressing the current and forthcoming homeless pressures.

5. Action Plan

What action/s will be taken, by whom and what is the timescale for completion

Actioner Name Transfer approach and proportion of lets to homeless	Action Date 05/08/2020
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What is the issue	
Potential to disadvantage vulnerable groups if allocate all new build housing to existing tenants and potential to disadvantage other vulnerable groups outside homelessness if proportion of lets remain unfairly high to homeless.	
What action will be taken The council will recommend Council Executive agree to review the transfer led approach to move to a 75/25 split. The council with the aim of reducing lets to homeless by 2021/22.	
Progress against action Paper being presented to PDSP on 28 September 2020 before Council Executive.	
Action completed	Date completed
Actioner Name	Action Date
What is the issue	
What action will be taken	
Progress against action	
Action completed	Date completed
Actioner Name Click here to enter text.	Action Date Click here to enter a date.
What is the issue Click here to enter text.	
What action will be taken Click here to enter text.	
Progress against action Click here to enter text.	

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Action completed Click here to enter text.	Date completed Click here to enter a date.
6. Details of consultation and involvement Who will be or has been involved in the consultation process a. State which groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement. b. Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the involvement process. c. Describe the results of the involvement and how you have taken this into account.	
<p>Findings from consultation and engagement in respect of homelessness to inform the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), which is the overarching strategy for housing in West Lothian and provides strategic context for the RRTP, are set out in the West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022:</p> <p>https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/9810/Policy-and-Strategies</p> <p>This evidences all feedback obtained through the formal LHS consultation process and how this has been used to influence the final LHS.</p> <p>A RRTP specific survey was created and sent to the Race Forum, Faith Group, Glitter Cannons (LGBT young people), West Lothian Pride Group, Milan Group, Disability West Lothian, Mental Health Service Users Forum, Senior Peoples Forum and the Homeless Housing Network Group (homeless service users group). As the RRTP Integrated Impact Assessment also covers those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, the survey was sent to the local regeneration steering groups (these are the groups developing locality plans in our West Lothians most deprived communities). A common theme from this consultation is concerns around the impact this may have on people trying to access housing via other means than homelessness.</p> <p>The Allocations Policy changes were sent out to all applicants on the council's housing list, staff, tenants, tenants panel, partners and stakeholders. The service held briefing and consultation sessions RSLs, Social Policy, Housing Offices, staff, tenants panel and tenants networks. The consultation lasted a full four months and concluded on 16th April 2020. The council consulted on proposals to increase points for vulnerable groups, homeless applicants, people living in Below Tolerable Standard, people experiencing overcrowding, medical needs, people forced to share, people seeking support. The council also consulted on increasing homeless applicants' choice to speed up the time to rehouse homeless applicants, review its transfer approach to award more new build housing to other groups. Overall, all suggestions were supported and relevant suggestions and areas of concern have been incorporated into the IIA.</p>	

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7. Data and Information

What equality data, poverty data, research, information or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?

(Information can include, for example, surveys, databases, focus groups, in-depth interviews, pilot projects, reviews of complaints made, user feedback, academic publications and consultants' reports)

- a. What information or other evidence has been used in the development of the policy?**
- b. What does research, consultation and other data or information tell you about the impact of the policy? (Describe the information and the conclusions, and state where the information can be found).**
 - (i) Quantitative (numbers, percentages, statistical data)**
 - (ii) Qualitative – (written/spoken words, opinions, surveys)**
- c. Describe any gaps in the available information, and record within section five (Action Plan Section), action you are taking in relation to this (e.g. new research, further analysis) and when this is planned.**
- d. Give details of any existing local or national evidence which has been used to inform the development of your policy.**

The following were referenced / consulted in the completion of this document and the RRTP:

Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019-2024

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/31211/2018-12-18-West-Lothian-RRTP-First-Iteration- FinalDraft- /pdf/RRTP.pdf?m=637063038965830000>

Homeless and Rough Sleeping Action Group Recommendations June 2018

<http://www.ghn.org.uk/publications/harsag/>

West Lothian Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/19574/West-Lothian-Council-Corporate-Plan-2018--- 2023/pdf/West Lothian Council Corporate Plan 2018-2023.pdf>

West Lothian Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022

<https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/9810/Policy-and-Strategies>

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8. Mitigating Actions

If the policy has a negative/adverse impact on a particular group/s, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.

Note: If the policy is unlawfully discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010 and/or is having a negative impact on poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage under the Fairer Scotland Duty, you **MUST** identify, how the policy can be amended or justified so the Council acts lawfully.

- a. How could you modify the policy to eliminate discrimination or to reduce any identified negative impacts? If necessary, consider other ways in which you could meet the aims and objectives.
- b. How could you modify the policy to create or maximise the positive aspects of the proposals and to increase equality and reduce poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage.
- c. Describe any modifications which you can make without further delay (for example, easy, few resource implications).
- d. If you propose to make any of the modifications shown above, describe any potential new negative impacts on other groups in society or on the ability to achieve the aims and how you will minimise these.
- e. Please describe the resource implications of any proposed modifications taking into account financial, people and property issues.

Through consultation it has been identified that there may be a negative impact on vulnerable groups due to the Transfer Led approach and high lets to homeless. We will monitor homeless applications to ensure there is no large increase in application because it is seen as quick route to housing. This will be monitored through the HL1 return to the Scottish Government. There will also be ongoing dialogue with the Tenants Panel and Homeless Housing Network Group for feedback on this issue. The increase in lets to the homeless group is not unlawful and the percentage lets to each group on the housing list will continue to be reviewed as the RRTP progresses with the aim of reducing these in 2021/22. We seek to reduce the transfer led approach to 75% from 100% and will continue to monitor new build lets and secondary lets to ensure we are making best use of accommodation and offering housing to those most in housing need.

9. Monitoring and Review

- a. How will the implementation and impact of the policy be monitored, including implementation of any amendments? For example, what type of monitoring will there be? How frequent?
- b. What are the practical arrangements for monitoring? For example, who will put this in place? When will it start?
- c. How will results of monitoring be used to develop future policies?
- d. When is the policy due to be reviewed?
- e. Who is responsible for ensuring this happens? Please detail below

Through annual reviews of the RRTP, Scottish Housing Annual Returns, ongoing performance management, ongoing monitoring of service delivery to tenants panel.

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10. Recommendation and Reasoning	
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement proposal with no amendments <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions (as outlined above) <input type="checkbox"/> Reject proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality, poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage Reason for Recommendation	
<p>The council is confident that through monitoring of its RRTP it can mitigate impacts against other vulnerable groups and the service is committed to seeking approval to reducing the Transfer Led approach to ensure more new build houses are allocated to those most in housing need.</p>	
Signed by Lead Officer	Click here to enter text.
Designation	Click here to enter text.
Date	Click here to enter a date.
Counter Signature (Head of Service or Depute Chief Executive responsible for the policy)	Click here to enter text.
Date	Click here to enter a date.

- **Integrated impact assessment completed**
- **Final assessment must be published on the council website once the decision to implement has been agreed:**
[Council EQIA Publication Page](#)
- **Link must be included in “Background References” section of committee/management reports**

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SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report the current levels of performance for Housing, Customer and Building Services indicators that are the responsibility of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the current performance on Housing, Customer and Building Services key performance indicators and determine if further action or enquiry is necessary.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; Being honest, open and accountable; and Making best use of our resources.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	In compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance and the principles of Best Value.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no impact but this report is part of the agreed process for performance reporting.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The key performance indicator that is relevant to the SOA is HQSPROP033.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None.
VII Consideration at PDSP	N/A
VIII Other consultations	Tenants Panel and service staff.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Current Position – Q1 2020/21

The relevant performance report is included within appendix 1. Of the 10 performance indicators we are reporting, 7 are categorised as green, and 3 are red. When compared to the same position last year this represents an improvement, where 4 were categorised as green, 2 as amber and 3 as red.

The service performance for Q3 and Q4 was not reported to PDSP as planned due to the impact of the Covid-9 pandemic, and this has been included as appendices 2 and 3 to this report. Due to the services reducing service delivery during this time to emergency only provision, there has been the expected reflection within service performance indicators.

Each indicator in the appendix displays the latest note which offers an explanation from the service on current performance levels.

D.2 Red Performance Indicators

The current trend for those indicators that are currently at red status is summarised:

1. HQSHOM004_9a Quarterly Spend on additional homeless service costs

Current Performance - £353,522.68
Target - £300,049.00

This quarter occurred during lockdown and therefore costs reduced for transport as result of schools being closed, voids reduced due to an increased effort to focus on turning over voids to create throughput however as a result furniture costs increased to furnish more tenancies to be converted into temp tenancies, there was also a decrease in property storage costs as the number of cases with storage requirements decreased. Target for 2020/21 will be updated to reflect new budget.

2. HQSLETS001m_9b Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties

In June 2020 there were 32 properties let, the average time is 63.34 days, this increase is attributed to the service dealing with a backlog of properties that were in process prior to Covid19 lockdown measures and the delay in recommencing the letting process. In May there were 35 properties let, the average time is 33.94 and in April there was only 1 property let due to restrictions in letting/signing up applicants.

3. HQSSAT2006_6a.7 Housing Options Survey - rate the overall quality of the service

Q1 2020/21 there have been no returns to any surveys for the whole service. This is a result of surveys not being issued to customers to reduce handling and community transmission of Covid during lockdown, and whilst working from home practices are in place. A review is already underway to move to a new texting survey service which is currently programmed for completion by September 2020.

E. CONCLUSION

The summary chart at the front of Appendix 1 shows the status of the performance indicators which are the responsibility of this PDSP. The information contained in Appendix 1 will allow the Panel to note current performance levels and actions being taken to address where current performance is below target.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: Three:

2020/09/28 SftC PDSP HCSB Performance Report Q1 Appendix 1

2020/09/28 SftC PDSP HCSB Performance Report Q4 Appendix 2

2020/09/28 SftC PDSP HCSB Performance Report Q3 Appendix 3

Contact Person: sarah.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk Tel No: 01506 281877.

AnnMarie Carr

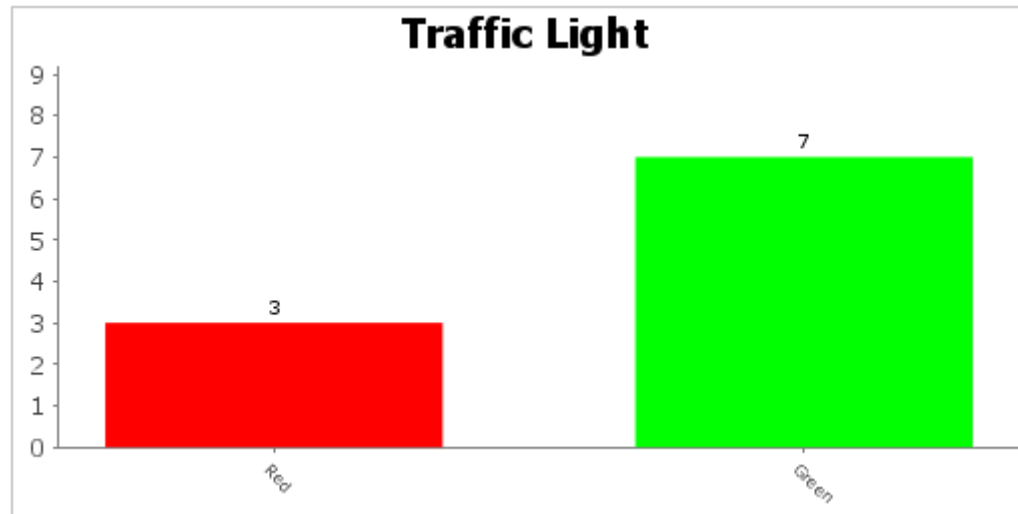
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

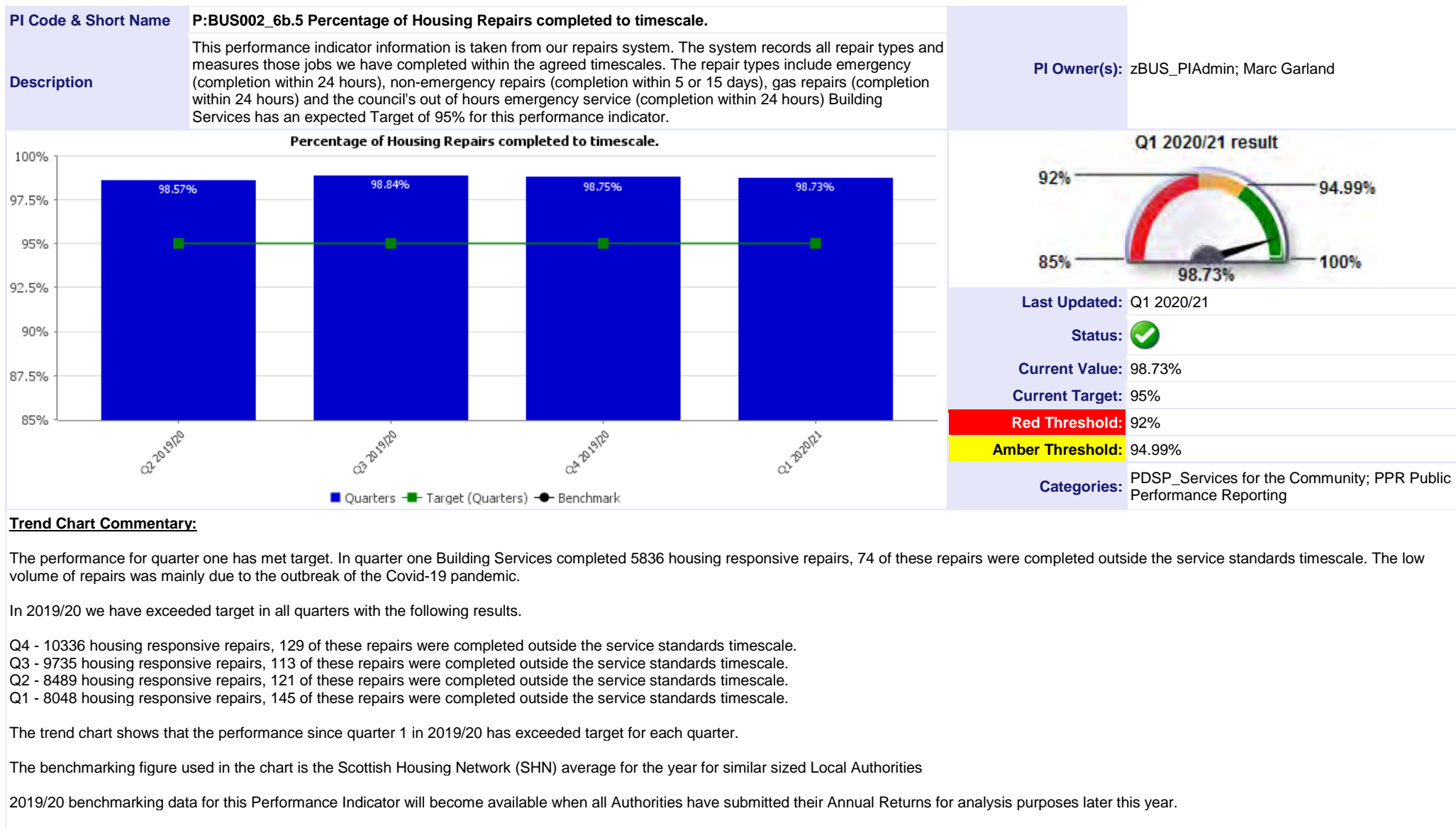
Date of Meeting: 20th October 2020

HCBS PDSP Report

Report Author: Sarah Kelly
Generated on: 09 October 2020 10:46
Report Layout: .NEW. PDSP_PIs_All(Detail)_Grid

Data Label : OFFICIAL





Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance for quarter one has met target. In quarter one Building Services completed 5836 housing responsive repairs, 74 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale. The low volume of repairs was mainly due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2019/20 we have exceeded target in all quarters with the following results.

Q4 - 10336 housing responsive repairs, 129 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.
Q3 - 9735 housing responsive repairs, 113 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.
Q2 - 8489 housing responsive repairs, 121 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.
Q1 - 8048 housing responsive repairs, 145 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale.

The trend chart shows that the performance since quarter 1 in 2019/20 has exceeded target for each quarter.

The benchmarking figure used in the chart is the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year for similar sized Local Authorities

2019/20 benchmarking data for this Performance Indicator will become available when all Authorities have submitted their Annual Returns for analysis purposes later this year.

The target of 95% is derived from discussion with Buildings Services and the Tenant's Panel with adherence to the Building Services Management Plan. This target is reviewed on a yearly basis and remains for 2019/20. Target setting for 2020/21 is planned for February 2020.

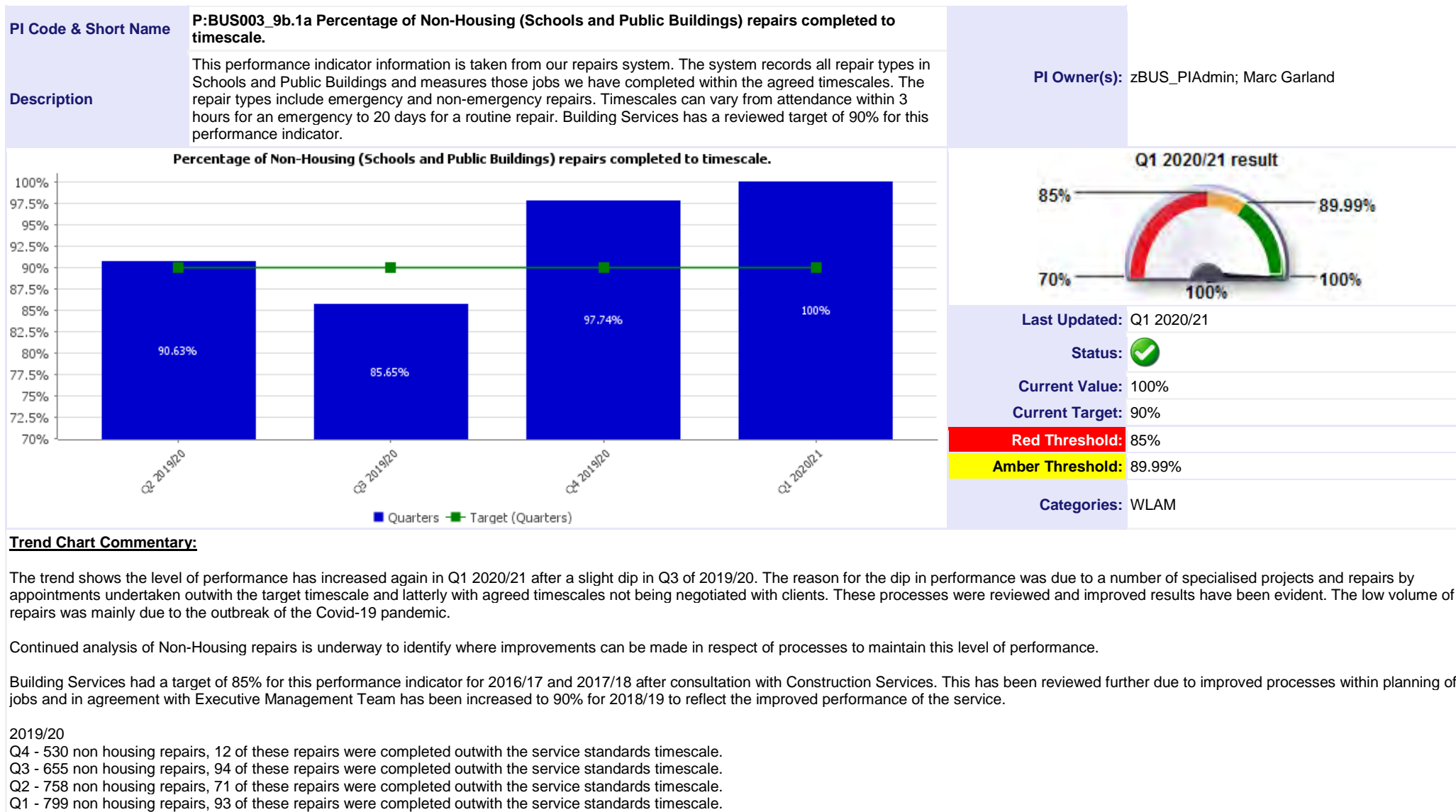
In 2018/19 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 91.45% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 3rd highest of the 6 providing data.

The Local Authorities included Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Highland and West Dunbartonshire.

In 2017/18 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 91.46% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 3rd highest of the 8 providing data.

In 2016/17 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 95.03% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 4th highest of the 8 providing data.

The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.



on the question, and confirmed they would have responded positively had they understood what was being asked. and the service is continuing to contact these customers to validate the figures. Once this piece of work is completed the figures and PI description will be updated to reflect the changes.

The benchmarking figure used in the chart is the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year for similar sized Local Authorities

2019/20 benchmarking data for this Performance Indicator will become available when all Authorities have submitted their Annual Returns for analysis purposes later this year.

In 2018/19 the Scottish Housing Network average customer satisfaction figure for a comparable medium sized Local Authority was 86.2%. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

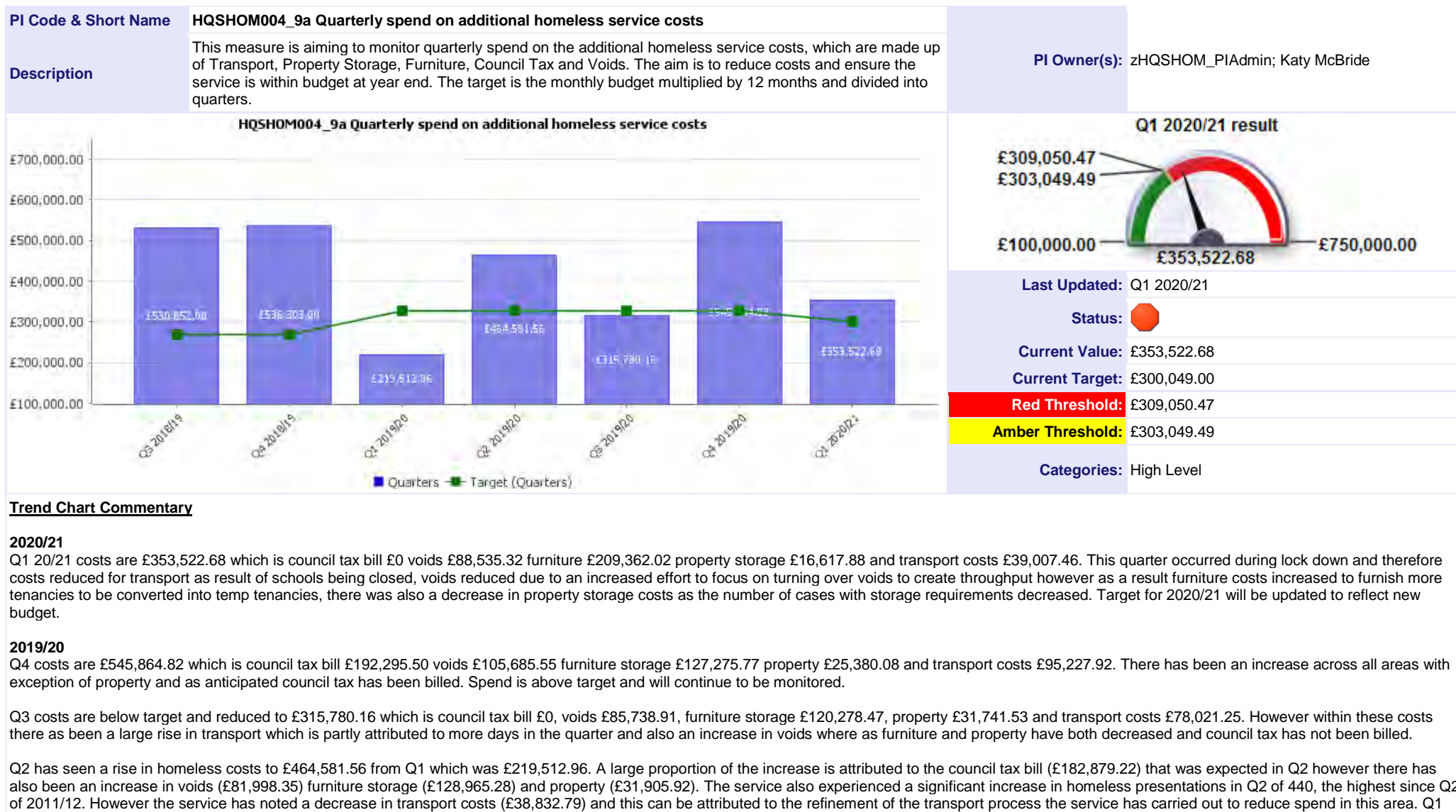
In 2017/18 the Scottish Housing Network average customer satisfaction figure for a comparable medium sized Local Authority was 84.3%. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

In 2016/17 the Scottish Housing Network average customer satisfaction figure for a comparable medium sized Local Authority was 84.1%. The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

Surveys are monitored to investigate negative responses to assess their relativity to the repairs processes. As a result the service has recently implemented new customer communication cards to assist with the improvements. The repair teams analyse all feedback and arrange to contact all customers who provide non positive responses to discuss ways of improving the service.

For 2018/19 the target has been agreed at 98% and is reviewed on a yearly basis with the Tenant's Panel.

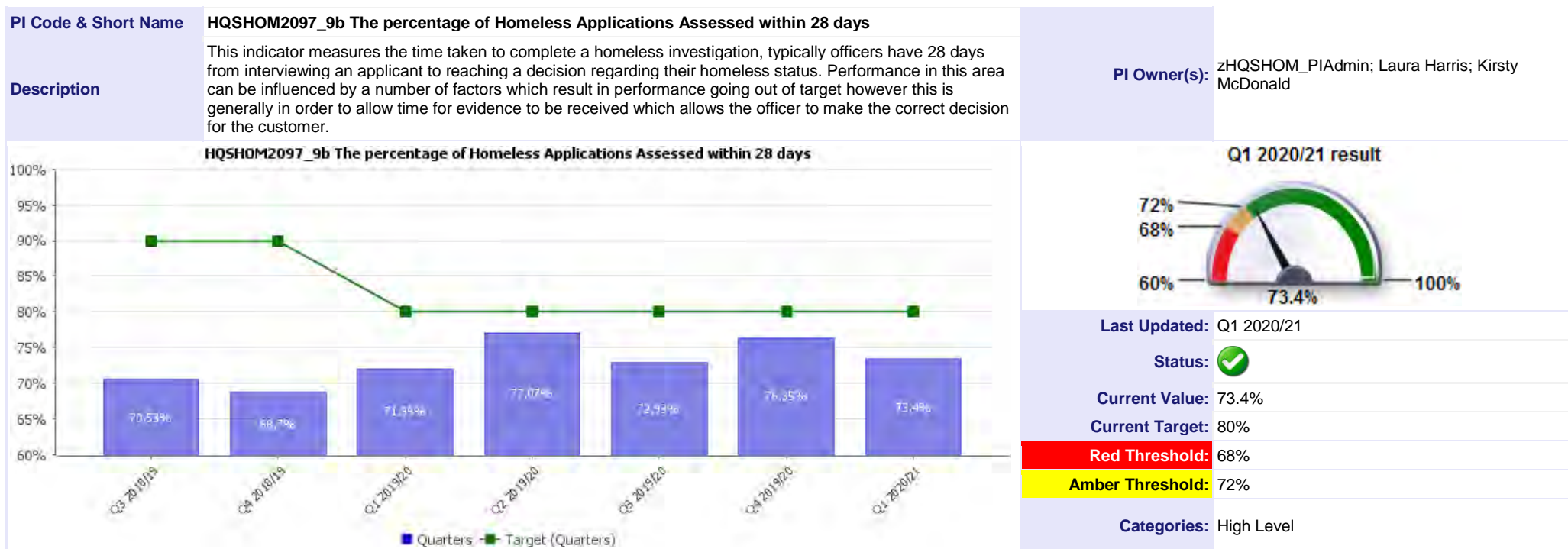
PI Code & Short Name	HQSARR700_9b.1a Total rent collection	PI Owner(s): zHQSARR_PAdmin; Alison Smith																																						
Description	<p>This indicator measures the rate at which Housing Customer & Building Services is collecting rent. This value is: The cumulative sum of rental payments made so far in the financial year by current tenants (excluding garages), divided by the cumulative charge we applied to rental accounts, to give us the year-to-date collection rate percentage.</p> <p>This value emulates the collection value reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) as part of the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) which social landlords are required to complete each year. Please note this value will be slightly different as this is an operational value and does not include void loss as the reported figure would.</p> <p>Source: HCBS Financial Dashboard</p>																																							
<div><div>Total rent collection</div><table><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Collection Rate (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>96.00%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2019</td><td>95.45%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2019</td><td>95.33%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2019</td><td>97.11%</td></tr><tr><td>January 2020</td><td>96.52%</td></tr><tr><td>February 2020</td><td>96.21%</td></tr><tr><td>March 2020</td><td>98.09%</td></tr><tr><td>April 2020</td><td>96.11%</td></tr><tr><td>May 2020</td><td>93.57%</td></tr><tr><td>June 2020</td><td>93.69%</td></tr></tbody></table></div>		Month	Collection Rate (%)	September 2019	96.00%	October 2019	95.45%	November 2019	95.33%	December 2019	97.11%	January 2020	96.52%	February 2020	96.21%	March 2020	98.09%	April 2020	96.11%	May 2020	93.57%	June 2020	93.69%	<div><div>June 2020 result</div><table><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Value</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>June 2020</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>93.69%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>96%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>91.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>93.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>High Level</td></tr></tbody></table></div>	Category	Value	Last Updated:	June 2020	Status:	✓	Current Value:	93.69%	Current Target:	96%	Red Threshold:	91.2%	Amber Threshold:	93.6%	Categories:	High Level
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Categories:	High Level																																							
<div><div>Trend Chart Commentary</div><p>Since the beginning of the 2018/19 the accelerated move of customers from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit has had an impact on the amount of rent collected. When Full Service UC went live in May 2018, the number of tenants on UC has increased from 280 to 2363 in July 2019. Each customer that transitions across experiences a break in income as they move from weekly payments to a monthly payment in arrears. This will in the short term in almost all cases generate a month's arrears. Customers on extremely low income will find this difficult to catch up within their income. This transition will decrease collection for the foreseeable future.</p><p>Please note:</p><p>That due to the way customers pay there can be some large variation from month to month. Customers will invariably make their payments to suit, their income (wages, benefits); There will be some extreme results each year in December and March; this is due to the fact that for most properties there are two non-collection weeks in each of these months. As a result customer payments vastly outweigh charges causing values well over 100% The service achieved a collection rate of 98.09% at year end March 2019. 3,018 of the tenants are recorded as UC claimants.</p><p>Target: 96% (Based on historical data, the HCBS collection rate when calculated in this way averages at 96%.) The service is monitoring the ongoing impact of Universal Credit on collection rate.</p></div>																																								



breakdown of costs is as follows, Transport £52,073.37, Property Storage £31,247.08, Furniture £81,482.78, Voids £54,709.73.

Q1 2020/21 £353,522.68
Q4 2019/20 £545,864.82
Q3 2019/20 £315,780.16
Q2 2019/20 £464,581.56
Q1 2019/20 £219,512.96

Target doe 2020/21 is £1,200,196.00 over four quarters = £300,049.00 budget provided by finance



Trend Chart Commentary

Q1 2020/21 performance decreased to 73.4% decisions, part of the reason for this was officers moving to working from home with a change in normal working practices, in addition there was an increase in presentations increasing the workload and change in the way the team were dealing with presentations whereby the team were split across homeless roofless cases and non roofless. This is under review with an aim to spreading the workload more evenly.

Q4 2019/20 performance has slightly improved to 76.35% still under target however in comparison to previous quarter number of decisions made and percentage made on time this is an improvement. Total decisions

made in Q4 2019/20 were 389 with 297 being made within 28 days.

Q3 2019/20 performance declined to 72.93%. This consisted of 256 decisions being made out of 351 over homeless decisions. It was anticipated with the review in office locations and distribution of workloads officers would have improved time to carry out investigations to assist improve performance.

Q2 2019/20 performance increased to 77.07%. This consisted of 410 decisions and 316 being processed within 28 days. This is attributed to a period of more straight forward investigations and increase in resources which had been fluctuating over the year. The service plans to embark on benchmarking in 2020 with other Local Authorities to streamline its homeless paperwork with the aim of increasing processing time and reducing paperwork for case officers.

From Q4 2018/19 to Q1 2019/12 performance improved to 71.9%. There was a large increase in workloads through increased decisions, complex cases and fluctuations in resources. Housing Options Officers often rely on obtaining information/evidence from other agencies such as SW, police, health services and in some instances this information is not necessarily provided within the 28 day times scale. This information is not always received within the 28 days timescale but contributes towards ensuring a thorough investigation of the homeless case is made and the correct decision given. Work is ongoing to review workloads and splits of duties to allow for more case management time. Rapid Rehousing Transition Programme was also driving increased focus on prevention and housing options which will longer term aim to reduce the amount of homeless cases and homeless decisions.

Q1 2020/21 73.4% decisions made within 28 days

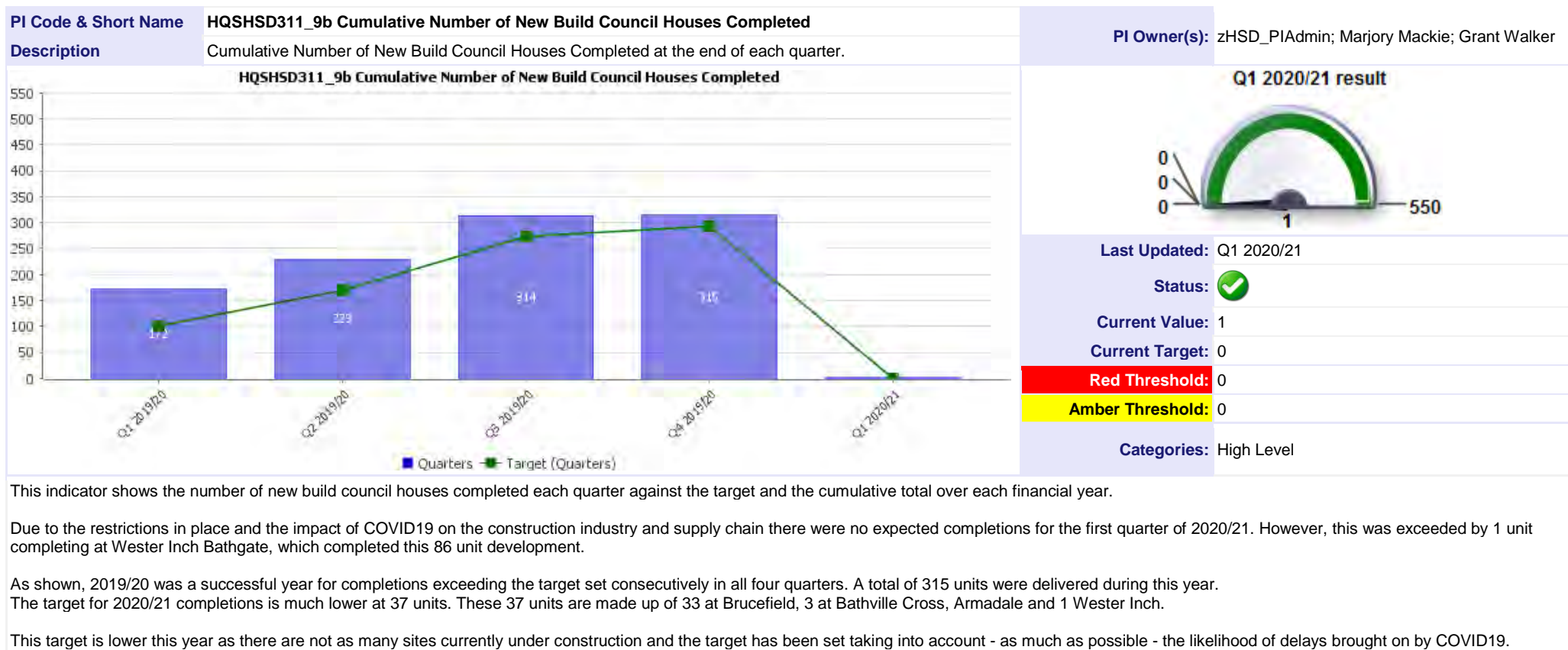
Q4 2019/20 76.35% decisions made within 28 days

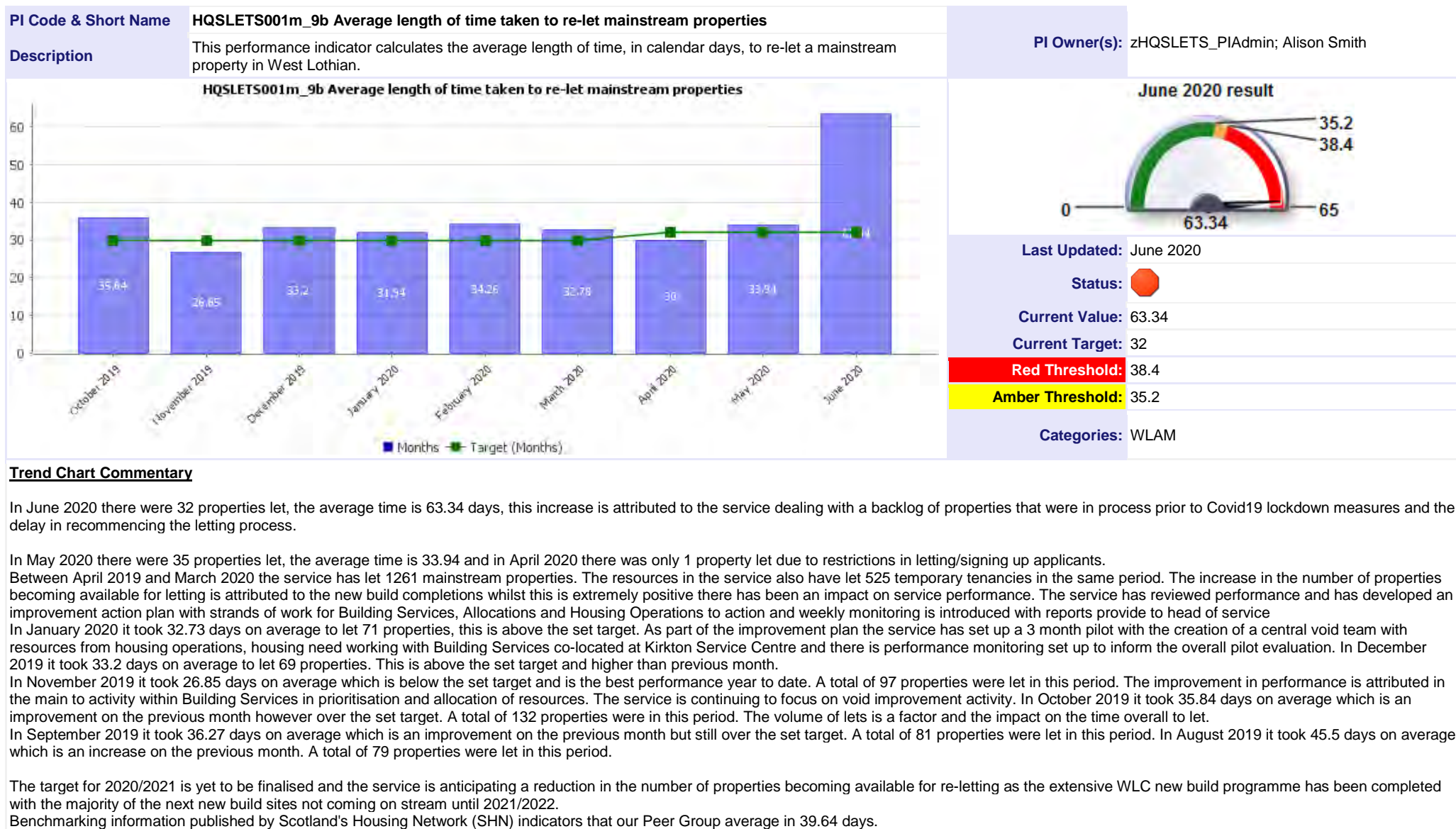
Q3 2019/20 72.93% decisions made within 28 days

