

## WIGAN AND LEIGH HOUSING BOARD 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

### Report of the Director of Strategy, Policy and Projects

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### WALH Quarter 1 Performance 2009/10

<b>Purpose/Summary:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To advise Board Members of the organisation's performance in the first quarter of 2009/10.</li> <li>• To trial a revised reporting structure which:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Links performance management to the Vision</li> <li>(b) Provides a focused report on the key issues to note</li> <li>(c) Provides a supplementary information booklet for Board Members wishing to consider more detailed information</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
<b>Recommendations:</b>				
Board is asked to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the performance in the first quarter of 2009/10.</li> <li>• Note the proposal to provide Business, Investment &amp; Performance Committee with a detailed report on the challenges facing the Homelessness Service.</li> <li>• Advise of any other areas it wishes to refer to Business, Investment and Performance Committee for more detailed discussion.</li> <li>• Agree to an annual performance indicator under the Access to Affordable Homes goal of 'Increase the supply of good quality affordable housing' and an annual target of 50 dwellings per year'.</li> <li>• Comment on the revised reporting structure recommended by the working group.</li> </ul>				
<b>For decision, discussion or information?</b>		Discussion and decision		
<b>For the open part or the press and public excluded part of the agenda? If press and public excluded please state reason.</b>		Open		
<b>Resource and Value for Money Implications:</b>	A number of indicators have key value for money implications e.g. re-let performance, rent collection.			
<b>Employee Implications:</b>	None			
<b>Key Risks incl. Company reputation, business relationships, health and safety and legal implications</b>	Risk to reputation of the organisation, value for money and satisfaction of tenants if performance is not strong.			
<b>Equality (Impact) Assessed?</b>	Yes		No	Not Applicable
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity and Community Implications:</b>	The indicator set includes some which relate specifically to the experience of vulnerable groups.			
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	None			
<b>Area Forums Affected:</b>	All			
<b>Tracking/Process</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Area Forum/s</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Board</b>
				1 Sept 2009

## 1.0 Background




- 1.1 As part of a revised performance indicator framework, Board approved a new set of indicators and targets at its May meeting which is being reported on for the first time at this quarter one stage.
- 1.2 A small working group is looking at how performance is reported to Board and phase one of their recommendations is included in this report:
- Clearly link performance management reporting to delivering the Vision
  - Make it easier for Board Members to identify performance for each indicator
  - Report how we are performing compared to 'best in class'

## 2.0 Introduction




- 2.1 The performance report being trialled for quarter one is structured around our Vision of providing 'Better Homes, Brighter Futures' for our customers. This Vision is supported by 5 goals and 4 business enablers:
- Goal 1 – Better Housing Services
  - Goal 2 – Decent Homes
  - Goal 3 – Better Estates
  - Goal 4 – Access to Affordable Homes
  - Goal 5 – Housing Services for Vulnerable People

Business Enablers:





- Value for Money
  - Information Technology
  - Human Resources
  - Governance
- 2.2 For all indicators an overall target for the year has been set. For those indicators which Board agreed would be reported quarterly, there are also quarterly targets to help monitor progress towards reaching the annual target. If performance isn't on target but is within 5% of the target (1% for BS5 proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward), performance is classed as 'close to target'.

Key	Performance against target
	On target or better
	Close to target - within 5% of the target (1% for BS5)
	At risk – more than 5% from the target (1% for BS5)

2.3 This report also highlights if performance is improving compared to either year end 2008/09 or quarter one 2008/09:

Key	Performance trend
	Improving
	Stayed the same
	Declining

2.4 To report how we are performing compared to 'best in class', this report details, where available, our relative position against the HouseMark ALMO Club or other relevant benchmarking information. Comparative benchmarking data for quarter one isn't currently available so we have compared our current performance against the 2008/09 benchmarking data.




Key	Quartile
	Top quartile – in the top 25% of ALMO Club members
	2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile – above average, in the top 25% to 50% of ALMO Club members
	3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile – below average, in the bottom 25% to 50% of ALMO Club members
	Bottom quartile – in the bottom 25% of ALMO Club members

As some of the indicators we are now reporting are new HouseMark indicators, benchmarking information will only be available from the end of 2009/10. However, where possible, we have included other comparative information which will help to give Board Members an indication of our performance compared to others.