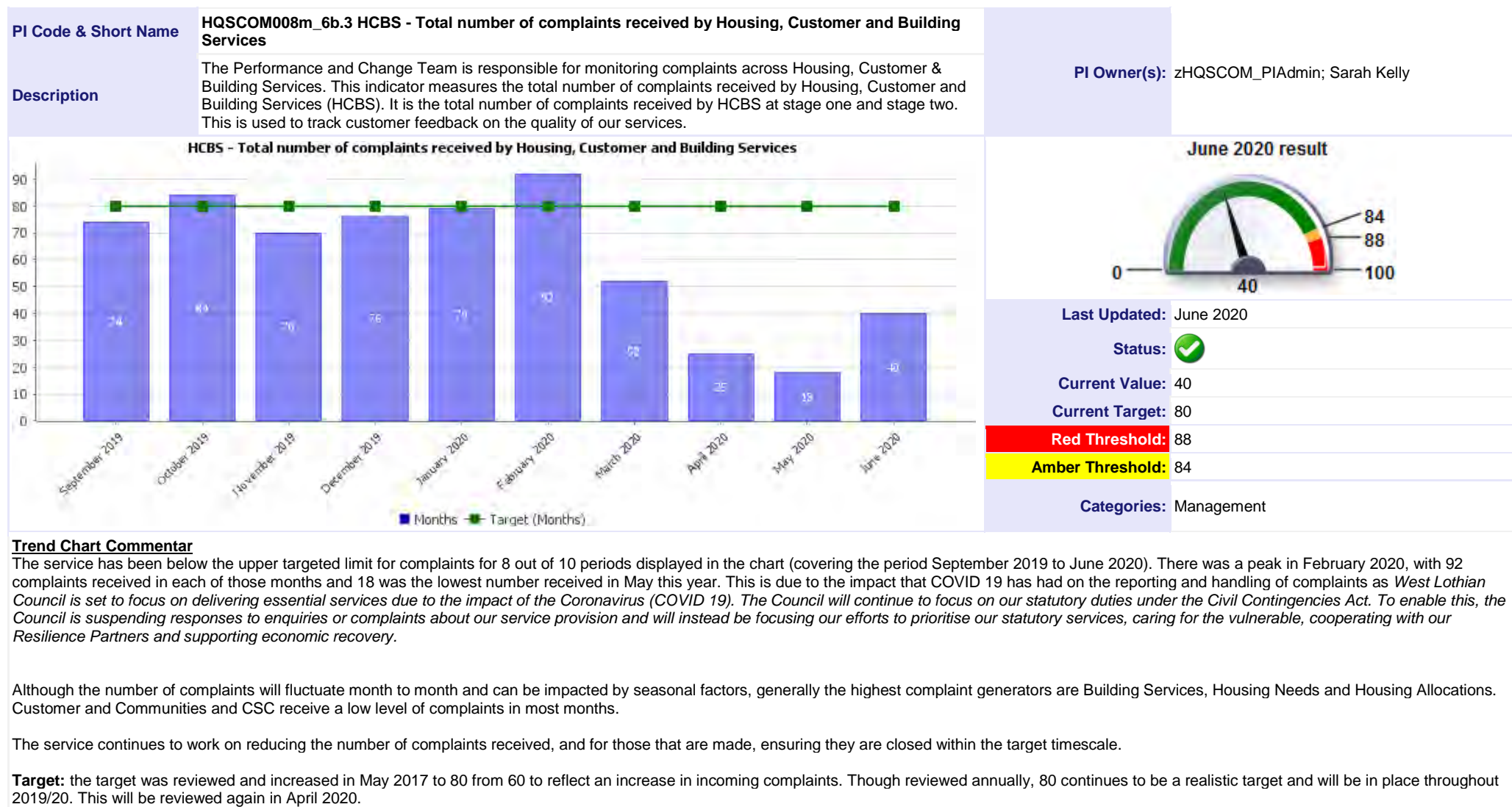
Q2 2019/20 77.07% decisions made within 28 days

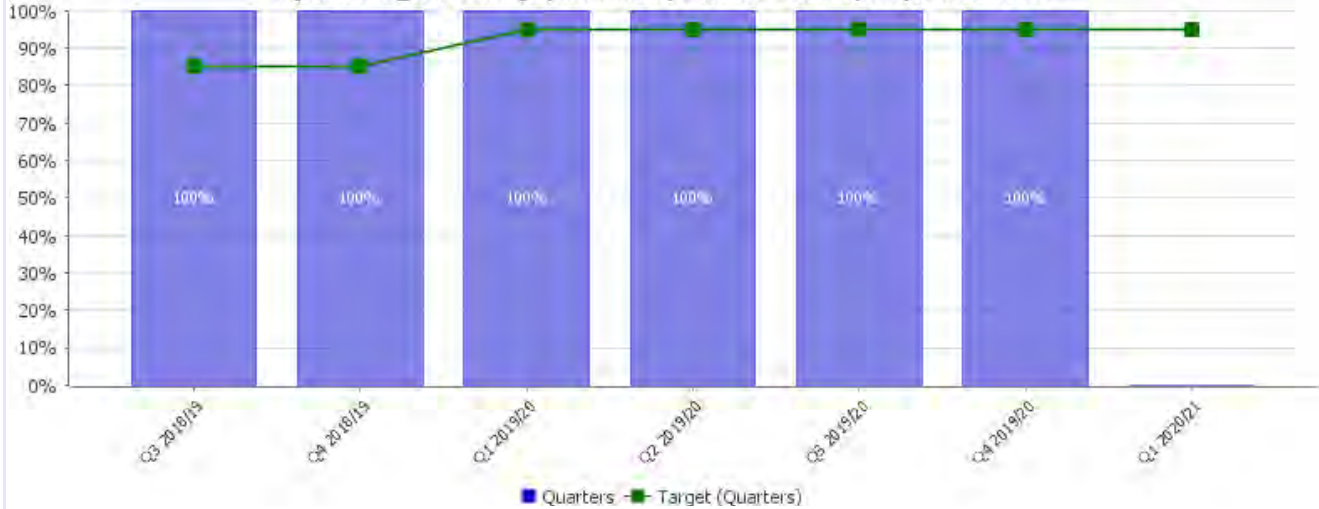


Q1 2019/20 71.99% decisions made within 28 days

Target reduced to 80% to take account of the complexity of investigation and evidence that is expected to be gathered in a homeless assessment whilst still striving to make correct decisions within 28 days.







PI Code & Short Name	HQSSAT2006_6a.7 Housing Options Survey - rate the overall quality of the service	PI Owner(s): zHQSHOM_PIAAdmin; Kirsty McDonald																																		
Description	The service aims to improve customer satisfaction with the overall quality of the service provided. This information is used to analyse overall good or excellent results. Information is collected from e survey on a quarterly basis. Customers complete this survey at the end of a housing options interview.																																			
<div>HQSSAT2006_6a.7 Housing Options Survey - rate the overall quality of the service</div>  <table><caption>Survey Results Data</caption><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Quarters (%)</th><th>Target (Quarters) (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q3 2018/19</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2018/19</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2019/20</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2019/20</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2019/20</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2019/20</td><td>100%</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1 2020/21</td><td>0%</td><td>95%</td></tr></tbody></table>		Quarter	Quarters (%)	Target (Quarters) (%)	Q3 2018/19	100%	95%	Q4 2018/19	100%	95%	Q1 2019/20	100%	95%	Q2 2019/20	100%	95%	Q3 2019/20	100%	95%	Q4 2019/20	100%	95%	Q1 2020/21	0%	95%	<div>Q1 2020/21 result</div>  <table><caption>Gauge Chart Data</caption><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Value (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Current Value</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target</td><td>95%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold</td><td>80%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold</td><td>85%</td></tr></tbody></table> <div>Last Updated: Q1 2020/21</div> <div>Status: </div> <div>Current Value: 0%</div> <div>Current Target: 95%</div> <div>Red Threshold: 80%</div> <div>Amber Threshold: 85%</div> <div>Categories: WLAM</div>	Category	Value (%)	Current Value	0%	Current Target	95%	Red Threshold	80%	Amber Threshold	85%
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<div>Trend Chart Commentary</div> <p>Q1 2020/21 there has been no returns to any surveys for the whole service. This is a result of surveys not being issued whilst working from home practices are in place. Review is already underway to move to a new texting service which is aimed to be concluded by September 2020.</p> <p>Q4 2019/20 resulted in a further decrease in numbers of completed surveys compared to Q3 2019/20, however outcomes remain at 100%. The main reason is the team moved to working from home at 23/03/20 due to Covid 19. This resulted in providing a reduced service which continued through the month of April. Consideration will be given to provide the survey via email instead during this time and to continue this format if deemed successful when there is a return to normal service provision.</p> <p>Q3 2019/20 resulted in a decrease in numbers of completed surveys compared to Q2 2019/20, however outcomes remain at 100%. Reviewing current communication methods to increase engagement to improve response rates. It is important to note that at 26/03/20, due to Covid 19 the HOO team started working from home providing a limited service provision to customers. This resulted in the removed of face to face interviews and being conducted over the phone. HOO where not able to hand out the paper survey as normal procedure.</p> <p>Q2 2019/20 details 100% was achieved. This also included an increase in the number of responses achieved from Q1 2019/20. An increase of 10. Monitoring will continue to encourage customers to provide feedback using a variety of different methods and to increase the numbers providing feedback.</p> <p>Q1 2019/20 shows that 100% was achieved. While this is an excellent result the Service is committed to improve the numbers of customer who engage with us in particular completing the survey at the end of a housing options interview. Discussion are ongoing to increase customer engagement and a number of options are being considered in order to improve customer response rate. measures include text messaging, emailing survey and conducting surveys over the telephone.</p> <p>Q1 2020/21 0 responses were received</p> <p>Q4 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good</p>																																				

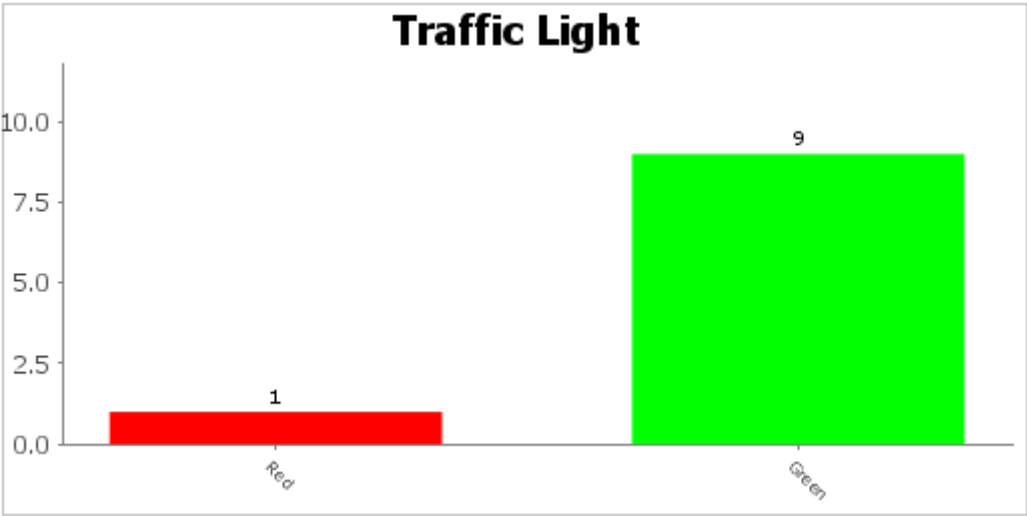
Q3 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good
Q2 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good
Q1 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

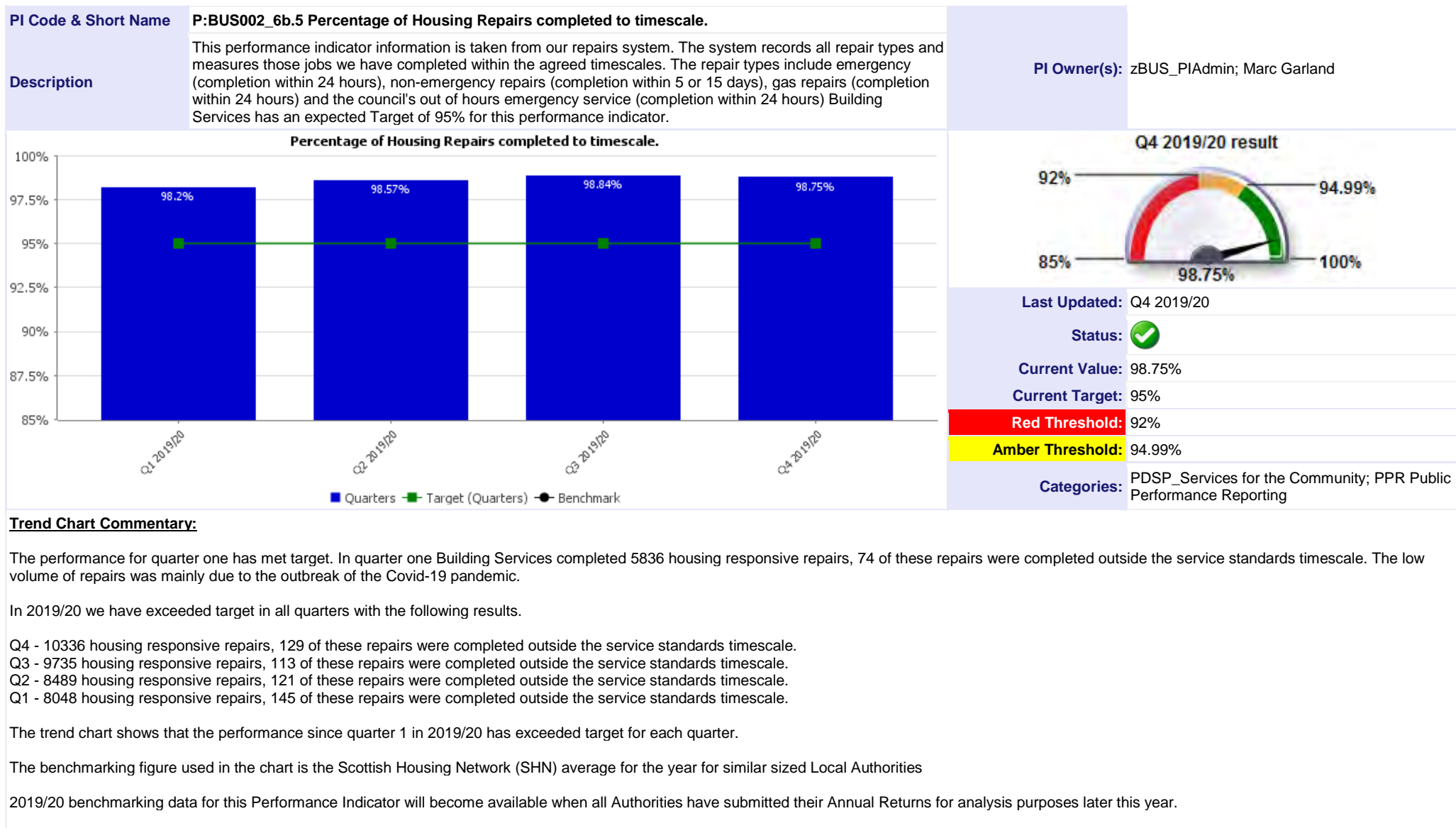
Target 95% in order to strive to maintain high performance

HCBS PDSP Report Q4

Data Label : OFFICIAL

Report Author: Steven Arthur
Generated on: 26 August 2020 09:44
Report Layout: .NEW. PDSP_PIs_All(Detail)_Grid





Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance for quarter one has met target. In quarter one Building Services completed 5836 housing responsive repairs, 74 of these repairs were completed outside the service standards timescale. The low volume of repairs was mainly due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2019/20 we have exceeded target in all quarters with the following results.

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The benchmarking figure used in the chart is the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year for similar sized Local Authorities

2019/20 benchmarking data for this Performance Indicator will become available when all Authorities have submitted their Annual Returns for analysis purposes later this year.

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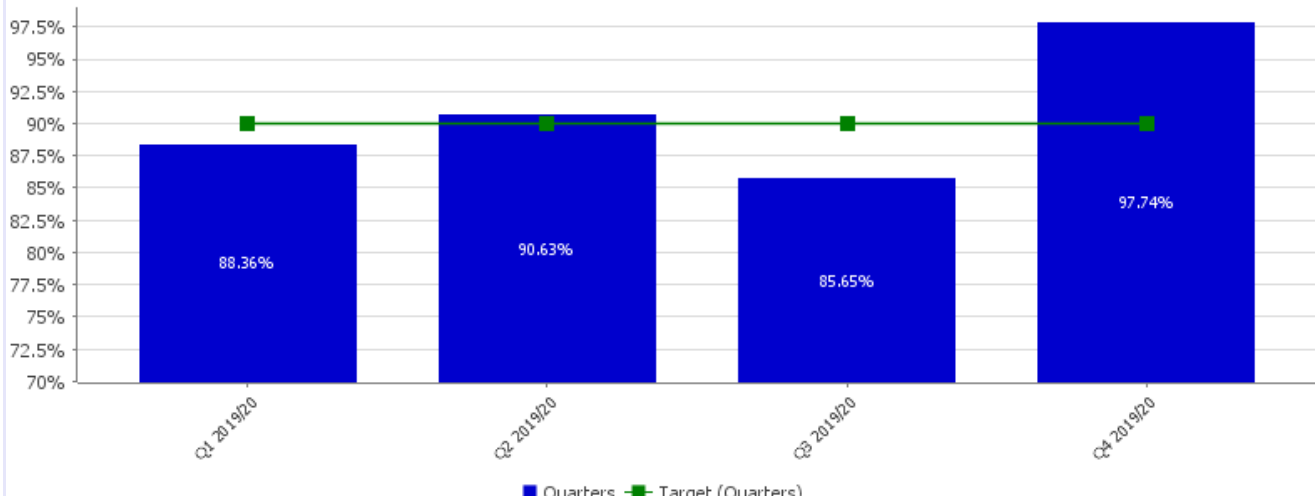

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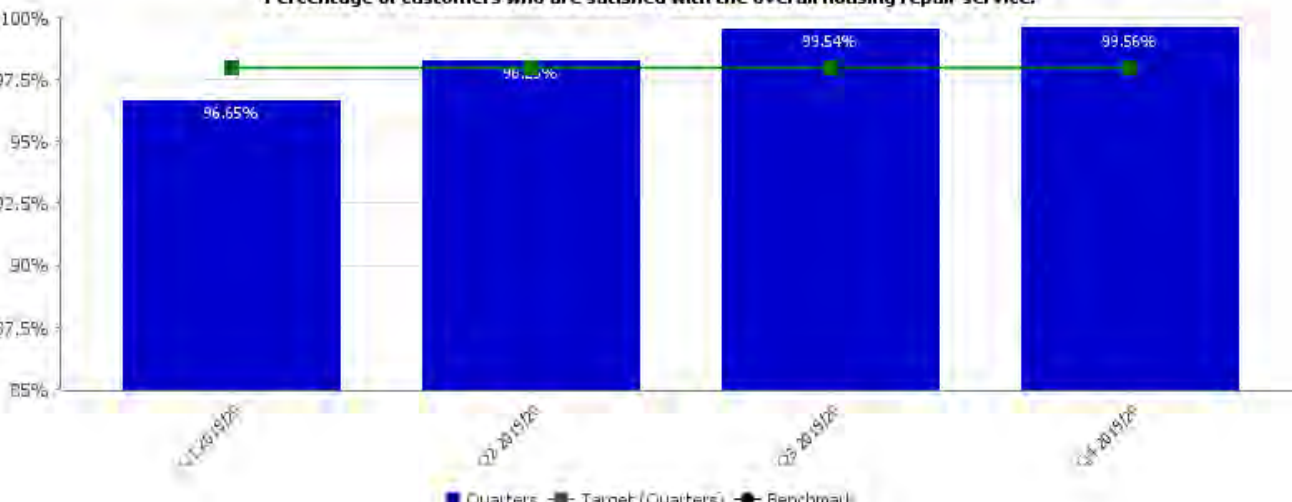
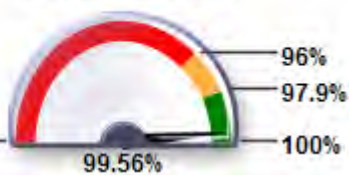
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In 2017/18 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 91.46% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 3rd highest of the 8 providing data.

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The Local Authorities included Aberdeenshire Council, Dundee, Falkirk, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Highland, West Dunbartonshire.

PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS003_9b.1a Percentage of Non-Housing (Schools and Public Buildings) repairs completed to timescale.	PI Owner(s): zBUS_PAdmin; Marc Garland																								
Description	This performance indicator information is taken from our repairs system. The system records all repair types in Schools and Public Buildings and measures those jobs we have completed within the agreed timescales. The repair types include emergency and non-emergency repairs. Timescales can vary from attendance within 3 hours for an emergency to 20 days for a routine repair. Building Services has a reviewed target of 90% for this performance indicator.																									
<p>Percentage of Non-Housing (Schools and Public Buildings) repairs completed to timescale.</p>  <table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Percentage (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1 2019/20</td><td>88.36%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2019/20</td><td>90.63%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3 2019/20</td><td>85.65%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4 2019/20</td><td>97.74%</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</p>		Quarter	Percentage (%)	Q1 2019/20	88.36%	Q2 2019/20	90.63%	Q3 2019/20	85.65%	Q4 2019/20	97.74%	<p>Q4 2019/20 result</p>  <table><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>Q4 2019/20</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>97.74%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>90%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>85%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>89.99%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>WLAM</td></tr></table>	Last Updated:	Q4 2019/20	Status:	✓	Current Value:	97.74%	Current Target:	90%	Red Threshold:	85%	Amber Threshold:	89.99%	Categories:	WLAM
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Categories:	WLAM																									
<p>Trend Chart Commentary:</p> <p>The trend shows the level of performance has increased again in Q1 2020/21 after a slight dip in Q3 of 2019/20. The reason for the dip in performance was due to a number of specialised projects and repairs by appointments undertaken outwith the target timescale and latterly with agreed timescales not being negotiated with clients. These processes were reviewed and improved results have been evident. The low volume of repairs was mainly due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Continued analysis of Non-Housing repairs is underway to identify where improvements can be made in respect of processes to maintain this level of performance.</p> <p>Building Services had a target of 85% for this performance indicator for 2016/17 and 2017/18 after consultation with Construction Services. This has been reviewed further due to improved processes within planning of jobs and in agreement with Executive Management Team has been increased to 90% for 2018/19 to reflect the improved performance of the service.</p> <p>2019/20 Q4 - 530 non housing repairs, 12 of these repairs were completed outwith the service standards timescale. Q3 - 655 non housing repairs, 94 of these repairs were completed outwith the service standards timescale. Q2 - 758 non housing repairs, 71 of these repairs were completed outwith the service standards timescale. Q1 - 799 non housing repairs, 93 of these repairs were completed outwith the service standards timescale.</p>																										

PI Code & Short Name	P:BUS005_6a.7 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the overall housing repair service.		PI Owner(s): zBUS_PIAAdmin; Grant Taylor																										
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For 2018/19 the target has been agreed at 98% and is reviewed on a yearly basis with the Tenant's Panel.

PI Code & Short Name HQSARR700_9b.1a Total rent collection

Description

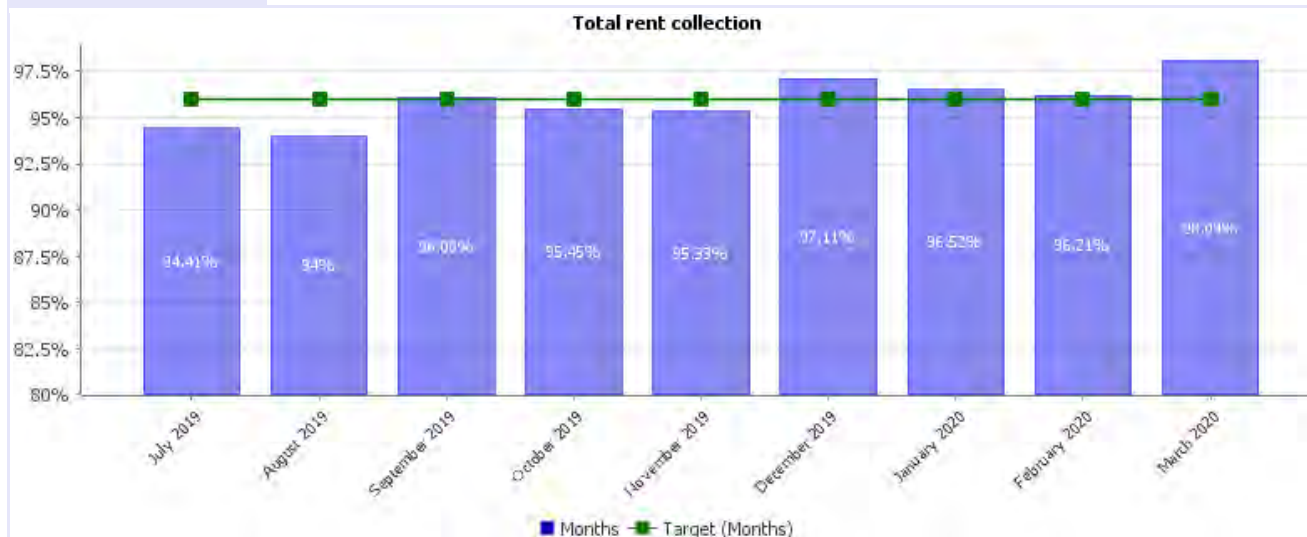
This indicator measures the rate at which Housing Customer & Building Services is collecting rent. This value is:

- . The cumulative sum of rental payments made so far in the financial year by current tenants (excluding garages),
- . divided by the cumulative charge we applied to rental accounts, to give us the year-to-date collection rate percentage.

This value emulates the collection value reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) as part of the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) which social landlords are required to complete each year. Please note this value will be slightly different as this is an operational value and does not include void loss as the reported figure would.

Source: HCBS Financial Dashboard

PI Owner(s): zHQSARR_PAdmin; Alison Smith



Last Updated: March 2020

Status:

Current Value: 98.09%

Current Target: 96%

Red Threshold: 91.2%

Amber Threshold: 93.6%

Categories: High Level

Trend Chart Commentary

Since the beginning of the 2018/19 the accelerated move of customers from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit has had an impact on the amount of rent collected. When Full Service UC went live in May 2018, the number of tenants on UC has increased from 280 to 2363 in July 2019. Each customer that transitions across experiences a break in income as they move from weekly payments to a monthly payment in arrears. This will in the short term in almost all cases generate a month's arrears. Customers on extremely low income will find this difficult to catch up within their income. This transition will decrease collection for the foreseeable future.

Please note:

That due to the way customers pay there can be some large variation from month to month. Customers will invariably make their payments to suit, their income (wages, benefits);

There will be some extreme results each year in December and March; this is due to the fact that for most properties there are two non-collection weeks in each of these months. As a result customer payments vastly outweigh charges causing values well over 100%

The service achieved a collection rate of 98.09% at year end March 2019. 3,018 of the tenants are recorded as UC claimants.

Target:
96% (Based on historical data, the HCBS collection rate when calculated in this way averages at 96%.) The service is monitoring the ongoing impact of Universal Credit on collection rate.



Trend Chart Commentary

2020/21

Q1 20/21 costs are £353,522.68 which is council tax bill £0 voids £88,535.32 furniture £209,362.02 property storage £16,617.88 and transport costs £39,007.46. This quarter occurred during lock down and therefore costs reduced for transport as result of schools being closed, voids reduced due to an increased effort to focus on turning over voids to create throughput however as a result furniture costs increased to furnish more tenancies to be converted into temp tenancies, there was also a decrease in property storage costs as the number of cases with storage requirements decreased. Target for 2020/21 will be updated to reflect new budget.

2019/20

Q4 costs are £545,864.82 which is council tax bill £192,295.50 voids £105,685.55 furniture storage £127,275.77 property £25,380.08 and transport costs £95,227.92. There has been an increase across all areas with exception of property and as anticipated council tax has been billed. Spend is above target and will continue to be monitored.

Q3 costs are below target and reduced to £315,780.16 which is council tax bill £0, voids £85,738.91, furniture storage £120,278.47, property £31,741.53 and transport costs £78,021.25. However within these costs there as been a large rise in transport which is partly attributed to more days in the quarter and also an increase in voids where as furniture and property have both decreased and council tax has not been billed.

Q2 has seen a rise in homeless costs to £464,581.56 from Q1 which was £219,512.96. A large proportion of the increase is attributed to the council tax bill (£182,879.22) that was expected in Q2 however there has also been an increase in voids (£81,998.35) furniture storage (£128,965.28) and property (£31,905.92). The service also experienced a significant increase in homeless presentations in Q2 of 440, the highest since Q2 of 2011/12. However the service has noted a decrease in transport costs (£38,832.79) and this can be attributed to the refinement of the transport process the service has carried out to reduce spend in this area. Q1

breakdown of costs is as follows, Transport £52,073.37, Property Storage £31,247.08, Furniture £81,482.78, Voids £54,709.73.

Q1 2020/21 £353,522.68

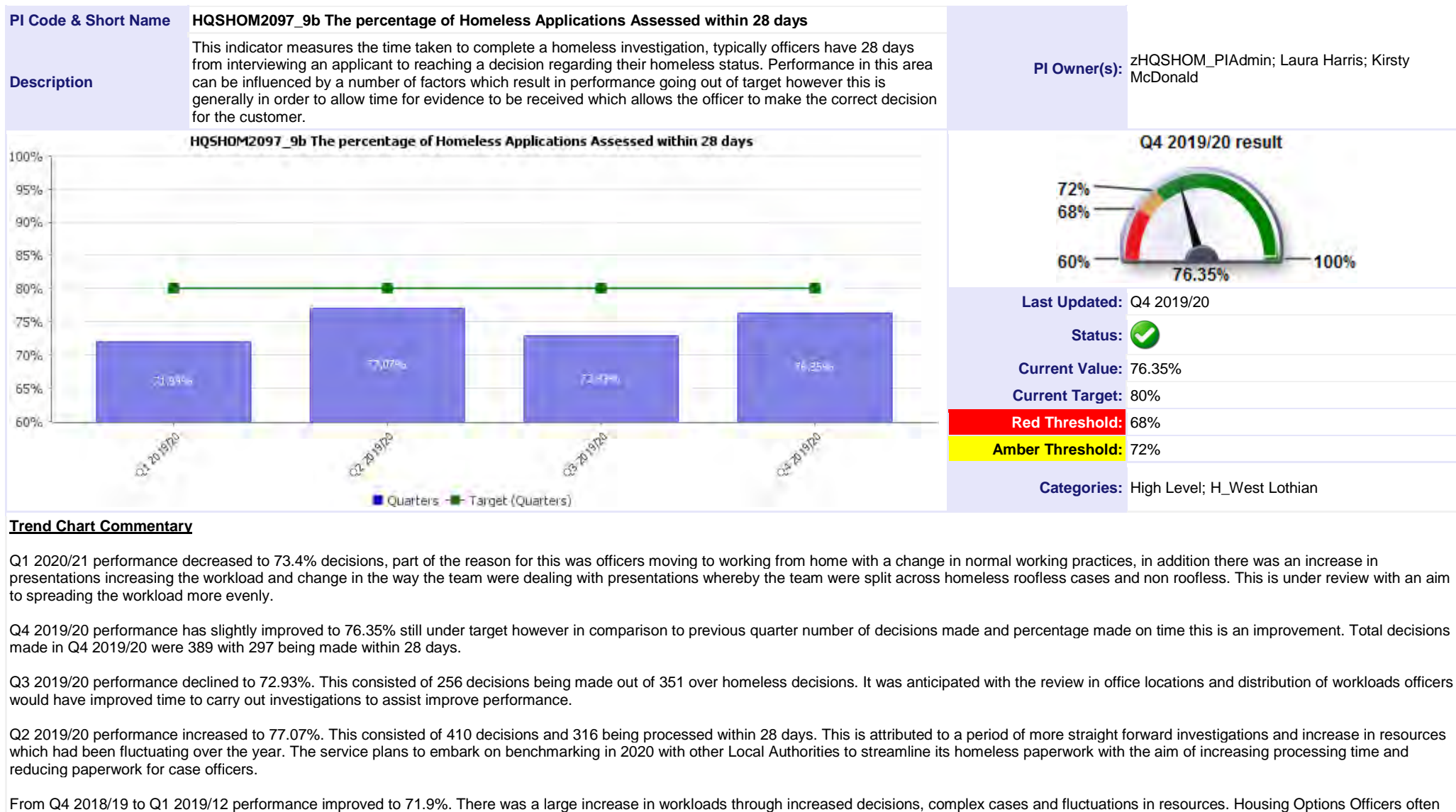
Q4 2019/20 £545,864.82

Q3 2019/20 £315,780.16

Q2 2019/20 £464,581.56

Q1 2019/20 £219,512.96

Target doe 2020/21 is £1,200,196.00 over four quarters = £300,049.00 budget provided by finance



rely on obtaining information/evidence from other agencies such as SW, police, health services and in some instances this information is not necessarily provided within the 28 day times scale. This information is not always received within the 28 days timescale but contributes towards ensuring a thorough investigation of the homeless case is made and the correct decision given. Work is ongoing to review workloads and splits of duties to allow for more case management time. Rapid Rehousing Transition Programme was also driving increased focus on prevention and housing options which will longer term aim to reduce the amount of homeless cases and homeless decisions.

Q1 2020/21 73.4% decisions made within 28 days

Q4 2019/20 76.35% decisions made within 28 days

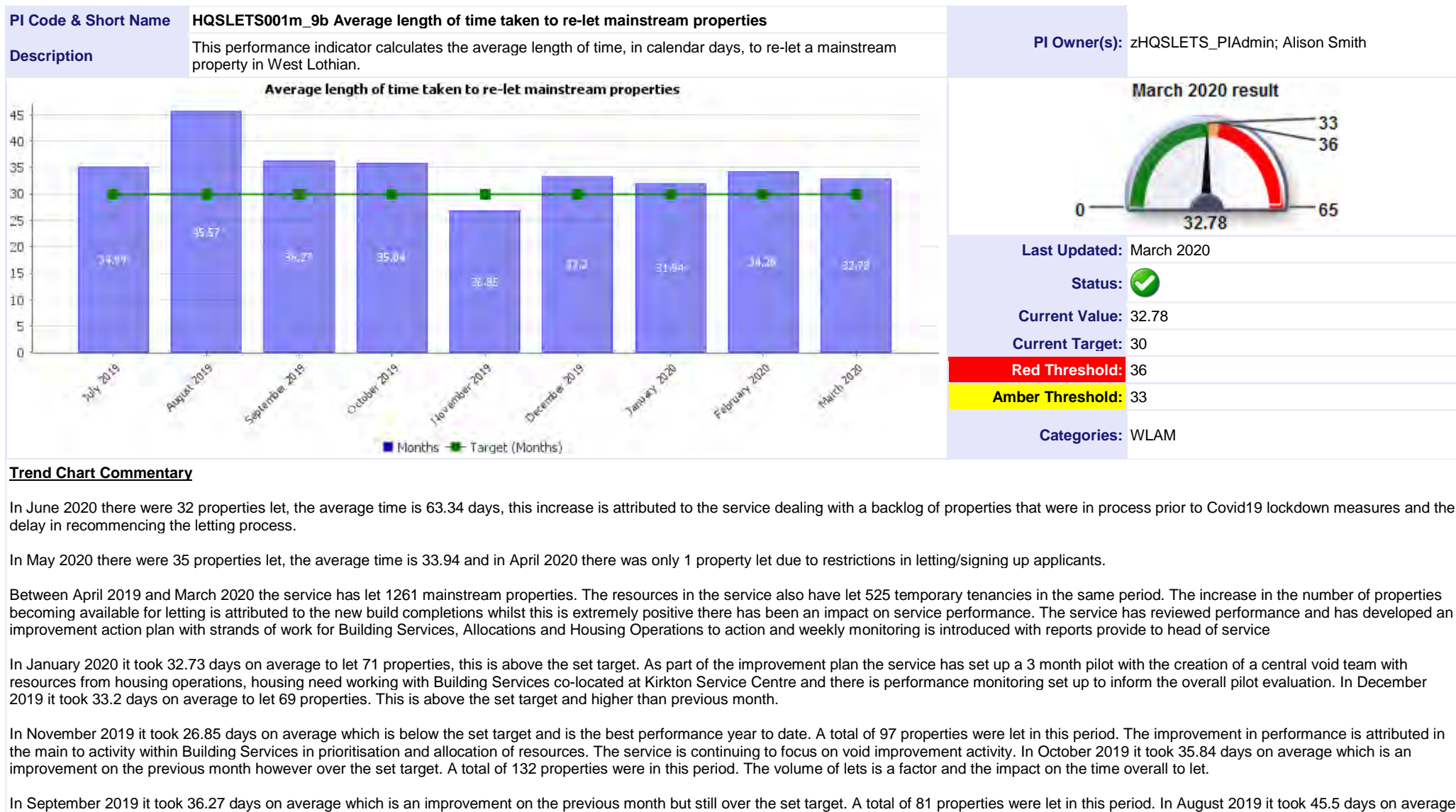
Q3 2019/20 72.93% decisions made within 28 days

Q2 2019/20 77.07% decisions made within 28 days

Q1 2019/20 71.99% decisions made within 28 days

Target reduced to 80% to take account of the complexity of investigation and evidence that is expected to be gathered in a homeless assessment whilst still striving to make correct decisions within 28 days.





Trend Chart Commentary

In June 2020 there were 32 properties let, the average time is 63.34 days, this increase is attributed to the service dealing with a backlog of properties that were in process prior to Covid19 lockdown measures and the delay in recommencing the letting process.

In May 2020 there were 35 properties let, the average time is 33.94 and in April 2020 there was only 1 property let due to restrictions in letting/signing up applicants.

Between April 2019 and March 2020 the service has let 1261 mainstream properties. The resources in the service also have let 525 temporary tenancies in the same period. The increase in the number of properties becoming available for letting is attributed to the new build completions whilst this is extremely positive there has been an impact on service performance. The service has reviewed performance and has developed an improvement action plan with strands of work for Building Services, Allocations and Housing Operations to action and weekly monitoring is introduced with reports provide to head of service

In January 2020 it took 32.73 days on average to let 71 properties, this is above the set target. As part of the improvement plan the service has set up a 3 month pilot with the creation of a central void team with resources from housing operations, housing need working with Building Services co-located at Kirkton Service Centre and there is performance monitoring set up to inform the overall pilot evaluation. In December 2019 it took 33.2 days on average to let 69 properties. This is above the set target and higher than previous month.

In November 2019 it took 26.85 days on average which is below the set target and is the best performance year to date. A total of 97 properties were let in this period. The improvement in performance is attributed in the main to activity within Building Services in prioritisation and allocation of resources. The service is continuing to focus on void improvement activity. In October 2019 it took 35.84 days on average which is an improvement on the previous month however over the set target. A total of 132 properties were in this period. The volume of lets is a factor and the impact on the time overall to let.

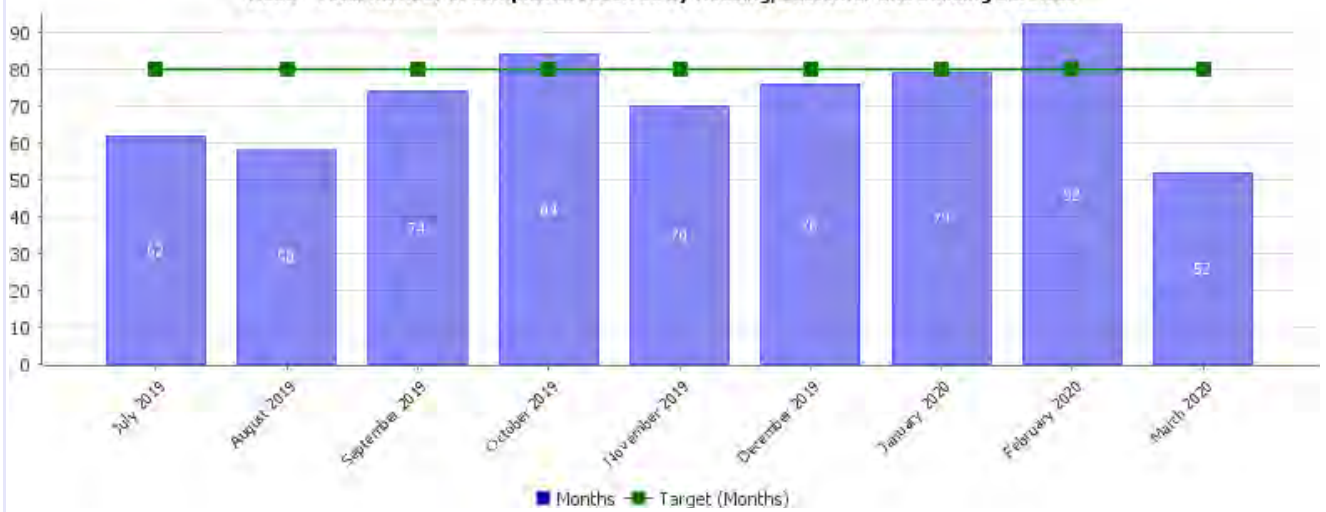

In September 2019 it took 36.27 days on average which is an improvement on the previous month but still over the set target. A total of 81 properties were let in this period. In August 2019 it took 45.5 days on average

which is an increase on the previous month. A total of 79 properties were let in this period.

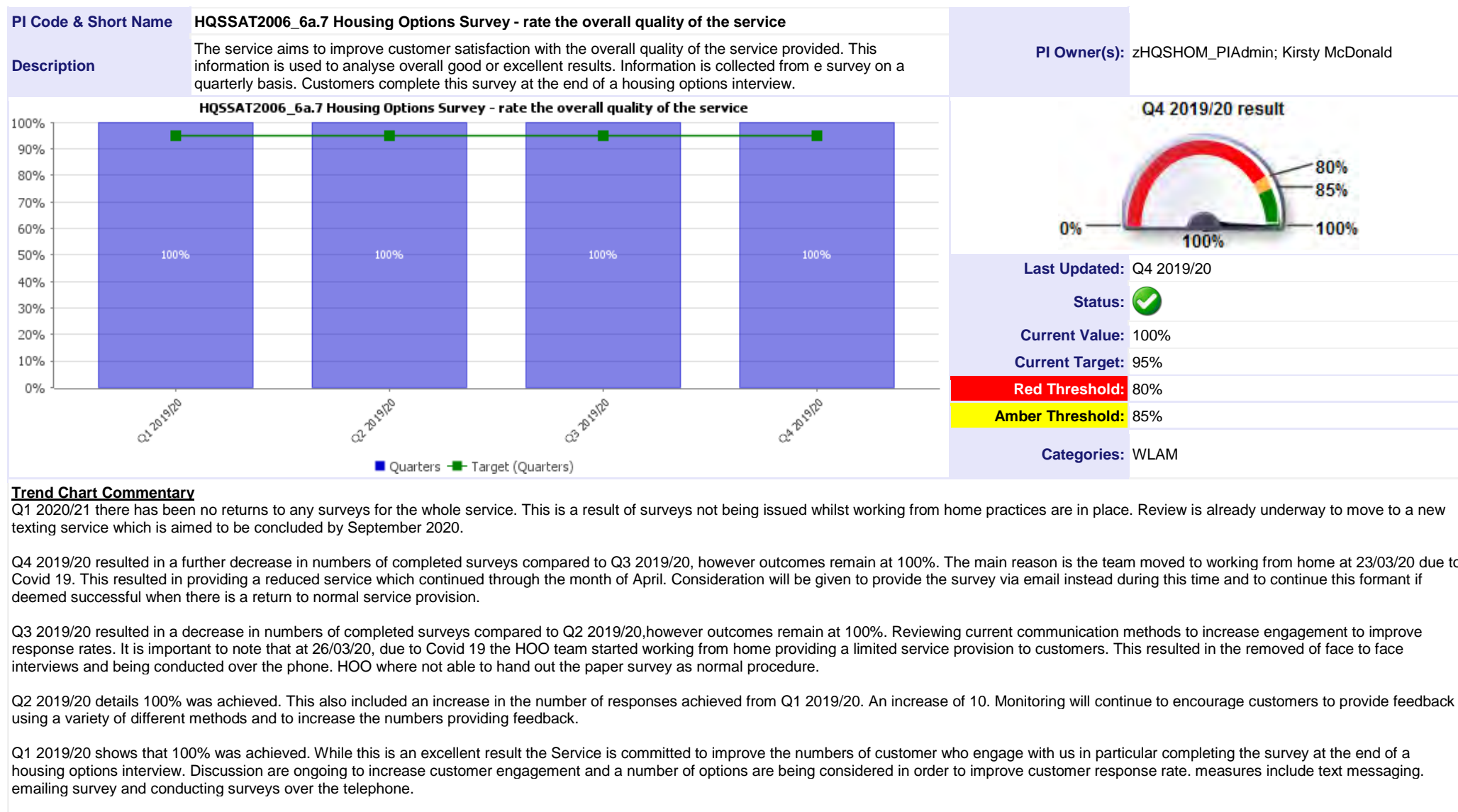
In July 2019 it took 34.99 days on average which is a slight improvement on the previous 2 months. A total of 69 properties were let in this period. In June 2019 it took 35.46 days on average which is a slight decrease and improvement on the previous month. A total of 91 properties were let in this period. The service continues to monitor with the volume of lets being a factor for the service to have re let with the resources available.

The target for 2020/2021 is yet to be finalised and the service is anticipating a reduction in the number of properties becoming available for re-letting as the extensive WLC new build programme has been completed with the majority of the next new build sites not coming on stream until 2021/2022.

Benchmarking information published by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) indicators that our Peer Group average in 39.64 days.

PI Code & Short Name	HQSCOM008m_6b.3 HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services	PI Owner(s): zHQSCOM_PIAAdmin; Sarah Kelly																																		
Description	The Performance and Change Team is responsible for monitoring complaints across Housing, Customer & Building Services. This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS). It is the total number of complaints received by HCBS at stage one and stage two. This is used to track customer feedback on the quality of our services.																																			
<div>HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services</div>  <table><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Complaints</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>July 2019</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>August 2019</td><td>58</td></tr><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>74</td></tr><tr><td>October 2019</td><td>84</td></tr><tr><td>November 2019</td><td>70</td></tr><tr><td>December 2019</td><td>76</td></tr><tr><td>January 2020</td><td>79</td></tr><tr><td>February 2020</td><td>92</td></tr><tr><td>March 2020</td><td>52</td></tr></tbody></table>		Month	Complaints	July 2019	62	August 2019	58	September 2019	74	October 2019	84	November 2019	70	December 2019	76	January 2020	79	February 2020	92	March 2020	52	<div>March 2020 result</div>  <table><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>March 2020</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>52</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>80</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>88</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>84</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>Management</td></tr></table>	Last Updated:	March 2020	Status:	✓	Current Value:	52	Current Target:	80	Red Threshold:	88	Amber Threshold:	84	Categories:	Management
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<div>Trend Chart Commentary</div> <p>The service has been below the upper targeted limit for complaints for 10 out of 13 periods displayed in the chart (covering the period June 2019 to June 2020). It peaked in February 2020, with 92 complaints received in each of those months and 18 was the lowest number received in May this year. This is due to the impact that COVID 19 has had on the reporting and handling of complaints as <i>West Lothian Council is set to focus on delivering essential services due to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID 19). The Council will continue to focus on our statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. To enable this, the Council is suspending responses to enquiries or complaints about our service provision and will instead be focusing our efforts to prioritise our statutory services, caring for the vulnerable, cooperating with our Resilience Partners and supporting economic recovery.</i></p> <p>Of the 40 complaints recorded, 87.5% were resolved within timescales.</p> <p>The outcome of the June 2020, complaints were; 10% (4) upheld, 80% (32) were not upheld, and 10% (4) were partially upheld</p> <p>Although the number of complaints will fluctuate month to month and can be impacted by seasonal factors, generally the highest complaint generators are Building Services, Housing Needs and Housing Allocations. Customer and Communities and CSC receive a low level of complaints in most months.</p> <p>The service continues to work on reducing the number of complaints received, and for those that are made, ensuring they are closed within the target timescale.</p> <p>Target: the target was reviewed and increased in May 2017 to 80 from 60 to reflect an increase in incoming complaints. Though reviewed annually, 80 continues to be a realistic target and will be in place throughout</p>																																				

2019/20. This will be reviewed again in April 2020.



Q1 2020/21 0 responses were received

Q4 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Q3 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Q2 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

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Target 95% in order to strive to maintain high performance

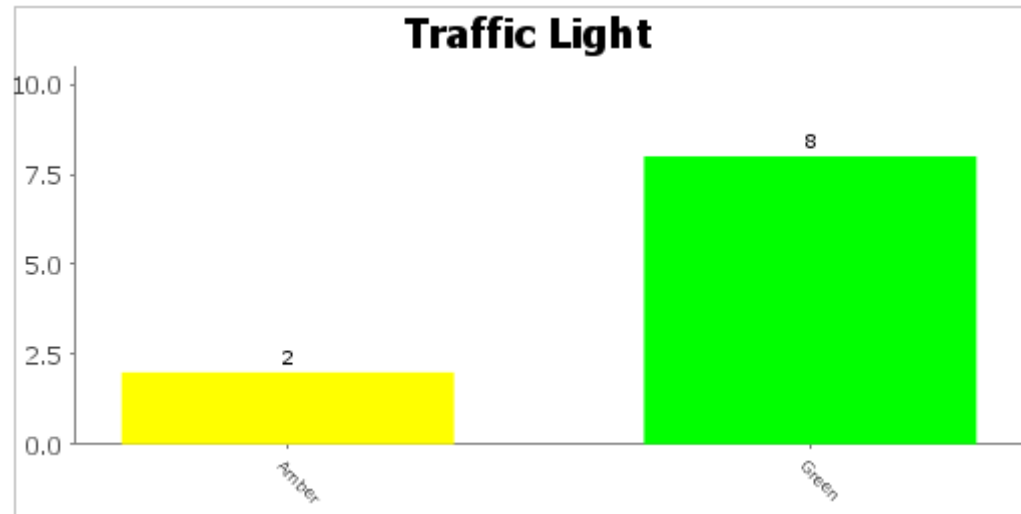
HCBS PDSP Report Q3 Report

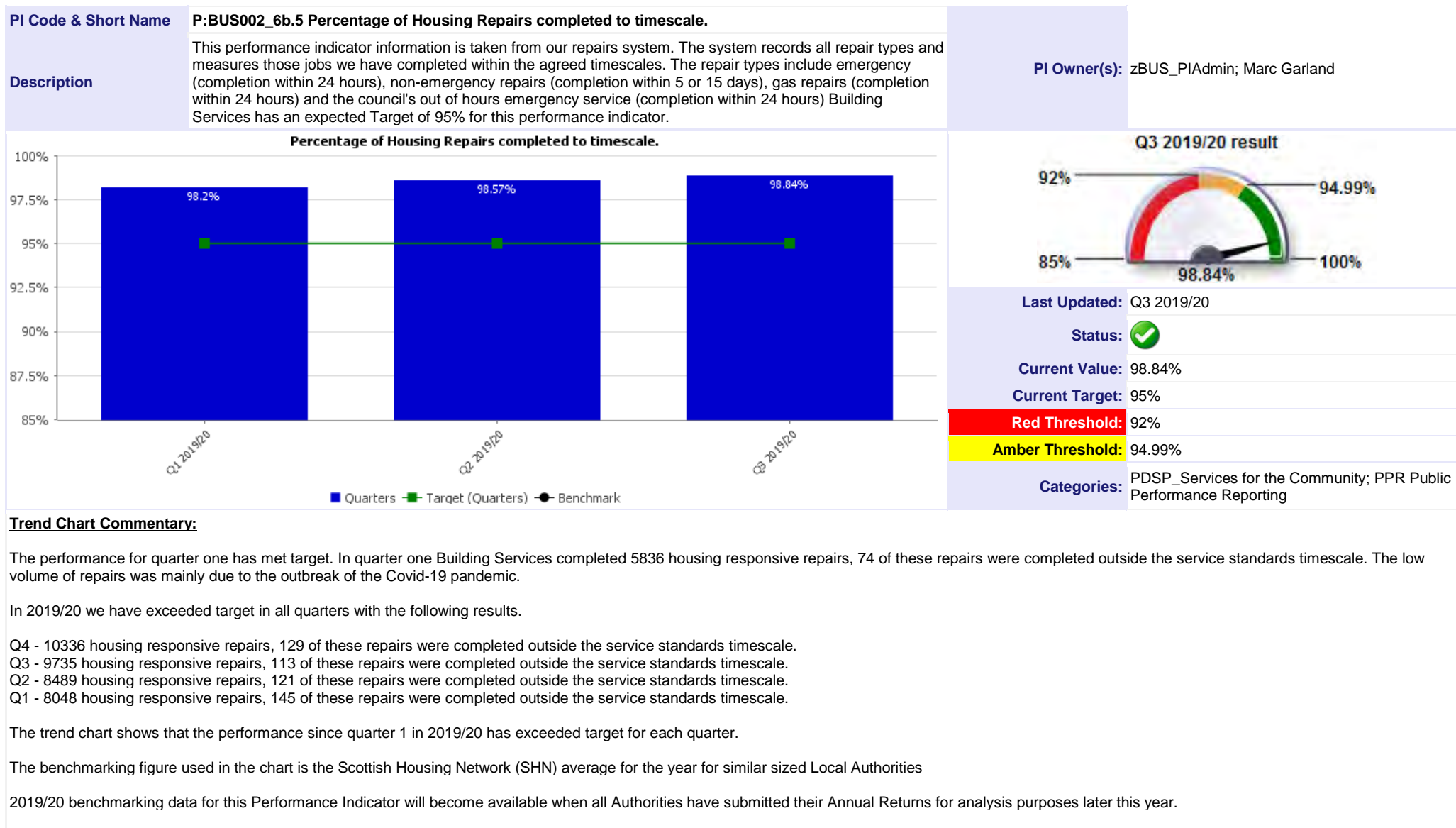
Report Author: Steven Arthur

Generated on: 26 August 2020 09:22

Report Layout: .NEW. PDSP_PIs_All(Detail)_Grid

Data Label : OFFICIAL





The target of 95% is derived from discussion with Buildings Services and the Tenant's Panel with adherence to the Building Services Management Plan. This target is reviewed on a yearly basis and remains for 2019/20. Target setting for 2020/21 is planned for February 2020.

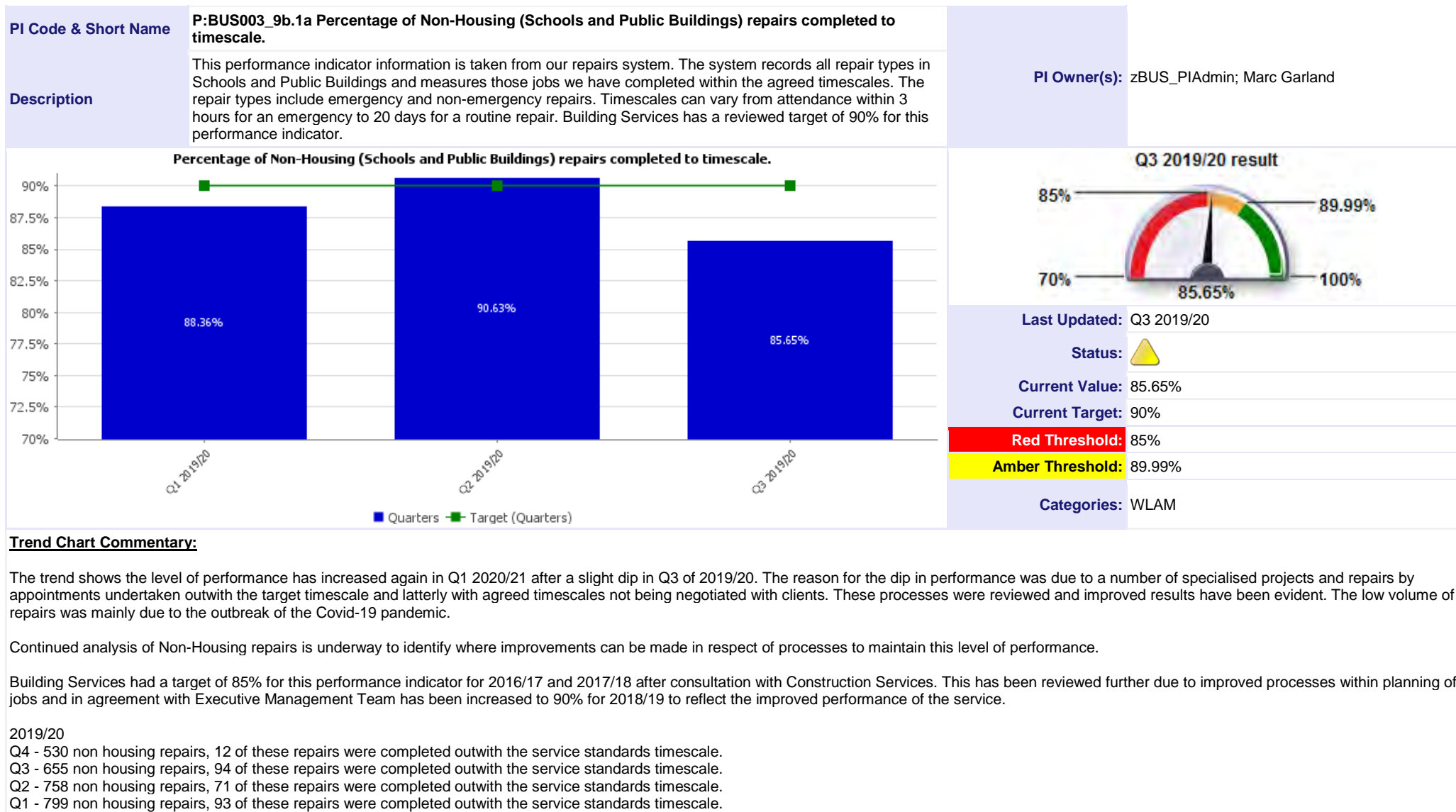
In 2018/19 the Scottish Housing Network (SHN) average for the year was 91.45% for similar sized Local Authorities of which we were placed 3rd highest of the 6 providing data.

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Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows the level of performance has increased again in Q1 2020/21 after a slight dip in Q3 of 2019/20. The reason for the dip in performance was due to a number of specialised projects and repairs by appointments undertaken outwith the target timescale and latterly with agreed timescales not being negotiated with clients. These processes were reviewed and improved results have been evident. The low volume of repairs was mainly due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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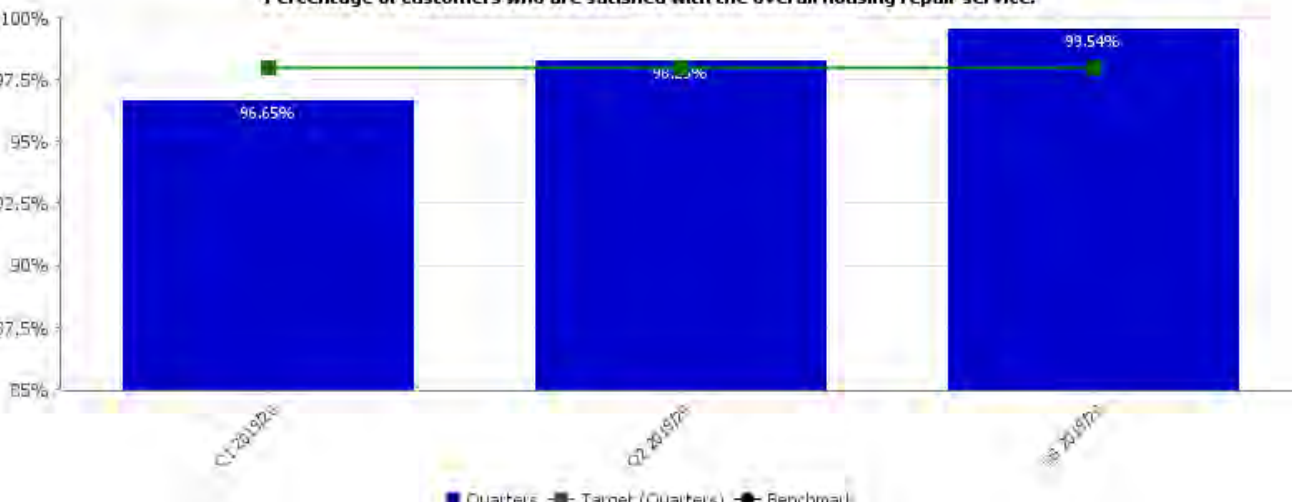


2019/20

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Surveys are monitored to investigate negative responses to assess their relativity to the repairs processes. As a result the service has recently implemented new customer communication cards to assist with the improvements. The repair teams analyse all feedback and arrange to contact all customers who provide non positive responses to discuss ways of improving the service.

For 2018/19 the target has been agreed at 98% and is reviewed on a yearly basis with the Tenant's Panel.

PI Code & Short Name		HQSARR700_9b.1a Total rent collection																															
Description		PI Owner(s): zHQSARR_PAdmin; Alison Smith																															
<p>This indicator measures the rate at which Housing Customer & Building Services is collecting rent. This value is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">. The cumulative sum of rental payments made so far in the financial year by current tenants (excluding garages),. divided by the cumulative charge we applied to rental accounts, to give us the year-to-date collection rate percentage. <p>This value emulates the collection value reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) as part of the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) which social landlords are required to complete each year. Please note this value will be slightly different as this is an operational value and does not include void loss as the reported figure would.</p> <p>Source: HCBS Financial Dashboard</p>																																	
<table border="1"><caption>Total rent collection</caption><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Collection Rate (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>July 2019</td><td>94.41%</td></tr><tr><td>August 2019</td><td>94.9%</td></tr><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>96.08%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2019</td><td>95.45%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2019</td><td>95.33%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2019</td><td>97.11%</td></tr></tbody></table>		Month	Collection Rate (%)	July 2019	94.41%	August 2019	94.9%	September 2019	96.08%	October 2019	95.45%	November 2019	95.33%	December 2019	97.11%	<table border="1"><caption>December 2019 result</caption><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Value</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>December 2019</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>97.11%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>96%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>91.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>93.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>High Level</td></tr></tbody></table>		Category	Value	Last Updated:	December 2019	Status:	✓	Current Value:	97.11%	Current Target:	96%	Red Threshold:	91.2%	Amber Threshold:	93.6%	Categories:	High Level
Month	Collection Rate (%)																																
July 2019	94.41%																																
August 2019	94.9%																																
September 2019	96.08%																																
October 2019	95.45%																																
November 2019	95.33%																																
December 2019	97.11%																																
Category	Value																																
Last Updated:	December 2019																																
Status:	✓																																
Current Value:	97.11%																																
Current Target:	96%																																
Red Threshold:	91.2%																																
Amber Threshold:	93.6%																																
Categories:	High Level																																
Trend Chart Commentary <p>Since the beginning of the 2018/19 the accelerated move of customers from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit has had an impact on the amount of rent collected. When Full Service UC went live in May 2018, the number of tenants on UC has increased from 280 to 2363 in July 2019. Each customer that transitions across experiences a break in income as they move from weekly payments to a monthly payment in arrears. This will in the short term in almost all cases generate a month's arrears. Customers on extremely low income will find this difficult to catch up within their income. This transition will decrease collection for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Please note: That due to the way customers pay there can be some large variation from month to month. Customers will invariably make their payments to suit, their income (wages, benefits);</p>																																	

There will be some extreme results each year in December and March; this is due to the fact that for most properties there are two non-collection weeks in each of these months. As a result customer payments vastly outweigh charges causing values well over 100%

The service achieved a collection rate of 98.09% at year end March 2019. 3,018 of the tenants are recorded as UC claimants.

Target:
96% (Based on historical data, the HCBS collection rate when calculated in this way averages at 96%.) The service is monitoring the ongoing impact of Universal Credit on collection rate.



Trend Chart Commentary

2020/21

Q1 20/21 costs are £353,522.68 which is council tax bill £0 voids £88,535.32 furniture £209,362.02 property storage £16,617.88 and transport costs £39,007.46. This quarter occurred during lock down and therefore costs reduced for transport as result of schools being closed, voids reduced due to an increased effort to focus on turning over voids to create throughput however as a result furniture costs increased to furnish more tenancies to be converted into temp tenancies, there was also a decrease in property storage costs as the number of cases with storage requirements decreased. Target for 2020/21 will be updated to reflect new budget.

2019/20

Q4 costs are £545,864.82 which is council tax bill £192,295.50 voids £105,685.55 furniture storage £127,275.77 property £25,380.08 and transport costs £95,227.92. There has been an increase across all areas with exception of property and as anticipated council tax has been billed. Spend is above target and will continue to be monitored.

Q3 costs are below target and reduced to £315,780.16 which is council tax bill £0, voids £85,738.91, furniture storage £120,278.47, property £31,741.53 and transport costs £78,021.25. However within these costs there as been a large rise in transport which is partly attributed to more days in the quarter and also an increase in voids where as furniture and property have both decreased and council tax has not been billed.

Q2 has seen a rise in homeless costs to £464,581.56 from Q1 which was £219,512.96. A large proportion of the increase is attributed to the council tax bill (£182,879.22) that was expected in Q2 however there has also been an increase in voids (£81,998.35) furniture storage (£128,965.28) and property (£31,905.92). The service also experienced a significant increase in homeless presentations in Q2 of 440, the highest since Q2 of 2011/12. However the service has noted a decrease in transport costs (£38,832.79) and this can be attributed to the refinement of the transport process the service has carried out to reduce spend in this area. Q1

breakdown of costs is as follows, Transport £52,073.37, Property Storage £31,247.08, Furniture £81,482.78, Voids £54,709.73.

Q1 2020/21 £353,522.68

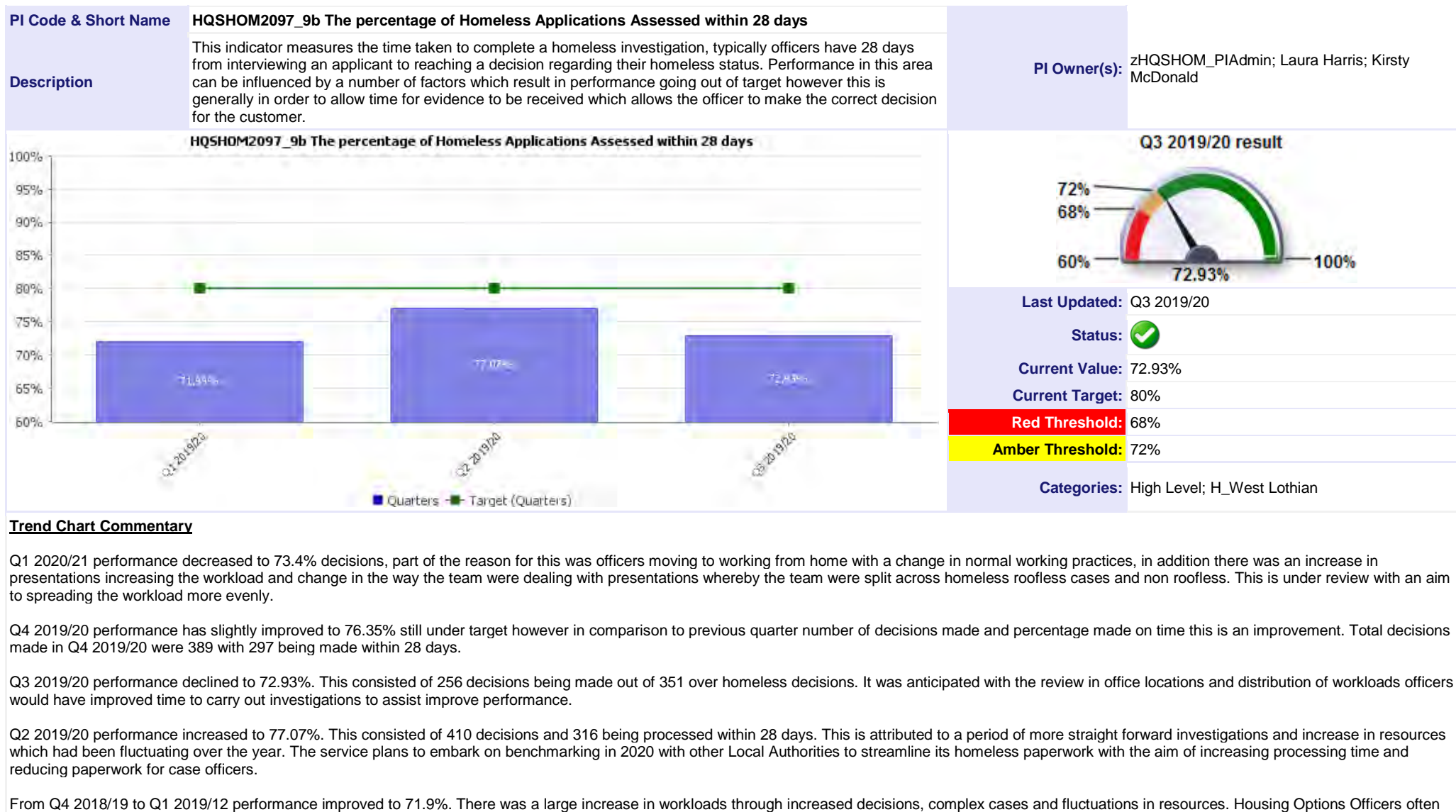
Q4 2019/20 £545,864.82

Q3 2019/20 £315,780.16

Q2 2019/20 £464,581.56

Q1 2019/20 £219,512.96

Target doe 2020/21 is £1,200,196.00 over four quarters = £300,049.00 budget provided by finance



Trend Chart Commentary

Q1 2020/21 performance decreased to 73.4% decisions, part of the reason for this was officers moving to working from home with a change in normal working practices, in addition there was an increase in presentations increasing the workload and change in the way the team were dealing with presentations whereby the team were split across homeless roofless cases and non roofless. This is under review with an aim to spreading the workload more evenly.

Q4 2019/20 performance has slightly improved to 76.35% still under target however in comparison to previous quarter number of decisions made and percentage made on time this is an improvement. Total decisions made in Q4 2019/20 were 389 with 297 being made within 28 days.

Q3 2019/20 performance declined to 72.93%. This consisted of 256 decisions being made out of 351 over homeless decisions. It was anticipated with the review in office locations and distribution of workloads officers would have improved time to carry out investigations to assist improve performance.

Q2 2019/20 performance increased to 77.07%. This consisted of 410 decisions and 316 being processed within 28 days. This is attributed to a period of more straight forward investigations and increase in resources which had been fluctuating over the year. The service plans to embark on benchmarking in 2020 with other Local Authorities to streamline its homeless paperwork with the aim of increasing processing time and reducing paperwork for case officers.

From Q4 2018/19 to Q1 2019/12 performance improved to 71.9%. There was a large increase in workloads through increased decisions, complex cases and fluctuations in resources. Housing Options Officers often

rely on obtaining information/evidence from other agencies such as SW, police, health services and in some instances this information is not necessarily provided within the 28 day times scale. This information is not always received within the 28 days timescale but contributes towards ensuring a thorough investigation of the homeless case is made and the correct decision given. Work is ongoing to review workloads and splits of duties to allow for more case management time. Rapid Rehousing Transition Programme was also driving increased focus on prevention and housing options which will longer term aim to reduce the amount of homeless cases and homeless decisions.

Q1 2020/21 73.4% decisions made within 28 days

Q4 2019/20 76.35% decisions made within 28 days

Q3 2019/20 72.93% decisions made within 28 days

Q2 2019/20 77.07% decisions made within 28 days

Q1 2019/20 71.99% decisions made within 28 days

Target reduced to 80% to take account of the complexity of investigation and evidence that is expected to be gathered in a homeless assessment whilst still striving to make correct decisions within 28 days.





Trend Chart Commentary

In June 2020 there were 32 properties let, the average time is 63.34 days, this increase is attributed to the service dealing with a backlog of properties that were in process prior to Covid19 lockdown measures and the delay in recommencing the letting process.

In May 2020 there were 35 properties let, the average time is 33.94 and in April 2020 there was only 1 property let due to restrictions in letting/signing up applicants.

Between April 2019 and March 2020 the service has let 1261 mainstream properties. The resources in the service also have let 525 temporary tenancies in the same period. The increase in the number of properties becoming available for letting is attributed to the new build completions whilst this is extremely positive there has been an impact on service performance. The service has reviewed performance and has developed an improvement action plan with strands of work for Building Services, Allocations and Housing Operations to action and weekly monitoring is introduced with reports provide to head of service

In January 2020 it took 32.73 days on average to let 71 properties, this is above the set target. As part of the improvement plan the service has set up a 3 month pilot with the creation of a central void team with resources from housing operations, housing need working with Building Services co-located at Kirkton Service Centre and there is performance monitoring set up to inform the overall pilot evaluation. In December 2019 it took 33.2 days on average to let 69 properties. This is above the set target and higher than previous month.

In November 2019 it took 26.85 days on average which is below the set target and is the best performance year to date. A total of 97 properties were let in this period. The improvement in performance is attributed in the main to activity within Building Services in prioritisation and allocation of resources. The service is continuing to focus on void improvement activity. In October 2019 it took 35.84 days on average which is an improvement on the previous month however over the set target. A total of 132 properties were in this period. The volume of lets is a factor and the impact on the time overall to let.

In September 2019 it took 36.27 days on average which is an improvement on the previous month but still over the set target. A total of 81 properties were let in this period. In August 2019 it took 45.5 days on average

which is an increase on the previous month. A total of 79 properties were let in this period.

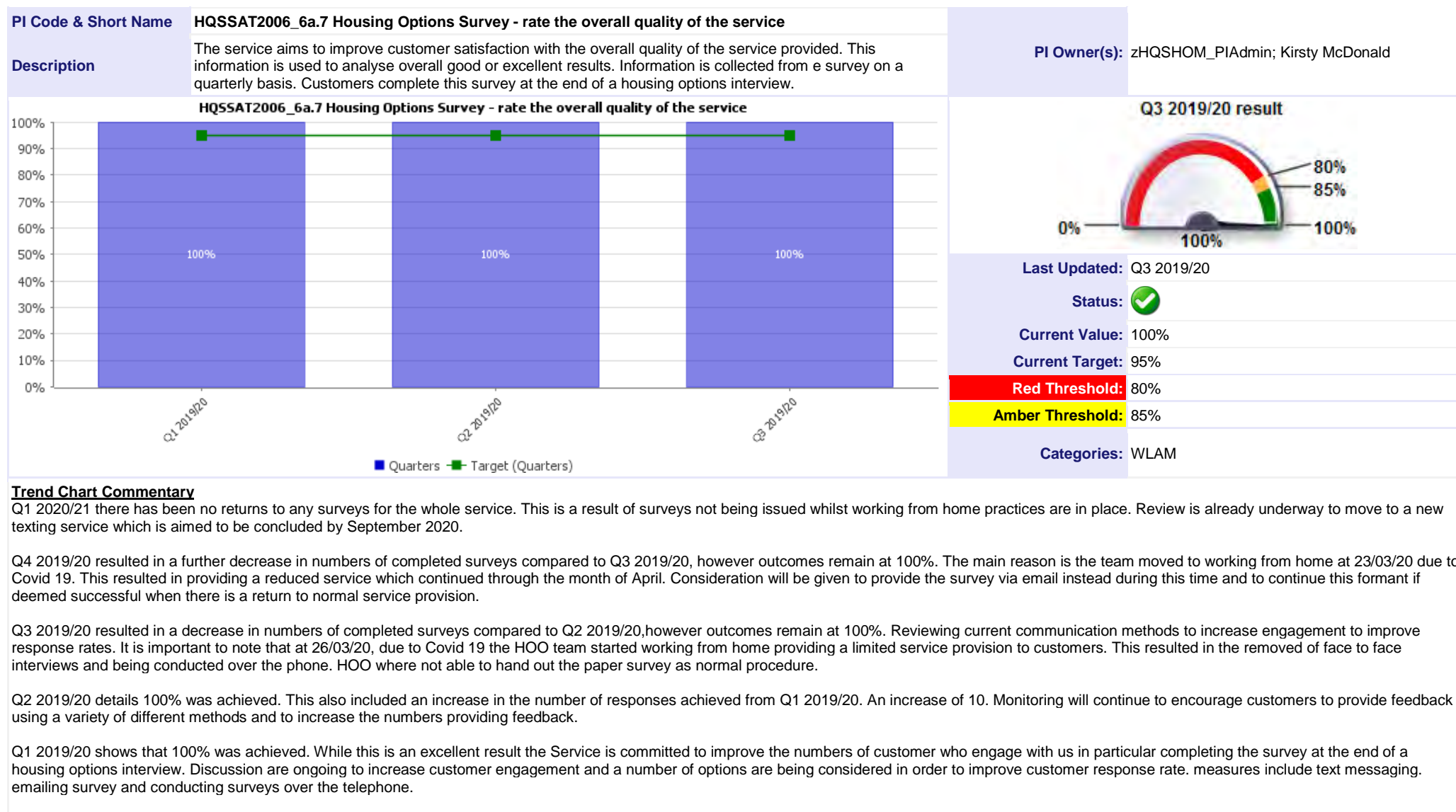
In July 2019 it took 34.99 days on average which is a slight improvement on the previous 2 months. A total of 69 properties were let in this period. In June 2019 it took 35.46 days on average which is a slight decrease and improvement on the previous month. A total of 91 properties were let in this period. The service continues to monitor with the volume of lets being a factor for the service to have re let with the resources available.

The target for 2020/2021 is yet to be finalised and the service is anticipating a reduction in the number of properties becoming available for re-letting as the extensive WLC new build programme has been completed with the majority of the next new build sites not coming on stream until 2021/2022.

Benchmarking information published by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN) indicators that our Peer Group average in 39.64 days.