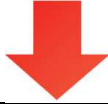
### 3.0 Quarter 1 Performance Summary

3.1 This quarter 1 update shows that of the 21 indicators reported quarterly:





#### Are we meeting our targets?

Key	Performance against target	Number of indicators
	On target	14
	Close to target	1
	At risk	4
	Not yet measurable – not yet able to measure performance or target to be set	2

#### Are we improving?

Key	Performance trend	Number of indicators
	Improving	13
	Stayed the same	2
	Declining	2
	Not yet measurable - new indicator so no trend data	4















#### How do we compare with others?

Key	Quartile	Number of indicators
	Top Quartile	5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile	3
	3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile	1
	Bottom quartile	0
	No benchmarking information currently available	12

3.2 The following sections provide a summary of our performance against each element of the Vision bringing out important issues to note. The supplementary performance information booklet included with this agenda provides more detailed information. There is also a glossary of terms to help with understanding of performance management.

## 4.0 Quarter 1 Performance

### Goal 1 – Better Housing Services

Indicator	Actual Q1 09/10	Target Q1 09/10	Actual against target	Trend	Quartile
<b>Customers</b>					
Avoidable contact- proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer <b>(National Indicator)</b>	12.3%	13%		New indicator	Not yet available
% of tenants on who the landlord has diversity information (age, gender plus at least one other of ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion)	56%	-	Target to be set	New indicator	Not available-local indicator
% of tenants who said that the service provided by the Contact Centre was excellent or good	97%	97%			Not available-local indicator
% of new tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process	N/a	85%	Revised indicator	Revised indicator	Not yet available
<b>Rents</b>					
Proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward	96.36%	95.85%			
% of tenants with more than 7 weeks of gross rent arrears	3.79%	4.24%			
% of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.02%	0.06%			
Proportion of former tenant arrears collected	4.15%	4%			Not available-local indicator

#### • **Key Business Indicators**

##### **Avoidable contact- proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer**

This is an important indicator because it is a National Indicator. Of the 48,886 calls recorded by the Contact Centre during quarter one 5,993 (12.3%) enquiries received may have been avoided. The largest number of avoidable contacts was customers calling to chase progress of jobs with a 28 day timescale within the 28 day period (1,576 enquiries). We are currently looking at IT software which may make improvements to the repairs appointments system. The new Customer Care section are also working with other sections to reduce avoidable contact and this has been reducing month on month since April.

Although the Cabinet Office has stated that current national data is not appropriate for comparison, it does give Board Members an indication of our performance compared to others. The England average for 2008/09 was 24.7% which is significantly worse than our quarter one performance. Wigan Council's performance for 2008/09 was 24.3%.

• **Areas for Concern**

**Proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward**

We have had an encouraging start to the year by collecting 96.36% compared to quarter one last year of 95.95% and by bettering the target for quarter one by 0.51%. However, performance in comparison to the general HouseMark ALMO Club is below average. We need to identify how other organisations are performing better than us, but this is a difficult indicator to calculate and we have concerns that other organisations are not strictly following the guidance. We plan to contact the top performing organisations to compare our calculations and then identify a small number who we can accurately compare ourselves with.

• **Excellent Performance**














**% of tenants with more than 7 weeks (gross) rent arrears**

Quarter one performance of 3.79% is well within the target of 4.24% and better than quarter one performance last year of 3.85%. This places us in the top quarter of organisations in the HouseMark ALMO Club.

**% of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears**

The number of evictions for rent arrears continues to fall and is now down to 5 for quarter one compared to 13 in the first quarter of last year. This places us in the top quarter of organisations in the HouseMark ALMO Club. Revised procedures focused on advice, assistance and sustaining tenancies in addition to early intervention and prevention has helped to improve performance.