PI Code & Short Name	HQSCOM008m_6b.3 HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services	PI Owner(s): zHQSCOM_PIAAdmin; Sarah Kelly																												
Description	The Performance and Change Team is responsible for monitoring complaints across Housing, Customer & Building Services. This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services (HCBS). It is the total number of complaints received by HCBS at stage one and stage two. This is used to track customer feedback on the quality of our services.																													
<div>HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services</div> <table><caption>HCBS - Total number of complaints received by Housing, Customer and Building Services</caption><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Complaints</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>July 2019</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>August 2019</td><td>58</td></tr><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>74</td></tr><tr><td>October 2019</td><td>84</td></tr><tr><td>November 2019</td><td>70</td></tr><tr><td>December 2019</td><td>76</td></tr></tbody></table>		Month	Complaints	July 2019	62	August 2019	58	September 2019	74	October 2019	84	November 2019	70	December 2019	76	<div>December 2019 result</div> <table><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>December 2019</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>76</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>80</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>88</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>84</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>Management</td></tr></tbody></table>	Last Updated:	December 2019	Status:		Current Value:	76	Current Target:	80	Red Threshold:	88	Amber Threshold:	84	Categories:	Management
Month	Complaints																													
July 2019	62																													
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September 2019	74																													
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<div>Trend Chart Commentary</div> <p>The service has been below the upper targeted limit for complaints for 10 out of 13 periods displayed in the chart (covering the period June 2019 to June 2020). It peaked in February 2020, with 92 complaints received in each of those months and 18 was the lowest number received in May this year. This is due to the impact that COVID 19 has had on the reporting and handling of complaints as <i>West Lothian Council is set to focus on delivering essential services due to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID 19). The Council will continue to focus on our statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act. To enable this, the Council is suspending responses to enquiries or complaints about our service provision and will instead be focusing our efforts to prioritise our statutory services, caring for the vulnerable, cooperating with our Resilience Partners and supporting economic recovery.</i></p> <p>Of the 40 complaints recorded, 87.5% were resolved within timescales.</p> <p>The outcome of the June 2020, complaints were; 10% (4) upheld, 80% (32) were not upheld, and 10% (4) were partially upheld</p> <p>Although the number of complaints will fluctuate month to month and can be impacted by seasonal factors, generally the highest complaint generators are Building Services, Housing Needs and Housing Allocations. Customer and Communities and CSC receive a low level of complaints in most months.</p> <p>The service continues to work on reducing the number of complaints received, and for those that are made, ensuring they are closed within the target timescale.</p> <p>Target: the target was reviewed and increased in May 2017 to 80 from 60 to reflect an increase in incoming complaints. Though reviewed annually, 80 continues to be a realistic target and will be in place throughout</p>																														

2019/20. This will be reviewed again in April 2020.



Q1 2020/21 0 responses were received

Q4 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Q3 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Q2 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Q1 2019/20 100% of responses rated the service as excellent or good

Target 95% in order to strive to maintain high performance

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SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON A MINISTERIAL STATEMENT FOR MODIFYING LOCAL CONNECTION REFERRALS IN SCOTLAND

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to outline to Scrutiny Panel the proposed council response to the Scottish Government's consultation paper, which invites views on whether the content of a ministerial statement setting out the new power for Scottish Ministers to modify local connection referrals between local authorities in Scotland is to be exercised.

The submission date for responses to be included in the consultation process is the 23rd October 2020.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Panel is requested to consider the council's response set out in Appendix 2 of this report for submission to the Council Executive for approval on the 17 November 2020.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focusing on our customers' needs• Being honest, open and accountable• Providing equality of opportunities• Developing employees• Making best use of our resources• Working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal	The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and in accordance with the Homelessness (etc.) (Scotland) Act 2003, Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Increasing levels of homelessness will have an adverse effect on the council's performance. Quarterly performance returns are monitored by the Scottish Government.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome	Outcome 6: People most at risk are

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	Agreement	protected and supported to achieve improved life chances. Outcome 7 - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities
VI	Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Homeless Services has a general fund budget of £3.504million in 2019/20 and FTE 53.6 staff.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other Consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

In January 2019, the Scottish Government issued a consultation paper inviting views on a recommendation from the original sitting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to commence the provision in Section 8 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") to give Scottish Ministers the power to modify, by statutory order, local connection referrals. HARSAG also recommended that Ministers use the new power to suspend referrals between local authorities in Scotland.

There were 72 responses to the consultation with 65 responding to the local connection question. 52% of respondents supported suspending local connection, 29% supported modifying local connection and 20% were opposed. West Lothian Council response supported modifying local connection as current legislation is already flexible enough to allow a significant level of choice for applicants in terms of which authority they wish to live in. The key theme from those respondents who did not support the modifications were concerns over the potential increase in homeless applications and local authorities' abilities to meet these applicant's accommodation and support needs.

Following the conclusion of the consultation, the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No. 4) Order 2019 commenced the local connection provisions, giving Scottish Ministers the power to modify the operation of referrals between local authorities within Scotland. The provisions also required that Scottish Ministers must publish a statement setting out the circumstances and general criteria by reference to which modifications will take place in which Scottish Ministers are also required to consult on.

This Scottish Government is now seeking views on the Ministerial Statement to take forward the power to modify local connection referrals, and suggested monitoring arrangements to effectively take account of any negative impacts on local authorities.

D.2 Current Homeless Position

Supply and Demand Position

One of the main challenges facing the service continues to be the demand versus supply of affordable housing options. There is high demand for people applying to the council for permanent housing through the council's Allocation Policy, as well as accommodation required for homeless applicants to enable the council to discharge its statutory homeless duty. The concerns remain that if demand for homeless

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services increases without the appropriate supply to meet this demand there will continue to be pressures in temporary accommodation and lengthy waiting times for permanent accommodation.

As at 31st March 2020 there were 7,999 applicants on the councils housing list. In 2019/20 there were 1364 council lets available in West Lothian compared to 1309 in 2018/19, with 762 (55.1%) being allocated to homeless applicants in 2019/20 and 737 (54.9%) in 2018/19. It should be noted that these figures include new build allocations, which are initially and predominantly allocated to transfer list applicants, therefore diluting the lets to homeless percentage.

Local Homeless Position

Table 1 below shows that whilst a positive reduction in homeless applications of 3.2% occurred in 2019/20 when compared to 2018/19, the demand to permanently rehouse applicants increased by 8.7% in the same period. This rise in applicants accepted as homeless continues to place significant pressure on the council's ability to permanently rehouse applicants rapidly.

Table 1: West Lothian Homeless Applications 2018/19 to 2019/20

Category	2018/19	2019/20
Applications	1517	1469
Assessed as homeless / threatened	1123	1221

The Scottish Government have stated that they anticipate the overall impact on suspending local connections to be neutral. It is difficult to predict the impact locally due to the inaccuracies across councils in recording no local connections. For example, during the homeless interview process, when a household is advised they have a local connection with another area the applicant can chose to cancel their application and apply directly to the local authority concerned meaning no original application is logged showing no local connection. In 2018/19 and 2019/20 there were only 8 applicants received in both years who were found to have no local connection.

Temporary Accommodation Position

In 2019/20 there was significant progress made in reducing the time spent in temporary accommodation, reducing the use of unsuitable accommodation and reducing length of stay in temporary accommodation. Table 2 demonstrates that there was a 6.4% reduction in overall placements in temporary accommodation from 2018/19 to 2019/20 with average length of stay also decreasing from 98.6 days in 2018/19 to 88.2 days in 2019/20.

Table 2: Placements and average length of stay (LOS) in temporary accommodation 2018/19 to 2019/20

	2018/19	2019/20
Total Placements	1955	1829
LA ordinary dwelling (LOS)	244.9	182
Housing association / RSL dwelling (LOS)	223.9	217.3
Hostel - local authority owned (LOS)	88.1	66.4

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Private sector lease (LOS)	242.8	168.2
Bed and breakfast (LOS)	30.4	25.8
Total all types (LOS)	98.6	88.2

Impact of COVID-19

Whilst some key achievements have been made in 2019/20 it is notable that these were prior to COVID-19.

Table 3 provides a comparison of some key statistics from Quarter 1 2020/21 compared to the same period of 2019/20. This shows that in the early stages of the national lockdown the demand for homeless services had increased by 11% with demand for temporary accommodation reducing by 21%. However most notably the biggest impact to be seen so far is in the reduction in the availability of mainstream lets by 86%, due to restrictions on allocations. This has meant that gradual numbers of applicants in temporary accommodation have begun to rise along with increases in the number of applicants waiting to be rehoused.

Table 3: Q1 comparison 2019/20 – 2020/21

	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21
Homeless presentations	323	360
Placements in temporary accommodation	496	394
Numbers in temporary accommodation (at end of quarter)	490	543
Mainstream lets	382	54

The service anticipates that the full extent of COVID-10 has not yet been experienced with evictions from secure and private tenancies currently suspended, the furlough scheme still in place and social distancing restrictions continuing there are significant concerns that homelessness will rise over the course of 2020/21. Initial modelling is suggesting that assessments are expected to rise by 23% to 1,239 in 2020/21 and the backlog of homeless applicants waiting to be rehoused is expected to rise by 91% to 1,047 in 2020/21.

D.3 Consultation Document and Response

The Scottish Government consultation paper invites comments on the proposal to suspend local connection referrals and the content of the Ministerial Statement to set out the circumstances in which allows Scottish Ministers to modify local connection referrals between local authorities in Scotland . It also invites comments on the proposal to suspend local connection referrals between Scottish local authorities to remove barriers people face to accessing the support they need.

The Scottish Government consultation paper “Consultation on a Ministerial Statement for Modifying Local Connection Referrals in Scotland” is contained within Appendix 1 of this report. The consultation document is set out in four sections as detailed below:

- Section 1: Background on HARSAG Recommendation, Legislative Provision and Consultation
- Section 2: Draft Ministerial Statement and Proposal to Suspend Local Connection
- Section 3: Consultation Questions and How to Respond
- Section 4: Statistical Data Tables on Local Connection Referrals

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The Scottish Government whilst seeking current views on the proposals to modify local connection referrals have also acknowledged that there should be a mechanism for dealing with a situation where a particular authority cannot cope with an increased flow of applicants as a result of the removal of local connection. Scottish Ministers retain the power to reverse or alter any such modifications in these circumstances and this is why they are also proposing to monitor a number of key factors to determine whether the capacity of a local authority is being adversely affected by any modifications.

The key areas to note within the response contained within Appendix 2 to the Scottish Government are as follows:

- The council does not support the removal of local connection duties
- The council agrees with the proposed ministerial statements circumstances for modifying local connection referrals
- The council does not agree with the proposed general criteria for modifying local connection and proposes this takes account of the wider homeless demand pressures and unsuitable accommodation use
- The council proposes that full homeless demand is monitored to understand the overall impact on supply and demand. The council also proposes that the required use of unsuitable accommodation is also monitored.
- The council does not believe HL1 to be the most effective monitoring mechanism to monitor the impact of this change due to the potential impact on education, health, social care, drug and alcohol services or employment opportunities.

D.4 Challenges

It is clear that the impact of COVID-19 will increase homeless demand in West Lothian and add to an already significant supply pressure. The removal of local connection is likely to add to the challenge in the council's ability to meet homeless demand.

If there is no local connection we do not know the true extent of what potential impact this may bring. For example, neighbouring authorities are experiencing even greater pressures than ourselves, such as Edinburgh, with higher waiting times for housing and there may be potential spill over across boundaries or increases in applications from south of the Border where there still remains priority need.

D.5 Next Steps

Responses to the Consultation on a Ministerial Statement for Modifying Local Connection Referrals in Scotland are to be submitted to the Scottish Government by the 23 October 2020.

The Scottish Government has agreed that the final response, if agreed by Council Executive on the 17 November 2020 can be submitted on that date and that the draft response from the council, attached as Appendix 2 can be submitted to the Scottish Government by 23 October 2020.

E. CONCLUSION

The council has been invited to participate in the consultation Ministerial Statement for Modifying Local Connection Referrals in Scotland. The council welcomes the

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opportunity to participate and to provide a consultation response encompassing contributions from key service areas from within the council. The council believes that any changes to local connection referrals whilst having a positive effect on homeless applicants will have a negative effect on the council's ability to meet homeless demand.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Scottish Government HARSAG Q2 recommendations How to end rough sleeping
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/factsheet/2018/03/ending-rough-sleeping-in-scotland-interim-report/documents/aa98bb99-2e2d4905-9ac9-e434e8a4dc72/aa98bb99-2e2d-4905-9ac9-e434e8a4dc72/govscot%3Adocument>

Scottish Government HARSAG Q3 recommendations report Transforming the use of Temporary Accommodation in Scotland.
<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/corporatereport/2018/05/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group-interimreport/documents/36232fb2-5237-4a27-b0bf-da126ec2a624/36232fb2-5237-4a27-b0bf-da126ec2a624/govscot%3Adocument>

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group: final recommendations report.
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-groupfinal-report/>

Scottish Government Ending homelessness and rough sleeping : action plan
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-high-level-actionplan/>

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1: Consultation on a Ministerial Statement for Modifying Local Connection Referrals in Scotland

Appendix 2: West Lothian Councils Proposed Response

Contact Person: Katy McBride, katy.mcbride@westlothian.gov.uk 01506 281070

AnnMarie Carr
Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

Consultation on a Ministerial Statement for modifying local connection referrals in Scotland

A consultation by the Scottish Government

July 2020

Ministerial Foreword



I am pleased to invite comments on the Scottish Government's proposal to publish a statement on local connection, as required by section 33B of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

In Scotland we have some of the most progressive homelessness rights in the world and all local authorities have the responsibility to meet their existing statutory obligations and provide people with appropriate accommodation and services.

Over the past decade, national government in partnership with local authorities, the third sector and others have delivered radical changes in homelessness and affordable housing. This has contributed to a significant reduction in homelessness applications. But we can and will do more.

Our vision is to support everyone at risk of homelessness, or experiencing homelessness, to have a safe, warm settled home of their own. We can achieve this by building on our strong foundations and go further to prevent, tackle and ultimately end homelessness for good.

To help us navigate the path to ending homelessness, we asked the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to consider the actions necessary to make the transformational changes which are required.

We are implementing HARSAG's recommendations through the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan, which we published jointly with COSLA in November 2018, and have backed with a £50 million Ending Homelessness Fund. The Action Plan sets out a programme of transformative change to help end homelessness in Scotland and our [Annual Progress Report](#) demonstrates the significant progress already made over the first year of implementation.

I believe that we all want people facing homelessness to be able to choose where they want to settle and to have access to the support they need, wherever they find themselves in housing crisis.

That is why we are proposing in this consultation paper to suspend the operation of local connection referrals between local authorities in Scotland, as recommended by HARSAG. We want to remove barriers to support which can hinder the prevention of

homelessness and modify how people are assessed, recognising that there are usually good reasons for wishing to live in a certain area.

I am confident that, by introducing this important change, we can remove unnecessary barriers that can prevent people receiving the person-centred support they need, when and where they need it.

I encourage you to respond to the consultation and look forward to hearing your views.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Stewart', is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Kevin Stewart MSP
Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning
3 August 2020

Introduction

1 Having somewhere to call home is a basic human right and housing is one of the most important factors in any person's quality of life. In this regard, Scotland already has some of the strongest rights in the world for people experiencing homelessness, and everyone who is threatened with homelessness is entitled to help from their local authority to secure a stable home.

2 We know, however, that not everyone is able to access those rights and that there are some who still contend with barriers to support when faced with homelessness. The Scottish Government is determined to remove these barriers. We want people who are facing homelessness to have the freedom to settle where they choose, with access to the support they require, wherever they find themselves in housing crisis.

3 Last year, the Scottish Government issued a [consultation paper](#) inviting views on a recommendation from the original sitting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) to commence the provision in Section 8 of the [Homelessness etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2003 \("the 2003 Act"\)](#) to give Scottish Ministers the power to modify, by statutory order, referrals for local connection. HARSAG also recommended that Ministers use the new power to suspend referrals between local authorities in Scotland. The consultation also sought views on the HARSAG recommendation to commence the provision in section 4 of the 2003 Act to change the duty for local authorities to investigate for intentionality to a power to investigate, and this was commenced in November 2019.

4 Following the consultation, the [Homelessness etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2003 \(Commencement No. 4\) Order 2019](#) commenced the local connection provisions, giving Scottish Ministers the power to modify the operation of referrals between local authorities within Scotland. The provisions also required that Scottish Ministers must publish a statement setting out the circumstances and general criteria by reference to which modifications will take place.

5 This Scottish Government consultation paper invites your views on our joint commitment to address barriers for people facing homelessness by taking forward the power to modify local connection referrals, and by effectively monitoring any changes which are to be introduced. In particular, we would like to receive views on the core content of the draft Ministerial statement and our proposal to suspend local connection referrals, as set out at Section 2.

6 People working in local authorities and with delivery partners across Scotland will be at the forefront of making this change and ensuring barriers to support are addressed; and people facing homelessness are at the heart of why the Scottish Government is committed to making these changes. We want as many people as possible to share their views and would encourage you to respond to any or all of the questions in Section 3 where you feel you have a contribution to make. However, in responding to this consultation, please do not feel constrained by the questions set.

7 The paper contains 4 sections:

- **Section 1** sets out the background to the provisions contained in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as they currently apply; the approach recommended by HARSAG; the powers contained within the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 and effect of commencing Section 8; and details of the further consultation which has taken place since HARSAG reported.
- **Section 2** sets out the proposed content of the Ministerial Statement on exercising the power to modify local connection, as well as details of a proposal to suspend referrals for local connection and future monitoring arrangements. **Consultees are asked for their views on these issues.**
- **Section 3** contains the consultation questions; information on how to respond to the consultation; a copy of the respondent information form; and accompanying information on Scottish Government consultation exercises.
- **Section 4** (Annex A): contains statistical data tables on local connection referrals.

8 The main pieces of primary legislation involved are the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 - these are referred to throughout this paper as “the 1987 Act” and “the 2003 Act” respectively.

Section 1: Background on HARSAG Recommendation, Legislative Provision and Consultation

9 The Programme for Government announced by the First Minister on 5 September 2017 set out the Scottish Government's commitment to eradicate rough sleeping, transform the use of temporary accommodation in Scotland and end homelessness.

10 The [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group \(HARSAG\)](#) was subsequently established to consider the most appropriate actions to make the transformational changes required. The 70 recommendations from HARSAG were incorporated into the [Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan](#), which was published jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA in November 2018, and which we backed with a £50 million Ending Homelessness Fund. Specifically, for local connection (and intentionality), HARSAG recommended that we should:

Recommendation 2.15 (Interim Report) "Revise legislative arrangements that can result in difficulties with people being able to access their rights. Scottish Government should revise the legislative arrangements on local connection and intentionality. Specifically, they should commence the current provisions on intentionality in the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 and narrow the definition to focus on instances of 'deliberate manipulation' of the homelessness system. In addition, they should commence the provisions on local connection in the 2003 Act and Ministers should exercise powers they would then have under S8 to suspend referrals between local authorities to remove barriers to support for people who are homeless or rough sleeping or at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping. Scottish Government should monitor the impact of these changes on local authorities to respond to any local authorities coming under undue pressure as a result of disproportionate net inflows."

Housing (Scotland) Act 1987

11 Local authorities currently have the power, but not a duty, under section 33 of the 1987 Act, to refer households they have assessed as homeless and who do not have a local connection with them to another local authority where they do have such a connection.

12 This power does not apply where the person has been assessed as intentionally homeless, as there is no duty to provide settled accommodation. The assessment of the 'notifying' authority cannot be revisited by the 'receiving' authority. A referral on the grounds of local connection cannot be made where the applicant household would face the risk of domestic abuse in the area where they have a local connection.

13 Local connection is defined at section 27 of the 1987 Act, as amended by Section 7 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003. A local connection is currently formed on the basis of residence of the applicant's own choice, employment, family associations or any special circumstance.

14 For those who have been serving in the armed forces, changes to the 1987 Act were introduced (through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010¹), which enable members of the armed forces, and those who live with them, to establish a local connection with the area they have lived or worked in.

15 A household in accommodation provided in pursuance of section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999², is not considered to have established a local connection with the area to which they are dispersed as it is not considered to be a “residence... of their own choice” under section 27 of the 1987 Act. This means that, unlike the position in England, a refugee who is homeless or threatened with homelessness in Scotland can apply to any of the 32 local authority areas in Scotland.

16 Where an applicant has no local connection with the authority to which they have applied, and no local connection with any other authority in England, Scotland or Wales, the responsibility for dealing with the application rests with the local authority the applicant applied to. Further guidance on applying the current local connection provisions is available in [Chapter 7 of the Code of Guidance on Homelessness](#).

Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003

17 The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 set the framework for fundamental changes to the eligibility criteria which apply to homeless applications by, in the main, amending the 1987 Act and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

18 The most significant of these changes was the abolition of the priority need test, a change that meant that unintentionally homeless applicants (and their households) seeking assistance from a Scottish local authority would be entitled to settled accommodation. This entitlement would no longer depend on a person falling into a priority need group. While local authorities had initially expressed strong reservations about the capacity within the sector to introduce these changes they have now been implemented successfully.

19 The commencement of Section 8 of the 2003 Act amends section 33 of the 1987 Act to give Scottish Ministers the power to issue a statutory instrument to modify the operation of the local connection referral rules. This power may be applied to all local authorities or to selected local authorities and can include making referrals, receiving referrals or both making and receiving referrals. Section 8 makes provision to insert new sections 33A and 33B into the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. These additional sections have the following effects:

- Scottish Ministers can modify, by statutory order, local authorities’ powers to refer an applicant to another local authority on the grounds of their local connection. Such an order can therefore restrict a specified local authority

¹ [S. 27\(2\)\(a\)\(i\)](#) repealed (1.3.2011) by [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2010 \(asp 17\)](#), **ss. 156(a), 166(2)**; [S.S.I. 2011/96, art. 2, sch.](#) and [S. 27\(3\)\(a\)](#) repealed (1.3.2011) by [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2010 \(asp 17\)](#), **ss. 156(b), 166(2)**; [S.S.I. 2011/96, art. 2, sch.](#)

² [S. 27\(2\)\(a\)\(iii\)](#) and word inserted (30.1.2004) by [Homelessness etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2003 \(asp 10\)](#), **ss. 7, 14(1)**; [S.S.I. 2003/609, art. 2](#)

from making referrals and/or other local authorities making referrals to it. The legislation also allows for the subsequent reversal of any changes made.

- Within 18 months of the Section 8 provisions commencing, Scottish Ministers must prepare and publish a Ministerial Statement setting out the circumstances in which, and the general criteria by reference to which, the power to modify local connection is to be exercised.
- Scottish Ministers are obliged to consult such associations representing local authorities and such other persons, as they see fit, before preparing or amending this statement.

20 Scottish Ministers also have the power to reverse or alter modifications, in the event that information comes to light that suggests they are no longer appropriate.

Responses to Previous Consultation

21 We invited views, last year, on our plans to commence the provision in the 2003 Act to allow Scottish Ministers to modify referrals relating to local connection and our intention to implement the proposal from HARSAG to suspend referrals in Scotland.

22 We received 72 responses overall to last year's [consultation paper](#), with 65 responding to the local connection question. These were from a range of individuals, local authorities, housing associations, tenants groups, third sector organisations, legal groups and other stakeholders. The highest level of support (51%) was for suspending local connection referrals across all local authorities in Scotland. A further 29% supported modifying local connection referrals in another way and 20% were entirely opposed to commencing the provisions. We published the [consultation responses](#), where we had received permission to do so, as well as an [analysis of the responses](#).

23 Two key themes emerged in responses to the consultation. The first, from those who supported suspending local connection referrals, was support for people experiencing homelessness to be able to choose where they wish to settle. This was seen as offering choice to people experiencing homelessness, removing unnecessary barriers to finding permanent accommodation and ensuring that homelessness services can be delivered at the point of need.

24 The second key theme, from those not favouring a suspension, mainly local authority responses, was concern over the potential increase to the numbers of referrals in areas that do not have the resources to meet accommodation and/or support needs. Various different types of local authority were cited, including major cities such as Glasgow or Edinburgh, urban areas or rural and island and highland areas.

Coronavirus pandemic

25 The opportunity was taken in the [Coronavirus \(Scotland\) \(No.2\) Act 2020](#) to make provision to extend, by 6 months, the deadline period for Scottish Ministers to publish the statement on exercising the power to modify referrals between local authorities on the grounds of local connection, as required under section 33B(1) of

the 1987 Act. The deadline is now therefore 18 months rather than 12 months after the coming into force of section 33B (on 7 November 2019). The Act also allows Scottish Ministers to introduce regulations to further extend the period by up to an additional 6 months, on a one-off basis, should this be necessary.

26 Local authorities and third sector partners have been facing particular challenges in their efforts to accommodate and support people who were rough sleeping and to prevent further homelessness during the pandemic. This significantly limited their capacity to engage while that was ongoing and the Scottish Government therefore decided to postpone the consultation until a time when capacity to deliver was restored.

Section 2: Draft Ministerial Statement and Proposal to Suspend Local Connection

27 It is the Scottish Government's expectation that those who are homeless or rough sleeping are more likely to resettle successfully, and avoid repeat homelessness, if they are living in an area of their choosing where they can access the specific services and support they require and where they are able to integrate successfully into the local community. Additionally, for some households, the ability to have a fresh start in another area can be a vitally important factor in helping them to sustain a safe and settled home.

28 We agree with the view, as expressed in the majority of responses to last year's consultation, that people experiencing homelessness are best placed to make the judgement as to the geographical area which best meets these needs. Choice may lead to better outcomes than a strict interpretation of the legislative test. However, we agree also that it is necessary to balance this desire with the need to ensure that these choices are realistic in terms of accommodation and support capacity within local authorities.

Core content of the Ministerial Statement

29 As mentioned above, Scottish Ministers are obliged to make a statement, within 18 months of Section 8 of the 2003 Act coming into force, setting out the **circumstances** in which, and the **general criteria** by reference to which, the power to modify the local connection provisions is to be exercised.

30 The Scottish Government proposes the following core content for the statement, which is informed by the consultation undertaken to date as well as separate engagement with individual stakeholders and a further analysis of previous engagement, practice and trends.

31 It is proposed that the **circumstances for modifying local connection referrals** would be:

To increase the ability of people who are experiencing or are threatened with homelessness to choose where to apply for assistance; taking account of available evidence on any detrimental effect which may result in terms of the capacity of particular local authorities to meet their homelessness duties, or outcomes for individuals or communities.

32 It is proposed that the **general criteria, by reference to which, the power to modify local connection is to be exercised** would be:

- *To improve outcomes for households experiencing homelessness;*
- *To increase choice for households experiencing homelessness;*
- *At the same time, to maintain the capacity for local authorities to fulfil their statutory homelessness duties and their duty to house people in housing need, and to respond to:*
 - *significant undue pressures related to an increased level of households being assessed as homeless, where this pressure is due in part to the*

pressure of applications from households with no local connection to the local authority area(s);

- *significant undue pressures resulting from increases to the scale/frequency of homelessness applications from households experiencing homelessness with no local connection to the local authority area(s).*

33 This third bullet is in recognition that it is important to balance the desire to reduce burdens and increase choice for people with the need to ensure that these choices are realistic in terms of accommodation and support capacity within local authorities. The Scottish Government plans to monitor this, on an ongoing basis, to determine whether the **capacity of a local authority to meet its homelessness and housing duties** is being adversely affected by any modification to local connection. It is proposed that the factors to be considered would include:

- *number of applications/assessments*
- *number of social lets required to house statutory homeless people and associated impact on waiting lists*
- *number of households experiencing homelessness in temporary accommodation and time spent there*
- *sustainability of solutions for households experiencing homelessness*
- *ability to meet support needs*
- *ability to prevent homelessness*

Proposal to Suspend Local Connection Referrals

34 In line with the recommendation of HARSAG, the Scottish Government proposes to suspend local connection referrals between local authorities within Scotland by means of a statutory instrument (subject to affirmative procedure) which would, if approved, come into force in May 2021.

35 The suspension would take effect among Scottish local authorities only - current arrangements relating to referrals to and from authorities in other parts of the UK will continue to apply as they do now. This would mean that no local authority in Scotland could refer an applicant to another local authority in Scotland on local connection grounds - but a Scottish local authority could still refer an applicant to elsewhere in the UK and would be obliged to accept referrals from elsewhere in the UK. It should be noted that the duty to co-operate with other local authorities under section 38 of the 1987 Act remains unaffected by the proposed changes.

36 This decision is predicated on the belief that people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness generally have good reasons to present to a particular authority, and that these reasons (as described above) should be acknowledged.

37 Local authorities and their partners are key to preventing and tackling homelessness in Scotland and providing the housing and support that people need. By suspending the power of local authorities in Scotland to make referrals to other Scottish councils for local connection, we are eliminating one of the barriers people face to receiving the right support, where and when they need it. This will ensure that

front-line staff are able to focus decisions and effort on providing a prompt, person-centred approach to applicants, and help more people into a settled home more quickly.

38 However, while historical data indicates that the power for local authorities to make local connection referrals is used infrequently, and has reduced over time, we acknowledge that there should be a mechanism for dealing with a situation where a particular authority cannot cope with an increased flow of applicants, should this occur. The 1987 Act, as amended, allows for action to be taken in these circumstances and Scottish Ministers retain the power to reverse or alter these modifications, in the event that information comes to light that suggests they are no longer appropriate.

39 It is proposed that following the first exercise of the powers under Section 8, local authorities could make a case to Scottish Ministers if they believed there was a need for further modification. The criteria for making this case would be as set out in the Statement (i.e. as currently proposed at paragraphs 32 - 33 above).

Monitoring Evidence/Assessing Impact

40 The Scottish Government would also monitor all available data and evidence, against the circumstances and general criteria, set out above, to keep the Ministerial Statement under review and to take swift and appropriate action, following consultation with local authority and other key partners, should it reveal that further modification to this statement and/or the statutory order which implements changes is needed.

41 On the national level, we anticipate that the overall impact of suspending local connection referrals will be neutral. We acknowledge, however, the concerns which have been expressed by local authorities and will monitor the number of applications and homelessness assessments in each local authority so that we pick up any changes or trends

42 The existing data (see tables at Annex A) shows that only around 0.5% of applicants who are assessed as homeless are currently being referred to another local authority under this legislation, and that most people present at a local authority where they have a local connection. These data also show that the number of referrals made varies between local authorities and the data will help us understand how the legislative changes impact on different local authorities.

43 In order to measure the impact on local authorities it is important to have sound monitoring systems in place. Local authorities' use of local connection powers has been recorded through the HL1 system which includes the category 'referred to another authority'.

44 The HL1 data collection was revised in April 2007 (in response to findings from Tribal HCH research, 2005³), with additional questions on local connection added to gather information on whether, and in what way, an applicant household

³ <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180518222506/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2005/02/20700/52699>

has a local connection with the authority and, if they do not, in what way they have a connection with another authority. These questions were introduced to aid monitoring of future modifications to local connection rules, so that a case could be made if needed for reversing any modification and to give an indication of the number of applicants local authorities refer to another authority.

45 The HL1 system is able to continue to collect local connection information where the power to refer is not currently exercised and should the provisions be suspended. Data is collected quarterly and published on a 6 monthly basis which provides an opportunity to respond swiftly should any local authorities come under undue pressure.

46 To further assist with monitoring the impact of any future modification of local connection, we also took steps to publish local connection data as part of the Homelessness in Scotland Statistics from summer 2020 onwards.

Section 3: Consultation Questions and How to Respond

1. We are proposing to suspend local connection referrals between Scottish local authorities to remove barriers people face to accessing the support they need. The analysis of the 2019 consultation demonstrated that there is support for this position, although there are concerns about the potential for increases in homelessness applications and subsequent impact on statutory services.

Please give us your current views about the proposed suspension of referrals.

2. Considering the core content proposed for the Ministerial Statement (see section 2 – paras 31 - 33), please give us any suggested amendments with regard to the:

- i. circumstances for modifying local connection referrals (see para 31)
- ii. general criteria, by reference to which, the power to modify local connection is to be exercised (see para 32)

3. Please let us know about any suggested amendments you have to the factors proposed in para 33 for assessing whether the capacity of a local authority to meet its homelessness and housing duties is being adversely affected by any modification to local connection.

4. As set out in the 2019 consultation, we propose using HL1 data to monitor the impact of this change. Please let us know of any comments you have on this proposal.

Responding to this Consultation

We are inviting responses to this consultation by 23 October 2020.

Please respond to this consultation using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, Citizen Space (<http://consult.gov.scot>). Access and respond to this consultation online at <https://consult.gov.scot/housing-and-social-justice/modifying-local-connection-referrals/>. You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of 23 October 2020.

If you are unable to respond using our consultation hub, please complete the Respondent Information Form (provide below) and send to:

Stephen O'Connor

Scottish Government

Homelessness Unit (Legislation and Measurement)

Better Homes Division, 5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow, G2 8LU

Handling your response

If you respond using the consultation hub, you will be directed to the About You page before submitting your response. Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are content for your response to be published. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

If you are unable to respond via Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form included in this document.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Next steps in the process

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public at <http://consult.gov.scot>. If you use the consultation hub to respond, you will receive a copy of your response via email.

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us. Responses will be published where we have been given permission to do so. An analysis report will also be made available.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to the contact address above or at Homelessness_External_Mail@gov.scot

Scottish Government consultation process

Consultation is an essential part of the policymaking process. It gives us the opportunity to consider your opinion and expertise on a proposed area of work.

You can find all our consultations online: <http://consult.gov.scot>. Each consultation details the issues under consideration, as well as a way for you to give us your views, either online, by email or by post.

Responses will be analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. We will publish a report of this analysis for every consultation. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Title

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy:
<https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- ☐ Individual
☐ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Phone number

Address

Postcode

Email

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- ☐ Publish response with name
☐ Publish response only (without name)
☐ Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Annex A

Section 4: Statistical Data Tables on Local Connection Referrals

Percentage of applicants referred to another local authority for closed applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness.									
	Financial year of case closure								
	2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019				
	Applicant referred to other LA (under 87 Act)	All	Applicant referred to other LA (under 87 Act)	All	Applicant referred to other LA (under 87 Act)	All	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019
Aberdeen City	5	1460	25	1700	15	1675	0.3%	1.5%	0.9%
Aberdeenshire	5	1110	10	990	15	1205	0.5%	1.0%	1.2%
Angus	5	655	5	755	5	740	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Argyll & Bute	0	480	0	485	5	445	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
Clackmannanshire	5	495	0	480	5	570	1.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Dumfries & Galloway	5	875	5	920	5	890	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%
Dundee City	5	1280	5	1335	5	1485	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%
East Ayrshire	0	515	0	610	5	825	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
East Dunbartonshire	5	515	5	440	0	430	1.0%	1.1%	0.0%
East Lothian	5	715	5	840	0	765	0.7%	0.6%	0.0%
East Renfrewshire	0	315	5	320	0	280	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%
Edinburgh	30	3265	25	2960	25	3035	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
Eilean Siar	0	135	0	145	0	135	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Falkirk	10	1060	5	1035	10	1100	0.9%	0.5%	0.9%
Fife	10	2410	15	2380	15	2525	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%
Glasgow City	5	5785	5	5190	5	5610	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Highland	0	985	0	1110	10	1230	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Inverclyde	0	230	0	185	0	205	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Midlothian	10	445	10	570	5	670	2.2%	1.8%	0.7%
Moray	0	580	0	560	0	525	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
North Ayrshire	0	735	5	985	0	1010	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
North Lanarkshire	5	1895	10	2005	15	2505	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%
Orkney	0	90	0	135	0	100	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Perth & Kinross	0	1060	5	995	5	1010	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Renfrewshire	0	715	5	850	0	880	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%
Scottish Borders	5	655	10	645	5	790	0.8%	1.6%	0.6%
Shetland	0	145	0	140	0	135	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
South Ayrshire	5	705	0	740	10	825	0.7%	0.0%	1.2%
South Lanarkshire	10	2060	10	1995	10	2020	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Stirling	5	615	5	565	5	590	0.8%	0.9%	0.8%
West Dunbartonshire	5	1085	5	1080	0	990	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%
West Lothian	5	1150	5	1450	5	1595	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
All	145	34225	190	34600	185	36795	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%

Local connection by local authority for applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness

	Financial year of assessment												Financial year of assessment											
	2016/2017				2017/2018				2018/2019				2016/2017				2017/2018				2018/2019			
	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All	Local connection with this LA	Local connection with another LA	No local connection with any LA	All
Aberdeen City	905	30	525	1460	1060	20	660	1740	1055	25	540	1620	62%	2%	36%	100%	61%	1%	38%	100%	65%	2%	33%	100%
Aberdeenshire	1015	10	15	1040	1045	15	25	1080	1120	15	20	1155	98%	1%	1%	100%	97%	1%	2%	100%	97%	1%	2%	100%
Angus	715	10	15	740	745	5	0	750	685	15	5	700	97%	1%	2%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%	98%	2%	1%	100%
Argyll & Bute	475	0	0	475	520	0	0	520	445	0	0	445	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Clackmannanshire	470	0	5	475	530	0	5	535	535	5	10	550	99%	0%	1%	100%	99%	0%	1%	100%	97%	1%	2%	100%
Dumfries & Galloway	775	25	15	815	815	10	15	840	910	5	5	920	95%	3%	2%	100%	97%	1%	2%	100%	99%	1%	1%	100%
Dundee City	1260	0	0	1260	1390	0	0	1390	1460	0	0	1460	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%
East Ayrshire	570	15	0	585	595	5	5	600	795	20	0	815	97%	3%	0%	100%	99%	1%	1%	100%	98%	2%	0%	100%
East Dunbartonshire	520	10	0	530	440	5	0	445	385	0	0	390	98%	2%	0%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%	99%	0%	0%	100%
East Lothian	745	0	15	760	750	5	35	790	750	5	40	790	98%	0%	2%	100%	95%	1%	4%	100%	95%	1%	5%	100%
East Renfrewshire	310	5	5	320	310	5	0	320	305	5	0	315	97%	2%	2%	100%	97%	2%	0%	100%	97%	2%	0%	100%
Edinburgh	2775	30	665	3470	2435	20	850	3300	2750	15	605	3365	80%	1%	19%	100%	74%	1%	26%	100%	82%	0%	18%	100%
Eilean Siar	135	5	0	140	120	5	10	135	130	5	5	140	96%	4%	0%	100%	89%	4%	7%	100%	93%	4%	4%	100%
Falkirk	1140	0	0	1140	1105	0	0	1105	1030	0	0	1030	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Fife	2415	20	25	2460	2365	25	20	2410	2550	30	25	2605	98%	1%	1%	100%	98%	1%	1%	100%	98%	1%	1%	100%
Glasgow City	4835	450	270	5555	4635	410	165	5210	4925	640	150	5720	87%	8%	5%	100%	89%	8%	3%	100%	86%	11%	3%	100%
Highland	920	25	245	1195	770	45	300	1115	765	35	435	1235	77%	2%	21%	100%	69%	4%	27%	100%	62%	3%	35%	100%
Inverclyde	235	0	5	240	180	0	15	200	165	5	30	195	98%	0%	2%	100%	90%	0%	8%	100%	85%	3%	15%	100%
Midlothian	515	0	0	515	555	5	0	560	490	5	0	490	100%	0%	0%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%	100%	1%	0%	100%
Moray	565	10	5	580	525	10	0	535	540	15	5	560	97%	2%	1%	100%	98%	2%	0%	100%	96%	3%	1%	100%
North Ayrshire	760	0	0	760	1035	0	0	1035	1030	0	0	1030	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%
North Lanarkshire	1870	15	5	1890	2085	10	5	2100	2360	20	5	2385	99%	1%	0%	100%	99%	0%	0%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%
Orkney	120	0	5	125	115	10	0	125	120	5	0	130	96%	0%	4%	100%	92%	8%	0%	100%	92%	4%	0%	100%
Perth & Kinross	680	5	200	880	825	5	145	975	765	5	190	955	77%	1%	23%	100%	85%	1%	15%	100%	80%	1%	20%	100%
Renfrewshire	750	5	5	760	860	5	5	870	835	5	5	850	99%	1%	1%	100%	99%	1%	1%	100%	98%	1%	1%	100%
Scottish Borders	675	5	10	690	685	5	5	700	745	5	5	750	98%	1%	1%	100%	98%	1%	1%	100%	99%	1%	1%	100%
Shetland	115	0	0	115	120	0	0	120	110	0	0	115	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	96%	0%	0%	100%
South Ayrshire	540	10	155	705	785	10	0	795	795	15	5	810	77%	1%	22%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%	98%	2%	1%	100%
South Lanarkshire	1990	0	0	1990	2000	0	0	2000	1925	10	0	1935	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%
Stirling	565	20	50	640	560	25	25	610	560	35	40	635	88%	3%	8%	100%	92%	4%	4%	100%	88%	6%	6%	100%
West Dunbartonshire	1145	5	0	1150	1045	5	0	1055	1035	5	0	1040	100%	0%	0%	100%	99%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%
West Lothian	1340	0	0	1340	1550	0	0	1550	1485	10	0	1495	100%	0%	0%	100%	100%	0%	0%	100%	99%	1%	0%	100%
All	31855	705	2235	34795	32550	675	2295	35520	33560	945	2135	36640	92%	2%	6%	100%	92%	2%	6%	100%	92%	3%	6%	100%



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APPENDIX 2 CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Question 1

We are proposing to suspend local connection referrals between Scottish local authorities to remove barriers people face to accessing the support they need. The analysis of the 2019 consultation demonstrated that there is support for this position, although there are concerns about the potential for increases in homelessness applications and subsequent impact on statutory services.

Prior to COVID-19 West Lothian was already experiencing significant pressures on housing availability due to demand for social housing and in particular homeless services. Whilst the homeless applications from 2018/19 to 2019/20 decreased from 1,517 to 1,469 by 3.2% the council experienced an increase in applications assessed as homeless, where there is a duty to provide temporary and permanent accommodation, rising by 8.7% from 1,123 in 2018/19 to 1,221 in 2019/20.

Since COVID-19 the council has seen demand for homelessness increase further by 11% from 323 in Q1 of 2019/20 to 360 in Q1 2020/21. The number of households in temporary accommodation has increased by 21% from 490 in Q1 2019/20 to 543 in Q1 2020/21. Most notably the biggest impact to be seen so far is in the reduction in the availability of mainstream lets by 86% from 382 in Q1 2019/20 to 54 in Q1 2020/21, due to restrictions on allocations.

The council anticipates that the full extent of COVID-10 has not yet been experienced and has significant concerns that homelessness will rise over the course of 2020/21. The councils updated RRTP modelling is suggesting that assessments are expected to rise by 23% to 1,239 in 2020/21 and the backlog of homeless applicants waiting to be rehoused is expected to rise by 91% to 1,047 in 2020/21.

This is why the council remains opposed to the proposals to remove local connection duties as any potential rise in homeless applications will have a further impact on homeless services where there is already not enough supply to meet demand.

The council has high demand in the areas to the east of West Lothian (Livingston and Broxburn) and an under supply of larger family accommodation in these areas. The council has concerns that the close proximity to Edinburgh may adversely affect West Lothian were referrals to be suspended. Those on low incomes in Edinburgh who cannot afford to access the private rented, mid-market rental options or who are living in unsuitable accommodation may choose to present homeless to West Lothian. West Lothian's proximity to Edinburgh along with good transport links makes this an attractive solution to their housing needs.

The council also has concerns that young families in particular residing in Edinburgh with limited housing options are likely to look to one of the neighbouring authorities to resolve their housing needs due to affordability issues within the private sector and pressures on social rented stock in Edinburgh. This will bring further pressure on existing high demand from families with a local connection to West Lothian due to the potential disproportionate net inflow from the city.

Section 33 (2)(c) of the Housing Scotland Act 1987 prevents local authorities from referring applicants with no local connection to another authority where there is a local connection if there is a risk of domestic abuse. The council is concerned that the removal of local

connection referrals will potentially place victims of abuse at risk where they have presented to a local authority with no local connection as removal of these connections will potentially allow the perpetrators of domestic abuse to abuse this new power and potentially increase their opportunities to reoffend.

In addition to this active offenders who may not be known to services could potentially abuse the removal of no local connection powers by presenting as homeless to an area where they are unknown to. Within Criminal Justice and Housing in West Lothian there are close working relationships and shared IT systems to allow for the sharing of appropriate information. Where offenders are free to present as homeless to any local authority where there is no local connection there would need to be robust processes in place to risk assess and screen this cross county borders to ensure no high risk offenders take advantage of this.

There are also concerns about how this will potentially impact the National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders in Scotland (NASSO). Obtaining housing for MAPPA offenders in West Lothian can be challenging due to the complexities in finding appropriate resources within current demand and supply pressures by removing these powers there is potential for supply for social housing to be further pressured placing more pressure on the ability to find suitable housing for offenders as part of the NASSO strategy.

The council has previously suggested modifying local connection in another way and would again propose that local connection referrals are modified in another way. This is due to existing flexibility which already exists within the current legislation allowing a significant level of choice for applicants in terms of which authority they wish to live in and to establish local connection. The council proposes modifications through the provision of a definition of the application of “any special circumstances” to widen local connection rights to a significant range of applicants such as:

- people with specific need to be housed in an area due to their social networks, health reasons, or addiction issues where services/ support for those with addictions are available,
- anyone who has been rough sleeping in an area (such as Edinburgh) and wishes to return to a community where they believe they can sustain accommodation. In addition to the above we would wish the Scottish Government to consider the following additional options:
- Reduce the 5 year residency rule for family associations to a shorter period.
- Greater collaboration to be undertaken at a housing options HUB level with neighbouring local authorities agreeing local protocols allowing greater flexibility.

Question 2

Considering the core content proposed for the Ministerial Statement (see section 2 – paras 31 - 33), please give us any suggested amendments with regard to the:

- circumstances for modifying local connection referrals (see para 31)**
- general criteria, by reference to which, the power to modify local connection is to be exercised (see para 32)**

The council remains committed to ending homelessness and agrees with the Ministerial Statement for modifying local connection referrals to increase the ability of people who are experiencing or are threatened with homelessness to choose where to apply for assistance.

The council agrees that those who are homeless are more likely to resettle successfully, and avoid repeat homelessness, if they are living in an area of their choosing where they can access the specific services and support they require and where they are able to integrate successfully into the local community.

Due to the already significant supply and demand pressures in West Lothian along with predicted future demands as a result of COVID-19, the council is concerned that any additional demand from homeless applicants with no local connection will not achieve the best outcome for that individual as outlined above. Applicants with no local connection will potentially experience long waiting times for permanent accommodation, lengthy stays in temporary accommodation, required use of Unsuitable Accommodation and may not receive an offer of housing in their chosen community due to the miss match between demand and supply. The council does not believe that by removing local connection referrals and increasing demand for homeless services applicants with no local connection will result in a better outcome as they have chosen to reside in West Lothian.

The council does not agree with the proposed general criteria for modifying local connection and does not believe that this will improve outcomes for homeless households in West Lothian. This is due to the ongoing supply and demand pressures and the requirement for the council to limit the choice of area for a permanent offer to ensure minimum time is spent in temporary accommodation as possible and limit use of unsuitable accommodation. The council does not agree that this will increase choice for homeless households and will be potentially detrimental increasing waiting times further.

If certain areas become hot spots for homeless applications due to the availability of specific services such as education, health, social care, drug and alcohol services or employment opportunities it is possible that both the council and partner organisations will become overwhelmed by the increase in homeless applications and those subsequently housed with specific needs.

The council therefore suggests that as capacity to fulfil statutory duties is already difficult to achieve that wider homeless demand pressures and the use of unsuitable accommodation are considered along with additional pressures that could incur within other services such as Health, Education and Social Policy.

Question 3

Please let us know about any suggested amendments you have to the factors proposed in para 33 for assessing whether the capacity of a local authority to meet its homelessness and housing duties is being adversely affected by any modification to local connection.

The council welcomes the Scottish Governments recognition that it is important to balance the desire to reduce burdens and increase choice for people with the need to ensure that these choices are realistic in terms of accommodation and support capacity within local authorities. The council agrees with the factors to be monitored however also proposes that all homeless applications are monitored to understand the overall impact on supply and demand which would include lengths of stay in temporary accommodation, waiting times for permanent accommodation and the use of unsuitable accommodation.

The council suggests that the percentage of social lets to homeless households is also monitored to take account of how much of social rented stock is being allocated to homeless households to manage the demand for homeless services.

As outlined above, the council also suggests that the impact on wider service such as Health, Education and Social Policy are also monitored as they may be adversely impacted through any rise in homeless demand as a result of removing local connection referrals.

Question 4

As set out in the 2019 consultation, we propose using HL1 data to monitor the impact of this change. Please let us know of any comments you have on this proposal.

The council does not believe HL1 to be the only effective monitoring mechanism to monitor the impact of this change due to the potential impact on education, health, social care, drug and alcohol services or employment opportunities.

Monitoring of the impact of the suspension of referrals should take account of pressures on housing supply and increased pressures on homeless services and other services listed above.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PROPERTY TURNOVER QUARTER 4 2019/20 and QUARTER 1 2020/21

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the panel of the property turnover for the fourth quarter (1 January to 31 March) of 2019/20 and first quarter (1 April – 30 June) 2020/21.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the current levels of activity relating to property turnover for Quarter 4 of 2019/20 and Quarter 1 of 2020/21 and in particular to note:

1. the decrease in properties let for Quarter 4 2019/20 and Quarter 1 of 2020/21 when compared to the same period last year;
2. of the 47 communities in West Lothian, nine had only one mainstream property to let and 18 had none, and
3. the decrease in properties let due to COVID-19 in Quarter 1 of 2020/21 of 54 when compared to Quarter 1 of 2019/20 of 385.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focussing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Providing equality of opportunities Making best use of our resources Working in partnership
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and in accordance with the Homelessness (etc) (Scotland) Act 2003, Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. West Lothian Council Housing Allocation Policy
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 7 - We have tackled the significant inequalities in West Lothian society. Outcome - 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places

where we are able to access the services we need

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)

None

VII Consideration at PDSP

None

VIII Other consultations

Consultation takes place with the Housing Network as well as individual tenant groups

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Quarterly Turnover

The number of permanent lets for Quarter 4 2019/20 was 248 compared to the same quarter the previous year when 370 properties were let.

The number of permanent lets for Quarter 1 2020/21 was 54 compared to the same quarter the previous year when 385 properties were let.

The number of lets for the Quarter 4 2019/20 excluding Assisted Moves was 226 properties. There were no lets in the first quarter of 2020/21 to Assisted Moves.

Details of all lets and property numbers for Quarter 4 2019/20 are provided in Appendix 1 and 2. Council stock figures by Ward are detailed in Appendix 3. Applicants can choose from a total of 47 communities. The main points to note are:

- The communities with the highest percentage of total lets were Bathgate with 59 lets 24% Whitburn with 40 lets 16% and Armadale with 33 lets 13%;
- There were four sheltered housing properties let;
- Nine communities had one mainstream property available to let (Addiewell, Harthill, Linlithgow Bridge, Mid Calder, Pumpherston, Uphall Station, Whiteside, West Calder and Winchburgh), and
- Eight communities had between two and four properties available to let (Breich, East Calder, Ladywell, Linlithgow, Polbeth, Stoneyburn, Uphall, Westfield)

Details of all lets and property numbers for Quarter 1 2020/21 are provided in Appendix 4. The main points to note for Quarter 1 2020/21 are:

- The communities with the highest percentage of total lets were Whitburn with 17 lets 31% Bathgate with 11 lets 20% and Armadale with 7 lets 13%;
- There were no sheltered housing properties let;
- Six communities had one mainstream property available to let (Addiewell, Blackridge, Deans, Harthill, Linlithgow, Uphall), and
- Seven communities had between two and four properties available to let (Blackburn, Broxburn, Bridgend, East Calder, Fauldhouse, Knightsridge, Winchburgh)

The following Eighteen communities had no properties becoming available in Quarter 4 2019/20 and/or Quarter 1 2020/21.

No	Community	Number of properties remaining
1	Ballencrieff	5
2	Bellsquarry	4

3	Craigshill	33
4	Dechmont	26
5	Ecclesmachan	4
6	Eliburn Co-op	41
7	East Whitburn	45
8	Howden	20
9	Greenrigg	103
10	Kirknewton	39
11	Longridge	89
12	Newton	12
13	Philipstoun	25
14	Threemiletown	6
15	Torphichen	26
16	The Riggs	137
17	Seafield	109
18	Wilkieston	5

D2 Type of property

The majority of properties that became available in Quarter 4 2019/20 were Four in Block at 88 (35%) followed by Cottages at 84 (34%). 37% of these were two-bedroom properties, 17 % were one-bedroom properties and 15 % were three-bedroom properties. The majority of properties that became available in Quarter 1 2020/21 were Cottages 20 (37%) followed by Four in Block 15 (28%). 31% of these were two-bedroom properties, 22% of these were three-bedroom properties and 11% of these were one-bedroom properties.

D3 Applicants

The 248 properties let in Quarter 4 2019/20 and the 54 properties let in Quarter 1 2020/21 were allocated in accordance with the Council's Allocations Policy and group plus points system.

Performance for the Quarter 4 2019/20 is detailed in the table below.

Group	Percentage Met
Homeless (HL)	68%
Housing with Care	1%
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	21%
General (GN)	1%
Transfer (TL)	9%
Outwith (OW)	0%

Performance for the Quarter 1 2020/21 is detailed in the table below.

Group	Percentage Met
Homeless (HL)	76%
Housing with Care	0%
Unsatisfactory Housing (UH)	18%
General (GN)	0%
Transfer (TL)	6%
Outwith (OW)	0%

E. Conclusion

The report provides information on the lets in Quarter 4 of 2019/20 and Quarter 1 of 2020/21. The report also highlights that there continues to be some communities where there is no movement in vacant properties at all. The report also highlights the impact of COVID-19 on the number of properties let in Quarter 1 2020/21 when compared to the same quarter in 2018/19.

F. Background References

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Lets excluding Assisted Moves Fourth Quarter 2019/20

Appendix 2 – Assisted Move Lets Fourth Quarter 2019/20

Appendix 3 – Total Housing Stock per area

Appendix 4 – Lets (no assisted moves) First Quarter 2020/21

Contact Person: katy.mcbride@westlothian.gov.uk – Tel No- 01506 281070

Annmarie Carr
HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 20th October 2020

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Armadale	Armadale	Cottage	5	1	2	0	0	8
		Four in Block	1	9	5	0	0	15
		Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Maisonette	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Armadale Total		7	10	8	0	0	25
	Westfield	Cottage	0	1	1	0	0	2
	Westfield Total		0	1	1	0	0	2
	Blackridge	Cottage	0	0	1	1	0	2
		Flat	2	0	0	0	0	2
		Maisonette	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Blackridge Total		2	2	1	1	0	6
Ward Total			9	13	10	1	0	33

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Bathgate	<i>Bathgate</i>	Cottage	0	3	2	0	0	5
		Four in Block	5	8	1	0	0	14
		Flat	4	0	0	0	0	4
		Sheltered	2	0	0	0	0	2
		Maisonette	0	1	2	0	0	3
	<i>Bathgate Total</i>		11	12	5	0	0	28
	<i>Boghall</i>	Four in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Cottage	1	7	6	0	0	14
		Flat	0	8	0	0	0	8
		Sheltered	2	0	0	0	0	2
	<i>Boghall Total</i>		4	15	6	0	0	25
	<i>Whiteside</i>	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	<i>Whiteside Total</i>		0	1	0	0	0	1
	<i>Wester Inch</i>	Four in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Cottage	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Flat	3	0	0	0	0	3
	<i>Wester Inch Total</i>		5	0	0	0	0	5
<i>Ward Total</i>			20	28	11	0	0	59

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Breich Valley	Addiewell	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Addiewell Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
Breich	Breich	Cottage	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Breich Total		1	1	0	0	0	2
Fauldhouse		Four in Block	0	4	1	0	0	5
		Maisonette	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Cottage	0	3	0	0	0	3
		Flat	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Fauldhouse Total		0	8	2	0	0	10
Polbeth	Polbeth	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Flat	1	1	0	0	0	2
	Polbeth Total		1	2	0	0	0	3
West Calder	West Calder	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	West Calder Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
Stoneyburn	Stoneyburn	Cottage	1	1	0	0	0	2
		Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Stoeyburn Total		1	2	0	0	0	3
Ward Total			3	15	2	0	0	20

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Broxburn	<i>Broxburn</i>	Cottage	0	3	3	0	0	6
		Four in Block	2	4	0	0	0	6
		Flat	3	5	1	0	0	9
		Maisonette	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Broxburn Total		5	14	4	0	0	23
	<i>Uphall</i>	Four in Block	1	3	0	0	0	4
	Uphall Total		1	3	0	0	0	4
	<i>Winchburgh</i>	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Winchburgh Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
	Ward Total		6	18	4	0	0	28
East Livingston	<i>East Calder</i>	Cottage	0	0	0	1	0	1
		Four in Block	0	2	0	0	0	2
	East Calder Total		0	2	0	1	0	3
	<i>Pumpherstoun</i>	Four in Block	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Pumpherstoun Total		0	0	1	0	0	1
	<i>Uphall Station</i>	Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Uphall Station Total		1	0	0	0	0	1
	<i>Mid Calder</i>	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Mid Calder Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
	Ward Total		1	3	1	1	0	6

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms				
			1	2	3	4	5 Total

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Linlithgow	Bridgend	Four in Block	0	3	0	0	0	3
		Cottage	1	0	1	0	0	2
	Bridgend Total		1	3	1	0	0	5
	Linlithgow Bridge	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Linlithgow Bridge Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
Linlithgow	Four in Block		1	0	1	0	0	2
	Flat		1	0	0	0	0	1
	Linlithgow Total		2	0	0	0	0	2
Ward Total			3	4	2	0	0	8
North Livingston	Deans	Cottage	1	0	1	0	0	2
		Flat	2	1	0	0	0	3
	Deans Total		3	1	1	0	0	5
Elburn/Livingston Village	Four in Block		5	2	0	0	0	7
	Cottage		1	1	1	0	0	3
	Elburn/Livingston Village Total		6	3	1	0	0	10
Knightsridge	Cottage		3	3	0	0	0	6
	Flat		0	1	0	0	0	1
	Knightsridge Total		3	4	0	0	0	7
Ward Total			12	8	2	0	0	22

Lets January - April 2020 - (excluding Assisted Moves)

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms						
			1	2	3	4	5	Total	
South Livingston	Dedridge	Cottage	1	1	1	0	0	3	
		Flat	1	1	0	0	0	2	
	Dedridge Total		2	2	1	0	0	5	
	Ladywell	Cottage	1	1	0	0	0	2	
		Flat	1	1	0	0	0	2	
	Ladywell Total		2	2	0	0	0	4	
	Ward Total		4	4	1	0	0	9	
	Whitburn	Blackburn	Four in Block	1	3	0	0	0	4
			Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
			Flat	0	5	2	0	0	7
Maisonette			0	1	0	0	0	1	
Blackburn Total		1	10	2	0	0	13		
Harthill		Cottage	1	0	0	0	0	1	
		Harthill Total		1	0	0	0	0	1
Whitburn		Whitburn	Four in Block	5	8	0	0	0	13
			Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
			Flat	3	2	3	0	0	8
	Maisonette		0	3	1	0	0	4	
	Whitburn Total		8	14	4	0	0	26	
	Ward Total		10	24	6	0	0	40	
Total		68	117	39	2	0	226		

Lets January - April 2020 Assisted Moves

Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Armadale	Armadale	Cottage	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Armadale Total		0	0	1	0	0	1
	Westfield	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Westfield Total		0	1	0	0	0	1
Ward Total			0	1	1	0	0	2
Bathgate	Bathgate	Cottage	0	2	1	0	0	3
		Four in Block	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bathgate Total			0	2	1	0	0	3
	Bogall	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
Boghall Total			0	2	0	0	0	2
Ward Total			0	4	1	0	0	5
Broxburn	Broxburn	Four in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Broxburn Total		1	0	0	0	0	1
Ward Total			1	0	0	0	0	1
Linlithgow	Linlithgow	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Linlithgow Total		0	1	0	0	0	1

Ward Total			0	1	0	0	0	1
Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
North Livingston	<i>Knightsridge</i>	Cottage	0	1	0	0	3	4
	<i>Knightsridge Total</i>		0	1	0	0	3	4
	Deans	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	<i>Deans Total</i>		0	1	0	0	0	1
		<i>Ward Total</i>		0	2	0	0	3
South Livingston	<i>Dedridge</i>	Cottage	0	0	2	0	0	2
	<i>Dedridge Total</i>		0	0	2	0	0	2
	<i>Ladywell</i>	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	3
	<i>Ladywell Total</i>		0	1	0	0	0	3
		<i>Ward Total</i>		0	1	0	0	3
East Livingston	<i>East Calder</i>	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	<i>East Calder Total</i>		0	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Total</i>			1	9	9	0	3	22

Council Stock Numbers				
Ward	Name	Number of properties		
1	BRIDGEND	218		
	LINLITHGOW	337		
	LINLITHGOW BRIDGE	83		
	NEWTON	12		
	PHILPSTOUN	25		
	THREEMILETOWN	6		
		681		
2	BROXBURN	860		
	CRAIGSHILL	33		
	DECHMONT	26		
	ECCLESMACHAN	4		
	UPHALL	206		
	WINCHBURGH	276		
		1,405		
5	EAST CALDER	294		
	KIRKNEWTON	39		
	MID CALDER	55		
	PUMPHERSTON	270		
	UPHALL STATION	111		
	WILKIESTON	5		
		774		
3	DEANS	609		
	ELIBURN CO-OP	41		
	ELIBURN KIRKTON	278		
	THE RIGGS	137		
	KNIGHTSRIDGE	485		
		1,550		
4	BELLSQUARRY	4		
	DEDRIDGE	716		
	LADYWELL	641		
	HOWDEN	20		
		1,381		
6	ADDIEWELL	274		
	BREICH	66		
	FAULDHOUSE	609		
	LONGRIDGE	89		
	POLBETH	348		
	STONEYBURN	238		
	WEST CALDER	146		
		1,770		
7	EAST WHITBURN	45		
	GREENRIGG	103		
	WHITBURN	1,469		
	BLACKBURN	842		
	SEAFIELD	109		
		2,568		
8	BALLENCRIEFF	5		
	BATHGATE	1,002		
	BOGHALL	652		
	WHITESIDE & BIRNIEHI	250		
		1,909		
9	ARMADALE	1,259		
	BLACKRIDGE	222		
	TORPHICHEN	26		
	WESTFIELD	69		
		1,576		
	Total stock	13,614		

Lets April - June 2020 - No Assisted moves for this period

Lets April - June 2020 - No Assisted moves for this period								
Ward	Community	House Type	Number of Bedrooms					
			1	2	3	4	5	Total
Armadale	Armadale	Cottage	0	1	1	0	0	2
		Four in Block	0	3	1	0	0	4
	Armadale Total		0	4	2	0	0	6
	Blackridge	Maisonette	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Blackridge Total		0	0	1	0	0
Ward Total			0	4	3	0	0	7
Bathgate	Bathgate	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Flat	2	1	0	0	0	3
	Bathgate Total		2	3	0	0	0	5
	Boghall	Cottage	0	0	2	0	0	2
		Flat	1	2	0	0	0	3
	Boghall Total		1	2	2	0	0	5
	Wester Inch	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Wester Inch Total		0	1	0	0	0
	Ward Total			3	6	2	0	0
Breich Valley	Addiewell	Four in Block	0	0	1	0	0	1
		Addiewell Total		0	0	1	0	0
	Fauldhouse	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Flat	1	0	1	0	0	2
		Maisonette	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Fauldhouse Total		1	1	2	0	0	4
	Ward Total		1	1	3	0	0	5
Broxburn	Broxburn	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Flat	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Broxburn Total		2	1	0	0	0	3
	Uphall	Four in Block	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Uphall Total		0	1	0	0	0
	Winchburgh	Cottage	0	0	2	0	0	2
		Winchburgh Total		0	0	2	0	0
Ward Total			2	2	2	0	0	6
East Livingston	East Calder	Cottage	0	0	2	0	0	2
	East Calder Total		0	0	2	0	0	2
	Ward Total		0	0	2	0	0	2
Linlithgow	Bridgend	Four in Block	0	2	0	0	0	2
	Bridgend Total		0	2	0	0	0	2
	Linlithgow	Four in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Linlithgow Total		1	0	0	0	0
	Ward Total		1	2	0	0	0	3
North Livingston	Deans	Flat	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Deans Total		1	0	0	0	0	1
	Knightsridge	Cottage	1	0	1	0	0	2
		Knightsridge Total		1	0	1	0	0
	Ward Total		2	0	1	0	0	3
Whitburn	Blackburn	Four in Block	1	0	0	0	0	1
		Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Blackburn Total		1	1	0	0	0	2
	Harthill	Cottage	0	1	0	0	0	1
		Harthill Total		0	1	0	0	0
	Whitburn	Four in Block	2	1	0	0	0	3
		Cottage	1	2	2	0	0	5
		Flat	3	1	0	0	0	4
		Maisonette	0	2	0	0	0	2
		Whitburn Total		6	6	2	0	0
Ward Total		7	8	2	0	0	17	
Total		16	23	15	0	0	54	

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD PERFORMANCE

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Panel Members with performance information on the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT).

B. RECOMMENDATION

Panel members are asked to note the performance information detailed for the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Making best use of our resources Working in partnership Providing equality of opportunity
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004 applies
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	SOA1304_34 (Number of active ASB cases)
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators; SOA10 – We live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need SOA11 – We have strong resilient and supportive communities, where people take responsibility for their actions and how they affect

VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Community Safety Partnership
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII	Other consultations	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

This report sets out the management performance data and analysis for the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Quarter 1 April to June 2020/2021 is set out in Appendix 1. The performance for Q4 January to March 2019/2020 is set out in Appendix 2 for noting.

- D1.** The Covid19 pandemic has impacted on the service that officers are able to provide and ability to take formal legal action is restricted as a result. The lockdown period at end March 2020, the SNT service have had officers working from home and therefore have restrictions/limitations on the ability to undertake full duties in respect of interviewing, witnessing noise nuisance/ anti-social behaviour.

SNT officers have provided a telephone service and followed up wherever possible to engage with both complainants and perpetrators. Officers have provided advice and assistance, telephone mediation, issuing letters to residents seeking further information to assist with corroboration and also issuing warning letters where evidence to do so has been obtained.

Officers have continued to liaise with Scottish Fire Rescue Service and with Police Scotland to access supporting information /corroboration to assist with case management. The most serious cases, SNT have consulted with Legal Services to progress to Court, albeit this has been limited. The SNT service has recently remobilised with officers able to undertake greater engagement in communities with a blended approach of community work and home working. The mobilisation planning progressed as the Covid19 Route Map from Scottish Government emerged over the summer period. The Service revised staff risk assessments, safe systems of work processes and engaged with trade unions and staff to ensure the safe return of staff to undertake their duties at this challenging time.

- D2.** The number of **New Antisocial Behaviour Cases** is set out in Table 1 – 2020/21 and Table 1.1 provides comparison to 2019/20. During Q1 there is a slight reduction in new cases opened compared to the previous year. This in the main is attributed to the lockdown measures that came into effect at end of March 2020. The number varies across West Lothian with some wards having more cases than others. There is no definitive reason for the level of numbers being reported from ward to ward and demographic variations and house type can all contribute to the way in which behaviour from others is tolerated or becomes intolerable to others. Investigations normally involve conducting mediations, issuing warnings, referring individuals to victim support and working with partners in the Community Safety Unit and the local Housing teams

- D3.** The fluctuation in the number of **Active Cases** (Table 2) across each ward is continually monitored with a view to ascertaining a causal factor. The numbers of cases open is only an indicative number of the level of antisocial behaviour occurring as they can be opened for more than one month and this information is counted on a rolling month on month basis. June 2020 is higher compared to June 2019 and this would suggest officers have left cases open longer to allow for monitoring.

- D4.** Data included in Table 3 and Table 3.1 is a note of the **Incidents** recorded and provides a breakdown of total incidents that are reported across each ward. Quarter 1 of 2020/21 has seen an increase in the number of incidents recorded compared to same period in 2019. An increase of 216 incidents recorded with 7 of the 9 wards showing an increase. A summary of the type of incidents (**incident categories**) received is set out in Table 4 and 4.1. Quarter 1 of 2020/21 shows an increase in Part 2 & Part 5 ASB incidents recorded compared to same period 2019. Where the antisocial behaviour is resolved the incident will be closed off, however where further reports are received and occurs on two or more occasions or causing fear, alarm and distress then SNT officer will open a case.
- D5.** Detailed within Table 5 and 5.1 sets out the main **Outcomes** with regards to the reported incidents. The Service has seen community tolerance/resilience reduced as residents of West Lothian cope with the stringent pandemic lock down measures and therefore more reports of neighbour nuisance emerged. The calls made to the Council, regarding people not respecting the social distance measures were fielded by SNT and appropriate advice provided. The emergency legislation and associated powers for any action to be taken was for Police Scotland to respond to. This led to frustration and dissatisfaction from residents which unfortunately SNT and Housing Operational staff had to cope with and placed a strain on staff. Overall this information highlights that our telephone service to customers contacting was the main method of engagement with advice and assistance provided during Quarter 1.
- D6.** Overall the number of **Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBO)** remains low. (Table7) ASBO's are deemed as a last resort to all other methods of curtailing antisocial behaviour within communities. There have been no new ASBO's during the Q1 reporting period in West Lothian, this is because the access to the judicial system was restricted with only the most serious criminal behaviour dealt with by Police Scotland receiving court time. The officers will review the ASBOs with our Legal Services on a regular basis and work with Police Scotland who has the power to enforce and take action should an order be breached. There is one case currently pending court time for a breach of the order and this case remains ongoing.

E. CONCLUSION

This report informs Panel Members of performance data and analysis for the Safer Neighbourhood Team for the period Q1 April to June 2020 and also provides data for Q4 January to March 2019/2020 for noting. The impact of the lockdown measures has limited and restricted aspects of the service however engagement through advice, assistance and where serious neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour has occurred the officers have taken action available to them at this challenging time.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Performance Data Q1 2020/2021

Appendix 2 - Performance Data Q3 & Q4 2019/2020

Contact Person:

Alison Smith, Housing Management & Community Safety Manager,
Housing, Customer and Building Services
Tel: 01506 281367
Alison.Smith@westlothian.gcsx.gov.uk

CMT member: AnnMarie Carr - Date of meeting: 20th October 2020

Table 1 – New Cases opened each month – 2020-/21	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale & Blackridge	0	0	6										6
Bathgate	3	3	1										7
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	3	2	1										6
Livingston East & East Calder	1	0	0										1
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	0	11	3										14
Linlithgow	1	8	3										12
Livingston North	0	3	3										6
Livingston South	1	0	1										2
Whitburn and Blackburn	0	0	4										4
TOTAL	9	27	22										58

Table 1.1 – New Cases opened each month – 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale & Blackridge	1	0	3										4
Bathgate	6	4	9										19
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	3	2	3										8
Livingston East & East Calder	1	0	1										2
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	4	5	1										10
Linlithgow	2	1	0										3
Livingston North	4	2	1										7
Livingston South	1	1	3										4
Whitburn and Blackburn	3	8	2										13
TOTAL	25	23	23										71

Table 2 – Total	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				YTD
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Active Cases /month											Jan	Feb	Mar	
SNT Officer Cases 2020/21	39	56	91											186
SNT Officer Cases 2019/20	37	61	65											163

Table 3													
No of All ASB Incidents 2020/21	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	31	45	33										109
Bathgate	77	75	84										236
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	37	37	46										120
East Livingston	20	37	43										100
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	53	60	71										184
Linlithgow	9	13	21										43
Livingston North	16	18	23										57
Livingston South	22	20	18										60
Whitburn and Blackburn	47	91	95										233
TOTAL	312	396	434										1142

Table 3.1													
No of All ASB Incidents 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	26	13	24										63
Bathgate	74	87	104										265
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	27	34	31										92
East Livingston	13	27	27										67
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	25	52	28										105
Linlithgow	14	9	13										36
Livingston	21	13	21										55

North													
Livingston South	24	26	26										76
Whitburn and Blackburn	57	63	47										167
TOTAL	281	324	321										926

Table 4.1 Examples of Incident 2020/21	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
ASB Part 2 Complaint	182	233	317										732
ASB Part 5 Noise Complaint	104	120	90										314
Dog Barking	1	3	0										4
ENV Health Complaint	4	7	0										11
Non ASB Noise Complaint	2	7	1										10
SST Section 3 Tenancy Management	14	22	19										55
Youth Disorder	2	2	6										10
Unauthorised Encampment	3	2	1										6
Unlicensed HMO	0	0	0										0
Unregistered Private Landlord	0	0	0										0
Total	312	396	434										1142

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec				YTD
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Table 4.2 Examples of Incident Category 2019/20											Jan	Feb	Mar		
	ASB Part 2 Complaint	147	163	150											460
	ASB Part 5 Noise Complaint	91	130	127											348
	CSU Patrol	2	0	1											3
	Dog Barking	5	1	11											16
	ENV Health Complaint	0	0	1											1
	Housing Scotland Act 2001	3	2	5											10
	Non ASB Noise Complaint	12	9	19											40
	SST Section 3 Tenancy Management	7	5	4											16
	Youth Disorder	11	14	2											27
Unauthorised Encampment	2	0	1											3	
Unlicensed HMO	1	0	0											1	
Total	281	324	321											926	

Table 5 - Examples of Incident Outcomes in the Month 2020/21	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Complainant Moved	0	0	0										0
Complaint Withdrawn	0	0	1										1
Criminal Prosecution	0	3	1										4
Insufficient Evidence	0	108	9										117
Phone Call & Advice	5	716	184										905
No Further Incidents	0	6	5										11
Noise Stopped	0	6	11										17
Reconciliation	0	3	0										3

RSL to Investigate	0	5	3										8
Successful Action	0	0	78										78
Warning Notices Issued	0	46	27										73
Warning Verbal Issued	0	2	0										2
Further Investigation (Legislation)	0	2	1										3
Grand Total	5	898	320										1223

Table 5.1 Examples of Incident Outcome in the Month 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Complainant Moved	8	0	0										8
Criminal Prosecution	4	9	7										20
EPA S80 Investigation (Noise Abatement)	0	1	1										2
Insufficient Evidence	20	50	51										121
Phone Call & Advice	116	79	98										293
Follow Up Visit	35	40	48										123
No Further Incidents	56	44	46										146
Noise Stopped	9	19	21										49
Perpetrator Moved	2	3	19										24
Reconciliation	0	1	3										4
RSL to Investigate	0	2	2										4
Successful Action	15	26	31										72
Warning Notice Issued	1	8	4										13
Warning Verbal Issued	6	9	16										31
Total	272	291	347										910

Table 6													
Number of Cases Closed in the Month 2020/21	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	0	0	0										0
Bathgate	4	1	2										7
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	2	3	4										9
East Livingston	0	0	1										1
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	1	0	1										2
Linlithgow	0	0	0										0
Livingston North	0	1	1										2
Livingston South	1	1	1										3
Whitburn and Blackburn	4	0	1										5
Total	12	6	11										29

Table 6.1 Number of cases closed in the month 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	2	0	0										2
Bathgate	8	6	4										18
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	3	1	4										8
East Livingston	0	1	1										2
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	1	2	1										4
Linlithgow	1	0	4										5
Livingston North	1	1	2										4
Livingston South	1	0	1										2
Whitburn and Blackburn	3	0	5										8
Total	20	11	22										53

Table 7		
Number of ASBOs (interim and full) in each ward		
Ward	June 20	June 19
Armadale and Blackridge	2	0
Bathgate	1	0
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	4	0
East Livingston	0	0
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	2	0
Linlithgow	0	4
Livingston North	0	3
Livingston South	0	1
Whitburn and Blackburn	2	2
Total	11	10

Appendix 2 Quarter 4 2019/2020 Performance Data Safer Neighbourhood Team

Table 1 - Cases opened each month – 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale & Blackridge	1	0	3	8	2	4	5	3	3	2	0	2	33
Bathgate	6	4	9	7	3	3	2	6	3	2	7	3	55
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	3	2	3	5	1	4	3	1	0	2	4	8	36
Livingston East & East Calder	1	0	1	5	0	0	2	1	0	1	3	1	15
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	4	5	1	6	5	3	2	5	3	2	6	0	42
Linlithgow	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	9
Livingston North	4	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	19
Livingston South	1	1	3	2	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	15
Whitburn and Blackburn	3	8	2	3	4	4	6	2	1	7	3	3	46
TOTAL	25	23	23	42	18	23	21	20	10	18	27	20	270

Table 1.1 - Cases opened each month – 2018/19	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale & Blackridge	3	2	4	4	0	1	1	1	0	3	1	0	20
Bathgate	2	7	3	5	8	8	6	9	8	5	9	4	74
Broxburn, Uphall & Winchburgh	0	1	4	6	0	0	1	3	2	5	3	3	28
Livingston East & East Calder	0	2	4	1	2	1	4	1	1	3	1	1	21
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	5	4	4	4	5	1	5	8	2	2	2	0	42
Linlithgow	0	1	1	6	3	2	2	1	1	4	0	4	25
Livingston North	2	2	1	5	2	0	1	3	0	2	0	1	19
Livingston South	0	3	3	11	3	2	6	3	1	2	1	0	35
Whitburn and Blackburn	1	4	5	2	4	6	4	0	1	2	6	2	37
TOTAL	13	26	29	44	27	21	30	29	16	28	23	15	301

Table 2 – Total Active Cases /month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
SNT Officer Cases 2019/20	37	61	65	84	76	67	56	58	50	56	56	58	725
SNT Officer Cases 2018/19	33	54	59	81	80	55	76	73	61	69	74	58	773

Table 3	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
No of All ASB Incidents 2019/20													
Armadale and Blackridge	26	13	24	38	21	33	35	51	56	34	28	49	407
Bathgate	74	87	104	123	60	50	68	37	49	53	65	62	837
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	27	34	31	47	37	44	27	19	22	24	48	56	417
East Livingston	13	27	27	31	27	14	17	12	13	13	18	6	217
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	25	52	28	35	37	34	20	48	20	36	34	23	391
Linlithgow	14	9	13	18	13	9	4	9	6	7	13	20	134
Livingston North	21	13	21	30	20	14	15	11	17	15	13	27	216
Livingston South	24	26	26	20	17	17	14	22	9	9	15	23	220
Whitburn and Blackburn	57	63	47	63	56	52	36	38	21	49	52	47	581
TOTAL	281	324	321	405	288	267	236	247	213	240	286	313	3420

Table 3.1	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
No of All ASB Incidents 2018/19													
Armadale and Blackridge	41	31	39	40	39	28	19	17	15	20	24	20	333
Bathgate	37	41	47	54	47	84	77	81	58	44	82	65	717
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	51	50	58	35	21	25	29	30	26	37	35	35	432
East Livingston	20	22	28	28	29	10	21	23	15	13	11	15	235
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	34	22	42	53	39	23	41	39	20	24	21	33	391

Linlithgow	6	15	9	23	20	14	13	6	9	8	12	12	147
Livingston North	22	30	30	30	30	12	12	33	13	22	21	10	265
Livingston South	17	37	39	65	37	28	20	27	14	20	14	22	340
Whitburn and Blackburn	44	43	55	52	49	51	55	41	48	43	55	43	579
TOTAL	272	291	347	380	311	275	287	297	218	231	275	255	3439

Table 4.1 Examples of Incident 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
ASB Part 2 Complaint	147	163	150	235	163	146	137	160	131	135	155	139	1861
ASB Part 5 Noise Complaint	91	130	127	107	80	75	73	60	55	79	110	142	1129
Dog Barking	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	2	10
ENV Health Complaint	5	1	11	8	7	8	4	7	3	2	4	7	67
Non ASB Noise Complaint	3	2	5	4	7	4	7	9	2	3	2	1	49
SST Section 3 Tenancy Management	12	9	20	38	20	18	8	3	14	17	9	16	184
Youth Disorder	7	5	4	6	7	13	5	7	3	1	2	5	65
Unauthorised Encampment	11	14	2	3	4	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	41
Unlicensed HMO	2	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	1	12
Unregistered Private Landlord	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	281	324	321	405	288	267	236	247	212	240	286	313	3420

Table 5 - Examples of Incident Outcomes in the Month 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Complainant Moved	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	1	0	0	0	0	15
Complaint Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Criminal Prosecution	3	7	0	1	1	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	17
In Custody	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9
EPA S80 Investigation (Noise Abatement)	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	9
Insufficient Evidence	15	9	38	72	36	60	23	24	38	46	28	16	405
Phone Call /Advice & Assistance	134	141	108	157	140	107	105	150	123	127	161	198	1651
Visit Only	35	45	35	39	25	25	26	19	18	21	34	27	349
No Further Incidents	41	53	49	76	48	37	37	17	7	9	12	3	389
Noise Stopped	16	17	19	8	12	13	13	18	5	13	16	19	169
Perpetrator Moved	11	13	28	19	4	4	0	0	0	2	2	1	84
Reconciliation	0	0	2	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	9
RSL to Investigate	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	1	3	4	2	0	17
Successful Action	14	29	28	13	17	2	9	5	6	7	10	11	151
Warning Notice Issued	3	0	3	2	2	4	2	3	9	1	9	4	42
Warning Verbal Issued	5	9	9	7	3	7	1	4	2	7	3	6	63
Further Investigation (Legislation)	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	8
Total	280	324	320	405	288	266	236	247	212	238	278	286	3380

Table 5.1 Examples of Incident Outcome in the Month 2018/19	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Complainant Moved	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	11
Complaint Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Criminal Prosecution	4	9	7	5	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	35
In Custody	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
EPA S80 Investigation (Noise Abatement)	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	10
Insufficient Evidence	19	48	51	61	50	38	42	58	47	48	17	28	507
Phone Call Advice & Assistance	115	79	98	100	108	94	118	91	84	95	138	155	1275
Visit Only	33	39	48	46	29	36	38	29	24	31	32	22	407
No Further Incidents	58	48	46	65	60	59	42	58	28	36	14	4	518
Noise Stopped	9	18	21	16	11	13	11	17	15	5	22	11	169
Perpetrator Moved	2	3	19	12	7	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	48
Reconciliation	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
RSL to Investigate	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	15
Successful Action	15	26	31	61	33	16	20	32	10	5	10	19	278
Warning Notice Issued	1	7	4	7	5	7	6	0	1	2	13	2	55
Warning Verbal Issued	6	9	16	4	3	7	6	5	4	3	8	0	71
Further Investigation	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	2	5	2	16
Total	272	291	347	380	311	275	286	296	216	231	268	249	3422

Table 6													
Number of Cases Closed in the Month 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	2	0	0	1	0	9	4	4	4	3	2	3	32
Bathgate	8	6	4	7	2	6	7	2	3	4	4	4	57
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	3	1	4	3	3	4	2	0	2	0	1	2	25
East Livingston	0	1	1	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	1	2	1	5	1	5	5	5	4	2	4	7	42
Linlithgow	1	0	4	1	1	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	12
Livingston North	1	1	2	1	6	2	1	0	1	1	1	2	19
Livingston South	1	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	2	0	1	1	12
Whitburn and Blackburn	3	0	5	7	4	1	2	12	1	3	4	5	47
Total	20	11	22	25	19	36	25	23	19	14	17	24	256

Table 6.1													
Number of Cases Closed in the Month 2018/19	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	YTD
Armadale and Blackridge	1	1	4	1	3	1	3	1	0	2	0	2	19
Bathgate	2	3	5	3	4	8	4	5	9	3	7	9	62
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	1	0	2	3	1	3	4	0	4	0	0	6	24
East Livingston	0	0	1	2	2	4	1	0	2	4	0	1	17
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	3	1	6	3	4	4	3	4	7	3	4	2	44

Linlithgow	0	1	0	2	1	2	5	2	1	1	0	5	20
Livingston North	0	1	4	2	4	3	2	0	0	1	1	1	19
Livingston South	0	0	0	6	2	4	6	2	3	1	0	9	33
Whitburn and Blackburn	7	2	2	2	5	3	6	1	5	1	3	1	38
Total	14	9	24	24	26	32	34	15	31	16	15	36	276

Table 7		
Number of ASBOs in each		
Ward	Mar 20	Mar 19
Armadale and Blackridge	0	0
Bathgate	4	1
Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh	0	0
East Livingston	0	0
Fauldhouse and Breich Valley	0	0
Linlithgow	3	5
Livingston North	2	5
Livingston South	3	1
Whitburn and Blackburn	1	5
Total	13	17

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL
HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020/21
REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER, AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report introduces the 2020/21 Management Plan for Housing, Customer, and Building Services, which is provided as an appendix.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel considers the plan and provides comment as appropriate.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focusing on our customers' needs;• Being honest, open and accountable;• Providing equality of opportunities;• Making best use of resources;• Developing our employees; and• Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The plan sets targets for high level performance indicators for 2020/21.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The activities within the Management Plan are closely linked to the overall Single Outcome Agreement and revised Corporate Plan.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The Management Plan sets out the financial and staffing resources required to deliver the activities and objectives of Housing, Customer and Building Services in 2020/21
VII Consideration at PDSP	N/A
VIII Other consultations	Service employees and senior management.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

In accordance with council procedures, Housing, Customer, and Building Services have produced a service Management Plan for the forthcoming financial year. The Management Plan takes account of the Corporate Plan, Transforming Your Council measures, and the agreed level of budgetary provision.