## Goal 2 – Decent Homes

Indicator	Actual Q1 09/10	Target Q1 09/10	Actual against target	Trend	Quartile
<b>% of non-decent council stock (National Indicator and Local Area Agreement indicator)</b>	4%	5%			
% of urgent repairs completed within Government timelimits	99.25%	98%			
Average time to complete non-urgent repairs	8 days	8 days			
% of repairs which are emergency/urgent repairs as defined by Govt Right to Repair legislation	14.53%	18%			Not yet available
Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding	2.35%	1%			Not yet available

### • **Key Business Indicators**

#### **% of non-decent council stock**

This is an important indicator because it is a National Indicator and a Local Area Agreement indicator. As a result of the external rendering works to the multi-storey blocks during quarter one, the number of non-decent properties is now down to 887 which is 3.9% of the stock. This is within target and places us in the top quarter of organisations in the HouseMark ALMO Club.

### • **Areas of Concern**

#### **Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding**









Of the 19,698 properties included in the annual gas servicing programme, at the end of quarter one 462 properties (2.35%) had certificates which had expired. The challenging target of 1% has not been achieved but there has been a significant year on year improvement. At the end of quarter one in 2008/09 there were 3.91% of certificates outstanding and for the same period in 2007/08 there were 4.10% outstanding. Of the 462 properties where a certificate had expired, 129 have been referred to the Council's Solicitor to commence legal action. Prior to this legal action, our gas engineers will have made 3 attempts to gain access and we will have sent 3 warning letters. We are continuing to intensively monitor the gas servicing programme and have commissioned CORGI Services to undertake a review of our policy, procedures and processes. The findings from this review will be reported to Business, Investment & Performance Committee.

### • **Excellent Performance**

#### **% of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits**

During quarter one 4,521 urgent repairs were ordered with 99.25% completed within target and just 34 repairs outside the target. This places us in the top quarter of organisations in the HouseMark ALMO Club.

### Goal 3 – Better Estates

Indicator	Actual Q1 09/10	Target Q1 09/10	Actual against target	Trend	Quartile
% of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with	68%	83%			Not yet available
% of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	64%	70%		New indicator	Not yet available
Proportion of empty homes as a % of the stock	1.02%	1.05%			Not available-local indicator
Average time to relet properties	26 days	27 days			

#### • **Issues to Note**

##### **% of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with**

The figure of 68% for Quarter 1 is significantly below the agreed target of 83%. This reduction in satisfaction levels is of concern and having assessed the completed satisfaction surveys there does appear to be a recurring theme in respect of lack of communication, with lack of regular feedback being the main complaint. This is being considered as part of the SIT review. However, it is also important to remember that this is an annual measure and last year we did see similar quarterly fluctuations in satisfaction levels. The final year-end result for 2008/09 of 82% was in the upper quartile.

##### **% of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint**

This is a new Housemark indicator which measures the percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint. As this is a new Indicator and the data has not been collected previously it has been difficult to ascertain a target for the year. The target set is currently based on the Housemark second quartile bracket of 70%. Some organisations are reporting very high percentage satisfaction, others very low and until we can obtain a better assessment of the norm, we have set the target at the current level. This will be reviewed as more data is obtained. Based upon the target we are currently using, the figure for quarter one at 64% is below target but outcomes may never satisfy the person complaining.

#### **Additional Better Estates indicators**

By linking performance management more clearly to the Vision highlights the need for more indicators under the Better Estates goal to show performance against this element of the Vision. We particularly need to be able to measure performance on crime/grime issues. Options will be included in the next monitoring report.





#### **Goal 4 – Access to Affordable Homes**

No annual or quarterly performance indicators have been agreed for this goal at this stage. The objective within the Vision is to:

- Increase the supply of good quality affordable housing by 100 dwellings per year.

It is therefore suggested that this indicator be included as an annual performance indicator which is measured at year end. Board has agreed that Business, Investment & Performance Committee has more detailed scrutiny of new build so any further performance measures will be agreed at that Committee. In the current economic climate the new build target needs revision and it is suggested that the target be revised to 50 per annum, starting in 2010/11.