The Management Plan sets out the work that the service will undertake in this role during the 2020/21 financial year. The plan also provides a summary of the work undertaken in the year prior, and the improvements achieved by the service during the period of the previous management plan. It will act as the control document against which the service will monitor progress during 2020/2021, and it the benchmark for service provision as the service continues to deploy the recovery and renewal of services following Covid-19 impacts in 2020.

Tenant representatives are consulted on the service performance targets and actions as part of our ongoing consultation and performance reporting arrangements.

E. CONCLUSION

The Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan enables focus for the work of the service during the year as we recover and renew our services. Its delivery will ensure the service continues to deliver high quality, efficient services to our customers and will contribute to the strategic aims of the council, enabling the council to meet its obligations.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: 1 - Housing, Building and Customer Services Management Plan 2020/21

Contact Person: Sarah.Kelly@westlothian.gov.uk 01506 281873

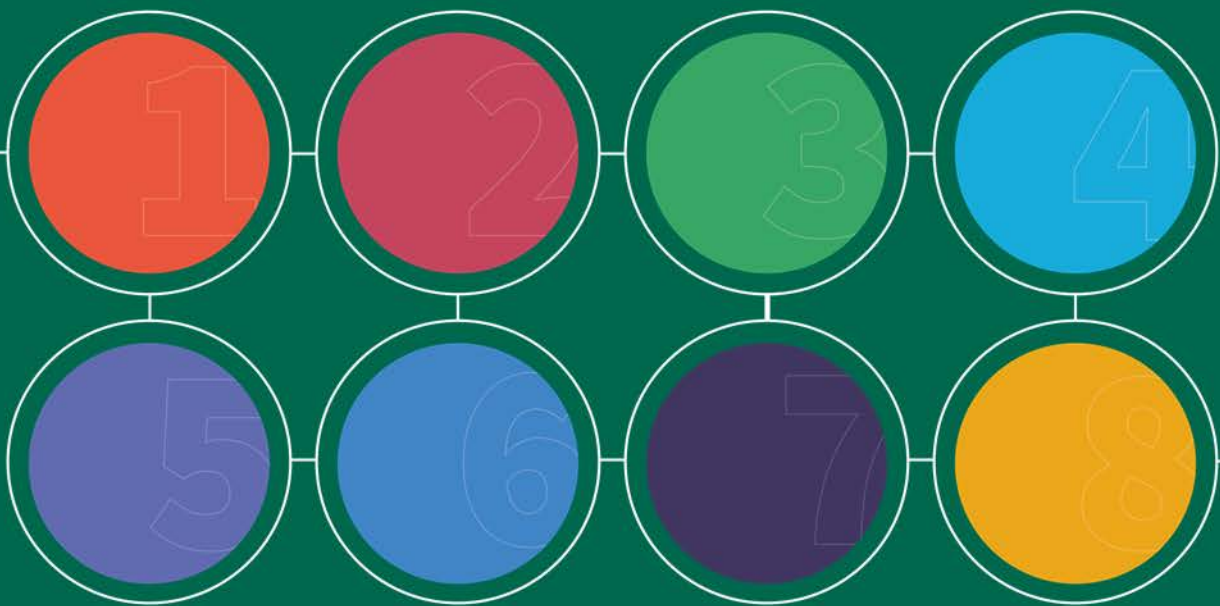
AnnMarie Carr

HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

Date of Meeting: 20th October 2020

Data label: OFFICIAL

Housing, Customer & Building Services Management Plan 2020/21



An introduction to the Management Plan from the Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

The Management Plan is a key planning document that will explain how the service will support in the delivery of the council's eight priorities in 2020/21.

West Lothian Council has a strong track record of delivering better outcomes for local people. Housing, Customer and Building Services play an integral role in that performance by developing and deploying corporate strategies aimed at improving the quality of life for people in West Lothian. Customer and Community Services are key to the organisation through their deployment of frontline service provision. With the continuing financial and demographic challenges ahead, the service will integrate our services to create a

seamless offering to customers, focusing on those most in need.

In Housing, Customer and Building Services we provide an extensive range of services which contribute to positive outcomes in the eight corporate priorities (see below) through provision of housing management; strategy and development, repairs and maintenance, homelessness and housing need; customer contact and frontline services in the community.

Corporate Priorities 2018/23 | The council re-committed to eight ambitious priorities following a large public consultation in 2017/18. We believe these priorities will continue to support improvement in the quality of life for everyone living, working and learning in West Lothian and will be the focus for council services, resources and staff in the next four years.



In support of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 and the eight priorities, we will continue to strive to improve the quality and value of our services.

Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to provide quality, sustainable housing and building functions as well as continuing to provide efficient and effective customer and community services. We will engage with our customers and tenants, partners and with other

council services to promote continuous improvement and transformation of our services.

This management plan fulfils a number of planning and improvement requirements and importantly, it sets out how the service will use its resources to deliver positive outcomes for West Lothian and deliver efficiencies of £1.209 over the next three years. It is the result of a detailed planning process to make sure that council

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

services are well planned and managed. I hope that this management plan will help our customers, employees and partners to understand how we will transform our services and continue to deliver for our communities.

The service, to those most in need, has remained constant during the Covid-19 pandemic. During initial lockdown restrictions, we continued to deliver well against our statutory duties to maintain properties, and respond to emergencies relating to homelessness and our tenants homes. During this time, our dedicated staff have embraced entirely new ways of working, and we intend to grow and learn from these changes as part of a return to full service recovery in the coming weeks and months. We have ensured that our plans for the renewal of our services as

Our services

The services that we will deliver through collaboration with our partners in 2020/21

Housing, Customer and Building Services are a key player in developing and deploying corporate strategies aimed at improving the quality of life for all people in West Lothian. In the next four years, the service will continue to support the delivery of the council's eight key priorities with value adding activities and will also assist in the delivery of the council's transformation programme through:

- ◆ Continuing to deliver on and prioritise our ambitious programme to increase the supply of new affordable homes with the aim of delivering 3000 affordable homes over a 10 year period to 2022.
- ◆ Increasing the supply of new tenancies where individuals are supported to live sustainably, supporting improved outcomes.
- ◆ Delivering compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by 2020 to improve council homes and help tackle fuel poverty.
- ◆ Maintain and monitor housing stock to ensure it remains compliant with Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS)

the country moves through the stages of the Scottish Government recovery roadmap sees HCBS move forward and incorporates these new ways of delivering services into our future plans for excellence in service delivery.



Ann Marie Carr
Head of Service

- ◆ Continuing to reduce anti-social behaviour through a range of targeted, preventative, diversionary and educational interventions.
- ◆ Continuing to provide high quality customer services and facilities that are accessible and tailored to meet the needs and preferences of customers within our communities.
- ◆ Continuing to provide statutory services in both our Libraries and Registration Services
- ◆ Continuing to provide high quality repairs and maintenance services to meet the needs of our tenants.
- ◆ Undertake a programme of digitisation across the service to increase effectiveness and efficiency. This will also allow staff to do mobile working and be more flexible.
- ◆ Maximising housing rental income including arrears management, taking account of Universal Credit and through rent maximisation.
- ◆ Undertake a review of the council's Housing Allocations Policy and consult on proposed changes with tenants, common housing register applicants, staff and our key strategic partners
- ◆ Review and modernise supported accommodation for people in housing need to meet the requirements of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order (this relates to the new build supported accommodation for young people etc.)

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

The biggest challenge for Housing, Customer and Building Services continues to be tackling homelessness. The service has delivered the first year of the West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) which aims to prevent homelessness. The service has delivered improvements with a reduction in the use of B&B Accommodation, decrease length of stay in temporary accommodation and increased lets to homeless people from Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). Over the next 3 years the

service will continue to lead on the delivery of the RRTP to reduce homelessness through:

- ◆ Working with the housing sector to transition to a West Lothian wide housing options and homeless prevention approach:
- ◆ Working together and partnership to deliver the supply of affordable housing
- ◆ Reduce the use of B&B accommodation and reduce lengths of stay in temporary accommodation.

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

The key activities of the service are identified in the Management Plan

		Page
Housing Operations	This service manages the council's housing stock and tenancies to ensure that this resource, which is in high demand, is used efficiently and effectively.	15
Housing Strategy and Development	This service manages the council's housing strategy and policies which cover all housing and housing need across the area.	24
Performance and Change	This service delivers management and business support functions that enable other services. This covers provision and development of systems, income, compliance and performance management, service design and improvement. We set the approach to engagement with our customers and turn their experiences into improvement.	29
Building Services	The council's in-house building contractor carries out repairs, maintenance and refurbishment of council properties. This includes project works associated with housing and general services capital programmes and responsive repairs and maintenance to both housing and non-housing properties.	36
Housing Need	The service is focused on the prevention of homelessness by reducing the overall levels of homelessness within West Lothian; providing accommodation and support services as appropriate and minimising the damage homelessness causes to families, neighbourhoods and communities.	41
Customer and Community Services	The service comprises seven service areas which, together, provide the frontline delivery of council services to all communities in West Lothian. This includes the council's partnership centres, customer information offices and community facilities.	48
Customer Service Centre	The council's centre for telephone, email and web contacts manages customer enquiries from the first point of contact. The service also includes Careline – the support service for electronic care alarms used by older and vulnerable people in our community.	53
	Developing the Management Plan and reporting progress	57
	Housing, Customer and Building Services Scorecard 2020/21	59

Supporting the delivery of Council priorities

The service will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and strategies

The service will make a meaningful and measurable contribution to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2018/23. The service's key processes are aligned to the Corporate Plan priorities/enablers and deliverables in the following table.

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	(P3.4) Increasing the supply of affordable housing through the New Build Council Housing Programme and working with Housing Association partners. By facilitating an increase of 3,000 affordable homes over a 10-year period to 2022, we will provide greater choice in communities where people want to live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work with partners to deliver new build and increased supply of social housing, implementing the Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan. ◆ Working with partners deliver the 5 Year West Lothian RRTP ◆ Providing advice and assistance on a range of housing options to meet the needs of customers ◆ Provide support to prevent homelessness and enable tenancy sustainment 	◆ CP:HQSHSD309_9b – The Number of New Affordable Homes Delivered	2,135	2,570
			◆ HQSHOM006_9b.1a - Number of households initially presenting as homeless or potentially homeless.	371	360
			◆ P:HQSARC20.2_9b Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year - homeless	88.9%	88%
	HCBS also contributes to the wider anti-poverty activity of the council through: budgeting and tenancy support; homelessness activity; and community facilities and customer engagement.				

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.1) Through the Community Safety Unit (CSU), sharing intelligence and daily multi agency tasking, to allow smarter and earlier interventions, thereby preventing crimes and escalation of incidents within the communities. Dependent on future planning in terms of transformation and police plan review.	◆ Management and implementation of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support early intervention. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ CP:HQS080_Number of active antisocial cases	724	760
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.2) Reducing antisocial behaviour and hate crime within our communities and ensuring that violence within our communities is not tolerated through a range of targeted preventative, diversionary and educational interventions.	◆ Management of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support preventative, diversionary and educational interventions. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ (Previous PI- HQS084_9b ◆ NEW- HQS083_9b Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases which were resolved within locally agreed targets	91.67%)	81%
7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	(P7.3) Sharing information intelligence, joint tasking and coordinating resources to prevent instances of and target, disrupt and deter those involved in serious and organised crime.	◆ Management of Community Safety Unit activities and processes to support coordination and sharing of resources. Future planning related to transformation and police plan review.	◆ CSSP2ASBHC05_ Percentage of customers satisfied with Safer Neighbourhood Team involvement	30% *This survey was started in Q4 of 19/20	Target TBC following more data being gathered

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.2) Helping people to access housing appropriate to their needs by supporting them to sustain their accommodation. Repairing, maintaining, improving energy efficiency to meet national standards and building social housing.	◆ Management action to reduce homelessness. Improve how we work with people with complex needs. Increase supply of temporary accommodation. Increase access to the range of permanent outcomes.	◆ P:HQSHOM031_9a2a Percentage of repeat homeless presentations	1.1%	3%
		◆ Implement the three-year capital programme to 2022/23, ensuring compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Scotland (EESH).	◆ P:HQSARC25.106b5 Average length of time (days) in temporary or emergency accommodation - All Types	88.2	90
			◆ CP:HQSHSD407_9b Number of properties improved by the Home Energy Efficiency Programme Scotland (HEEPS)	16	77
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.3) Working with private landlords through the Private Sector Leasing Scheme to ensure that housing need can be met in a planned manner and that we maximise the supply of affordable housing.	◆ Management action to reduce homelessness. Improve how we work with people with complex needs. Increase supply of temporary accommodation. Increase access to the range of permanent outcomes.	◆ P: HQSARC25.106b.5 Average length of time (days) in temporary or emergency accommodation - All Types	88.2	90
			◆ P:HQSHOM031_9a2a Percentage of repeat homeless presentations	1.1%	3%
8 Protecting the built and natural environment	(P8.6) Providing high quality customer services and community facilities that are accessible and tailored to meet the needs and preferences of customers.	◆ Delivery of Whitburn Partnership Centre including new library provision, ensuring customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities. ◆ Planning of the North Livingston Partnership Centre. It is proposed this will hold the local Library and will work in partnership with Social Policy	◆ CuCS007a_6a.7_ Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent	99.4%	99%

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
Modernisation and improvement	(E3.1) Providing our local communities with excellent services, looking for new and innovative ways to improve the way we plan, manage and deliver services.	◆ Introduction, ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's 2018-2023 Customer Service Strategy which HCBS is the lead service on.	◆ A performance scorecard and actions are included alongside the strategy available at: CustomerServiceStrategy	Various	Various
		◆ CSC – Implement the use of new technologies to enhance customer service.	◆ CSC059a_Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent	96.81%	97%
		◆ Planning of the North Livingston Partnership Centre. It is proposed this will hold the local Library and will work in partnership with Social Policy	◆ HQSSAT2006_6a.7- Housing Options Survey - rate the overall quality of the service	100%	95%
		◆ Introduction of a wider Housing Options Approach			
		◆ Review and modernisation of supported accommodation.			

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
Transformation and improvement	(E3.2) Ensuring that service provision is designed and delivered to meet local needs and that service improvements are customer-led and outcome focused.	◆ Implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy jointly developed with council tenants to ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change.	◆ HQSARC06_6a Percentage of tenants that are satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in Housing and Building Services decisions making processes	59.7%	72%
		◆ Introduction, ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's Customer Service Strategy 2018/23 which HCBS is the lead service on.	◆ A performance scorecard and actions are included alongside the strategy. Available at: CustomerServiceStrategy	Various	Various
		◆ Where service failure has led to a customer complaint being upheld, ensure that the service area responsible has identified, and delivered proportionate improvement action as a result.	◆ HQSALL1000_9b- Percentage of housing applications processed on time	82.7%	70%
		◆ Introduction of an online council housing application form and housing options application form.			
		◆ Implementation of a Homeless Services User Strategy			

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers

Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Housing, Customer and Building Services key activities / processes	Indicator(s)	2019/20 Performance	2020/21 Target
Transformation and improvement	(E3.3) Giving our communities a voice in the shaping of services, helping to build a stronger, more responsive organisation.	◆ Implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy jointly developed with council tenants to ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change.	◆ HQSARC06_6a Percentage of tenants that are satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in Housing and Building Services decisions making processes.	59.7%	72%
		◆ Service developments are planned and undertaken using a service design approach where user needs and feedback are central to defining outcomes and success	◆ CuCS007a_6a.7- Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	99.4%	99%
		◆ Delivery Whitburn Partnership Centre, ensuring customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities.			
		◆ Following Implementation of the 2018-2023 Customer Service Strategy, ensure the service is engaging with customers in ongoing service improvement.	◆ A performance scorecard and actions are included alongside the strategy but are across all council services.	Various	Various



Transforming Your Council

How Housing, Customer and Building Services will transform in the next few years

The council will embark on an ambitious programme of transformation in order to support the delivery of services that are accessible, digital and efficient. The Transforming Your Council programme is intended to deliver over £73 million in savings and will fundamentally change the way that council services are delivered.

Digital transformation is a critical element going forward for the future structure and delivery of Housing, Customer and Building Services. As far as is possible, the Service aims to deliver efficient systems, automation, customer self-service and improved business intelligence solutions to maximise business efficiency and effectiveness. This will enhance the customer experience and consistency in day-to-day decisions and service provision, while enabling shift of focus for employee resources to complex cases and value adding service development and improvement activity. Projects designed to deliver budget savings are being developed to transform the way that we work in Housing, Customer and Building Services.

Transformation in the service will be grouped around three key themes.

Reviewing service activities

The service Spine and Ribs project is mapping customer journeys in full and enables the redesign of services around customer need. This is balanced with business priorities to optimise outcomes and resources. By adopting a customer forward approach to design, we are more efficient and effective in delivering transformation. We will also review the core tasks and operational activity within our community facilities and Libraries and Information Service to ensure we continue to achieve value for money, efficiencies, and meet the changing demands of our service users and communities.

Digital transformation and new ways of working

As far as is possible, the Service aims to deliver efficient systems, automation, customer self-service and improved business intelligence solutions to maximise business efficiency and effectiveness. This will enhance the customer experience and consistency in day-to-day decisions and service provision, while enabling shift of focus for employee resources to complex cases and value adding service development and improvement activity.

Empowering Communities

We will work together with management committees and community groups to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities available to them through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. This aim will see the service work in partnership with other services to build capacity, knowledge and resilience in our local communities to enable them to have greater control over community facilities and assets.

Engagement methods

Throughout the period of this plan, the Service will continue to engage and consult with customers, employees, partners and stakeholders on the effectiveness of the services that we provide and also, any changes that are proposed to the offering. Details of planned engagement and consultation methods will be provided in the annual update to the Management Plan.

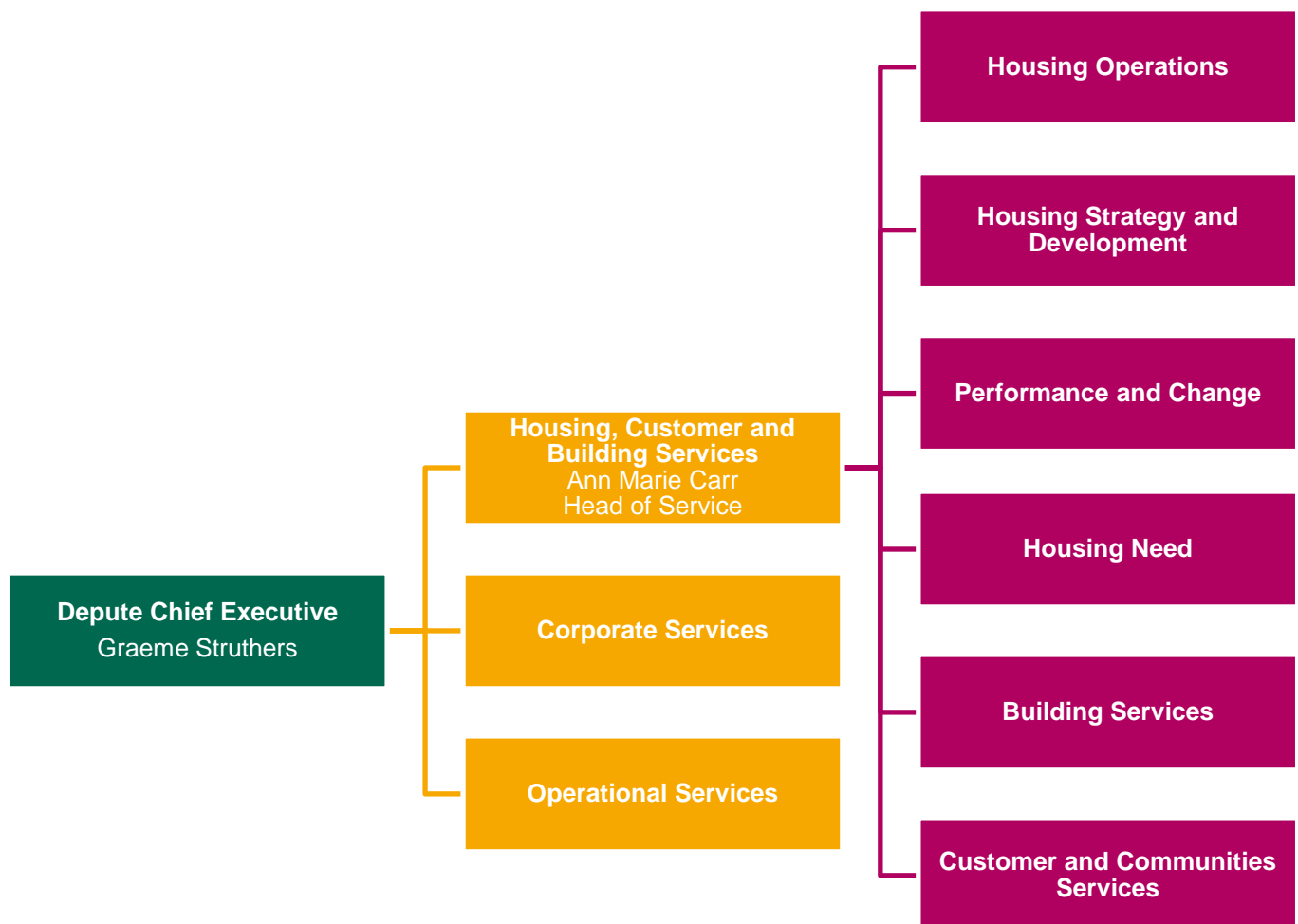
Housing, Customer and Building Services make the following commitments to customers, employees and partners:

- ◆ Involve and engage employees, customers and partners in service improvement and transformation activity through a range of appropriate methods;
- ◆ Ask customers about the quality and effectiveness of the services that we provide through regular consultation and surveys and use their views to inform decision making in the service.

Service Activity

The Corporate, Operational and Housing Services directorate is focused on the delivery of vital infrastructure services that will make West Lothian a better, more sustainable place to live.

This includes three large service areas delivering a wide array of council activities, such as; environmental and roads services, the frontline customer and community services, social housing services and the council's support services.



Housing, Customer and Building Services comprises seven separate service areas. These service areas form five West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) units, under the direction of the Head of Service. Customer and Communities Services, includes the Customer Service Centre but is split into two WLAM units to allow closer scrutiny of performance. The five remaining services split into individual WLAM areas.

The following section provides more information on the activities and resources of each WLAM unit.

Employee Engagement

Housing, Customer and Building Services has a total of 778.26 (full time equivalent) employees delivering our services.

Motivation and commitment are key drivers of employee performance and the service aims to effectively engage and develop employees through improved communication and increased participation. The service uses the council's employee engagement framework, ensuring that employees have access to the information and support they need to succeed, also that there is constructive, regular two-way communication throughout the service.

The schedule of engagement that will take place in each of our WLAM units is outlined in the table.

Employee Engagement Schedule			
Employee Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
All employees	Email Updates	Monthly	Service Manager
All employees	One-to-ones	Fortnightly / monthly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Team meetings/ briefings	Monthly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Team Briefings	Quarterly	Service Manager and service management team
All employees	Employee survey	Annually	Service Manager
All employees	Appraisal and Development Review (ADR)	Annually	Service Manager and service management team
Employee sample	Employee Focus Group	Annually	Service Manager
All employees	Management Plan Launch	Annually	Head of Service / Service Managers
All employees	Circulation of the Housing, Customer and Building Services CMT update report	Monthly	Service Manager
Service management team	Extended Management Team	Quarterly	Head of Service
Service management team	Directorate Managers meeting	Quarterly	Deputy Chief Executive



Risk Management

Risk can be defined as the effect of uncertainty on an organisation's objectives.

The council aims to mitigate risks to its objectives by implementing robust risk management procedures which enable managers to effectively manage their risks.

Significant risks to Housing, Customer & Building Services' objectives are set out in the council's corporate risk register. These risks are regularly monitored by managers and are reviewed on a monthly basis by the service management team to ensure that appropriate and effective control measures are in place.

Housing, Customer & Building Services is currently managing the following risks considered to be high:

Service Risks 2020/21			
Risk Title	Risk Description	Current Risk Score	Traffic Light Icon
HCBS004 Overspend of allocated Housing Need budgets	Increased demand for homeless services. This may also result in an overspend of allocated budgets.	20	
HCBS012 Breach of statutory homeless duty	Lack of adequate accommodation due to increased demand results in HCBS breaching our statutory duties to accommodate unintentionally homeless people in suitable accommodation.	20	

Housing Operations

Managers: Alison Smith, Housing Management and Community Safety Manager

Number of Staff: 70.85 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Civic Centre, six local housing offices (plus local surgeries)

Purpose

Housing Operations manages the council's housing stock and tenancies to ensure that this resource, which is in high demand, is used efficiently and effectively. The local housing teams ensure a customer focused service is delivered at the frontline and co-ordinate the implementation of Council policies and procedures in compliance with current legislation, regulation and good practice. The aim is to improve the quality of life for tenants, assist individual households and promote sustainable communities.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team is part of the Community Safety Unit (CSU) and is dedicated to preventing antisocial behaviour and ensuring a safer community where people can live their lives without fear for their own or other people's safety. The CSU is made up of council staff, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and uses a robust intelligence-led approach to dealing with local antisocial behaviour issues and co-ordinates resources to deliver prevention, intervention and diversionary work.

The service area has operated in a fully remote manner during the pandemic and have utilised more technology and digital means of supporting customers in their homes. We have been undertaking a programme of welfare calls to every council tenancy to determine if any support is required for those who are vulnerable or shielding. This will help shape our future plans to deliver the services customers need in their communities, in a way that reflects how they interact with other organisations. Using more digital methods of having conversations and making requests is something our customers are clearly engaging with, and we will carry this with us in our renewal plans.

Activities

The main activities of Housing Operations during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Maximising housing rental income including arrears management, taking account of Universal Credit and supporting tenants to engage for debt and money advice.
- ◆ Void management and lettings of council properties.
- ◆ Managing tenancies to make the best use of the housing stock.
- ◆ Sustaining tenancies and communities and preventing homelessness by working in partnership through a multi-agency approach.
- ◆ Reducing antisocial behaviour in conjunction with other partners in the Community Safety Unit.
- ◆ Providing housing options information and advice.
- ◆ Encouraging and promoting tenant participation.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include: Other Council Services, Tenants & Residents, Other RSL partners, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire Rescue Service, West Lothian Youth Action Project, Capita, Scottish Government, Scottish Housing Network, Scottish Community Safety Network, Shelter, Chartered Institute of Housing, Department for Work and Pensions, Integrated Joint Board.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenant representatives	Tenants Panel Meeting	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants Panel minutes available
	Tenant Led Inspections	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback session, Tenants News
	Tenant Participation Development Working Group	On-going	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Tenants Panel, Housing Networks
	Tenants Editorial Panel	As required	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback to authors of published material on views, accessibility and presentation of information
	Housing Networks	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Homeless Networks, Tenants Panel
Current Tenants	Local Tenants Information Events	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Housing Networks, Tenants Panel
	Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey	Biennial	Performance and Change Manager	Results and what we will do to improve reported to tenant groups, in Tenants News and on the website
	Tenant Facebook Group	On-going	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback to inform policies and initiatives
	Tenant Focus Groups	Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback on service issues and processes
New Tenants (lettings survey)	Survey completed during tenancy sign up	On-going	Housing Managers	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
Safer Neighbourhood Team Customer Survey	Survey completed following case closure	On-going	Housing Managers	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Local housing strategy stakeholders (tenants, RSLs, private landlords, developers, service users, service providers)	Quarterly meetings with developing landlords Annual meetings with other RSLs Quarterly Private Sector Landlord's forum and steering group	Quarterly	Performance and Change Manager	Minutes and updated action plans

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/2021

Housing Operations (Housing Revenue Account)								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Responsive Repairs - Sustaining council housing and communities	To provide repairs, gas servicing and estate management service to our customers that meets their needs	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	BUSMT015_9a Average cost of housing emergency repair Target: £70	WLAM	9.0	19,678,575	(19,678,575)	0
			BUSMT016_9a Average cost of housing non-emergency repair Target: £106	WLAM				
			BUS002_9b Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale Target: 95%	Public				
Management of voids - Void Management and Letting	To improve letting and minimise loss of rental income.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	SSHC Indicator 34_The percentage of void rent lost through properties being empty Target: 0.60%	Public	29.2	3,481,407	(3,481,407)	0
			HQSLETS001_Average length of time taken to re-let mainstream properties Target: 32 days	Public				

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Housing Operations (Housing Revenue Account)								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Rent Collection & Arrears Management - Managing Tenancies including arrears	To maximise the collection rate for rental income and ensure that customers in difficulty are provided with appropriate support and advice.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	SSHC Indicator 31_Gross rent arrears as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year Target: 5%	WLAM	24.1	4,807,033	(4,807,033)	0
			SSHC Indicator 30_Rent collected as a percentage of total rent due in the reporting year Target: 99%	High Level				
Tenant Participation - Encourage and promote tenant participation	To actively engage with tenants through tenant participation and identify new ways to involve tenants, particularly in hard to reach groups.	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	HQSFIN059_9a Unit cost of Managing Tenancies in the Housing Service Target: £320	WLAM	9.5	689,427	(689,427)	0
			HQSARC03_9b Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions of tenants Target: 85%	WLAM				
			HQSCOM013_Percentage of Housing Operations Stage 1 complaints resolved within 5 days Target: 85%	WLAM				
Total:					71.8	28,656,442	(28,656,442)	0

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Community Safety

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Antisocial Behaviour	To reduce anti-social behaviour in West Lothian in conjunction with the Community Safety Unit and other community partners	7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	SSHC Indicator 21 Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported which were resolved within locally agreed targets (3 months) Target: 80%	Public	9.2	444,910	(28,000)	416,910
			SSHC Indicator 17 Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of the neighbourhood that they live in Target: 79%	Public				
Noise Related Complaint Service	To provide an efficient and effective response to deal with noise related complaints under Part V of the Antisocial Behaviour legislation	7 Reducing crime and improving community safety	SSPi20a_The average time (hours) between the time of the complaint and attendance on site Target: 1 hour	High Level	2.3	109,432	0	109,432
			cspASP040_Number of visits made - monthly comparison with last year Target: 1,140	Public				
Total:					11.5	554,342	(28,000)	526,342

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Housing Operations Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Tenant Participation Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.	A joint strategy with council tenants that will ensure the service is engaging with customers in service development and change.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2017	March 2021	Active	Strategy progress monitored through the Tenants Participation Development Working Group.
Review of community safety unit – staffing and external awards	Review of community safety unit structure, design and delivery. Review of external funding within community safety unit.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Complete	Implemented- Audit and Review of processes and operation to be completed during 2020/21
Community Safety Plan 2019-2022	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.	To continue to protect the people living, working and visiting West Lothian enabling them to feel safe in inclusive communities where their health and well-being is promoted.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Ongoing	Ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.
Income maximisation and management	Process review in response to Universal Credit and implement various arrears reduction campaigns and initiatives.	Minimise impact of welfare reform on our customers and improve customer engagement and continue to reduce overall rent arrears debt.	Housing Operations and Community Safety Manager	April 2018	March 2021	Complete	Process review in response to Universal Credit has been implemented. Ongoing, fluid analysis to support arrears reduction.
Rent Harmonisation	Assist in the process to realign the current rent structure.	To create a more streamline, efficient and equitable rent system for tenants.	Performance and Change Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan to be defined.

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Housing Operations Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advanced of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2019	March 2020	Ongoing	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Housing Strategy and Development

Manager: Marjory Mackie

Number of Staff: 14.14 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Civic Centre

Purpose

The Housing Strategy and Development team undertakes strategic planning and development for housing in West Lothian. The team promote the development of new affordable housing and improvement of the condition of existing housing. The team will manage a capital programme of £40.25 million in 2020/21.

In recovering our service area following lockdown restrictions, we are mobilising all construction sites to continue the programme of new build council housing.