## Goal 5 – Housing Services for Vulnerable People

Indicator	Actual Q1 09/10	Target Q1 09/10	Actual against target	Trend	Quartile
Households considering themselves homeless who approach for housing advice and housing advice casework intervention resolves their situation (per 1,000 households in the authority)	1.61	0.9			Not available
Number of households living in temporary accommodation <b>(National Indicator and Local Area Agreement indicator)</b>	53	45			Not available

### • **Key Business Indicators**

#### **Number of households living in temporary accommodation**

This is an important indicator because it is a National Indicator and a Local Area Agreement indicator. Although the target of 45 households for the end of quarter one has not been achieved, 53 households represents an improvement on last year's performance. Weekly strategic meetings focus on both reducing the numbers entering temporary accommodation and the length of time households remain in temporary accommodation. Particular emphasis is placed on resolving difficult cases requiring a multi-agency approach, especially young people and those with mental health issues. Proposals in the Allocations Policy review should also help us get closer to this target.

The quarterly and annual targets agreed over the next couple of years have been set to achieve the longer term target of 19 by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 which was set by the Government. This target of 19 was set by halving the number of households we had living in temporary accommodation as at December 2004 which was 39. Even though the demand for housing in the Borough was very different at that time there is no flexibility allowed in setting the target. At the end of March 2009 our number in temporary accommodation per 1000 households was 0.5, exactly equal to the North West average.







In view of the challenge presented by this target it is proposed to bring a report to Business, Investment & Performance Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> October to describe more fully the challenges the Homelessness Service faces and the work being done to tackle those challenges and improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

### • **Excellent Performance**

#### **Homeless prevention**

The number of cases where we have prevented a household from becoming homeless after they approached us for housing advice has steadily increased over the previous four quarters (39, 67, 119, 151). The improvement continued in quarter one with 224 cases where housing advice casework intervention resolved the situation. The figure that would have been top quartile in 2007/08 when this was last a Best Value Performance Indicator ( 6 per 1000 households in the course of the financial year) equates to 828 cases and so we are currently on course to match that. However, that was based on national performance two years ago and many other authorities have also been delivering markedly improved performance so we need to sustain our drive to improve to keep up with the others.

## Business Enablers

Indicator	Actual Q1 09/10	Target Q1 09/10	Actual against target	Trend	Quartile
<b>Value for Money</b>					
% void rent loss	1.06%	1.02%			
<b>Human Resources</b>					
The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence	1.86 days	2.3 days			

- **Areas for Concern**

**% void rent loss**

Whilst performance didn't meet the target and there was a slight decline from 2008/09 (1.04%), there are no significant concerns at this stage. Out of the total rent due of £18.3 million from all properties, occupied and void, during quarter one we lost £194,212 potential rental income due to properties being empty. This still places us in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile when compared to the HouseMark ALMO Club but performance will be monitored closely.

- **Excellent Performance**

**Sickness absence**

1.86 days is a significant reduction in absence compared to the quarterly performance in 2008/09. In fact this is the lowest quarterly absence level for at least three years. 1.86 days equates to 780 days lost due to sickness absence during the first quarter which is an absence rate of 3.3%.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 15 of the 21 quarterly indicators reported are either on target or close to target. The 4 indicators which are “at risk” are:

- DH5 Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding
- BE1 Percentage of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with
- BE2 Percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint
- VP2 Number of households living in temporary accommodation

The reasons for the indicators not meeting their target and actions required are detailed in the report.

5.2 The revised structure of this report seeks to clearly link performance management reporting to delivering the Vision and make it easier for Board Members to identify performance for each indicator. Through the working group further improvements will be made to the quarterly performance reports.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 Board is asked to:

- Note the performance in the first quarter of 2009/10.
- Note the proposal to provide Business, Investment & Performance Committee with a detailed report on the challenges facing the Homelessness Service.
- Advise of any other areas it wishes to refer to Business, Investment and Performance Committee for more detailed discussion.
- Agree to an annual performance indicator under the Access to Affordable Homes goal of ‘Increase the supply of good quality affordable housing’ and an annual target of 50 dwellings per year, starting in 2010/11.
- Comment on the revised reporting structure recommended by the working group.