Activities

The main activities of Housing Strategy and Development during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Planning and implementing the council house new build programme and increasing new housing supply.
- ◆ Co-ordinating the Registered Social Landlord affordable housing new build through the Strategic Local Programme.
- ◆ Co-ordinating and implementing the housing capital improvement programme of investment in existing housing stock.
- ◆ Development and maintenance of the Housing Asset Register.
- ◆ Supporting the delivery of the West Lothian Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan
- ◆ Updating and Administering Private Sector Improvement and Repair Grants through the Scheme of Assistance.
- ◆ Preparing and programming for compliance with EESSH – (Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing) the new legislated standard for all Social Landlords to meet by 2020.
- ◆ Home Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEPS) – develop programme using in-house staff to improve energy efficiency of our stock and to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions through maximising the funding awarded for HEEPS.
- ◆ Coordinate and develop the Local Housing Strategy which sets out its strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include: other council services, Tenants and Residents, Shelter (Empty Homes Officer), Capita Software Solutions, Scottish Government, Scottish Housing Regulator, Scotland's Housing Network (SHN), Chartered Institute of Housing and other local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenant representatives	Tenants Panel Meeting	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants Panel minutes available
	Tenant Led Inspections	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback session, Tenants News
	Tenant Participation Development Working Group	On-going	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Tenants Panel, Housing Networks
	Tenants Editorial Panel	As required	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback to authors of published material on views, accessibility and presentation of information
	Housing Networks	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Homeless Networks, Tenants Panel
	Registered Tenant Organisations	Monthly	Housing managers	Reported in Tenants News
Current Tenants	Local Tenants Information Events	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Housing Networks, Tenants Panel
	Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey	Bi-Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Results and what we will do to improve reported to tenant groups, in Tenants News and on the website
	Tenant Facebook Group	On-going	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback to inform policies and initiatives
	Tenant Focus Groups	Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback on service issues and processes
New Tenants (lettings survey)	Survey completed during tenancy sign up	On-going	Housing managers	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
Local housing strategy stakeholders (tenants, RSLs, private landlords, developers, service users, service providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly meetings with developing landlords Annual meetings with other RSLs Bi-annual Private Sector Landlord's forum and steering group 	Quarterly	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	Minutes and updated action plans

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/2021

Housing Strategy and Development (Housing Revenue Account)

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
New Build Programme	To build new council houses for rent and work with development partners to invest in housing in West Lothian.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	CP:HQSHSD309_9b – The Number of New Affordable Homes Delivered Target: 2,570	Public	5.6	13,541,494	(13,541,494)	0
			HQSHSD301_Percentage of Scottish Government Grant Spent by West Lothian Council Target: 100%	High Level				
Other Housing Capital Investment Programme	To invest in our homes to make sure we comply with our statutory responsibilities as landlord and owner.	8. Protecting the built and natural environment	HQSHSD415_Cumulative Percentage of Annual Capital budget Spend Target: 100%	WLAM	8.0	10,746,584	(10,746,584)	0
			P:HQSHSD419_Percentage of Houses Maintained or Upgraded to Ensure their use is Safe and Secure Target: 100%	Public				
			P:HQSCOM024_Percentage of Housing Strategy and Development Stage 1 complaints resolved within 5 days Target: 85%	Public				

Housing Strategy and Development (Housing Revenue Account)							
Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Total:				13.6	24,288,078	(24,288,078)	0

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Housing Strategy and Development Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Local Housing Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the strategy.	An effective strategy that will ensure the service is delivering on its strategic local housing development priorities.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	October 2017	October 2022	Active	Annual update on the strategy will be reported to Services for the Community PDSP in third quarter 2019/20.
Increased housing supply and new build social homes for rent.	Work with partners to deliver new build and increased supply of social housing, implementing the Local Housing Strategy and Strategic Housing Investment Plan.	Delivery of 3000 affordable homes for rent over ten years to 2022.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	April 2017	March 2022	Ongoing	Various new build sites completed or under development. Buy back policy ongoing. Partnerships with local RSLs under development.
Delivery of Capital Programme, Asset Management Plan and EESSH compliance.	Implement the four-year capital programme to 2022/23, ensuring compliance with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Scotland (EESH).	Deliver a holistic approach to regeneration in partnership with other services to improve project planning, delivery, management information, customer satisfaction. 100% compliance with EESH.	Housing Strategy and Development Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	2019/20 to 2022/23 Capital Programme approved. Implementation of agreed programme to commenced in April 2019.
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advantage of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Performance and Change

Managers: Sarah Kelly, Performance and Change Manager

Number of Staff: 15.17 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Civic Centre

Purpose

The specialist Performance and Change Service ensure that the outcomes and targets outlined in the Management Plan, and the council's strategic priorities are achieved. Support is provided for the service across a range of improvement activities including, quality development, tenant participation, research and analysis, complaints management, systems administration and governance and compliance (e.g. FOIs, subject access requests).

Performance and Change ensures that our service developments remain focussed on user needs, achieve this by utilising tools and approaches such as Service Design, Agile and other project management methodologies.

The service has continued to deliver a full service during the pandemic to enable colleagues to mobilise digitally, to redesign processes and services and ensure customer were kept informed about changes to services. We have also been involved in contacting all of our tenants. We have run a full programme of tenant participation digitally, and our Tenants News digital edition was launched. Our renewal plans will see these new ways of engaging with our customers and getting them involved continue as the norm, and we will be supporting other services to develop new ways of working.

Activities

The main activities of Performance and Change during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Strategic quality development, including service plans and strategies and the associated and corporate planning contributions. Leading on service performance and complaints management approaches and ensuring appropriate monitoring, guidance and support is in place for staff in these activities.
- ◆ Service Design, including facilitating the redesign and integration of services and efficient process management. Delivery of project management and lead role on improvement projects across the service. Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and corporate and external accreditations through a programme of self-assessment and internal scrutiny.
- ◆ Coordinate and monitor customer and user engagement across the service to ensure the needs of our customers remain our highest priority. Seeking new means of enabling customer involvement through innovation, improving access and ensuring the security of customer data.
- ◆ Supporting income management and effective financial strategies in the service, continuing to support the management and mitigation of the impact of UK welfare reforms on service revenue and providing future planning/proofing for further reforms.
- ◆ Delivery of the service IT infrastructure and development needs. Provide fit for purpose processes and systems to enable service efficiency, continuous improvement and to support digitisation through the development of Open Housing. Enable the development of service that meets the needs of customers and staff, and meets expectations for self-service.
- ◆ Provision of ongoing support for new and existing tenants through the implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy, with specific focus on supporting further service scrutiny through Tenant Led Inspections, and robust financial and performance scrutiny.

- ◆ Administration and process development of the Private Landlord Registration Scheme to encourage a range of good quality, well managed, affordable housing options across all tenures in order to meet housing demand in West Lothian.
- ◆ Delivery of the factoring service, ensuring compliance in statutory duties as a registered factor.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include: other council services, Tenants and Residents, West Lothian Youth Action, Victim Support, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service (WLDAS), local equality groups, Shelter (Empty Homes Officer), Capita Software Solutions, Scottish Government, Scottish Housing Regulator, Scotland's Housing Network (SHN), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Hallnet, Chartered Institute of Housing and other local Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), The Digital Office, Objective, The Office of the Chief Designer, Scottish Digital Academy.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/2021				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenant representatives	Tenants Panel Meeting	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants Panel minutes available
	Tenant Led Inspections	Annual	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback session, Tenants News
	Tenant Participation Development Working Group	On-going	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Tenants Panel, Housing Networks
	Tenants Editorial Panel	As required	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Feedback to authors of published material on views, accessibility and presentation of information
	Housing Networks	Monthly	Housing Management and Community Safety Manager	Tenants News, Homeless Networks, Tenants Panel
	Registered Tenant Organisations	Monthly	Housing managers	Reported in Tenants News
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	Annual Tenant Satisfaction survey	Bi-Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Results and what we will do to improve reported to tenant groups, in Tenants News and on the website
	Tenant Facebook Group	On-going	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback to inform policies and initiatives
	Tenant Focus Groups	Annual	Performance and Change Manager	Tenant feedback on service issues and processes

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/2021

Performance and Change (Housing Revenue Account)								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Tenant Participation - Encourage and promote tenant participation	To actively engage with tenants through tenant participation and identify new ways to involve tenants, particularly in hard to reach groups.	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	HQSFIN059_Unit cost of Managing Tenancies in the Housing Service Target: £320	WLAM	9.5	689,427	(689,427)	0
			HQSARC03_Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions of tenants Target: 86%	WLAM				
Performance and Change activities	To provide management and business support functions for Housing, Customer and Building Services.	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	HQSPC026_8b.4 Percentage of FOI Act requests responded to within 20 working days Target 85%	WLAM	13.1	1,505,861	(1,505,861)	0
			HQSCOM009_6.b Percentage of complaints received by HCBS upheld/partially upheld against total no of complaints closed in full Target 50%	WLAM				
Total:					22.6	2,195,288	(2,195,288)	0

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Landlord Registration (General Fund)

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Landlord Registration	The administration, provision and maintenance of an up to date register of almost all Private Landlords within the authority area is a statutory function delivered by the service. This includes registration and application of checks to ensure applicants are fit and proper to let property. The activity also requires instigating enforcement action against unregistered or non-compliant landlords where required.	8. Protecting the built and natural environment	HQSPC030_9b.1c Total number of Private Landlord Applications Completed Target: 100	Public	2.0	82,289	(80,000)	2,289
Total:					2.0	82,289	80,000	2,289

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Performance and Change Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Performance improvement against SHR regulatory standards	Coordination and validation of return to Scottish Housing Regulator. Deliver improvement, audit and performance activity.	Improved performance within priority Housing Regulator indicators. Ensuring good governance, value for money and legislative compliance across HCBS.	Performance and Change Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Ongoing	<p>Timescales and project management arrangements developed for ongoing delivery of priority compliance and governance activity.</p> <p>Performance is benchmarked throughout the year, and the service has constructed programmes of training and support on a range of activities such as complaints handling, performance management, customer engagement and handling difficult conversations. This work has seen the understanding of individual contribution to our performance in the ARC widen across the service.</p>
Rent Harmonisation	Assist in the process to realign the current rent structure.	To create a more streamline, efficient and equitable rent system for tenants.	Performance and Change Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	<p>Project scope and plan to be defined.</p>

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Performance and Change Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Service design delivery and capability building	Lead on a programme of service design led projects to transform the culture and processes across HCBS	Co-designed customer journeys which are built to respond to customer needs, and that inform service developments in all areas of the service. This will improve outcomes for customers, drive our programmes of investment and resource planning, and increase the service capacity for transformation in future.	Performance and Change Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	The service has completed the mapping of primary customer journeys 'the spine' and over the summer will complete all sub-processes 'ribs'. The service is incorporating data analysis, stakeholder satisfaction, business objectives, and customer impact to build a blueprint of the service processes and needs, The work of redesigning these with customers will begin this year, with workshops to capture feedback from a range of users This will be complemented by work planned to build accurate customer profiles to forecast needs and inform strategy/plans.
Digital transformation	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advanced of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Overall digital project scope and plan defined across all services. Current projects underway in all service areas to align the digital capability to deliver services at the point of need either through improved access or self-service. This will be combined with planned customer experience (CX) activity to ensure plans are on track to reflect needs.

Building Services

Manager: Grant Taylor, Building Services Manager

Number of Staff: 440.81 (full time equivalents)

Location: Kirkton Service Centre

Purpose

Building Services is the council's in-house building contractor, carrying out responsive repairs, maintenance and refurbishment of council properties. There are two teams; the Contracts Team who undertake project works associated with the Housing and General Services capital programmes, and the Repairs Team who carry out responsive repairs and maintenance to both housing and non-housing properties. Operatives cover all trades including:

- ◆ Plumber
- ◆ Joiner
- ◆ Builder
- ◆ Electrician
- ◆ Gas Engineer
- ◆ Blacksmith
- ◆ Glazier

Activities

The main activities of the unit during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Responsive repairs and maintenance to housing and non-housing properties, including an emergency standby service
- ◆ Gas servicing and repairs
- ◆ Enhanced estates management to housing communal areas
- ◆ Project works associated with both Housing (90% of works) and General Services Capital Programmes (10% of works)
- ◆ Maximising Void property turnaround for the management and lettings of council properties to assist with the elimination of the use of B&B accommodation and reduce lengths of stay in temporary accommodation

Key Partners

The unit actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services, local sub-contractors and trade suppliers, Health and Safety Executive (HSE), all relevant trade accreditation bodies, Gas Safe Register and National Inspection Council for Electrical Inspecting Contractors.

Customer Participation

The unit will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Tenants representatives	Telephone survey of tenants who have recently had their gas servicing completed	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
	Tenants asked to complete survey following repairs	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported in Tenants News and to tenant groups
Non-housing repairs recipients (schools, community centres, etc.)	Face to face questionnaire, on completion of repair work	On-going	Building Services Manager	Reported on Intranet
Non-housing contracts recipient community (e.g. a school's head teacher and business manager)	Pre-start meetings	Quarterly	Building Services Manager	Site specific plans produced and circulated to all relevant parties

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/21

Building Services

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Responsive repairs – housing repairs and enhanced estates management service	To provide a repairs service to our customers that meets their needs.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	BUSMT015_Average length of time to complete emergency repair Target: 6 hours	Public	235.1	12,425,000	(12,452,000)	0
			BUSMT016_Average length of time to complete non-emergency repair Target: 7 days					
			BUS002_Percentage of Housing Repairs completed to timescale Target 95%	WLAM				
Gas servicing	To provide gas servicing to our customers that meets their needs.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	BUSGAS103_Average cost of gas service Target: £46.50	WLAM	24.0	1,675,000	(1,675,000)	0
			BUSGAS106_Percentage of gas services completed within 12 months Target: 100%	Public				
Housing Capital Investment Programme	To invest in our homes to make sure we comply with our statutory responsibilities as landlord and owner.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	BUSMT003_Percentage of Housing Capital Programme delivered of budget allocated to Building Services Target: 100%	WLAM	176.0	14,704,000	(14,704,000)	0

Building Services								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Non-housing repairs – education and general services	To provide an excellent repair and maintenance service for internal council services and other partner agencies.	8 Protecting the built and natural environment	Percentage of non-housing repairs completed to timescale (BUS003_9b) Target 90%		36.0	1,000,000	(1,000,000)	0
			BUS003_Percentage of non-housing repairs completed to timescale Target 90%	WLAM				
Total:					471.1	29,804,000	(29,804,000)	0

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Building Services Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Health and Safety	Promote best practice across HCBS. Improve procedures and practice, sharing appropriate information with partners.	Ensure a safe workplace and that repair work is carried out to high standards of safety. Reduce violent behaviour towards staff.	Building Services Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Ongoing	HCBS wide procedures and practices in place. Monitored at CMT and via Health and Safety Committee structures.
Building Services process efficiency	Implementation of priority process review actions in support of improved consistency and customer service.	To improve internal efficiency and increase customer satisfaction with Building Services.	Building Services Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Priority process review activity currently ongoing, identifying action to be implemented within service.
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advantage of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Housing Need

Manager: Katy McBride, Housing Need Manager

Number of Staff: 62.14 (full time equivalents)

Location: Civic Centre and three emergency accommodation units

Purpose

The Housing Need Service is responsible for delivering the statutory function of homelessness, support and allocation of council properties.

The service takes a proactive, housing options approach to preventing homelessness occurring in the first place. When homelessness does happen, the objective of the service is to ensure the provision of appropriate emergency or temporary accommodation and re-housing into settled accommodation as soon as possible. Housing support is provided where required, to help people sustain their accommodation.

The Allocations Team works in partnership with Common Housing Register, Social Landlords and private sector landlords to let settled accommodation that meets the housing needs of all applicant groups.

We have continued to provide support, advice and access to accommodation for those most in need in our communities during the pandemic. As part of our renewal plan, the service will be launching self-service options for housing options and applications, and we are planning to move to a fully digitised service in the next year – this will mean we have faster access to information, and that customers can update their records and applications themselves.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Delivery of Year two of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) Action Plan
- ◆ A key priority is to provide housing information and advice on housing options to help people access appropriate housing/sustain existing housing and prevent homelessness
- ◆ Review and modernisation of supported accommodation to align with the West Lothian RRTP and to meet the requirements of the Unsuitable Accommodations Order.
- ◆ Assessing housing and support needs
- ◆ Delivering housing support services to vulnerable tenants, residents and homeless people
- ◆ Managing 24-hour emergency accommodation at three units
- ◆ Review of the Allocation Policy
- ◆ Allocating temporary and permanent accommodation
- ◆ Managing delivery of the Common Housing Register in partnership, and on behalf of, local Registered Social Landlords
- ◆ Increase/ Develop/manage the Private Sector Leasing Scheme
- ◆ Encouraging and promoting participation from Housing Need service users
- ◆ Management, support and ongoing engagement to ensure the successful community integration of refugee families to the area through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS).

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services, Local Registered Social Landlords in West Lothian, private sector landlords in West Lothian, service users and partner agencies, local support service providers and the voluntary sector, NHS Lothian, Integration Joint Board and Police Scotland.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
People who have presented as homeless	Face to face	On-going	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News, on the website and to tenant groups
People living in temporary or emergency accommodation	Face to face survey in persons home	Annual	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News, on the website and to tenant groups
The Big Lunch	The Big Lunch	Monthly	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News
People who have received Housing Support Service	Face to Face	Bi-Annual	Housing Need Manager	Reported in Tenants News
Homelessness stakeholders	Joint Strategy Group	Quarterly	Housing Need Manager	Minutes and updated action plans
Strategic Partners	RRTP Board	Quarterly	Head of Service	Minutes and updated action plans
RRTP Working Group	RRTP Working Group	Quarterly	Head of Service	Minutes and updated action plans

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/21

Housing Need Service								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Homelessness prevention and assessment	To improve our support services to prevent people from becoming homeless including providing mediation, counselling personal housing plans and rent deposits schemes. Enhance the role of the private sector and other partner agencies to promote sustainable outcomes.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	SOA1307_12 Number of applicants where homelessness is prevented Target: 260 households prevented	Public	18.7	871,249	(45109)	826,140
			HQSHOM006_Number of households initially presenting as homeless or potentially homeless Target:360 per quarter	High Level				
Homelessness provision	To assess need and provide temporary and emergency accommodation.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	HQSARC25.1_Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation - Ordinary LA dwelling Target: 190	WLAM	7.7	4,885,213	(3,384,231)	1,500,982
			HQSARC25.10_Average length of time in temporary or emergency accommodation - All types Target: 90	High Level				

Housing Need Service								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Housing support	To help vulnerable tenants sustain their tenancy and support vulnerable homeless people in securing a sustainable housing solution.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	SOA1307_13 Percentage of council tenancies that are sustained after 12 months for previously homeless people Target: 85%	Public	26.7	1,466,201	(21,109)	1,455,092
Total:					53.1	7,222,663	(3,450,449)	3,772,214

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Housing Need Service Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Housing Need management activities to reduce homelessness	Implement Year 2 the RRTP to shift focus further to the prevention of homelessness and reducing the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation. To provide settled, permanent housing solutions as quickly as possible.	Improve housing options to prevent homelessness. Promote sustainability by ensuring housing need is met in a planned manner, where possible. Ensure access to range of housing support.	Housing Need Manager	April 2019	March 2021	Ongoing	Implementation of year 2 of West Lothian RRTP to be monitored quarterly by RRTP board.
Review of the Allocation Policy	Consult and work with tenants, applicants, members of the Common Housing Register and stake holders to review the Allocation Policy.	To align with the preventative approach of RRTP, meet the requirements of the statutory functions and legislation and address local housing issues.	Housing Need Manager	April 2020	December 2020	Planned	New Policy at Consultation Stage
Modernisation and Improvement of Accommodation for People in Transition	Meet statutory requirements regarding homeless people's accommodation standards.	Increase satisfaction with the quality of accommodation for people in transition.	Housing Need Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Approval has been given for new supported accommodation. The service is also reviewing existing units.
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advantage of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Housing Need Service Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Modernisation of Housing Options	Pilot a drop in Housing Options service approach delivered in the East and West of the county to as part of RRTP	Shift to a preventative approach in line with RRTP	Housing Need Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Evaluation following implementation

Customer and Community Services

- Manager:** Ralph Bell, Customer & Community Services Manager
- Number of Staff:** 116.65 (full time equivalents)
- Locations:** Operates from 49 buildings across West Lothian

Purpose

Customer and Community Services comprises five functions which, together, provide the frontline delivery of council services to all communities in West Lothian. The service operates from 47 locations which include; 7 Partnership centres, 32 community centres and village halls, a further 6 buildings support and deliver library and museum services, as well as CIS delivery from Arrochar House and Registration services from the Civic centre. The service generally engages with customers on a transactional basis, that is, they tend not to have long term relationships with customers; they are very likely to refer customers to other services. However, in Library and Museum Services, focus is on creating long term engagement with customers.

The service continues to work to increase the diversity of services that can be delivered by staff at the frontline, therefore creating a better customer journey and experience.

The service also works in partnership with the 37 local management committees who lease community centre facilities in West Lothian. This model encourages active citizenship and community capacity building through local people who programme the community centres and take ownership of the facilities on a day to day basis. We also work closely with our partners, stakeholders and the voluntary sector to help build a dynamic inclusive learning community which encourages customers to develop their potential to the full.

The service has corporate responsibility for developing and overseeing the delivery of the council's Customer Services Strategy.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Promotion and ongoing monitoring of the Customer Services Strategy
- ◆ Provide customers with personal access to all council services and payment facilities through a network of local service centres
- ◆ Providing housing information and advice on housing options to help people access appropriate services
- ◆ Provide access to formal and informal leisure and learning opportunities for individuals and groups in West Lothian through a comprehensive range of libraries, community centres and community museums and associated outreach activities
- ◆ Work with management committees to maximise the use of facilities through programmes which meet the needs of the community
- ◆ Maximise efficiency, effectiveness and promote 'best value', through resource management and energy management systems.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers. Regular and structured engagement with key internal partners improves the quality of information delivery to front line staff.

Our key partners include; other council services, Management Committees, Community Councils, NHS Lothian, West Lothian Leisure and Police Scotland.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21				
Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Library users	Focus groups and paper-based surveys	Quarterly / Monthly	Neighbourhood Manager	Notice boards and notes from meetings
Community groups with an interest in development of partnership centres	Meetings	Monthly	Project Manager	Notes from meetings and reports to committees
Community centre users and management committees	Meetings / paper-based surveys	Monthly	Neighbourhood Manager	Monthly meetings and notice board
Users of CIS or Registration services	Papers based surveys	Monthly	Team Managers	Monthly reports, quarterly newsletters
Customer Service Participation Group	Focus Group	Bi-Annual	Neighbourhood Manager	Bi-annual reporting, and reports to committee.
Museum Development Plan Group	Focus Groups/ paper based & online surveys	Biennial	Senior Manager	Biennial public report

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/21

Customer and Community Services								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Registration Service	To record all registrations for births, marriages and deaths accurately and issue extracts from the registers.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	CuCS023_Unit cost of each registration activity Target: £5	High Level	6.0	215,583	(274,407)	(58,824)
			CuCS515_Percentage accuracy for the registration of births, deaths and marriages Target: 98%	WLAM				
Neighbourhood Services	To provide customers with personal access to all council services and cash collection facility, access to informal learning opportunities, and access to a comprehensive range of lending and reference books through a network of local service centres.	Enabler service – Modernisation and Improvement	CP:CuCS026_Percentage of CIS enquiries resolved at first point of contact Target: 72%	Public	113.4	3,868,673	(1,215,899)	2,652,774
			P:CuCS050_9a.1a Net cost per item borrowed from branch libraries	Public				
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities.		0.7	61,588	0	61,588
Total:					120.1	4,145,844	(1,490,306)	2,655,538

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2020/21

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Customer and Community Services Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Customer Service Strategy 2018/23	Ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's corporate strategy.	Continue to deliver an effective strategy that will support the development of digital council services.	Customer Services Manager	December 2018	March 2023	Active	Customer Service Champions and Customer Consultation Groups ongoing.
Modernised Library and Information Service	Rationalisation of customer and information services.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Customer Services Manager	June 2020	March 2021	Planned	Implementation and Review of changes
Partnership Centres and reducing the number of community facilities	As the number of buildings required to deliver council services reduces, community groups will have the opportunity to request ownership of properties. With the partnership model, there is an opportunity to consolidate the number of community centres and village halls. Review the provision of facilities at community centres.	To enable the council and service to deliver more effective, flexible and affordable services.	Customer Services Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Active	Implementation and Review of changes
Development of new Partnership Centre Delivery	Delivery of Whitburn and Livingston North Partnership Centres.	Customers have improved access to council and partner services in local communities.	Customer Services Manager	April 2020	March 2021	Active	Building Work Commenced

Customer and Community Services Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advanced of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Customer Service Centre

Manager: Ralph Bell, Customer & Community Services Manager
Number of Staff: 57.71 (full time equivalents)
Locations: Civic Centre and various locations

Purpose

The council's centre for telephone, email and web contacts manages customer enquiries from the first point of contact. The service also includes Careline – the telephone support service for electronic care alarms used by older and vulnerable people in our community.

The service engages with customers on a transactional basis and is likely to refer customers to other services where specialist or professional support is required.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Providing customers with access to all council services and payment facilities through a centrally based contact centre
- ◆ Handling a range of customer enquiries through to resolution
- ◆ Providing 24 hour / 7 days a week support for older and vulnerable people through the electronic care alarm system (Careline).

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; other council services and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2020/21

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Careline users	Paper based / electronic survey	Monthly	Customer Service Centre Co-ordinator	Results are published via the service's reported performance indicators
Customer Service Centre users	Phone surveys	Monthly	Customer Service Centre Co-ordinator	Results are published via the service's reported performance indicators

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Activity Budget 2020/21

Customer Service Centre								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2020/21	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2020/21 £	Revenue Income Budget 2020/21 £	Net Revenue Budget 2020/21 £
Telephone service	Provide customers with access to all council services through a centrally based telephone service	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	P:CSC080_9a.1a Unit cost of each CSC call Target: £1.88	Public	44.0	1,615,810	(903,918)	711,892
			P:CSC104_9b Percentage of CSC calls resolved at first point of contact Target: 75%	Public				
Care Alarm system	Provide 24/7 support for older and vulnerable people through the electronic care alarm system	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	CSC081a_9a.1a Unit cost of each Careline customer contact: Target £3.47	Public	15.4	624,849	0	625,849
			CSC107m_9b.1a Percentage of Careline calls answered within 30 seconds: Target 95%	WLAM				
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support.	Enabler Service - Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities.		0.3	26,395	0	26,395
Total:					59.7	2,268,054	(903,918)	1,364,136

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Actions 2019/20

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Customer Service Centre Actions 2020/21

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Digital transformation projects	A programme of activity to ensure that the council is well placed to take advantage of opportunities offered in the digital age.	To deliver improved user-focused digital public services.	Head of Service	April 2020	March 2021	Planned	Project scope and plan defined across all services.

Developing the Management Plan and reporting progress

The Management Plan was developed to support the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan and to take account of a range of factors that are likely to impact the delivery of council services in the next four years.

Context

The next four years will be a period of significant challenge for the council with ongoing spending constraints expected to continue. However, the council has clearly defined long term aims relating to the development of high quality services, designed to meet the needs of its customers. These long-term aims are captured in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Community Plan and in the council's Corporate Plan and together these strategic plans determine the work of the council's services.

The development of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 was directly influenced by the views of the people living and working in West Lothian, ensuring that all employees are focused on meeting the needs of a growing and vibrant community. The Corporate Plan sets the strategic priorities for the council up to 2022/23 and this will be the continued focus for all council services during the period.

This will help to ensure that we continue to tackle the most important issues for West Lothian. Also, that we invest in and prioritise the services which make the most significant contribution to the achievement of positive outcomes.

Influences

There will be many internal and external factors which will influence the work of Housing, Customer and Building Services during the period. The more prominent include: the ongoing economic challenges for communities; the continued roll out of Universal Credit and other welfare changes; continuing to meet the challenges of the Scottish Social Housing Charter; availability of Government grant funding for new homes and energy efficiency programmes and continuing implementation of relevant legislation, including the Housing Act 2014.

Planning Process

The Management Plan was developed by the Housing, Customer and Building Services Management team, using a range of information to ensure that services, activities and resources are aligned to:

- ◆ The council's Corporate Plan and the deliverables for which Housing, Customer and Building Services will be responsible for achieving or contributing to;
- ◆ Supporting the delivery of the council's transformation programme and Digital Transformation strategy;
- ◆ The requirements and standards set out within the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and
- ◆ The priorities of council employees, tenants, customers and partners.

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

The process and timescales for the development and publication of the management plan is set out, including consultation with the appropriate stakeholders.




Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan is approved by West Lothian Council, setting out the key priorities for all council services for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.	February 2020
Housing, Customer and Building Services planning	The service management team develop the plan taking account of a range of factors, business requirements and customer needs.	February to March 2020
Executive Management Team approval	The council's executive management team (EMT) will review all service management plans to ensure they are sufficiently focused on corporate priorities. The EMT will also review the plans annually, scrutinising performance and progress in the stated outcomes and actions.	March 2020
PDSP consultation	The Management Plan is taken to the relevant Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel(s) for consultation, providing Panel members the opportunity to shape planning and resource allocation.	April to June 2020
Management Plan launch	The service cascades the plan to Housing, Customer and Building Services employees to ensure that they understand the key priorities and challenges ahead and how they will contribute to successful outcomes.	April to June 2020
WLC website	The Management Plan is published on the council's website to provide detailed information for the public and external stakeholders on council services, resource allocation and performance.	July 2020
Management Plan updates	The Management Plan progress is reviewed by the appropriate PDSP each year	April to June 2020













Continuous Improvement

Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to play a key role in the development and support of high quality customer services. Housing, Customer and Building Services will continue to engage with our customers to modernise structures and processes to ensure that they continue to provide the most efficient and effective model for service delivery. We will do this by:

- ◆ Continuing to deliver a programme of quality assurance and quality improvement review across Housing Operations, Strategy and Development, Building Services and Housing Need;
- ◆ Agreeing and implementing a programme of Tenant Led Inspections (TLIs) to enable customers to review key services and recommend improvements;
- ◆ Participate in corporate activities such as Citizen Led Inspections (CLIs) within customer and communities and Customer Service Centre, as required;
- ◆ Introducing the Customer Service Participation Group to ensure effective and ongoing delivery of the Customer Service Strategy 2018/23.
- ◆ Implement and evaluate both employee and customer satisfaction surveys to learn and change as a result of feedback for the whole service; and
- ◆ Continue to analyse service complaints to understand key strengths and weaknesses within service processes and implement improvement measures as required.

Housing, Customer and Building Services Scorecard

The service will report on the following key measures of the success throughout the lifetime of our plan (short term trend arrows: 2019/20 performance exceeded the target =  / 2019/20 performance met the target =  / 2019/20 performance was below the target = ):

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2019/20 Performance	2019/20 Target	Performance against Target	2020/21 Target
Housing Operations	P:HQSARC01_6a.7 Percentage of tenants who are satisfied with the overall service from Housing and Building Services.	82.8%	88%		88%
	HQSCOM022q_6b.3 Housing Operations - Total number of complaints received by Housing Operations.	46	50		50
	P:HQSPC027_9a Unit cost of Managing Tenancies in the Housing Service.	£311	£320		£320
	CP:HQSARC30_9b1a Rent collected as percentage of total rent due in the reporting year.	98.2%	99%		99%
Housing Strategy and Development	P:HQSHSD110_6a Percentage of tenants satisfied with their new build home	94.4%	95%		95%
	HQSCOM026q_6b.3 Housing Strategy and Development – Total number of complaints received by Housing Strategy and Development	28	15		15
	HQSHSD410_9a Percentage of Home Energy Efficiency Programme budget spent	35%	80%		100%
	CP:HQSHSD309_9b Number of new affordable homes delivered	2135	2195		2570
Performance and Change	HQSPC032_9b.1c Number of Private Landlord Registration cases referred to Licensing Committee	2	2		2
	HQSPC034_9b.1c Number of Rent Penalty Notices Served	5	5		5
	HQSPC045_9b.1c Monthly number of system admin requests received from users	100	115		115
Building Services	P:BUS005_6a.2 Percentage of customers who are satisfied with the housing repair service (yearly).	98.54%	98%		98%

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2019/20 Performance	2019/20 Target	Performance against Target	2020/21 Target
	BUSMT020a_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Building Services.	422	440	↑	440
	BUSMT016_9a Building Services - Average cost of Housing Non-Emergency Repairs.	£89.44	£106	↑	£106
	P:HQSARC13_9b Percentage of housing repairs carried out in the last year completed 'Right First Time'.	96.8%	92%	↑	92
	BUSGAS106_9b.1b Percentage of gas services completed within 12 months	100%	100%	▬	100%
Housing Need Service	P:HQSARC28_6a Percentage of homeless households satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation	97.9%	87%	↑	87.5%
	HQSCOM016a_6b.3 Housing Needs - Total number of complaints received by Housing Needs	89	120	↑	120
	P:HQSFIN058_9a1a Unit cost of Housing Needs Prevention and Assessment Service.	£520	£474	↓	£520
	P:HQSHOM034_9b The proportion of priority, unintentionally homeless applicants for whom permanent accommodation was secured.	79.7%	78%	↑	78%
Customer and Communities Service	CuCS007a_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	99.4%	99%	↑	99%
	CuCS010a_6b.3 Customer and Communities - Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services.	49	48	↓	48%
	CuCS023_9a.1a Unit cost of each registration of a birth, marriage or death. This does not include handling requests for copies of birth, marriage and death certificates.	£5.24	£5	↓	£5
	CP:CuCS026_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Information Service (CIS) enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	68.9%	75%	↓	75%
Customer Service Centre	CSC059a_6a.9 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	96.81%	97%	↓	97%
	CSC062a_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC).	67	84	↑	84

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2019/20 Performance	2019/20 Target	Performance against Target	2020/21 Target
	P:CSC080_9a.1a Unit cost of each Customer Service Centre (CSC) call.	£1.44	£2.56	↑	£2.56
	P:CSC105a_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	60.33%	75%	↓	75%

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

April 2020

For more information:

Email address: annmarie.carr@westlothian.gov.uk

Telephone number: **01506 281355**

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road | Livingston | West Lothian | EH54 6FF

Housing, Customer and Building Services Management Plan 2020/21

Services for the Community PDSP - 20th October (Agenda setting on 6th October)								
1	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	Performance -Q1 (Q3/Q4 of 2019/20 included as appendix)	No	1/4	N	N	N	David Sharp
2	Police Scotland	Performance - Q3/Q4 of 2019/20	No	1/4	N	N	N	Alun Williams
3	Housing Operations	SNT Performance- Q3/Q4	No	1/4	N	N	N	Alison Smith
4	Performance & Change	HCBS Performance Q1 (Q3/Q4 of 2019/20 included as appendix)	No	1/4				Sarah Kelly
5	Performance & Change	Management Plan	No	Annually				AnnMarie Carr
6	Housing Need	Scottish Government- Local Connection Consultation	No	Once				Katy McBride
7	Housing Need	Property Turnover - Q3/Q4	No	1/4				Katy McBride
8	Housing Need	Allocations Policy - Result of consultation/draft policy	No	Once				Katy McBride
9	Finance	2019/20 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – MONTH 12 MONITORING REPORT (Capital/Revenue)	No	Annually				Graeme Struthers
Council Executive 17/11/2020 (AS TBC) *PAPERS TO BE WITH M HEWITT FOR CONSIDERATION AT EMT BY 2ND NOV AT NOON								
Culture & Leisure PDSP (Customer Services) 26/11/2020 (AS TBC)								
Partnership & Resources PDSP (Customer Services) 04/12/2020 (AS TBC)								
Council Executive 15/12/2020								

Council Executive 15/12/2020 (AS TBC)								
Services for the Community PDSP- 15/12/2020 (AS TBC likely to be 01/12/2020)								
1	Housing Strategy & Development	West Lothian Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021-2026.	No	Once				Marjory Mackie
2	Performance & Change	Rent Setting consultation	Yes	Annual	No	No	Yes	Sarah Kelly



SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

SCRUTINY OF POLICE SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE IN WEST LOTHIAN

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING, CUSTOMER AND BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to update Panel Members on the Performance of Police Scotland in West Lothian for the period 1st April 2020 to 30th June 2020.

B. RECOMMENDATION

Panel members are asked to note the contents of the report covering the period 1st April 2020 to 30th June 2020.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable; Focusing on our customers' needs; Making best use of our resources; and Working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The production and Council approval of the Local Police and Local Fire and Rescue Plan is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None at this stage.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	There is no direct impact however this report is part of the agreed process for strategic performance reporting.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	<p>This report will have a positive impact on the following SOA indicators:</p> <p>We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities; People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life changes.</p>

VI Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The council contributes to directly and in partnership to the delivery of the plan.
VII Consideration at PDSP	N/A
VIII Consultations	Council Executive, Community Planning Partners, Elected Members.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Police Scotland Strategic Plan sets out the local Policing priorities and objectives for West Lothian and is a statutory requirement of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Council Executive has agreed that the monitoring of performance against the plans will be reported and considered on a quarterly basis by the Services for Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. This report covers the period 1st April 2020 to 30th June 2020.

E. CONCLUSION

This report updates the Panel on the performance framework which will be used to enable members of the Services for the Community Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) to scrutinise the work of Police Scotland.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendix 1: West Lothian Policing Scrutiny Performance Report.

G. Contact Person:

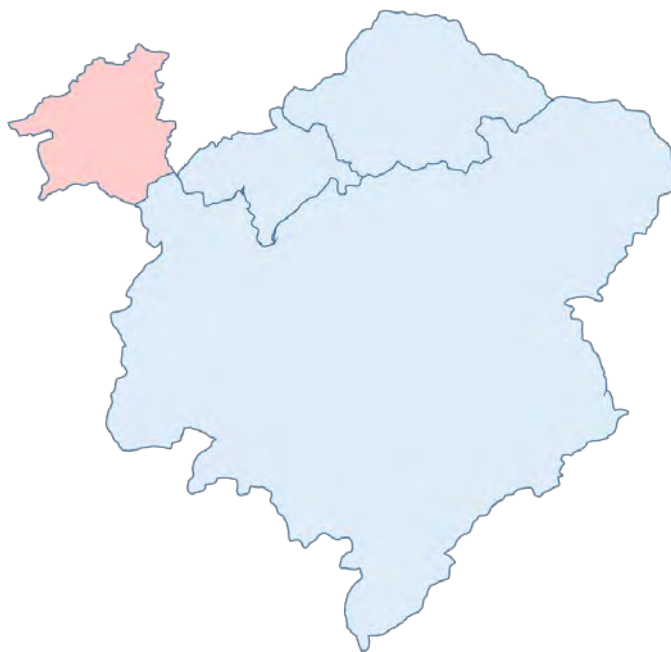
Ann Marie Carr
Head of Housing Customer and Building Services.

Date of meeting: 20th October 2020



West Lothian Area Command

The Lothians and Scottish Borders



Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

Quarter 1 – 2020/2021

April-Jun 2020 inclusive

The data provided in this report is for information purposes only. This is to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. Due to delayed reporting or recording of crimes, incidents or road accidents and the management of crime enquiries, there is likely to be minor amendments between the information in this report and the final Police Scotland statistics. The extraction date from recording systems can also differ so it would not be appropriate to refer to, quote or use any data in the report as official statistics.



Our Vision

Sustained excellence in service and protection.

Our Purpose

To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland.

Our Values

Integrity, Fairness and Respect.

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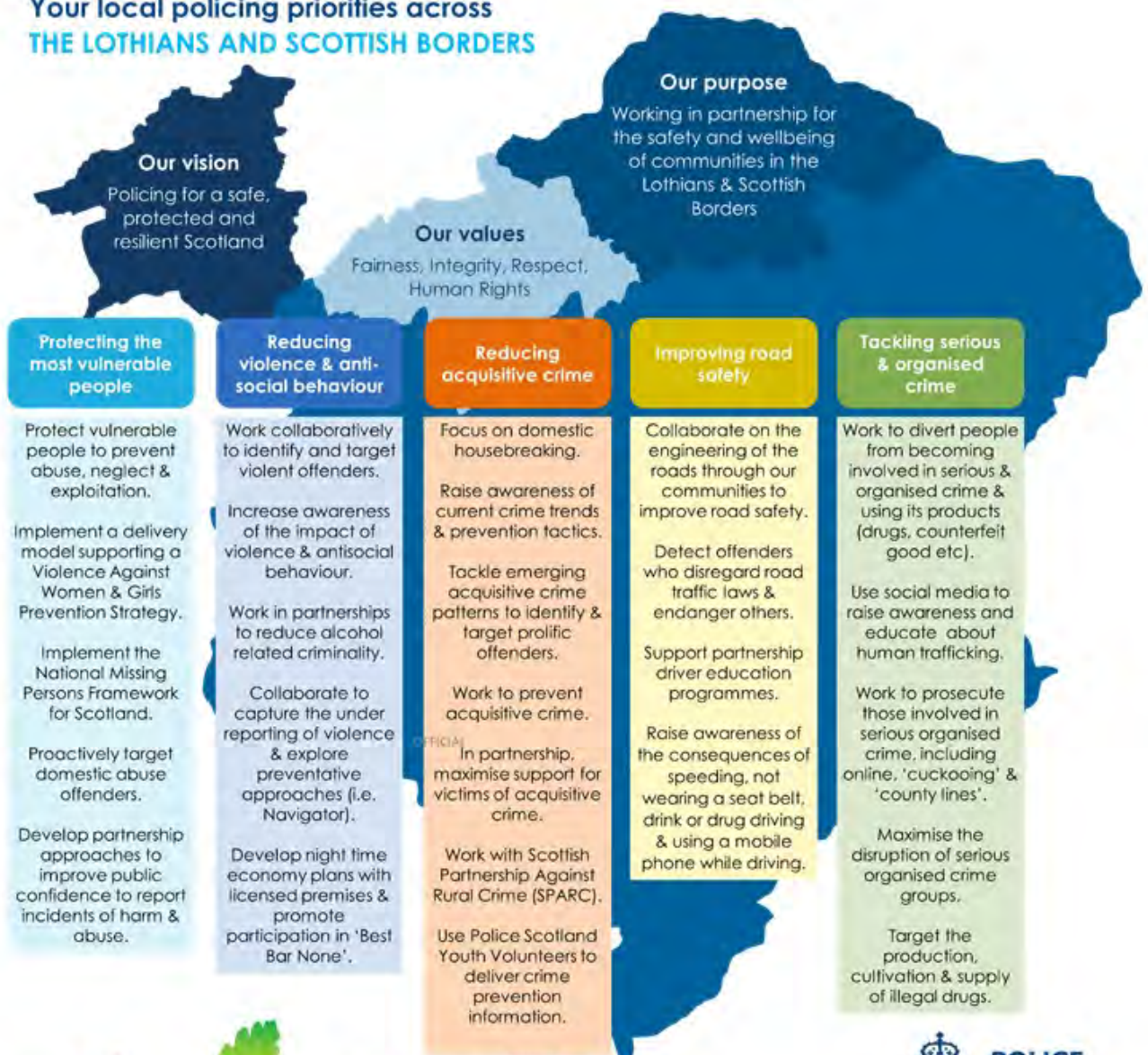


**POLICE
SCOTLAND**
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA

J Division Policing Priorities 2020/23



Your local policing priorities across THE LoTHIANS AND SCOTTISH BORDERS



Introduction

This document is intended to provide a summary of the performance of West Lothian Area Command for the reporting period of Quarter 1 2020/2021 (1st April 2020 – 30th June 2020).

The document will be submitted to the West Lothian Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel for the meeting on 20th October 2020.

The report aims to provide information and a brief assessment of performance, with accompanying context. Numerical comparisons will be provided based upon the same reporting period for the previous year.

The report references the themes from West Lothian Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and the aligned police priorities within the Local Police Plan for West Lothian 2020-2023, namely:

People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances:

- Protecting the Most Vulnerable People

We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities:

- Reducing Violence and Antisocial Behaviour
- Reducing Acquisitive Crime
- Improving Road Safety
- Tackling Serious and Organised Crime

The data provided in this report is for information purposes to allow Partnership Members to conduct their scrutiny responsibilities. All data is sourced from Police Scotland internal systems and is correct as at 02/07/2020, as reviewed October 2020.

Lothian and Scottish Borders Divisional Crime Overview

Lothian and Scottish Borders Division	2019/20 Q1	2020/21 Q1	Per 10,000 Q1 2020/21	Detection Rates 2020/21
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	150	147	2.95	81.63
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	1	-	-	x
Culpable homicide (at common law)	-	-	-	x
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	1	-	-	x
Attempted murder	3	3	0.06	100.00
Serious assault	76	59	1.18	84.75
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	21	23	0.46	69.57
Domestic Abuse (of female)	14	19	0.38	100.00
Domestic Abuse (of male)	-	1	0.02	100.00
Domestic Abuse (Total)	14	20	0.40	100.00
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	25	18	0.36	105.56
Threats and extortion	5	14	0.28	21.43
Other group 1 crimes	4	10	0.20	90.00
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	255	270	5.42	63.33
Rape	42	34	0.68	76.47
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	2	2	0.04	150.00
<i>Rape and attempted rape - Total</i>	44	36	0.72	80.56
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)*	6	-	-	x
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)*	63	75	1.51	76.00
Lewd & libidinous practices*	40	18	0.36	55.56
<i>Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total</i>	109	93	1.87	72.04
<i>Prostitution related crime - Total*</i>	1	-	-	x
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	13	10	0.20	90.00
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)*	17	27	0.54	62.96
Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	10	18	0.36	55.56
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)*	11	9	0.18	66.67
Public indecency (common law)	2	1	0.02	0.00
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)*	32	47	0.94	29.79
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)*	3	3	0.06	166.67
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image*	13	26	0.52	53.85
Other Group 2 crimes	-	-	-	x
<i>Other Group 2 crimes - Total</i>	101	141	2.83	53.19
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	2411	1925	38.64	41.61
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	111	60	1.20	41.67
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	79	77	1.55	12.99
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	89	90	1.81	45.56
<i>Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total</i>	279	227	4.56	33.48
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	74	35	0.70	34.29
Theft of a motor vehicle	116	124	2.49	60.48
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc.)	178	109	2.19	22.94
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	8	4	0.08	50.00
<i>Motor vehicle crime - Total</i>	376	272	5.46	41.91
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	35	17	0.34	29.41
Common theft	683	496	9.96	27.82
Theft by shoplifting	678	400	8.03	67.75
Fraud	183	282	5.66	25.18
Other Group 3 Crimes	177	231	4.64	54.55
GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc.	1041	861	17.28	31.48
Fireraising	59	60	1.20	11.67

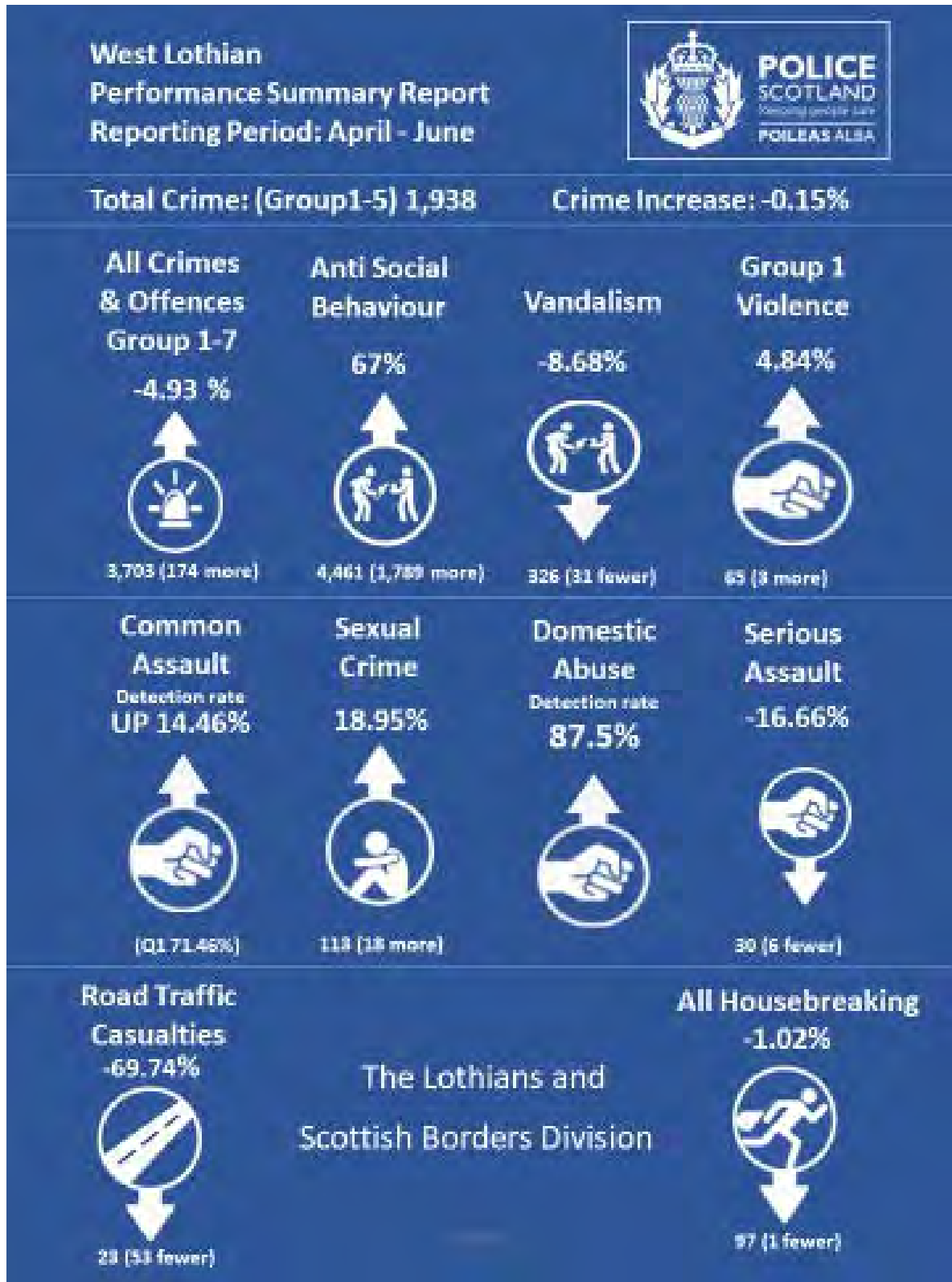
Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	938	758	15.22	29.68
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	-	1	0.02	100.00
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	42	40	0.80	95.00
Other Group 4 Crimes	2	2	0.04	0.00
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	1114	1243	24.95	87.29
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	49	42	0.84	100.00
Handling bladed/pointed instrument	46	46	0.92	95.65
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)*	51	32	0.64	96.88
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)*	15	21	0.42	95.24
<i>Total offensive/bladed weapons</i>	161	141	2.83	97.16
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	19	17	0.34	105.88
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	65	67	1.34	68.66
Bringing drugs into prison	4	11	0.22	18.18
<i>Supply of drugs - Total</i>	88	95	1.91	69.47
Possession of drugs	531	498	10.00	79.52
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	2	2	0.04	0.00
<i>Total drugs crimes</i>	621	595	11.94	77.65
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	3	1	0.02	0.00
Bail offences (other than absconding)	148	266	5.34	95.86
Other Group 5 crimes	181	240	4.82	96.25
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	2570	2419	48.56	75.44
Common Assault	1061	854	17.14	71.31
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	98	111	2.23	96.40
<i>Common Assault - Total</i>	1159	965	19.37	74.20
Breach of the Peace	35	33	0.66	90.91
Threatening & abusive behaviour	928	983	19.73	80.37
Stalking	26	40	0.80	72.50
<i>BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total</i>	989	1056	21.20	80.40
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct*	42	36	0.72	97.22
Drunk and incapable	13	6	0.12	116.67
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	12	16	0.32	100.00
Other alcohol related offences*	13	2	0.04	100.00
<i>Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)</i>	38	24	0.48	104.17
Wildlife offences*	8	17	0.34	70.59
Other Group 6 offences	334	321	6.44	58.57
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	1552	1627	32.66	92.32
Dangerous driving offences	50	71	1.43	83.10
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	140	119	2.39	84.87
Speeding offences	125	132	2.65	99.24
Driving while disqualified	36	37	0.74	105.41
Driving without a licence	115	183	3.67	101.64
Failure to insure against third party risks	357	524	10.52	101.53
Seat belt offences	22	12	0.24	91.67
Mobile phone offences	28	19	0.38	100.00
Driving Carelessly	121	126	2.53	88.89
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	21	9	0.18	100.00
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	166	75	1.51	110.67
Other Group 7 offences	371	320	6.42	68.75

West Lothian Recorded Crime Overview


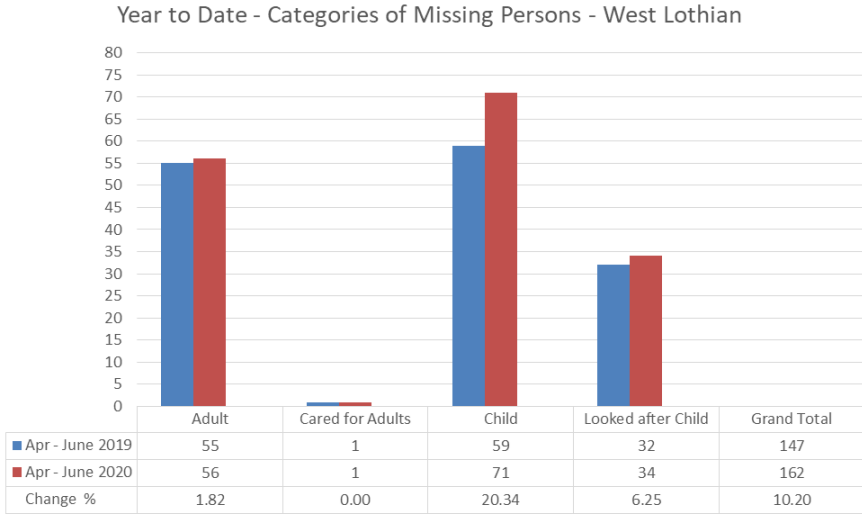
West Lothian	2019/20 Q1	2020/21 Q1	Per 10,000 Q1 2020/21	Detection Rates 2020/21
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	62	65	3.61	81.54
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	1	-	-	x
Culpable homicide (at common law)	-	-	-	x
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	-	-	-	x
Attempted murder	2	2	0.11	100.00
Serious assault	36	30	1.67	83.33
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	11	12	0.67	66.67
Domestic Abuse (of female)	3	8	0.44	87.50
Domestic Abuse (of male)	-	-	-	x
Domestic Abuse (Total)	3	8	0.44	87.50
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	2	6	0.33	116.67
Threats and extortion	3	3	0.17	0.00
Other group 1 crimes	4	4	0.22	100.00
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	95	113	6.27	42.48
Rape	16	10	0.56	50.00
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	1	1	0.06	200.00
Rape and attempted rape - Total	17	11	0.61	63.64
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)*	2	-	-	x
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)*	25	35	1.94	54.29
Lewd & libidinous practices*	11	10	0.56	0.00
Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total	38	45	2.50	42.22
Prostitution related crime - Total*	-	-	-	x
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	2	1	0.06	100.00
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)*	4	14	0.78	35.71
Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	5	6	0.33	50.00
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)*	9	2	0.11	0.00
Public indecency (common law)	1	-	-	x
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)*	13	22	1.22	36.36
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)*	2	-	-	x
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image*	4	12	0.67	41.67
Other Group 2 crimes	-	-	-	x
Other Group 2 crimes - Total	40	57	3.16	38.60
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	984	938	52.07	38.27
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	32	29	1.61	24.14
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	20	29	1.61	17.24
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	46	39	2.17	33.33
Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total	98	97	5.38	25.77
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	23	13	0.72	30.77
Theft of a motor vehicle	56	63	3.50	55.56
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc.)	76	69	3.83	20.29
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	4	2	0.11	100.00
Motor vehicle crime - Total	159	147	8.16	37.41
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	17	7	0.39	28.57
Common theft	307	235	13.05	24.26
Theft by shoplifting	274	215	11.94	62.33
Fraud	69	135	7.49	19.26
Other Group 3 Crimes	60	102	5.66	58.82
GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc.	416	378	20.98	25.66
Fireraising	36	37	2.05	5.41


Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	357	326	18.10	25.46
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	-	1	0.06	100.00
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	22	13	0.72	84.62
Other Group 4 Crimes	1	1	0.06	0.00
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	384	444	24.65	86.71
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	14	19	1.05	105.26
Handling bladed/pointed instrument	17	20	1.11	100.00
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)*	30	12	0.67	108.33
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)*	7	12	0.67	100.00
Total offensive/bladed weapons	68	63	3.50	103.17
Production, manufacture or cultivation of drugs	13	3	0.17	166.67
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	30	27	1.50	62.96
Bringing drugs into prison	4	11	0.61	18.18
Supply of drugs - Total	47	41	2.28	58.54
Possession of drugs	165	163	9.05	80.98
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	1	2	0.11	0.00
Total drugs crimes	213	206	11.44	75.73
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	2	1	0.06	0.00
Bail offences (other than absconding)	44	97	5.38	91.75
Other Group 5 crimes	57	77	4.27	97.40
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	1023	1001	55.57	71.23
Common Assault	459	397	22.04	68.51
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	41	48	2.66	95.83
Common Assault - Total	500	445	24.70	71.46
Breach of the Peace	6	14	0.78	100.00
Threatening & abusive behaviour	352	374	20.76	75.13
Stalking	14	8	0.44	100.00
BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total	372	396	21.98	76.52
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct*	21	18	1.00	105.56
Drunk and incapable	1	2	0.11	100.00
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	2	4	0.22	100.00
Other alcohol related offences*	6	-	-	x
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)	9	6	0.33	100.00
Wildlife offences*	1	1	0.06	0.00
Other Group 6 offences	120	135	7.49	49.63
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	565	764	42.41	93.85
Dangerous driving offences	16	37	2.05	83.78
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	59	51	2.83	80.39
Speeding offences	25	101	5.61	99.01
Driving while disqualified	9	14	0.78	107.14
Driving without a licence	49	82	4.55	106.10
Failure to insure against third party risks	151	235	13.05	100.00
Seat belt offences	14	11	0.61	90.91
Mobile phone offences	19	13	0.72	100.00
Driving Carelessly	36	43	2.39	100.00
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	3	8	0.44	100.00
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	60	31	1.72	106.45
Other Group 7 offences	124	138	7.66	73.19


West Lothian Performance Summary





People Most at Risk are Protected and Supported to Achieve Improved Life Chances


Protecting the Most Vulnerable People	Executive Summary																												
<div>Missing Person Incidents</div> <div></div>	<div>Year to Date - Categories of Missing Persons - West Lothian</div>  <table><thead><tr><th></th><th>Adult</th><th>Cared for Adults</th><th>Child</th><th>Looked after Child</th><th>Grand Total</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>■ Apr - June 2019</td><td>55</td><td>1</td><td>59</td><td>32</td><td>147</td></tr><tr><td>■ Apr - June 2020</td><td>56</td><td>1</td><td>71</td><td>34</td><td>162</td></tr><tr><td>Change %</td><td>1.82</td><td>0.00</td><td>20.34</td><td>6.25</td><td>10.20</td></tr></tbody></table>						Adult	Cared for Adults	Child	Looked after Child	Grand Total	■ Apr - June 2019	55	1	59	32	147	■ Apr - June 2020	56	1	71	34	162	Change %	1.82	0.00	20.34	6.25	10.20
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<div>Overall Top ‘Missing from’ YTD 2020 – West Lothian</div> <table><thead><tr><th>Missing From</th><th>Grand Total</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>St John’s Hospital, Livingston, West Lothian</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Waterstone Farm YPU, Waterstone, Uphall, West Lothian</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>Torcroft YPU, Raeburn Crescent, Whitburn, West Lothian</td><td>11</td></tr></tbody></table>					Missing From	Grand Total	St John’s Hospital, Livingston, West Lothian	13	Waterstone Farm YPU, Waterstone, Uphall, West Lothian	12	Torcroft YPU, Raeburn Crescent, Whitburn, West Lothian	11																	
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<p>The Lothians & Scottish Borders (J) Division and the communities of West Lothian recognise that protecting people, particularly those considered vulnerable, is a policing priority. Within the remit of protecting people is the work and investigations carried out to trace people who are reported missing. In Q1 there were 162 missing persons reports, all traced alive/returned.</p> <p>Recognising the vulnerability associated with missing people, particularly those that are young or suffering from mental health challenges, Police Scotland has adopted a rigorous investigation structure and management approach to missing person incidents.</p> <p>Significant work has been undertaken in respect of engaging with children identified as repeatedly being reported missing. This has led to several partnership meetings being convened to support these children. Input has also been provided to establishments for looked after children, including a number of young people from the Central Scotland area who have been placed to Waterston Farm YPU. This has led to a reduction in reported incidents involving such children and ensuring support for them.</p> <p>Significant input has been provided in respect of one looked after adult who had historically been reported missing multiple times. Risk not only to this adult but members of the public was identified and multi-agency discussions were progressed. This led to more robust management of the male resulting in a significant decrease in reports and risk presented.</p>																													


Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour	Executive Summary					
<div>Crimes of Violence – Group 1</div> <div></div>	Crime Type	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	Q1 2020/21 Detection Rate
	Group 1	62	65	4.84%	3.61	81.54%
	Serious Assault	36	30	-16.66%	1.67	83.33%
	Robbery	11	12	9.09%	0.67	66.67%
	Common Assault	500	445	-11.00%	24.70	71.46%
<p>*Common assaults not recorded as group 1 crimes, but will be referenced in this section</p> <p>Reducing violence is a policing priority for all areas within The Lothian & Scottish Borders Division of Police Scotland. We recognise the impact violence has in our communities and the desire from these communities that we work to prevent such incidents and where they have occurred, swiftly identify the perpetrators.</p> <p>Detection rates for crimes of violence remain strong, led predominantly by CID and Proactive Crime Team officers. Serious Assault year to date shows a decrease of 6 crimes compared to 2019/2020 crimes, with solvency sitting at 83.33%. Reports of Robbery have increased by 1 crime compared to 2019/2020 recording with detection rate slightly down to 66.67%.</p> <p>During Q1, Common Assault in West Lothian has decreased by 55 compared to Q1 in 2019/2020 with solvency at 71.46%.</p> <p>Operation Minoration, an enforcement activity targeting perpetrators of violent crime, continued into Q1. This involved uniformed officers removed from general duties. During this time, the team solved 164 crimes of violence and domestic violence, with 90 reports being submitted to the PF for consideration, 60 being released insufficient evidence and 14 being closed no crime. A template of good practice, Operation Minoration will continue into Q2 in support of our local policing priorities, reducing violence and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The Lothians and Scottish Borders Division is proactively working to reduce violence through a variety of methods, including but not exclusively;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Implementation of Violence Reduction plans across J Division, including in West Lothian, where officers deploy with an intelligence-led focus to problematic areas including regular patrols in higher tariff areas.- Interventions and targeted disruption activities, such as proactive bail checks, are also being carried out with violent offenders to deter further criminality. This activity seeks to reduce violence by focusing resource to known and recidivist offenders.- Targeted warrant enforcement days/days of action, including at HMP Addiewell- Focused intervention and high visibility presence to licensed premises; this has included compliance checks relating to Covid-19 restrictions. The Best Bar None Awards and 2021 launch has been postponed but we will support again this scheme in the coming year.						


Protecting the Most Vulnerable People	Executive Summary											
<div>Sexual Crimes - Group 2</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>Q1 2019/20</th><th>Q1 2020/21</th><th>Change</th><th>TYTD Per 10,000 population</th></tr><tr><td>95</td><td>113</td><td>18.95%</td><td>6.27</td></tr></table>				Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	95	113	18.95%	6.27
	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population								
	95	113	18.95%	6.27								
	<p>*Total number of group 2 crimes recorded.</p>											
	<div><div>West Lothian Recent vs Non Recent Rape and Attempted Rape</div><div><div><div>5, 45%</div><div>6, 55%</div></div><div><div>■ Non-recent</div><div>■ Recent</div></div></div></div>											
<p>Tackling criminality that poses the greatest threat and risk is, and will always be, a priority for officers in West Lothian. Rape and Sexual Crime is an area of focus in terms of providing confidence to report, undertaking professional investigations, providing victim support, pursuing perpetrators and managing offenders.</p> <p>By the end of Q1 2020/2021, it can be observed that reports of all Sexual Crime have increased by 18 crimes in comparison to LYTD. In considering these figures the following points are highlighted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• During Q1, 11 Crimes of Rape and Assault with Intent to Ravish were reported compared to 16 in the same period 2019/2020. Current Rape solvency has increased to 50.0%.• Rape and Sexual Crime is typically underreported and Police Scotland continue to work closely with partner agencies to ensure victims of crime are supported in reporting these crimes.• The figures contained in this section relate to crimes that were reported in Q1, however many are historic, having occurred in some cases years previously.• “Stranger Rape” is remarkably uncommon. As in the whole of the year 2019/20, there were no such reports during Q1, with all perpetrators know to the victim.• The overall solvency rate for group 2 crime in West Lothian at the end of Q1 rose to 42.5%, an increase of 7.8%. <p>The investigation of rape and sexual crime, alongside the management of offenders is achieved through close partnership working. This continues to be the case in West Lothian and we will continue to work with all partners and explore further collaborative working opportunities.</p> <p>In Q1, 106 child and 36 adult Initial Referral Discussions were completed, with police identifying and raising formal discussion with key WLC partners regarding vulnerability.</p>												

Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour	Executive Summary			
Domestic Abuse Incidents 		Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	% Change
	Number of Domestic Abuse Incidents	593	738	24.50%
	Total Crimes and offences in domestic abuse incidents	390	363	-6.92%
	Percentage of Domestic Incidents that result in a crime	46.2%	38.1%	-8.10%
	Total crimes and offences detection rate	56.4%	67.2%	10.80%
	Total Detections for Domestic Bail Offences	23	29	26.10%
	<p>Domestic Abuse remains a priority matter for all West Lothian officers. By the end of Q1 officers had recorded 738 incidents, 24.50% higher than the previous year, from which 593 crimes were recorded. Out of these incidents, 363 resulted in crimes being identified, this figure is a decrease of 6.92% from the same period 2019/2020.</p> <p>In terms of preventative activity the following points are highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Lothian Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) is a regular local meeting where information is shared about domestic abuse perpetrators who pose the highest risk, continues to be a feature of partnership prevention activity. The objective of MATAC is to protect people at risk of harm through the targeting of perpetrators. During Q1 there were 4 MATAC referrals in respect of a high tariff offenders, which were allocated to East Command Domestic Abuse Task Force. <p>The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland has two main triggers for disclosure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Right to Ask is open to anyone who has concerns about a new partner's abusive past or has concerns about another person's new partner. An example of this would be a parent concerned about their child's new partner. The Power to Tell is when we receive information or intelligence about the safety of a person who may be at risk. During the Q1 period there were 30 applications recorded under DSDAS with 25 meeting the criteria for disclosure. <p>Operation Minoration will continue into Q2 to ensure domestic incidents are investigated to completion in the earliest possible time.</p> <p>As we move into Q2, West Lothian officers will continue to focus on incidents of Domestic Abuse and work collectively to protect victims and pursue perpetrators.</p>			

Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour	Executive Summary															
<div>Anti-Social Behaviour</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>Indicator</th><th>2019-20 Q1</th><th>2020-21 Q1</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>Antisocial Behaviour Incidents (per 10,000 population)</td><td>2,672</td><td>4,461</td><td>66.95%</td></tr><tr><td>Number of complaints regarding disorder</td><td>1,802</td><td>3,308</td><td>83.60%</td></tr></table>				Indicator	2019-20 Q1	2020-21 Q1	Change	Antisocial Behaviour Incidents (per 10,000 population)	2,672	4,461	66.95%	Number of complaints regarding disorder	1,802	3,308	83.60%
	Indicator	2019-20 Q1	2020-21 Q1	Change												
	Antisocial Behaviour Incidents (per 10,000 population)	2,672	4,461	66.95%												
	Number of complaints regarding disorder	1,802	3,308	83.60%												
	<p>The number of reported Anti-Social Behaviour incidents per 10,000 people increased by 66.95% compared to the 2019/2020 Q1 period. This has been primarily attributed to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions with an increase of persons being within their home addresses and reporting breaches of these restrictions, and groups gathering.</p>															
	<p>Linked directly to public space disorder, violence and alcohol misuse, Community and Response officers are directed in an intelligence led way to priority locations. This included attention, during the quarter, to parks and public spaces in Bathgate, Whitburn and Livingston in particular. This was especially prevalent due to lockdown restrictions with officers engaging with the public and utilising the 4 E's – Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce.</p>															
	<p>During Q1, Operation Bravely was established due to Bangour Village Hospital attracting upwards of 200 persons a night causing numerous ASB calls to the police. Incidents included a number of fire raisings, vandalisms and traffic issues. As a result three Recorded Police Warnings (RPW) were issued, a POCA seizure of cash and Drugs RPW was issued and a further male reported for summons for theft of a bible from the church. A Temporary Traffic Restriction Order (TTRO) and a Section 11 Restriction of Access Order were granted to deter persons visiting the site, this has now been extended to 13/09/20. Since their implementation over forty Parking tickets have been issued and the number of persons ignoring the legislation has reduced significantly. In addition, security erected ten 24hour monitored CCTV cameras, with voice communications. Police will continue to support the on-site security by carrying out regular patrols over the summer period.</p>															
	<p>Plans were advanced in relation to the Blackburn Bonfire Night Action Group 2020 although again due to Covid-19 pandemic, planning and indeed the shape of the Bonfire period itself, are difficult.</p>															
	<p>All Night-time Economy interventions reduced significantly during Q1 due to the closure of licensed premises. These interventions will recommence during Q2 as licenced premises are allowed to re-open. Regular patrols will occur to prevent any issues due to the high number of people expected to visit premises after lockdown.</p>															
	<p>Reports of vandalism sit at 326 by the end of Q1 compared to 357 LYTD, a reduction of 31. We will continue to target areas identified by analysis and community intelligence for public space anti-social behaviour within our commitment to improve the safety of all in our communities.</p>															

Reducing Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour	Executive Summary			
<div>Racially Aggravated Conduct</div> <div></div>	West Lothian			
		2019/20 Q1	2020/21 Q1	Per 10,000 Q1
	Hate Incidents	49	78	4.3
	Hate Crimes	45	69	3.8
	Hate Crime Detection Rate	97.8%	76.8%	
<p>Please note that in respect of recorded Hate Crimes, this section references;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CRIM LAW CONSOLID 1995 S50A(1)(B)&(5)CAUSE DISTRESS & ALARM• RACIALLY AGGRAVATED HARASSMENT (CRIMINAL LAW (CONSOLIDATION) (S) ACT 1995 S50A(1)(A)) RACIST <p>Official Hate Crime statistics include all crime types which have a hate crime aggravator added to the crime. The aggravators are Disability, Race, Religion, Sexual Orientation and Transgender Identity.</p> <p>Following on from Q4, Q1 continued with the preventions officers promoting the continued roll-out of Keep Safe Campaign and Third Party Reporting, raising awareness of disability hate crime, and in support of hate crime awareness. Social media posts highlighting the issues have continued throughout Q1 reinforcing Police Scotland’s stance on hate crime being unacceptable within West Lothian.</p> <p>The overall number of hate crimes and incidents have increased from this time last year. Although all such matters are of concern, they remain few in total. The only identifiable pattern relates to the verbal abuse of staff at a small number of shops and businesses and this is where support and preventions advice is focused.</p> <p>The detection rate for Hate crime at the end of Q1 is 76.8%, a decrease of 21% from last year’s reporting period. We will continue to review investigative opportunities and build a strong performance in this area throughout 2020/21.</p>				

Reducing Acquisitive Crime	Executive Summary						
<div>Dishonesty - Group 3</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>Q1 2019/20</th><th>Q1 2020/21</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>984</td><td>938</td><td>-4.67%</td></tr></table> <p>Dealing with Acquisitive Crime, and as such working to Protect People by reducing the impact (both financial and personal) that it has on our communities remains a priority for the Lothians & Scottish Borders (J) Division and West Lothian.</p> <p>By the end of Q1 2020/2021 overall reported Group 3 crimes of Dishonesty decreased by 46 with detection rates at 38.27%.</p> <p>Further breakdown of the data provided in the table above provides the following;</p> <p>Thefts of vehicles has seen a rise by end of Q1 to 63, an increase of 7 on the same period last year. In the year to date there have been 69 Thefts from insecure vehicles, which is slightly down 2019/20.</p> <p>Overall motor vehicle crime fell by 12 to 147 crimes.</p> <p>Due to the excellent work of the Pro-Active Crime Team during Q1, a 31 year old male was identified as being responsible for numerous crimes in West Lothian and Edinburgh area including several acquisitive thefts, MDA offences, RTA offences including ramming a police vehicle and impersonating a police officer. Op Rampion was established in relation to these enquiries with 19 offences being identified with further more still being investigated. Several high value property items were returned to complainers and further enquiries into these continue.</p> <p>Common Theft and Theft by Shoplifting remain the volume crimes under the Dishonesty heading, accounting for 215 out of the 938 crimes of dishonesty year to date, down by 59 on the same period in 2019/2020.</p> <p>Rural crime, including the theft of plant and equipment is at comparatively low levels, however they have a high impact on local small businesses. During Q1 Uniform and Roads Policing officers continued with planned road checks in relation to metal and vehicle thefts, including that of catalytic converters, which although comparatively few in numbers, has continued to feature more recently.</p> <p>Crimes of Fraud has seen a significant increase from 69 at this point in 2019/2020, to 135 by the end of Q1 in 2020/2021. The vast majority of these incidents related to online or telephone crimes. In addition to reviewing vulnerabilities and supporting victims, we continue to support national campaigns, including in Q1, “Shut out Scammers” and “International Safer Internet Day”, along with Social Media posts offering online advice, in particular in relation to Cybercrime and online offences.</p> <p>During a proactive patrol as part of the “Shut out Scammers” campaign, Community Officers conducted a vehicle stop and identified both males within as being responsible for numerous bogus workmen crimes. A 37 year old male and 57 year old male were both arrested and interviewed resulting in seven bogus workmen, one theft and two road traffic offences being detected. Further charges were libelled for offences within the Fife area.</p>	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	984	938	-4.67%
Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change					
984	938	-4.67%					

Protecting People	Executive Summary					
<div>Housebreaking</div> <div></div>	Crime Type	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	TYTD Per 10,000 population	Q1 2020/21 Detection Rate
	Dwelling HB	32	29	-9.38%	1.61	24.14%
	Non Dwelling (Sheds, garages) HB	20	29	45.00%	1.61	17.24%
	Other (Business) HB	46	39	-15.22%	2.17	33.33%
	All HB	98	97	-1.02%	5.38	25.77%
	*All Crime Types include attempt thefts					
<p>There was 1 less report of Housebreaking in West Lothian for the comparable period last year, equating to a small fall of 1.02%. Of particular note, within this figure, there were 3 fewer dwelling housebreakings compared to last year’s Q1 report, equating to a 9.38% reduction. It is fair to suggest that one of the consequences of Covid-19 is that fewer domestic dwellings were unoccupied through the day and evenings, but that more business premises were closed, and potentially more vulnerable to attack.</p> <p>Housebreakings to Business premises fell by 7 incidents YTD, and officers continue to promote target hardening, preventions and security advice to try to promote further improvement. During Q1 we again promoted a number of national prevention campaigns relating to building security, at commercial and domestic premises. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, these were led predominantly through Social Media.</p> <p>Following reports of persons in the Whitburn area attempting vehicle/house handles a 30 year old and 21 year old were arrested on suspicion of theft. The ensuing enquiry resulted in the above males being charged with 28 offences in relation to thefts.</p> <p>A further report of males breaking into properties in the Livingston area resulted in two males being arrested and charged with several offences. One of these males was also charged with breaching his ASBO conditions.</p> <p>Other recent trends continue to include metal thefts from premises where gas boilers, copper piping and water cylinders were stolen, mainly from new build building sites. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, building work was halted resulting in all building sites being vulnerable to theft. Due to this, regular patrols were conducted on key arterial routes and focused to potentially vulnerable premises.</p> <p>Community Safety and PSYV (Police Scotland Youth Volunteers) were unable to continue with planned events or leaflet drops due to lockdown restrictions. To counterbalance this, numerous crime prevention posts were published on West Lothian Facebook and Twitter gaining a positive response from local communities.</p>						

*All Crime Types include attempt thefts

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Improving Road Safety		Executive Summary			
<div>Road Casualties</div> <div></div>					

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism	Executive Summary								
<div>Drugs Supply, Production and Cultivation</div> <div></div>	<table><tr><th>Q1 2019/20</th><th>Q1 2020/21</th><th>Change</th></tr><tr><td>47</td><td>41</td><td>-12.77%</td></tr></table>			Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change	47	41	-12.77%
	Q1 2019/20	Q1 2020/21	Change						
	47	41	-12.77%						
	<p>*Total crimes in relation to drugs supply, Production and Cultivation</p>								
	<p>During Q1, there was 41 drugs Supply, Production and Cultivation offences libelled, compared to Q1 2019/2020 figure of 47, a reduction of 12.77%. In many cases we await lab test results before being able to report additional drugs Supply offences.</p>								
<p>During Q1, officers attended at an address in Armadale due to drugs Intel in relation to a Cannabis cultivation. During this, a young male attempted to flee although was arrested by officers. Using language line, it was established that he was linked to human trafficking and organised crime. Within the locus, officers located 160 Cannabis plants with a street value in excess of £80,000. Enquiries are continuing into the full circumstances, the criminal network with apparent links to the North East of England and Glasgow.</p>									
<p>Furthermore, a Misuse of Drugs Act warrant was also executed at an address in Livingston in relation to a 30 year old female suspected of supplying Valium from her home address. Officers attended and located in excess of 5000 Valium tablets; the drugs seized and will be examined before charging the suspect.</p>									
<p>The other significantly large drug recovery was in relation to a general evidence/MDA warrant in relation to an enquiry to an address in Livingston. During the search, significant amount of Cocaine and Cannabis was located. A 43 year old male and 18 year old male were subsequently charged with MDA production and supply.</p>									

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism	Executive Summary
<p data-bbox="124 459 331 566">National Terror Threat - Substantial</p> 	<div data-bbox="391 398 917 728"> </div> <div data-bbox="941 398 1484 728"> </div> <p data-bbox="375 772 1420 869">The current National Terrorism threat level is SUBSTANTIAL. Police in West Lothian continue to evaluate and review our responses to incidents, working with partners to provide expert advice, training and support.</p> <p data-bbox="375 907 1420 1003">The current UK Government website provides extensive guidance on the current threat level (SUBSTANTIAL – AN ATTACK IS LIKELY) and critical guidance for the public can be accessed by following this link</p> <p data-bbox="375 1041 1364 1070">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counterterrorism-security-office.</p> <h2 data-bbox="375 1120 702 1176">Threat Level</h2> <ul data-bbox="438 1187 1316 1249" style="list-style-type: none"> •  The National Threat Level is SUBSTANTIAL. <p data-bbox="375 1288 1468 1417">Threat levels are designed to give a broad indication of the likelihood of a terrorist attack. They are a tool for security practitioners working across different sectors and the police to use in determining what protective security response may be required. They also keep the public informed and give context to the protective security measures which we all encounter in our daily lives.</p> <p data-bbox="375 1456 1460 1518">The threat level for the UK from international terrorism is set by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC).</p> <p data-bbox="375 1556 1396 1619">MI5 is responsible for setting the threat levels from Irish and other domestic terrorism both in Northern Ireland and in Great Britain.</p> <p data-bbox="375 1657 1428 1720">In reaching a judgement on the appropriate threat level in any given circumstance several factors need to be taken into account. These include:</p> <ul data-bbox="438 1758 1484 2022" style="list-style-type: none"> • Available intelligence - It is rare that specific threat information is available and can be relied upon. More often, judgements about the threat will be based on a wide range of information, which is often fragmentary, including the level and nature of current terrorist activity, comparison with events in other countries and previous attacks. Intelligence is only ever likely to reveal part of the picture. • Terrorist capability - An examination of what is known about the capabilities of the terrorists in question and the method they may use based on previous attacks or from intelligence. This would also analyse the potential scale of the attack.

- **Terrorist intentions** - Using intelligence and publicly available information to examine the overall aims of the terrorists and the ways they may achieve them including what sort of targets they would consider attacking.
- **Timescale** - The threat level expresses the likelihood of an attack in the near term. We know from past incidents that some attacks take years to plan, while others are put together more quickly. In the absence of specific intelligence, a judgement will need to be made about how close an attack might be to fruition. Threat levels do not have any set expiry date, but are regularly subject to review in order to ensure that they remain current.

New Threat Level Threat Level Definitions:

Critical

An attack is highly likely in the near future

Severe

An attack is highly likely

Substantial

An attack is likely

Moderate

An attack is possible but not likely

Low

An attack is highly unlikely